

annual report

2022

2023

**believe**  
housing

# hello

At believe housing we are committed to doing the right thing for our people, for our customers, and for our business. We have seen in recent years the challenges people and businesses have faced due to the continued effects of the Covid pandemic, the increase in energy bills and other cost of living factors. We fully understand that this is a truly difficult period for people to navigate. That's why at believe housing we are working hard to ensure our services go 'beyond the front door'.

To provide healthy homes and communities where people can thrive, we actively engage with our customers on many issues to make sure that the services we deliver meet needs and expectation. We are investing in existing homes to make them modern, safe and energy efficient; and our development programme is delivering high-quality new properties where they are needed. We have also expanded our community grants programme to offer funding to groups and projects that support our customers and their communities.

Below you'll find a short summary of some of the key information and figures relating to believe housing's services during the last year.

Alan Smith  
Chief Executive

## the year in numbers



We've carried out **80,575** repairs, retrofitted environmental works on **1,401** homes, and completed 100 new homes.

We've awarded **£239,084** in community funding, and supported customers to receive **£1.5m** in welfare benefits.



And we've engaged with customers in-person as well as receiving feedback from **7,175** customers through **107** surveys.

# neighbourhoods



**76%**

of customers believe we make a **positive** contribution to neighbourhoods



**80%**

of customers believe we keep communal areas clean, safe and well-maintained

# safer neighbourhoods



**70%**

of customers are satisfied with our approach to handling antisocial behaviour



**103**

cases where we took legal action

**2,938**

cases opened

**2,707**

cases closed

# lettings

**9,130**

people applied through Durham Key Options

**25,054** bids were placed by **10,569** bidders for our properties



**1,533**

new tenancies including:

**22**

relets – Rent to Buy

**1,432**

relets – affordable and social

**26**

first let – Rent to Buy

**53**

first let – affordable and social

# customer contact



**208,068**

calls answered by our customer hub

**25,167**

emails received by our customer hub

**72%**

calls resolved at first point of contact

# assets and investments

**3,104**

fire door inspections

**2,120**

stock surveys completed

**2,510**

retrofit assessments



**1,186**

properties retrofitted through environmental works

**1,401**

boiler and heating upgrades



**193**

roofing, photovoltaic (PV) cells and external improvements

**100%**

compliance for health and safety site audits



**87**

kitchens fitted



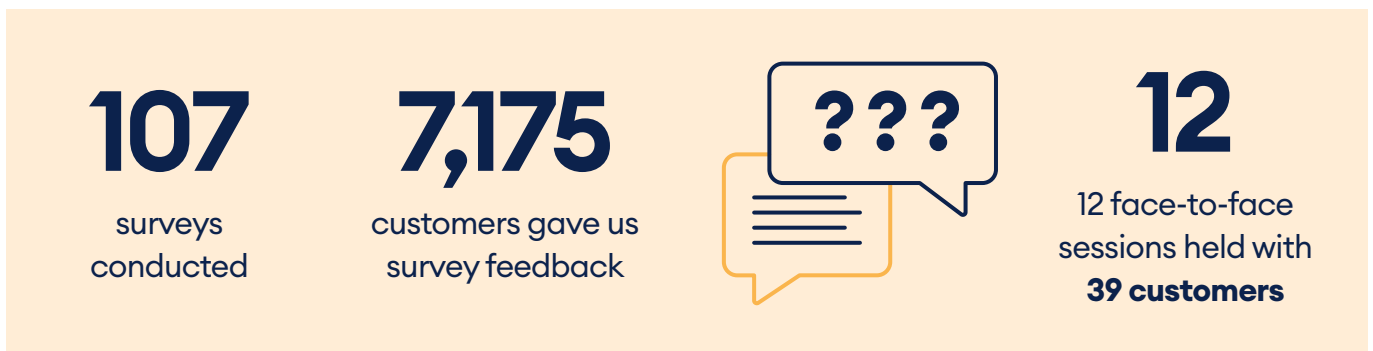
**66**

bathrooms fitted

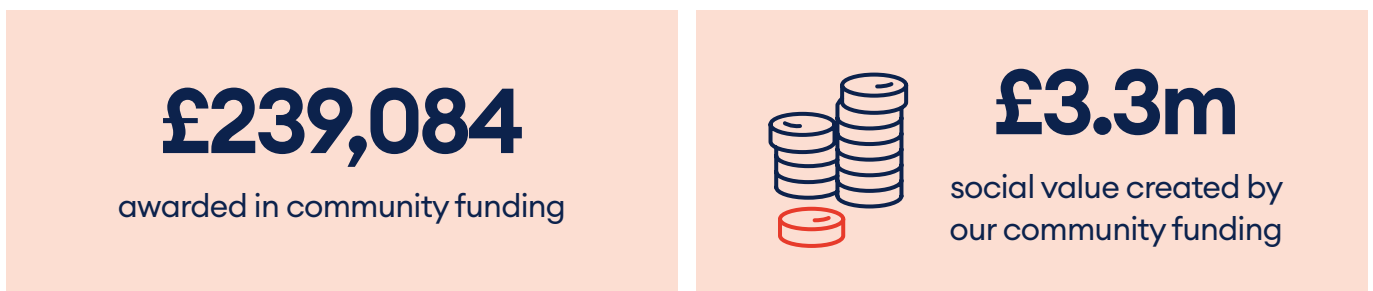
# customer satisfaction



# engaging with our customers



# supporting our communities



**84**

**grants of £500**  
awarded to 81  
organisations or  
community groups

**18**

**grants of £1,000**  
awarded to 18  
organisations or  
community groups

**7**

**grants of £10,000**  
awarded to 7  
organisations or  
community groups

**6**

**grants of £20,000**  
awarded to 6  
organisations or  
community groups

Our funding unlocked **£203,768.23** of match funding

## repairing and maintaining homes

**80,575**

repairs completed

**4.3**

out of 5 satisfaction

**17.6**

days to complete  
repairs

**87.2%**

repairs completed  
within timescales

**92.9%**

repairs completed  
first time



We carried out:

**17,832**

gas services in  
**99.98% of our homes**

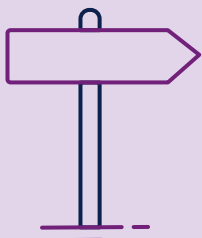
**3,298**

electrical  
safety checks

## supporting our customers

**£1.5m**

in welfare benefits  
received by customers  
through our support



**£16,850**

in heat and eat  
vouchers issued

**3**

NewStart roles  
advertised specifically  
for our customers and  
taken up

**183**

people supported  
into employment



**6**

people supported to  
access volunteering  
opportunities

**626**

customers supported  
to reduce their rent  
arrears

# development



**127**

new homes approved in 2022/23



**100**

new homes completed in 2022/23

# how we spend our money

**£25.7m**

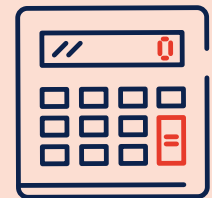
improving existing homes

**£26.2m**

repairs and maintenance to homes

**£25.4m**

acquiring and developing new homes



**£20.3m**

wages and salaries

**£6.9m**

decarbonisation and environmental improvements

**£1m**

adaptations

**£162k**

developing digital services

You can visit our website to read all of [believe housing's financial reports](#).

# complaints

Average days to respond to a complaint:

stage 1

**14.5**

working days

stage 2

**22**

working days

combined

**15.7**

working days

# 62.6%

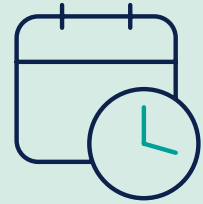
responded to within timescale (237 of 379)

# 59.9%

within timescale at stage 1

# 76.7%

within timescale at stage 2



# 6

housing ombudsman reviews

Top three areas for complaints:

# 238

repairs



# 28

staff



# 22

neighbourhoods

Every year we complete a self-assessment of our compliance with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaints Handling Code and publish this on our website. You can see our latest version [here](#).

Complaints say we:	Examples:	Planned actions:	Expected outcome:
Don't always deliver what we promise	Not returning calls or completing repairs when we say we will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review service standards with tenants</li> <li>Deliver customer experience training</li> </ul>	Delivering services that customers can trust and have their expectations met
Need to tailor support to meet individual needs	Not fully considering customers' needs and the impact of our actions/inactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver equality, diversity, and inclusion training to all staff</li> <li>Improve how we identify and respond to individual customer needs</li> </ul>	Understanding our customers' needs through the data we hold and collect. Providing homes and services that reflect people's changing needs
Must improve record-keeping and give consistent advice	Not recording conversations and varying advice given to customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure our policies and processes are understood by all colleagues</li> <li>Improve our systems and processes for recording customer contact</li> </ul>	Making fair decisions based on good reliable data and making our services easier to use



# focus on feedback

**All feedback, whether it's positive or negative, helps us to focus our plans and work on the things that matter most to customers.**



We use feedback to put things right for individual customers but also to look at emerging themes, which are examined in service area meetings.



Our repairs service holds a monthly customer satisfaction meeting to make ongoing process improvements from the feedback provided.



Customer views have fundamentally shaped the development of policies around topics including customer home improvement and decoration allowance.



As soon as I phoned I got told someone would call me back and the next morning I got a phone call when they said they would. It was extremely easy. ✓

There is a lack of communication from department to department. ✗

They always come straight out and get repairs done straight away. ✓

They are polite and I've never had any problems with the workmanship. ✓

They could have fixed right in the first place. ✗

I think it could have been dealt with sooner. ✗

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Call: **0300 1311 999**

Email: **hello@believehousing.co.uk**

Visit: **www.believehousing.co.uk**

Coast House, Spectrum 4,  
Spectrum Business Park,  
Seaham, SR7 7TT



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