



CASTLE VALE COMMUNITY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT TO TENANTS

2012
2013

LOOKING BACK

OUR HIGHLIGHTS OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS



LOOKING FORWARD

OUR CHALLENGES OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS



WELCOME

to this year's Annual Report for Tenants for the year to 31st March 2013. Our commitment to reporting to you how we have been performing.

2012-2013

You will have seen regular updates on our performance as your landlord in “Tyburn Mail” and on our website www.cvcha.org.uk.

Looking Back 2012-2013

- We have continued to perform well over the last year (Our **Scrutiny Panel Update and Performance Summary** gives further details). There are still areas where we need to improve, and these are highlighted in the report.
- More of you have gotten involved, to have your say, to help shape our services, or just to have fun!

Thank you for getting involved in making Castle Vale an active community, and in helping to improve our services to ensure that we meet your needs.

2013-2014

Looking Forward 2013-2014

- Our Major Renewals Programme will continue, with new boilers being installed in all our properties. This year we will begin refurbishing kitchens – our schedule for this work is available on our website, and further information will be made available throughout the year.
- The Government's Welfare Reform process will bring major changes to benefits in 2013-14. We will be working with tenants to provide advice and support to help you to understand how these changes may affect you.
- Our Digital Inclusion work is a major step forward in ensuring that everyone has the support and guidance needed to take advantage of getting online – whether for entertainment, keeping in touch, or accessing key services.



A MESSAGE from the Operational Board

CVCHA's Operational Board has a tenant and resident majority, and is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the housing service on Castle Vale. The board structure ensures that local people are at the heart of decision making, and that the voices of tenants and residents are heard.

Over the last 12 months, the Operational Board has made some key decisions, including:

- Developing the new allocations policy - who can move into our properties and the types of properties they can have
- Choosing to award the new gas servicing and maintenance contract to npower
- Overseeing the new kitchen and boiler installation programme for our tenants homes.

Over the next year, the Operational Board will be looking at:

- Awarding a new repairs and maintenance contract for our homes
- Understanding the impact of welfare reforms on our tenants and approving the policies that affect our tenants.

During the year Resident Board Members have been involved, working well with fellow Independent Board Members and Staff, to make major decisions around how we allocate our properties and how we will **deliver the Major Renewals Programme**.

All Board Members are committed to making sure that Castle Vale is a place where people want to live, so that we can all **be proud of the Vale**.



UPDATE

from the Scrutiny Panel



We have enjoyed consistently good attendance from our very active members and prompt responses to our questions and concerns from contractors and staff.

It's been another busy year for the Scrutiny Panel.

As local residents, taking a close look at CVCHA's services and being able to question staff and contractors, our role is to ensure that high standards are maintained and performance is monitored closely. This can mean some challenging conversations are had, but we think that the results speak for themselves!

So what have we achieved?

Holding staff to account

Regular meetings with staff enable the Panel to assess how policies and procedures will meet resident needs, and to make sure that the customer viewpoint is considered. The Panel review performance information and challenge staff to make changes needed to improve standards.

Challenging performance

We've challenged contractors to respond to customer comments and complaints about services, and to explain the actions they will take to improve services. The Panel has regular meetings with contractors to check that they are doing what they say they will do. We use performance information to check whether changes result in improved customer satisfaction.



PERFORMANCE



As you will see from this report, we have performed well, improving the performance we reported last year.

SUMMARY

LOOKING BACK

OUR PERFORMANCE RESULTS SHOW:

- 👁️ **Tenant satisfaction** has increased to **94%**
- 👁️ **Responding to customer** complaints on time has improved to **92%**
- 👁️ **Anti-social behaviour** complaints were responded to within timescale **100%** of the time.



LOOKING FORWARD

IN THE YEAR AHEAD WE ARE AIMING TO:

- 👁️ **Continue** to improve the number of telephone calls answered
- 👁️ **Improve** tenant satisfaction with the complaints process and learn from complaints
- 👁️ **Deliver** the gas repairs service with a new contractor.



HOW DID WE DO?

PERFORMANCE OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Customer Service

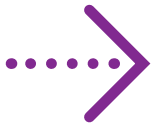
Providing excellent customer service and involving you in the decisions we make is very important to us. We are continuing our work to understand how and when you contact us, and how we can improve your experience when you need to get in touch.

The table below shows how well we have performed.

Customer Service	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend compared to last year	Met this year's target
Tenant satisfaction with CVCHA as a landlord	91%	92%	94%	↑	😊
Customer complaints responded to within 10 working days	75%	90%	92%	↑	😊
Tenant satisfaction with the complaints process	60%	83%	72%	↓	😐
Post responded to within 10 working days	89%	97%	98%	↑	😊
Telephone calls answered	93%	92%	96%	↑	😊
Tenant satisfaction in contacting CVCHA	92%	95%	97%	↑	😊



Overall, the results are very positive, with work still to be done around ensuring that our complaints process meets your expectations.



HOW DID WE DO?

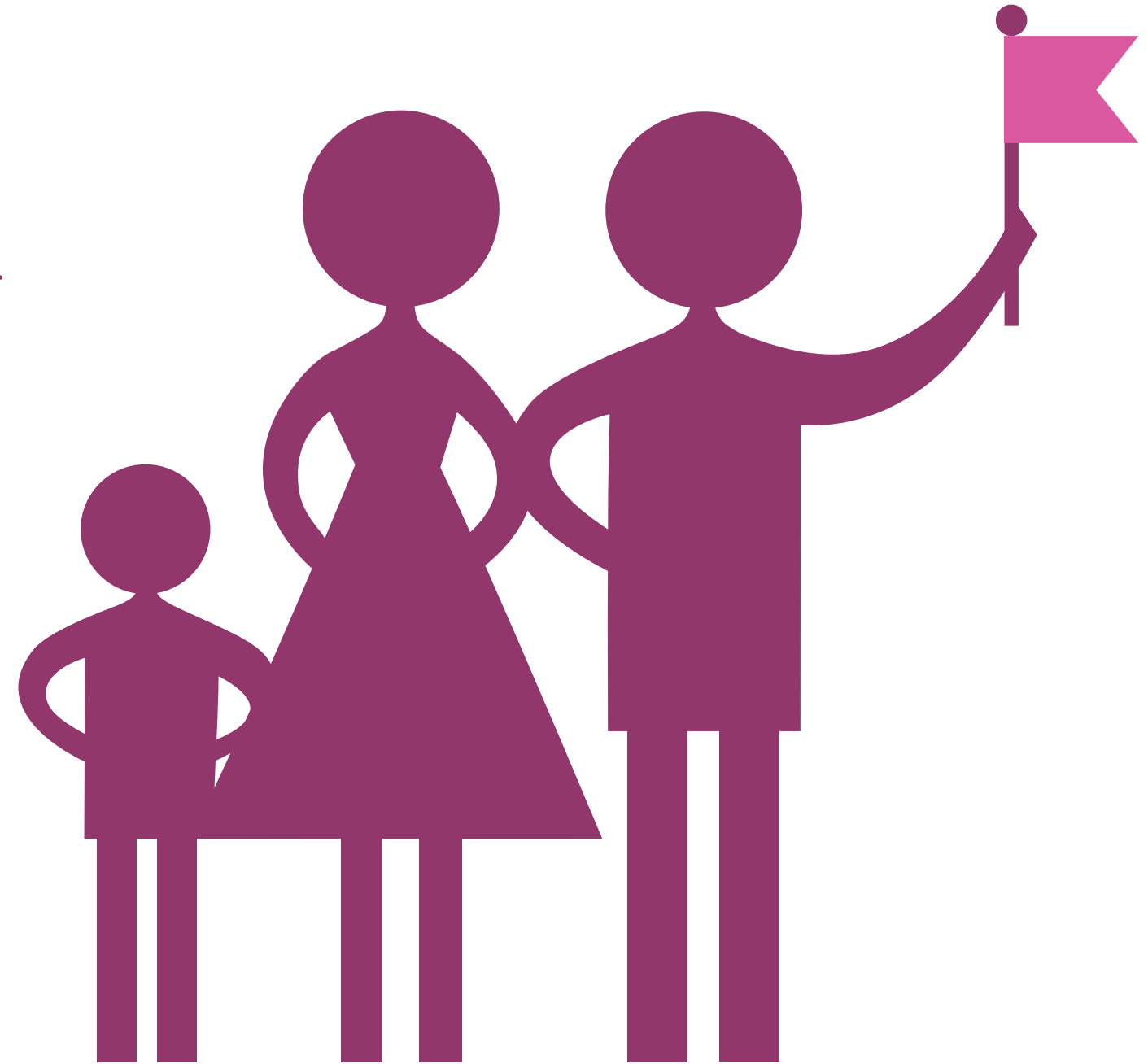
PERFORMANCE OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Involving You

If you want to get involved, we offer a range of opportunities so that you can choose the way which suits you best.

Over 1000 of you are registered on our “**Make a Difference**” database.

52 residents were involved in 2012/13 in supporting procurement processes for new contracts for cleaning, landscaping, boiler installation, kitchen supplier and kitchen installation.



HOW DID WE DO?

PERFORMANCE OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

General Responsive Repairs

This year, we completed more repairs on time, and more of you said you were satisfied with your repairs.

The average cost of a repair this year was **£101**. This was an increase on last year, where the average cost was **£90**.

General Responsive Repairs	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend compared to last year	Met this year's target
Repairs completed on time	97%	99%	99%	↑	😊
Tenant satisfaction with repairs	92%	94%	95%	↑	😊

95% of you said we got it right first time. This is an improvement on last year.



HOW DID WE DO?

PERFORMANCE OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Gas Safety

Your safety is our top priority. This year **99.8%** of properties had a valid gas safety certificate, our target is **100%**, and we will continuing working with tenants to ensure that we gain access to properties to complete the checks.

Gas Repairs and Servicing	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend compared to last year	Met this year's target
Tenant satisfaction with gas servicing	92%	96%	95%	↑	😊
Tenant satisfaction with gas repairs service	80%	92%	85%	↓	😐

We had some issues with our gas repairs service this year, and will be working with a new contractor to tackle these going forward.

How did we do on Adapting Your Home?

We offer an aids and adaptations service to all our tenants. This involves fitting things like handrails and walk-in showers to your homes.

During the year we received **100 requests** from you for this service.

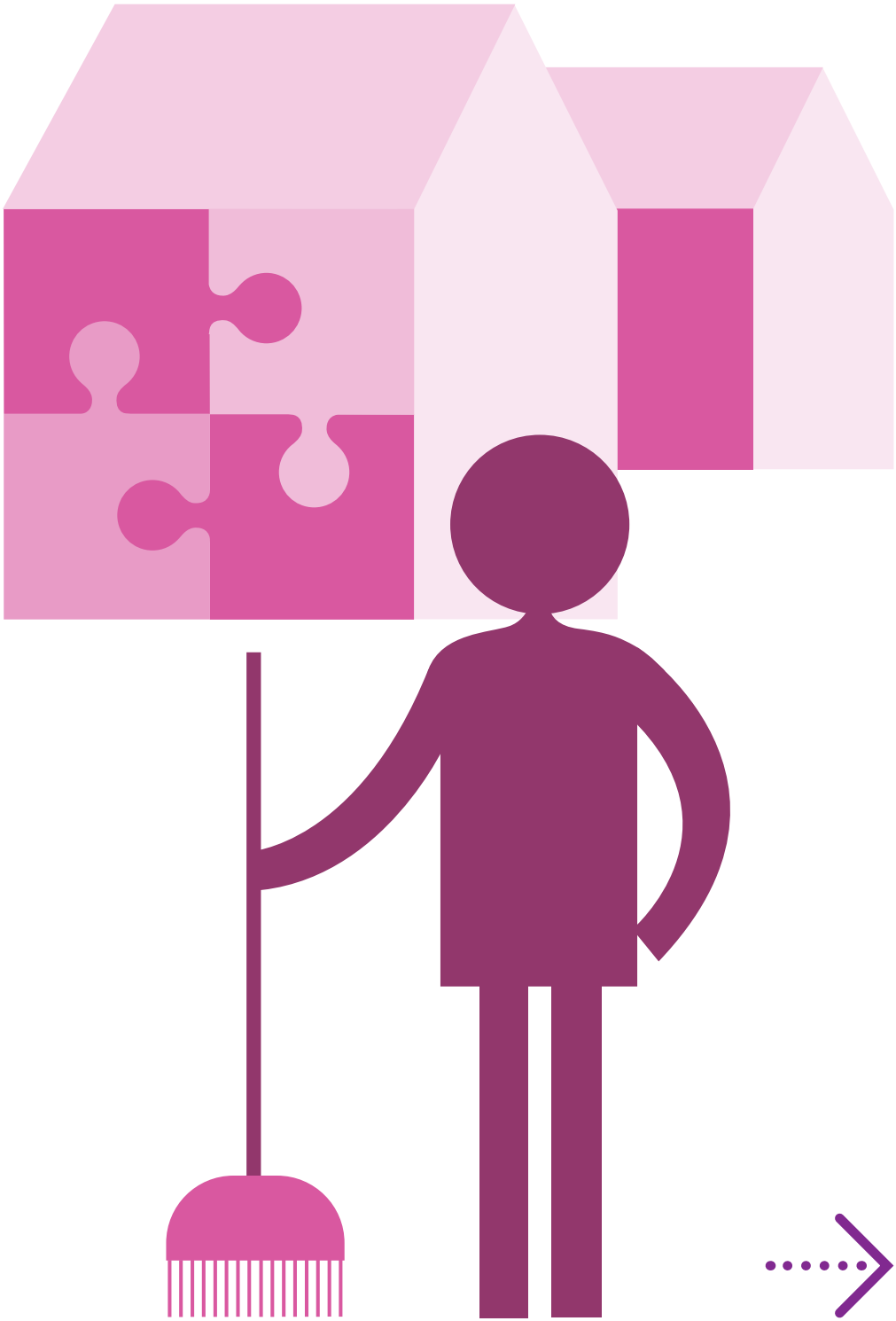


HOW DID WE DO?

PERFORMANCE OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Looking after Your Environment

Your Environment	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend compared to last year	Met this year's target
Bulk rubbish collections	100%	100%	99.8%	↓	😊
Fly tipping response	100%	100%	100%	↔	😊
Graffiti removal/clean up	100%	100%	100%	↔	😊
Tenant satisfaction with estate services	96%	95%	95%	↔	😊



HOW DID WE DO?

PERFORMANCE OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

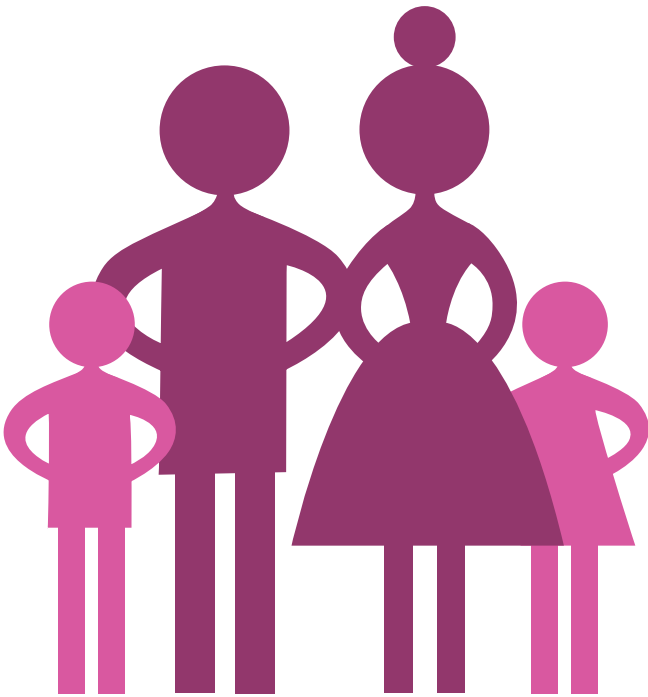
Dealing with Anti Social Behaviour

This year 99% of our closed anti-social behaviour cases had been resolved.

Anti Social Behaviour	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend compared to last year	Met this year's target
Anti-social behaviour complaints answered on time	97%	98%	100%	↑	😊
Tenant satisfaction with the outcome of their anti-social behaviour complaint	87%	83%	77%	↓	😐

How did our Community Warden Team do?

Community wardens spent **81%** of their time on the estate.
Customer satisfaction with the community wardens is at **92%**.



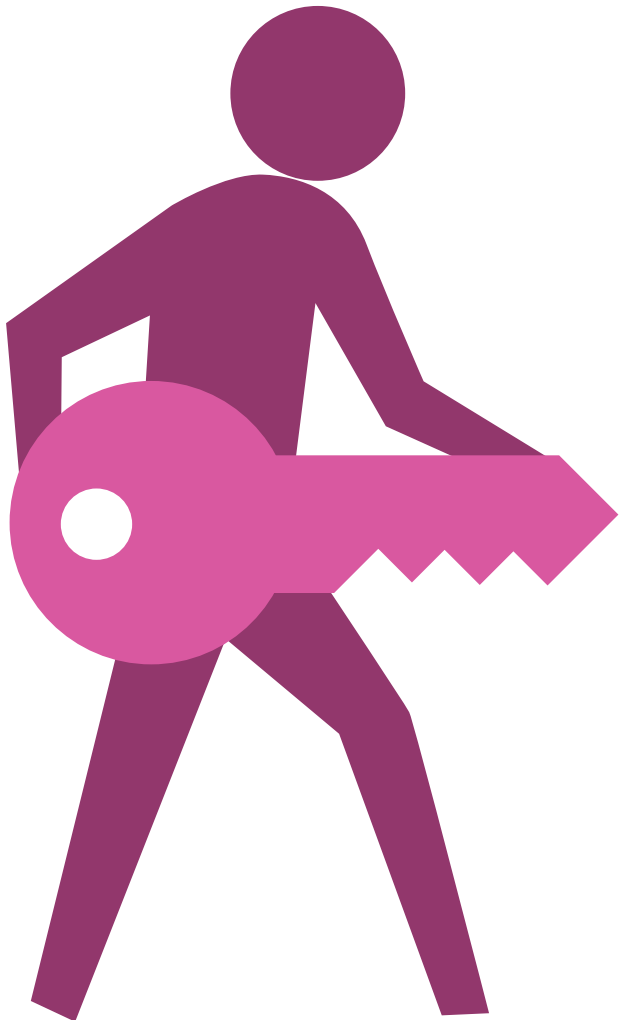
HOW DID WE DO?

PERFORMANCE OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Letting people their New Home

During the year we let over 110 empty homes. Around half of our empty homes must go to people nominated by the council. This year we let our empty homes in 14.9 days.

Your Tenancy Agreement	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend compared to last year	Met this year's target
Tenancy changes completed within 10 working days	100%	100%	100%	↔	😊
Mutual exchanges processed within 30 working days	100%	100%	100%	↔	😊
Home improvement requests processed within 10 working days	100%	100%	100%	↔	😊
Garden letters sent within 10 working days of walk and talk	100%	100%	100%	↔	😊



HOW DID WE DO?

PERFORMANCE OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Collecting your Rents & Service Charges

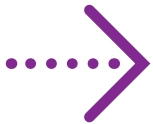
Your rent is calculated using a government formula that gives a target rent for the size of your home. CVCHA rents are slightly below the target rent. Our average rent is **£93** per week. But this varies depending on the size of your home.

Property size	Average weekly rent
1 bedroom	£71
2 bedroom	£80
3 bedroom	£90
4 bedroom	£99
5 bedroom	£112



Rent collection	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Trend compared to last year	Met this year's target
Rent collected within the year	103%	100%	99%	↓	☺
Current tenant arrears	3.0%	3.2%	3.0%	↑	☺

Overall customer satisfaction with the income team was at **94%** at the end of the year.



HOW DID WE DO?

PERFORMANCE OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Money matters

During the year we collected over **£11 million** in rent. This is what we spent it on:

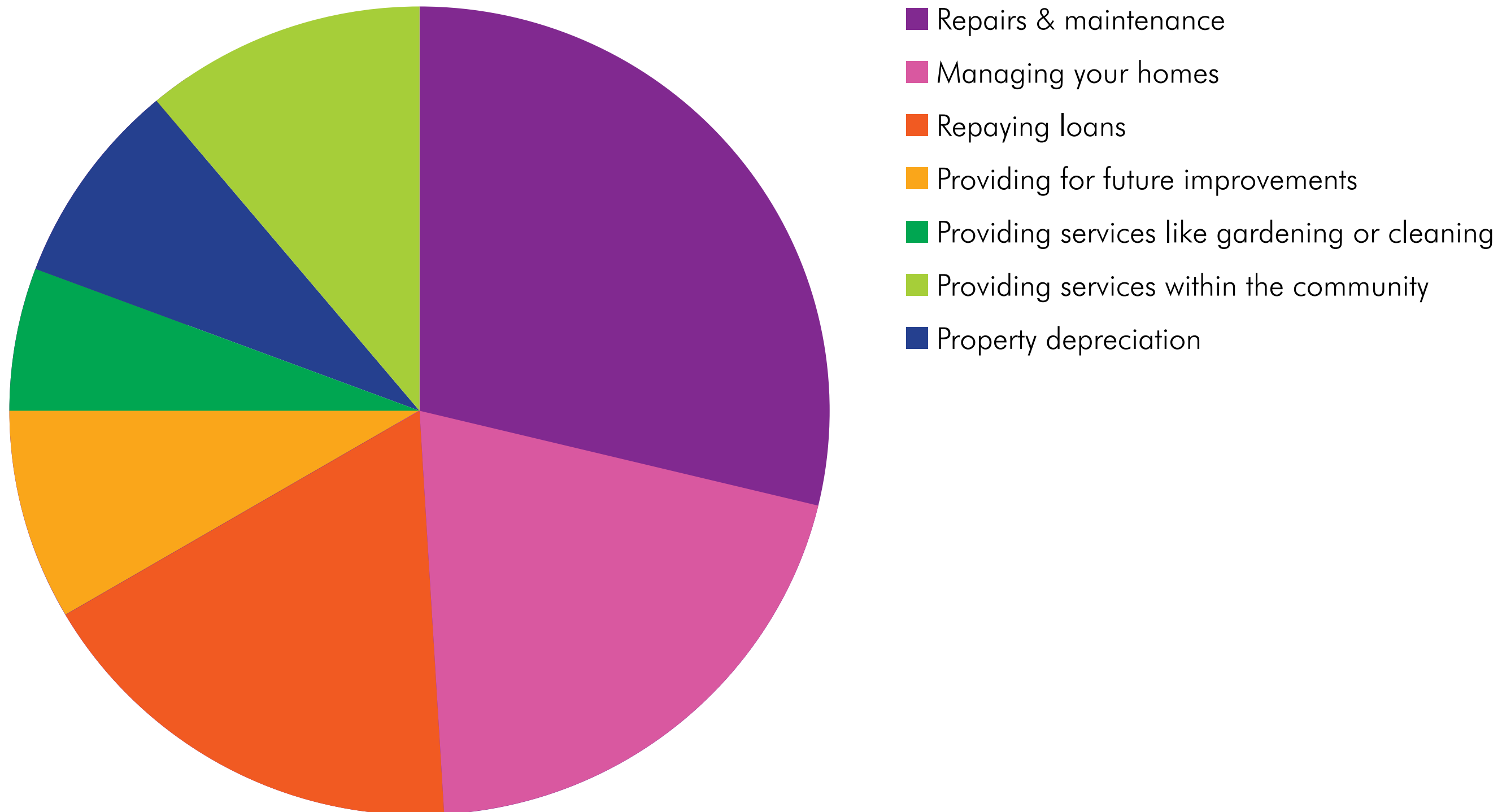
Outgoings	Total Spent
Repairs & maintenance	£3,302,362
Managing your homes	£1,911,588
Repaying loans	£1,801,628
Providing for future improvements	£2,124,338
Providing services like gardening or cleaning	£686,331
Providing services within the community	£1,097,102
Property depreciation	£752,221



HOW DID WE DO?

PERFORMANCE OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Outgoings



VALUE FOR MONEY



Value for money is about getting the most benefit out of the resources and effort we put in to achieve a cost efficient outcome.

Value for money has 3 elements that have to be balanced:



The cost that goes into providing a service, i.e. delivering a quality service at the right price.



Providing the right service which meets the requirements of our customers and regulatory bodies, while fulfilling our objectives, i.e. doing the right thing.



Delivering a high quality service with minimum effort and resources in a timely manner, i.e. getting it right first time.

Our value for money challenge is to achieve one of these three favourable outcomes:



- 1 Provide a better service at a lower cost, or
- 2 Provide a better service at the same cost, or
- 3 Provide the same service at a lower cost

We consider this in everything we do and use the performance information you see in this report together with more detailed information to help us make decisions to achieve this challenge.



HIGHLIGHTS of the year 2012/13



Community Games 2012
Gardening Competition



Castle Vale Water Festival
Older Persons Day



NEXT 12 MONTHS

WHAT ARE WE DOING

Services to focus on people and places.

Improve Estate Services efficiency.

Respond to welfare reform.

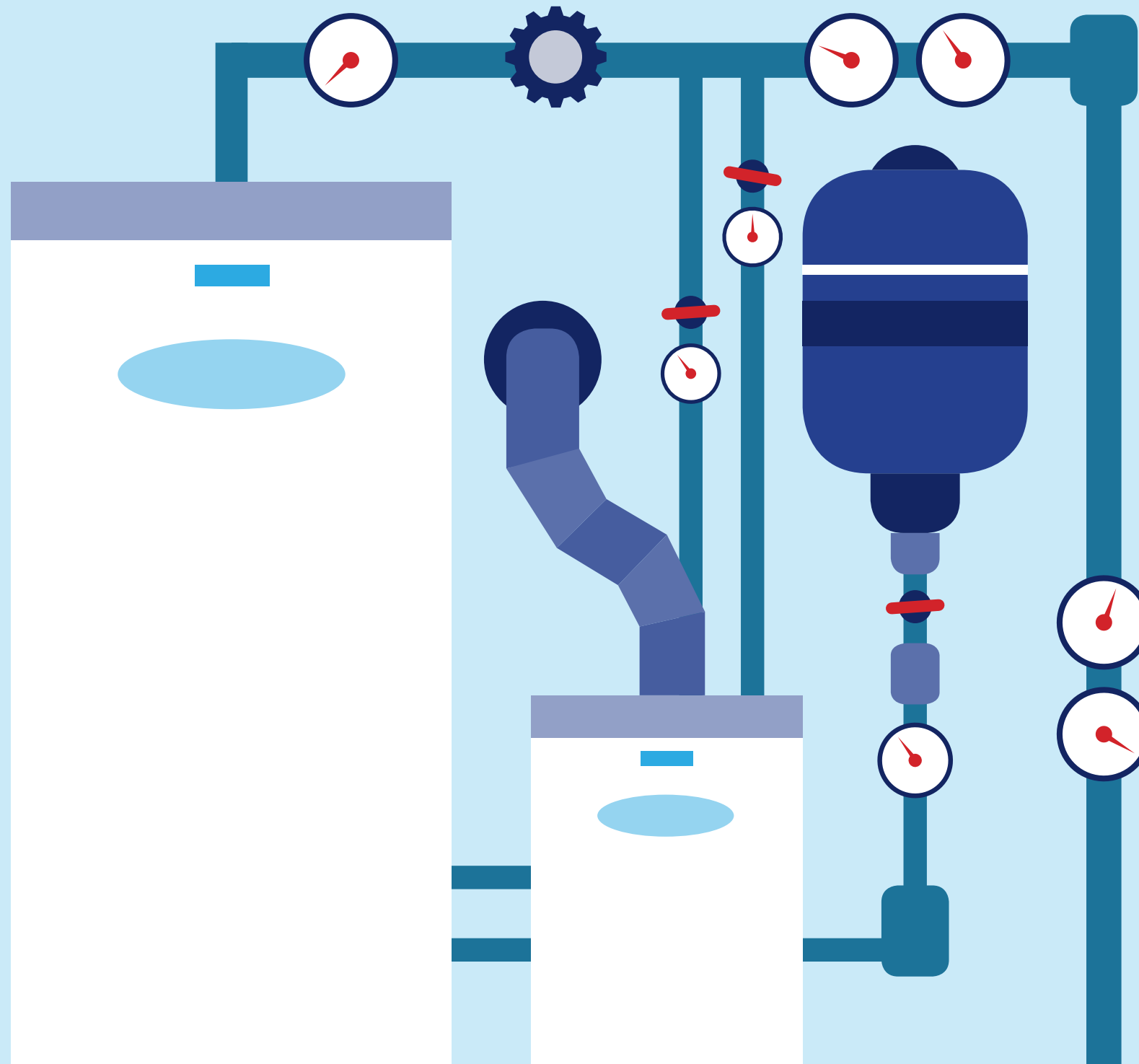
Explore the development of
a Crisis Fund for Castle Vale.



NEXT 12 MONTHS

WHAT ARE WE DOING

605 Boilers



CASTLE VALE COMMUNITY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

CUSTOMER HANDBOOK INSTALLATION OF NEW BOILERS AND HEATING CONTROLS



Information to help customers
of Castle Vale Community Housing Association
make informed choices

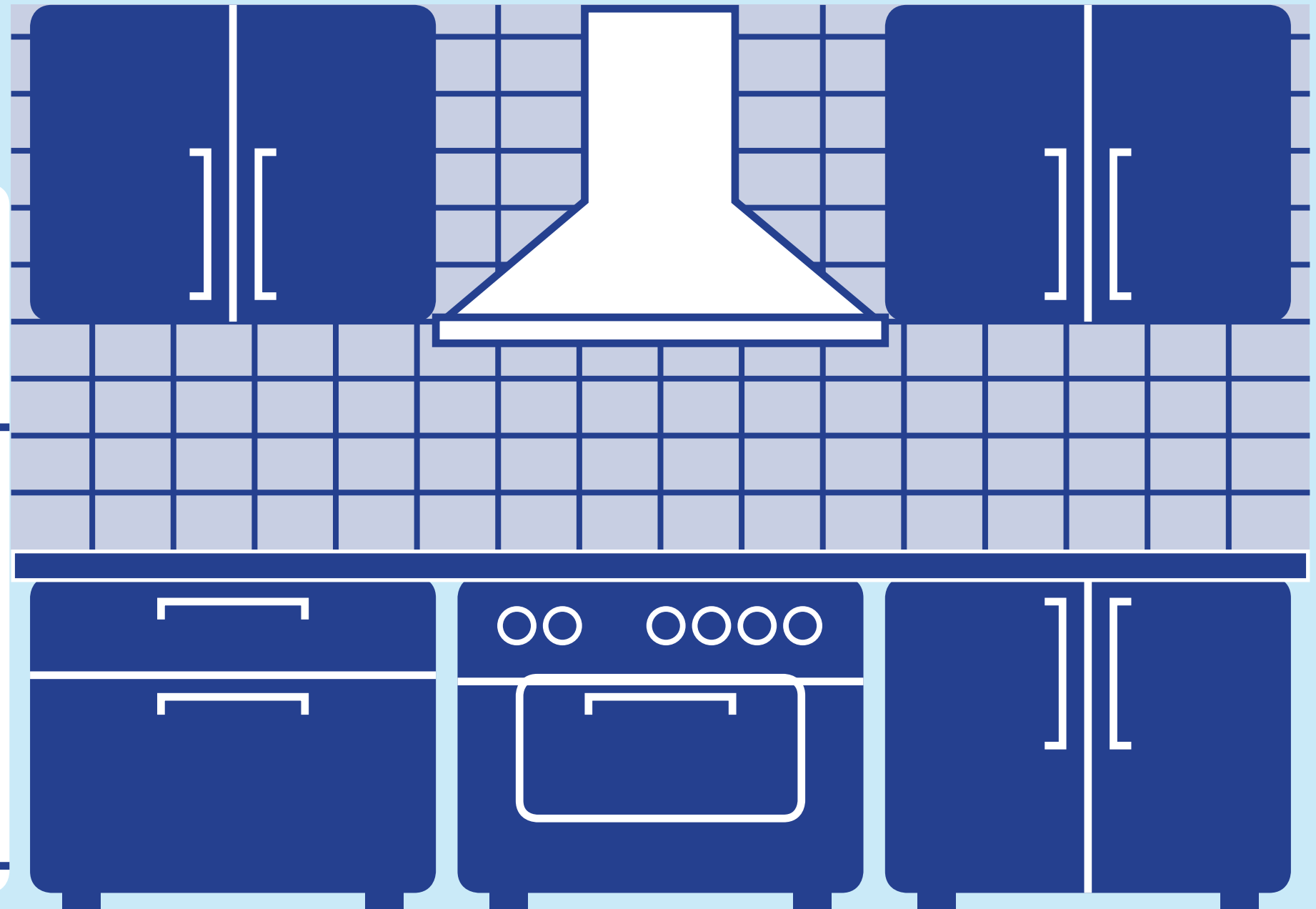
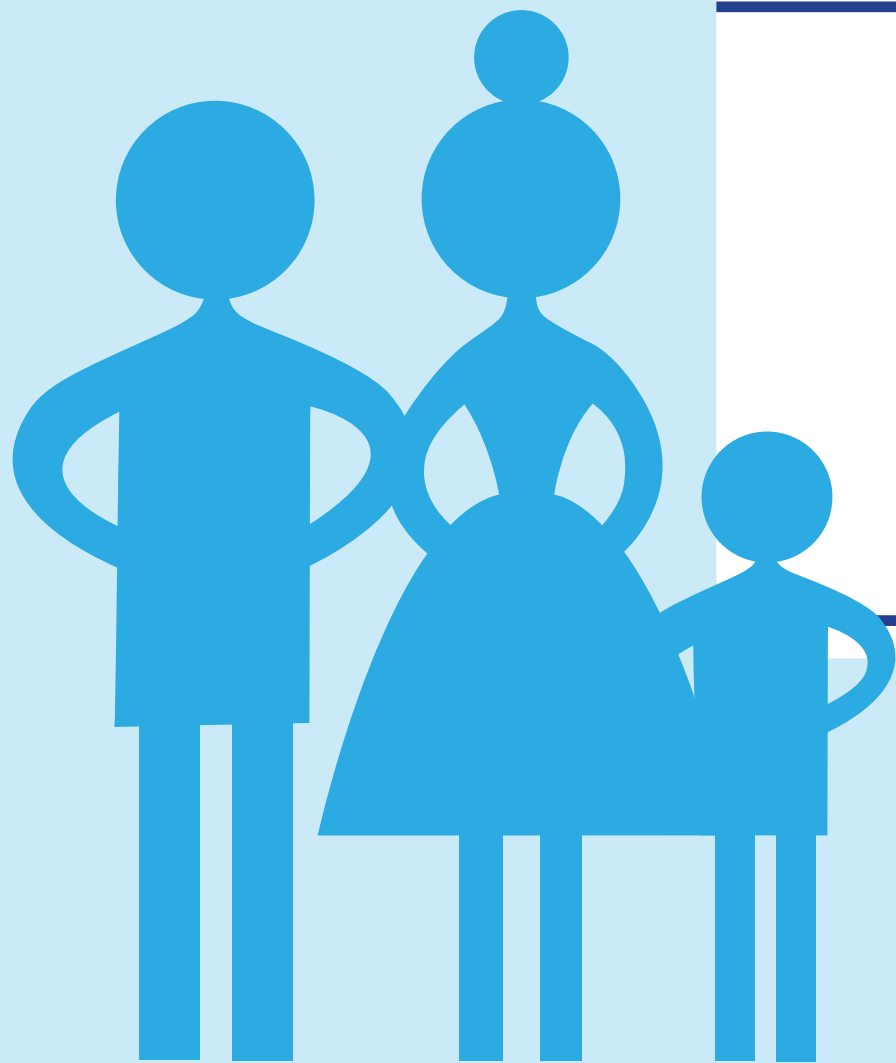
REF/200i Issued: February 2013



NEXT 12 MONTHS

WHAT ARE WE DOING

240 Kitchens



NEXT 12 MONTHS

WHAT ARE WE DOING

425 Properties

425 properties external and internal redecoration.

Garages decorated externally.



NEXT 12 MONTHS

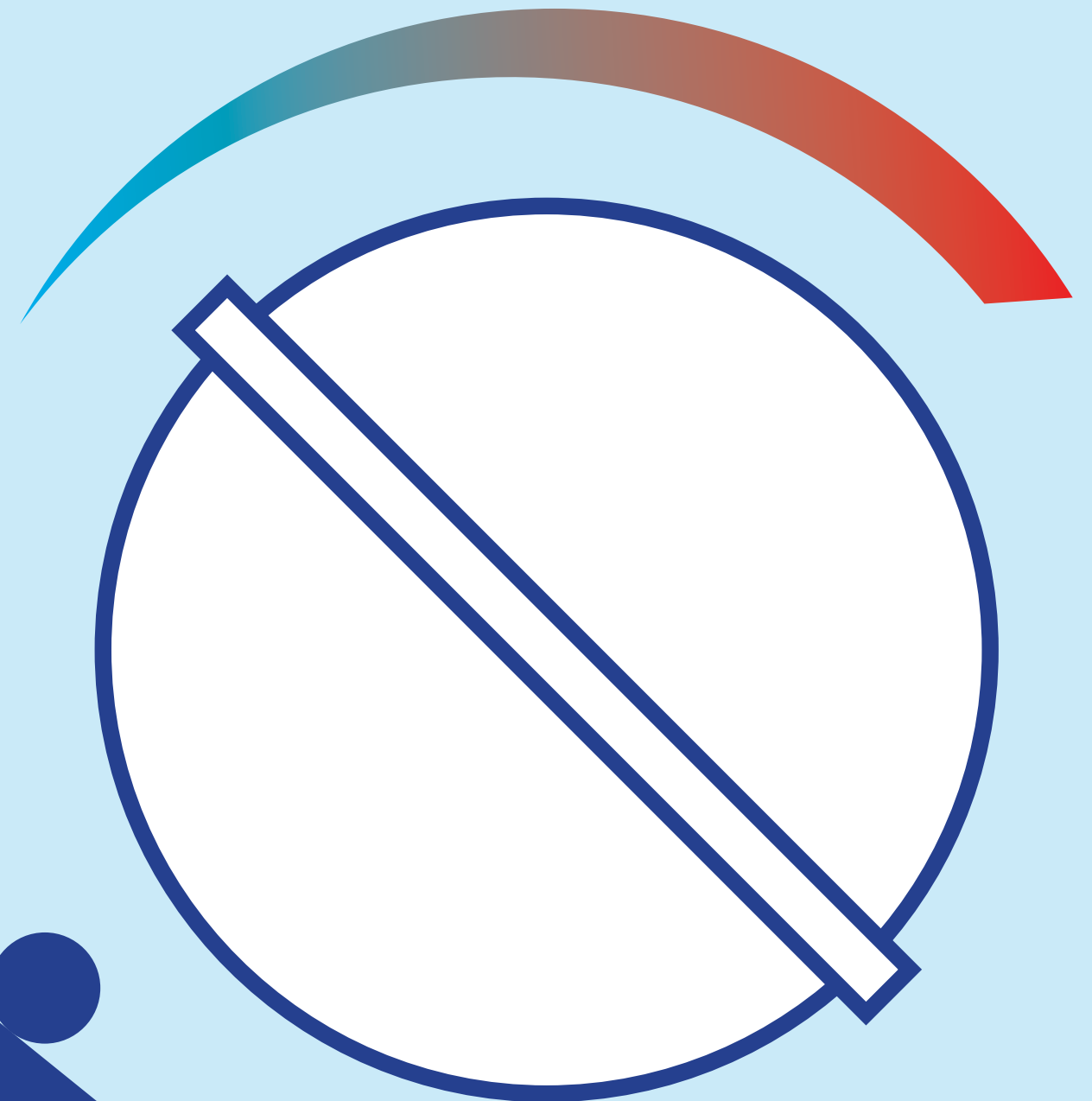
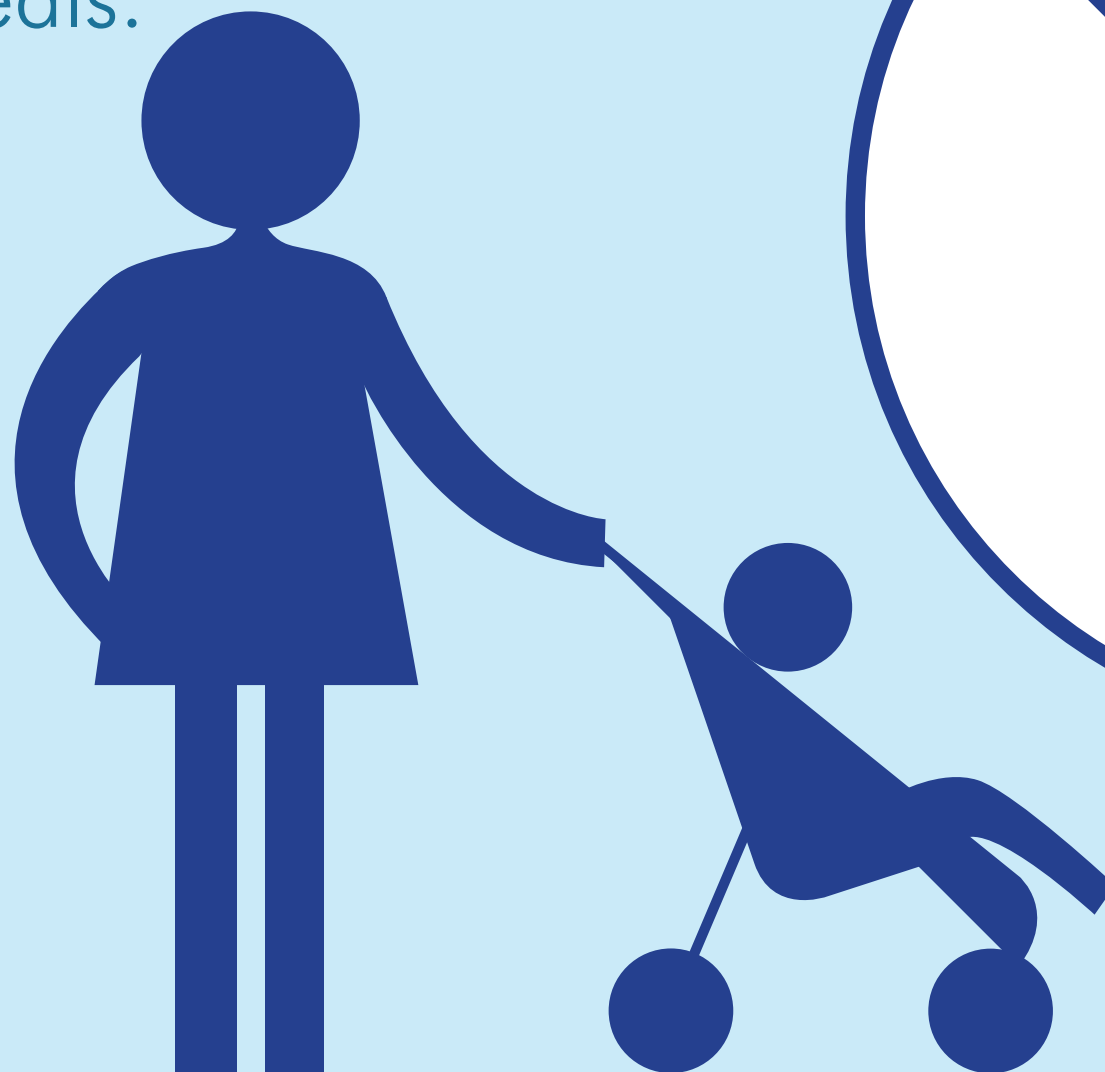
WHAT ARE WE DOING

Better deals

Replace inefficient (G rated) boilers.

Maximising grant funding for boiler replacements.

Procure customer utility deals.



NEXT 12 MONTHS

WHAT ARE WE DOING

Financial Inclusion

Ensure that customers know how Welfare Reform will impact on them.









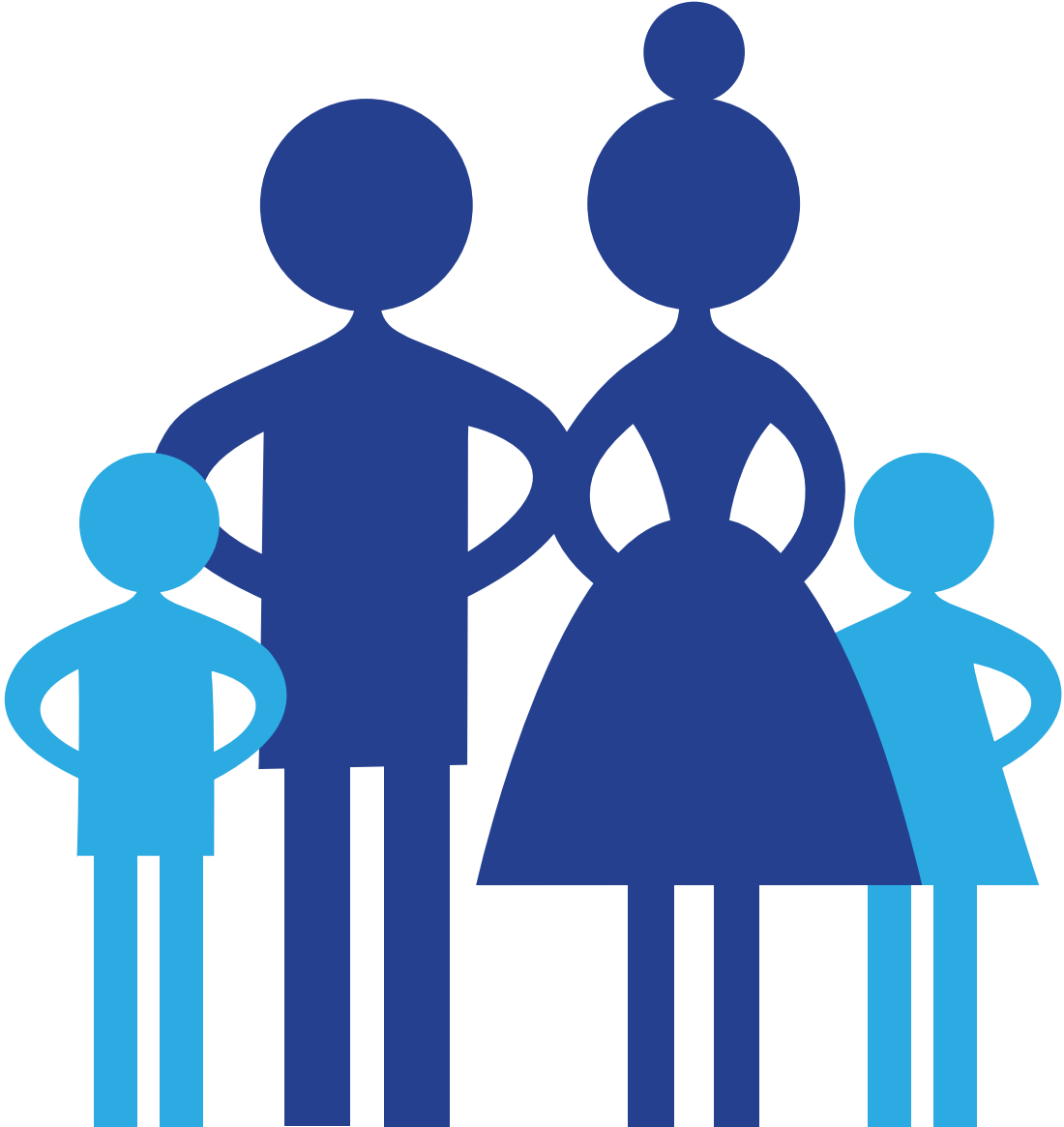
UPDATING YOU

OUR PROGRESS TO DATE

Modern, Well Maintained Homes

CVCHA is committed to a **£70 million**, 30 year, major renewals programme across our **2409** tenanted properties, in line with our Asset Management Strategy. Between **2013-2026**, the main elements of the programme include:

A		boiler replacement programme	
A		kitchen refurbishment programme	
A		bathroom refurbishment programme	



UPDATING YOU

OUR PROGRESS TO DATE

Modern, Well Maintained Homes

What you have told us is important to you about the programme?

So far, focus groups and consultations have given us an overview of your needs and opinions. We will continue to have these conversations with you throughout the renewal programme. You have identified the following requirements as “**non-negotiable**”, you want:



- A plan of how we are going to **deliver** the programme of renewals
- A realistic, achievable and fair **programme**
- Clear, personal, consistent and timely **communication** all the way through
- To have a **choice** when it comes to kitchen and bathroom components
- Us to understand and cater for your **individual needs**, around timetabling, arrangements for access and communicating with you
- A **nominated person** to speak to if you are unhappy and the process for making a complaint, giving a compliment or making a comment to be clear.

Failure to deliver these, you have said, would have the biggest impact on how happy you are with the overall programme, so we are committed to getting this right, first time, every time!



WHAT TO EXPECT

FROM US

When we renew your boiler, kitchen or bathroom.

START

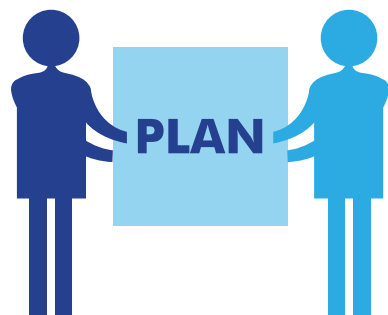
Before the work starts, you will know:

- When the programme of works will begin.
- The standard of service we are delivering.
- Who the contractors are.
- That residents have been involved all the way through the programme.



Before the work starts, you will have:

- Seen the range and quality of the components.
- Had a **“Personal Pre-intallation Visit”** to plan the work
- Made choices and agreed when the work will commence.
- Agreed how you will help by being accessible when we need you to be and removing objects that might hinder progress.
- Received a personal letter and a Major Renewals Handbook detailing the work to your home and who to contact.



During the work, we will:

- Update all of you on how the programme is progressing, in articles and features on our website and newsletters.
- Resolve any complaints you have with the works to your home, or the service you have received.
- Listen to your comments, complaints and compliments and ensure that we learn from what you are telling us.



After the works are completed, we will:

- Make sure you are happy with the work.
- Give you information about how to look after your new boiler, kitchen and bathroom.
- Ask you for your views on the programme of work.



FINISH



Information



For more information about the major renewals programme, visit our website www.cvcha.org.uk or look out for information in TyburnMail.





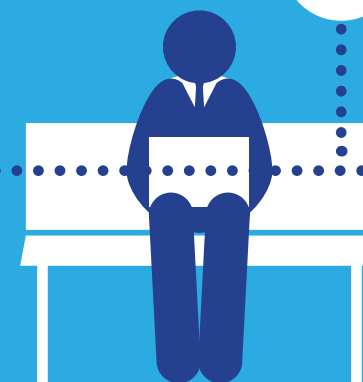
DIGITAL INCLUSION

programme



What is Digital Inclusion?

"A situation where everyone has ready access to, the skills to use, and an understanding of the benefits of digital technology (the internet)."





DIGITAL INCLUSION programme

Why is it important to Castle Vale?

Digital Exclusion is a social issue – more than 16 million adults in the UK are not computer users, and half of non users live in Social Housing. People with disabilities are more likely to be excluded.

Only 40% of people living on Castle Vale have internet access compared to a national average of 75%.



There
are
many

BENEFITS

to
internet
use

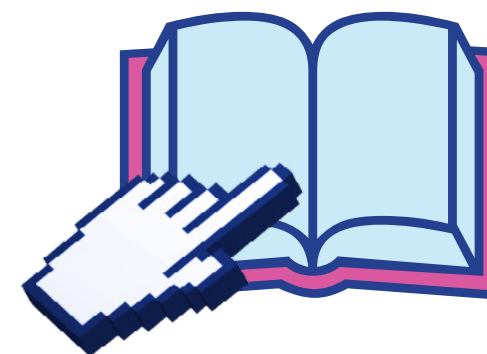
Cost Savings

Up to £600 a year for a first time internet user shopping online.



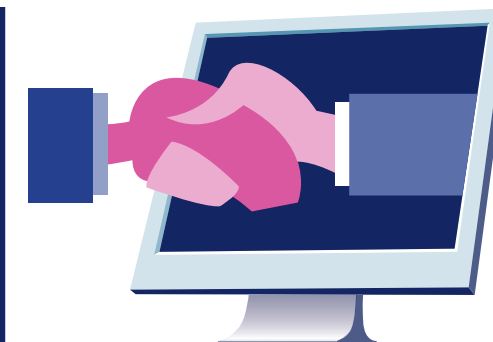
Educational Benefits

Increased attainment levels.



Employment

Increased employment and career opportunities.



Social

Connect with family, friends or form new relationships online.



Health benefits

Reduction in loneliness and depression, and access to Health Information.

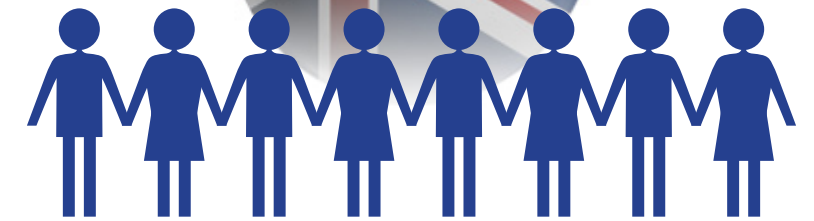


DIGITAL BY DEF@ULT



The **government** want the UK to become the

1st digital nation,



At a local government level, councils are moving towards **online services** as a replacement to face to face services and paper forms.

This means that many services, including **benefit applications**, are expected to be applied for, and maintained online.

BENEFITS

GRANTS

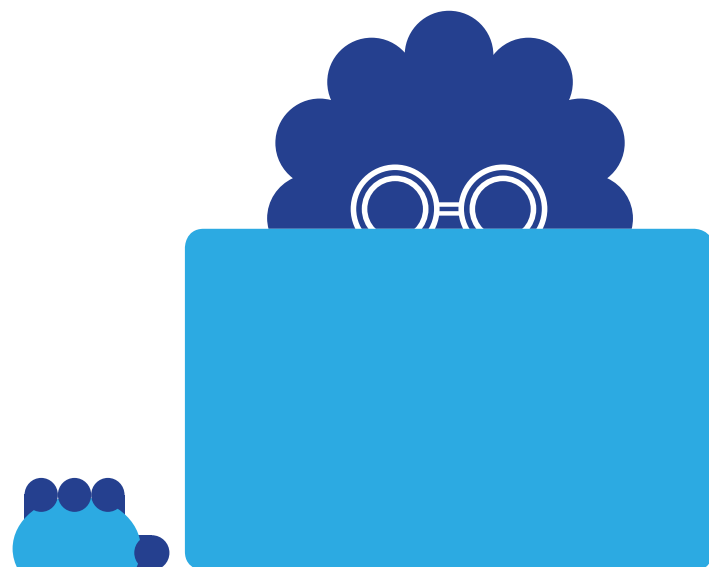
RENT

PLANNING

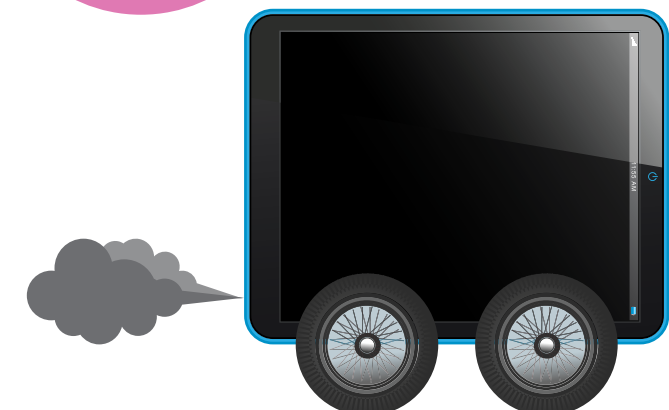
Increasingly, **employment opportunities** are advertised only online, and many employers expect applications to be made on the internet.

VACANCIES

COLLECTIONS



Schools increasingly expect pupils to be able to **access online learning** and homework services.



CVCHA want to ensure that **no-one is left behind** by the changes that are coming.



What are we going to do?

Bridging the digital divide is about providing **Access**, building **Skills**, and **Motivating** people to get online.

CVCHA are developing a Digital Hub, providing **Free Access** for residents to the internet, using PCs, laptops and tablets, with **training** and **support** from our **Digital Champion** and local volunteers.

The Hub will **develop links** with **training providers**, seek **funding** for development work to encourage digital inclusion and provide **opportunities** for peer learning, volunteer and outreach work across Castle Vale.

We will collect information on internet access and use to **tailor the support offered** and **develop** ongoing work on digital inclusion.



UPDATE

FROM THE GOVERNMENT

Do you rely on benefits? Will you be able to survive the Government's changes?

What is the Government planning to do?

The Government is changing most benefits across the United Kingdom through 'Welfare reform'. The Government's idea is to reduce the effects of the poverty trap so people in work are better off than people on benefit. The Government wants to change the way benefits are paid so it is the same as people in paid work, for example by **paying benefits monthly**.

So what are the big issues for tenants?

There are a number of changes being made by the Government but the following 4 are the most important:

1 Bedroom Tax

2 Universal Credit

3 Benefit Cap

4 More money if you are in work



UPDATE

FROM THE GOVERNMENT

Do you rely on benefits? Will you be able to survive the Government's changes?

1 Bedroom Tax

From April 2013, if you are under pensionable age and have more bedrooms than you need for you or your family your housing benefit will be cut by the Government. For one extra bedroom, the Government expects you to pay around £14.00 per week towards your rent.

For two extra bedrooms this will increase to around £25.00 per week.

See our leaflet on the Bedroom Tax for more information.

If you are worried about paying your rent, what can you do?

If you are affected by the bedroom tax, you are in a difficult position as the Government will cut your housing benefit but will not give you extra money in other benefits. Here are some options:

- **Find the money yourself** – Change your household budget to be able to find the rent contribution that the Government will no longer pay. If you need help with your finances visit Castle Vale TRA who can help you with money advice.
- **Move to a smaller home** – Talk to CVCHA about moving to a smaller home so you will not be affected by the bedroom tax.
- **Take in a lodger** – This may help you meet the shortfall but it might affect your other benefits. You will need the permission of CVCHA to take in a lodger, more details can be found on our website www.cvcha.org.uk or you can speak to the Community Housing Team at the High Street Office.
- **Look for employment** – There are a number of agencies in Castle Vale who can help you get into work. Contact Merlin Venture, Castle Vale Tenants and Residents Alliance or CVCRS at the Sanctuary.



UPDATE

FROM THE GOVERNMENT

Do you rely on benefits? Will you be able to survive the Government's changes?

2 Universal Credit – including housing benefit direct

From October 2013, if you make a new claim for benefits, or you have a change in your circumstances, you will change to 'Universal Credit'. When this happens, you will:

- Probably have to make your benefit claim on the internet.
- Your benefit will be paid into a bank account.
- You will be paid monthly in arrears.
- You will receive your housing benefit directly and will be expected to pay it to your landlord.

As time goes by the Government will move everyone onto Universal Credit, even if you do not make a new claim or have a change in circumstances. See our leaflet on Universal Credit for more information.

What do you need to do?

- Universal Credit will be a single benefit paid directly to your bank account, so if you haven't got an account you will need to open one.
- One of the important changes is to the 'housing costs' part of the Universal Credit, currently known as Housing Benefit. This means that Housing Benefit will no longer be paid to Castle Vale Community Housing Association, but will be paid straight to you monthly.
- We can offer lots of ways to pay, but the easiest way to pay by direct debit and we can help you set this up.

It's really important that your rent is paid on time.



UPDATE

FROM THE GOVERNMENT

Do you rely on benefits? Will you be able to survive the Government's changes?

3 Benefit Cap

From April 2013 the Government is saying that you cannot get more in benefits than the average earnings of working households. This means a single person cannot get more than £350 per week and a couple or family cannot get more than £500 per week. This includes housing benefit.

4 More money if you are in work

The Government is changing the amount of benefit you can still claim if you are in work and on a low income. The aim is to make sure people in work are better off than people not in work.

To find out further information go to the website www.turn2us.org.uk



FIND OUT MORE

SPECIFIC TO YOUR NEEDS

- **CVCHA** – Call into the High Street Office, telephone us on 0121 748 8100 or visit the website at www.cvcha.org.uk. We will be happy to provide you with **help and advice** about paying your rent, moving home or any other housing related question you may have.
- **Birmingham City Council** – Call into your local Neighbourhood Office, telephone on 0121 303 1111 or look on the web at www.birmingham.gov.uk. You will be able to get advice about Housing benefit.
- **Castle Vale Tenants and Residents Alliance** – Call into the office at Spitfire House on the High Street or telephone on 0121 747 5932. You will be able to get advice about benefits, managing your money and how to get a job or training opportunities.
- **CVCRS at The Sanctuary** – Call in at The Sanctuary or telephone 0121 748 8111. The team can provide advice about training, getting a job, family support and other support services.
- **Merlin Venture** – Telephone 0121 384 5614 or visit the website at www.merlinventure.com. You will be able to get advice about training, getting a job or access to Nurseries.
- **Turn to Us: Benefits checker** – www.turn2us.org.uk. This website will give you information about the benefits you may be entitled to.
- **Household cap helpline** – Telephone 0845 605 7064. The helpline will provide information about the Benefit cap.



FEEDBACK

If you have any queries or comments about this Annual Report, please contact us on **0121 748 8100** or by email at: **contactus@cvcha.org.uk**.

You can keep up to date on news from CVCHA throughout the year on our website **www.cvcha.org.uk**, our Facebook page **www.facebook.com/cvcha** and in the **Tyburn Mail**.