



**THANK YOU
NHS**



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FOREWORD

This year's annual report to tenants sets out how we have performed over the last year, as we continually work to ensure that we are providing good value for money.

Despite the economic uncertainty and challenges that Covid-19 presented at the turn of the year, I am pleased to report that our performance throughout 2019/20 has been really strong.

We have dedicated the front page of this year's annual report to our wonderful NHS and all the residents and organisations who came together to support one another during the pandemic. Thank you to each and everyone of you who supported our residents of all ages.



I was delighted when BCT achieved the Customer Service Excellence accreditation, which is a national quality mark awarded to organisations that demonstrate the delivery of effective services, focussing on key priorities for customers.

During 2019/20, we consulted with tenants and our stakeholders to find out what your key priorities and needs were, and you will see on page 27 what you would like us to deliver.

Throughout 2019/20, we invested £5.7m to improve homes and the Estate – more than double compared to the previous year. You will also see inside this report, how we spend the rent we receive and how much we spend on improving and maintaining our homes.

The summer of 2019 was billed as 'Byker's Best Summer Ever' in terms of free events and activities that were organised. In fact, 2,220 tenants were actively involved in BCT events during the year.

Our Welfare Reform Team has continued to support tenants to ensure they receive the financial support they are entitled to. In 2019/20, the team helped tenants to secure £489,528. This is a staggering 600% increase compared to the previous year.

Our staff carried out 1,263 customer care visits throughout 2019/20 to support tenants with their tenancy and I was pleased to see 254 tenants achieve Valued Customer Status, which was more than double compared to the previous year.

This report is designed to raise awareness about how BCT works, how money is spent, how we are performing compared to the previous years and also how we compare against other housing associations. I hope you find the report helpful and informative.

Jill Haley, Chief Executive.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this year's annual report to tenants. This report will cover the period from April 2019 to March 2020.

The aim of the report is to provide tenants with an open and honest assessment of the work Byker Community Trust has undertaken over the last year and how we are complying with the Consumer and Economic Standards as set out by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH). (A full explanation of what this means is set out on pages 9 and 10).

We have again used the 'Our Byker, Our Community, Our Tenants' as the theme for this report. This slogan was previously developed with our tenants during the period of our service transition.

OUR BYKER details Value for Money (VfM), investment in the Estate and how we have performed against the Economic and VfM Standards.

OUR COMMUNITY covers the Neighbourhood and Community and the Tenancy Standards. This is all about how we manage the Estate, let homes and work with our partners.

OUR TENANTS is about you, our tenants, and what you have put into making the area great. We will also look at how we are performing against the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard.

How we involve tenants in our communications

The Communications Group have been involved in approving this annual report to ensure that the content, the images and most importantly that the language is as jargon free as possible.





How does BCT monitor performance?

BCT's performance is monitored using several methods that are in place to ensure all areas of the Association are as efficient and effective as possible.

These methods include;

- Board meetings which are open to the public
- Customer Scrutiny Committee meetings
- Audit and Risk Committee meetings
- Governance and Remuneration Committee meetings
- Executive Team meetings (fortnightly senior managers meetings)
- Operational Meetings (monthly team meetings)
- Staff Team Brief (following all Board meetings)
- Appraisals and one to one meetings with all BCT staff
- Service Level Agreement meetings with our contractors
- Independent reports from Auditors
- Supporting this we also ask tenants how they think we are performing for example through the Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR Survey)
- Independent surveys, such as Voluntas, which measures satisfaction with our repairs service.

We compare ourselves against other similar organisations by using benchmarking. Benchmarking allows BCT to compare our business processes and performance against other housing associations and where possible, identify best practice.

BCT's performance scorecard is reported to Board and the Customer Scrutiny Committee (CSC) on a quarterly basis. The performance scorecard includes benchmarking information which allows BCT to make comparisons against our peers.

KEY PERFORMANCE

The following performance indicators are monitored by the BCT Board and the Customer Scrutiny Committee.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2019-20	2018-19	MEDIAN	PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT
Rent Collection	98.55%	99.97%	99.92%	☹️
Void Rent Loss	1.32%	1.57%	0.99%	😊
Tenancy Turnover	13.34%	14.16%	7.21%	😊
Average Relet Time (days)	30.70	34.20	25.60	😊
Average cost of a responsive repair	£94	£89	£106	☹️
Average cost of a void repair	£2,563	£2,422	£2,096	☹️

Despite high levels of tenants receiving Universal Credit, the income collection rate for the year continued to perform well. This is an excellent result and it exceeded budget expectations.

Through the cost sharing partnership with Karbon Solutions, BCT is able to buy in its repairs and maintenance service at a low cost. These low costs are however outweighed by a high volume of responsive repairs and there has been a notable increase in the cost of materials during the last year.

Customer satisfaction shows that we are achieving good quality in our repairs contract, and our costs are lower than many other

housing associations, despite the challenges of maintaining the Grade II* listed Byker Estate.

The cost of void repairs was higher than our peer group which has largely been due to the condition of some properties that have been returned to BCT and also the cost of updating properties that had previously omitted from decent homes standard work.

BCT compares against median levels of peer performance against 12 similar housing associations, using HouseMark benchmarking guidelines in line with the BCT Board objective of achieving the median level of performance by 2020.



OUR BYKER

Investing in Byker

This section is about the income that BCT has collected and what has been spent during the last year. We will also show you how we have made savings and how we have achieved best Value for Money (VfM).

What is Value for Money?

VfM describes the entire approach an organisation takes to ensure that available resources are used optimally throughout the value chain to achieve maximum fulfilment of its objectives.

As a housing association with a strong social purpose, BCT cannot just consider the cheapest option. Alongside the economic benefits, BCT must also consider the social and environmental benefits, which is often referred to as the 'Triple Bottom Line'.

BCT is committed to delivering VfM in the interests of its tenants and the wider community because we aim to minimise the financial pressures on households adversely affected by economic pressures, and to improve service quality and customer satisfaction.

VfM is often described in terms of the three 'E's of Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness.

Economy Turns money spent into inputs.	We buy in goods and services at the best price.
Efficiency Turns inputs into outputs.	We review internal processes to be lean and remove waste.
Effectiveness Turns outputs into outcomes.	We put our resources where we will have biggest impact towards our Vision. We recognise that we shouldn't try to do everything - we work with partners where they can provide a more effective service than us.



VfM gains

BCT has achieved significant VfM gains since stock transfer in 2012. BCT defines efficiency gains as on-going savings that permanently reduce the cost of BCT services. BCT Board set targets for 2019-20 as follows:

RENT COLLECTION RATE			
Definition: The value of rent collected as a percentage of the rent charged in the year.			
2019-20	2019-20 Target	2018-19 Result	Peer group median (2019)
98.55%	98.00%	99.97%	100.05%

VOID RENT LOSS

Definition: The value of rent not charged due to properties being empty. Shown as a percentage of the maximum possible rent charge for the year.

2019-20	2019-20 Target	2018-19 Result	Peer group median (2019)
1.32%	1.30%	1.57%	0.82%

OPERATING SURPLUS

Definition: The operating income less operating expenses for the year.

2019-20	2019-20 Target	2018-19 Result
£2,419,000	£2,100,000	£1,666,000

The Board was pleased to see that these key performance targets were achieved or very nearly achieved. This strong performance means that BCT generates more cash to spend on improving services and the Estate.

Future Plans

As part of its VfM Strategy, the BCT Board has set the following targets to be achieved in the 2020/21 financial year. These targets reflect how the Board intends to use available resources to deliver BCT's strategic objectives.

NAME	2020-21 TARGET	COVID-19 FALLBACK TARGET
Rent Collection	98.0%	96.0%
Void rent loss	1.30%	2.0%
Budget Surplus 2020-21	£1,631,800	£1,496,500
Capital investment (including potential £6.8m purchase of district heating system)	£13.1m	£10.1m

We have kept the same challenging targets from the previous year for rent collection and void rent loss, however should our performance be adversely affected by Covid-19 and local or national lockdowns, we have also set some targets that will accommodate these challenges.

Who is the Housing Regulator and what is the Regulatory Framework?

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) is responsible for monitoring how housing associations, like BCT, are performing.

The RSH requires housing associations to comply with seven Regulatory Standards. These Standards are split into three Economic and four Consumer Standards.

ECONOMIC STANDARDS

Governance and Financial Viability Standard	This standard sets out expectations about how BCT is governed and how the BCT Business Plan is monitored.
Value for Money Standard	This standard is about how BCT makes best use of the resources available to deliver services and new housing.
Rent Standard	This standard governs how your rent and service charges are set.

CONSUMER STANDARDS	
Home Standard	This standard sets out the required standards for repairs, maintenance and improvements made to your home.
Neighbourhood and Community Standard	This standard governs the area in which you live and how BCT works with partners to deliver services in your community and prevent anti-social behaviour.
Tenancy Standard	This standard is about your tenancy agreement and how our housing is allocated.
Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard	This standard is about communicating with you and how you can get involved with BCT to help to shape our services and hold us to account.

Each year, the BCT Board completes a self-assessment against each of the Regulatory Standards to ensure that BCT continues to meet all of the requirements and finds areas for improvement.

Regulatory Judgement

The RSH issues all large housing associations with ratings for the governance and financial viability standard. The ratings range from G1 to G4 for governance, and V1 to V4 for financial viability.

These ratings are set out in the following table:

G1	V1	The highest rating, compliant with the Standard.
G2	V2	Compliant with the standard but needs to improve some aspects to maintain compliance.
G3	V3	Not compliant with the Standard and there are issues of serious concern.
G4	V4	The lowest rating. Not compliant with the Standard and the housing association will be subject to intervention or enforcement by RSH.

BCT's current rating is

G1 V2

Governance

Governance describes the methods and structures that are in place to ensure that BCT's decisions are made well.

The BCT Board has adopted a governance framework that includes risk appraisal and management, enhanced internal audit for greater assurance, and stress testing of the Business Plan.

In addition, the BCT Board and Committee structure includes committees to support the decision-making process and ensure that tenants have a key role to play in scrutinising our services and performance:



Board and Committee Structure

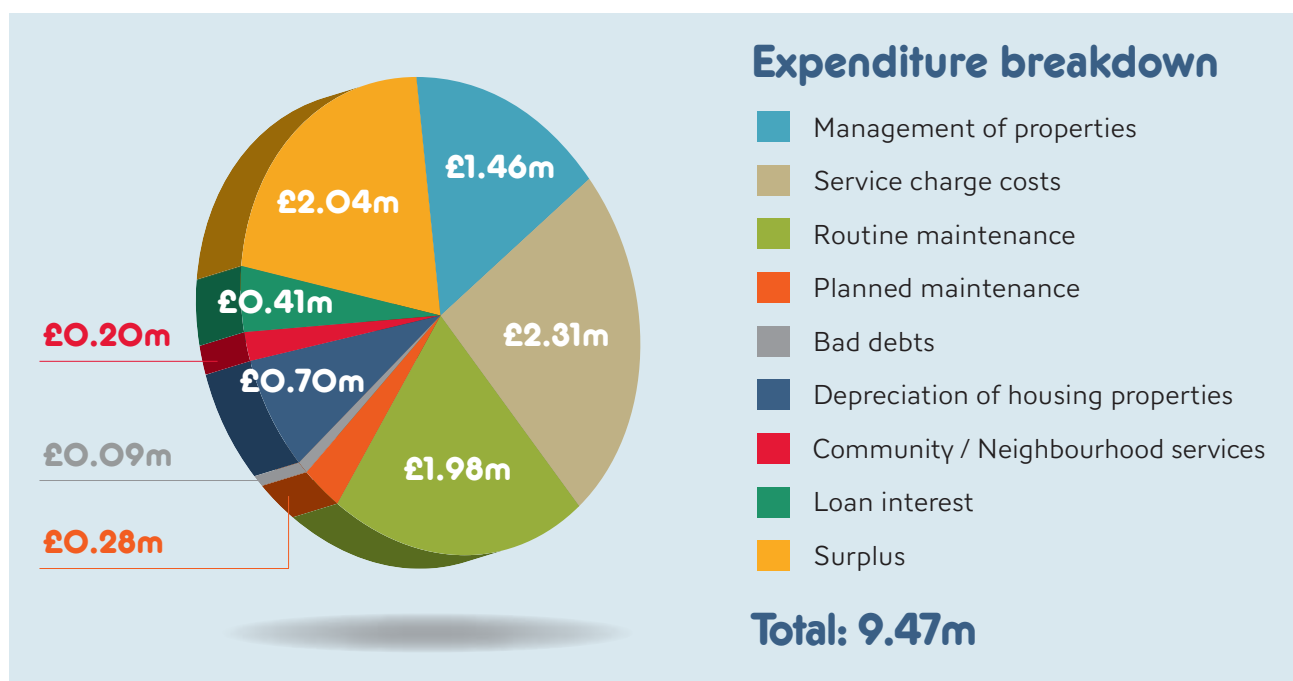
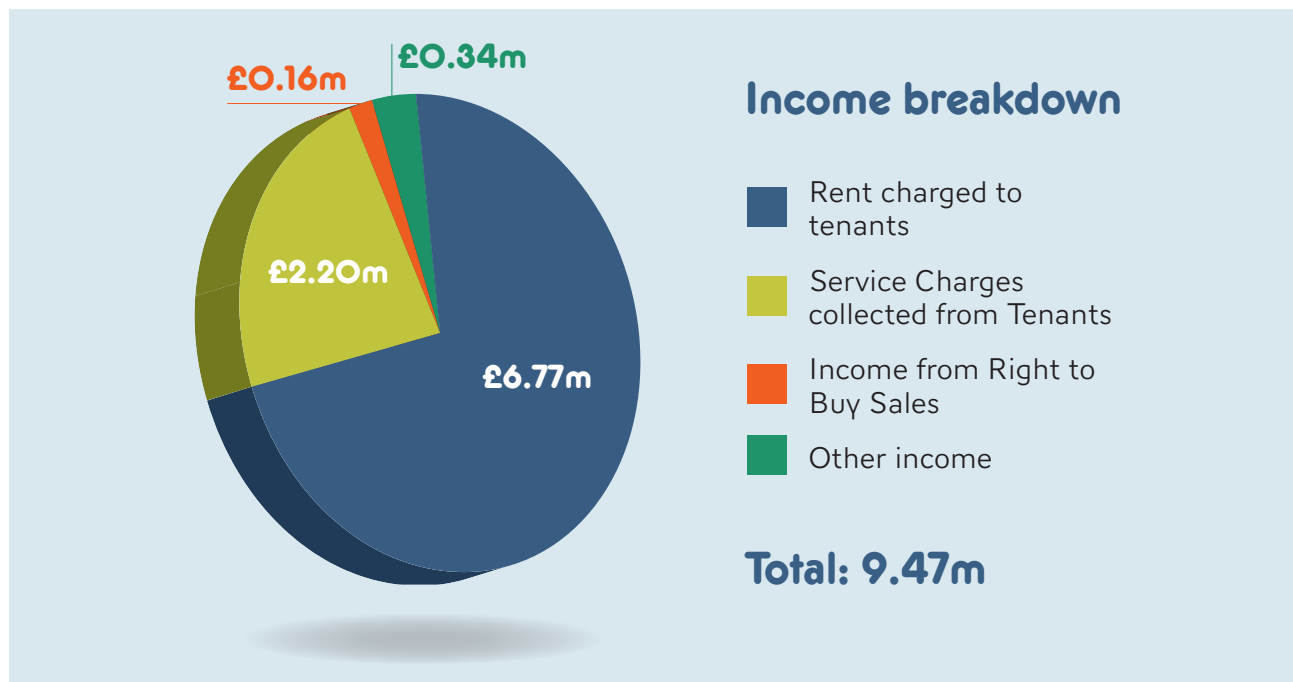
adopted March 2018



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

How BCT spends the income it collects

The rents and service charges paid by tenants and leaseholders is used to pay for all of the day to day services provided by BCT as well as the ongoing investment required on the Estate. BCT's income in 2019-20 was £9.47m.



During 2019/20, BCT achieve a surplus of £2.04m (after tax and deductions).

A surplus often occurs in a budget when expenditure is less than the income collected. BCT keeps the surplus in reserve and uses it to finance further investment and to help repay loans that have taken out to fund the investment programme.

These figures confirm that BCT is on track against its financial targets.

INVESTMENT COMPLETED DURING 2019/20:

Official Offer Document
stated BCT would invest
£39m
in the Estate in its first
20 years



In BCT's first 8 years, since
2012, it has committed over
£35.7m
to the delivery of our
investment programme

A further
£10.6m
of investment is planned
up to 2025



Investment works progressing during 2019/20

Reroofing Programme

A **£3.6m** project to replace the roofs to 411 properties with original concrete tiled roofs and original metal roofs began on site in June 2019. Work is progressing well, and it is expected that the project will be complete by October 2020.

Spend £3.6m



Lift Replacement Programme

Work started on this **£1.5m** project in April 2019 to replace 13 original passenger lifts in the Byker Wall, from Byker Crescent to Northumberland Terrace and upgrade both lifts servicing Tom Collins House. These works were completed in September 2020.

Spend £1.5m



Disabled Adaptations Programme

During 2019/20, we completed 15 major disabled adaptations helping tenants to remain living independently in their homes.

Spend £26,255



Internal Heating Improvements

Work is ongoing as part of a £3m project to upgrade the heating controls to all properties which will allow greater control of the heating system and improve its energy efficiency. Over 50% of property upgrades are now complete and old or defective tanks, valves and radiators are being replaced with all homes completed fitted with a new programmer. This programmer allows residents to control the times and temperature of their heating system. The project will complete by Autumn 2021.

Spend £3m



Dunn Terrace External Upgrade

In February 2020, work began to carry out an external upgrade of the Dunn Terrace section of the Byker Wall from Wolseley House to Salisbury House, including Graham House.

The project includes the replacement of the white aluminium profiled cladding, installation of new pigeon netting to balconies, concrete and brick work repairs and a full external redecoration in line with the original Ralph Erskine colour scheme. Included in this project is the replacement of all communal doors to bin stores and service cupboards in stairwells from Bamburgh Terrace to Salisbury House, including the 5 link blocks.

The £2.3m project will complete by March 2021.

Spend £2.3m



COMING SOON

BCT holds information on the stock condition of your home and all communal areas across the Estate following detailed stock condition surveys. This allows us to plan investment and ensure components, such as the electrics, kitchens, bathrooms, windows and doors, are replaced in accordance with their recommended lifespan.

New door replacements

Following BCT's stock condition survey, 110 doors across the Estate have been identified for replacement. It is expected that the door replacements will be completed by Summer 2021.

Environmental upgrade Health & Safety works

A major programme of environmental improvement work is planned across the Estate. Health and safety works have been prioritised and these will be completed by winter 2021. These works were identified through consultation and will include the creation of external bin stores in several locations, the provision of additional litter bins, a new footpath link along the east side of Raby Way, production of a tree management plan and the provision of handrails. It will also include improved surfacing to key pedestrian through routes.

Conversion of commercial units to create four new homes for rent

Plans are being developed to convert the empty commercial units at Dunn Terrace, Northumberland Terrace and the former district heating office on Raby Street into new homes for rent. The conversions will create four much needed one-bedroomed properties providing level access and wet-room accommodation. It is expected that the new homes will be available to rent in April 2021.

Kitchen and Bathroom replacement programme

Following BCT's stock condition survey, 272 kitchens and 354 bathrooms across the Estate have been identified for replacement before 2025. All tenants receiving a kitchen and/or bathroom with shower will be contacted to arrange a survey ahead of the project commencing in Spring 2021. It is expected that the project will take 2 years to complete.

Health and Safety

BCT monitors all areas of Health and Safety compliance on a monthly basis to ensure that homes and buildings are safe. Areas of compliance affecting communal areas and stairwells such as lift inspections, fire risk assessments (FRAs), water hygiene, emergency lighting testing and firefighting equipment servicing are all completed in accordance with the statutory timescales. Performance relating to Health and Safety compliance is reported to the BCT Board at every meeting. BCT publishes all FRAs on its website including progress on the completion of FRA recommendations.

Your safety is of utmost concern to BCT, therefore to make sure the internal areas of your home are protected all properties with a gas appliance have this serviced annually. Additionally, we are moving towards testing your internal electrical system every 5 years to ensure its safety, rather than 10 years as previously. Your mains powered smoke detectors will be replaced when they reach 10 years old.

Essential information to ensure you remain safe in your home can be found on our website on the 'Safety in your home' page.

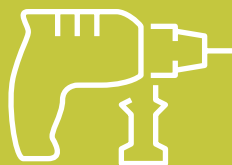
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

The Home Standard requires BCT to meet a range of statutory requirements for the health and safety of the tenants in their homes (including, but not limited to Gas Safety, Fire Safety, Electrical Safety, Asbestos, Legionella and Lift Safety).

We deliver your repairs and maintenance service in partnership with Karbon Solutions and have a dedicated team of 16 staff working in Byker.

Total cost of R&M, including voids and health & safety compliance was

£1.705m



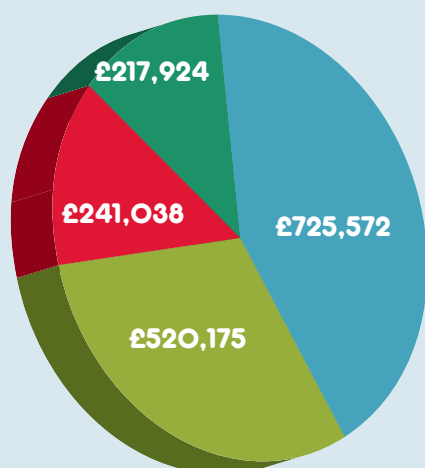
The team completed

7275
repairs

The below table indicates how well BCT has been performing in relation to delivering repairs and maintenance during 2019/20:

DESCRIPTION	TARGET	YEAR END POSITION	
Number of repairs completed within target	98%	98.2%	😊
Properties with a valid gas safety certificate	100%	100%	😊
Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service	93.0%	94.0%	😊
Average number of calendar days to complete repairs	9 days	10.1 days	😞

During 2020/21, the Customer Scrutiny Committee (CSC) commenced a review of the repairs and maintenance service focusing in particular on repair timescales. It is expected that the CSC will conclude their scrutiny review before the end of 2021.



During 2019/20 BCT spent the following amounts on repairs and maintenance:

- Repairs and Maintenance
- Voids
- Health and Safety Compliance
- Repairs Support Staff Costs

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Customer Service Excellence

In February 2020, BCT were awarded the Customer Service Excellence accreditation for our commitment to delivering high quality housing and community services to its residents. To read more about Customer Service Excellence, please see page 29.



Constructing Excellence National Award

Tom Collins House was recognised at the Constructing Excellence National Awards after winning the North East Regional Award in the 'Preservation and Rejuvenation' category.



UK Housing Awards

BCT was shortlisted in the category of Neighbourhood Transformation Award with a presentation being made to a judging panel in March 2020. The final outcome of the award has been delayed until later in the year due to Covid-19.



Top 50 UK Landlords award

In August 2019, BCT were named 24th in the Top 50 Landlords Awards from 24Housing Magazine, which is voted for by other social landlords.

The award commended BCT's unique Byker Approach and placing customer empowerment at the forefront of strategy and service delivery.



OUR COMMUNITY

The Neighbourhood and Community Standard requires BCT to work in partnership with other relevant agencies to address issues such as the cleanliness of the area and anti-social behaviour. The Standard, in line with the RSH's general approach, envisages that such issues are best dealt with locally.



Thriving Byker and the 'Best Summer Ever'

The Thriving Byker Strategy (TBS) was introduced by BCT during 2018 and concentrates on the main themes of: Health and Wellbeing; Financial Inclusion; A Safer Byker; Children and Young People and Community Investment.

Community Investment and partnership working is at the heart of the strategy and we would like to thank everyone involved in the Byker Children and Young People's Network, for taking a truly collaborative approach and for sharing in BCT's vision for a Thriving Byker.

The Byker Children & Young People's Partnership (BCYPP) is a pioneering and unique, strategic collaboration between approximately 30 organisations from the housing, cultural and social sectors alongside representatives from local authority and statutory services with the joint aim of supporting the community of Byker.

In July and August 2019, the BCYPP collectively planned and delivered a programme of free activities everyday throughout the six weeks' school holidays to ensure the community would have the 'Best Summer Ever'.

The Best Summer Ever programme included activities such as arts and crafts, dancing, horse riding, climbing, laser quest, circus skills, singing, picnics, poetry sessions and multi-sports were all included as well as a family fun day, guided tours of The Victoria Tunnel, trips out to places like Whitehouse Farm, 'Real Tennis' and Tynemouth beach and visits to Seven Stories and the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art.

In addition to the comprehensive programme of activities and events, lunch was also provided to the children each day free of charge at the Byker Community Centre and on site at other community activities.

BYKER'S BEST SUMMER EVER!



600

participants



912

volunteer hours



145

hours of free holiday activities



8,637

lunches, desserts and snacks served



79%

reported reduction in Anti-Social Behaviour

Outcomes from the Best Summer Ever included:

- ✓ Participants experienced a decrease in boredom when compared to previous Summer holiday experiences.
- ✓ Participants perceived less financial barriers to accessing Summer activities.
- ✓ The Best Summer Ever supported an increase in the establishment of new friendships and community connections.
- ✓ Children demonstrated an increased willingness to try previously untried activities and untried food.
- ✓ Participants showed an increased willingness to re-engage with activities at Byker Community Centre.
- ✓ Participants reported experiencing increased happiness.



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

BCT would like to say a big 'Thank You' to all our partners who have supported us and worked with us to help achieve success. We couldn't have done it without you!

CORPORATE PARTNERS	COMMUNITY PARTNERS	BYKER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTNERSHIP
Bell Group Classic Lifts ESH H. Malone & Sons Karbon Newcastle United Foundation Newcastle University	Building Futures East Byker Community Centre Byker Sands Food Nation Newcastle City Council Northumbria Police St Michael's Church	Big Bike Revival Food Nation Foundation Futures Hat-trick Kids Kabin Northern Stage Seven Stories Stepney Banks Tyne and Wear Sports YMCA Youth Focus NE

LITTER, WASTE AND RECYCLING

BCT has continued to work closely with Newcastle City Council's Waste Management Team and other community partners to address a wide range of issues on the Estate.

During the year, BCT have:

- Continued to empty the BCT branded litter bins on the Estate on a weekly basis.
- Agreed investment to create permanent communal bin areas across the estate in pilot areas at Dunn Terrace and Headlam Green. This will improve the appearance of the communal bins areas as well as the general waste and improve recycling facilities.
- Held 'Skip Days' collecting 7,600 kilos of general waste with 95% being waste that could be recycled.
- Completed regular community litter picks with residents at various locations across the Estate.
- Published Newcastle City Council cleaning schedules and routes on the BCT website.
- Worked with the Sage Foundation to deliver a community clean up day.



POLICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

BCT works very closely with the Police, Newcastle City Council and other partners in order to provide a safe community. We proactively work together to help reduce anti-social behaviour (ASB) and to minimise the affects that it has on the lives of residents living on the Byker Estate.

- During the course of the last year we have listened to tenants and residents and worked with the Police to take appropriate action to tackle ASB.
- We reviewed and updated our ASB Policy which was approved by Board in January 2020. This was followed by the development of the Proactive Youth Intervention process. BCT developed this new process with the Police to help in managing and tackling youth ASB through support, early intervention and diversionary activities.
- Two Community Protection Notices (CPNs) have been served during the year. The purpose of CPNs is to prevent unreasonable behaviour that is having a negative impact on the local community's quality of life. A CPN can be served on a person aged 16 years or over.
- We have issued two closure orders to prevent people entering our properties in order to tackle serious ASB.
- BCT has also taken the lead in the setup of a local partnership approach to address the needs of young people on the Estate. The partnership looks at ways of engaging and supporting families where children are causing or are part of youth disorder.
- The Byker Children and Young People's Partnership secured funding to deliver the 'Best Summer Ever'. That included a host of events, activities, sports and healthy eating, providing choice and enabling children of all ages to get involved and be active throughout the school holidays. The initiative brought together youth projects and charities from across the ward to identify those involved in disorder and co-ordinate diversionary activities.
- The project was a huge success and during the summer months, a 79 per cent reduction in ASB was reported, compared to the same period in 2018.



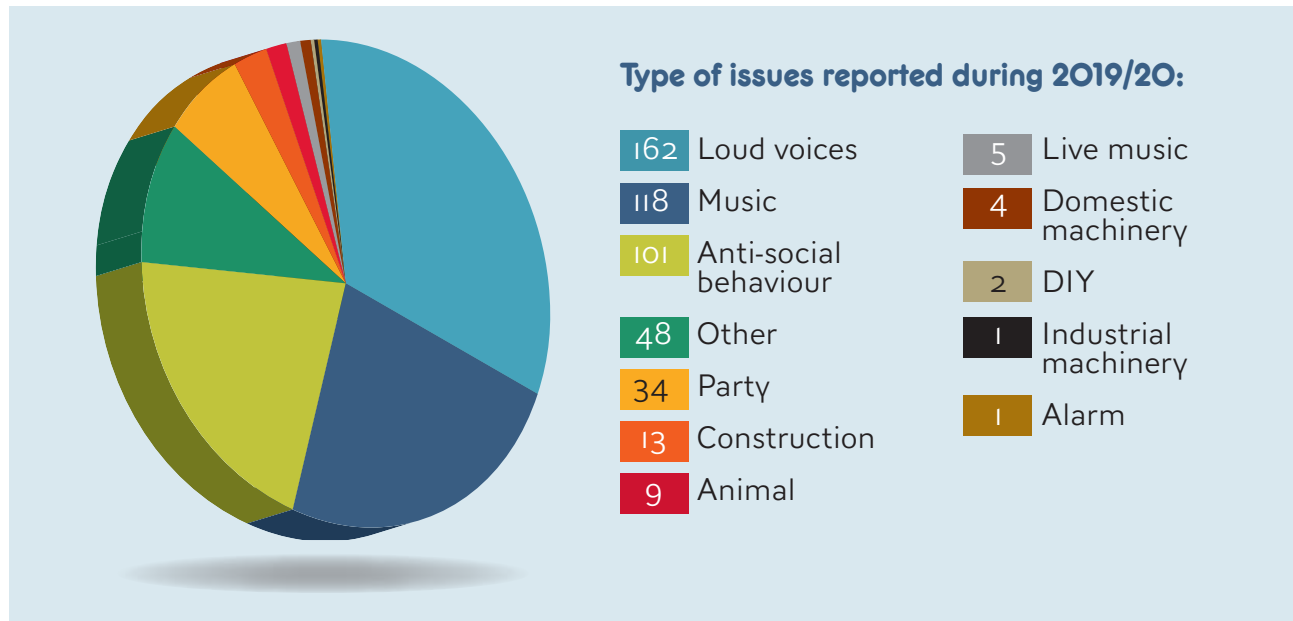
The Noise App

BCT introduced the 'Noise App' in 2017 and this has continued to be a very popular tool with customers for its ease in reporting noise related issues.

Use of the Noise App has more than doubled since its introduction and it has helped to effectively tackle ASB cases.

Feedback from tenants has been very positive as a preferred way of recording incidents relating to noise.

The Noise App supports customer complaints and can be used in Court when it is necessary to take legal action against perpetrators of ASB.



Managing Tenancies

The Tenancy Standard aims to ensure that BCT lets its homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way taking into account the needs and aspirations of tenants and potential tenants.

Tenancy sustainment is important to BCT and we provide a range of appropriate advice and support to all tenants to help them to remain in their home.

One of BCT's challenges this year is again trying to minimise the effect that Universal Credit has had on our tenant's ability to pay their rent. BCT have taken steps to ensure that all new tenancies get off to the best possible start by delivering pre-tenancy workshops and assessments.



IMPACT

The Tenancy Sustainment and Welfare Reform Team whose role it is to make sure tenants receive all of the financial support that they are entitled to. The team can provide advice and support to access employment. The team works closely with our Income Management Team to collect rent and help tenants to stay in their home.

In 2019/20, BCT has helped:

682 customers



received career coaching at BCT in partnership with Building Futures East.

918



different types of enquiries.

**An additional
£489,528**



generated by the team to support our tenants.

£7,380



of backdated benefit was obtained for tenants.

£191,602



additional monthly benefit was obtained for tenants.

£122,780



in additional housing costs was obtained for tenants.

**An additional
£167,301**



is now paid to BCT through annual rent arrangements.

We also worked closely with one of our partners; Building Futures East who helped with employability, skills, training and CV development.

34 tenants



received career coaching at BCT in partnership with Building Futures East.

5 people



found work and a further 28 are receiving ongoing support.

300 hours



of bespoke career coaching and classes in maths and English.

Support was in the way of:

47 hours



of individual support was given to BCT tenants.

11 tenants



successfully gained employment.

6 accessed



and attended training courses.

Working in partnership with Newcastle United Foundation

5 tenants



secured work placements

13 tenants



took part in NEI Works to develop CV writing and interview skills

253 children

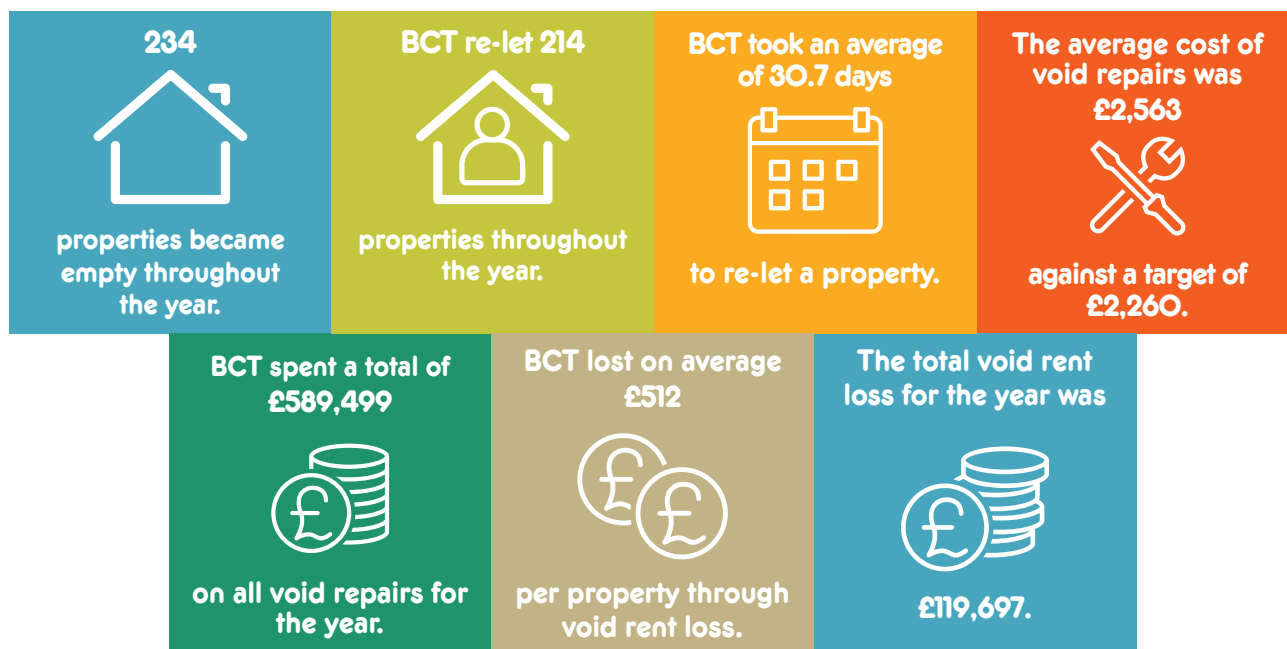


were involved in a range of educational programmes delivered in the local primary schools.

Starting and Ending Tenancies

BCT is part of a Choice Based Letting Scheme called Tyne and Wear Homes. This scheme runs in partnership with Newcastle City Council and other housing providers in the Tyne and Wear region.

Tyne and Wear Homes operates through a website (www.tyneandwearhomes.org.uk) and provides a one stop-shop for anyone wishing to search or register for social housing across Gateshead, Newcastle, North or South Tyneside.



The Byker Approach

Throughout the year, we continued to carry out Customer Care Visits (CCVs) for all tenants. The aim of the CCVs is to obtain feedback from tenants and to help BCT identify and address any issues or concerns. BCT also uses the information to assess future investment priorities and deliver services that are appropriate and support tenants.

- **1,263 the number of Customer Care Visits were completed during the year.**

In addition, BCT also awarded Valued Customer Status (VCS) to tenants who have a clear rent account, maintain their home to a good standard and have no breaches of tenancy such as anti-social behaviour or untidy gardens. Those tenants who are awarded with VCS may be considered for priority re-housing and are automatically entered into BCT's annual prize draw.

- **254 tenants have achieved Valued Customer Status during the year.**



OUR TENANTS

Engaging, Empowering and Supporting You!

The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard is intended to ensure that tenants are able to hold their landlord account. It sets out how BCT should engage and interact with our tenants, how we should handle complaints, and the importance of taking tenants' needs into account.

This year we have had some outstanding levels of engagement, just have a look for yourself.

How did you make a difference?

2,220 tenants that became involved with BCT through participating in activities throughout the year.



This means that a total of over 47,000 hours of voluntary involvement activity in your community.



SO WHAT DID THAT MEAN?

Here is a summary of the improvements that have happened as a direct result of your involvement.

<p>130 volunteer hours of tenant involvement</p>  <p>in key business and decision making through BCT Board, Customer Scrutiny Committee and Tenants and Residents Groups.</p>	<p>40 volunteer hours of Grounds Maintenance Inspections</p>  <p>resulting in 98% year-end customer satisfaction with Grounds Maintenance Services.</p>	<p>1,692 adults and children</p>  <p>took part in community activities organised by or in partnership with BCT.</p>	<p>Over 230 hours of fun and free activities</p>  <p>were provided on or around the Estate.</p>
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Customer Scrutiny Committee (CSC)

✓	The CSC led a review of BCT's Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Policy which was approved by Board in December 2019.
✓	The CSC is chaired and led by tenants who monitor all aspects of BCT's performance on a quarterly basis.
✓	Members of the CSC have been actively involved in the 'Together with Tenants' initiative.
✓	CSC have commenced a review of the Repairs and Maintenance service.
✓	CSC were actively involved in the Byker Family Fun Day, supporting the consultation exercise to shape the future strategy for Byker.

BCT Tenant Board Members

✓	BCT has tenant board members who form part of BCT's decision making process. This is at a time when many other Housing Associations have moved away from having tenant board members and it is something that BCT are extremely proud of.
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Grounds Maintenance Inspectors

✓	Worked with BCT to review the Grounds Maintenance Service Level Agreement.
✓	Hold our Grounds Maintenance Team to account and ensure improvement actions are completed as a result of their feedback surveys.
✓	Satisfaction rate 98%.

Litter Picks and Community Clean up days

✓	Worked with community partners to undertake 4 litter pick events.
✓	Over 70 bags of litter picked.
✓	In May 2019, over 200 volunteers from the Sage Foundation spent a day on the Estate cleaning, tidying and removing litter and waste.

Continued actions following tenant's feedback:

✓	Skip days after Christmas collecting 7,600 kilos of general waste with 95% being waste that could be recycled.
✓	Continued promotion and use of the Noise App.
✓	Joint approach to ASB problem solving issues on the Estate.
✓	Increase in employment and welfare support projects for BCT tenants.

Environmental Upgrade Consultation

✓	We consulted with 100s of residents throughout March and April in community venues and just popping up on street corners.
✓	Play, waste and community safety have been prioritised in the scheme as a direct result of the consultation

16 formal walkabouts were carried out across the Estate.

✓	Improvement to drainage at Salisbury House
✓	Estate improvements made:

Following a clean up of graffiti across the estate in late 2018 there were only 3 new incidents reported and removed during 2019

78
repairs were identified, reported and completed

103
items of litter or fly-tipping was reported to Newcastle City Council

122
items of litter or fly-tipping was reported to the BCT Grounds Maintenance team

Consultation on the future strategy for BCT

BCT consulted with tenants, leaseholders, partners and the wider public throughout July 2019 and were supported by the Customer Scrutiny Committee in doing so.

Over 600 attended the Family Funday in July 2019 and provided feedback with regards to the future strategy for BCT.

What you told us

During the consultation, tenants told us that they wanted:



CUSTOMER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Customer Scrutiny Committee (CSC) has played a key role during 2019/20 supporting the work of BCT in a professional, supportive and constructive way.

The CSC, which is made up of nine tenant members, works closely with BCT to hold us to account and take us to task on issues that matter to them.

The CSC is chaired by a Tenant Board Member. This ensures that tenants have a direct link to the BCT Board and have responsibility for:

- Monitoring BCT customer complaints and compliments
- Monitoring performance
- Championing tenant involvement
- Ensuring BCT's compliance with the regulatory standards
- Reviewing services and quality standards

ACHIEVED SO FAR	NEXT STEPS
Completed a review of the BCT Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Policy and Procedure.	Commenced a review of the Repairs and Maintenance Service.
Scrutinised the performance of BCT's partnership with Newcastle United Foundation.	Involvement in the Together with Tenants regional working group.
Monitored and scrutinised performance and complaints on a quarterly basis.	Involvement in BCT's consultation with tenants and shareholders with regards to the future direction of BCT.
Supported BCT with a consultation exercise at the Family Fun Day in July 2019.	Involvement in BCT's consultation with tenants and shareholders with regards to the future direction of BCT.

12 BCT services were changed, implemented or withdrawn during the year as a result of resident feedback and involvement.



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

In February 2020, BCT was awarded the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accreditation for our commitment to delivering high quality housing and community services to our residents.

CSE is a national quality mark which recognises organisations that meets the criteria as set out in The Cabinet Office's Customer Service Excellence (CSE) Standard.



Organisations undergo a rigorous assessment and are tested in great depth on 57 elements focussing on the key priorities for customers, with particular focus on delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude. BCT was assessed as being fully compliant in 51 elements of the Standard and achieved Compliance Plus in three other areas.

BCT underwent a two-day on-site assessment, which included an observation of the Customer Scrutiny Committee and a number of meetings with customers, staff, and partners. BCT achieved Compliance Plus in three areas, including Leadership, Using Customer Insight and Working in Partnership.

Byker Village TARA

BCT has continued to support the work of the Byker Village TARA. The TARA is a resident led forum that meet every 5 weeks on a Tuesday between 6pm–7pm.

The TARA meets at Byker Community Centre and the purpose of this is to consider issues on the Estate that affect the whole community.

The TARA is regularly attended by a number of partners including BCT, the Police and Newcastle City Council.

During 2019/20, the TARA has increased have worked tirelessly on issues such as waste management, traffic calming and community activities.



Over 100 voluntary hours from 70 residents holding BCT, the Police and Newcastle City Council to account on community issues through the Byker Village TARA.

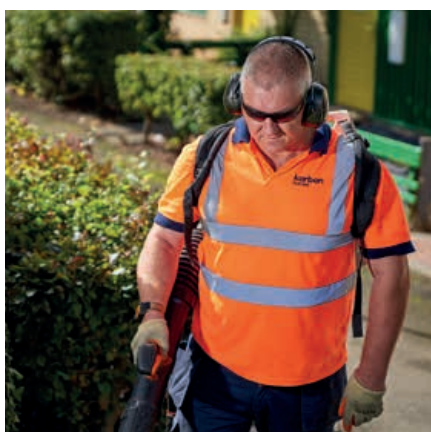


Grounds Maintenance Inspectors & Estate Walkabouts

The Grounds Maintenance Inspectors (GMIs) are members of the community with an interest in their environment. Our team of 13 GMIs are key to scrutinising the way BCT manages the grounds maintenance activity across the Estate and look at issues such as grass cutting, tree and hedge cutting, removing graffiti, litter picking, emptying litter bins, inspecting our play areas, and maintaining Ayton Park. During 2019/20 the GMIs carried out a total of 106 inspections with their feedback as follows:

DESCRIPTION	TARGET	% SATISFIED	
Did the grass cutting in your inspection area meet the agreed service standard?	95%	100%	😊
Were footpaths in your inspection area left free of grass clippings on completion of the work?	95%	100%	😊
Were footpaths in your inspection area left free of any encroaching hedge growth?	93%	99%	😊
Was your inspection area left clean and tidy and all litter removed?	95%	94%	😞
Are you satisfied that the BCT footpaths in your inspection area have been maintained in a weed free condition?	93%	99%	😊
Are you satisfied that the shrub beds and communal planters in your inspection area have been maintained in a weed and litter free condition?	95%	95%	😊
On completion of the work to your inspection area – was all graffiti that had been reported to BCT removed?	95%	100%	😊
Did the team remove all fly tipping in your inspection area that was on BCT land?	95%	98%	😊

IN NUMBERS



BCT has 13 trained
Grounds Maintenance
Inspectors.



Last year, 106
grounds maintenance
inspections were
carried out.

Family activities

Last year, BCT offered tenants the opportunity to visit Whitehouse Farm with 109 tenants attending this event which was almost double the number of attendees from the previous year.

The events provided an opportunity for families to come together in both fun and learning environments.

Further family activities attended by over 100 tenants included barbecues at Ayton Rise and Felton Walk as well as a trip supported by Northern Stage to see the Snow Queen.



COMMUNICATING WITH YOU

We have continued to improve the way we connect with you through social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.



we achieved 148.5K impressions, reached 94.5K people and our followers grew by 43% from 647 to 930.



we posted 108 tweets, achieved 114K tweet impressions and gained 247 new followers.

We will continue to send out our award winning 'Byker News' newsletter keeping you up to date with our progress and upcoming events.



Check it out <https://bykercommunitytrust.org/events>

Tenants' Conference

Our annual tenants' conference was held in October 2019 at Byker Community Centre and involved a number of our partners.

79 tenants attended and the day was filled with family activities, a poem from Rowan McCabe, an opportunity to discuss the performance of BCT and provide feedback and suggestions for improving services. A community clean up involving many tenants and volunteers took place at the end of the conference.



THANK YOU TO OUR CUSTOMER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND TO ALL OF THE RESIDENTS WHO SUPPORT IT.

Who are driving forward positive change
on behalf of all residents.



Get Involved

If you would like to get involved in improving the neighbourhood, developing housing services or organising community activities then please get in touch. We would love to hear from you.

What are you waiting for?

How to contact Byker Community Trust

📞 Call: **0800 533 5442**

- 🔧 Option 1: Repairs
(also for out of hours emergencies)
- £ Option 2: Rent Enquiries
- 🏠 Option 3: Housing Enquiries
- 🏢 Option 4: Business Enquiries

✉ customerservices@bykerct.co.uk

💻 www.bykercommunitytrust.org

📘 bykercommunitytrust

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BYKER
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