



Annual Report

2023 - 2024

Realising the potential in our communities

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Red Kite Community Housing is the trading name of Red Kite Community Housing Limited, a charitable registered society which operates for the benefit of the community under the Cooperative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, registered in England with the Financial Conduct Authority (registration number 31322R and the Regulator of Social Housing (registration number 4682).

Introduction

Candida Dutiro, Head of RRT and Sophie Field, Head of Resident and Community Engagement, at a recent Tpas event.



A message from our Resident Representative Team (RRT)

Welcome to the annual report for Red Kite Community Housing!

I'm Candida Dutiro, Chair of our Resident Representative Team (RRT). I'm proud to work alongside a wonderful team of tenants who shape key decisions at all levels of Red Kite. The RRT are part of a network of tenant volunteers, who volunteer across 16 different groups that look at everything from repairs to awarding grant funding to local good causes.

This document outlines the key achievements and information from 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024.

Over the last year, the RRT members have been working hard to achieve many service improvements for tenants and ensure that the tenant view remains a key consideration in day-to-day activity. The RRT brings together a wealth of experience, knowledge and skills and we monitor performance and deliver detailed scrutiny reviews that make recommendations for how things can be further improved. We meet fortnightly, but also face-to-face every six weeks. Some key areas which we have made a difference this year include:

- **Delivering a scrutiny review looking in detail at damp, mould and condensation, resulting in eight agreed actions to improve things**
- **We reviewed the complaints, safeguarding and tenancy fraud policies**
- **Hosted tenants from Fairhive housing association to learn more from each other about how we can ensure the tenant voice is heard**
- **Agreed and shaped the launch of health and safety tenant champions**
- **We held an away day, providing our feedback to the government on the ways we feel housing associations like Red Kite should be held to account by the regulator.**

RRT members have worked tirelessly over the past year, but we know that there is always lots more to do.

We're always looking for more tenants to get involved as volunteers like we do. Your lived experience as a tenant is what we're looking for and we can always provide any training and support you might need. We're a flexible, friendly and approachable team and if the RRT doesn't sound like the right opportunity for you, perhaps you might enjoy sitting on interview panels for Red Kite staff or helping us to set the criteria for the contractors who cut grass or perform our repairs.

The Resident and Community Engagement team would love to hear from you!

I hope you enjoy finding out more about what has been achieved during the last financial year and, if you aren't already, perhaps it might inspire you to play a part in the great work we report on for next year!



Click the below button or scan the QR find out more about volunteering.

CLICK HERE

Chair's statement

An illustration featuring a blue and white megaphone on the left, a large orange gear in the upper center, a grey document with horizontal lines in the center, a blue pencil with an orange eraser on the right, and a grey speech bubble with three white dots above the document. The background consists of stylized buildings and a green field under a light blue sky.

In my first year as Chair, I'm delighted to present Red Kite Community Housing's 2023/24 annual report.

I've spent much of my first nine months getting to know our tenants, communities, homes and staff and my over-riding impression has been of a housing association that is deeply committed to being tenant-led. Tenants are involved in decision making at every level – from Board discussions on financial priorities to how to improve our repairs service, to how we can better support tenants through the cost of living crisis. The resulting culture allows us to much better understand the challenges and opportunities that we face (of which there are many) and continually strive to do even better.

There have been lots of things to be proud about this year. We've made significant progress on our strategic goals, delivering high-quality homes and valued services to our tenants.

Throughout this period, we've maintained a strong financial position and have been able to prioritise investments in our services and people. Our commitment to tenant-led services remains unwavering and will remain the foundation of the next strategic plan we are currently collaborating on with tenants, staff and local partners.

We remain financially strong and stable, having maintained cost discipline and delivered on our value-for-money commitments throughout the year, without compromising our service offerings to tenants. We remain G1/V1 rated by the Regulator of Social Housing, their highest rating.

Looking ahead, we're committed to growth with a plan to develop 500 new homes within the next five years. We've been successful in securing grant funding from Homes England, the government's housing and regeneration agency, allowing us to create more homes for social rent.

As well as providing new homes for the community, we've made significant progress in delivering home improvements for our tenants. Our planned asset investment program has seen cyclical repairs and decorations completed in over 880 homes. Additionally, we have replaced roofs on 44 buildings, renovated kitchens and bathrooms in 51 homes, and installed new windows and doors in 181 homes.

Our homes have undergone comprehensive stock condition surveys, including inspections of all exteriors and around 90% of interiors. These help us to understand and plan for work that might be needed in the future, as well as to ensure our homes are safe and maintained in good condition.

We have a focus on improving the energy efficiency of our homes. These improvements, including insulation, will not only reduce fuel costs for tenants but also contribute to a healthier living environment.

We've maintained consistently high standards in meeting all statutory and legal obligations related to health and safety, completing 100% of health and safety checks, and being 99.9% gas safety compliant. In total, we've carried out over 7000 safety checks and assessments during the year.

Our community ties continue to strengthen, with three networking breakfasts held in our office, bringing together a wide range of local partners, tenants and staff and providing a platform for collaboration and best practice sharing. We've also been proud to be able to support our community by providing grant funding to help 21 projects in our local area.

Like many other housing associations, we also have some challenges. The ongoing cost of living crisis is causing hardship to many of our tenants and has also impacted our cost base as a business. With rents capped at 7% by the government, this meant that our costs inflation exceeded our income inflation in this financial year. Whilst this gap has now narrowed, the absence of an agreed long-term framework for sector rent setting means the risk remains.

Media coverage of some shocking damp and disrepair conditions in social housing has rightly turned a sector spotlight on these issues. We have sadly discovered additional cases in our own homes as part of this process and now have a robust approach to identify and address new cases quickly and comprehensively. This was developed in collaboration with a dedicated group of 21 tenant volunteers on a "scrutiny bootcamp" focused on damp, mould and condensation. Their valuable insights have guided us in improving our processes and ensuring we learn and grow.

The sustained focus on this issue is leading to a raft of new and imminent legislation, regulation and ombudsman requirements, which we are fully embracing. When combined with the intention to deliver net zero commitments over the coming years, these combined factors will lead to a significant uplift in our costs. Whilst these are all factored into our long-term business plans, they will need to be closely managed. These changes reinforce the need for exceptional service delivery, and we're actively working to enhance tenant engagement and strengthen our service culture.

Like many organisations, we have faced challenges in attracting and retaining quality staff post-pandemic. We have introduced innovative retention policies, have a strong focus on training and staff development and staff satisfaction surveys are showing positive improvements. The availability of skilled tradespeople remains a challenge for our contractors, with knock on effects for our repairs and maintenance service and customer satisfaction. This risk is being closely managed to minimise the impact on our tenants as far as possible and we are working on a number of projects to improve their experience of this service.

Since my arrival, I have been so impressed by the commitment, hard work, and expertise of our staff, many of whom go above and beyond on a daily basis. They are the driving force behind our collective vision for the excellent homes and services that our tenants and communities deserve and I'd like to thank them for everything we have achieved this year.



One of those projects seeks to improve our IT systems and digital offering, in which will be investing heavily over the next few years. This investment will allow us to improve service delivery, inform decision-making, and deepen our understanding of tenant needs. This digital transformation will also support broader tenant engagement and improved service focus.

Since my arrival, I have been so impressed by the commitment, hard work, and expertise of our staff, many of whom go above and beyond on a daily basis. They are the driving force behind our collective vision for the excellent homes and services that our tenants and communities deserve and I'd like to thank them for everything we have achieved this year.

I would also like to use the opportunity to welcome new Board members this year: Derek Cash, Tim Mulvenna and Tracey Faraday Drake and to thank both senior management and those colleagues we have joined on the Board for their continued trust and support.

Lastly, we would not be the organisation we are without the immensely important contribution of our tenant volunteers. Their spirit, energy and passion are what forms the backbone of Red Kite, and I am both humbled by their dedication and grateful for their selfless contribution in equal measure.



Lucy Weston
Chair of Red Kite



A quick overview



Here at Red Kite, we're proud to share the highlights of a successful year, marked by strong tenant engagement and a commitment to building a vibrant community.

Dedicated tenant volunteers: Our incredible tenants have made a significant impact, contributing a remarkable 1,702 hours of volunteer time. Their valuable insights on interview panels (199 hours) are helping us recruit passionate individuals to join our team.

Expanding housing options: We're thrilled to deliver 100 new homes in Wycombe and the surrounding areas, catering to diverse needs. This includes 44 affordable rent homes, 27 social rent homes, and 29 shared ownership opportunities.

High tenant satisfaction: We're committed to creating positive living environments. It's rewarding to see a continued increase in tenant satisfaction, with 90.1% of residents expressing satisfaction with their neighbourhoods – a positive trend compared to last year.

Efficient repairs and maintenance: We understand the importance of a well-maintained home. This year, we completed 18,767 repairs, with an on-time completion rate of 90.2%.

Investing in our communities: We're proud to support local initiatives. Through our Springboard and Starting Blocks fund, we've awarded £77,883 to empower communities and foster a thriving local environment.



Our money and financial wellbeing

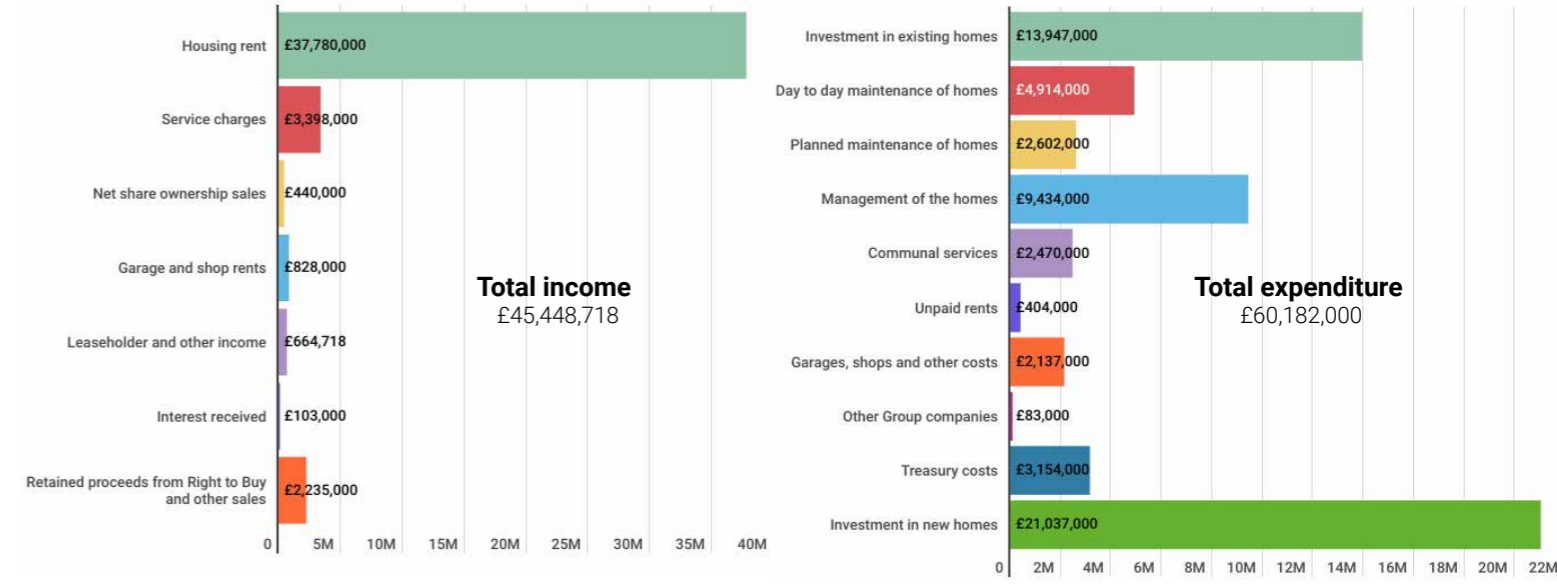


During the year we spent 55% of the rent that we received on maintaining and improving our existing homes, spending £14 million on investment works and £7.5 million on day-to-day repairs and planned maintenance works. We also spent a further £21 million on new homes for the local community.

In a year where inflation levels were at their highest rate for many years, by carefully monitoring our costs throughout the year we managed to limit the increase in the costs to manage our homes to only 4% whilst the costs of communal services increased by 5%.

These charts show how the rent from our tenants is our greatest source of income and that we then spend most of our money looking after our existing homes as well as investing in much needed new homes. To help with the costs of building the new homes, we received grant funding from Homes England during 2023 and 2024 and we have also borrowed additional money that is used to fund both the building of new homes and to invest in our existing homes.

This sometimes results in the expenditure being higher than income.



Financial wellbeing

During the year, we received 713 wellbeing referrals and we saw advancements in our approach to tenant support. Through a strategic team restructure, we've focused on:

Strengthening tenancy sustainability: We prioritised identifying the root causes of tenant issues, allowing us to offer more targeted support and referrals. This empowers tenants to live independently and reduces the need for ongoing assistance.

Faster, more effective support: Streamlined procedures ensure tenants are connected with the right specialists for their specific needs. This frees up valuable time for our team to provide in-depth support for complex cases.

Improved resource allocation: By focusing on root causes, we've optimised resource distribution. This allows us to empower tenants and offer more comprehensive assistance for those who need it most.

These changes reflect our commitment to providing exceptional tenant support that fosters independence and long-term wellbeing.

Through a collaborative effort, we referred 622 individuals to One Can Trust, with 71 unique tenants receiving assistance. Our tenancy sustainment support played a vital role in identifying five tenants who benefited from our enhanced financial wellbeing service. This initiative empowered them to achieve greater independence, reducing their reliance on external support.

We awarded a total of £1,775 from our hardship fund, and worked collaboratively with external partners to successfully obtain £41,815 in Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) funding to assist tenants struggling with rent or housing costs.



622 referrals to One Can Trust



£41,815 in DHP obtained

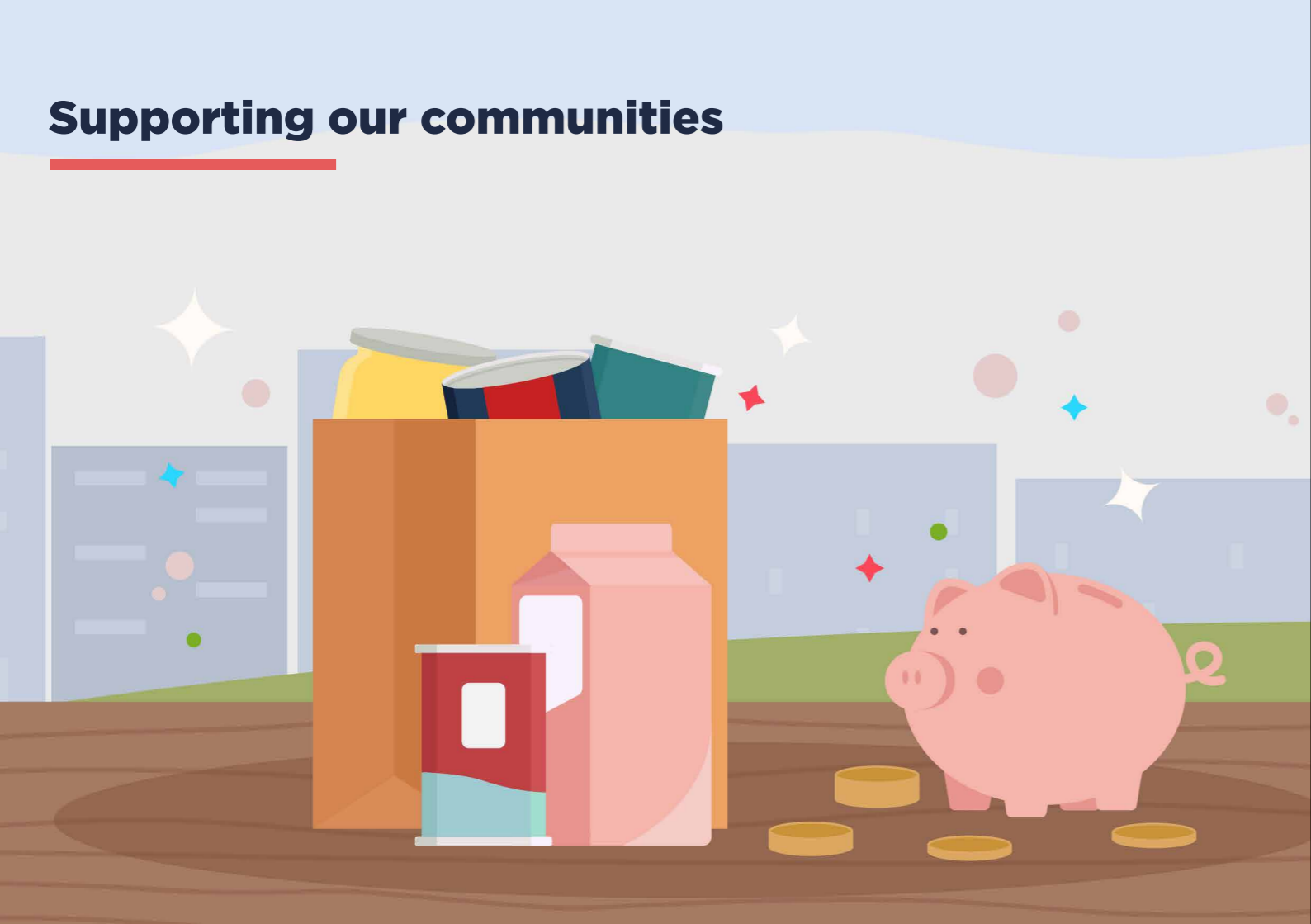


713 wellbeing referrals made



Through a collaborative effort, we referred 622 individuals to One Can Trust, with 71 unique tenants receiving assistance.

Supporting our communities



Here at Red Kite, we're passionate about investing in our community, which is why we have a dedicated fund to offer financial support to local people and organisations. We have two funding routes to give applicants the opportunity to access the funding they need - Starting Blocks and Springboard.

Starting Blocks is there to support individuals with smaller grants to help them set up a business, project, or even an event that makes a positive impact on their community.

Springboard provides larger grants to charities or groups that play a vital role in supporting our communities.

We funded a total of 21 projects.

Funding awarded during the year

Springboard	Starting Blocks
£55,823	£22,060

Total applications received 31, number agreed 21.

Tenant involvement

15 of our tenants provided feedback on applications either via our remote panel, called the e-Panel, or by attending the in-person panel meetings.



Mediation Bucks was awarded £6,650 for The Room to Talk project aiming to deliver a conflict and reconciliation service specifically for children, young people and families.

£10,000 was awarded to **Wycombe Homeless Connection** for the homeless prevention project, dedicated to proactively preventing homelessness and recognising the significance of prevention over intervention.

Wycombe Arts Centre was awarded £3,667.29 to fund an essential smoke and heat detector upgrade.

The One Recovery Project supports Connection Support's clients in moving into their own accommodation by providing them with essential household items to maintain a dignified standard of living. £4,000 was awarded from our Springboard Fund.

Wycombe Food Hub's Enchanted Wonderland project is an annual Christmas experience held at the Chilterns, High Wycombe. The food hub creates an immersive grotto event for children of all ages to enjoy. The aim is to bring the joy of Christmas to the heart of High Wycombe in December. The panel agreed to support the project by awarding them £5,450.

In the true spirit of Christmas, your continued support not only brings smiles to faces but has also woven a tapestry of togetherness and community spirit that shines brightly across High Wycombe. Thank you for your role in spreading the magic of the season.

Santa and his elves at Enchanted Wonderland



Starting Blocks

11 people received a total of £22,060 from our Starting Blocks fund.

Thank you to Red Kite Community Housing for gifting us a new hoover! We have welcomed James to our support centre and are very grateful for you coming to the rescue!

Wycombe Homeless Connection



Click the below button or scan the QR to find out more about how we support our communities.



12 days of kindness



We funded 12 community organisations in 12 days!

Community funding has always been something very close to our hearts here at Red Kite. We're passionate about making sure the money we have set aside for funding goes to groups that truly benefit our community.

So, this year, as well as offering our usual Springboard and Starting Blocks funding, we created Red Kite's 12 Days of Kindness to give smaller community groups a chance to receive a helping hand.

During December, we ran a competition on social media, offering a £100 voucher to groups working in the local community - all the groups had to do to win was add a comment explaining how they'd use the money. The names then went into a random draw, with the lucky winner announced later that day.

We had entries from people across the district, including lots of groups we've not previously worked with or funded. This has given us a great opportunity to open up relationships with people who, like us, are working to realise the potential in our communities.

We're looking forward to working with all the groups who entered and doing more with them. We plan to reach out to every organisation that has participated with details of our Springboard and Starting Blocks funding streams and other community activities that might benefit them.

Social Link (pictured left) was one of the recipients of funding from the campaign and is a charity providing a range of services for adults with a learning disability.

Thank you for today, it meant a lot to the guys, and to be given the VIP treatment was amazing for them. They're a wonderful bunch and they don't really get opportunities like they did today.

Sarah Kerns, Social Link team leader



100%
increase in
Facebook
visits



12 posts
received
260
comments



64 groups
nominated



£1200
awarded in
total



Community events

Christmas Arts and Crafts Fair

In November, we supported the Christmas Arts and Crafts Fair at Wycombe Arts Centre.

Over the two days, a diverse array of talented artists, crafters, and artisans offered their exquisitely crafted items in the serene atmosphere of the main church hall.

It was heartwarming to see Red Kite tenants and Starting Blocks recipients among the stallholders at the Christmas Arts and Crafts Fair. The local community showed great support, and the festive atmosphere was palpable in the church hall filled with Christmas music.

Nicola Wiecha, Community Engagement Support



Community Action Days

We attended two Community Action Days, one in Micklefield and one in High Wycombe town centre.

Community Action Days are all about local partners coming together to tackle antisocial behaviour concerns and listen to residents, so this was a great opportunity for us to hear from some of our tenants about the issues they are currently facing.

We're proud to be a partner with Opportunity Bucks and to attend these Community Action Days, which give us a fantastic opportunity to engage with the people who need it most, right at the heart of our communities.

Janine Healy, Estates Manager



Networking breakfast

In December, we hosted another successful networking breakfast, bringing together organisations we've supported through our community funding programmes, tenant volunteers from our Springboard Panel, and the chair of our Resident Representative Team.

The event saw 27 organisations attend, with 12 forming new partnerships with us. Importantly, all attendees benefitted from valuable networking time, fostering connections that will strengthen community initiatives.

With rising costs threatening the sustainability of local services, collaboration is more important than ever. As regulations shift towards emphasising local partnerships, these networking events will play an even more crucial role in fostering a strong and supportive community network.

Click the below button or scan the QR to read the full news story.



Green Space Awards

The Green Space Awards replaced our usual Neighbourhood Awards and were created to focus on the wonderful gardens, patios, vegetable patches and balconies across High Wycombe and surrounding areas.

We had five categories open to tenants and local residents:

- **Best vegetable patch**
- **Best communal garden**
- **Best pots and patios**
- **Best kept garden**
- **Tallest sunflower.**

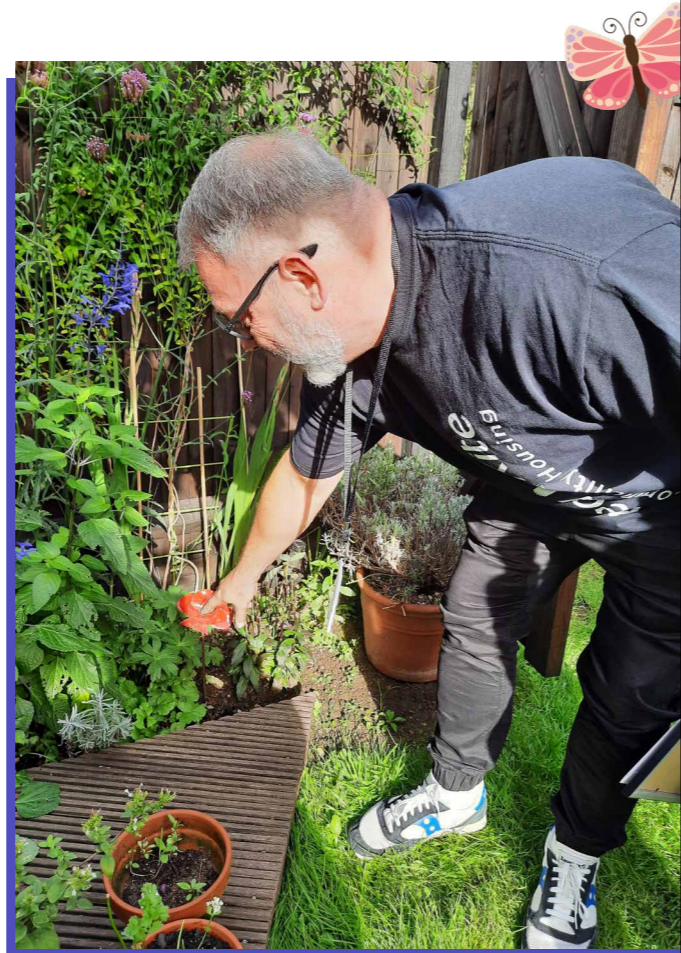


The Events Focus Group, made up of tenant volunteers, went to see the green spaces and were overwhelmed with how great they looked.

Samantha Bacchus, awarded with 'Best Kept Garden' commented, "Thank you to everyone who voted for my garden, I love this little space! When I moved in 10 years ago there was nothing but decking and a shed, just stones and lots of clay soil. During lockdown I was working from home and this tiny little garden became my project, it was so wonderful to have and nurture."

Congratulations to all the winners and thank you to everyone who got involved and entered!

Click the below button or scan the QR to see the full winners and photos.



Resident and Community Engagement Strategy Progress

Year three saw strong progress with 37 of 40 strategic objectives completed for this year. We will pick up the three remaining objectives in year four, along with the other objectives set for that year.

The focus for the remaining three objectives is all about enhancing our overall engagement structure; thinking about the diversity of our tenant volunteers, adjusting our volunteer survey frequency, and relaunching our internal engagement forums which monitor how the tenant voice impacts key decisions. The introduction of new regulation meant we needed to wait for more information before we could move these objectives forward, and this is why they were not completed within year three.



Anti-social behaviour (ASB)



2023 to 2024 has been a packed year with many complex legal cases. We have had several court outcomes where possession orders have been granted with subsequent evictions. We have also made successful injunction applications to try and remedy negative behaviour, whilst providing an opportunity for tenants to sustain their tenancy and remain in their home.

We continue to work closely with multi-agency partners and have excellent open relationships with the Police and Council. We remain valued members of the antisocial behaviour action group (ASBAG) working together on our own cases, but also providing advice and feedback on other wider issues to help the group. We have worked very hard to nurture these relationships which are built on reliability and respect, which has been key to resolving complex cases by discussing and using collective evidence for proceedings, where required.

Whilst we have welcomed positive legal outcomes, most cases are

concluded with non-legal resolutions and staff have worked very hard and achieved success by using the toolbox of options open to us. This in turn helps us to sustain tenancies without the need for legal action.

Recent Ombudsman guidance has focused on providing a complaint centred approach whilst managing expectations around ASB allegations, particularly on noise, by encouraging landlords to provide realistic advice and help whilst stressing issues that are not technically considered ASB, should not be treated as such. During the year we introduced our new ASB process. This process has helped us provide a nuanced response to ASB with the confidence to refer complainants where appropriate and manage expectations.

In January we had an external organisation conduct an audit of our antisocial behaviour (ASB) service. The audit involved an in-depth analysis and testing of our ASB case management including benchmarking of our policy/process, reviewing the communication we give to tenants and stakeholders, our partnership working, and staff knowledge.

In February we were delighted to receive the final report from the Auditor providing a Green assurance rating with no recommendations. This was very pleasing as ASB is an area which can be very difficult to navigate and where complex matters can involve differing opinions.



Click the below button or scan the QR to read how the ASB team were successful during an audit.

CLICK HERE



New homes for the community (Development)



Whilst inflation has continued to present a challenge to developing new homes, the past year has been one of delivery with 100 new homes added to our stock in Wycombe and the surrounding areas.

We have delivered 44 homes for affordable rent, 27 homes for social rent and 29 homes for shared ownership.

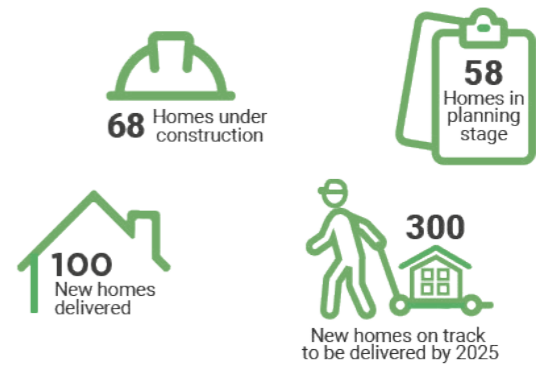
We have completed our review of our appraisal assumptions and adjusted our development criteria to better balance our ambition to deliver new homes for the local community and ensure that value for money is achieved.

As a result, we are starting to see more success in our bidding process and are securing additional sites and homes as part of our ambition to deliver 500 new homes between 2025 and 2030.

An important part of our work is helping people to get onto the housing ladder, and we are proud that we have sold all 29 shared ownership homes that we have developed this year to local households and generated £2.9m in receipts.

Over the coming months, we hope to start work on several sites around the local area in High Wycombe, Princes Risborough and Marlow to provide much-needed affordable homes.

We will also be completing sites we are currently working on at Windrush House and Gayhurst Road, delivering 45 social rented flats.



£4.9 million grant to help deliver 48 new homes

We have been successful in our application for £4.9 million of grant funding from Homes England. This means that the grant will be used to help deliver 48 new social rent homes for our community!

Where will these homes be?

21 refurbished and newly developed homes at Windrush House in Bourne End and 27 newly built flats at Huntercombe Park in Taplow.

Why is this important?

The demand for affordable housing, especially social rented housing in High Wycombe is high, and these new homes will make a real difference to families and individuals in need. With the rising cost of living, social rent provides much-needed stability and security.

Alan Wylde, Head of Development commented:

Here at Red Kite, we're committed to delivering new, high-quality, and affordable homes. Securing this grant from Homes England is a fantastic result as it enables us to expand our housing offerings, providing more homes for families within our community at social rent.



The sale of Castlefield

The sale of the Castlefield site in High Wycombe to a private developer went ahead on 20th March, just in time for the end of the financial year. The decision to sell the site came after our Board determined that the redevelopment of the site was no longer financially viable due to the economic downturn and significant increase in construction costs. The money that we have received from the sale will now allow us the opportunity to invest in further homes in the Wycombe area.

Click the below button or scan the QR to read more about Castlefield.



Tyzack Road, High Wycombe

Sustainability and our homes



We are committed to creating a more sustainable future for our homes, with a strong focus on improving their energy performance.

After securing grant funding of £1,244,691, we're delivering energy efficiency measures to more than 140 homes currently rated below an Energy Performance Certificate C (EPC).

These improvements, including insulation and solar panels, will not only reduce fuel costs for tenants but also contribute to a healthier living environment by minimising damp, mould, and condensation.

Looking ahead, we are utilising data and energy modelling software to prioritise further upgrades and secure funding for future investment programs.

Our ultimate goal is to ensure all rented homes achieve an EPC C rating by 2025 for new tenancies and by 2028 for existing ones, in line with upcoming legislation.

Sustainability and energy efficiency will be central themes in our upcoming 1-5 year Asset Management Strategy, which will also encompass land use and biodiversity considerations.

We plan to engage extensively with tenants through consultations, providing them with context on our data, modelling approach, and overall strategy.

This collaborative effort will ensure tenant voices are heard as we shape a sustainable future for our homes and guide future investments.



Our homes

We're pleased to report that we've maintained consistently high standards in meeting all statutory and legal obligations related to fire, gas, electrical safety, asbestos, water hygiene management, and lift maintenance throughout the past year. We've completed 7,000 safety checks and assessments, and completed 18,767 repairs.

Our Home Safety Team has worked closely with Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service, successfully passing recent building safety audits. We've also upgraded fire alarm systems in 11 buildings and improved radiator controls in sheltered housing schemes to enhance tenant comfort and reduce running costs.

Furthermore, we actively involve our tenants in safety matters. Our tenant-led Compliance Core Group regularly reviews our performance, and in January 2024, we established a new Health & Safety Tenant Champions Group. This group plays a vital role in promoting the importance of health and safety, and in shaping how we gather feedback and address any health and safety concerns our tenants may have.

Delivering home improvements for our tenants

Over the past year, we've made significant progress in delivering home improvements for our tenants. Our planned asset investment program has seen cyclical repairs and decorations completed in over 880 homes. Additionally, we have replaced roofs on 44 buildings, renovated kitchens and bathrooms in 51 homes, and installed new windows and doors in 181 homes.

We are also committed to improving the energy efficiency of our homes. The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund project has secured grant funding, with installations already completed in 10 homes and work underway in 57 more. We have also conducted energy efficiency surveys for over 100 homes, with further work planned for year two of the program.



Streamlining repairs and voids services

We have successfully implemented changes within the Repairs & Voids team, including the introduction of new processes to enhance our management of damp, mould, and condensation (DMC) cases. These improvements have contributed to significant cost reductions in our repairs service.

Our voids service continues to excel, consistently meeting budgetary targets. The transition to a new Repairs & Voids contract with Gilmartins in November 2023 has led to improved IT infrastructure and data sharing.

To further optimise our team's capacity and address evolving challenges, we are currently reviewing the Repairs & Voids team structure. This review will inform our plans to strengthen the team with additional resources and expertise.

Our repairs service

We've seen some significant challenges with our responsive repairs service.

Our main contractor has acknowledged that the service they provide has not been meeting the standards that our tenants have set for this contract. They have recently had to contend with some major challenges: the difficulties they are experiencing - along with many other responsive repair companies operating in the housing sector - in recruiting and retaining staff; sickness absences running at a higher level than usual; and large volumes of jobs being logged.

We are working closely with our contractor to drive improved performance, and we remain committed to providing timely, efficient, and high-quality repairs for every tenant. We are already seeing things get better, including a reduction in missed appointments and complaints.



99.9%
Gas and safety compliant



18,767
Repairs completed



94.1%
Repairs completed on time



100%
of homes meet the Decent Homes Standard

Listening to our tenants



Valuing tenant feedback is a cornerstone of our commitment to providing excellent service. We actively seek tenant input through independent surveys, receiving a strong response rate of 6,016 this year. This feedback, along with direct compliments and concerns raised by tenants, provides invaluable insights into their experiences.

We take all feedback seriously, using it to identify areas where we excel and opportunities for improvement. For tenants who don't wish to go through a formal complaints process and prefer to work with us to achieve a quick resolution, we offer a "Quick Resolution" process, demonstrating our commitment to addressing tenant needs promptly.



793
Compliments



491
Quick Resolutions



369
Formal Complaints



19
Appeals

The Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman service provides a free, independent and impartial service for tenants, who can contact them for advice at any time. Tenants can also escalate their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman once they've exhausted our complaints process.

During the year, six 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 complaints. In the same year, we received determinations for three complaints, and the Housing Ombudsman found no maladministration.

At the end of the financial year there were six complaints with the Housing Ombudsman where we are waiting to receive their determination. You can find out more about the Housing Ombudsman on its website www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk where you can also find published determinations.

Learning

We've continued to value tenant feedback as a crucial part of how we shape our services. With any complaint there's always an element of learning and our teams regularly review tenant experiences to identify service failures and take appropriate action to improve our service and increase tenant satisfaction.

In the last year we've scrutinised our learnings more thoroughly to ensure that we:

- **Understand the true root cause of tenant dissatisfaction**
- **Understand the impact of our service failures on tenants**
- **Prioritise improvements based on impact on tenants, prevalence and sector trends**
- **Use learning to inform project scoping as an additional method of tenant influence**
- **Review our improvements to ensure they have had the desired impact, and if not, review again and look for other possible solutions.**



118
High priority
learnings actioned



43
Medium priority
learnings actioned



31
Low priority
learnings actioned

As is common in the sector, over 75% of our complaint learning has been related to the repairs service our tenants have received. We were quick to support the Government's 'Make Things Right' campaign, highlighting to our tenants how they can let us know if there is a problem in their home and how we can resolve issues quickly. Earlier in the year we also made significant improvements to how we manage damp and mould cases, setting up a dedicated internal dashboard to track reported cases and actions, as well as introducing a proactive monitoring system to get back in touch with tenants at regular intervals, providing assurance that the interventions we made have had the desired effect.

Enhancing repair completion times

We identified an opportunity to improve our repair completion times. This came to light after investigating an increase in tenant inquiries between May and September about when repairs would be finalised.

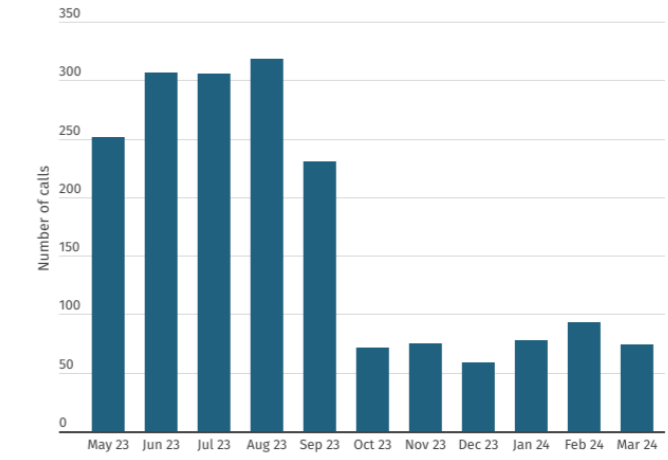
We discovered a flaw in our process where jobs were being closed before all related work was completed. For instance, a leak repair might require follow-up redecoration, but the job would be closed before the redecorating was scheduled.

This resulted in unnecessary tenant inconvenience as they waited for the job to be reopened.

To address this, we instructed our repair contractor to group all related remedial works under a single job number. This ensures jobs aren't closed prematurely, leading to a more streamlined process and a quicker completion time for tenants.

Following the change in process we saw a decrease in related tenant contact which has been sustained since, as shown in the below graph.

Calls related to follow on works not being completed



Contact centre call back system

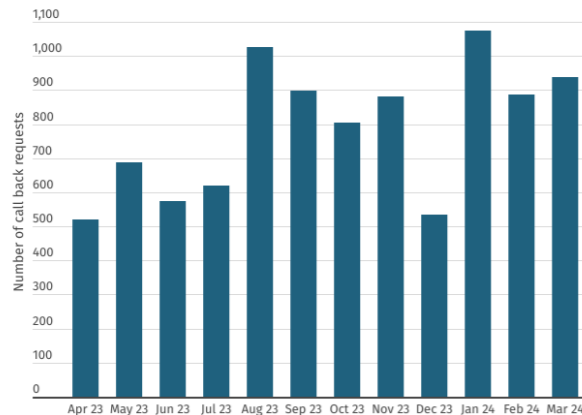
We've focused on expanding our digital resources, like website content and webchat, to empower tenants to resolve queries online. However, we understand that sometimes speaking directly with a representative is preferred.

Recognising our tenants' busy schedules, and with input from RRT, we implemented a call-back system in 2022. This allows them to request a call back when an agent is available, freeing them to continue their day without waiting on hold during peak periods.

Through internal reviews, we identified a significant number of abandoned calls where wait times fell between 3-5 minutes. In response, we proactively reduced the call-back trigger time to three minutes in July 2023. This data-driven adjustment demonstrates our commitment to tenant convenience and has been well-received, with positive feedback from our customers.

Since the adjustment an average of 851 call back requests per month have been made compared to an average of 593 requests in the three months prior to the adjustment. It's estimated that between October 2023 and March 2024 this has saved an average of 598 hours on hold for our tenants with 100% of calls returned and 98.9% within two hours.

Number of call back requests



Compensation

We always strive to uphold high standards of customer service, but we know that unfortunately at times our tenants can feel let down by us a landlord. As part of our learning, we picked up that our compensation process was occasionally causing further tenant dissatisfaction rather than being the catalyst for rebuilding trust as it should be. In some circumstances tenants were having to wait an extended period to be compensated, further adding to their frustration from their initial complaint.

As a result of this learning, we have since taken a deep review of which internal procedures were causing significant delays in the processing of payments and made the following improvements which allow for a more streamline and timely process:

- **Provided clarity on internal forms to state when payments are due**
- **Increased the number of staff who can authorise compensation payments**
- **Increased the visibility of pending payments.**

This project involved many areas of the business and was a positive example of different teams working together for the good of our tenants. We understand these details matter to our tenants and we are fully committed to regularly analysing what we can do better and the difference it could make.

Click the below button or scan the QR to see how we're doing with feedback.

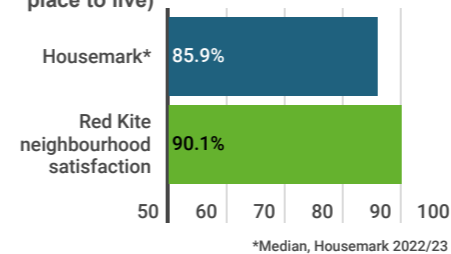


How we compare to other providers

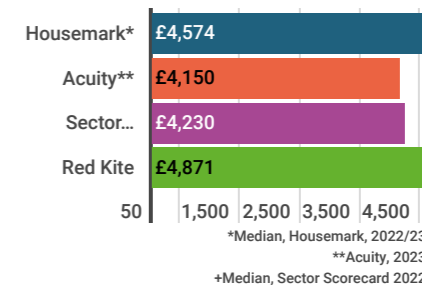


We also wanted to share with you some information to help show you how we compare to other social housing providers. Red Kite's figures are for this financial year, 2023/24, comparing to the most recent available figures published for the sector, generally financial year 2022/23.

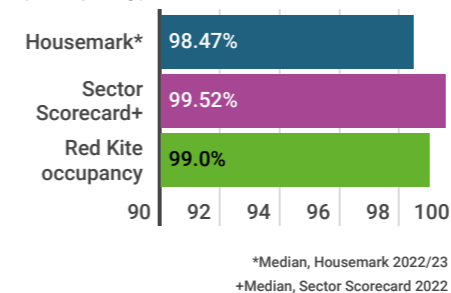
Creating happy communities (Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live)



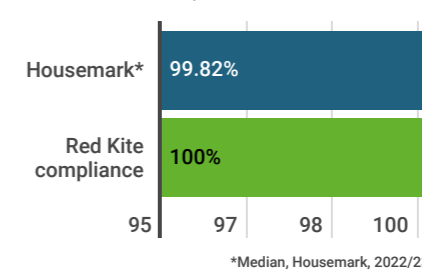
Social housing cost per home



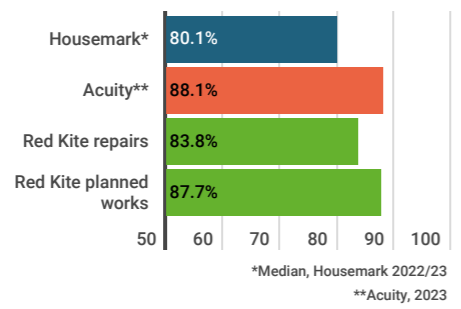
Making best use of our homes (Occupancy)



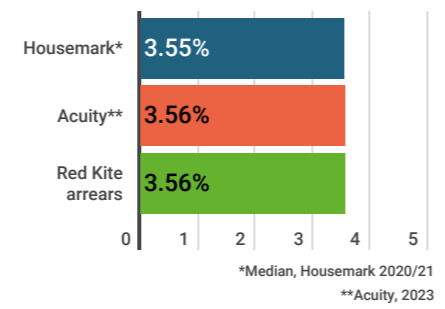
Providing quality homes (Decent Homes Standard)



Maintaining our homes (Repairs and planned works satisfaction)



Collecting rents (Arrears)



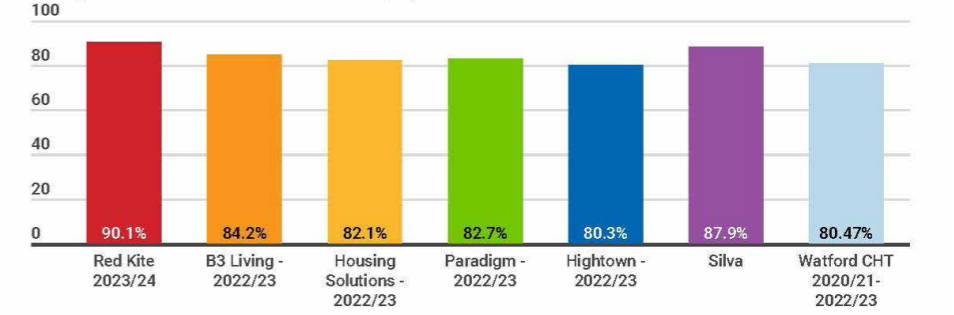
Social housing cost per home



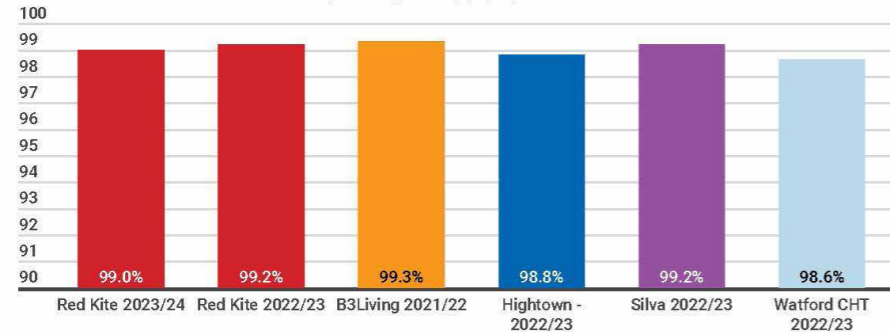
Repairs satisfaction (%)



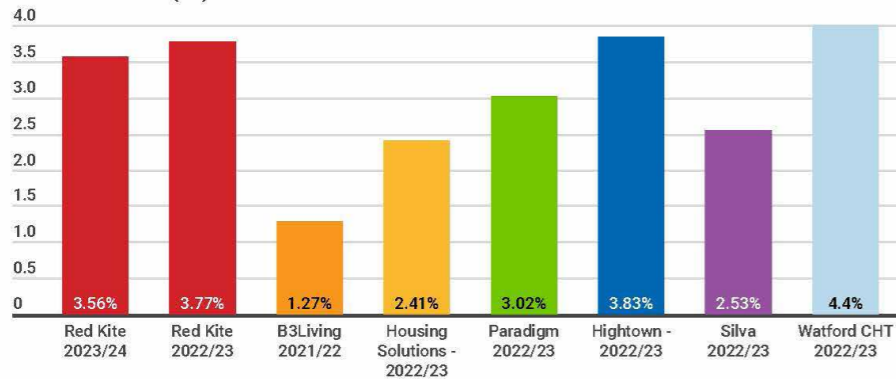
Neighbourhood satisfaction (%)



Making use of our homes (Occupancy) (%)



Rent arrears (%)



In July, volunteers helped us review the structure of our website ensuring that information can easily be found.



In June, we celebrated the hard work and dedication of our tenant volunteers by hosting a thank you afternoon tea, as part of Volunteers' Week.



15 tenant volunteers signed up for our brand new Digital Inclusion Training back in August, teaching them the very basics of the online world.



In February, we visited Faye, a tenant of ours and recipient of Starting Blocks funding, to see how she was getting on with her new Silk Art business.



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