



# How we're working for you.

Annual Report 2024-2025 for Milton Keynes City  
Council tenants, shared owners, and leaseholders







# Foreword

## Councillor Ed Hume, Cabinet Member for Housing



As the city's largest landlord with more than 12,000 homes, we've been working hard to make improvements to our council housing, while ensuring

compliance with Consumer Standards for Social Housing and we're very grateful for the feedback you've given us along the way.

Thank you to everyone who has got involved, whether you've taken time to respond to a consultation, joined our tenant engagement group, helped shape our new housing policies or in some other way.

Thanks to your feedback, we've been changing the way we work to improve the service you get.

In last year's tenant perception survey, overall satisfaction for tenants was at 53% and for shared owners it was 46%, which is no change from the year before. This shows us that we have more to do to increase satisfaction. I can assure you there's plenty of good work already going on and ahead of us.

The Big Conversation in September is key to this work, where we'll be out and about in communities talking with tenants about what's working well and where we need to do better.

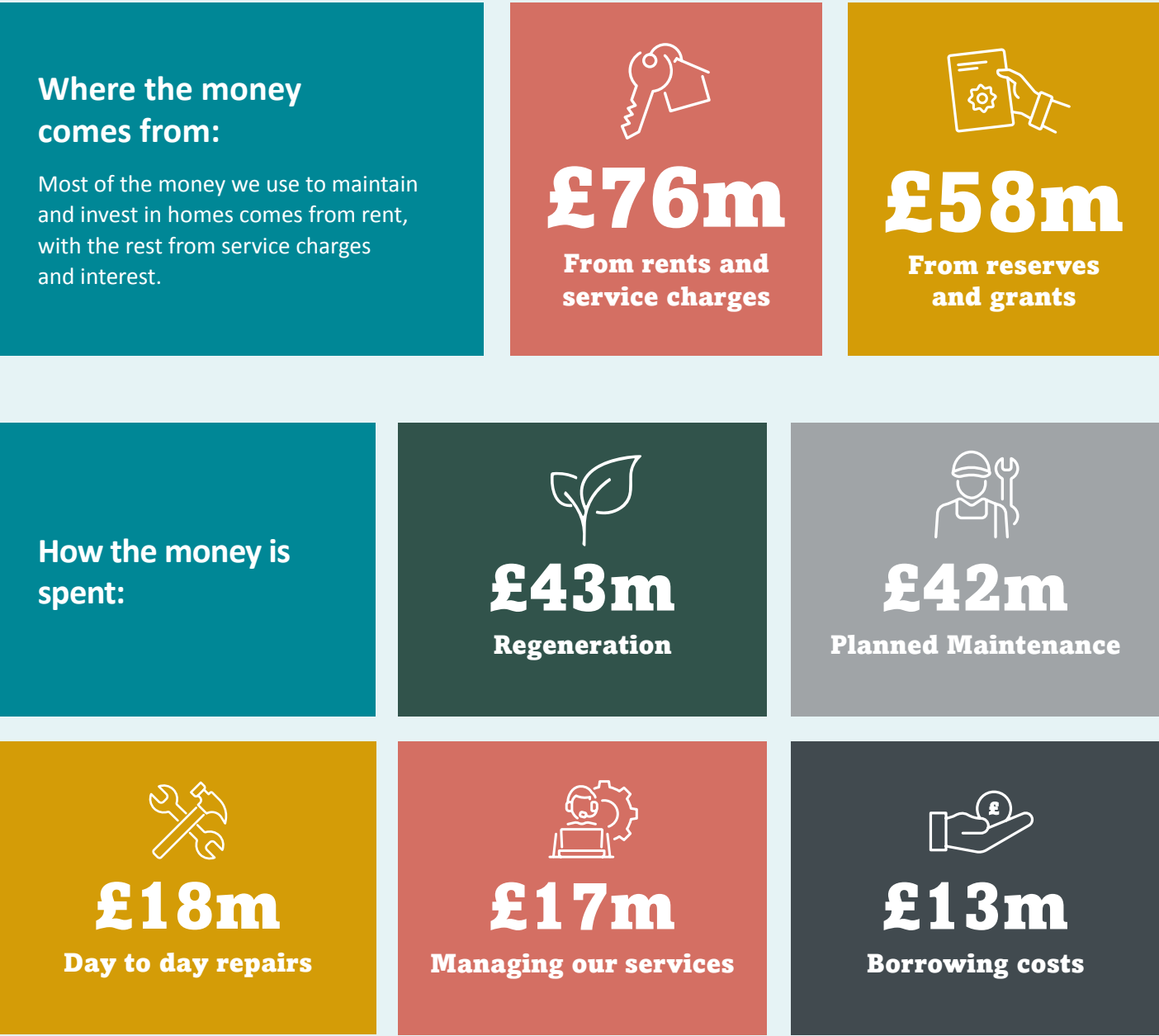
Everyone's voice matters and we want to hear yours.

### A few things from the last year that I'm particularly proud of:

- Creating much-needed new council homes – with the first homes already handed over to tenants at our major Lakes Estate redevelopment, and a contractor appointed to develop 66 homes including bungalows at Cripps Lodge.
- Starting a new repairs and maintenance contract with Mears which focuses on the things you've said are really important, like more 'first time' repairs and a quicker response.
- Modernising homes and reducing tenants' fuel bills by improving energy efficiency.



# Making every pound count



## Our average weekly rents 2024/25

- Social Rents £105
- Shared Ownership Rents £95
- Affordable Rents £210

In the last year we collected 100% of the rent due, up from 99% the year before. Some of this is advance or backdated payments. Some tenants continue to owe us rent.

Renting from us is around **42% lower** than renting privately in Milton Keynes.

# Keeping you safe in your home

We're committed to providing safe, well-maintained homes and an accessible and effective repairs service. In 2024/25 this is how we kept you safe:

- 9,729 domestic gas safety checks
- 64 communal gas safety checks
- 2,468 domestic electrical tests and fire detection upgrades
- 47 communal electrical checks
- 558 communal asbestos inspections
- 305 emergency lighting tests

Giving you more confidence

In our repairs and maintenance consultation, most tenants and leaseholders said they wanted us to have greater control over the important safety work we do in your home, such as checking fire doors. We listened and are appointing contractors to carry out these checks. We'll publish their details on our website at [milton-keynes.gov.uk/housing-contractors](https://milton-keynes.gov.uk/housing-contractors)

We'll also be publishing how well we're doing on repairs and safety matters, as we want everyone to have confidence in this. **We continue to keep on top of routine safety checks. Sometimes we do these when a property is void too.**

YOU SAID:

**56% Satisfaction that your home is safe**

1,026 tenants answered this question.

No significant change from the previous survey result.

## Completed on time:



## Fire safety at our sheltered housing schemes

We've made significant fire safety upgrades to our sheltered housing schemes including to fire doors, fire detection systems, emergency lighting and more. **Magdalen House and Dexter House** have had their secondary fire escape routes significantly improved, and this will happen at Bellfounder House, Byerly House, and Hinton Court next.

# Keeping homes in good repair

53,155

Repairs made (the equivalent of one every ten minutes around the clock)

99.7%

Percentage of repairs completed on time

8.3 days

Average time to complete

68,251

Calls taken

15 seconds

Average time to answer

In tenants’ homes in 2024/25 we fitted:

- 236 new boilers and heating systems
- 387 new doors
- New windows in 221 homes
- Solar panels in 82 homes
- 1 lift, replaced at a sheltered housing scheme

We continue to work hard so more of our homes meet the decent homes standard, currently 93%.

**A new contract for repairs**

This is what you can expect from the new contract we have agreed with Mears, which started in August:

- **Emergency repairs:** Completed in less than 24 hours
- **Priority repairs:** Completed within 14 days, typically less
- **Routine repairs:** Completed within 28 days, typically less
- **Evening bookings (Wednesdays):** For routine repairs
- **Stronger oversight:** Where we monitor Mears’ performance more closely, as well as making sure all work meets regulatory standards



YOU SAID:

59% satisfaction with repairs and time to complete

50% Satisfaction that the home is well maintained

No significant change from the previous survey results.

It’s easy to report repairs:

Online via [Mears’ portal](#) | Call on 0330 123 2522 | Email [repairs.miltonkeynes@mearsgroup.co.uk](mailto:repairs.miltonkeynes@mearsgroup.co.uk)

# Listening to you

Tenants have helped us come up with better ways to engage and involve people, guided by a new Resident Engagement Project Board. A new Tenant Charter and Resident Engagement Strategy will be introduced in 2025/26.

In September 2025 we’ll be running The Big Conversation, where we’ll be knocking on doors and holding community activities to talk about what’s important to you, and to help create new neighbourhood connections.

YOU SAID:

38% said we listen and act on tenant views

48% said we keep you informed

53% said we treat you fairly and with respect

No significant change from the previous survey results.

## Holding us accountable

Plans are in place to increase the number of actively engaged residents and introduce a tenant scrutiny panel, the Residents and Officers Reflection Group.

Our Anti-Social Behaviour Monitoring Group and Block Champions programme will continue to empower residents to influence how we do things:

- Block Champions monitor communal areas for cleaning standards, bulky waste, and repairs, and report at least once per month.
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Monitoring Group meets quarterly and works with the Anti-Social Behaviour team to review key performance indicators and victim satisfaction survey results.



Tenants have helped us review the way we work.

We’ll also be introducing new housing officer drop-ins, tenant led-panels and neighbourhood walkabouts to keep listening.

If we don’t get the opportunity to talk to you during The Big Conversation there’s other ways to get involved. If you’d like to be part of a tenant engagement group, call us on 01908 253 148 or email [residentengagement@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:residentengagement@milton-keynes.gov.uk)



# Putting things right

We're committed to being more responsive and transparent, which includes:

- Keeping everyone updated on the results of complaint investigations.
- Being very clear what we can and cannot do.
- Making it straightforward to escalate complaints when necessary.
- Working with our contractors to make sure they're giving a quality service.

**YOU SAID:**

**25% Satisfaction with how we handle complaints**

No significant change from the previous survey results.

During 2024/25, we managed:

48

Stage 1 complaints per 1,000 homes

UP 16%

10

Stage 2 complaints per 1,000 homes

UP 6%

The most common reasons for complaints are roof leaks, heating related issues, and kitchen or bathroom repairs.

## How we handled your complaints

53%

Stage 1 complaints responded to on time. UP 39%.

62%

Stage 2 complaints responded to on time. UP 38%.

# Working together to improve estates



We work with others to help with the upkeep and safety of neighbourhoods.

**YOU SAID:**

**48% said Communal areas clean and well maintained**

**41% said we make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods**

No significant change from the previous survey results.

581

Estate inspections made

Estate inspections usually involve walking an estate to identify issues such as garden upkeep, landscaping quality, communal space maintenance, and environmental issues like littering, fly-tipping, and abandoned vehicles.

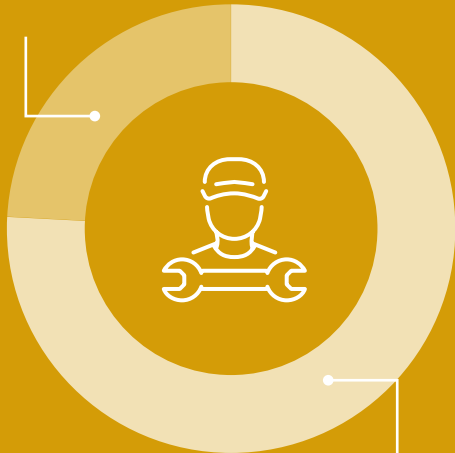
In the coming year we'll be introducing Neighbour Walkabouts, where residents and partner agencies are invited to join us. We're doing this so people can highlight issues that matter most to them, and to help foster stronger connections within our communities.

We also look after 533 internal communal areas. We record work daily, aiming to meet the standards set out in our Cleaning and Caretaking Service Standards Handbook (in April 2024, following consultation with tenants, we implemented new cleaning standards).

26,881

Visits by caretaking teams

24%  
ad-hoc



76%  
scheduled

# Creating safer neighbourhoods

## We've listened to feedback from victims of anti-social behaviour and others who use our service and made improvements:

- Expanding the ways people can report ASB, making it easier and more accessible.
- A new case-management procedure which puts the victim central to the process.
- Introduced action plans so we can be more accountable for the promises we make.
- New response times for hate-related behaviour.
- Embedded our Victim Satisfaction Survey.

## During the year we:

- Made three closure orders (which brings immediate relief in cases such as drug activities, as it closes the property).
- Initiated six ASB injunctions, which require persistent offenders to engage with services and stop their behaviours, and we continue to manage 20 more. Two ASB injunctions were breached, and one resulted in a custodial sentence.
- Recovered seven properties due to serious ASB and criminal behaviour. Possession proceedings are a last resort, and the tenant will be evicted.

In the coming year, our focus for improvement will be on increasing response times, keeping the promises we make in our Victims Code through effective action plans, maintaining regular contact with victims, changing how we engage with hard-to-reach groups, and raising awareness of hate related behaviours and how to report it (in line with our new Hate Policy).

### 208 Cases of anti-social behaviour

Most commonly: drug use or supply, verbal abuse, harassment, violence.

### 16.8 Anti-social behaviour cases per 1,000 homes

6.9 higher than last year.

### 0.4 Hate incident cases per 1,000 homes

5 cases in total. No change to last year.

### 89% Cases responded to on time

### 90% High risk cases responded to on time

### 97% Cases successfully resolved

### 78% Satisfied with how we handled the case

## YOU SAID:

### 37% Satisfaction with ASB handling

No significant change from the previous survey results.

# Supporting you through tough times

We offer support to residents who are struggling financially, including proactively reaching out to around 1,500 people last year to help them reduce debt and find new sources of income such as unclaimed benefits.

In the last year our debt support initiatives have been nominated for three awards, and we won the silver award for tenant services in the Housing Technology Awards. We found a total of £493,000 of extra income for our tenants.

We were able to reduce rent arrears from £923,000 in 2023/24 to £856,000 in 2024/25, which also meant evictions for rent arrears reduced from 32 to 21.

Two years ago, 152 tenants were more than £2,000 in debt to us. In April 2025, that number dropped by around a third to 104.

**Last year we achieved a record low arrears percentage of 3.17%.**



# 80%

**Of tenants we helped have reduced their debts**



# 40%

**Of tenants we helped are no longer in debt at all**



# £557

**Average reduction in debt per tenant helped**

## Having problems keeping up with your rent and bills?

It's important you tell us early. Get in touch on 01908 252 937 (option 1).



# Allocating homes fairly

We've worked hard to make our Housing Allocations Scheme fair, transparent and informed by residents.

The scheme applies to all residents and is a key part of how we meet Tenancy and Transparency Standards, ensuring that access to housing is fair, well-managed, and clearly communicated.

We consulted with the public in 2024, receiving 423 responses and strong support for the proposed changes, and introduced the new Scheme in January 2025.

4,461

Applications assessed

677

Homes offered

659

Households nominated to registered providers

59

Mutual exchanges facilitated

1,018

Introductory visits with new tenants

Support for successful tenancies

We want our tenants to feel supported and to understand their responsibilities from day one. We make introductory visits to check in with new tenants, confirm who does what, and identify any early support needs. We carried out 1,018 visits during the year (out of 1,176 scheduled) which is a completion rate of 87%. We're focusing on increasing that number this year.

Over the life of a tenancy, in-person audits help us to keep homes safe and address issues early. We verify occupancy, identify any safeguarding or support needs, and ensure properties are being maintained. Our aim is for every tenant to be visited at least once every five years. We completed 1,452 tenancy audits in 2024/25.

## Ready to downsize?

Family size homes are in high demand, and some tenants no longer need a home that large. Last year, we paid out £44,000 in cash incentives to 27 tenants who downsized through our incentive scheme. We offer:

- £1,000 per bedroom released
- An extra £1,000 for moves into sheltered housing

- Up to £500 for relocation costs
- Up to £500 for carpets
- Help with furniture disposal

If you're interested in downsizing, call us on 01908 252937 (choose option 4)

# Building a brighter future for communities

## New council homes

Tenants started moving into the first of 183 new and modern council homes on the Lakes Estate homes in July 2025. It was a significant moment for the local community, who have played a central role in shaping the regeneration project through years of collaboration. In the coming year we will work on a business plan for 'phase B' of the regeneration work, including working with Homes England who provided funding for the first phase.

Tenants also started moving in to 21 flats we purchased in Fairfields, which was enabled by a change in rules on how we can use our Right To Buy receipts. We have appointed a contractor to build 66 new council homes on the former Cripps Lodge site in Netherfield. The development will include houses, bungalows and flats, and will feature energy efficiency measures to ensure bills remain low for tenants.

## Updates from Estate Renewal Forums

Estate Renewal Forums take the lead on engagement and consultation in the city's regeneration areas. Here are some of their achievements over the last year.

### Lakes Estate Renewal Forum

- Monthly meetings where residents can ask questions and receive updates from the developer of the new homes.
- Activities and events such as a successful Health and Wellbeing Day, to tackle local issues such as health and wellbeing, loneliness, and the cost of living crisis, and to help residents share their voice.

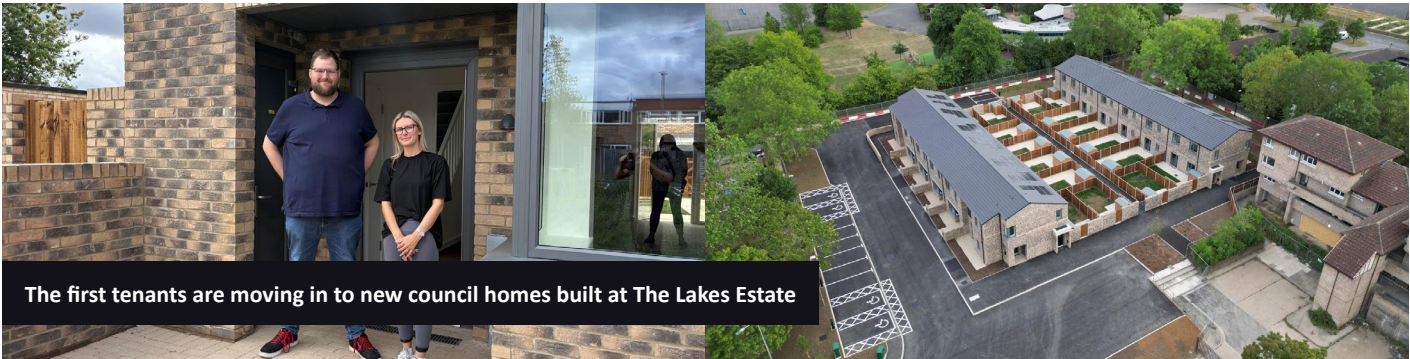
- External funding has been secured to help deliver their forum's well-attended events, meetings and activities.

### Bradville Estate Renewal Forum

- Engaging residents for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Project where 100+ homes will receive improved insulation, including holding drop-in meetings where residents spoke directly to the city council and contractor Mears.
- Successful consultation on the Big Slide Park, inviting local residents to have their say on new pieces of equipment that were installed earlier this year.
- Supporting the local Bradwell Windmill heritage project which has successfully secured £250,000 of lottery funding.

### Fullers Slade Estate Renewal Forum

- Cohesion events such as Fullers Slade Iftar event breaking down barriers and bringing communities together to share culture, experiences and food during the month of Ramadan.
- Securing external funding from both National Lottery and Shared Prosperity Fund to help deliver events and activities throughout the year bringing experiences to a community that has higher than national averages of deprivation.
- Building capacity within the community; the forum itself growing stronger and delivering more through support and training, enabling them to provide more services for their community.
- Regular coffee mornings, brunch clubs and surgeries bringing communities and services together and tackling loneliness and isolation.



The first tenants are moving in to new council homes built at The Lakes Estate



# Living independently

Our sheltered housing service is designed for tenants primarily aged 60 years and over. Throughout the year we've been consulting with tenants regarding their priorities and the future of the service, specifically the time spent on each scheme by Sheltered Housing Officers.

A high proportion of tenants attended local consultation meetings, and 61% of tenants responded in writing.

The majority of the tenants who responded (47%) opted to share Sheltered Housing Officers between schemes, which means each scheme will receive 18.5 hours of support each week from 1 September 2025.

Tenants will be supported through the changes. The changes have resulted in a new flat charge. Tenants who receive full benefits towards their rent will no longer need to pay anything for the service, and tenants who receive partial benefits will receive a contribution towards the charges.

As in previous years, we have been proactive in allocating properties and have sustained an occupancy rate in our sheltered housing schemes of more than 96%.



## Report a repair

☎ 0330 123 2522  
✉ [repairs.miltonkeynes@mearsgroup.co.uk](mailto:repairs.miltonkeynes@mearsgroup.co.uk)



Scan to report online

## Pay your rent

☎ 01908 252 937  
(option 9 to pay, option 1 with a query)  
[rents@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:rents@milton-keynes.gov.uk)



Scan to pay online

## Report anti-social behaviour

☎ 01908 252 937 (option 3)  
✉ [ASB@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:ASB@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

Living in sheltered housing?  
Contact your sheltered housing officer.

## Changes to your tenancy

☎ 01908 252 937 (option 2)



Scan to report online

## Give us feedback

☎ 01908 253 817  
✉ [complimentsandcomplaints@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:complimentsandcomplaints@milton-keynes.gov.uk)



Complete the online feedback form

## Escalating issues further

Housing Ombudsman  
☎ 0300 111 3000  
✉ [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

## If you are a leaseholder or shared owner

☎ 01908 253 705  
✉ [home.ownership@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:home.ownership@milton-keynes.gov.uk)



Scan for more information online

## Domestic abuse help

☎ 0344 375 4307  
✉ [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)



Scan for help online





# Be part of The Big Conversation!

The Big Conversation is happening between 22 and 27 September. We'll be out and about, knocking on doors and inviting tenants to share their views on what's working well and where we need to do better. But the conversation doesn't end then. You can take part on our Tenant Perception Survey until 31 March 2026.

Scan the QR code to take part in the short survey.



Your feedback will help shape the future of our housing services. Please spare us a few minutes to share your thoughts!

There's lots of other ways to get involved. If you'd like to be part of a tenant engagement group, call us on **01908 253 148** or email [residentengagement@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:residentengagement@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

Visit [milton-keynes.gov.uk/tenants-groups](https://milton-keynes.gov.uk/tenants-groups) to find out about other groups and associations where you live.