

**“OUR BYKER,
OUR COMMUNITY,
OUR TENANTS”.**

BYKER
community trust



Our Tenants' Second Annual Report - October 2015

www.bykercommunitytrust.org

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LANGUAGES

This information is about Byker Community Trust, which owns the Byker Wall Estate in Newcastle upon Tyne. If you would like this information in your own language, an interpreter can help you on 0191 278 8633. This information is also available in large print, Braille and audio tape. We can also arrange for you to see a British Sign Language interpreter.

تحيات نوباً لسالكويين يف Byker رادجل تاراقعل لئلمت يتلا ،ققثلا عمدتجل Byker لوح تامول عملا هذه
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0191 278 8633

České Tato informace je o Byker Společenství Trust, která vlastní majetek Byker zeď v Newcastle upon Tyne.
Czech Chcete-li tuto informaci ve vašem vlastním jazyce tlumočnick vám může pomoci na 0191 278 8633.

Français Cette information est d'environ Byker Community Trust, qui est propriétaire du domaine Byker mur
French à Newcastle upon Tyne. Si vous voulez cette information dans votre propre langue un interprète peut vous aider sur 0191 278 8633.

Polonais Informacja ta jest o Byker Wspólnoty Trust, który jest właścicielem nieruchomości Byker ściany w
Polish Newcastle upon Tyne. Jeśli chcesz tę informację w swoim własnym języku tłumacza może pomóc na 0191 278 8633.

Português Esta informação é sobre Byker Community Trust, que detém a propriedade Byker parede em
Portuguese Newcastle upon Tyne. Se você quiser que essas informações no seu próprio idioma de um intérprete pode ajudá-lo no 0191 278 8633.

русский Эта информация о Byker Community Trust, которая владеет недвижимости Byker стене в
Russian Ньюкасл-апон-Тайн. Если вы хотите эту информацию на своем родном языке переводчик может помочь вам на 0191 278 8633.

FRONT COVER PHOTOS Main image: Part of the refurbished Byker Wall. Second image: YMCA Help the Heroes. Third image: Thumbs up for the Fun Day.

FOREWORD

Welcome to our second Annual Report to Tenants called **'Our Byker, Our Community, Our Tenants'** the title chosen by the Tenant Communications Group, and what a year it has been...



Jill Haley
Chief Executive

Within this report, you will see some of our early achievements and performance milestones as we rightly celebrate another successful year. But more than that, you will see that we have been working with you, our residents, to enable us to be better informed about what you want. Your involvement is helping us to plan for better future service delivery and at the same time to get the best value from the money we spend, so a big thank you to everyone who has already got involved.

We have continued to deliver the Offer Promises which we made to you at the time of transfer of the estate from Newcastle City Council, whilst at the same time applying greater influence and control over the contractors who provide services to you, on BCT's behalf.

We are indeed living through very challenging economic times and it has never been more important for BCT to manage our costs whilst at the same time demonstrating value for money, not only to the housing regulator and our funders, but most of all to you, our residents.

We are on a journey to improve and deliver excellence in customer service, I feel it is important that I echo the plea which I made last year. I would again invite you to get involved with us because your views are extremely important.

By working together, we will make 'Our Byker' even better.

"By working together, we will make 'Our Byker' even better."



HOW WAS OUR SECOND ANNUAL REPORT TO TENANTS DEVELOPED?



No us or them. We are all in this together. It's 'Our Byker'

Mrs Oxborough, Michaelgate

Meet the BCT Tenant Communications Group who have worked hard to develop our second Annual Report to Tenants. The group started with a blank sheet of paper and built up this year's report considering what questions tenants might want to ask BCT and also what information tenants might want. The Tenant Communications Group wanted to ensure that the report meets the needs of you, our tenants.

'Our Byker, Our Community, Our Tenants', has been developed by tenants, for tenants.

WHAT HAS THE TENANT COMMUNICATIONS GROUP DONE?

The report has been developed and directed by the 'Tenant Communications Group' who gradually built up this year's report. Building on last year's award winning annual report, the group reviewed best practice and have adapted some of the innovations they liked to make this year's report even better.

The Group suggested the report title, style, which questions to ask, the layout and pictures for the report. They designed questions for BCT staff to respond to and the answers given will hopefully provide you with the information you want. The Group wanted to provide everyone with a chance to look at what BCT has achieved and how BCT continues to strive to put tenants at the heart of everything they do.



But that's not all. The Group has ensured that the content of this report is easy to understand. You'll see the Tenant Approved logo at the end of the report. This logo was suggested by the Tenant Communications Group and in future you will find it on all documents which have been approved by the Group.

AN INVITATION TO JOIN THE TEAM

The Communications Group would like to take this chance to invite you to join the team and help to further improve communications within BCT and our community. If you would like some more information, please contact David Jones on Freephone 0800 533 5442.

BYKER USEFUL NUMBERS DIRECTORY

In the middle pages we have included a Byker useful numbers directory which will help you to contact any of the organisations working in Byker.

SOMETIMES I DON'T UNDERSTAND SOME OF THE TERMS USED. CAN YOU HELP?

To help you, we have put a 'glossary of terms' towards the end of this report to explain some of the terms used.



We hope you will enjoy reading about 'Our Byker' and BCT's plans for the future.

JILL HALEY (CHIEF EXECUTIVE) ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

It sounds like life in BCT has been busy. What has been happening this year?

This year has been another really challenging and busy year for BCT but I am so proud of what we have achieved.

Not only are we making a difference within the Byker community, we are also raising the profile of the work that we are delivering nationally.

I am delighted to report that refurbishment work on the Byker Wall is progressing well. We have already passed the half way stage and it looks fantastic. A new concierge and digital aerial system is also being installed and aims to improve contact, security and enjoyment for those residents living in the Wall. Work continues to replace major parts of the district heating system, which provides heating and hot water to all properties on the estate. We also refurbished a disused council owned building, Chirton House and created 16 new stunning, luxury apartments for the over 50's (two of them for disabled residents) and we have also moved forward with the external painting programme in Byker.

As you know the transfer offer to tenants was comprehensive with specific promises relating to investment. The promises relating to service delivery were less specific but made it clear that 'The Board' will review service delivery arrangements to make sure BCT is getting high quality service and value for money. During the first five years, BCT would look at whether services could be provided better by other providers. With this in mind in April, the BCT Board commenced a service review and set some key criteria which were;

- BCT's control over the standards of service to be delivered with focus on improvement in quality and cost.
- Demonstrating Value for Money, including excellence in services to customers; and
- Completing the delivery of Stock Transfer Promises to tenants.

The review continues and very shortly we will be consulting you on this in more detail.

I am pleased to say that despite the current economic climate, BCT has continued to grow and deliver successful community projects. My sincere thanks go to the growing number of tenants who have worked with us over the last year, to help us improve our services.



What are BCT's Vision, Mission and Values?

Vision

BCT's vision for 2015 to 2020 is an independent BCT where;

- We have delivered on the major stock transfer promises.
- We ensure tenants have a key voice and role in decision making.
- We maximise access for local people into employment, training, health and education opportunities.

Mission

- We work for people who have a voice and influence in our business.
- We celebrate our diverse neighbourhood.
- We provide quality homes, environment and services.

Values

We will do our best for Byker by being;

- Ambitious for people and the community.
- Energetic in our work with and for our diverse neighbourhood.
- Innovative in providing excellent services.
- Open and transparent in the conduct of our business.
- Unrelenting in our focus on positive change.

It is important for us that we live by these values if we are to provide the best possible services for our tenants and communities.

HOME STANDARD

This is about repairs and improvements.

Michelle Bell (Head of Property Investment, Development and Asset Management) answers your questions.

Has Byker been given a special status?

Yes. English Heritage have given the Byker Wall Estate, Grade 2* listing. The Estate is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended, for its special architectural or historic interest. It is one of only two housing estates in the country which has this status. The other being in Tower Hamlets, London.

What is the relationship between BCT and Newcastle City Council (NCC) and Your Homes Newcastle (YHN)?

Both NCC and YHN supply some of the services that you receive on BCT's behalf. BCT is a Housing Association and NCC and YHN are our contractors.

How long after a repair is reported should it take to be repaired?

Each repair is given a priority code which will depend on the nature of the fault and the possible risk to health and safety. From the priority code, you will be able to get an indication of how quickly the repair will be carried out.

The table below shows the repair categories which we have, including an example of what type of repair each category covers. The table also indicates how well we have been performing in relation to the main categories throughout the past year.

Priority	Target completion time	Actual Completion rate 2013/14	Target completion rate 2014/15	Actual Completion rate 2014/15	Was the target achieved?
Emergency	Attend by appointment within four hours	99.9 in 100	99.5 in 100	99.84 in 100	
(Example) A leaking pipe that is causing damage to the property					
Urgent	Attend by appointment within 1,3, or 7 working days	100 in 100	99 in 100	99.33 in 100	
(Example) A faulty socket that is not dangerous					
Routine	Attend by appointment within 15 working days	100 in 100	99 in 100	99.76 in 100	
(Example) Fixing a kitchen drawer					
Planned maintenance	Attend by appointment within 40 working days				
(Example) An estate fencing repair that is not dangerous					

"I'm happy with the new windows and how they look. My house is a lot quieter and easier to clean"

Mr Steven, Rabygate

Are BCT responsible for all repairs or are some repairs a tenant's own responsibility?

BCT is responsible for most but not all repairs. For example if you lost your keys and we have to change your locks, then this repair would be a tenant's own responsibility. If we carry out this repair - it is a chargeable repair.

If we know the repair being reported is chargeable we will tell you. However this is not always possible and sometimes the repair may only be identified as chargeable when the tradesperson is on site. If this is the case, the tradesperson will make you aware of this.

How much did BCT spend on repairs last year?

We spent £2.04 million on repairs and maintenance last year.

Do you carry out Annual Gas Safety Inspections to all of your properties?

Yes we did carry out Annual Gas Safety Inspections to all of our properties which have a gas supply.

What Improvement works are being carried out by BCT?

BCT's Investment Programme is made up of number of different projects to refurbish and improve the Byker estate. These include;

Byker Wall External Works.

Work is well underway to carry out major improvement works to the Byker Wall. This is a two year programme of external works that includes; new windows, doors, render panels and a full new roof. Improvements are also being made to the communal stairwells, entrances, deck access walkways and a complete repaint in line with the original Ralph Erskine colour scheme.

Chirton House Conversions – Remodelling.

Working in partnership with Newcastle City Council, BCT took over ownership of Chirton House. This former care home has now been completely remodelled to create 16 modern 1 and 2 bedroom apartments designated for residents aged 50+. Work was completed in April 2015 and residents have now moved into their new homes.

Fitting PV Panels to the Byker Wall.



Disabled adapted bathroom.



Chirton House being redeveloped.



Chirton House after.

How can I find out if and when improvement works are to be carried out in my home?

We will always write to you in advance to tell you when we are going to carry out work to your home. In addition, we will always write to tell you when work on the investment programme is being carried out in your area.

If you have any questions in relation to improvement works please contact me, Michelle Bell on Freephone 0800 5335 442.

Concierge Upgrade/Digital Aerial System.

A new digital aerial system is being installed along the whole of the Byker Wall from Bamburgh Terrace to Salisbury House including all of the link blocks. At the same time, the concierge and camera system is being modernised and upgraded with cabling for high speed broadband connections also being installed.



District Heating Upgrade

A major upgrade of the District Heating System commenced in April 2014 and will continue during 2016. This work involves replacing some of the mains pipework and the refurbishment of heating sub stations. This will improve the reliability and efficiency of the heating system that serves the Byker estate.



BCT: How are we performing?	13/14	14/15	Was target achieved?
All properties with gas have a valid Gas Safety Certificate	100 out of 100	100 out of 100	
95 in 100 of tenants are satisfied with the external investment works carried out to their home during 2014/15	100 out of 100	90 out of 100	
95 in 100 of properties scheduled to have investment work during 2014-15 to be completed within agreed timescale	N/A	100 out of 100	

Is BCT planning any further improvement schemes?

Yes. A number of projects are being developed to continue to deliver the stock transfer promises and make improvements across the estate. These will include;

Hobby Rooms Upgrade.

There are 88 hobby rooms across the estate and last year we carried out a feasibility study to identify how we can make the best use of those buildings to meet the needs of the local community.

The first phase of the upgrade programme will aim to convert eight hobby rooms into new residential units and where possible create disabled access dwellings.

Modern Homes Programme.

For those properties that have

not been modernised, there will be another opportunity to have the internal improvement works carried out which includes new kitchens, bathrooms, rewiring and other repairs.

District Heating Internal Improvements.

During 2016 we will start a programme of internal improvements to the heating and hot water systems. This project will bring all of the heating systems up to the same standard of repair and install programmers which will give residents much greater control of their heating

and help to conserve energy. As there are almost 2000 properties to be improved, this work is likely to take two years to complete.

Environmental Improvements.

A major programme of environmental improvement works are proposed across the whole estate.

During the next twelve months, we will appoint a team of landscape architects to review options to redesign the estate layout and start the consultation process with residents to understand your views.

NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY STANDARD

This is about where you live.

Berni Dickson (YHN- Tenancy and Estates Manager)
answers your questions.

What is BCT doing to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour?

BCT takes anti-social behaviour very seriously. Unfortunately over the past year we have had to evict families and individuals for anti-social behaviour. In addition, if tenants experience difficulties with non-BCT tenants on the estate, we can work closely with our partners at YHN and NCC to try to resolve these problems.

As part of the Safe Neighbourhoods Actions and Problem Solving Group, BCT is working with our partners including the Police, Fire Service, NCC and YHN to ensure that anti-social behaviour across the neighbourhood is closely managed, monitored, and acted on swiftly. To resolve anti-social behaviour issues, it is important to remember that we rely on tenants to help us with this work. This includes tenants remembering to show consideration to others and keeping us informed of ongoing issues.



A demonstration at the Family Fun Day. Chip pan fires can be dangerous.

What do you do about untidy gardens?

We all want 'Our Byker' to be a fantastic neighbourhood to live in, however sometimes we identify untidy gardens when we are carrying out estate inspections or occasionally we receive information that a garden is not being maintained.

When tenants sign their tenancy agreement, one of the terms they sign up to is that they will maintain their garden. Where they don't maintain their gardens to the required standard, we firstly visit them to encourage them to do so. If this does not work, we formally write to them to ask them to bring their garden up to the required standard within a reasonable timescale. Ultimately if tenants don't maintain their garden, we will do it and bill them accordingly. Exceptions to this can be made for elderly or disabled tenants.





Prince Harry gets a friendly welcome from Byker.

Can everyone working together make a difference?

Yes. BCT worked in partnership with the community, NCC, YHN, and the Police to reduce anti-social behaviour issues in the Chirton Wynd area. This was done through improving the Bamburgh Terrace/Spires Lane football pitch, and encouraging young people to use this area to play their ball games. Supporting this, NCC, YHN and the Police took action to encourage dog owners to be responsible and not only clean up after their dogs but also to stop using the Bamburgh Terrace/Spires Lane football pitch, for dog exercising activities.



Police supporting the community at the Family Fun Day.

We are not saying this has resolved everything but it is an example of everyone working together to try to make 'Our Byker' a better place for everyone.

Who do you report dog fouling to?

Dealing with dog fouling is the responsibility of our partners at NCC. If you experience a problem with dog fouling then you can report this to Envirocall by contacting 0191 278 7878.

Are vehicles allowed to park on the grass?

The simple answer is no.

Vehicles parked on the grass can damage the environment and can also be a danger to pedestrians. Off-street parking is provided where we can, but we know this isn't possible in all areas. We really want to discourage anyone from parking their vehicle on the grass.



Gordon Road TARA litter pick.

Peter Gray (NCC Head of Highways and Local Services) answers your questions.

How often do you cut the grass?

The NCC Grounds Maintenance Team are contracted to maintain the hedges and grass on the estate. They cut the grass between 12 and 16 times each growing season. The grass is kept to approximately 4 inches long and is maintained subject to the weather.

Do you have access to a gardening scheme which is available to everyone?

Yes, YHN has a service called 'Garden Care'. This service is available to all tenants, however it costs £8.24 per week to receive this service, the exceptions being if you are in receipt of a health related benefit or have a doctor's letter.

If you are part of the scheme, the 'Garden Care' team will visit you 11 times in 12 months (although this will not be monthly). They will provide the following services; grass cutting, weed control, hedge trimming, pruning, border maintenance and litter picking. If it is something you might be interested in, please don't hesitate to contact the Garden Care Team on 0191 278 8600 or email gardencare@yhn.org.uk

How do we deal with issues related to trees?

If you have any issues with trees they should in the first instance be reported to Envirocall on 0191 278 7878 (Textphone: 0191 211 4944). Alternatively, this can be reported via NCC website www.newcastle.gov.uk/environment-and-waste/report-an-environmental-issue.

BCT will be looking at both trees and hedges as part of the planned Environmental Improvement upgrade of the estate.

Why was the Rapid Response Team created?

The Rapid Response Team was established as a direct response to tenant feedback, which called for improvements to littering, graffiti, dog fouling, fly tipping and the general environment of the Byker Estate, and you told us in the STAR Survey 2014 that these issues are still a concern to you.



The Rapid Response Team.

The services provided by the Rapid Response Team are only available to BCT residents. Wherever possible, the team deals quickly and efficiently with all of these issues. The feedback that the team has received is very positive with people describing the service as being 'excellent'.

To contact the team, please phone Envirocall on 0191 278 7878 (Textphone: 0191 211 4944).

Are there any community groups who represent the community?

Yes there are two Tenant and Resident Associations (TARA); The Byker Village TARA and Gordon Road TARA. The Byker Village TARA meets in the Spires Lane Hobby Room and the Gordon Road TARA meets in the Chevron.

For contact details see pages 18.

BCT: How are we performing?	14/15	Was target achieved?
The average number of days taken to complete an investigation of anti-social behaviour. Cases not to exceed 48 days by 31/3/15	29 days	
All eight neighbourhood areas of Byker to achieve at least a silver level in their 2014-15 Going for Gold estate inspection	5	

TENANCY STANDARD

This is about your tenancy agreement and how to get a house.

Gill Snowdon (YHN Housing Options Manager) answers your questions.

How can I apply for a BCT property?

All of BCT's vacancies are advertised through a Choice Based Lettings Scheme (CBL) which is called 'Tyne and Wear Homes'.

To be considered for a BCT property, you will need to complete an application form which you can get via the Tyne and Wear Homes website (www.tyneandwearhomes.org.uk), by the YHN website (www.yhn.org.uk) or by completing and returning a paper version which can be collected at any YHN office, however, residents are encouraged to apply online.

Your completed form will then be assessed and you will be placed in a 'band'. Which band you

are placed in is dependent on your individual circumstances. It is only once you've been placed in a band that you will be able to bid for a property.

If you need any assistance, please contact the Byker Community Housing office at 45-47 Brinkburn Street, Byker or call 0191 278 1555.

What does bidding for a property mean? Does it mean I have to pay?

The term 'bidding' simply means letting us know you would like to be considered for a particular property. We also use the term expression of interest. Residents can bid/express an interest in up to three properties per week.



John Prescott issues the first key at Chirton House.

Did you know...
that you can pay your Home Contents Insurance weekly?

How do I know which properties are available to apply for?

All available properties are advertised on the Tyne and Wear Homes website and are also advertised in a weekly newsletter available in the Byker Community Housing Office or in any other YHN office. Properties are advertised each week on a Thursday, closing for bids on a Monday night.

How long do I have to be in a property before I can 'bid'?

There is no time limit as to how long you have to be in a property before you can apply to be part of the Tyne and Wear Homes, choice based lettings scheme. The scheme is open for anybody to apply.

How many properties can I refuse?

You can refuse any number of properties but if you have a higher band based on your circumstances, refusals will be taken into account when your band is reviewed.

How do you support tenancies?

We support tenancies in a number of different ways depending on the needs of individual households. For example, our Pre-Tenancy Advice and Support Officer supports new tenants, making sure they have the necessary support to give their tenancy the best chance of succeeding. We have in place an Adaptations Service to support tenants who have physical disabilities.



Children from Byker Primary School learning new skills.

The Advice and Support Service also helps tenants to maximise their income and support them through times of financial hardship.

Can I swap my home?

In principle, yes, providing the swap is with another social housing tenant. We have to consider a few things when this request is made. For example, property sizes, do both parties have clear rent accounts, are the properties in good condition and have either parties been involved in anti-social behaviour?

How would I end my tenancy?

Naturally we don't want any of our tenants to leave BCT, however if they decide that they wish to end their tenancy there are a few simple steps that need to be followed. The rules can be slightly different depending on what type of tenancy the tenant has. However for most tenants they need to give 28 days' written notice of their wish to end their tenancy.

When they hand in their keys they should leave the property in a condition ready for the next tenant to move into otherwise they will be charged for any work which has to be carried out. They also need to make sure they have cleared their rent account.



Helping improve the Family Fun Day.

BCT: How are we performing?	13/14	14/15	Was target achieved?
The void rent and service charge loss amount not to exceed 1.78% by 31/03/15	1.78 out of 100	1.05 out of 100	😊
Reduce the average total re-let time of BCT properties to 33 days by 31/03/2015	N/A	31.5 days	😊

TENANT INVOLVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT STANDARD

This is about communicating with and getting involved with BCT.

David Jones (Head of Engagement and Community Development) answers your questions.

Why is tenant participation so important?

At BCT we are passionate about providing excellent housing and developing thriving communities that our tenants are proud to live in and that other residents aspire to live in. To achieve this, we know we need to work with, and listen to you, our tenants. If we do this, we will understand what tenants want and what they would like their homes and communities to look like.

What are the benefits of getting involved?

By getting involved you can:

- Give your views and help BCT improve the services you receive
- Work in partnership with BCT to improve 'Our Byker'
- Learn more about what BCT does
- Build confidence and knowledge
- Meet other tenants and staff
- Have fun and help to make a difference



Working in partnership to develop young people.



Jill and David at ACANE.

Anabel at the Community Activities Fund.

How do I find out what involvement opportunities are available?

Probably the best person to speak to is me, David Jones and I can be contacted on Freephone 0800 5335 442, or even better, speak to a tenant who is already involved. They will be able to give you a flavour of what opportunities are available. There is also information on our website.

Do you help tenants to get involved?

We provide transport for tenants or reimburse fuel costs to those who use their own car. We will also pay for child minding and care expenses (which must be from a registered child minder or care agency). In addition, we offer extra assistance for those with mobility difficulties as well as providing training.

To help create an informal, friendly atmosphere we provide refreshments at our meetings where we ensure that everyone's views are valued and respected.



Helping at the Community Activities Fund.

HOW IS BCT SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY?

This year was the second year of the BCT Participatory Budget. Between the main BCT Participatory Budget and the BCT Community Activities Fund, we supported a total of 24 initiatives.

The Participatory Budget Steering Group awarded £145,000 shared between 12 projects.

Main BCT Participatory Budget Fund	Name of Project	Amount Received
	Rookie Sports- The Community Game	£8,000
	Eva Lukofo- Bright Future	£4,000
	Hat-Trick- Your Goals Newcastle	£26,000
	YMCA- Spires Lane Project	£16,500
	Sure Start- Family Support Volunteer Programme	£4,920
	ACANE- Involving and Engaging with ACANE's Drop in Centre Users	£14,580
	Dance City- Dance City @ Byker	£14,500
	Keith Connolly- GASBAGS	£3,000
	NUFC Foundation- Byker United	£15,000
	Annabelle Pacinto- Learning and Language	£5,500
	Klaire Sharpe- Zumba with Baby	£6,000
Young Tenants and Residents- Byker MUGA	£27,000	



Byker decides.



Working in partnership with YMCA.



Dance City @ Byker.

For the first time, you as a community decided how to spend the BCT Community Activities Fund. Everyone in the community, aged 11 and above, had three votes to use, and at the event held in February, you decided to award the £20,000 budget to 12 projects.

BCT Community Activities Fund		Name of Project	Amount Received
		Byker Youth Cafe	£2,000
		ACANE- Community Centre Equipment	£1,263.99
		Youth Employment Event	£1,600
		YMCA- Bizibodis Pop Up Breakfast Club	£2,000
		Stags Head Football Club	£660
		Launchpad Veterans Kitchen and Cafe	£2,000
		Learning a Language Project	£2,000
		One Love North East- Junior Youth Club	£1,890
		Cultural Exchange Art Project	£2,000
		Byker United Project Equipment	£980
		Byker Sands Parents Voice Project	£2,000
		Rookie Sports Volunteer Project	£957.01



NUFC Foundation with their new equipment.



Louise McGlen (third from right) from the NCVS providing grant support.

In addition, we are also working with Louise McGlen (Funding Advice Officer) from Newcastle Council for Voluntary Services (NCVS) who is helping projects to grow and develop their ideas and showing them how to access grants and funding from elsewhere.

If you have a project or scheme which needs funding and will make a difference in Byker, please contact David Jones on Freephone 0800 5335 442 for more information.

Byker useful numbers directory



Organisation

Tel.

ACANE 0191 265 8110

AFV&E 0191 265 1978

Barnardos/Sure Start 0191 275 9636

Bright Future 07405 796 447
07450 257 382

Building Futures East 0191 263 2752

Byker Community Centre 0191 265 5777

Byker Community Trust 0191 290 3910 or Freephone 0800 533 5442

Byker Primary School 0191 265 6906

Byker Village TARA 0191 224 0021

Byker YMCA 0191 276 6052

Dance City 0191 261 0505

St Michaels Church Byker Youth Café 07735 990 077

GASBAGS 0191 265 5777

Gordon Road TARA 0191 265 5370

Hat-Trick 0191 406 0291

Learning & Language 0191 903 2645

Moneywise 0191 276 7963

NCVS 0191 232 7445

Newcastle City Council 0191 278 7878

NUFC Foundation 0844 372 1892 - Ext 8451

One Love North East 0191 265 7456

Police (Byker Neighbourhood Team) 101 Ext 69191

Rookie Sports 0191 226 7356

St Martins Centre 0191 276 4002

St Lawrence's Primary School 0191 265 9881

Stags Head Football Club 07500 927 743

Welbeck Primary School 0191 265 5362

Your Homes Newcastle 0191 278 1555



Email	Address
Acane2003@hotmail.com	1 Raby Cross, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE62FF
Phil.old@afv-launchpad.co.uk	50 Raby way, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2FR
sure.start.east@barnardos.org.uk	19 Raby Cross, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2FF
lukofoeva@yahoo.co.uk	28 Commercial Road, Byker, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE6 2FN
info@buildingfutureseast.org	Low Yard, White St, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 3PJ
bykercc@live.co.uk	Headlam Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2DX
enquiries@bykerct.co.uk	23 Raby Cross, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2FF
admin@byker.newcastle.sch.uk	Commercial Road, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2AT
fionajanefford@yahoo.co.uk	Spires Lane Hobby Room, Spires Lane, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne
byker.project@newcastleymca.com	71 Wolsley House, Dunn Terrace, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 1DA
info@dancecity.co.uk	Temple Street, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 4BR
Phil_medley@btinternet.com	St Michaels Church Centre, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2AL
Gasbags@hotmail.com	Tues 6pm – 8pm. Byker Community Centre, Headlam St, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2DX
Les Richards - no email address available	The Chevron, 1 Gordon Road, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne
admin@hattrickproject.org	28 Hawthorne Terrace, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 6RJ
Anabeljacinto55@gmail.com	
admin@moneywise.org.uk	187-189 Shields Rd, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 1DP
information@cvsnewcastle.org.uk	Higham Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8AF
csc@newcastle.gov.uk	Newcastle City Council, Civic Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE18QH
foundation@nufc.co.uk	St. James' Park, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 4ST
onelovenortheast@gmail.com	2 Chirton Wynd, Byker, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE6 2PW
newcastle.npt@northumbria.pnn.police.uk	Clifford Street Police Station, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 1EA
info@rookiesports.co.uk	Suite 4, John Buddle Work Village, Buddle Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 8AW
info@stmartinscentre.org.uk	St. Martin's Centre, Roman Ave, Byker Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2RJ
admin@stlawrences.newcastle.sch.uk	Headlam Street, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2JX
Lee_dava_05@hotmail.com	Freeman Road, High Heaton, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE7 7AH
welbeck@wiseacademies.co.uk	Welbeck Academy, Flodden Street, Walker Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE6 2QL
byker@yhn.org.uk	45-47 Brinkburn St, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 1QN

TENANT INVOLVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT STANDARD

(Continued)

Was the BCT Family Fun Day a success?

The BCT Family Fun Day, which is now in its third year, was a real success again this year with over 1,100 people attending throughout the day.

The day was a real community celebration with children and adults alike having a great day out. The photographs tell the story but you confirmed how successful the Fun Day was through the evaluation forms you completed on the day. Very positively, 94 in 100 people who completed our feedback form, were either satisfied or very satisfied with the Fun Day and 98% told us that you would be likely or very likely to attend future BCT events.

What does Equality and Diversity mean to BCT?

Equality and Diversity at BCT is all about having a better understanding of who our residents and staff are. By understanding who they are, and their particular needs, we can hopefully meet those needs in the provision of our services and investments. By doing this on a day-to-day basis, we ensure that we take this into account when planning our priorities for the future.

It is important to us that everyone in the community is treated with dignity and respect. We know that Byker is a very diverse community, which has a rich ethnic mix and makes Byker a special place to be. We want everyone in the community to get involved with BCT, often going the extra mile to achieve this.

How do I complain about the service I have received and what should I do if I can make a suggestion that might help make services better in the future?

Despite our best endeavours, we won't always get it right and where we don't, we welcome challenge and feedback, to enable us to learn and wherever possible remedy any mistakes.

BCT recently developed our own bespoke Complaints Policy which enables residents to complain about any of the services which they receive directly from BCT. However our complaints policy goes beyond that, enabling us to use any complaints, which are made directly to our contractors, as an opportunity to learn about the services you, our tenants receive, and where appropriate, to change service delivery accordingly.



Going up in the world at the Family Fun Day.



Newcastle Thunder at the Family Fun Day.



Cultural Exchange Project-
Community Activities Fund.

If you have an idea or suggestion on how we might improve the services which BCT provides to you, we would love to hear it. Likewise, if you have received excellent service we would also like to hear about it.

Compliments are just as important to us as they show when we are getting things right. This enables us to thank the member of staff for treating you so well and recognising the hard work of people providing excellent services.

You can make a complaint, suggestion or compliment by using any of our usual communication methods including; phone, letter, email, face to face and through the BCT website (www.bykercommunitytrust.org/contact).

Using the internet seems to be becoming more important and many people don't have access to a computer. How is BCT helping?

We have already funded the setting up of two public access computer facilities in the community including ACANE (whose premises are at Raby Cross) and also ONE LOVE (who's premises are at 2 Chirton Wynd). In addition, as part of the Byker Wall improvement works, we are also installing broadband ready facilities to the 629 households who live in the Byker Wall.

Byker Primary School at St James' Park with NUFC Foundations.



Internet safety day.



GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL VIABILITY STANDARD

This is about how the Board works and how BCT manage your money

Jill Haley (Chief Executive) answers your questions.



What has the BCT Board been doing during 2014/15?

The Board has responsibility to ensure strong control and management is in place to protect BCTs assets (properties, land etc.). With this in mind, they consistently monitor and challenge management practice and service delivery because they must ensure that the organisation is operating to the best possible standards and achieving value for money. The same principle equally applies to the Board itself.

BCT is a Registered Provider of Housing (Housing Association) and must comply with a whole range of different regulatory and legal requirements, covering governance and management. Board set an annual governance and management timetable by which they monitor progress against this. Amongst the regulatory and statutory checks, this year we also tested our practices against the National Housing Federation Code of Governance 2015 and then adopted changes in response to the new rules.

One change was to review the makeup of BCT Board. This was also in response to Your Homes Newcastle (a main contractor of BCT) withdrawing their membership from the Board.

New BCT rules were approved at a Special General Meeting on 30 July 2015 (they still require final approval from our regulatory and funding bodies) and provide for a revised Board structure as follows:

- 5 tenant Board members (was 4).
- 5 independent Board members (was 4).
- 2 local authority Board members (no change).

How do you make sure that BCT Board is effective?

We aim to make sure that the skills and experience of our Board are relevant to BCTs business needs. Each Board member has an annual appraisal and skills audit, to make sure that we can identify any additional training needs which may be required. Attendance at meetings is monitored and during the year 2014/15 we achieved 72%.

We have commissioned an external specialist to work with Board and Senior Officers during August and September to test the robustness of our Business Planning and Governance.

Do BCT tenants get in involved and make an impact on the business?

Yes, Byker tenants have more power now than ever before. Since working with us to develop our Community Engagement and Empowerment Strategy in July 2013, a whole range of opportunities to be involved with BCT have been put in place. The Tenant Communications Group has gone from strength to strength as the production of this report testifies and we are really excited about the impact that the Tenant Scrutiny Panel can make.

What methods of tenant scrutiny and co-regulation do you have?

As tenant participation becomes embedded in what the BCT does, the opportunities for tenants to carry out meaningful scrutiny is increasing.

In conjunction with the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS), BCT set up a Tenant Scrutiny Panel in October 2014, which is designed to provide a robust approach to tenant scrutiny of the services we provide to tenants. Following a period of training with TPAS, the Scrutiny Panel started its first service review and designed their own questionnaire, which they used at the BCT Fun Day to capture other tenants' views. The Panel have been looking at an issue which tenants identified in the STAR Survey and are hoping to present their first report to BCT Board in January 2016. A programme of future reviews will be developed and the outcomes from the reviews reported to residents in due course.

As well as advertising the opportunity to become a Tenant Board Member this year, the opportunity to join the Tenant Scrutiny Panel was promoted widely to all tenants. The Tenant Scrutiny Panel have already started their first scrutiny exercise, however they are looking for more members so if you might like to find out more, please contact David Jones on Freephone 0800 5335 442.

The Participatory Budget Steering Group, which contains tenants, was formed last year to oversee the BCT Participatory Budget, and Mystery Shoppers have been recruited and trained to help provide a real insight into customer experience. This insight will help BCT to improve the services which you receive.

It is important to realise that co-regulation within BCT goes beyond just having a Tenant Scrutiny Panel.

What does being a Tenant Member and having Shareholder Status mean?

We would welcome and encourage more BCT tenants to become members of the BCT, it only costs £1 to do so. Membership will allow you to have a say in the management of BCT, receive copies of the Annual Report and accounts, vote at the Annual General Meeting, attend and vote at Special Board Meetings and to be consulted on any changes to our Rules.

To have a Vote and a Voice in "Our Byker" for only £1 please contact Phil Ambrose, Company Secretary on Freephone 0800 5335 442.

In financial terms how well has the BCT performed this year?

We have performed well during 2014/15 and this is backed up by our annual accounts, the summary of which are highlighted in the pie charts on the next page.

We continue to remain financially strong. The business plan has been out performed each year since transfer with significant value for money savings being made. The pie charts on the following page give a summary of how we have been doing.



The Tenant Scrutiny Panel carrying out an exercise at the Fun Day.

Income

Income for Year Ending
31st March 2015
Total £9.61 million



£6.82 million

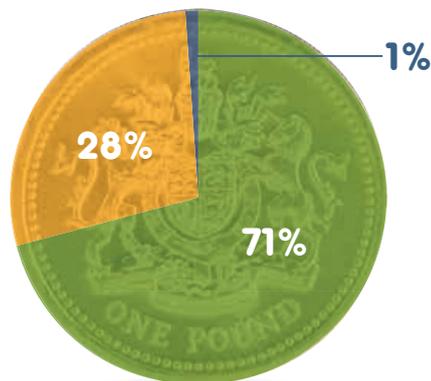
Rent

£2.79 million

Service charges

Expenditure

(Outgoings for year ending
31st March 2015)
Total £7.25 million



£5.15 million

Housing Services

£2.79 million

Repairs and Maintenance

£0.07 million

Other
For example Right to Buy (Buy Backs) and Community Participatory Budget

This year, Income exceeded Expenditure by £2.36 million. This money is kept in reserve and used to repay the loans BCT has taken out to fund the investment programme. These figures confirm that BCT is on target against its financial targets.

During the year, the Board and the Chief Executive have been looking in great detail on how to increase influence and control over the standards of services delivered in Byker, with a main focus on improvement in quality and cost; demonstrating Value for Money; including excellence in services to residents; and completing the delivery of Stock Transfer Promises.

This has been given even further significance following the 8th July 2015 Budget when the annual rent setting formula was changed by Government, resulting in rent reductions for the next four years. Over the four year period, this results in a shortfall in BCT rental income of £2m, a 7% shortfall against our Business Plan target (on average a shortfall of £500k per year over the four year period). As a consequence, we are looking very carefully now at how we can save money,

in order to still deliver the level of investment which the Byker Estate needs.

Unless the shortfall in rent income can be offset by either raising additional sources of income, or by achieving reductions in revenue costs, BCT's capacity to deliver the Investment Programme will most certainly be adversely affected.

At the time of transfer from the Council, a number of 'Offer Promises' were made. Are they being delivered?

Yes. We continue to deliver the 'Offer Promises' which we made to you. I know you will have seen that the work on the Byker Wall and the District Heating has been progressing well. This improvement work was one of the main 'Offer Promises' however just as important you, our tenants, are now having more influence on how the estate is managed and more opportunities to be involved in the work of BCT.

If you would like to get involved with BCT, to work together with us to shape and improve "Our Byker", please contact David Jones on Freephone 0800 5335 442.



It's a goal Family Fun Day.

Did you know that we would love to hear about any ideas you might have on how we can improve the services you receive.

VALUE FOR MONEY STANDARD

This is about making the best use of BCT's resources.

Phil Ambrose (Financial Controller) answers your questions

Has BCT been able to make value for money savings this year?

Yes. This past year has seen us continue to make savings in our costs.

This has allowed us to do three main things;

- Firstly we haven't had to draw down as much money from our loan facility which has saved on interest payments.
- Secondly we have been able to redirect our resources allowing us to provide better services for our tenants.
- Thirdly, by using efficiency savings achieved through our procurement arrangements, we have been able to include improvements to the Concierge system as part of the capital programme.



St Lawrence's Primary School Christmas Card Competition.



Has BCT agreed new funding arrangements this year?

BCT has agreed new funding arrangements with the Yorkshire Building Society (YBS), which will mean we can build on the fantastic regeneration work we've already done.

Our initial loan from YBS provided access to £12 million but now we're able to borrow up to £26 million during the ten years from January 2015. We've managed to secure a better interest rate, which will provide even more value for money.

BCT will use this better deal to further develop the Byker Estate. Following on from converting Avondale House into a home for armed forces veterans, transforming Chirton House into a stunning new apartment complex and refurbishing the Byker Wall, we will continue to consult with you about your priorities for Byker and plan further regeneration in response to this.

Who is the Housing Regulator and what is the regulatory framework?

The Housing Regulator is called the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and it is responsible for monitoring how Registered Social Landlords (Housing Associations), like BCT, are performing. To do this the HCA established a Regulatory Framework which has seven National Standards. These Standards are split into Economic and Consumer Standards.



Investing in young people.

The Economic Standards are;

- Governance and Financial Viability Standard (this is about how the BCT Board works and how BCT manages your money)
- Value for Money Standard, Rent Standard (this is about making the best use of BCT's resources)
- Rent Standard (this is about the rent you pay)

The Consumer Standards are;

- Home Standard (this is about repairs and improvements)
- Neighbourhood and Community Standard (this is about where you live)
- Tenancy Standard (this is about your tenancy agreement and how to get a house)
- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard (this is about communicating with you and getting involved with BCT)

The Economic Standards are monitored by the HCA, and BCT, like all other Housing Associations, monitor their own performance against the Consumer Standards. At BCT, we do this by working closely with tenants and providing regular performance reports to the BCT Board.

What was the HCA's Regulatory Judgement for BCT?

The regulator's assessment on compliance with the Governance and Financial Viability Standard is expressed in grading's from G1 to G4 for governance and V1 to V4 for viability. For both viability and governance the first two grades indicate compliance with the standard.

The HCA have said that BCT is 'Properly Governed' and awarding us G1 for governance and V2 for financial viability. So the regulator has said that BCT meets the requirements of the Governance and Financial Viability Standard.



Friends play sumo at the Family Fun Day.

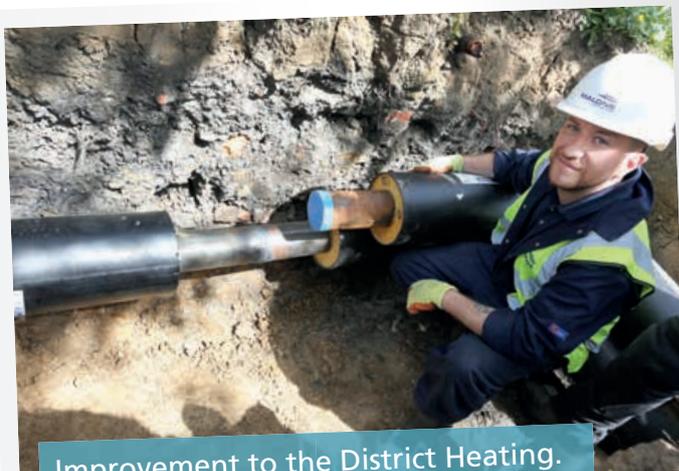
How does BCT monitor performance?

Within BCT we constantly monitor our performance and have a number of methods in place to ensure all areas of the Association are as efficient and effective as possible.

These methods include;

- Executive Team Meetings (fortnightly senior managers meetings)
- Operational Support Meetings (monthly team meetings)
- YHN monthly contract performance meeting
- NCC monthly contract performance meeting
- YHN and NCC performance information reported to Board
- Reports from our Auditors
- Supporting this we also ask tenants how they think we are performing for example through the Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR Survey). We report these findings through to the Board.

We also compare ourselves against other organisations as part of understanding how we are performing.



Improvement to the District Heating.

Key Performance Measures

We monitor our performance to measure how well we are doing in key areas of our services and use this information to improve our performance and the services we deliver to you.

You may remember from last year's Annual Report to Tenants that in May 2014 we put together a new Performance Improvement Plan to help us improve our performance in a number of key areas including rent income and void management.

We have tried throughout this report to show you how we have been performing. Because this year saw the establishing of a new set of housing management performance indicators, it has not always been possible to show you the previous year's performance, otherwise you would not be able to compare eggs with eggs. However, where we have been able to do so we have included information for this and the previous year so you can make your own judgement.



St Lawrence's Primary School garden makeover.

Did many tenants complete the recent BCT STAR Survey?

We would like to say a big thank you to the 388 households who completed and returned recent STAR Survey (Survey of Tenants and Residents). The information you provided is invaluable and the collective results are being used to help us improve the services you receive.

We know that you told us that you weren't satisfied with some of the services which we provide. We have been using the information you provided as part of the service review that we are presently carrying out. This will lead to you receiving better services in the future.

We are also pleased to be able to report that you have told us that there are many areas where we are getting better however we are not complacent and we know that there is a long way to go.

The table below shows the main findings.

Satisfaction question	Byker 2011/12 * in 100	Byker 2013/14 * in 100	Percentage difference	Getting better/ Getting Worse?
Overall Satisfaction	79.2	78	1.2% down	
Quality of home	78.7	79	0.3% up	
Opportunity to make views known	61.4	71	9.6% up	
Listening to views and acting on them	58.3	62	3.9% up	
Keeping tenants informed	73.5	80	6.5% up	
Deals with ASB	54.1	51	3.1% down	
Deals with complaints	57	62	5% up	
Deals with tenants moving or swapping home	33.9	50	16.1% up	
Deals with repairs and maintenance	76.3	76	2.7% up	
Rent Value for Money	60	71	11% up	
Service Charge Value for Money	54.7	58	3.3% up	
Overall Neighbourhood Appearance	64.8	60	4.8% down	
Ground Maintenance	71.8	73	1.2% up	
Cleaning external communal areas	56.7	57	0.3% up	
Neighbourhood improved/got worse	73.4	74	0.6% up	
Neighbourhood as a place to live	61.6	65	3.4% up	

Some of the other areas where you told us we are performing particularly well are;

Highest Satisfaction results	Byker 2013/14
Attitude of workers (Repairs and Maintenance)	89% 
Satisfied with opportunities to get involved with BCT	85% 
Satisfaction with the way BCT deals with enquiries generally	82% 

We will continue to work with you, our tenants and our partners to understand what these results mean and we will use the information you have given us to develop plans to address your concerns and support your suggestions. Throughout this report, you will be able to see that we have already been using the information you provided to improve the services you receive.

AWARDS

Jill Haley (Chief Executive) answers your questions.

I hear that BCT has recently received quite a few awards. What have they been for?

We are very proud that BCT has either received awards or has been short listed for so many awards. I have listed them below, which I hope you will agree makes impressive reading.



2015

AWARD	CATEGORY	RESULT
TPAS Awards 2015- North Region	Excellence in Annual Reports	Winner
RICS Awards NE	Building Conservation	Shortlisted: Chirton House
RICS Awards NE	Community Benefit	Shortlisted: Chirton House
CIH NE Awards	Student of the Year	Winner: Steve Howells
CIH NE Awards	Rising Star of the Year	Runner Up: Steve Howells
CIH NE Awards	Innovation of the Year	Winner: Avondale House
TPAS Awards 2015- National Final	Excellence in Annual Report	Shortlisted
Newcastle City Council Apprentice Awards	Adult Apprentice	Winner: David Sleightholme
YHN Community Spirit Award	Going for Gold	Winner: Herby Warren
CIOB	Landmark project of the last 50 years	Shortlisted - Byker Wall

What about awards in the community?

There is real reason to believe that our community is continuing to grow in strength. Some of the projects that are taking place in the Byker community are truly inspirational. An example of this is Hat-trick who recently won the Team/Community category at the prestigious Sports Newcastle Awards.

Then of course there are Byker's very own VOSCARS. Every project in Byker has its own heroes and I was proud to be there and see the Byker community celebrating their own, often unsung heroes. Well done to everyone who took part and won an award.



RENT STANDARD

This is about the rent you pay.

Questions to Hannah Adey -
YHN Income Recovery Manager

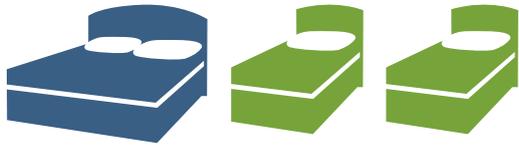
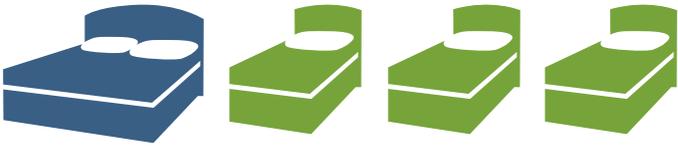


What is BCT's average rent, and how does it compare for each property size?

Based on rent being paid over 49 weeks each year (excludes service charges) our average rent is £80.30.

The average rents for each of our property types are:

Average 49 week Basic Rent (current actual position)

Bedsit  £64.44	1 bedroom  £70.51	2 bedroom  £79.72
3 bedroom  £89.50	4 bedroom  £96.22	

If someone is having difficulties making ends meet, do BCT have anyone that can help?

Through YHN, you have access to Advice and Support Workers who are available to offer advice, information and support on all aspects of your finances and benefits, such as: budgeting, dealing with debts, benefit checks, Welfare Reform, utilities, insurance and much more!

The Advice and Support Workers are here to support you, our tenants, in making the most of your money, ensuring your money is working as hard for you as you are for it. We work with a number of partners to ensure you receive the best advice for all your queries.

What has BCT done to prepare for the impact of Welfare Reform?

As you will know there have been a number of Welfare Reforms over the past few years; notably the 'Bedroom Tax' and more recently the introduction of Universal Credit.

As part of preparing for the impact of Welfare Reform, BCT developed an action plan which was ultimately intended to support you, our tenants.

You may recall that until the end of March 2015, Andrew Young was a BCT funded full-time dedicated CAB Welfare Benefits Case Worker. By the end of March 2015, Andrew had supported approximately 350 clients, who between them were granted approximately £260,000 of additional entitlement.

Andrew's role has evolved and he is now employed directly by BCT as a Welfare Benefits and Employability Support Worker.

Questions to Andrew Young BCT Welfare Benefits and Employability Support Worker.



I've heard a lot about Universal Credit, but what is it and will it affect me?

Universal Credit is a new welfare benefit designed to replace six main benefits; Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance (income related), Jobseekers Allowance (income related), Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, and Housing Benefit. So, if you are under pension age and receive one or more of these benefits, then you are likely to be affected now or in the coming years. If you have any concerns about Universal Credit please contact me on Freephone 0800 5335 442 and I'll be happy to assist you.

What help can you give me to get back into work?

As well as dealing with welfare advice, I also provide employability support, working with a

network of other organisations to help residents find employment and training. These include Newcastle Futures, The Princes Trust, City Learning and other organisations who can offer additional support. BCT are trying to organise some local training for residents, and details of these opportunities will be promoted when more information is known.

Did you know that we recently created a job vacancies board in the office which I'd invite you to come into the office to have a look at. I regularly update the board so it's worth a look because there might just be a job advertised which you might want to apply for. If you would like to speak to me about employability support, please do not hesitate to contact me on Freephone 0800 5335 442.

BCT: How are we performing?	13/14	14/15	Was target achieved?
Collect 97.8% of rent and service charges owed (excluding arrears brought forward and void rent loss) during 2014-15	94.9 out of 100	98.7 out of 100	



Creating employment opportunities and developing skills

A key objective of BCT is to achieve new training and employment opportunities for tenants and residents on the Byker Estate. BCT work closely with Newcastle Futures and delivery key partners like Keepmoat, to maximise their social investment into the estate. The table on the next page summarises what has been achieved to date.

'Andrew has helped me enormously. I couldn't have done it without him. In fact we couldn't do without him. Great work Andrew'

Mr Haworth, Houlet Garth.

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY
EMPLOYMENT:	
• New apprenticeship opportunities created.	21 
• New jobs created.	10 
• Apprenticeships safeguarded.	28 
• Local jobs safeguarded.	10 
• Individuals progressing into employment opportunities of up to 6 months duration.	14 
• Individuals progressing into employment opportunities of over 6 months duration.	10 
TRAINING:	
• Attendees on Health & Safety training for construction trades.	477 
• Construction Skills Certification Skills (CSCS) cards issued.	123
• Certified short courses delivered on construction trades.	72
• Construction skills research visit by secondary school age children.	15
• School leavers participating in construction skills work experience programme.	21
• Primary school children participating in health & safety information sessions.	500
• Number of school health & safety information sessions delivered.	180
• School & college workshops delivered covering District Heating System Upgrade.	40
• Vocational qualifications achieved.	14
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SUPPORT:	
• Individuals worked with and registered by Newcastle Futures organisation.	230 
• Individuals supported into employment or training.	70



Lizzie Sharkey, new BCT Business Administrative Apprentice.

Did you know... paying your rent by Direct Debit is the preferred payment method available for BCT?

What do I have to do to view my rent account online?

If you visit the YHN website, www.yhn.org.uk and click on 'View Your Rent Online' and then follow the on-screen instructions, this will allow you to review your rent account online. You will need to have both your payment reference number and postcode to initially set this up.

I've heard that from November 2015 we won't be able to pay our rent at the Customer Service Centre on Shields Road. What other ways can I pay?

Yes that's right, you won't be able to pay by cash or cheque at the Customer Service Centre from November 2015. Don't worry though as there are other ways to pay:

Direct Debit

BCT recommend Direct Debit as the best way for you to pay. It saves you time, is safe and reliable, gives you peace of mind and is convenient. Please contact us on 0800 5335 442 or drop into our office at 23 Raby Cross or the Housing Office on Brinkburn Street and we will help you move to direct debit.

Swipe card

Use your rent payment card to pay at any Post Office or Paypoint Outlet. There's one at the Raby Cross Convenience Store and the Brinkburn Store.

Telephone

Use your debit or credit card to make a payment by calling 0191 278 7878.

QR Code

Scan this code using your smartphone or tablet and you will be directed to the online payments screen.



Online Banking

If you use online banking you can pay your rent into this account:

Sort code: 30-93-71
Account number: 63352060

If you need help with ways to pay your rent, please contact Phil Ambrose 0800 5335 442 or drop into our office at 23 Raby Cross or the Housing Office on Brinkburn Street where staff will be pleased to assist you.

Unfortunately we hear more often of people having to go to Food Banks to get basic essentials. Do BCT have links with any of the local Food Banks?



BCT and Byker Primary supporting the Foodbank.



BCT Foodbank donation cheque.

Yes we do have links with several of the local Food Banks and our Welfare Benefits and Employability Support Worker regularly refers people who need assistance.

What you won't know is that staff have been collecting food and raising funds for the North East Food Bank. This has been done in a number of ways including running in sponsored events. Only recently staff presented cheques for £185 to the NE Food Bank.

In addition, last November we also took the opportunity to do a food collection at the Chartered Institute of Housing's, North East Conference, where the delegates all brought an item of food. The food was donated to the North East Food Bank.

LOCAL OFFERS

Tailoring service delivery to reflect local priorities.

David Jones (Head of Engagement and Community Development) answers your questions.



Engaging with our new tenants at Chirton House.

We work with you, our tenants, to understand your needs and to develop our 'Local Offers' (promises) as the H.C.A. calls them. This means making an agreement with you about how we will deliver and improve the services you receive. Here are some of the promises we have already made to you;

Economic Standards

Governance and Financial Viability Standard

- We will continue to promote opportunities for every tenant and the local community to have a say in the governance of BCT by encouraging individuals to become a shareholder.
- With your support we created a Tenant Scrutiny Panel which met for the first time at the end of October 2014.
- BCT residents carried out a mystery shop to test the level of customer service being delivered by staff. The telephone service, face to face engagement and use of social media all received either a good or very good rating.

Value for Money Standard

- To help us build on the fantastic regeneration work we are already carrying out we renegotiated new funding arrangements with Yorkshire Building Society. We managed to secure a better interest rate, which will enable us to make more improvements and provide even more value for money.
- We monitored closely the Performance Improvement Plan which we told you about last year, which has resulted in much better performance this year.

Rent Standard

- To support the Byker Community we employed a Welfare Benefit and Employability Support Worker.
- To help support tenants whose benefits are changing because of Welfare Reform, we developed a Universal Credit action plan.

Consumer Standards

Home Standard

- We continued to roll out the huge two year programme of external works to the Byker Wall.
- We continued to carry out the refurbishment works to upgrade the Byker District heating system.
- As part of the Byker Wall refurbishment and the link blocks we have been installing a new digital aerial system, upgraded the concierge and camera system as well as fitting cabling for high speed broadband connections.

Neighbourhood Standard

- Supported Gordon Road Tenant and Residents Association to carry out a community litter pick.
- We have redesigning the area below the so-called "stilt blocks". By creating garages we resolved some anti-social behaviour issues as people could no longer gather there.
- We worked in partnership with the Fire Brigade and other Community Safety partners to raise community awareness regarding the need to take precautions and reduce risks around bonfire night.

Tenancy Standard

- Redeveloped Chirton House to create a complex of 16 one and two bedroom, high quality apartments for people aged 50 and over.

Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

- Continued to roll out Year 2 of the Participatory Budget - Progressing into year 3.
- Increased community involvement through the Community Activities Fund.
- Hosted the 3rd BCT Family Fun Day.

Did you know... you can pay your rent either weekly or monthly when paying by Direct Debit.

Glossary of Terms

BCT-

Byker Community Trust

Bedroom Tax-

A name given to how housing benefits is adjusted to reflect how many people live in a property in relation to the size of the property.

Benchmarking-

A way of comparing the performance of one Association against another.

Board Appraisals-

A exercise which is used to see if any individual needs additional training.

CAB-

The Citizens Advice Bureau is a free national advice and guidance service. A general advice contact point.

Capital Investment Strategic Brief-

Guidance given to our contractors prior to them applying for work with the Trust.

Choice Based Lettings Scheme-

The way all BCT properties are advertised.

Code of Governance-

The rules which BCT has to follow.

Co-regulation-

Tenants, the regulator and staff working together to monitor the Association.

H.C.A.-

The Homes and Communities Agency is the regulator for social housing in England and Wales.

Envirocall-

Newcastle City Council's contact centre for environmental issues.

Financial Hardship-

Finding it difficult to make ends meet.

Housing Regulatory-

The organisation responsible for monitoring the performance of Housing Associations (including BCT).

Investment Programme-

A plan for delivering the large improvements across the estate.

KPI-

Stands for key performance indicators. These are the areas which we monitor that are most important to BCT.

Local Offers-

An agreement of how service delivery can be tailored to reflect local priorities.

Mystery Shopping-

Checking out how a service works without the person who is providing the service knowing and feeding the finding back.

National Standards-

The standards which all social housing providers are expected to either achieve or work towards achieving.

NCC-

Newcastle City Council.

Participatory Budget-

A budget which is available for all community groups to apply for funding to support them.

Performance Indicators-

Scores that give a sense of how we are doing.

Rapid Response Team-

BCT's quick response tidy up team.

Registered Provider of Housing-

A Housing Association which is registered with the HCA.

Regulatory Framework-

The standard and rules which the Trust has to follow.

Regulatory Judgement-

An assessment made by the regulator against set criteria.

Service Standards-

The standard of service residents expect to receive.

Scrutiny-

The act of examining something closely.

Sustainable-

Making something last for a length of time.

Tenant Communications Group-

The group of tenants who look at how we communicate with tenants.

Tenant-

A tenant or leaseholder of BCT.

Tyne and Wear Homes-

The name for the available property services which covers the region.

Universal Credit-

A new type of welfare benefit.

Void-

Another name for an empty house.

Welfare Reform-

Changes to the social benefits system.

YHN-

Your Homes Newcastle.

Youth Forum-

A group of young people from different organisations who come together to discuss issues affecting the area.

A BIG THANK YOU

I hope that you have enjoyed reading our second Annual Report to Tenants.

The development of this report, 'Our Byker, Our Community, Our Tenants, 2014/15' would not have been possible without the help and support of the tenants from the Tenant Communications Group.

The BCT Annual Report to Tenants won the TPAS (Northern Region) Awards 2015, for the category 'Excellence in Annual Report'. This prestigious award was testimony to the hard work which the Group put in, last year, to developing the best possible report for you, our tenants.



Jim Coulter (third from left) says a Big Thank You to the Tenant Communication's Group.

That was last year, and I think that you will agree that the report which the Group has created this year is even better than last year's. It is full of pictures, information and facts which I hope you will have found both interesting and useful.

The Group's vision, passion and commitment is, without doubt, helping BCT to communicate more effectively with everyone in Byker. Their influence on this report and on the Byker News (BCT's quarterly newsletter) is clear to see.

To the Tenant Communications Group, I would like to say that this report would not have been possible without you, so can I say a 'Big Thank You' to all of you.

Jim Coulter (Chair of BCT Board)

If you would like further details about any of the information contained within this report or if you would like to get involved and help BCT improve the services provided to you and your community, please contact David Jones, Head of Engagement and Community Development on Freephone 0800 5335 442.

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