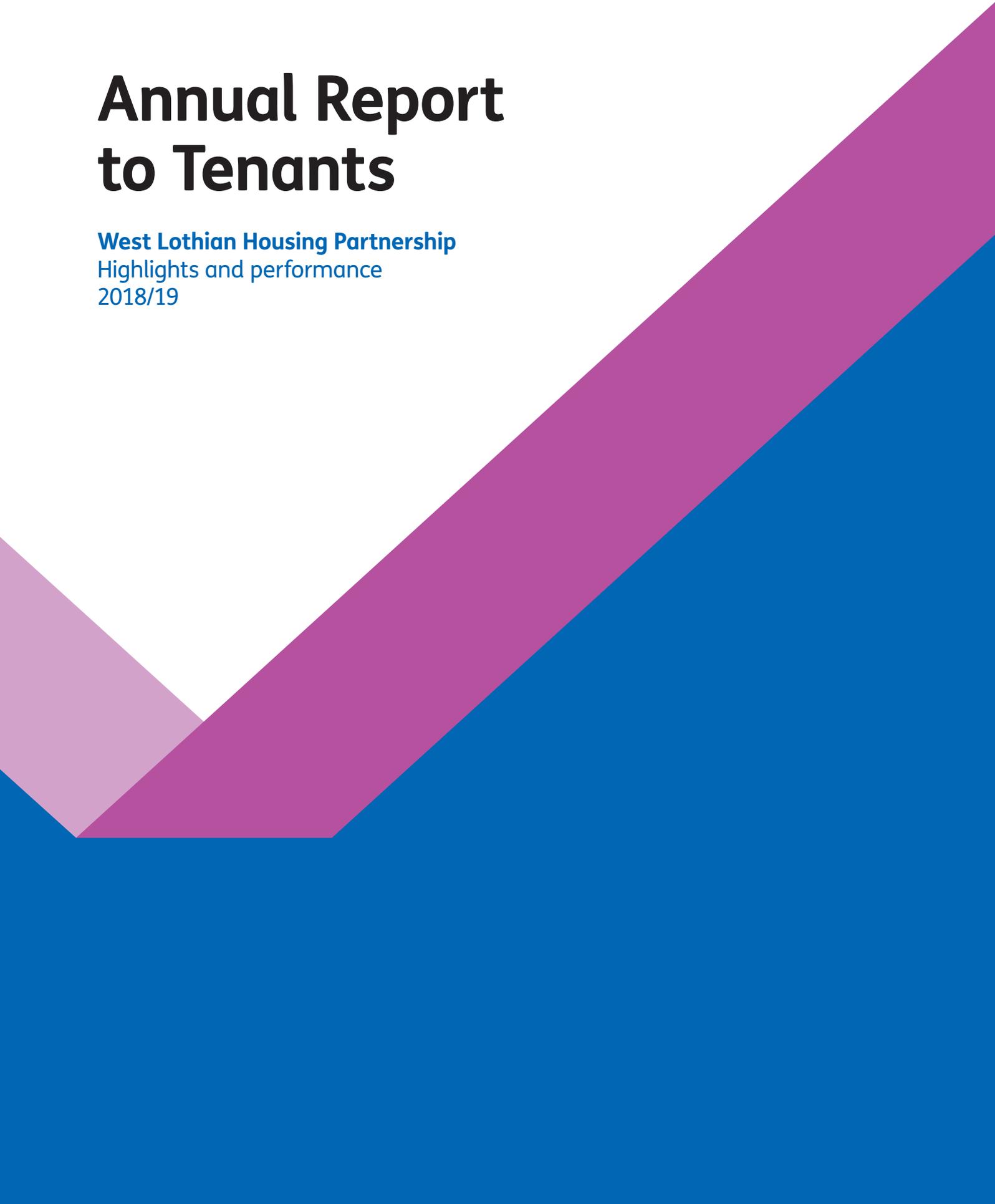


Annual Report to Tenants

West Lothian Housing Partnership
Highlights and performance
2018/19



Welcome to the Annual Report to Tenants. This year we have combined our Annual Highlights with our Report to Tenants about how we have performed.

In some sections you'll also see feedback from our Scrutiny Panel, a group made up of customers which meets regularly to review Wheatley Group's performance and services.

We hope you enjoy reading about what we achieved in the year and taking a look at how we performed on the key indicators we give the Scottish Housing Regulator each year.



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Welcome

from West Lothian Housing Partnership Chair
John M Hill



Looking back over the year 2018/19 there is much to be proud of at West Lothian Housing Partnership.

Perhaps most notably, we completed our very first new homes since we were set up in 2002. These first homes – 55 in Winchburgh – are the start of our wider plans to help increase the supply of more affordable housing in West Lothian.

In fact, our plans for further new-build homes across our communities will see us almost double in size by 2022. We also continued to invest in our existing homes, ensuring they remain great places for tenants to live in long into the future. Alongside this we achieved outstanding levels of customer satisfaction with our services and engaged and involved our tenants more closely than ever in local decision-making.

Universal Credit continued to present new challenges and hardship for many. We supported our customers and their families through this and many other challenges with personalised help delivered by our housing

officers. Our wraparound services, from money, benefits and fuel advice to help with furnishing their homes, became more important than ever, particularly for those making the transition on to the new benefit.

We offered people from our homes opportunities to get into work or training through our investment and new-build contracts and our employability schemes such as our Modern Apprenticeships. We also offered bursaries to help tenants and their children go to university.

On behalf of the West Lothian Housing Partnership Board, I would like to thank all our staff for their continuing hard work and commitment to delivering a wide range of outstanding services to tenants across our communities.

You can read about some of the highlights for 2018/19 here.

Landlord self-assurance is at the heart of the Scottish Housing Regulator's approach to regulation. An important element of this is our Annual Assurance Statement. We have assessed compliance against the relevant regulatory requirements and the Wheatley Group Audit Committee considered evidence at its meeting on 7 August 2019. The Group Audit Committee has confirmed that all Registered Social Landlords which are part of Wheatley Housing Group Limited – GHA, Dunedin Canmore Housing, Cube Housing Association, Loretto Housing Association, West Lothian Housing Partnership and Barony Housing Association – comply with all relevant requirements set out in the regulatory framework. The full statement is available to view at www.wheatley-group.com We also comply with the Scottish Social Housing Charter. This Annual Report provides an assessment of our performance against the outcomes and standards.

Our journey to excellence

Despite the ongoing economic uncertainty, I am pleased we can once again report a strong and improving business performance in 2018/19 in many of the areas we measure.

98%
tenants satisfied overall
with WLHP



Our already high overall customer satisfaction improved further from 97% to 98%, the highest of all the landlords in Wheatley Group and among the highest in the country.

Satisfaction with our repairs service remained high at 98% and the number of tenants satisfied with opportunities for participating in decision-making increased from 96% to 100%, reflecting our absolute commitment to engage and listen more closely to our customers.



100%
tenants satisfied with the
opportunities to participate
in decision making



The Panel is pleased to see continued strong performance in overall customer satisfaction. Over the coming year we will monitor performance across all other aspects of customer satisfaction, including satisfaction with opportunities to participate and with rent as value for money.

Homes and communities

Building and improving homes

West Lothian Housing Partnership built its first new homes since it was set up in 2002. The 55 energy-efficient homes for social rent at Winchburgh in West Lothian are part of a £1billion regeneration of Winchburgh that will see the village transformed into a town over the next 15 years.

In 2018/19, WLHP invested £249,000 improving its homes and communities. Two tenants had modern new kitchens fitted, while a further 70 homes across Craigshill, Blackburn and Bathgate also received new highly-efficient gas boilers.

West Lothian Council Leader, Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick, marked the milestone for Winchburgh in March 2019 with the official opening of the homes which are a mix of 36 flats and 19 terraced family houses. Future new-build plans will see WLHP, which now has just over 430 homes, almost double its housing stock by 2022.

55
new homes built
in 2018/19



We know local services and improvements are very important to tenants and we welcome the opportunity for tenants to improve their neighbourhoods. We will continue to review customer satisfaction with the management of neighbourhoods over the coming year.

Improving our neighbourhoods

Creating clean, green and safe neighbourhoods where people are proud to live remained one of our priorities.

Our pioneering partnership with Keep Scotland Beautiful saw both staff and customers assess our environments. We were delighted that WLHP's neighbourhoods achieved a 5-star award.

We were also pleased that 99% of tenants reported feeling satisfied with the quality of the neighbourhood they live in.

Wheatley's Community Improvement Partnership (CIP) – made up of seconded police and fire officers and our own staff – continued to work with WLHP communities to tackle anti-social behaviour, crime and fire safety.

Our Stay Safe campaign encouraged people to get home safety visits. The visits are carried out by an officer from Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and are key to helping prevent fires in our homes.

Across Wheatley there was an 81% increase in the uptake of home safety visits – up from 1550 in 2017/18 to 2812 in 2018/19 – with the total number of fires in our homes falling by 11%. A total of 125 West Lothian Housing Partnership customers benefited from home fire safety visits.

We resolved 100% of all anti-social cases reported to us within timescales agreed locally.

99%
tenants satisfied with the quality
of their neighbourhood

| No. of lettable units | | Average weekly rent £ |
|-----------------------|-----|-----------------------|
| 1 apartment | 0 | - |
| 2 apartment | 69 | £77.58 |
| 3 apartment | 250 | £84.06 |
| 4 apartment | 114 | £91.25 |
| 5+ apartment | 3 | £97.30 |

| Size | 1 Apt | 2 Apt | 3 Apt | 4 Apt | 5+Apt | Total |
|-----------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|------------|----------|------------|
| House | 0 | 18 | 113 | 114 | 3 | 248 |
| High-rise | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Tenement | 0 | 27 | 59 | 0 | 0 | 86 |
| Four-in-a-block | 0 | 24 | 78 | 0 | 0 | 102 |
| Other flat/maisonette | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total owned | 0 | 69 | 250 | 114 | 3 | 436 |
| No of lettable units | 0 | 69 | 250 | 114 | 3 | 436 |



The work the guys do adds to the whole look of the area and makes everyone feel good. WLHP are always on the ball

Jean Houston, West Calder



We have our own garden now, and the kids just love playing there. It looks lovely

Ashleigh Salmond, Winchburgh





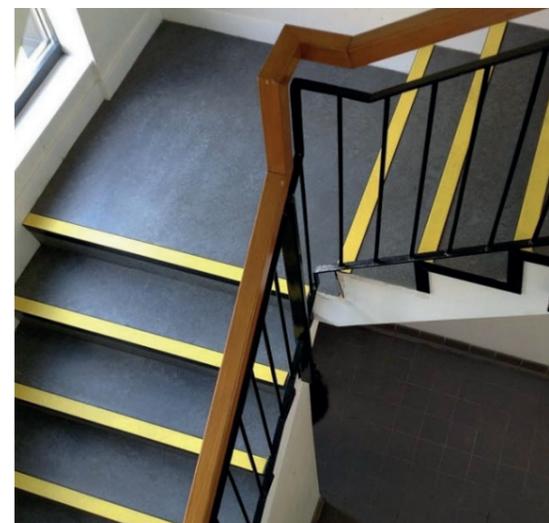
I'm really impressed with the help available for tenants. WLHP staff have been really supportive to me

Sharon Johnston,
Livingston



My housing officer has been brilliant. If I need anything, I just lift the phone and it's dealt with right away

Helen McCollum,
Winchburgh



Your repairs service

We continued our mission to improve our repairs and maintenance service because customers have told us this is important to them.

We were delighted that tenant satisfaction with the service remained at 98% for the second year in a row.



We cut the time taken for both emergency and non-emergency repairs to be completed.

On average an emergency repair took 2.5 hours compared with 2.8 hours the previous year and 4.7 hours in 2015/16.

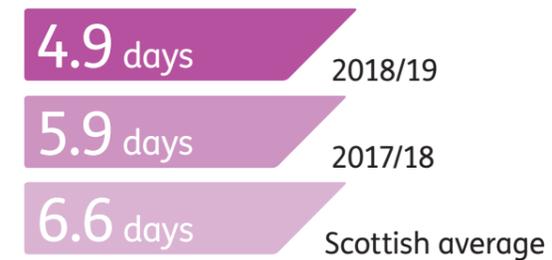
Non-emergency repairs took an average of 4.9 working days, down from 5.9 working days the previous year.

We kept 100% of repairs appointments and 95.5% of repairs were completed right first time.

Our repairs and maintenance service is delivered by the Property Team at Dunedin Canmore, our sister organisation in Wheatley Group. We continue to work with them on introducing further improvements to the service to make the overall customer experience even better in the next year.

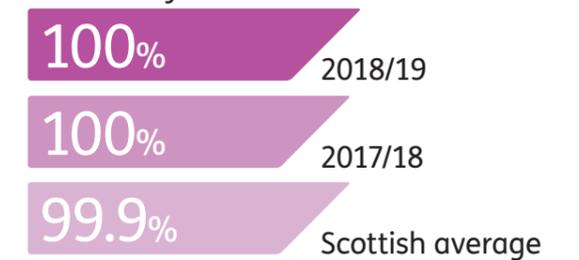
Non-emergency repairs

Average time to complete non-emergency repairs



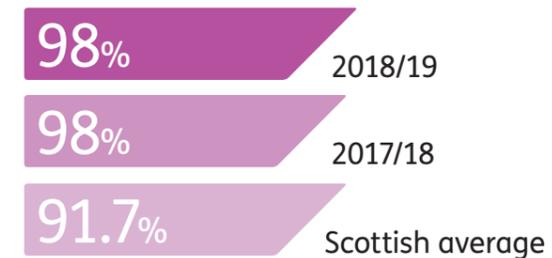
Gas safety

Percentage of properties requiring a gas safety record which had gas safety check by anniversary date



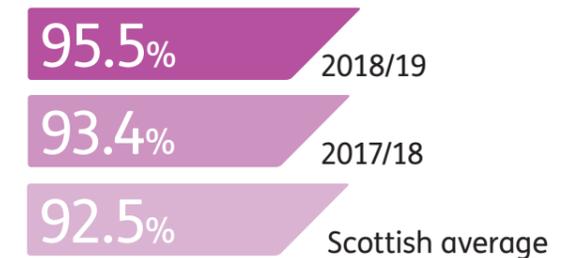
Repairs and maintenance

Satisfaction with repairs or maintenance in last 12 months



Reactive repairs

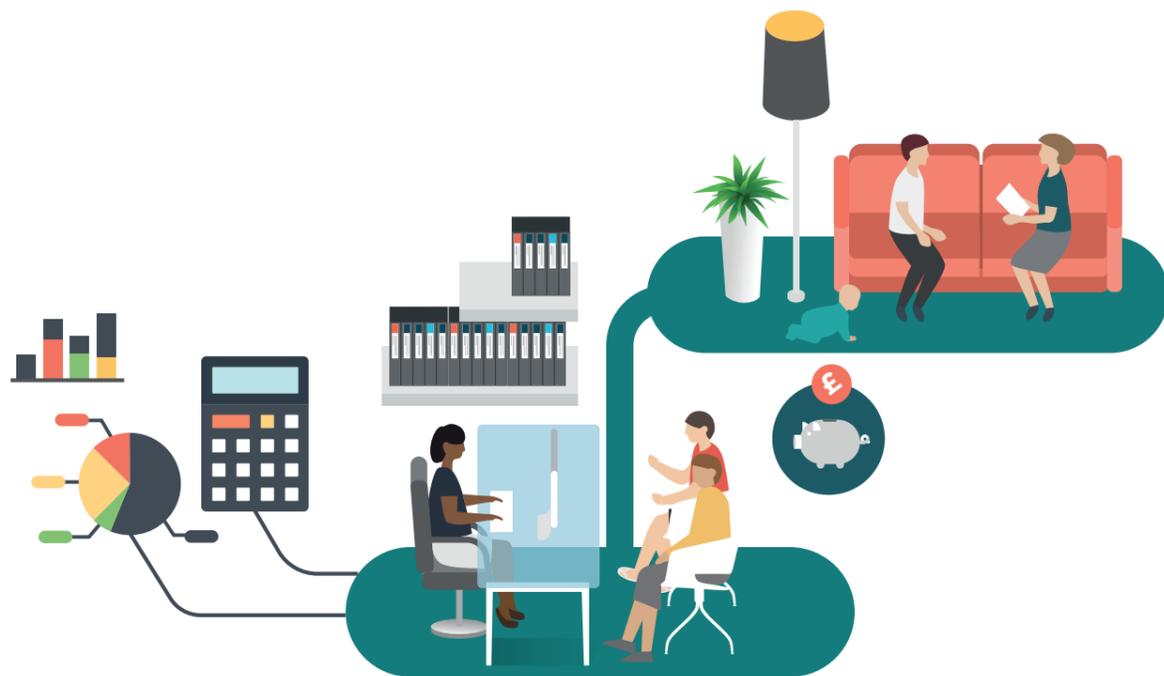
Reactive repairs completed right first time



The Panel carried out a review of the repairs service from the customer point of view, including repairs completed right first time and quality of repair. Our aim was to identify what works well and what needs to be improved. We found current level of performance is good and generally improving. We will continue to review the take-up and refinement of online self-service and customer satisfaction with the service over the next 12 months.

Rent and value for money

We want our tenants to feel their home and services are good value for money.



In 2018/19 the percentage of tenants who felt the rent for their home represented good value for money was 84%. We will continue to work with customers over the next year to develop an action plan to ensure they get as much value from their home and our services as they can.

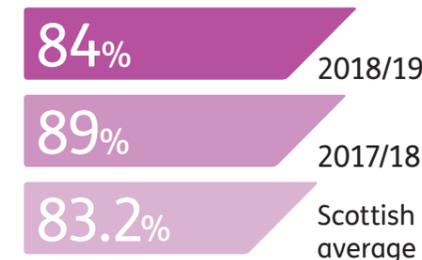
Rent collection at WLHP – at 99.8% – remains steadily high.

We introduced a new online discounts scheme, MySavings, to help customers make their money go further and cut the cost of their weekly shop.

WLHP's gross rent arrears fell to 1.7% from 2.2% in 2017/18. This continues the improving trend in every year since 2013/14 when WLHP arrears were 5.7%.

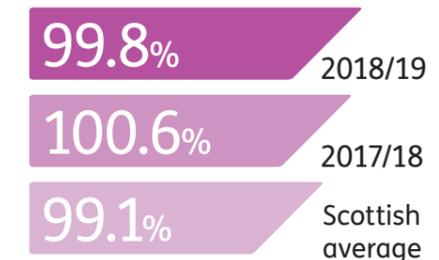
Value for money

Percentage of tenants who feel their rent is good value for money



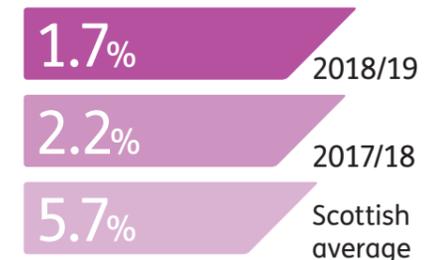
Rent collected

Rent collected as a percentage of total rent due



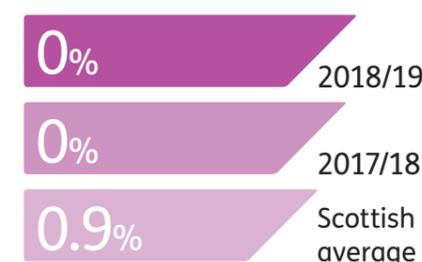
Rent arrears

Gross rent arrears



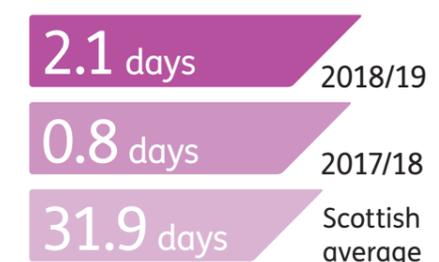
Rent lost

Rent lost through properties being empty



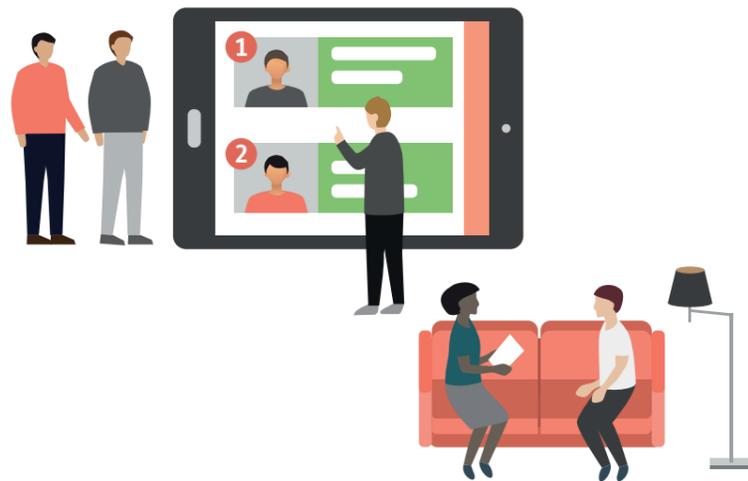
Re-let properties

Average length of time taken to re-let properties



Engaging with customers

Engaging more effectively with our communities was high on our agenda, with a renewed focus on engaging in new and innovative ways.



Housing officers met customers in their streets at our 'Bite & Blether' events during the summer months. These events gave customers the opportunity to come and have a chat and let us know what they think of our services. We also helped customers get registered with their My WLHP self-service accounts.

Our customer forums, including the scrutiny panel, African Forum, Polish Forum and our new Welfare Reform Forum, continue to meet and shape what we do.

In April 2018 our housing officers began working with new tablet computers which gives them much more scope to be out and about in their communities, engaging directly with customers in their homes, helping them access services and supporting them to get online.

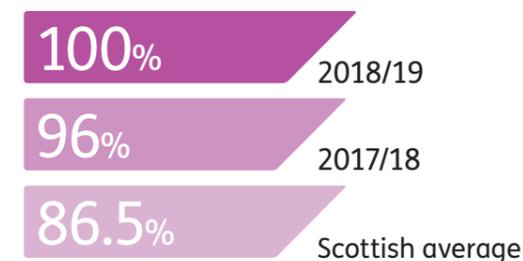
We also reached out to more tenants through online channels, with nearly 740 people following us on our Facebook channel – an increase of more than 80 people over the past 12 months – and our website audience growing to more than 730 visitors a month. In 2018/19,

we added new support and advice sections on the WLHP website, including expert advice on how to stay safe in your home and support for people affected by Universal Credit. The number of tenants registered for online self-service at the end of the financial year doubled from 2017/18, to more than 230, with nearly £183,000 paid using a My WLHP online account.

The percentage of tenants who felt WLHP was good at keeping them informed about their services and decisions increased from 95% to 100% while the percentage of tenants satisfied with opportunities to participate in decision-making was also 100%, up from 96%.

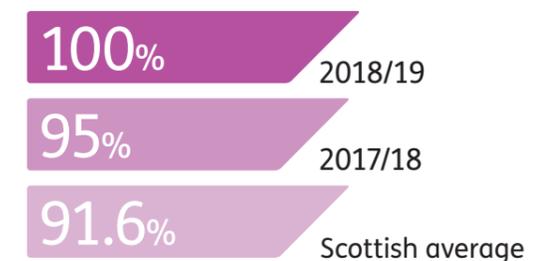
Decision making

Tenants who were happy with opportunities to participate



Keeping you informed

Tenants who were satisfied with their landlord keeping them informed about their services and decisions



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