



Annual Tenant Report

2020-2021

Who are CVCH?

Castle Vale Community Housing (CVCH) is a community-led organisation where the customer and community is at the heart of everything we do. We manage over 2,400 properties within our social rented portfolio which include a wide range of stock from general needs to supported schemes and our policies are created with the support of tenants, residents and partner organisations. We have a clear vision and strong values which are at the heart of everything we do.



Our Values:

#COMMUNITY

- > Consistently do our best for our tenants and residents
- > Listen to what matters most to our tenants and communities and act on what we hear
- > Be ambitious for ourselves and for the people in our communities



#RESPECT

- > Take organisational and personal responsibility
- > Be helpful and kind
- > Embrace and celebrate diversity



#EMPOWER

- > Invest in colleagues and people to be the best they can be
- > Build trust by being humble and honest
- > Create confidence and capacity in our communities



#BETTERTOGETHER

- > Find the best most inclusive way to make things better
- > Make the most of our resources to make positive impact and think carefully about every penny we spend
- > Work smart/hard and enjoy what we do





Introduction from CEO

Last year was, of course, a year like no other as the COVID-19 pandemic turned the world upside down from March 2020. As we look back on that year, I am incredibly proud of the role we played, not just as CVCH supporting our tenants, but also as The Pioneer Group, supporting wider communities, right across our core neighbourhoods.

Working with our partners we delivered a comprehensive Community Offer for the residents of Castle Vale. For full details, see pages 8-9.

Alongside this, we did our best to maintain our day-to-day services. At times this was incredibly challenging, and there were points in the year where we were only able to provide emergency repairs, but we always did our best to meet individual needs while being flexible and responsive. It was a huge regret that our reception service was closed for most of the year, but staff continued to work hard from their own homes. At times technology presented challenges, including some difficulties in keeping our phone service afloat, but the dedication of staff meant that we were still responsive, and 93% continued to report that we were 'easy to deal with' in our Annual Tenant Survey.

We have continued to listen to your feedback and have commissioned some in-depth research about tenants and residents experiences of living on Castle Vale. This told us that people want to hear more from us and that we need to get better at communicating the work we are doing. We will be taking this on board and looking at how we get better at that in the future.

Meet CVCH Board

Our Board Members 2020/21

- Sue Spicer
- David Pipe
- Cliff Horrocks
- Fern Watson
- John Whitwam
- Gary Dulson
- Nicolette Browne-Marke



A message from Chair of CVCH Board, Sue Spicer

Despite all challenges the COVID-19 pandemic presented, we succeeded in keeping services afloat and introducing a number of changes and improvements during the course of the year.

In April 2020, just as we entered into the first 'lockdown', we successfully launched our new repairs contract in partnership with The Wrekin Housing Group. Initially we were able to offer emergency repairs only, but the service gradually remobilised and was very busy by the summer of 2020. The feedback we have had about the service has shown some great improvements in tenant satisfaction, and we are working hard to continue to improve the service.

During the year we responded to the strengthening of the powers of the national Housing Ombudsman, by improving our own complaints process. We now aim to provide a more reliable turnaround time and, where possible, resolve issues within 24 hours. Where this is not possible, we allocate complaints for investigation and aim to respond within 10 working days. We have also strengthened the process whereby we learn from complaints, so that we are making changes and improving our services where we realise that things have gone wrong.

Another big area of focus during the year was the launch of our long-awaited new Allocations Scheme. This meant that we were able to open our waiting list again for the first time in many years, and the huge response to this demonstrates the continued popularity of Castle Vale as a place to live. We are now awarding priority to those with a local connection to Castle Vale which is helping those who already have family in the neighbourhood, those who work locally or those who contribute to the community.

Tenants continue to play a lead role in overseeing our services and continue to make up a majority on CVCH Board. During the year we said goodbye to Ken Sims who stepped down from the board and we thanked him for his contribution during his time on the Board. We welcomed Cliff Horrocks as an Independent Board member and Nicolette Browne-Marke as a Resident Board member.



Resident involvement

Our residents are at the heart of everything we do here at CVCH and we invite all members of the community to get involved in shaping the organisation and the services we offer.

To make a difference in everyday lives we recognise it is important for tenants to be part of both our governance structure and significant decisions we make as an organisation.

We are passionate about involving residents to help us improve our services and support our neighbourhood. This is why as a community-led organisation, we offer a variety of formal and informal opportunities for you to have your say.

Whether this be part of our board, a member of our scrutiny panel or stopping by one of our community events to let us know your thoughts, please get in touch.

If you are interested and would like more information, please contact our Resident Engagement Officer, Vikash Mistry, on 0121 748 8100 or Vikash.Mistry@cvch.org.uk

Scrutiny Panel

The scrutiny panel works to ensure that customer-facing policies have received adequate customer engagement through the review process and helps to provide assurance that CVCH meets regulatory requirements as set out by the consumer standards. The scrutiny panel work alongside our CVCH board in our resident majority governance structure and are the eyes and ears within the community.

This year our Scrutiny Panel has been busy supporting our:

Environmental Strategy Review

Asset Management Review



Block Champions

Block Champions are the eyes and ears of the blocks where they live. They take pride in their homes, working together with the CVCH Neighbourhood and Estates teams to help maintain and improve their community. The tenant volunteers can tell us about any issues with cleaning, communal repairs, ground maintenance services, graffiti, fly tipping and any other problems. To find out more about becoming a Block Champion, simply call 0121 748 8100 or email contactus@cvch.org.uk

Castle Vale Community Pledge

In 2015 we made a 10 year promise to the Castle Vale community to demonstrate our commitment to our values and invest in the estate's long-term sustainability. We recognised that there needed to be clear financial commitment to continue delivering a range of 'added value' services that are beyond our core landlord responsibilities. Therefore, each year a minimum of £500k investment is made into the community to fund these services.

This year's contribution has provided the community with over

£575,482

of funded services for residents including:

Compass
Contribution:
£301,000



Debt Advice:
£40,000



Community
Safety / CCTV:
£94,711



Apprentices:
£6,054



Castle Vale
Stadium:
£53,294



Additional
Estate Services:
£59,332



Neighbourhood
Partnerships:
£41,066



Digital
Inclusion:
£21,091





Phoenix Court Gardening Grant

Residents of Phoenix Court got their gardening gloves on and planted flowers, fruit and vegetables worthy of the Chelsea Flower Show.

The onset of the coronavirus lockdown meant the usually-active residents of the retirement accommodation were unable to venture outside of the gated community.

With a large communal garden available to them and time on their hands, residents have decided they would like to install raised beds to make gardening more accessible for all.

The residents approached The Pioneer Group with the idea and a Community Activity Grant was awarded to fund the improved garden.

The money was used for wood to build the beds, compost and plants, which were delivered by B&Q and other local businesses. Seeds were also provided by Compass Support through their Activity Wellbeing Packs.

Now in the new raised beds, residents have planted the prettiest of flowers, plants and vegetables that will provide fresh produce for their kitchens.

Whether the topic of conversation is beans, tomatoes, or how to get rid of pesky slugs, the new raised beds have had an extremely positive effect on the residents with more people coming out to swap experiences, chat or simply to read a book in new ambience.

Castle Vale Community Offer

During the pandemic there was an amazing effort to provide support to residents across Castle Vale. This was put in place by the efforts of local organisations (including The Pioneer Group, Compass Support and Spitfire Services), community groups and volunteers. The following ten key areas of support were provided:

Welfare

The first lockdown came as a shock to everyone; many people had to shield and couldn't easily see their friends, relatives and carers. Jumping into action, a Community Response team was formed that arranged over 15,000 welfare calls and delivered over 6000 food parcels throughout the year.



Mental Health

Thanks to the amazing support from so many resident volunteers, Compass Support were able to launch their Telebuddies scheme, where local people are able to establish connections and stay in touch with regular phone calls. Through frequent telephone calls, the team have been able to support over 100 people who are experiencing loneliness, a loss of routine and going through a tough time.



Wellbeing

Exercising and activities became difficult to take part in so Compass Support, the charitable arm of The Pioneer Group, provided some encouragement into our daily lockdown lives by bringing fitness and wellbeing to people at home. With a timetable of daily virtual classes to keep everyone moving and mindful throughout the week, over 100 hours of live footage was delivered through Facebook over the course of the pandemic.



Non Digital Activities

It was clear there needed to be new ways for residents to feel like they were still part of their community whilst being able to stay safe at home. After a successful funding application, Compass Support were able to create weekly Wellbeing Activity Packs for residents including topics on baking, crocheting, gardening and puzzles. A total of 5610 were delivered to residents.





Community Support Network

In a few days Castle Vale had to re-engineer how the needs of the residents were met through remote services and sharpened communication.

A Community Response Team was created with much of the work on a voluntary basis and above and beyond everybody's day job.

Advice

One of the biggest impacts on residents has been financial – especially for those who are suddenly unemployed or furloughed, which for many resulted in a 20% reduction in income. CVCH worked to reduce the burden on tenants by making some major changes to rent arrears recovery, including the free Money Advice offered through Spitfire Services and put more money into our crisis fund to support residents facing an immediate financial crisis.

Youth Support

For hundreds of young people their youth clubs, one to one support and school support was stopped overnight and it has had a big impact on their lives. The team at Compass Support acted quickly to setup a virtual youth programme that saw mentoring moved to video or telephone and youth clubs delivered in zoom rooms.



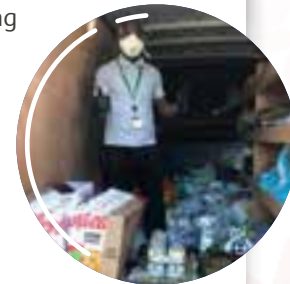
The team worked hard to make sure the sense of normality was not lost and helped the community celebrate the holidays by delivering Easter eggs, VE day packs and even ice creams when it was hot.

Support for Local Families

With a real focus on families' emotional wellbeing, Compass Support worked hard to connect with households through schools and phone or video meetings to find out what hardships local families were facing. From here, whether it was financial, emotional, welfare, or others – the team could make referrals and connect residents to vital services that could help them.

Community Fundraising

A month into the crisis, major funders began to release emergency funding opportunities for local communities. In an overwhelming response, the total fundraising activity brought in over £300,000 over a 12 week period which sought to channel the amazing goodwill in the community.



Community Co-Ordination

Castle Vale has always had a tight knit community support network to focus on key issues within the neighbourhood. During the lockdown the work between schools, nurseries, churches, employers and charities enhanced to ensure that all vulnerable families had been identified so support could be provided to any families who needed additional help.



Customer 1st Team

Calls received
in 20/21

23,464



85%
of calls
answered within
10 seconds



1,007
Responsive repairs
satisfaction surveys
completed



This year has been the most challenging of recent times for our Customer 1st Team. Due to the pandemic, the majority of last year saw our organisation without a face to face reception service.

In that time, the teams adapted to working from home and were able to successfully provide all of our services remotely via telephone and email. While not being there in person, the Customer 1st team have been there at the end of the phone to take payments, help resolve complaints and handle all of your day to day queries. The team also carried out thousands of welfare calls to ensure our residents were safe and provided for throughout the pandemic.



Opening Times

Our reception service at the High Street is now fully open with opening hours as follows:

Monday – 09:00 to 17:00

Tuesday – 10:30 to 17:00

Wednesday – 09:00 to 17:00

Thursday – 09:00 to 17:00

Friday – 09:00 to 16:00

For all out of hours emergency calls, please call 0121 748 8100 (24 hours)

Closed on Bank Holidays

www.cvch.org.uk

0121 748 8100

contactus@cvch.org.uk



Reception: COVID Update

We are continuing to limit the numbers allowed into our reception at any one time so we can maintain social distancing. As we take a cautious approach to the lifting of restrictions, we ask residents to continue wearing masks while in communal spaces (unless exempt).

If you need to come and see us, it is recommended that you come alone if you are able to. If you want to speak to a particular member of staff you should make an appointment in advance to ensure they are available.

Income

2.99%
Customer rent
arrears*



1.70%
Former customer
rent arrears



140
Welfare referrals



0
Evictions for
rent arrears



81
Properties let at
discounted social
rent levels



* We take all the rent due for a whole year and work out how much is outstanding to find the arrears percentage.

We recognise that with the gradual reopening of businesses, the phasing out of furlough arrangements, or unexpected redundancies may mean some people may find they are experiencing a change in income. It is important that you talk to us as soon as you think you might be running into difficulties with your finances as we can help you access support with our money advice or employment services; we fund these services so you can receive support quickly.

As our reception continues to have COVID controls in place, residents may find it quicker and easier to pay rent via:

- **Setting up a Direct Debit;**
- **Calling our team on 0121 748 8100;**
- **Allpay either by calling 0330 041 6497 or visiting their website allpayments.net (you will need your rent card for this option);**
- **BACS transfer;**
- **Or setting up a Standing Order**

Please note: For BACS transfer or Standing Order please use your tenancy number as the ref to ensure payment reaches your account. (Account name: The Pioneer Group Account. No: 40714852 Sort code: 20-07-71).



Allocations Policy

We have changed the way we allocate our homes on Castle Vale following feedback from our customers.

You told us that you wanted to give some priority to people with a local connection to Castle Vale and so we made this one of the main focusses of our new policy. This includes people who live in Castle Vale already, those who have relatives here, or those who work in the area or make a contribution to the community. Our policy also sets out those people who might be excluded from our waiting list such as those with no connection to Castle Vale or those who might have been involved in anti-social behaviour or crime in the past.

The launch was slightly delayed due to a temporary suspension of the lettings service during the pandemic, but we have launched the new policy and there was an overwhelming response.

Our homes and the regeneration on the estate were funded with public money. For this reason, we have a nomination agreement with Birmingham City Council which ensures that those in the greatest need of housing receive priority. Half of the properties we let are through this route, with the remainder being let through our own policy.

Castle Vale is a popular place to live and people tend to stay for a long time when they are here. This means that we don't have a large number of homes available to let at any one time and when they do become available there is a high demand for them. This can mean that you can be waiting for quite some time. For this reason we can't tell you how long you might be waiting.

We review applications annually to keep them up to date and make sure the people on our lists still need housing, so it's important that you respond to keep your place on the list.

To find out more about our allocation policy or to apply for a home, please visit **www.cvch.org.uk** or call our team on **0121 748 8100**.

"You told us that you wanted to give some priority to people with a local connection to Castle Vale and so we made this one of the main focusses of our new policy."



Estate Services

The Estates Team are responsible for ensuring Castle Vale remains a clean, green and safe place to live and continued to ensure this was kept at the forefront of their roles during the year.



CCTV

The CCTV system is recording 24 hours a day and is regularly maintained to ensure it is always functioning as it should be. There are 80 cameras operating throughout the estate in various locations and we have started working even closer with staff to tackle anti-social behaviour, including the Neighbourhoods team and West Midlands Police, to address issues across the estate. This has resulted in a number of arrests being made.

We have strengthened our relationship with our local neighbourhood policing team and are focused and committed in driving down crime and antisocial behaviour. We are continuing with our CCTV upgrade programme, with 60% completed so far, to High Definition for a better picture quality to assist with various types of identification.



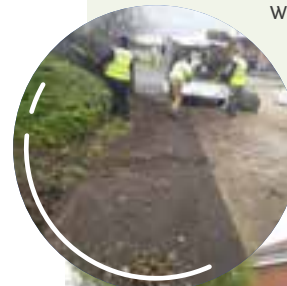
**Collected
135 tonnes**
of fly tipping and
bulk collection
from Castle Vale.

100%
planned inspections
on blocks, schemes,
garage
site and
alleyways

Our Estates Team have supported residents through COVID-19 assisting in collections and distribution of food parcels, shopping and medical prescriptions.

They have also been working hard to clear various neglected and overgrown areas to provide better access for the residents of Castle Vale.

Our painting team have been working hard through the year giving both internal and external areas of the estate a fresh coat. What a difference a spot of paint can make!



Repairs & Maintenance

April 2020 witnessed the mobilisation of our new contracting arrangements with Wrekin Housing Group for the delivery of repairs and maintenance across the estate.

The commitment to deliver excellent services saw an increase of our investment of this service by 12%, demonstrating our commitment to provide great homes to our customers.

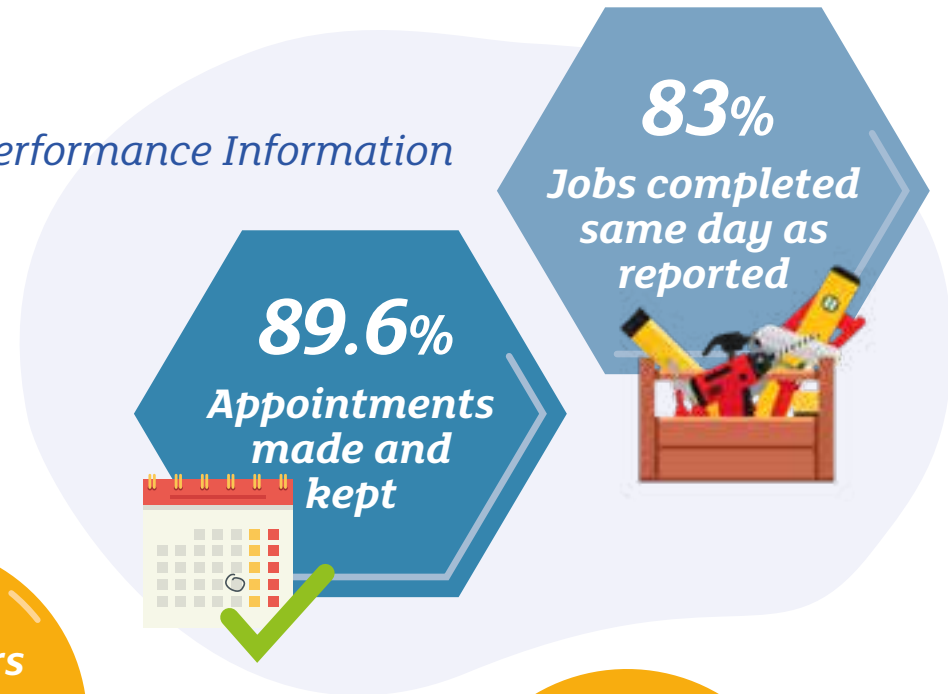
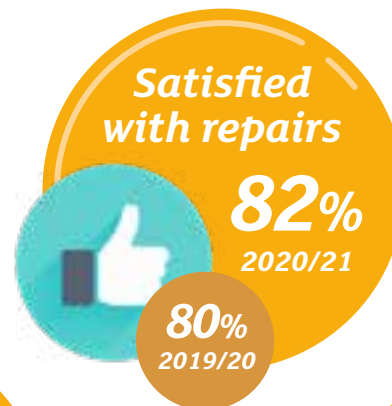
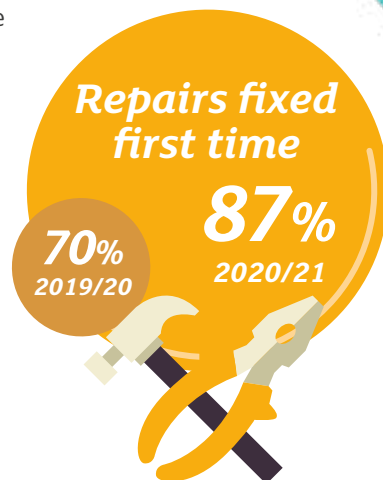
Despite the challenges of lockdown, the team were able to deliver 5616 repairs over the 12 months of 2020/21, with feedback from our customers telling us that we are going in the right direction with increased performance in a number of areas. Satisfaction levels increased from 80% to 85% in 2020/21.

2021/22 has seen this target increase even more to 95% of customers being satisfied. It is a significant challenge to reach this level of satisfaction, but we are determined to achieve this.

The contract has a unique feature where we aim to deliver 85% of all repairs on the same day. Over the last 12 months we have managed to achieve 85% which we feel is contributing directly to our customers feeling happier about the service that they receive.

Performance Information

How did we do?



Gas Service & Maintenance

Status Heating carried out 2345 services over the last 12 months, with additional repairs taking an average of just 2.9 days to complete.

We feel residents are happy with this service as the feedback you provided us with resulted in 95% satisfaction with the service.

Gas servicing is a legal requirement which is part of your tenancy agreement, Gas appliances that are not serviced can produce poisonous carbon monoxide gas which can cause sickness and even kill. For the safety of you and your family you need to ensure that access is provided to complete your gas service on time. This check will not take longer than 1 hour to complete.

Last year it took 355 visits to complete 67 services (an average of 5.2 visits per property) for hard to access properties. Throughout 2021 we will be contacting the hard to access properties to remind them of the importance of getting gas appliances serviced on time - failure to do this is breach of the tenancy agreement.

We work with tenants to schedule suitable appointments as best as possible, however if we are unable to gain access to a property to complete the annual gas service then we may have to take action. As a result, we may obtain an injunction through the courts to enforce access. If this occurs you will be liable for any legal fees incurred which could cost as much as £2,000.

There have been several high profile gas explosions across the UK in the last 12 months, all of which have totally destroyed the properties, so please let us in first time to carry out the annual safety check.

GAS SERVICING IS PARAMOUNT TO YOUR SAFETY AND ONLY TAKES AN HOUR SO PLEASE WORK WITH US TO ENABLE ACCESS

If you smell gas, please isolate your supply by turning the emergency handle and call

0800 111 999

This is a free service that will attend within 30 minutes to check the property is safe.

The emergency gas handle looks like this and will be located near to your gas meter.



Electrical Testing

2020/21 witnessed the most intensive programme of electrical testing across the estate that we have ever done. We completed over 700 electrical tests to ensure that the homes that we provide are safe, further demonstrating our commitment to providing Great, Safe Homes.

In October 2020 Black Pear Electrical were appointed to assist with electrical safety inspections, the delivery of our electrical compliance programme and consequent remedial works across the properties managed and provided by The Pioneer Group, ensuring safety and legal compliance.

Taking ownership of the entire process with clear communication throughout, Black Pear Electrical have proved a seamless addition. We now think of them to be a fully integrated part of our team, from the office staff to the front-line electricians.



*This year we
invested
£4,879,703
in our repairs and
maintenance
services*



Lift Refurbishment

2020/21 witnessed nearly £500,000 of investment in our lifting equipment in our towers. This work included the upgrading of safety features as well as cosmetic upgrades to these much used facilities.

We have also re-procured our lifting and maintenance services across our estate which will deliver an enhanced service and incur savings on maintenance costs of over £6000 across the contract, meaning we have more money to reinvest in our homes.



Facilities Team

Throughout 2020/21 our facilities team:

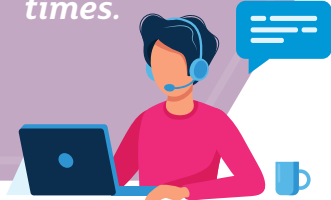
Continued to carry out essential safety check for communal areas.



Ensured the offices were safe for employees to use throughout the pandemic.



Continued to support our Community Hubs during challenging times.



Aids and Adaptations

We have worked closely with Birmingham City Council and delivered over **£78,000 worth of adaptations to homes** in order to assist our customers to remain in their properties.

Major Works & Planned Maintenance

Despite the challenges of COVID-19 and lockdowns we were still able to deliver **163 brand new kitchens** across the estate.

We have also begun a significant piece of work to deliver new windows to the whole estate over the coming years. 2021 will see this work commence on site so watch out for new windows coming to a street near you very soon!

Stock condition surveys have also been improved through 2020 with the team working on the implementation of digital collection solutions.



This means that we can collect even more information on what our homes need in the future quicker and more efficiently, meaning our customers will receive improvements when they are most needed.

If you feel your home is in need of a survey, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the team and we will be more than happy to carry out a condition survey.



Fire Safety

We have carried out **100% of required Fire Risk Assessment surveys** across our stock in 2020, ensuring that the homes that we provide are safe.

The team have also been working hard to ensure the association meets the new legal requirements of the Fire Safety Act 2021 via a dedicated Fire Safety Group who continue to work hard to make sure they are doing everything possible to keep you safe in your home. This work has consisted of a number of detailed property inspections including a detailed inspection of cladding to our low rise blocks that have been deemed safe and will not encourage the spread of fire.

Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty relates to households that must spend a high proportion of their household income to keep their home at a reasonable temperature. The most recent government survey says there were 2.53 million fuel-poor households in England in 2017.

To address this, the team has worked hard to create a new Environmental Strategy to get our homes to net zero by 2050, reducing fuel poverty for our customers.

Net zero refers to achieving a balance between the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere.

Over the course of 2021 we will build upon this work by collecting energy performance information about our stock, so we may be booking our tenants an appointment with an Energy Assessor.

Results of the Survey

It is important for us to understand your experience of the services we provide through the feedback you give us. Resident feedback helps us gain insight into what works well and helps us shape our services to ensure that we are delivering our commitment to the community and understand those we serve.

2020/21 Annual Tenant Survey Data Summary

92%
Satisfied with the
service provided
by CVCH

89%
Satisfied with
the overall
quality of their
home

84%
Satisfied with the
overall appearance
of their
neighbourhood

88%
Satisfied that they
feel safe in their
neighbourhood

88%
Satisfied
with Castle
Vale as a
place to live

97%
Satisfied that CVCH
has friendly and
approachable
staff

85%
Satisfied with the
way CVCH handles
repairs and
maintenance

92%
Satisfied that their
rent provides
value for
money

77%
Satisfied that CVCH
listens to their
views and acts
on them

83%
Satisfied with the
opportunities to get
involved with CVCH
or other parts of the
Pioneer Group

83%
Satisfied that
CVCH provides
opportunities to
make their views
known



You said, we did!

Our residents' feedback is important to us to help us shape our services and deliver our commitment to the community.

Last year, while there were a number highlights, there were also some areas to work on, including satisfaction with repairs and maintenance and listening to residents views and acting upon them. As a result, we;

- **landed a popular new repairs service with contractors Wrekin Housing Group**
- **updated our allocations scheme to prioritise applications with a local connection to Castle Vale**
- **delivered an amazing community offer helping countless families throughout our core communities; and**
- **significantly improved our complaints service.**



...but we don't want to stop there!

To improve the way we work in our core neighbourhoods and find out what really matters to residents, we have commissioned DJS Research, an independent research company, to speak to residents about their key concerns.

To hear your stories and find out what neighbourhood issues residents care most about, DJS spoke to over 100 people in Castle Vale about their experiences.

So, what are the scores?

Our residents felt that The Pioneer Group:

- **Are a good service provider**
- **Have a caring attitude**
- **Have friendly, polite and approachable staff**
- **Offer a wide range of practical and emotional support to vulnerable tenants**
- **And the new repairs service is an improvement.**



But there are areas to improve on:

- **Make it easier to report issues**
- **Communicate better**
- **Being more visible**

So, what's the plan?

We are:

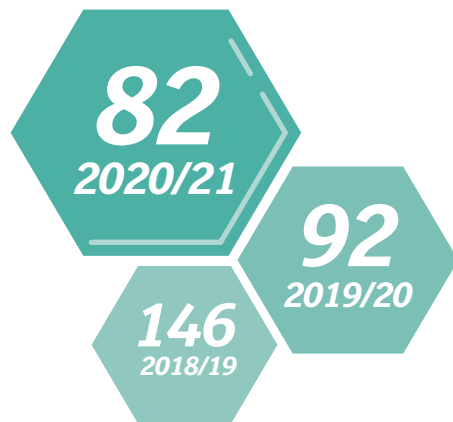
- **Developing the way people can feedback about our services**
- **Increasing the ways people can get involved**
- **Investing in better communication**
- **And improving how we manage complaints, making sure we learn the lessons when things go wrong!**

& much more!

We're committed to continuing to improve, so **#WatchThisSpace** for more updates.

Complaints Data

Total complaints

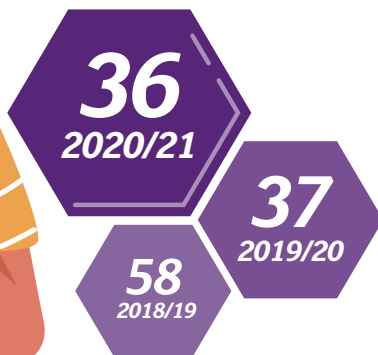


We have been listening carefully to our customers this year, and improved our complaints process to make it more transparent and easier to access. During the differing working arrangements brought about by the pandemic, we recognised that we weren't always providing a good, timely response to our complaints and so we decided to completely change the way we work.

We have reviewed our complaints process, with a real emphasis on trying to fix problems straight away. The Housing Ombudsman Service issued a new Complaints Handling Code, which we have incorporated into our work and in some cases we are far surpassing the requirements of the Code. We now have a clear definition of what is a complaint, and our Customer 1st team try to resolve all complaints within 24 hours. For more complicated complaints we ask a senior officer to investigate.

After we've dealt with your complaint, a senior manager looks at it again to understand what is happening, and how we can use your feedback to improve our services. This may mean we could change how we work or it could even lead to a policy change. We share this learning with our Board. The following examples are changes that we have made as a direct result of complaints we received.

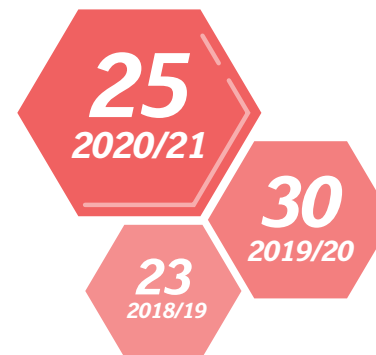
Upheld



Partially upheld



Not upheld



Cancelled by Customer



You told us...

That you were unhappy with the delays in issuing leaseholder service charge statements.

We have looked again at how we organise service charge work and now have a dedicated officer looking after these. As a result we have caught up with the late statements and have put a new timetable in place aiming to get estimates out each March, in good time for you to start paying the charges.

There are delays to recalculating the Direct Debits when the rent changes

We have agreed a new timetable and process for next year to ensure we can collect the new amounts from April and so avoid any unnecessary debt building up in April and May.

You were unhappy about the way some neighbourhood disputes are dealt with

We have a plan to provide new content on our website this year based on this feedback. It will set out what we can and cannot do and how we will need to work together to resolve ongoing issues and gather evidence.

We needed to provide better information about how we allocate properties, particularly on new developments

We launched a new allocations scheme and provided a lot of information on our website. We have also provided a new page on our new developments setting out the arrangement for the allocation of these properties when they are finished. We've also provided more training on our allocations arrangements to our staff incorporating your feedback.

You want to know how long you will have to wait for a property

We updated the information on our website to help customers to understand the uncertainty about when a property might become available. As we offer lifetime tenancies we are uncertain when properties will become available. We also improved the information about other ways of getting a property – such as through the City Council website.



Sometimes queries can go unanswered when staff leave and you have to raise them again

We have fed this back to the teams concerned and we will always try to ensure there is a proper handover between staff when circumstances allow. All managers have been asked to improve this as we know it can lead to a lack of continuity when staff move on. We intend to also look at our computer records to ensure more is recorded in just one place so all staff can see what has happened in the past.

You thought our defect reporting process (on new properties) needed improvement.

We have worked with contractors to make our expectations clear on communicating changes and will build expectations into new contracts. Where we make changes to a programme we will try to communicate these in writing to avoid any misunderstanding.

When there is a change to planned replacement programmes (like windows/kitchens/doors etc) we need to communicate these better

For our new developments we have taken your feedback and built a new process for staff to follow to report and follow up jobs reported as defects.

You can find a full copy of our Complaints Policy on our website by following the links from www.cvch.org.uk or you can ask us for our complaints leaflet, which provides a simple summary of the process, along with details about how you can ask us to review some of the decisions we make. You can also pick up a copy from our reception at the High Street.

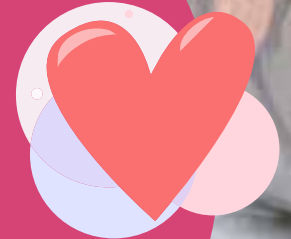
We have published copies of our self-assessment of how we are doing against the complaints handling code and frequently update this as we keep our processes under review, shaped by what you tell us.



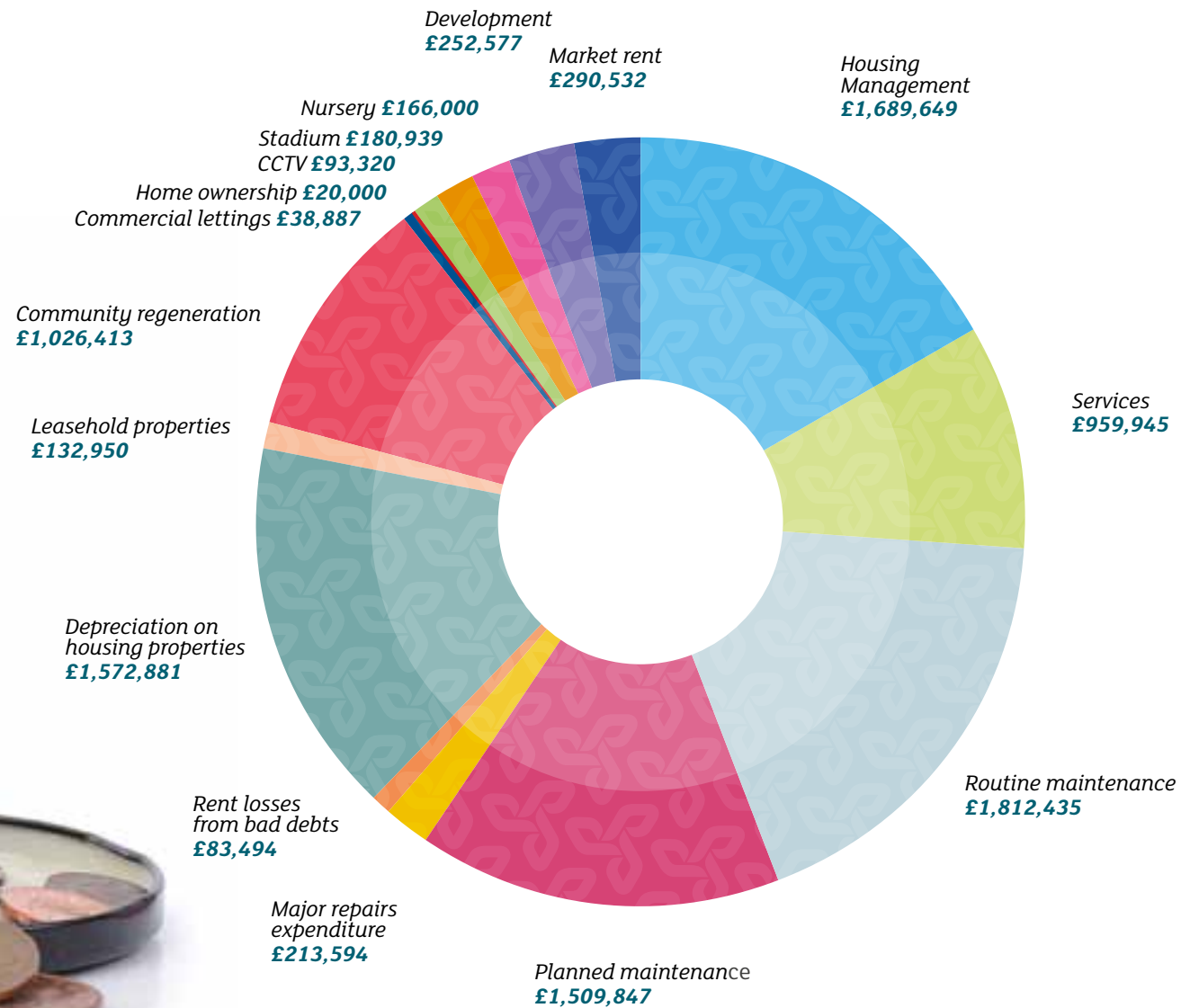
Compliments

*During the year, a total of **20 compliments** were received from tenants and residents about our staff or services.*

We always welcome feedback from our residents, so if you would like to get in touch with yours, please visit us at www.cvch.org.uk



Spending for The Pioneer Group



Legal status of structure

The Pioneer Group – is a Registered Provider with the Regulator of Social Housing. 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 board and delegated authority to ensure services are delivered to Castle Vale residents.

Compass Support – is a Company limited by guarantee and is a subsidiary of The Pioneer Group.

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

SGCH – is a trading name of The Pioneer Group to manage the housing assets owned in Stockland Green. The work is overseen by an operational committee of the Group called Stockland Green Community Homes Board.

Merlin Venture – is a Company limited by guarantee and is a subsidiary of The Pioneer Group.



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