

Annual residents report

2020





Welcome

to our 2020 annual residents report

This report aims to inform residents of our performance over the past year and our plans for 2021. 2020 has been an exceptional year for many reasons. Our response to the coronavirus pandemic has been intensive and continuous as we tried to respond to the changing rules and restrictions. Whilst this diverted some attention from our priorities at the start of 2020, there were many achievements and lessons learned across the broad spread of our work.

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Good communication was key to getting us through 2020, ensuring staff and residents were well informed and updated of any changes to services and received the right support for them.

One of our most important innovations has been the launch of an email newsletter which updates residents on the latest information on services and stories from our communities.

Nearly 1,000 people currently receive the newsletter. If you would like to be added to the mailing list or have any stories or ideas which you would like to see in future JRHT resident email newsletters, please email information@jrht.org.uk

Welcome message

2020 was for many reasons a watershed year for the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust (JRHT). In January 2020 we underlined JRHT’s operational independence within the JRF-JRHT Group by becoming a Community Benefit Society that aims to provide specific public benefits. We do this through provision of affordable housing, care and support; innovative development projects that inspire other developers and service providers; and collaboration with our parent body, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), towards our shared outcomes of everyone having a decent home in a good place, and everyone having a good standard of living and prospects.

Little did we know at the start of 2020 that the coronavirus pandemic would bring such disruption and uncertainty to the organisation, tenants, residents, and their families with many people still grappling with challenges. From day one, our frontline services and the safety of staff and residents was the priority, and we are proud of the way that JRHT has delivered on this every day since then, across the communities we serve in our care homes and the villages and estates we help to maintain. In this annual report you will hear

more about JRHT activities in 2020 – in short, what we set out to do this year, the challenges we faced, and what we have delivered.

We hope you will agree that against the backdrop of the pandemic JRHT has brought positive change in how it operates, how it listens to and communicates with its tenants, residents and staff, and has weathered the financial and other impacts of a very difficult year. A clear testament to this incredibly hard work is

the excellent news that the Regulator of Social Housing has recently upgraded JRHT's governance rating to G1 in our latest In-Depth Assessment (IDA) result.

2021 looks like it will bring continued challenges – but also the opportunity to reflect, recover and rebuild. We hope you will stay involved, so that together we can continue to improve and develop JRHT's communities and services.

With best regards

Chris Simpson

JRHT Executive Director

Helen Evans

Chair of the JRHT Board



Achievements and performance

JRHT's work is aligned to the organisation's outcomes;

- More people live in a decent, affordable home.
- More people are shaping our communities.
- More people can improve their prospects.
- More people are independent and well.

A summary of key achievements and performance are highlighted on pages 6-12.

More people live in a decent, affordable home

New homes

Our work providing 1,000 homes over the next ten years took a step forward in 2020 with the submission of a planning application for a new development situated on land north of Willow Bank within New Earswick. In September 2020, we launched a public consultation about our proposed plans to build 117 new and affordable homes on land within New Earswick. Our key focus was to gather invaluable feedback and insights from residents, the local community and staff, as well as key stakeholders. This helped us to refine our plans before applying for planning permission in December 2020. We created a suite of materials that were informative, clear, and followed best practice accessibility standards, and shared these in print and online. We welcomed feedback by post, phone and through a series of online meetings that were attended by the JRHT Executive Director. In the interests of transparency this feedback was shared with the local community and influenced the final set of plans submitted for planning approval.



Artist impression of cul-de-sacs.

Throughout the pandemic, construction work continued on the final buildings within the New Lodge development. The development has already won an award for Healthcare Interior Built category at the International Interior Design Awards 2020.



Repairs and maintenance



We know that an accessible and effective repairs, maintenance and modernisation service is crucial to ensuring that all residents live in a decent and affordable home. The average time taken to complete a repair is now 2.75 days, down from 8.47 days in the previous year. This is a very positive reduction due to changes in ways of working, namely training operatives to multitask, meaning more jobs can be completed in one visit.

However, our repair services were significantly impacted in 2020 by the pandemic and particularly during the first lockdown, when we moved to an emergency and essential compliance service only, in line with much of the sector. The table overleaf shows that by year end, 2020 performance across all repair indicators has fallen. However, up until Q3 we can see that performance has either held

steady or improved considerably compared to 2019. First-time fixes had fallen from 96% to 90% - still a high level of performance. In October 2020 a new repair recording and allocating IT system was introduced – Connect. This system changed the way performance was recorded, and staff had to adjust to new ways of recording and tracking their work.

As a result, we can see a dip in Q4 and the impact on year-end figures. We will continue to monitor this closely and individual jobs continue to be tracked to ensure that the dip in performance illustrated by the data is not a reflection of a poor repairs service. By December 2020, we had already begun to see an improvement in the figures as staff familiarised themselves with the new system.

Over the course of the year, our ability to maintain progress on our

Repairs indicators	2018	2019	Q3 2020 Pre-Connect position	End 2020 Post-Connect position
Responsive repairs completed on time: 24 hours (%)	97.48	98.47	100	88
Responsive repairs completed on time: urgent 7 days (%)	94.40	96.09	100	71
Responsive repairs completed on time: routine 31 days (%)	94.53	96	100	75
Appointments kept – responsive repairs grades 3, 4 and gas (%)	91.65	96.52	96.05	82
First-time fixes – all responsive repair grades (%)	90.50	95.61	89.52	81
Average time taken to do a repair – all responsive repair grades (number of days)	7	2.75	2.46	6

various building compliance programmes was also tested. The coronavirus pandemic has meant that, for significant parts of the year, there were properties that we were unable to enter or to allow our contractors to enter. This may have been because a tenant was self-isolating and in the case of our care and extra care settings, due to visitor restrictions at times of outbreak or lockdown.

Despite this, and due in no small part to the hard effort of our teams working closely to reassure our tenants, and our robust approach to managing risk across our services, we managed to maintain compliance levels across key areas such as gas and electrical inspections. We also made excellent progress with our building safety management programmes, such as securing asbestos surveys for 100% of our properties. Similarly, whilst some work on fire improvements was held up in 2020, we worked closely with the local fire authority to ensure that our mitigations against any risks were robust, and that our Fire Risk Assessment Programme was completed within the year.

Some disruption was experienced with our contractors. This led to longer than desired timescales for completion of non-urgent repairs in areas such as lifts but all urgent repairs were completed as required and within timescales. Throughout this challenging period, we are proud to say that our properties remained safe for our tenants, residents and staff.

	Fire Risk Assessment programme	Legionella Management programme	Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) programme	Landlords Gas Safety Record (LGSR) Programme	Asbestos Survey programme	Lift Management programme
% Status - January 2020	100	100	100	100	92.73	100
% Status - December 2020	100	100	99.84	100	99.39	100



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More people are shaping our communities

Hartrigg Oaks Management Committee and Derwenthorpe Governance Group are good examples of local management partnerships with tenants and residents. In 2020, some groups were hampered by the pandemic, but we are delighted that many residents still participated online in Tenants Voice, residents' meetings, and conversations with the JRHT Executive Director.

For example the Listening project consisted of a series of five online discussions with the JRHT Executive Director, residents, and the Resident

Involvement and Communities team, to hear and understand the impact of coronavirus on people's lives and their views on service priorities throughout the pandemic.

Tenants and residents are now routinely involved in JRHT staff recruitment panels, adding a crucial voice to the process.

We know that catering is about more than just food, so our catering teams have undertaken surveys and gathered feedback from their customers to improve the service and experience that they deliver.



More people can improve their prospects

In 2020, the JRHT Money and Benefits Advisor supported residents to obtain £600,836 in cumulative annualised benefits that households were entitled to, as well as securing backdated benefits totalling £85,749.

Funded by our parent organisation, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the Hartlepool Action Lab is working with organisations across Hartlepool to enable residents and people living within those communities to improve their prospects through education, training, volunteering, and employment opportunities. A further new initiative is Design for Collaboration. This will bring together a group of people across voluntary and public sectors who are open to thinking and working in new ways, creating a cohort of good collaborators in the town. An initial focus for the improved collaboration will be to consider how best to readjust systems to meet the needs of those cut adrift by poverty, homelessness and addiction.



A report from 4 December 2020 highlights that JRHT care staff completed 6,853 individual training modules over the course of the year. This equates to 14 training modules per care team member. This is a fantastic achievement and means that as an organisation we are now building a more confident and professionally developed care team. Despite the pandemic and the additional pressure on staff, we also saw several colleagues take up the Health and Social Care diploma in 2020 (three people on level 2, five people on level 3 and five people on level 5). Finally, JRHT is currently the only care provider in the region to offer trainee nurse associate (TNA) apprenticeship programmes.

More people are independent and well

The wellbeing of care residents has been uppermost in our minds, especially in 2020 with many services closed to visitors for long periods. To ease uncertainty during this time the care team provided regular written information to residents and families in the form of newsletters. The activities coordinators and redeployed staff worked together to regularly connect residents with their loved ones via video calls. Families and friends were also encouraged to send care packages to residents, including personalised notes.

Staff at New Lodge got creative to ensure residents felt well supported and part of the JRHT community during lockdown. Doorstep deliveries was an initiative where staff visited the front doors of residents, keeping people involved in activities whilst adhering to strict social distancing and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) rules. Activities included bingo, quizzes, musical recitals from staff members, and the 'New Lodge Trolley' providing residents with a range of foodie feasts from afternoon tea to ice cream sundaes.



Customer feedback: complaints and compliments

JRHT welcomes compliments, comments and complaints about our services so that we can continually improve what we do and how we do it. The section below summarises our performance relating to complaints and compliments in 2020.

Complaints

Department	Opened	Closed	Escalated to stage 2	Housing Ombudsman
Housing and Communities Services (HCS)	48	49	6	1
Care	16	16	3	N/A
Development and Asset Management (DAM)	4	4	1	N/A
Finance	2	2	0	N/A
TOTAL	70	71	10	1

Target response times for complaints are as follows:

STAGE 1 TARGET:



STAGE 2 TARGET:



Overview of complaints against target times

Department	Stage 1		Stage 2	
	Average days	% on time	Average days	% on time
HCS	6	90	17	67
Care	5	92	14	33
DAM	6	100	3	100
Finance	10	100%	N/A	N/A
Total	7	91	15	60

Compliments

Service area	HCS	Care	DAM	Total
Number of compliments received in 2020	72	108	8	188

HouseMark




HouseMark is a performance management service which Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust (JRHT) uses to help us compare our performance against other similar Housing Associations.

Overall, HouseMark rated JRHT as 'good performance and low cost', and highlighted several areas in which we perform comparatively well, such as housing management, repair and letting.

Resident satisfaction survey

In March 2021, JRHT asked residents for their views and opinions about the services we run. In total, **546** residents completed the survey.

Below is a summary of the key findings from the survey.

			
Satisfaction with the quality of their home	72.8%	9.6%	17.6%
Satisfaction with repairs (rented tenure only)	79.3%	7.0%	13.6%
Satisfaction with value for money of the rent	70.2%	16.6%	13.1%
Satisfaction with value for money of the service charges	49.3%	19.6%	31.1%
Satisfaction with customer enquiries	70.7%	17.5%	11.8%
Satisfaction with JRHT doing what they say	56.7%	25.2%	18.1%

Over the past 12 months JRHT has implemented a new repairs system called 'Connect'. Connect has more capability than is currently being utilised, so the focus for the next year will be to maximise its potential to improve service delivery.

Further work is required with residents to begin to fully understand the response to the questions relating

One area where JRHT scores less well is on non-housing management overheads (for example, office premises, IT and other support functions), however this is an improving picture with 2019/20 cost of £1,238 better than the 2018/19 cost of £1,373 per property.

A link to JRHT's 2019/20 report can be found on the JRHT website:

<https://www.jrht.org.uk/about-us/corporate-information>

to rent and service charges. One factor influencing the result about the value for money of the service charges may be a lack of visibility on what services charges are used for.

The survey highlights the need for communication with residents and between teams, so people can have more confidence that they are being listened to and this will be acted upon.

Our plans for 2021 and beyond – get involved!

In December 2020, the JRHT Board discussed and approved plans this year to:

- Take account of the Social Housing White paper – A new charter for Social Housing Residents.
- Sign up to commitments set out in the National Housing Federation Together with Tenants Charter.
- Grow the service providing money, benefit and debt advice to residents.
- Increase the information we make available about our performance and work.

We have created new sections of our website to help residents keep track of performance and leadership decisions. After every board meeting we will be publishing videos from JRHT leaders setting out the main topics of discussion on: www.jrht.org.uk/about-us/key-updates-jrht-board. Similarly, our most recent performance data is available on the website at:

www.jrht.org.uk/about-us/performance-information

Over 2021 we will be carrying out a large-scale review of the future strategic mission and role of JRHT to understand how we make real Joseph Rowntree's vision of building 'self-governing' communities in the 21st century. JRHT is committed to working with residents to offer more opportunities for you to shape the work we do and the communities you live in. We are just about to start some really important work in JRHT, and as part of that commitment we will be seeking your input in the coming weeks and months.

We want to hear what our residents' views are on the future shape of the housing services we provide, and also the ways you want to be able to access services in the future. We will be planning a range of ways to listen to your ideas. Longer-term, these will help us make some big changes to what we do, including the technology we will use, and ensure that residents help to guide our new strategy and play a lead role in designing what we do in the future.

If you'd like to contribute to this conversation, please contact:

Matt Lewer, Service Transformation Lead
matt.lewer@jrht.org.uk



Contact us

We remain committed to providing the best service possible. We welcome compliments, comments, and complaints about our services so that we can continually improve what we do and how we do it. If you want to get in touch, there are many routes available.

You can speak to any of our staff, call our customer access team on 0800 5870211, email us at feedback@jrf.org.uk, or write to the Complaints Officer, JRF/JRHT, The Homestead, 40 Water End, York, YO30 6WP.