

# Annual tenant report 2017/18



*Putting the  
community at  
the heart of  
what we do*

# Who are we and what do we do?

Castle Vale Community Housing Association (CVCHA) was set up in 1997, initially to develop and manage new homes on the Castle Vale estate after residents voted to create a Housing Action Trust post regeneration. In 2015 a group structure was created with Castle Vale Community Housing (CVCH) at the heart of the organisation with by far the largest housing stock of The Pioneer Group. CVCH has strong values and works along side partners within Castle Vale to ensure we deliver on our strategic goals within the community.

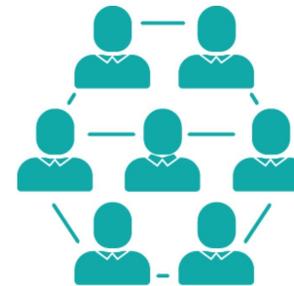
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Provide great homes and excellent services



Help people to reach their true potential



Empower communities and identify community driven



Build a strong and value driven organisation



Simon Wilson, CEO, The Pioneer Group

*"As of the 25th May 2018 I was incredibly privileged to start my role as Chief Executive of The Pioneer Group. The Group is an alliance of organisations all about housing, people and communities. Castle Vale is and will remain for the foreseeable future our largest community. Although the work we do through the Group is now stretching beyond the Vale and into other communities we remain committed to keeping the Vale an attractive, safe and pleasant place to live and work. We have some big challenges as an organisation, some born out of national pressures such as welfare reform, the well-publicised shortage of affordable housing and the ongoing pressure of two more years of rent cuts for our tenants and the impact that has on our income and ability to continue to invest in services that keep the Vale great. However I have a real determination of not leaving anyone behind and will continue to ensure we deliver community driven solutions with strong values and led by the voices of our tenants and the residents of the Vale and partners we work with. This community is incredibly resilient and should be proud of what it achieves by pulling together and working in partnership."*

# CVCH board and scrutiny



The past year has seen much change with our housing association. The staff and Board members have been adjusting to the new board structure, at the same time as managing changes at senior management level. I am delighted to report that we now have recruited two excellent new members to senior posts, and the successful candidate for Chief Executive Officer came from within the existing management team.

One thing that hasn't changed though is CVCH's commitment to its many customers. It has been a difficult year managing changes imposed on us by government and I am very impressed that the organisation has managed this with little effect on our many customer.

There are some vacancies on the CVCH Board for an independent member and resident. We are busy at the moment recruiting, and am confident that we will find suitable candidates to fill these vitally important rolls.

The CVCH Boards' biggest strength is that residents form a majority on this Board, which is right at the heart of the business. I am proud to be the chair of this board, and as a resident group we have achieved much in this past year. Although it is my intention to remain on the board into the future, my term as chair is near its end, so this will be my last report to you. It has been a privilege and pleasure, and I've met so many lovely and interesting people, and I thank everybody for their support and encouragement that I have enjoyed along the way.

Ken Simms—CVCH Board Chair



**Introducing Claudette  
Chair of CVCH  
Scrutiny panel**

Do you want to be involved in shaping the organisation and what services we offer to our tenants and how?

We are always looking for people within this community to be part of both our governance structure and to be involved with important decisions we make as an organisation.

Whether this be part of our board, a member of our scrutiny panel or even letting us know we can check in with you now and again to see how things are going, please get in touch.

If you are interested and would like more information, please contact Becki Winkless on 07956 007 696

## CVCH board tenant representatives

As a community driven organisation we are proud to have retained a resident/tenant majority board with the chair of our board being a resident of Castle Vale. Our CVCH board is embedded in everything we do from policy to complaints and we are committed to retain this majority. The voice of the customer is what keeps us delivering to our strategic goals and in a way in which is aligned to our strong organisational values. Our independent board scrutinise and approve our policies, procedures and our performance to ensure that we deliver according to our service standards.



# The pledge

Castle Vale Community Housing made a pledge in 2015 to put back in to the community an additional £500k per year for the next 10 years which would pay for additional services. We understand that being a landlord in a community such as Castle Vale should be so much more than maintaining homes and managing tenancies but ensuring the community itself is a thriving place where people want to live.

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12% of the contacts which are received by our Customer 1st Team are done face to face via our reception. We made a commitment that we would retain a community based service in which allows our tenants, prospective tenants and residents of Castle Vale to see us face to face. We have a community notice board in order to display information on local events and local businesses. We offer a family friendly environment to ensure everyone feels welcome.



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- Pledge 1 – Commit
- Pledge 2 – Responsive
- Pledge 3 – 'On tap'
- Pledge 4 – Feeling Safe
- Pledge 5 – Green, clean and tidy
- Pledge 6 – Help for the vulnerable
- Pledge 7 – Providing Support
- Pledge 8 – Meeting together and having fun
- Pledge 9 – Pledge Pot
- Pledge 10 – Connected
- Pledge 11 – In the know



The contribution received from CV Pledge has enabled Compass Support to provide the following to residents of Castle Vale during the year:

- ◆ **Open Access Job Club** – delivered twice per week from The Sanctuary
- ◆ **Workshops** – Weekly C.V workshops delivered from Topcliffe, with additional sessions delivered where needed
- ◆ **Get Healthy, Get Working** – We have run the programme four times during the year
- ◆ **Careers IAG delivery in Greenwood Academy** – Delivery of quality independent Careers advice for 3 days per week (term-time only)
- ◆ Open Access Youth Club
- ◆ **Summer Programme** and **sports-based sessions** for young people within Castle Vale
- ◆ Targeted **Youth Mentoring** Service
- ◆ A six month **'Think family'** family support programme for a wide range of needs such as; school attendance/behaviour, emotional or physical health and wellbeing, bereavement and domestic violence
- ◆ Apprenticeship programme

## The pledge



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## Get online!

The Digital hub based at the Sanctuary gives Castle Vale residents access to computers and support to get online. In 2017/18 the hub saw 860 visits. 87 people went through the 'Learn my way' programme and we have 4 volunteer digital cham-

CVCH contract for there to be free impartial advice for residents of Castle Vale. Spitfire Services have the expertise in order to support the community with a wide range of subjects.

Spitfire services have been providing a service on behalf of CVCH such as;

- ◆ Benefit advice and benefit health checks
- ◆ Universal Credit support
- ◆ Crisis support with the use of the crisis fund
- ◆ Debt advice

Last year alone there were 172 households are benefited positively from this service.



spitfire  
services

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One successful applications for 'pledge pot' money came from Castle Vale Community Environmental Trust. CVCET took a group of 23 children on an outdoor residential trip to experience nature walks, discover new habitats, took part in challenges such as archery and slack line and not forgetting cooking marshmallows and singing round a camp fire at night. What an adventure!

On the 7<sup>th</sup> August 2017 we embarked on our three month service improvement programme, increasing resources and **providing an improvement plan** to address all areas on Castle Vale with regards to environmental challenges A new plan was created to ensure timely and quality services are provided through a scheduled and smarter approach to our work programme under a new Estates Services theme "**Pride in our Estates**". The three month plan was delivered successfully, and there was an overall improvement in the appearance of the estate. The cost to deliver this three month improvement plan was supported by 'The pledge'. (more on page 6)



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## Safety in Castle Vale

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There are **75** cameras operating throughout the estate in various locations. The service operates **365 days a year, 24 hours a day**, including Bank Holidays – it is a responsive service.

There were almost **1,200** incidents recorded by CCTV from April 2017 to March 2018.

CCTV also acts as a deterrent with the knowledge that there is extensive coverage of Castle Vale as well as provides reassurance to residents, local businesses and service providers.

CVCH have maintained a close partnership with West Midlands Police and will continue to develop this in order to achieve tangible outcomes with the aim to reduce ASB and crime in Castle



# Estate Services and environment

In 2017 the Estate Services team embarked on an ambitious 3 months Service Improvement Plan to improve the appearance of the estate. It was clear in the annual survey result in 2016 that our customers were identifying areas in which needed improvement. We listened to our customers our project "Pride in our estates" commenced. Within this project we had key themes,

- **Be more viable on the estate and engage positively with customers and the community**
- **Improve the appearance of Castle Vale and reduce any risk associated with environmental issues**
- **Continue to build strong partnerships across internal and external teams who deliver services on Castle Vale**

In 2017 we removed around **150 tonne** of bulk waste and fly tipping per last year.

On top of this the Estate Services team collected around **5000 black bags** of litter from the streets of Castle Vale last year!!



Before



After

## What next!

2018 saw the procurement of our new grounds maintenance and cleaning contracts.

We are really excited to now be working with Greenfingers Landscape Ltd and Ideal Cleaning Services Ltd.

Both organisations share our strong customer focussed values and we will work in partnership to ensure that these services are delivered on land and property owned by CVCH.

If you have any comments or feedback with regards to either of these contractors please contact our friendly Customer 1st team on 0121 748 8100 or by email on [contactus@cvch.org.uk](mailto:contactus@cvch.org.uk)

# Repairs, maintenance and voids

As of January 5th 2018, The Pioneer Group went into contract with L Daniels Property Maintenance Services Limited for the provision of responsive and voids maintenance services.

## Who are L Daniels?

L Daniels are small to medium size building, maintenance and reactive repairs business based in Kings Heath. The company is privately owned and has been providing services throughout the West Midlands for more than forty years.

All L Daniel's operatives are security checked and trained to NVQ Level 2 in their respective trades.

As part of the contract, LDaniels have committed to providing a dedicated team for the provision of services to CVCH including the position of a dedicated Contracts Manager. This is to ensure the service provided to our tenants is of what is expected within our service standards (<https://www.cvch.org.uk/your-cvch/your-service-agreement/>)

L Daniels have displayed flexibility and dedication during contract talks and the mobilisation of the new contract and we are excited about making more improvements as CVCH and L Daniels continue to work together.

## Thank you!

We would also like to thank you, our tenants for your patience during the first 6 months of this contract. Although we did make every effort to minimise any issue during the transition between Wates and L Daniels and aim for a smooth mobilisation, we understand there have been some challenges. Please be reassured that CVCH is working along side L Daniels and our tenants to ensure that we and L Daniel provide a great service going forward into the second half of 2018/19.

## Asset Management Performance 2017/18

**100%** Gas safety compliance certificates in date

**97%** of responsive repairs completed on time

**84%** Responsive repairs completed at 1st visit



**93%** satisfied with their most recent repair



**94%** satisfaction with condition of new home

## *Major works and Planned maintenance*

CVCH continues to deliver on its kitchen replacement programme and work is being undertaken to produce a 30 year plan for major works across our stock. We will continue to invest in our homes in 2019 onwards.

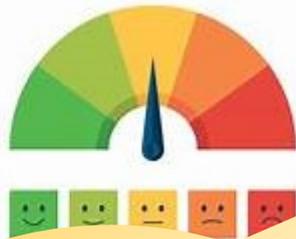
**287 kitchens  
replaced 2017/18**

**97% satisfaction  
with the kitchen  
replacement**



# Your say!

It is important to us that our tenants can have a say on our services and feedback on the experiences they have had when dealing with us or one of our contractors. When we receive feedback, regardless of where it is positive or something in which we need to improve on, this is always taken seriously. The feedback in which we receive helps us shape our services to ensure that we are delivering our commitment to the community and understand those in which we serve.



**1229** surveys completed

In 2017/18 we received **1390** official pieces of feedback from our customers. This is broken up into the following:

**49** compliments

■ Upheld  
■ Not upheld  
■ Cancelled by Customer  
■ Partially upheld



**112** official complaints

**97%** of respondents said they were satisfied with our lettings process!

**86.9%** were satisfied are you that your rent provides value for money?

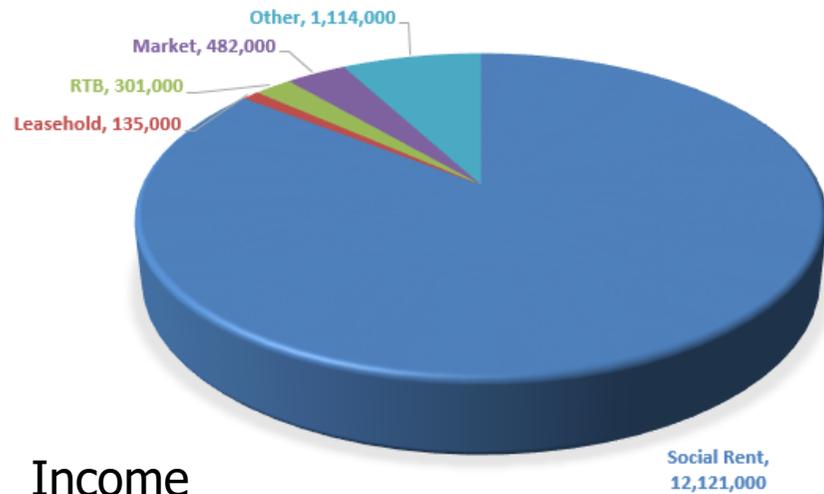
**90.6%** of respondents said they feel safe in the day and **78%** feel safe at night

We were <b>community</b> and <b>customer</b> focused
We delivered <b>quality</b> and achieve value for money
We acted with <b>integrity</b> and take personal responsibility
We were <b>innovative</b> , making good things happen
We treated people with <b>dignity</b> and <b>respect</b>

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to let us know what we are doing well and what we need to do improve on!

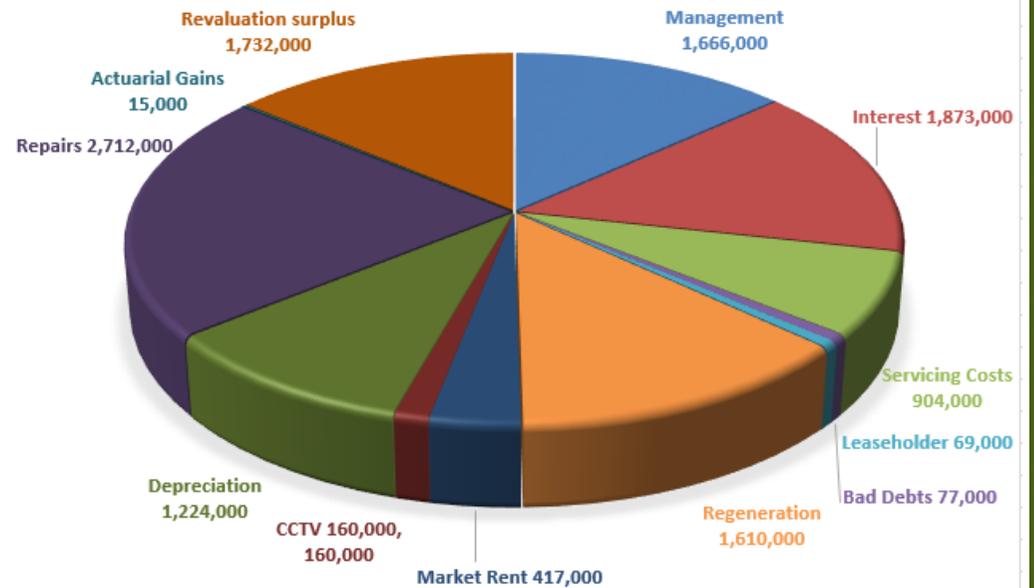
# Income and spending The Pioneer Group

Castle Vale Community Housing is part of a group structure The Pioneer Group. CVCH will continue to be at the heart of the group as Castle Vale Community Housing has by far the largest stock within the group. Below is the groups income and spending.



Income

## Spending



## *Legal Status of structure*

**The Pioneer Group** – is a Registered Provider registered with the Homes and Communities Agency. It is an exempt charity. It owns all of the housing assets of the group and holds all loans and other liabilities.

**CVCH** – is a trading name of the Pioneer Group to manage the social housing assets owned in Castle Vale. The work is overseen by an operational committee of the Group called Castle Vale Community Housing Board. It has a resident majority on the this Board and delegated authority to ensure services are delivered to Castle Vale residents.

**Pioneer Places** – is a trading name of the Pioneer Group for market rented homes, shared ownership and sales of the Groups Assets.

**SGOHT** – is a subsidiary of the Pioneer Group. It is a Community Interest Company.

**Compass Support** – is a subsidiary of the Pioneer Group.

**Merlin Venture** – is a subsidiary of the Pioneer Group.



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