



# Tenants' Annual Report on Housing Services 2023 – 2024

# Welcome to the Tenants' Annual Report on Housing Services 2023 – 2024

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# Welcome to Dimensions annual tenants' report 2024



**Dear Tenant,**

Welcome to our Tenants' Report. Here you can find out about our landlord services between April 2023 and March 2024. We also tell you about how satisfied tenants are with the services we provide.

This year, the Regulator of Social Housing introduced 'Tenant Satisfaction Measures' for use by all social housing landlords in England, including Dimensions. We've included what you told us about each of these measures in this report.

We held our first post-Covid-19 in-person tenants meeting in Darlington in May 2024. The team spent the day with tenants discussing the tenants' survey results and listening to what you would like us to do differently to improve both the services we deliver and the opportunities for all tenants to have your say.

This year's annual report is centred around the results of our tenants' survey, highlighting what you shared as your priorities and, most importantly, what actions we are taking in response.

Dimensions is a support provider, and also a housing association. It is important to us that the opinions of both the people we support and our tenants are heard equally throughout our organisation; our tenant representatives Angela and Martin have taken many opportunities to speak up on your behalf, particularly highlighting the importance of Dimensions providing an effective repairs and maintenance service that works best for

tenants. They've also wanted to make sure that Dimensions understands the impact that the cost of living crisis has had on all tenants and their families and the people that support them. This report tells you what we're doing in response.

Finally, investment in our homes continues in line with our Asset Management Strategy. In 2023/24 we invested £1.1m in our homes – including installing four new communal kitchens, 21 new bathrooms, one full roof replacement, as well as a range of adaptations and heating upgrades. We also continued our major fire safety investment programme, modernising and upgrading fire door and safety systems. The safety of our tenants continues to be our priority.

I hope you find this Tenants' Report informative and interesting. If it encourages you to get involved and work with us to shape and improve our Dimensions housing service, please contact our Housing Hub team, we would love to hear from you.

**Nick Baldwin**

Chair of the Dimensions Board

# Hello and Welcome from your Tenant Representatives and Housing Quality Consultants

Martin Hancox



Angela Jones



We're Angela and Martin and we're both elected Tenant Representatives. We work with the Dimensions Housing Team, Executive team and Board members to help them to keep improving the lives of all their tenants.

We both think it's important to keep reminding Dimensions that tenants should be involved in all the decisions they make about us tenants, we tell our Housing Team that we're here to "keep you right!"

Over the last year we've been telling Dimensions about how difficult it is to make ends meet because of the cost of living crisis and we helped them write an easy read 'hints and tips to save money' guide. We believe that all information should be produced in the easy read format because that helps more tenants understand what Dimensions as our landlord wants us to know about. We attend the virtual tenants' meetings so we can tell other tenants what we've been doing as their tenant reps and we get to listen to other tenants telling us about what's important to them.

We've also been involved in 'My Voice My Vote' campaign and the 'Check your Connection' podcast.

We're both also Housing Quality Consultants, which we both really enjoy. We visit the homes of tenants with the local Regional Housing Advisor, and get the opportunity to speak to lots of tenants and ask them about what it's like to live in their Dimensions house or flat. When tenants tell us about things that have gone wrong we tell the Housing Team and they try and sort the problem out.

We really enjoy being your tenant representatives and work hard to try and improve things for all Dimensions' tenants. We hope you enjoy reading the Tenants' Report.

# About our homes

Our social homes are low-cost rental – this means that the rent is less than the market rent.

Dimensions houses 1178 people. This total number includes many different individual living arrangements, as indicated by the table below.

	Low cost social housing			Private lets at market rate	Total
	Owned and managed by Dimensions	Owned by Dimensions, managed by others	Owned by others, managed by Dimensions		
Supported Housing (including Affordable Rent)	578	4	251	115	833
Registered Care Homes	30	80	120		230
<b>Total</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>1178</b>

Accommodation type	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	Notes
<u>Supported Living tenants</u> (number of properties)	<u>570</u> (199)	<u>576</u> (199)	<u>615</u> (208)	The types of home we offer are changing. Some of our registered care homes are becoming supported living (this is called “de-registration”).
<u>Registered Care Home tenants</u> (number of properties)	<u>230</u> (39)	<u>250</u> (39)	<u>263</u> (41)	We are handing back or selling some of our older larger properties and replacing them with smaller properties. During 2023 we let all five apartments at our new development in Yorkshire (completed in January 2023).
<u>Supported Living tenants in private rented homes</u> (number of properties)	<u>115</u> (79)	<u>117</u> (85)	<u>122</u> (88)	We sold no properties in 2023/24 but we do have eight properties (41 rooms) that are empty and awaiting disposal during 2024/25.

# About Rents and Tenancy Agreements

This section tells you about the average weekly rents we charge:

## Social housing

Dimensions applies the Regulator of Social Housing's agreed approach each year to increase rent.

This is the previous September consumer price index plus 1%. The annual rent increase is applied in the first week of the following April.

Service charges increased in line with the cost of delivering services.

Accommodation type	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Shared house £ (average)	£87.27	£81.46	£77.61
One bedroom flat £ (average)	£115.07	£103.25	£98.65
Service charge £ (shared average)	£113.59	£90.46	£82.67

## Non-social housing

This includes owned, leased and market rents. (Values include service charges)

Rents in homes that Dimensions uses but does not own must be set in line with the lease.

A lease is an agreement between the landlord that owns the property and the landlord that uses it.

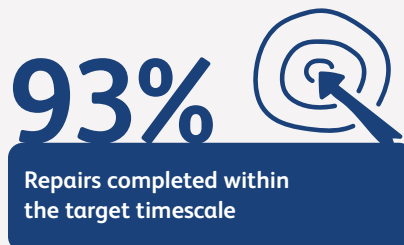
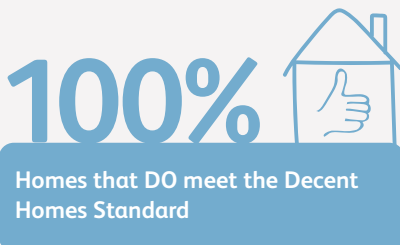
The highest is £801.11 per person per week (in London) and the lowest rents are in shared private lets in the north of England.

	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Shared house £ (average)	£297.39	£293.48	£257.81
Two-bedroom flat £ (average – includes sleep-in)	£348.52	£327.44	£311.62
Range of total rents and service charges £ (average – lowest to highest)	£138.80 to £801.11	£138.80 to £700.53	£181.32 to £672.03

# About our performance

This section tells you about our 2023/24 performance,

## Tenants' Satisfaction Measures as at 31 March 2024



Our tenants say that being able to tell us when something goes wrong, including making formal complaints, is very important; so over the last year we've been actively encouraging complaints. As an example, one complaint we received during 2023/24 was about how we responded to a report about the behaviour of a neighbour. This complaint was investigated and we recognised that we could have done better. So we're going to review our policies, all our procedures and the way we record and monitor anti-social behaviour cases. Our aim is to ensure all tenants receive a consistent and person-centred response and that every effort is made to work with a tenant's support, family and other agencies to secure the best outcome for our tenant.



# About our performance

Safety for our tenants and the people that support them remains a top priority and so our target for all safety checks remains 100%. At the end of the 2023/24 financial year a number of fire risk assessments, asbestos and water safety checks were booked but not completed; we need to do more to ensure we meet our 100% target. As an example, fire risk assessments are carried out every three years and at the end of the year we had 30 outstanding of which: 17 had been completed but we were waiting for receipt of the assessment; four had appointments booked for April; one property was empty; and seven were waiting for appointments to be booked. Our fire risk assessors had staffing issues at that time and this has now been addressed. We are now completing those delayed assessments.

We monitor the performance of all our contractors on a daily basis, engage with our tenants to ensure contractors have access to properties to complete their safety checks, report on performance monthly, review plans to achieve 100% property safety compliance and then update our Board on our performance and exceptions every three months.

In addition to performance management measures, we monitor a range of other activities, including how many calls and emails our Housing Hub receives, repair completion times (against targets), repair and maintenance costs, electrical safety checks, the number of empty rooms, and rent and service charge arrears.

<b>Housing Hub Team (our maintenance and tenancy contact centre)</b>	<b>Call centre</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
2023/24 was the Housing Hub Team's (HHT) busiest year since it was set up in November 2021. The team handles calls about repairs and maintenance during office hours.	<b>Number of inbound calls</b>	<b>5,724</b>	4,475	4,981
We continue to use a company called Astraline to answer all the telephone calls from people needing a repair to their home outside of standard office hours – this is called our Out-of-Hours emergency repairs service.	<b>Time to answer (in seconds)</b>	<b>27</b>	19	15
	<b>Out-of-Hours calls handled (repairs raised)</b>	<b>457 (149)</b>	595 (224)	n/a

# About our performance

Repairs completed in time	Repairs	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
<p>The number of repairs requested this year continues to reduce, this is part because of our ongoing investment in our properties (new kitchens, bathrooms, etc.) and in part because we have disposed of some older properties.</p>	<b>Number of repair jobs</b>	3,113	3,303	3,407
<p>We aim to complete all emergency repairs within 24 hours. Our reported performance has improved by 14% over the past two years to 94%. Where it appears we missed our 24 hour attendance target we contact the tenant and contractor to ensure the emergency has been resolved, which is had in every case, but the contractor had not confirmed this.</p>	<b>Emergency jobs completed on time (target 24 hours)</b>	<b>94% (679 jobs)</b>	89% (835 jobs)	90%
<p>Our target to complete urgent jobs is 90% within seven days. We did not achieve this during 2023/24 though there was a small year-on-year improvement. Some of our contractors have struggled to complete all their urgent jobs within seven days. We work closely with our tenants and contractors to ensure we prioritise work based on the needs of individual tenants.</p>	<b>Urgent jobs completed on time (target 7 days)</b>	<b>84% (1,911 jobs)</b>	81% (1,982 jobs)	91%
<p>Our target to complete routine jobs is 90% within 28 days.</p>	<b>Routine jobs completed on time (target: 28d)</b>	<b>94% (523 jobs)</b>	94% (486 jobs)	100%

## Tenants Satisfaction with their repair:

During the year 273 tenants were asked how satisfied they were with how their recent repair was completed.

# 85%



## Tenant Satisfaction with the overall repairs service:

During the year 273 tenants were asked how satisfied they were with the overall repairs service provided by Dimensions.

# 87%



# About our performance

Maintenance costs	Maintenance costs	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
<p>We do different types of repairs.</p> <p>‘Reactive’ repairs are the things tenants report to us that are broken and need repairing.</p> <p>The 2022/23 rise was due to rising labour and material costs, these inflationary pressures reduced during the year. There was also a slight reduction in the number of responsive repairs during the year.</p>	<p><b>Reactive repairs £</b> (year on year increase or decrease)</p>	<p><b>£892k</b> <b>(-7%)</b></p>	<p>£956k (+25 %)</p>	<p>£767k (-4 %)</p>
<p>‘Major’ repairs are big repairs that we need to think more carefully about – sometimes getting more than one contractor to give us a price so that we can get the best value for money.</p> <p>‘Cyclical’ repairs are things like external decorating that we know we need to do from time to time. We plan for these on a ‘cycle’.</p>	<p><b>Major repairs and cyclical</b> (year on year increase or decrease)</p>	<p><b>£313k</b> <b>(-40%)</b></p>	<p>£521k (-24 %)</p>	<p>£685k (+93 %)</p>
<p>‘Compliance’ includes gas safety tests, legionella tests, electrical tests and fire risk assessments.</p>	<p><b>Compliance works</b> (year on year increase or decrease)</p>	<p><b>£786k</b> <b>(+2%)</b></p>	<p>£769k (+41 %)</p>	<p>£546k (+14 %)</p>
<p>Internal decorations are carried out every five years.</p>	<p><b>Internal decorations</b> (year on year increase or decrease)</p>	<p><b>£267k</b> <b>(+59%)</b></p>	<p>£168k (-17 %)</p>	<p>£202k (-18 %)</p>
<p>The Government says all homes must be of good quality – this is called ‘Decent Homes’. We survey and invest in our homes to make sure we are confident that all Dimensions’ homes are ‘Decent Homes’.</p> <p>Overall, changes in maintenance spend in 2023/24 were driven by inflation, demand for responsive repairs, clarity about compliance responsibilities across the stock, and major works scheduling.</p>	<p><b>Total costs £</b> (year on year increase or decrease)</p>	<p><b>£2,258k</b> <b>(-6%)</b></p>	<p>£2,414k (+10 %)</p>	<p>£2,201k (+8 %)</p>

# About our performance

<b>Compliance</b>	<b>Compliance</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
Every property with a gas supply has an annual gas safety check. We completed them all.	<b>Gas safety checks</b>	<b>100%</b>	100 %	100 %
We complete Legionella (water safety) checks and Fire Risk Assessments every two years. We have invested in completing safety works in your homes and this will continue in 2024/25.	<b>Legionella checks (water safety checks)</b>	<b>99%</b>	88 %	99 %
We complete electrical safety checks every five years.	<b>Electrical checks</b>	<b>100%</b>	100 %	100 %
We complete Fire Risk Assessments every two to five years depending on risk factors. We have invested in completing safety works in your homes and this will continue in 2024/25. <b>Page 9</b> explains why the Fire Risk Assessment figure sits at 87 %.	<b>Fire Risk Assessments</b>	<b>87%</b>	96 %	98 %
Thermostatic Mixing Valves make sure that hot water is not dangerous for people. We service these each year and had serviced 100 % by the end of March 2024.	<b>Thermostatic Monitoring Valve checks</b>	<b>100%</b>	88 %	84 %

<b>Empty Homes</b>	<b>Tenancy numbers</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
We want all our homes to be lived in by someone who needs them. The number of available to let empty rooms increased in 2023/4. Some rooms in shared houses are empty because we have to make sure that new people can have a great life living with the people who are already there.	<b>Empty homes available to let</b>	<b>63 (7.4%)</b>	60 (6.8 %)	65 (6.9 %)
We continue to work with colleagues, commissioners and tenants to re-let as many empty rooms as possible. The increase in empty rooms unavailable to let is due to delays in selling empty properties.	<b>Empty homes unavailable to let (to be sold)</b>	<b>39 (4.6%)</b>	30 (3.4 %)	70 (7.5 %)

# About our performance

<b>Rent arrears</b>	<b>Rent arrears</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
Our services are paid for by the rent tenants pay us so we must collect all the money owed. Our performance at the end of the year was similar to the end of last year.	<b>% arrears as at 31st March</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	5.2%	4.8%

<b>Complaints and compliments</b>	<b>Rent arrears</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
<p>We received five complaints during the year, all of which were investigated. When we agree that a complaint is right, we say it is 'upheld'.</p> <p>We upheld one and partially upheld two.</p> <p>Where we upheld a complaint, we offered an apology and tried to correct our mistake.</p> <p>No complaints were referred to the Housing Ombudsman.</p> <p>Although it looks great that we have received fewer complaints than before, we want to make sure that every tenant knows how to complain if they need to (see <b>page 30</b>).</p> <p>We also were very pleased to receive 17 formal compliments.</p>	<b>Complaints</b>	<b>5</b>	14	8
	<b>Compliments</b>	<b>17</b>	22	11

# About our performance

## Vicky's story (North East)

**Vicky is one of our newer tenants living in the north east of England. She's capable of doing her own cooking, but due to the design of the kitchen not suiting her needs, it was difficult for her to prepare and cook her own food.**

As part of Dimensions' planned investment programme, the kitchen was due to be replaced in 2023/24. As part of the kitchen design process, our asset manager visited, met the tenants and realised by talking to both them and support staff that if we replaced their kitchen with a traditional kitchen, it would continue to make it difficult for Vicky to prepare and cook her own meals.

Vicky didn't want to lose her cooking skills or her independence and we didn't want that to happen either, so we redesigned the new kitchen to include an adjustable work surface, which she can now use to prepare her own meals.



## Independence

This new design enables Vicky to retain and improve her cooking skills and independence.



# About our performance

## Debbie's story (Sheffield)

**Debbie's lived in her bungalow since 1993 – she loves her room and she loves water and now one of the highlights of her day is her shower, she just loves the feel of the water on her face and the sensation often makes her laugh out loud.**

So, Debbie's bathroom is very important to her. However, a problem arose with her bath which was part of a regular bathroom, which wasn't due to be replaced for another couple of years. Rich, our Asset Manager, visited to see what could be done about the problem and when he learned just how important the shower was to Debbie, he created a bathroom design that centred on the shower rather than a bath (this is called a 'wet room'). We were then able to complete the work this year. He made sure Debbie had easy access to the shower and the other amenities. The new design and colour scheme has added to Debbie's enjoyment.

And now on a not so good day there is plenty of space for Debbie to use her wheelchair to access the wet room, whilst on her better days Debbie just walks straight into the shower ready for the water and the sheer pleasure it brings.

Debbie loves her new bathroom and by improving how easy it is for her to access and use the bathroom we've helped her to remain in the home she loves, a home her late Father, a builder, built without realising that his daughter would one day live in.

## Home sweet home

Debbie loves her new bathroom and we've helped her to remain in the family home she loves.



# How we spent your rent in 2023–2024

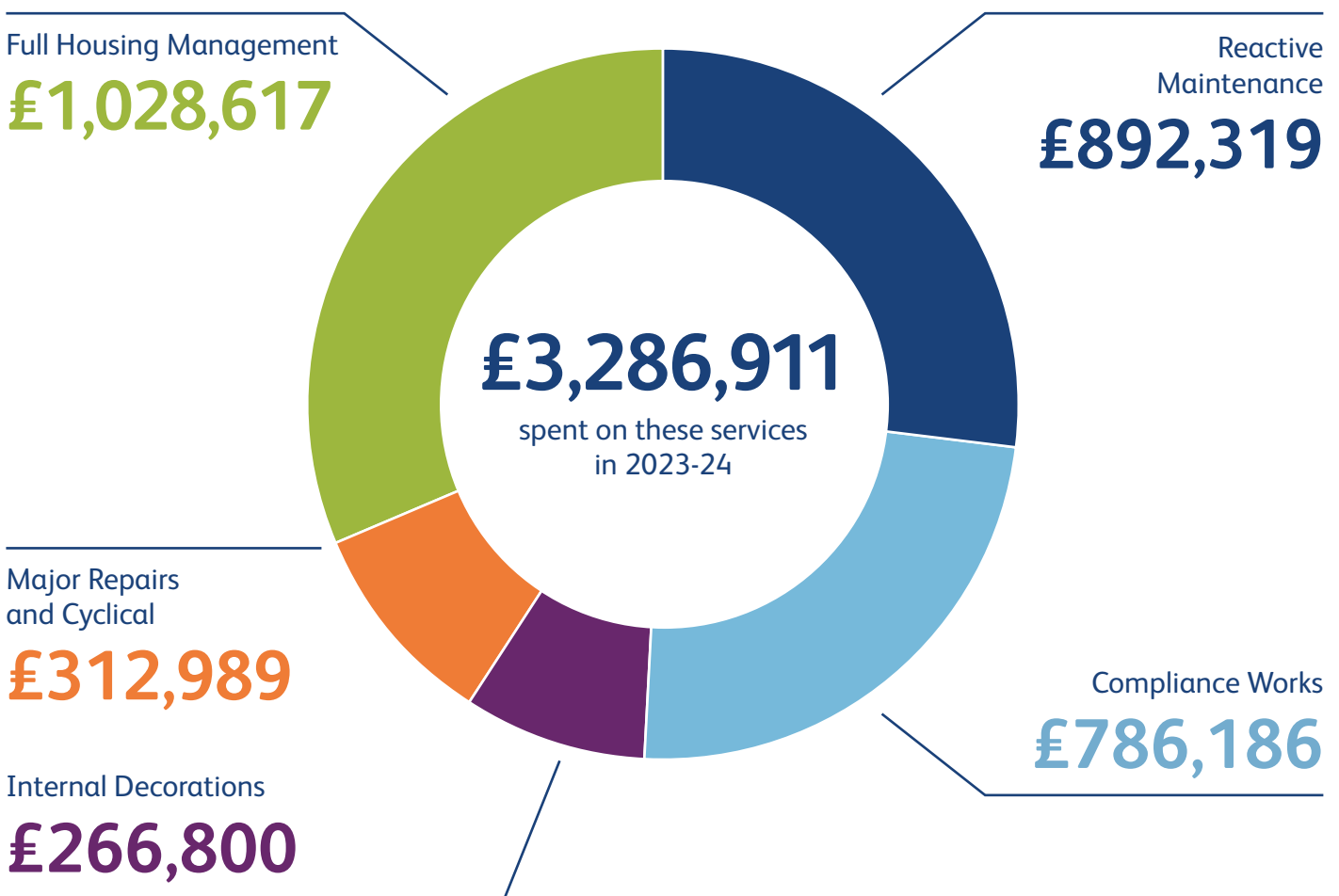
We charge you rent to live in your home, and we spend it on repairs, decorations and the people who manage our homes.

We also spend money on finding new homes for people and supporting tenants to get involved with Dimensions and influence the decisions it makes.

In 2023/24, we spent £3,286,911 on providing these services. The chart below shows you how much we spent. You can see all the spending divided up.

We try to plan for repairs before they are needed so that you do not have to ask for them. We are pleased that more money was spent on replacements this year so fewer things went wrong and needed to be repaired.

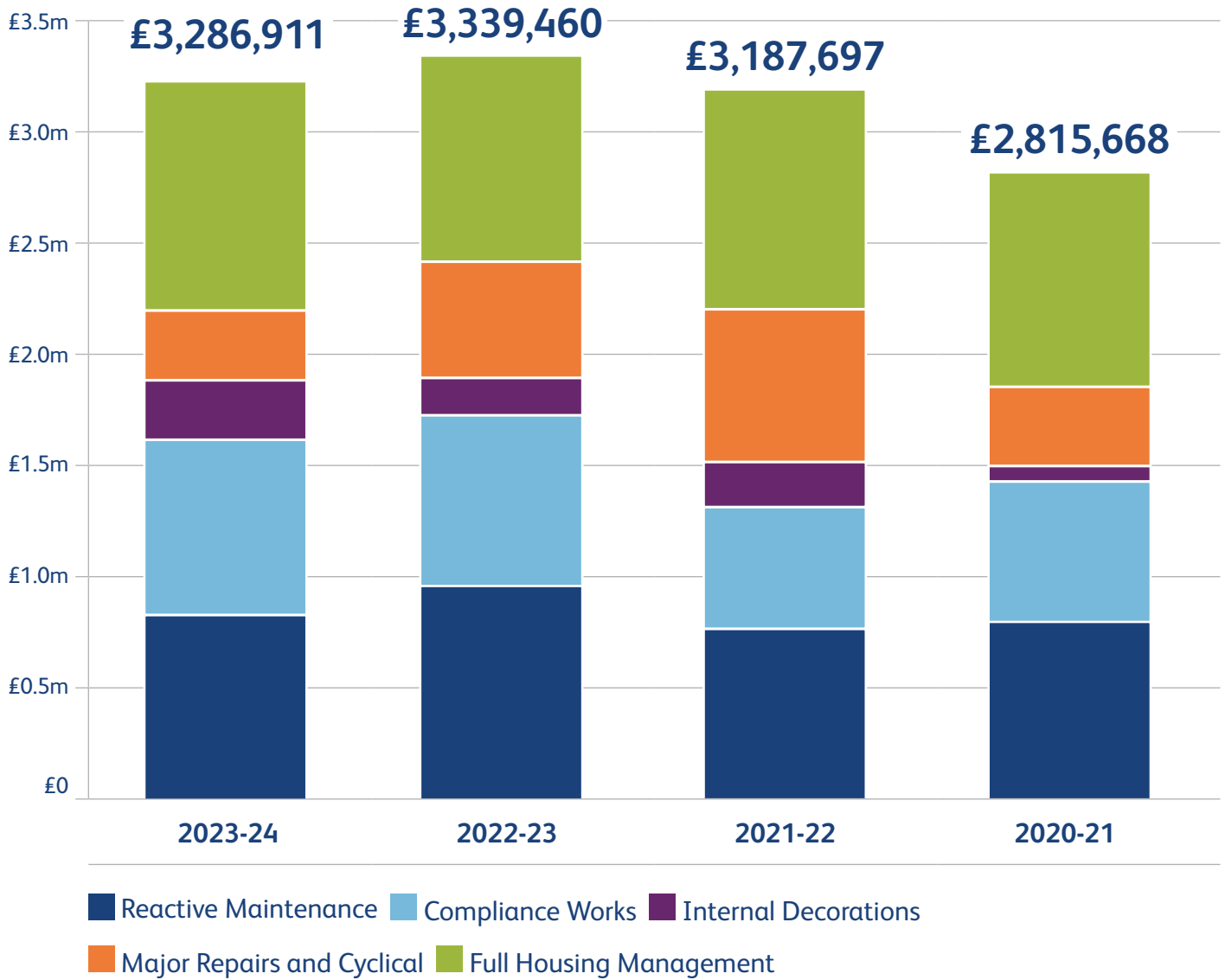
We will always be happy to answer any questions that you have about how we spend your rent.





# How we spent your rent in 2023–2024

## How we spent your rent totals from 2020 – 2024



Like all Registered Providers of social housing, we use ‘cost per unit’ to compare our own costs with those of other specialist housing associations.



Average cost per unit in 2023-24:

**£12,844**

peer group average £13,575

# How we spent your rent in 2023–2024

## Directors' remuneration and management costs

	Group		Parent	
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Non-executive directors	140	140	130	140
Executive staff members	1,357	1,357	1,093	1,281
	1,497	1,497	1,223	1,421
Compensation for loss of office	105	–	105	–

No retirement benefits are accrued under defined benefit schemes.

The Chief Executive Officer was the highest paid employee during the year (similar to prior year 2023).

The total emoluments payable to the Chief Executive Officer (including employer's NI and pension contributions, benefits in kind and compensation for loss of office) were:

	Group		Parent	
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Emoluments	180	216	180	216

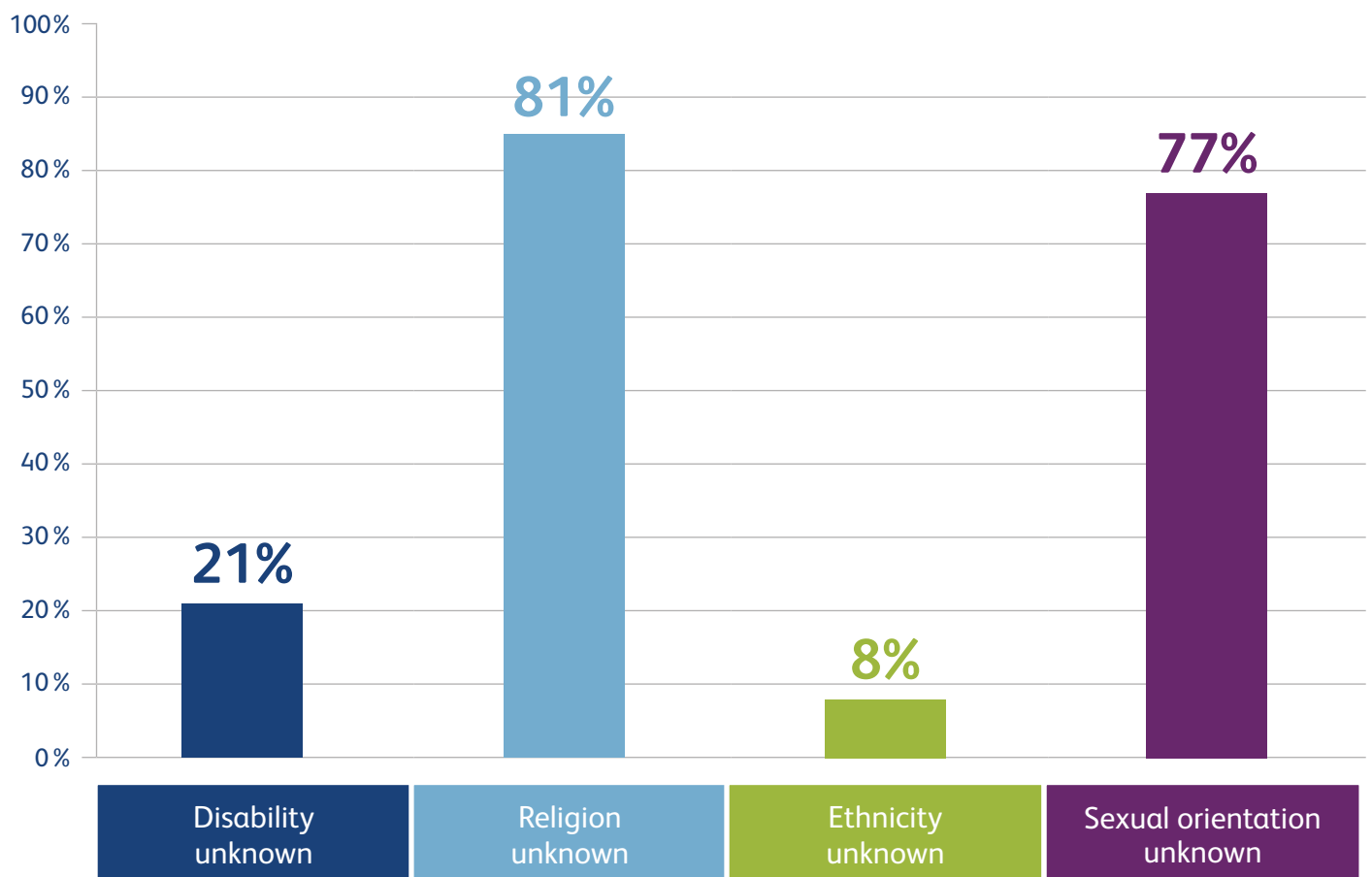
The pension contributions paid by the organisation for the Chief Executive Officer were £12k (2023: £14k)

# About our tenants

## Equality & Diversity Insight

Our existing data does not suggest that tenants experience any meaningful difference in our service to them based on characteristics such as their disability, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation. We would like to hold more information about the diversity of our tenants so that we can double check this. At the same time, we recognise our tenants' right to not share this information with Dimensions. Once we have discussed this issue with our tenant representatives we will put improvement plans in place.

### Our varying understanding of our tenants' diverse characteristics

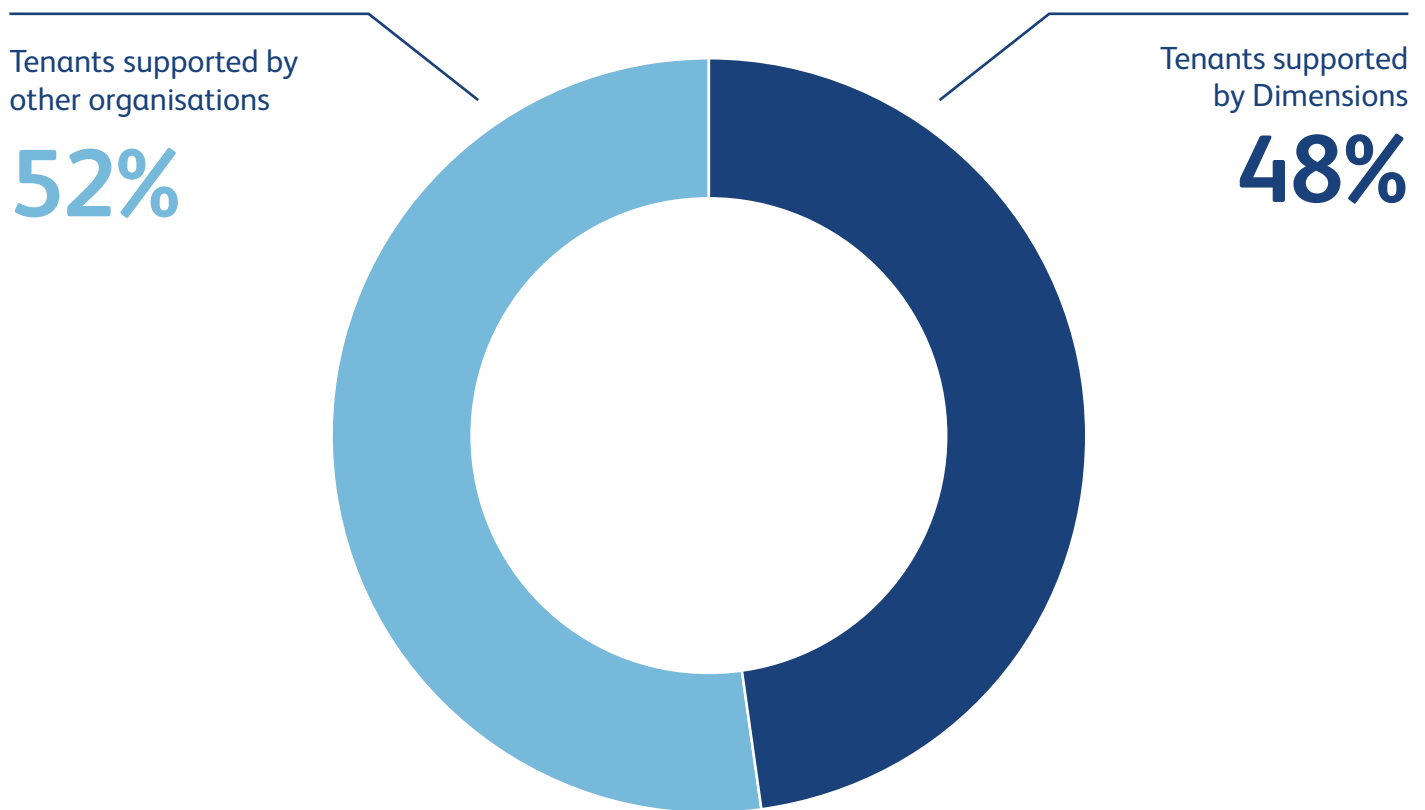


# About our tenants

## Who provides support for our tenants?

Dimensions manages all the homes that it owns except for some registered care homes that are managed by another support provider. We also manage tenancies in properties owned by other social and private landlords where the tenant receives support from Dimensions. Some Dimensions tenants receive support from Dimensions and some receive support from other organisations.

The chart below illustrates the range of support providers across our stock:

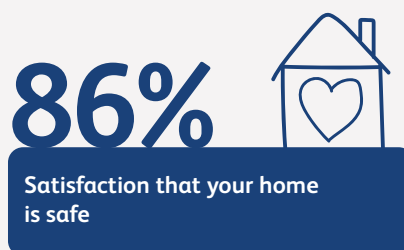
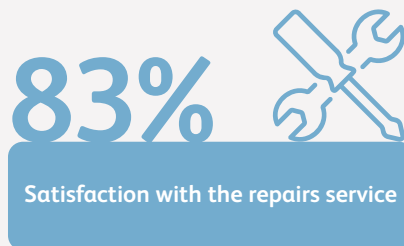


# Listening to our tenants: Annual Tenants' Survey Results

In September 2022 the Regulator of Social Housing introduced the Tenants' Satisfaction Measures. These are standard questions that tenants of all housing associations in England are asked every year.

There are 22 measures in total, including survey questions and performance information. We included the 12 tenant perception questions into this year's annual tenants' survey (completed in March 2024). Here are the results:

## Tenants' Satisfaction Measures as at 25 March 2024



# Listening to our tenants: Annual Tenants' Survey Results

Tenant Satisfaction Measure questions		Very or fairly satisfied	Fairly or very dissatisfied
TP01	Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Dimensions?	86%	2%
TP02	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall repairs service provided by Dimensions over the past 12 months?	83%	1%
TP03	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the time taken to complete your most recent repair after you reported it?	74%	5%
TP04	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Dimensions provides a home that is well maintained?	86%	2%
TP05	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Dimensions provides a home that is safe?	86%	3%
TP06	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Dimensions listens to your views and acts upon them?	80%	1%
TP07	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Dimensions keeps you informed about things that matter to you?	77%	0%
TP08	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following "Dimensions treats me fairly and with respect"?	87%	0%
TP09	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Dimensions' approach to complaints handling?	59%	1%
TP10	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Dimensions keeps these communal areas clean and well maintained?	85%	4%
TP11	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Dimensions makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood?	60%	1%
TP12	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Dimensions' approach to handling anti-social behaviour?	58%	2%
DUK	Would you recommend Dimensions as a Housing provider to your family and friends?	81%	1%

# Listening to our tenants: Annual Tenants' Survey Results

Roughly one in three tenants responded to the survey, which showed low levels of dissatisfaction on all the areas measured. We also asked tenants to tell us their feedback in their own words. We do this because it gives us a very good idea of what is working well and what is working less well, and it helps us to make things better for the respondent.

Most of the comments that people made were about the repairs service. Some of you told us how quick the service is, and some told us we were too slow to get repairs done. Some people said they weren't told how long they would have to wait and some simply told us they had to wait too long. This is an issue that the Housing team aim to improve for all our tenants.

## Repairs feedback

During 2023/24 we've continued to contact tenants directly following the completion of a repair to ask them what they thought of our repairs service and the quality of the repair work.

We spoke to 273 tenants who had a repair completed where they live during 2023/24 (that's 50 more tenants than last year). 85% told us they were satisfied with the repair work and 87% told us they were satisfied with the overall repairs service provided by Dimensions.

Tenant Satisfaction with the overall repairs service:



**273**

Tenant responses



**87%**

Satisfaction

# Listening to our tenants: Representation

The Dimensions Council represents people we support. It makes recommendations to the Dimensions' Board on things that matter to the people we support.

Our tenants are always represented on the Dimensions Council. Our two Tenant Representatives are Angela Jones and Martin Hancox. Angela and Martin speak up on behalf of tenants about housing issues when they attend Dimensions Council Meetings and pass information back to our tenants at our virtual tenant meetings.

In 2024/25 a Tenants Scrutiny Panel will be set up so that our tenant representatives can check the Housing team's performance and plans in more detail, and help ensure that our services are designed and delivered for the benefit of all our tenants.

During 2023/24 we continued to hold monthly tenant meetings using Zoom. These meetings are an opportunity for tenants, their support staff, your tenant representatives, our Housing Quality Consultants and our housing colleagues to meet up to discuss everything to do with our housing service, review our performance and plan for our future.

These meetings usually last for two hours. There is always plenty of time to ask questions and discuss the housing service. Some meetings are held in the morning and some in the afternoon, we also hold them on different days of the week, so as many tenants as possible can attend.



## **We want to work with more of our tenants.**

If you are interested in attending tenants' meetings, please call **0300 303 9194**.

We understand that not everyone is able to meet online, much like not everyone is able to travel and meet in person. We will do whatever we can to help you to become involved if this is something you are interested in.



# Listening to our tenants: Quality Consultants

During 2023/24 our Housing Quality Consultants visited the homes of our tenants, spending time with tenants and their support teams, and inspecting properties.

A Quality Consultant is an Expert by Experience. This means that they have a learning disability or are autistic and also have experience of being a Dimensions tenant. Our Housing Quality Consultants visit the places our tenants live with one of the Regional Housing Advisors and they then co-produce some individual feedback on our homes and submit it to the Housing Team. They've started to present their findings at virtual tenants meetings so more tenants can hear about their visits and their recommendations to improve the homes our tenants live in and the services the Housing team provide.

The results of the 2023/24 visits have all been positive; we will continue to learn all we can from the feedback and insight the Housing Quality Consultants provide.

In particular, we will keep the tenants that were visited updated on any action or changes that have resulted from the Housing Quality Consultants reports and recommendations during 2024/25. We also plan to increase the number of trained Housing Quality Consultants we employ in the south of England.



**If you would like to be a Housing Quality Consultant or would like them to visit the place you live, please call 0300 303 9194.**

# Listening to our tenants: Quality Consultants

Hi, I'm Martin, I live in Coventry and I love my job with Dimensions. I'm a Tenant Rep and Housing Quality Consultant for Dimensions.

It's nice to go to people's homes as a Quality Consultant, I work with Liz from the Housing Team and we check that the homes are safe for tenants to live in.

As a Tenant Rep, I go to the Dimensions Council meetings, I work with Martine from the Housing Team, other Council Members, Dimensions Executive Team and the Board of Dimensions, to help make Dimensions a better landlord.

I tell other tenants what's happening in the Council, it's good to be a tenant and to be involved in different things.

Last year I worked with Amy to give a talk to the whole Housing Team at their away day, I'm the first tenant to do this!

I was also the graphic artist for a two-day Council Meeting which included the Dimensions Board and Executive Team – this is helpful for people who don't read and write as they can look at the pictures and the pictures tell the story of what is happening.

I hope you enjoy reading the Tenants Report, it's a good opportunity to find out more.



If you want to get involved too, please get in touch (you can do this by calling the Housing Hub team: 0300 303 9195).

**Martin** as our official graphic artist at the Dimensions Council Meeting.



# Listening to our tenants: You said, we will do:

Based upon everything we have heard, here is what we plan to do about it:

## What you said you wanted from Tenant Meetings



- Provide more in-person tenants' meetings.
- Support us to set the meeting agenda.
- Provide less information and support us to tell you more.
- We want to talk about what's important to us: safety, security, repairs and rent and service charge changes.
- Support us to be more involved with 'Everybody Counts' and 'Working Together for Change' events.
- Tell us more about the Housing Quality Consultants and what you are doing about their feedback.
- Tell us more about the annual rent and service charge increase.

## What we will do in response:



- We held our first post-Covid-19 in-person meeting in May and will be hosting a second in October.
- A new meeting agenda that starts with "what would you like to talk to us about today?" and contains fewer landlord items.
- Housing Quality Consultants will attend tenants meetings to update people about recent inspections.
- We will provide the meeting with a "what we will do" response.
- We have agreed to include a discussion about rent and service charge at the December tenants meeting.
- We are seeking ways tenants can join 'Everybody Counts' and 'Working Together for Change' in-person meetings.

# Listening to our tenants: You said, we will do:

## How you want us to communicate with you:



- We want regular Housing newsletters.
- More paper, less use of electronic communication.
- We want more easy read guides, starting with one to help with the cost of living crisis and one with advice about damp, mould and condensation.
- Help us to feel more confident to complain when things go wrong.

## What we will do in response:



- Tenant newsletters stopped in 2020. We will aim for two tenant newsletters per year.
- We will explore the balance between the use of paper and electronic communications with tenants.
- We have co-produced an easy read guide to 'damp, mould and condensation' and 'top tips for saving money'. These are being circulated to tenants and will be found on our Dimensions website.
- We continue to work with tenants to improve existing easy read documents and create new ones.
- We have spoken to tenants, family groups and Board members about how we can better support tenants to make complaints and how we can better demonstrate to all that we address concerns and complaints openly, do our best to fix the problem and then work to avoid making the same mistake. This remains a high priority.

# Listening to our tenants: You said, we will do:

## How you want us to help make where you live feel more like home:



- Implement the 'Standards for Maintenance' that we co-produced and make sure contractors understand our needs.
- Do more to help us understand waiting times for repairs to be completed.
- Provide more support to get adaptations done, especially wet rooms.
- Do more to help us feel confident that you will deal with those responsible for anti-social behaviour so I can feel safe at home.
- Do more to ensure we're involved in decisions about the communal spaces that are part of my home, such as decoration and gardening.

## What we will do in response:



- During 2023/24 we re-tendered our responsive repairs service. The 'Standards for Maintenance' was included in the new contracts and all contractors are expected to meet these standards.
- We've employed a Maintenance Manager to work more closely with our four contractors, colleagues and tenants to achieve our targets and standards.
- We will use tenant meetings, newsletters and easy read guides to keep all tenants informed about our repairs service.
- We will review our aids and adaptation policy with tenants.
- We will work with tenant representatives to review all our anti-social behaviour policies, procedures and reporting methods.
- We will also co-produce an easy read guide to services we can provide to support tenants to maintain their indoor and outdoor communal space.

# Housing Ombudsman complaints handling code

The Housing Ombudsman is an independent, impartial, and free service for social housing residents.

All local authorities and registered social housing providers must be members of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme and must comply with the complaints handling code. Dimensions is committed to meeting this code and we self-assess against it every spring – in 2025, we would like to do this self-assessment with our tenants. The Housing Ombudsman works closely with the Regulator for Social Housing to improve services for tenants across the country.

In response to our self-assessment against the Ombudsman’s complaints handling code, we have made some changes to our Complaints Policy, which can be found on our website.

Dimensions also now has a Non-Executive Director – Huw John – with lead responsibility for complaints. Our performance in handling complaints, our learning from them and the results of complaints investigations have been reported at our virtual Tenants’ Meetings and the Quality & Practice Committee.

We now publish our annual self-assessment and annual Housing Concerns, Complaints and Compliments Report on our website. We have been working with tenants, family groups and support providers to build confidence in reporting incidents where our service has failed to meet our own standards and tenants expectation. Once every complaint investigation is completed time is taken to review the findings to see what can learn, and do differently.

“ The Board wants all our tenants and the people we support to feel confident that when something goes wrong they can tell us, they will be listened to and that not only will the problem be fixed but that we will learn from mistakes and use that learning to improve services for all our tenants. ”

**Huw John, Board Member**

We are pleased to report that all complaints were investigated and where they were upheld or partially upheld, resolutions were found and corrective action taken. We had no complaints that were referred to the Housing Ombudsman. No compensation was required to address any of this years’ complaints.

For more information about the Housing Ombudsman service you can visit

<https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/>

Their contact details are:

**Email:** [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

**Phone:** 0300 111 3000

Their phone line opening hours are:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,

Friday, 9am - 5pm, Thursday, 9am - 3.30pm

Lines are closed for staff training:

Every Thursday from 3.30pm to 5pm.

Calls are recorded for training and monitoring purposes.

Or you can write to:

Housing Ombudsman Service

PO Box 1484

Unit D

Preston, PR2 0ET

## Championing the rights of our tenants

Dimensions is a member of many groups and organisations, amongst them:



We campaign on workforce issues, on voting, around learning disability hate crime, and for improved health for people with learning disabilities. In association with all the main cinema chains, we run autism friendly cinema screenings across the country, and we have extended this to libraries and other entertainment venues. Dimensions also runs the Learning Disability and Autism Leaders' List which aims to support leaders with learning disabilities and autism to raise their voice and personal profile and accelerate social change.

# Meet the Housing Team



**Chief Housing & Commercial Officer:**

**Julia Ashley**

**Email:** [Julia.ashley@dimensions-uk.org](mailto:Julia.ashley@dimensions-uk.org)

**Telephone** contact via the Housing Hub Service 0300 303 9195



**Director of Housing:**

**Grenville Hague**

**Email:** [Grenville.hague@dimensions-uk.org](mailto:Grenville.hague@dimensions-uk.org)

**Telephone** contact via the Housing Hub Service 0300 303 9195

## Dimensions' Housing Hub Team

### **What is the Housing Hub?**

The Housing Hub was launched in November 2021 to provide a central Housing Service point of contact for our tenants, their support teams, other support providers and our contractors. While the main function of the Housing Hub is to manage our property repairs and maintenance service for tenants, we are also the first point of contact for any general Housing Team enquiries.

The Housing Hub replaced Astraline who have been our out-sourced service provider for many years.

Astraline will continue to provide an out-of-hours service for any emergency repairs (**out-of-hours is from 5pm to 9am plus all day Saturday, Sunday, and bank holidays**).

### **How do I contact the Housing Hub?**

You can call us on **0300 303 9195** or email [maintenance@dimensions-uk.org](mailto:maintenance@dimensions-uk.org)

### **Who will I be speaking to when I call?**

When you call the Housing Hub, your call will be answered by any one of the team, be that Molly, Sandra, Steph, Angela, or Deborah.



# Meet the Housing Team

## What do you need me to tell you?

When reporting a repair, and to enable us to diagnose what work is required, we would ask that you give a full and accurate description of your repair problems.

## And finally...

It's important that we have up to date contact details for you so please let us know if these change, for example a new mobile phone number or e-mail address. The reason for this is we like to ask you about your satisfaction with our repairs service.

## Meet the team

**Deborah**



Housing Services  
Manager

**Molly**



Housing Hub  
Services Officer

**Sandra**



Housing Hub  
Services Officer

**Steph**



Housing Hub  
Services Officer

**Angela**



Housing Hub  
Services Officer

## Dimensions' Tenancy Services Team and Housing & Contracts Team:

Dimensions employs an experienced team of Regional Housing Advisors who provide a specialist housing management service tailored to the needs of the tenant. The service is provided to supported living services both shared and single occupancy, some supported by Dimensions support and others by external support providers.

## Our Regional Housing Advisors



**Martine Otton**

**Email:** Martine.Otton@  
dimensions-uk.org

**Region:** Yorkshire,  
North Lincolnshire



**Kath Lisle**

**Email:** Kath.Lisle@  
dimensions-uk.org

**Region:** North-East &  
West and North Yorkshire

# Meet the Housing Team

## Our Regional Housing Advisors continued

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**Karen Hennessy**  
**Email:** Karen.Hennessy@  
dimensions-uk.org  
**Region:** Wales



**Liz Davies**  
**Email:** Elizabeth.Davies@  
dimensions-uk.org  
**Region:** West



**Shami Choudhury**  
**Email:** Shami.Choudhury1  
@dimensions-uk.org  
**Region:** Central



**David Anker**  
**Email:** David.Anker@  
dimensions-uk.org  
**Region:** London &  
South-East



**Emma Dickins**  
**Email:** Emma.Dickins@  
dimensions-uk.org  
**Region:** South West



**Jeannette Hibberd**  
**Email:** Jeannette.Hibberd@  
dimensions-uk.org  
**Region:** South



**Mo Valli**  
**Email:** Mo.valli@  
dimensions-uk.org  
**Region:** Tenancy  
Services Manager

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# Meet the Housing Team

Regional Housing Advisor responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing housing management services, including budget management for the home, organising and paying for services like gardening, renewal of white goods and furniture.
- Explaining tenancy and rent obligations. We have pictorial and visual tenancies to help tenants understand their rights and responsibilities.
- Enforcement action for anti-social behaviour or other tenancy breaches from easy read warnings to court action.
- Advising/dealing with repairs and maintenance which may be more involved due to the nature of our tenant's ability, or support need.
- Help with housing benefit applications and reviews.
- Working with families and appointees with regards to all aspects of housing.
- Partnership working with support teams and external stakeholders on housing/building, health & safety and safeguarding related issues.
- Property inspections, including health & safety checks and extra compliance checks if needed.
- Help and advice with regards to any adaptations required based on the needs of the tenant.
- Contract negotiation with private landlords and other organisations from whom Dimensions leases or manages accommodation.
- Arranging and hosting Tenant Listening events and other meetings to encourage tenant empowerment and involvement.
- Advocating for tenants either directly or via signposting.
- Partnership working to turnaround voids.

The Regional Housing Advisor role is more intensive than general needs housing management, to meet the needs of our tenants who need extra help maintaining their tenancy due to their support needs.

# Meet the Housing Team

## Contact the team

The Housing Management team can be contacted between the hours of **9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday on 0300 303 9194**.

You can send emails to **HousingEnquiry@dimensions-uk.org** or directly to the relevant Regional Housing Advisor for the region.

## Dimensions' Housing & Contracts Manager:



### **Ingrid Deicke**

Dimensions' Housing & Contracts Manager:

Ingrid oversees contracts and leases with private landlords and other organisations we lease accommodation from.

Ingrid leads on setting Dimensions rents and services charges, and liaison with external landlords in this process. Ingrid also liaises and agrees rents and service charges with local authorities/commissioners when Dimensions is setting up new services.

Ingrid can be contacted on **0300 303 9131** or directly via email at **Ingrid.deicke@dimensions-uk.org**



### **Karen Bushell**

Dimensions' Rent and Service Charge Officer:

Tenants are charged a weekly rent which includes service charges both eligible and ineligible for housing benefit. This is monitored and managed by our Rent & Service Charge Officer, Karen Bushell.

Karen liaises with tenants/families/appointees to ensure rent is paid in a timely manner and any debts are addressed. Karen liaises with Housing Benefit teams regarding under and over payments of housing benefit.

Karen can be contacted on **0300 303 9194**, via **RentAccounts@dimensions-uk.org** or directly at **Karen.bushell@dimensions-uk.org**

# Meet the Housing Team

## Property Services Team

Dimensions employs an experienced team of Asset and Compliance Management and colleagues, alongside external specialists that help provide nationwide Property Management Coverage to our Housing Stock (your homes). We own and manage supported housing and registered care homes where you as tenants see a fully inclusive property management and maintenance service.



**Russ Clarke**  
**Head of Property**  
**Email:** [Russell.Clarke1@dimensions-uk.org](mailto:Russell.Clarke1@dimensions-uk.org)



**Rich Lawson**  
**Development and Asset Manager**  
**Email:** [Richard.Lawson@dimensions-uk.org](mailto:Richard.Lawson@dimensions-uk.org)



**Kay Bowman**  
**Development and Asset Manager**  
**Email:** [Kay.Bowman1@dimensions-uk.org](mailto:Kay.Bowman1@dimensions-uk.org)



**Jon Knowles**  
**Maintenance Manager**  
**Email:** [Jon.Knowles@dimensions-uk.org](mailto:Jon.Knowles@dimensions-uk.org)



**Vera Renakova**  
**Compliance Manager**  
**Email:** [Vera.Renakova@dimensions-uk.org](mailto:Vera.Renakova@dimensions-uk.org)



**Chris Edwards**  
**Housing Data Analyst**  
**Email:** [Christopher.Edwards@dimensions-uk.org](mailto:Christopher.Edwards@dimensions-uk.org)

You can call us on **0300 303 9195** or email [maintenance@dimensions-uk.org](mailto:maintenance@dimensions-uk.org)

# Better Lives for More People

For over 40 years, we have been supporting people with learning disabilities and autistic people to have a louder voice, choice, and control in their lives.

We design personalised support for each individual, working towards specific outcomes in the cornerstones of a good life: health, relationships, work, hobbies, and having fun.

## Contact us to find out more:



**Website:** [www.dimensions-uk.org](http://www.dimensions-uk.org)

**Phone:** 0300 303 9001

**Email:** [enquiries@dimensions-uk.org](mailto:enquiries@dimensions-uk.org)

**Find us on social media** @DimensionsUK



## Dimensions

Ground Floor, Building 1430, Arlington Business Park, Theale, Reading, RG7 4SA

Dimensions (UK) is a charitable registered society number 31129R.

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