

Annual Report

2021 - 2022



Contents

Annual Report

Introduction from our Resident Representative Team (RRT)	4
Chairman's Statement	6
A quick overview	8
Our money / Financial Wellbeing	10
Listening to our tenants	12
Supporting our communities	14
Community events	18
Red Kite turns 10	22
Keeping you safe (ASB)	24
New homes for the community	26
Corporate Journey	28
Sustainability / Our homes	30
How we compare to other providers	34

Realising the potential in our communities



Introduction from our Resident Representative Team (RRT)

Welcome to the latest Red Kite Community Housing annual report. This document outlines some of the key achievements from the financial year 2021-2022.

Over the last year, we – the Resident Representative Team (RRT) – have been working hard to ensure that tenants remain at the heart of Red Kite. We have consulted on key service changes, helped to shape decisions, and shared our recommendations for consideration with the Red Kite Board. There are 10 members of RRT and we are all local tenants who bring a range of different skills and experience to the group.

We have continued to meet on a weekly basis, mostly meeting virtually as this allows for more tenants to be able to join the meetings. RRT works as an important part of our wider network of tenant volunteers that help to ensure we are delivering on our commitment to be a truly tenant-led organisation.

We've worked closely with staff in reviewing key issues that affect tenants the most, including complaints and anti-social behaviour. We help to ensure that the tenant voice is considered by staff when developing approaches or initiatives. We've attended scrutiny training sessions with external engagement specialists called tpas and have supported a large consultation with tenants to capture their views in relation to The Together with Tenants Charter. We used the feedback given by over 400 tenants to help shape our first scrutiny review, which involves looking at a specific service in detail and coming up with formal recommendations for improvements.

We're always looking for more tenants to get involved as volunteers like we do. You don't need to have any special skills or experience to make a real difference. If this sounds like something you might be interested in, please contact the friendly volunteering team at volunteering@redkithousing.org.uk.

From your Resident Representative Team



Chairman's statement

Last year I talked about how, due largely to the pandemic, it had been a challenging year. This year has been no less demanding but, thanks to the strong partnership between the Board and the Executive team, we have been able to support staff and tenants without losing our clear focus on our mission and journey.

We have now completed the first year of our corporate journey, which takes us to the next stage of our evolution. The initial results are encouraging, with many of the first-year objectives met and particularly strong results in our Resident and Community Engagement Strategy.

Covid has been a factor in limiting some activities but, despite that, we have managed to maintain a high-quality service.

Back in December we celebrated our 10th birthday with a virtual get-together, with some of our tenant members and volunteers also joining in. This was a great opportunity to look back on all that has been achieved. Everyone was right to feel very proud, and now we are eager to reach the next level.

In common with most other organisations, we continued to operate with most staff working remotely. Gradually, to my relief and, I suspect, that of many others we began moving back to the office. Again, in common with many other businesses, we are transferring to a hybrid system, providing the flexibility for staff to maintain our focus on excellent services in the most efficient way.

“ We helped secure £109,459 of grant funding from December 2021 to March 2022. ”

The looming spectre of high inflation along with a number of other factors have combined to put pressure on use and our tenants' budgets. The wellbeing of our tenants continues to be a priority. Our staff, along with our partners, are ready to help where possible.

We helped secure £109,459 of grant funding from December 2021 to March 2022.

We are fortunate to live in a beautiful and prosperous part of the country, but this brings its own issues. We are always conscious of the requirement to combine the service we offer to our tenants with the need to build more houses for families in our area.

Over the past year we have made available 30 new homes and many more are under construction or have received planning permission.

At Red Kite we never underestimate the importance of our volunteers and the role they play. One significant element of this is the work of our Resident Representative Team (RRT).

RRT has gone from strength to strength during the year, growing in number and working with our Head of Resident and Community Engagement and other staff to deliver our Community Engagement Strategy. I am very grateful to the members of RRT and all other volunteers who so freely give their time to us.

I am also grateful to our Chief Executive, Trevor Morrow, and his Executive team who have tirelessly run Red Kite throughout the pandemic. To enable us to deal with the many challenges ahead, we planned to restructure with the appointment of two new Executive Directors to give a more focused lead in the areas of Property and Customer Services. These new roles are set to start in 2022-23. It is no surprise that this has been a busy and challenging year. Already it is apparent that 2022-23 will bring its own demands on our tenants, staff, and the Board. But I am confident that we will rise to those challenges.



Mike Gahagan
Chair of Red Kite



A quick overview



The below graphic gives a quick overview of a year at Red Kite, and it's been a busy one! With COVID-19 restrictions easing and the number of hospitalisations declining, we continued to err on the side of caution when it came to large-scale events.

Whilst working with Buckinghamshire Financial Insecurity Partnership, we hosted a virtual "Back on Track" event which brought together exciting opportunities and practical support to local residents during challenging times. 46 people attended the event and joined in on sessions.

A huge 19,720 repairs were carried out, with more than 88% of these completed on time, an improvement on the previous year.

We're proud to have awarded £86,517 from our Springboard fund and £29,367 from Starting Blocks, continuing to support our communities in realising their potential and helping a wide range of local projects.



Our Money

Financial wellbeing

Our money

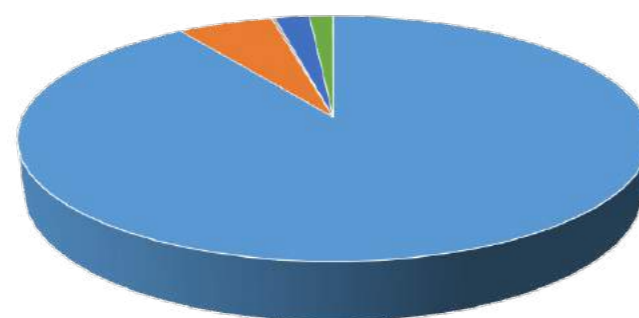
During the year we spent £11.6 million on improving our existing homes as well as a further £7.1 million on day-to-day repairs and planned maintenance works. This equates to 56% of the rent that we received. In addition to this, we spent a further £4.2 million on new homes for the local community.

The pandemic continued to have an impact during the year and whilst it was half of the amount from the previous year, £250,000 was spent on COVID-19 related items such as enhanced communal cleaning to protect our tenants and the community.

These charts show how the rent from our tenants is our greatest source of income and that we spend most of our money looking after our homes.

Income

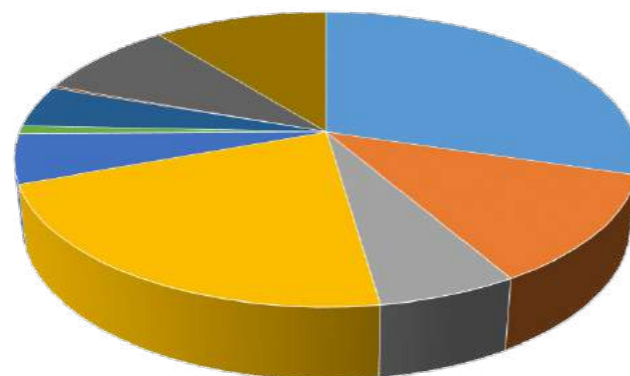
- Housing rent
- Service charges
- Net share ownership sales
- Retained proceeds from Right to Buy and other sales
- Garage and shop rents
- Leasehold and other income
- Interest received



Total income:
£36,943,000

Expenditure

- Investment in existing homes
- Day to day maintenance of homes
- Planned maintenance of homes
- Management of homes
- Communal services
- Unpaid rents
- Investment in new homes
- Garages, shops and other costs
- Other Group companies
- Treasury costs



Total expenditure:
£39,138,000

Financial wellbeing

Supporting our tenants in the past year has been a priority with increases in cost of living as well as ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

We have provided support in grant applications to help with rising household costs, food and fuel packages, moving costs, discretionary housing payments for rent arrears as well as skills and training for future employment.

We helped secure £138,000 of grant funding this year. This included money for rent arrears, bus passes, energy bill payments, car maintenance, school clothes and equipment. It was through great partnership working with the Helping Hand team from Buckinghamshire Council that were able to support our tenants.

In the past year we have also increased the household income of the tenants we worked with by a total of £16,550 per month. This was from access to benefits, pension credit and increased employment.

We supported our tenants by making 1354 wellbeing referrals, including 860 to the foodbank One Can Trust for food parcels and a further 240 supermarket vouchers for those in need.

The next year will see further pressures with increases to cost of living and the migration of more tenants onto universal credit, however, we will endeavour to support all our tenants and ease any burden on household finances.

 **£138,000** provided in grant funding for customers

 **£77,000** reduction rent in arrears

 **1354** wellbeing referrals made



Listening to our tenants

We really value the feedback we receive from our tenants. It's great to know what you think we do well, but also when we get things wrong so we can look at how we can improve our services based on your experience.

One of the ways we do this is through our survey programme where we get an independent company to capture your feedback on key services such as our repairs service. This year we had 5,899 responses to these surveys which gave us a wealth of information. We really appreciate it when you take the time to complete these surveys. We've also received contact directly from you giving us compliments or telling us where you've been unhappy.

Some of you choose for us to try and resolve these informally through what we call our Quick Resolution (QR) route. Where possible we always try to put things right as quickly as we can.



857
Compliments



765
Quick Resolution



201
Formal Complaints



21
Appeals



The Housing Ombudsman

All our tenants can contact the Housing Ombudsman, for advice at any time. The Housing Ombudsman provides a free, independent and impartial service for tenants. You can also escalate your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman once you have exhausted our complaints process.

During 2021/22 five complaints were referred to the Housing Ombudsman for investigation. The Housing Ombudsman will determine if there has been any maladministration in the handling of the complaint. In the same year we have received determinations back for six of the complaints (one having been referred the year before) and the Housing Ombudsman found that there was no maladministration in any of their cases.

You can find out more about the Housing Ombudsman on its website www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk where you can also find published determinations.

As a member of the Housing Ombudsman we also have to complete a self assessment against their Complaint Handling Code. We publish this on our website and you can find our latest self-assessment here: www.redkitehousing.org.uk/selfassessment

Learning

It's really important to us that we learn from the complaints that we receive, as well as from what you tell us we did well. We publish some of these on our website. Examples of how we have applied our learning during the year includes:

- ▶ Introduced a digital version of diary sheets for tenants to use when they are experiencing anti-social behaviour
- ▶ Additional training for staff on when to escalate matters
- ▶ Reviewing our process and communications in relation to annual gas safety checks
- ▶ Strengthened our promotion to tenants of how to arrange removal of bulky items to minimise fly-tipping
- ▶ Reviewed the letters we send regarding electrical works as you had told us that we could be clearer on when we are attending.

“

You visited us in early March to discuss refitting our bathroom. Social services were also involved along the line. The completed bathroom is wonderful. The teams you chose to do the work were polite, very professional and considerate.

”

The young man that did the works was absolutely spot on perfect!! He put stuff down to protect my carpets. He also asked to remove my curtains so they didn't get spoilt AND he rehung them for me when he had finished cleaning the area. He was brilliant!!

Supporting our communities

We're proud to be able to support our communities by providing grant funding to help a wide range of local projects.

Starting Blocks supports individuals with smaller grants to help them set up a business, project or event that makes a difference to the community. It can also be used by our tenants to help to pay for training or qualifications that will help them to secure a promotion or employment.

Springboard provides larger grants to charities or groups that play a vital role in supporting our communities. This funding route is usually for larger and more complex projects that will realise potential, create employment opportunities and positively contribute to our neighbourhoods.



Funding awarded for 2020-21

Springboard: £86,517

Starting Blocks: £29,367

Total:

£115,884



Wycombe Museum received £10,000 to support and train volunteers to work with Wycombe's chair collection. Moving the chair collection safely from the storage site to a Pop up exhibition in the Eden centre.

Open Door got £7,000 support for women and children through community activities.

Wycombe Homeless Connection was given £11,000 for support worker to prevent homelessness.

More than £8,000 was given to five **Red Kite tenants** to support them with access to laptops, online courses and enterprise.

Booker Common received £1,490 for tools for maintenance and up keep of the common.

Action4Youth was given £10,000 to support the development of a new crisis support and youth centre, The Junction, in High Wycombe.

£2,000 was given to **Wycombe Santa** for upgrading the sleighs and Christmas gifts for children.

CoffeeSnobs received £5,000 to hire and train people to manage the Smart Car setup.



“

We just wanted to say thank you. We love what we do so much and your assistance helps us get one more step on our journey.

Coffee Snobs



Starting Blocks fund leads to new job for Jordan

In September our Starting Blocks fund successfully supported a tenant into work.

Jordan 22, joined Red Kite's Better Futures Youth Forum. After speaking with him it became apparent that he had a keen interest in IT and a passion for mending things!

Our Community Investment Support specialist spent some time with Jordan and encouraged him to apply for Starting Blocks funding to pay for a course that would qualify him to mend mobile phones.

A local company was found who could offer the course and help mentor him.

Jordan went on to complete his Level 1 and 2 smartphone and tablet repair course, impressing the company so much that they offered him a job.

Jordan, said: "The Red Kite Youth Forum is absolutely amazing. The opportunity it's given me has actually been life-changing. It has really boosted my confidence and shown me there are people who care".

"When I was approached about having a course funded to help me I couldn't believe it. Red Kite genuinely has openings, wants to listen and I think it's just amazing".

"I've learnt so much, I now feel like I can take anything on!"

"It's so difficult for young people coming out of education, but having the youth forum really helped me."

Click the below button or scan the QR code to watch Jordan's speech during one of our team brief meetings.

[CLICK HERE](#)



CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT
This certificate is presented to
Jordan Thomas
for the successful completion of
the Level 1 and 2 Smartphone & Tablet Repair Course

“It's so difficult for young people coming out of education, but having the youth forum really helped me.”
Jordan Thomas

Community events

Helping others

Rebel Business School

Fifty-eight people attended our ten-day pop-up business course which teaches people how to start a business. Out of those, 30% made a sale during the course!

The types of businesses created included: food services, pet care, arts and entertainment, education and crafts.

REBEL

“ Thank you so much. This is so valuable as it helps people to take charge of their life and finances.



Christmas market

More than 2,000 shoppers flocked to High Wycombe High Street on Sunday 28th November for the Christmas market, sponsored by Red Kite and My Wycombe. Forty stall holders attended and braved the freezing temperatures to sell an array of wonderful gifts and appetising treats.

Many of the stall holders have previously received funding or support from us, either through our Starting Blocks fund, or the Pop-Up Business School course we organise annually. Offering a free stall at the market was a great way to support them further as local businesses.

Shoppers were treated to some festive live music and entertainment from LED Bauble, the Polkadots, as well as the local Rock Choir.

And if that wasn't Christmassy enough, Santa even made an appearance - raising money for Wycombe Food Hub. Organised by the town centre team, HWBidCo, the event was hailed a fabulous success by all.



“

Everyone has had a fantastic day at the Christmas market and it's been brilliant to see the high street buzzing with festive excitement. We've loved working alongside Red Kite Community Housing, it's been a truly successful collaboration between the organisations, and something we can hopefully repeat in the future.

Chief Exec of HWBIDCo



Back on track event 2021

We know that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to cause far reaching impact on many areas of our tenants lives, the current pressures; increase in COVID cases, the new variant, increase in living costs, high energy bills and increase in food costs is challenging a lot of households.

It was an honour to host the Buckinghamshire Financial Insecurity Partnership virtual event #backontrack in December 2021, bringing together amazing organisations across Buckinghamshire who are committed and passionate about supporting people through these challenging times.

Building resilient and thriving communities requires networking and partnership working. Each organisation highlighted coordinated access to practical support and funding that is available across Buckinghamshire.

We were joined by 15 partner organisations including Wycombe Mind, other housing associations, One Can Trust, the CAB and Bucks Council.

We had a total of 71 tenants who registered and 46 joined the live session with more than 1000 reactions (emoji used) in the different sessions. The beauty of a virtual event is that tenants were still be able to attend the sessions, via the video links, over the following weeks and months.

Neighbourhood Awards media event 2021

Our Neighbourhood Awards recognise people and projects within our communities, including: Best Gardens, Amazing Volunteer, Young Hero, Good Neighbour, Project of the Year and Pet of the Year. In total, we received 112 nominations! It was certainly not easy for our panel of judges. Our judges included two of our tenants, a local young person and two members of local community organisations. We also received great feedback from tenants and community partners. All the winners and participants had something essential in common – they love helping others and do their best to serve the community.

Well done to all the worthy winners!



#backontrack

Red Kite turns 10 10th Birthday event

In December we celebrated our 10th Birthday here at Red Kite.

In 2011, we bought all social housing homes from Wycombe District Council (now Buckinghamshire Council) following a successful campaign led by tenants. Our approach of being tenant-led is totally embedded in how we operate as an organisation.

Over the last 10 years, we've grown and flourished, and great people have helped build Red Kite into something special.

Since the transfer, we've made thousands of improvements to tenants' homes. We've installed:



3908
Bathrooms



3401
Kitchens



4893
Boilers



3413
Doors



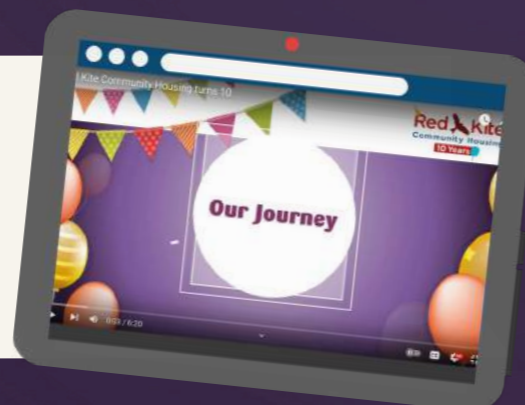
2214
Windows

For the day, we celebrated by hosting a virtual event to bring together staff, partners and volunteers. It was a great opportunity to look back at all we've achieved together in the last decade!

173 attendees joined on the day and 14,122 reactions/engagement/emojis were used.

Click the below button or scan the QR code to watch our 10-year journey!

CLICK HERE



Keeping you safe (ASB)



**ANTI-SOCIAL
BEHAVIOUR**



Our ASB service continued to navigate COVID restrictions in 2021/2022. The reopening of the court system in late 2021 was a welcome restoration of all tools to tackle nuisance behaviour but significant delays continue as a result of a backlog of legal cases.

To alleviate these challenges we have been using our strong existing relationships with partner agencies such as the police and other support agencies, to share information and find non-legal solutions to ASB alongside legal remedies.

We have also worked with, and sometimes funded, specialist support agencies to successfully deal with problematic and persistent ASB caused in part by mental health and/or drug and alcohol addiction. We intend to continue to use and develop technology, such as the mobile noise app and our ASB case management system to support our investigations.



New homes for the community (Development)

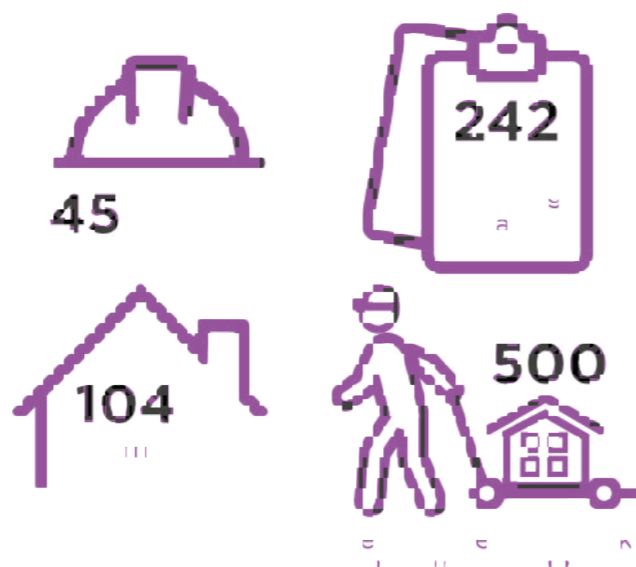
Inflation is biting in the construction industry as well as the supermarket. We faced increased prices for labour and materials and are having to work hard to ensure that development schemes remain viable. Given these challenges, we are reviewing with our Finance Committee the subsidy we can commit to when building new homes. We will do all we can to continue to develop affordable new homes for the community going forward whilst ensuring value for money.

We are now becoming well-known in the industry as an affordable housing provider who is actively seeking s106 opportunities. As a result we have seen a vast increase in the number of sites we are providing indicative bids / bidding for. Over the last year we have successfully bid on three sites which are currently in construction.

Mill Lane in Loudwater is a further major development completed on our own land and consists of 24 flats and six shared-ownership homes. The completed scheme was shortlisted for the “Best Affordable Housing Development” in the national Inside Housing Development Awards 2022.

Applicants for the shared ownership homes had the option to buy up to 75% of their homes depending on their own individual affordability circumstances. The six homes were valued between £410,000 and £425,000. On average, applicants purchased shares of between 45% and 75% and have the option to purchase more, up to full ownership, in the future. This scheme has helped six families in the local area achieve their dream of affordable, low-cost home ownership while bringing £1,417,550 of capital receipts into the Red Kite Group. This can be used to help us provide further homes and services for those in need.

- ▶ Highlands Park is eight affordable homes in Henley-on-Thames, with handover anticipated in August 2022
- ▶ Little Kimble is 19 homes, with work on site commencing July 2022
- ▶ Huntercombe Park, Taplow is 53 homes, our largest s106 site to dates. Homes are at the second-storey of construction.



Corporate Journey 2021-2026

We have developed a new Corporate Journey to map out our direction of travel for the next five years.

Our Corporate Journey is our strategic plan for the future direction so it is important that it is fit for purpose and truly reflects the needs of our tenants and our communities. Therefore, the priorities and actions set out in the document have been shaped by an extensive consultation process, which involved our tenants and a number of our other key partners.

We are very proud to be a genuinely tenant-led organisation with our roots fixed firmly in our communities. We listen and engage with our tenants working closely with them to shape the services they need. Our vision is to empower our tenants and provide opportunities for skills development and employment. By doing this effectively we can help create successful and sustainable communities.

In order to achieve this vision, the new Corporate Journey has set out eight key areas of focus taking into account feedback received by our tenants:



Tenant Voice



Better Services



New Homes



Better Homes



Green Agenda



Equality and Diversity



Realising Potential



Twenty11

Our why
“To realise the potential in our communities”



Click the below button or scan the QR code to watch our video for the first year of our five-year plan.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Sustainability

Our homes

Sustainability

The sustainability agenda is a priority area of focus for us. We have important work to do so we can achieve our challenging targets, such as meeting energy performance requirements, EPC C for all our homes by 2030 and working towards carbon neutral homes by 2050.

To help deliver the work needed and ensure that the considerable investment required is spent wisely, we have recruited a Head of Sustainability. This role will take the lead in developing our sustainability strategy whilst managing our newly formed Sustainability pod which has responsibility for strategic asset management, tenant and building safety, and of course sustainability.

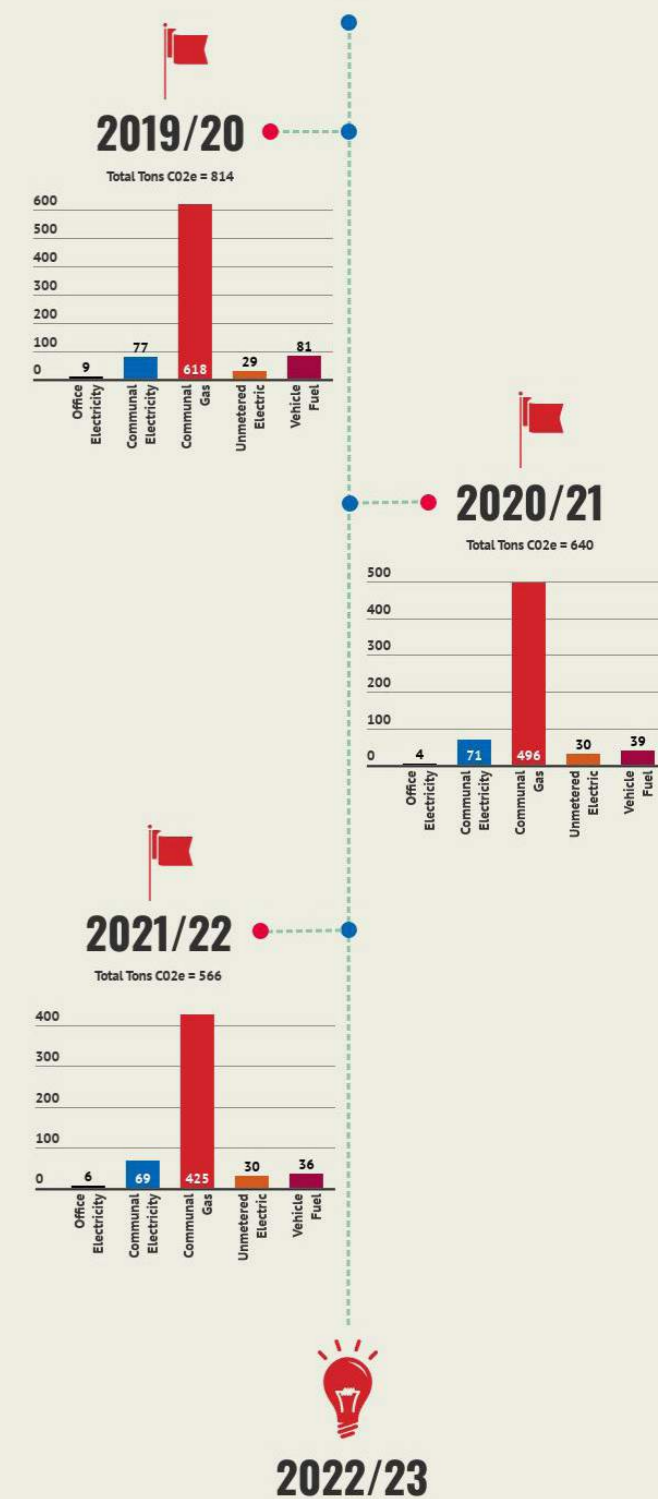
The sustainability strategy is being devised, with the help of our tenants, during 2022 and is due to be published in January 2023. It will ensure that we are able to provide our services while also delivering for the environment and communities in which we operate.

Our strategy, combined with the themes below set out our vision for how we can live sustainable and happy lives. It also shows how we as an organisation will meet the significant challenges, both immediate and in the future.

The strategy will focus on a number of key themes including:

- ▶ Fuel poverty
- ▶ Energy and carbon
- ▶ Bio-diversity
- ▶ Environment
- ▶ Net zero
- ▶ Transport of the future
- ▶ Building communities.

Our Carbon Footprint



As a company that wants to become more sustainable going forward, there has been a steady decrease in our carbon footprint over the last 3 years. Next year with the introduction of our new sustainability strategy we are looking to make further decreases in the coming years.

Our homes

Our Property pod has been very active on renewing a number of contracts over the past 12 months. The procurement process for renewing these contracts has involved working closely with our tenants and reviewing arrangements to ensure an increased focus on driving tenant satisfaction and value for money.

We have looked to develop a strong portfolio of specialist multi-disciplinary consultants and contractors with values that align with ours. Most recently we have commenced work on procuring a combined repairs and voids contract that is due to go in May 2023. Due to the size and scale of this contract, we have appointed specialist procurement consultants to help us with this important work.

We have received good feedback from a number of contractors that would like to work in partnership with us to deliver this important contract.

The average repair cost this year was higher than we typically might expect. A high volume of repairs were completed in the year. This was partly due to additional works arising from damage due to high winds and very stormy weather. Also a high number of repairs relating to homes and communal areas have been reported as a result of the comprehensive stock conditions survey that started in March 2022.

A large impact which is adding to the increase in average repair costs has been due to the challenging economic conditions. We have been required to increase rates to accommodate for the significant price rises in materials in order to keep services running.

Repairs satisfaction has remained high but within the required levels that we expect, with the results of tenant satisfaction being a key part of our contractor review meetings. We continue to use feedback from surveys, complaints and compliments to inform how we can improve. Despite the increased costs and demand for the repairs, it is reassuring to see that the majority of tenants remain satisfied with the service they received.

Actions to improve satisfaction with planned works have been ongoing throughout the year, with a particular focus given to strengthening communication between us, our contractors, and our tenants.

Several improvements to the communication process have been made, with project managers and contractors having greater focus on joint inspections when works are complete.

We have engaged with "Toolbox Talks" which our contractors give to their tradespeople to ensure that key messages are spreading to all who need to hear them.

This has helped reinforce the standard for the quality of works and the levels of communication expected. Our Asset Management Core Group has also been reinstated and allows results and performance to be scrutinised and challenged by our involved tenants.

The Property pod has looked to continue and further develop its close ties with tenants through regular service reviews. This is best reflected in the reinstatement of a range of Property Core Group meetings which cover areas such as home safety, planned works, repairs and voids.

These meetings give tenants the ability to review current service delivery and discuss trends in performance, challenge areas of concern, plus provide advice and feedback for deciding how we shape and amend service delivery. In addition, our Core Procurement Group has ensured involved tenants are at the forefront of decision-making throughout the procurement of new contracts. Our Development Panel and our continued engagement with tenants in a variety of ways has continued to provide engagement mechanisms so that we clearly hear our tenants' views and can act on them. These arrangements have helped shape the direction of travel across all of our work.



99.9%
gas and safety compliant



100%
of remedial actions completed in target time



100%
of rents meet the Rent Standard



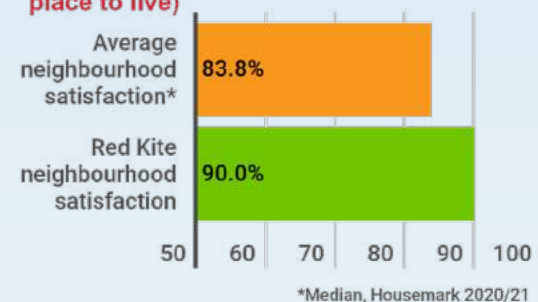
100%
of homes meet the Decent Homes Standard



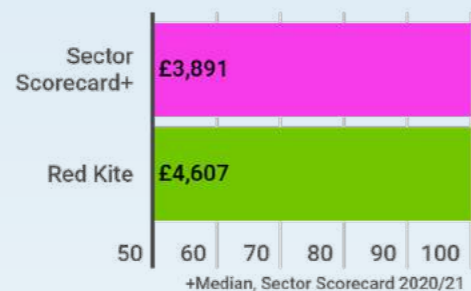
How we compare to other providers

We also wanted to share with you some information to help show you how we compare to other social housing providers. Red Kite's figures are for this financial year, 2021/2022, comparing to the most recent available figures published for the sector, generally financial year 2020/21.

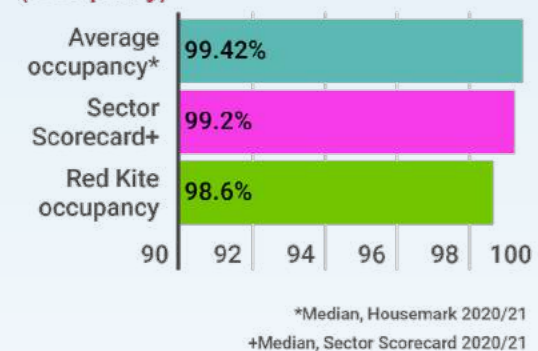
Creating happy communities (Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live)



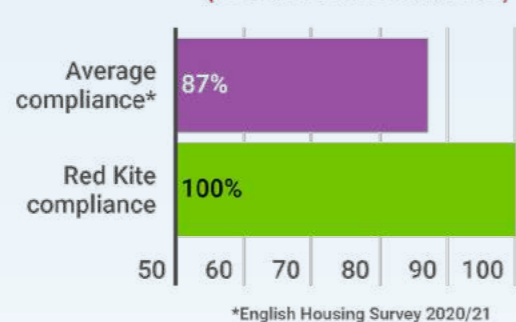
Social housing cost per home



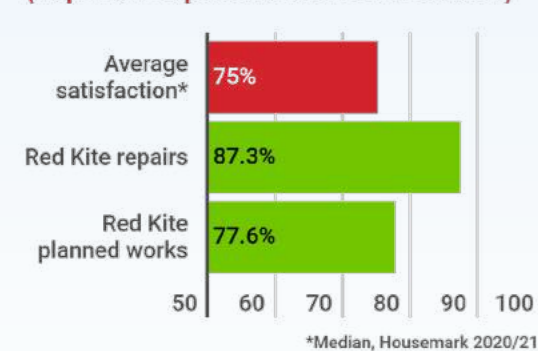
Making best use of our homes (Occupancy)



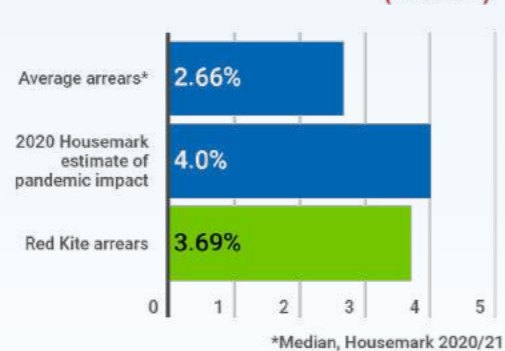
Providing quality homes (Decent Homes Standard)



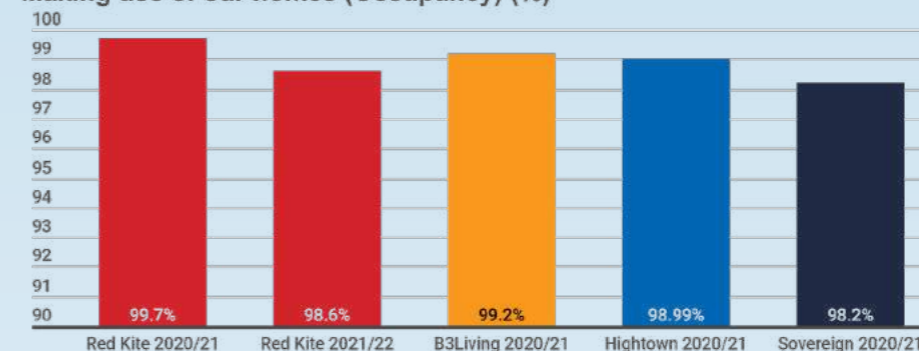
Maintaining our homes (Repairs and planned works satisfaction)



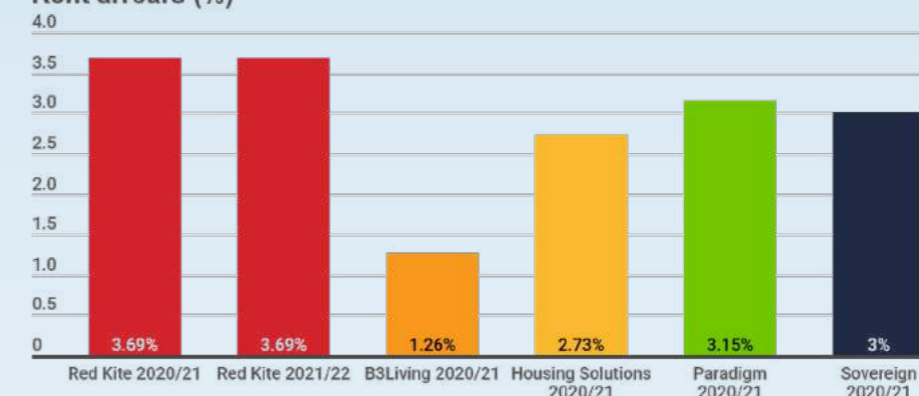
Collecting rents (Arrears)



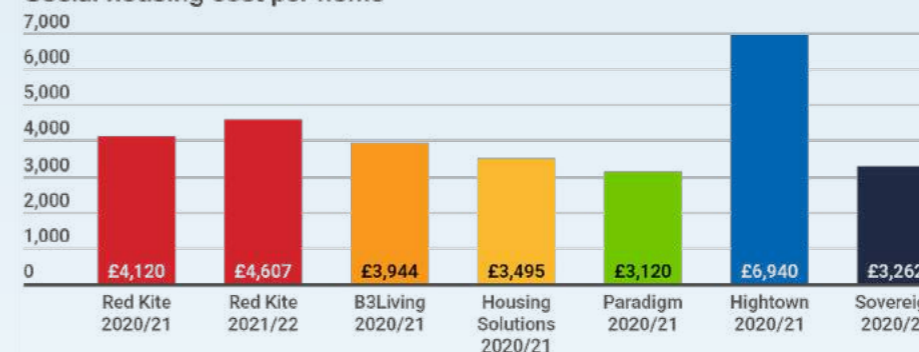
Making use of our homes (Occupancy) (%)



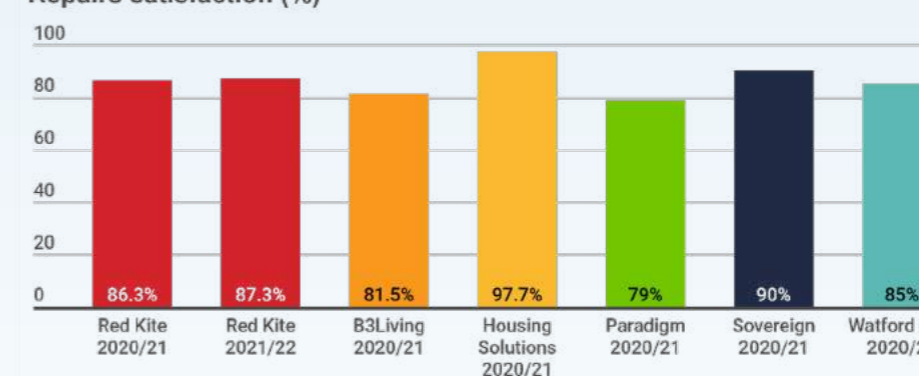
Rent arrears (%)



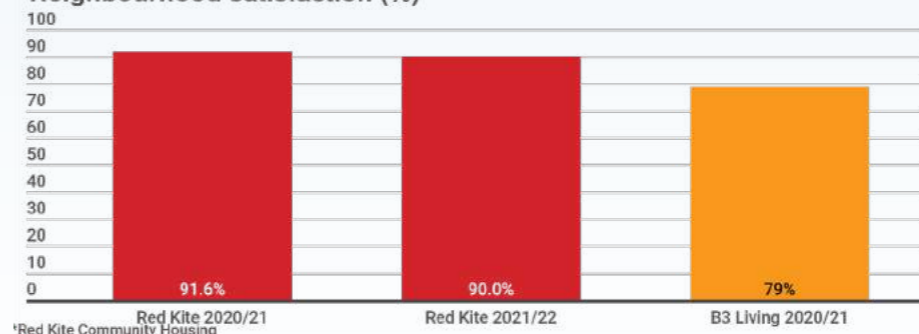
Social housing cost per home



Repairs satisfaction (%)



Neighbourhood satisfaction (%)



Red  Kite
Community Housing

For more info, please contact us:

 www.redkitehousing.org.uk

 01494 476100

 contact@redkitehousing.org.uk

 @redkitehousing