



IT'S OUR

20TH BIRTHDAY!

Celebrate with a chance to

WIN

a £200 shopping voucher

(see back page)



FOR TENANTS, WITH TENANTS

Annual Report 2021-22



berneslai
homes

AN INTRODUCTION FROM OUR TENANTS

85%

✓ Overall **SATISFACTION** with our service.

✓ **Benchmark** average **77%**

79%

✓ **SATISFACTION** in the quality of the home.

✓ **Benchmark** average **75%**

83%

✓ **SAFETY** and security of home.

✓ **Benchmark** average **80%**

Welcome to our annual report which reviews the delivery of services from April 2021 to March 2022 and looks at what's happening now and next at Berneslai Homes.

The cost of living crisis will mean more difficult times ahead, so if you're worried about things, please scan this QR code to get advice and support from the Tenants First team.



In this report, you'll read about some challenges faced with repairs and maintenance. Like many organisations, Berneslai Homes is dealing with rising costs, difficulty getting materials, and staffing issues, as COVID-19 continues to impact our lives. And remember Storms Dudley and Eunice? Urgent repairs had to be carried out after they caused damage to properties.

As tenants, we require honesty about what hasn't gone well, and evidence of lessons learned. It's good to see some examples of this and we appreciate that things will go wrong sometimes. When things are delayed, we want regular and clear communication, so please check your contact details and preferences. The best way to do this is on your Housing Online account. Scan this QR code to update your account or create a new one.



We hope you enjoy this report. Don't forget to enter the competition for a chance to win a £200 shopping voucher.

*Berneslai Homes Tenants,
Annual Report Editorial Group.*



HOW WE SPEND YOUR MONEY

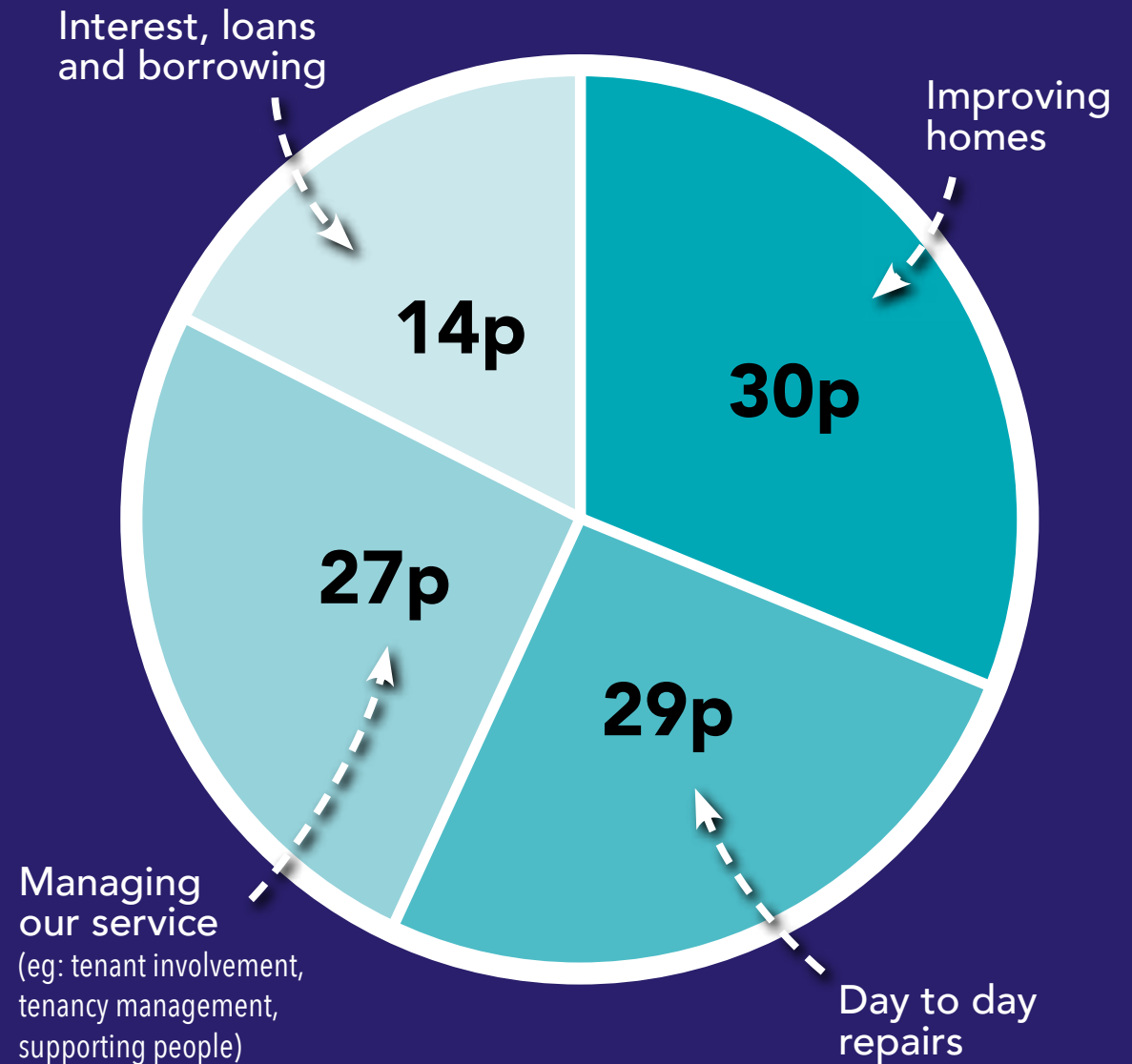
It's important that Berneslai Homes offers value for money, and we work hard to manage our finances carefully.

In 2021-22:

- We collected **96%** of rent due
- **71%** of funds were spent locally, supporting the local economy and keeping the 'Barnsley Pound'* in Barnsley
- We made over **£181,000** of efficiency savings that we can invest back into services

*The 'Barnsley Pound' is money that stays in the borough spent on local supplies and services, and wages that are paid to employees who live locally.

How every £1 is spent



MAINTAINING BUILDING SAFETY

100%

- ✓ FIRE RISK assessments carried out.
- ✓ GAS SAFETY checks carried out.

This year we've worked with South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue and Barnsley College to provide firefighters with high rise building training.

During their training exercises, four fire engines were called to a high rise block to a scenario incident on one of the upper floors. They practiced a number of safe rescue procedures delivering training on mass evacuation, protecting escape routes, and keeping residents and firefighters safe, with the college students acting as casualties.

While SYFR were on site, we used the opportunity to communicate with residents about fire safety.

We provided a leaflet to all flats which contained advice on general fire safety advice and balcony fire safety. We spoke to residents about the person-centred fire risk assessments that are available and explained about support for anyone who would need assistance to evacuate from the flat in an emergency.

The training days were a great success and a fantastic example of partnership working in action!



South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue.

IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, WE'LL BE:



Fitting sprinklers in high rise blocks and Independent Living Schemes.



Fitting carbon monoxide detectors to all domestic properties that have boilers, cookers and fires.



Holding regular residents' fire safety engagement meetings and publishing a new Resident Engagement Strategy.

Berneslai Homes have been excellent - really accommodating and professional. It's very clear they have the safety and welfare of their tenants as their utmost priority.

Gary Devonport, Station Manager
at South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue

KEEPING PROPERTIES IN GOOD REPAIR



Window fitters at our Carlton depot.

IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, WE'LL BE:



Dealing with the backlog of repairs, made worse by the pandemic and emergency repairs needed after severe weather damage.



Making it easier for you to report repairs with our new online booking system, and improving the way we allocate jobs and keep you informed.

As the cost of materials has increased and we've faced new challenges, things haven't always gone to plan. It's important to learn from this, as this case study shows.

Seth* was waiting for window repairs to be carried out at his home and made a formal complaint after a long delay.

The complaint was investigated, and it was discovered that the glazing had been measured by Berneslai Homes in preparation for the repair work months before, but Seth was not kept informed about the next steps. There was a delay with the original order but there had been no communication or explanation from Berneslai Homes about this, leaving Seth having to chase up the job.

The works were completed, and a number of internal processes were reviewed so that lessons could be learned. Opportunities for better communication were identified and training was delivered so that in future, customers would be regularly updated when waiting for repairs. This includes explaining to customers about delays due to issues like the cost and availability of materials as an impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Name and personal details have been changed.

In 2021-22, we've spent:

- £13.3M on completing 70,071 repairs
- £4.08M on 909 major adaptations
- £235,708 on minor adaptations

82%

! Benchmark average 84%



SATISFACTION with repairs (in last 12 months).

75%

! Benchmark average 76%



SATISFACTION with repair time (in last 12 months).

RESPECTFUL AND HELPFUL ENGAGEMENT

70%



SATISFACTION that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them.

✓ **Benchmark** average 60%

We're really proud that our tenants are rightfully at the heart of everything we do.

As the new regulatory framework is evolving, we're confident we're on track to deliver against the requirements.

We have seven fabulous tenants on our Tenant Voice Panel who challenge us to ensure we remain compliant. We also have a great group of tenant scrutineers who deep dive into our services, looking at issues like how we respond to damp and mould, our compliance against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Code, and the accessibility of our website.

We've made lots of positive and exciting changes to how we listen to tenants and are continuously challenging ourselves. To make sure we've got it right, we invited TPAS* to conduct a review of our customer engagement and we passed all the categories which is great news. The review has also highlighted some areas for improvement so we'll be working on these in the coming months.

*TPAS are a not-for-profit organisation who are experts in tenant engagement.



Panel member, David Allen.

I've just joined the Tenant Voice Panel. It's amazing to know that I'm already making a difference and improving services!

David Allen, Tenant Voice Panel member

IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, WE'LL BE:



Working with tenants to find creative ways of responding to the TPAS review (look out for new involvement opportunities!)



Working hard to get 'regulatory ready', giving our Tenant Voice Panel all they need to keep us on our toes.



Exploring ways we can make the most of our tenants' wealth of lived experience and give everyone a voice.



Developing lots of journey maps, looking at our services through a customer's eyes.



Developing our Customer Insight Strategy, making better use of data to improve services.

RESPONSIBLE NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT



McShane and Shaw entertain a Berneslai Homes tenant.

Getting involved in creative things is really good for you.

You start connecting with other people, developing friendships, and trying new things – it's great for the community!

Helen Boule, Lead Artist, Creative Recovery.

IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, WE'LL BE:



Working with residents to improve our approach to managing communal areas in line with new legislation.



Supporting residents by working in partnership with the council to review our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.



Working hard to make sure our estates are places people choose to live and are sustainable with thriving, vibrant communities.

Over the past year we've held various events with residents and key partners including Barnsley Council, South Yorkshire Police, Twiggs, and Creative Recovery.

We encouraged families with children to come along and help tidy their estates and work together as a community.

Our Housing Management Team used dog fouling stencils around the estates to help keep the areas clean and safe for everyone who lives and plays there.

We even enjoyed creative activities and some live music from local musicians McShane and Shaw. The events were well received, brought people together and tackled social isolation after a tough time during the pandemic.

Working together create estates that people are proud of and where residents look after their local environment – helping to make Barnsley the place of possibilities!

81%

✓ Benchmark average 78%



SATISFACTION landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods.

61%

✓ Benchmark average 61%



SATISFACTION with landlord's approach to handling of anti-social behaviour.

EFFECTIVE HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS

63%



SATISFACTION with the landlord's approach to handling of complaints.



Benchmark average 65%

Kate* contacted customer services to complain about a delay in fixing her Drymaster system that reduces moisture in the property. Kate had first reported the repair five months before and the engineer who attended had recommended it be replaced.

She told us that since it had stopped working properly she had been finding black mould in her home.

When months passed without any communication, Kate phoned to chase the job up. She spoke to numerous people and was told conflicting information. Feeling understandably frustrated, she phoned customer services to complain.

Our Customer Services Team picked up the complaint. They discovered that our partner Wates has been left waiting for a response from the contractor. The order was chased up and the problem was resolved within ten days.

*Name and personal details have been changed.



*Maintenance Surveyor,
Saqib Hussain.*

IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, WE'LL BE:



Self-assessing against the Complaint Handling Code with input from tenants.



Working to achieve Housemark's Complaint Handling accreditation.



Reviewing our approach to gathering customer insights to help shape our programme for the future, and improve services.

Customer Services are excellent and got my issue sorted really quickly. I would tell anyone, if you're unhappy or having problems, go straight to customer services.

Kate* – a Berneslai Homes tenant.

MORE THAN JUST A LANDLORD

1,493

✓ Low level early SUPPORT cases carried out.

1,427

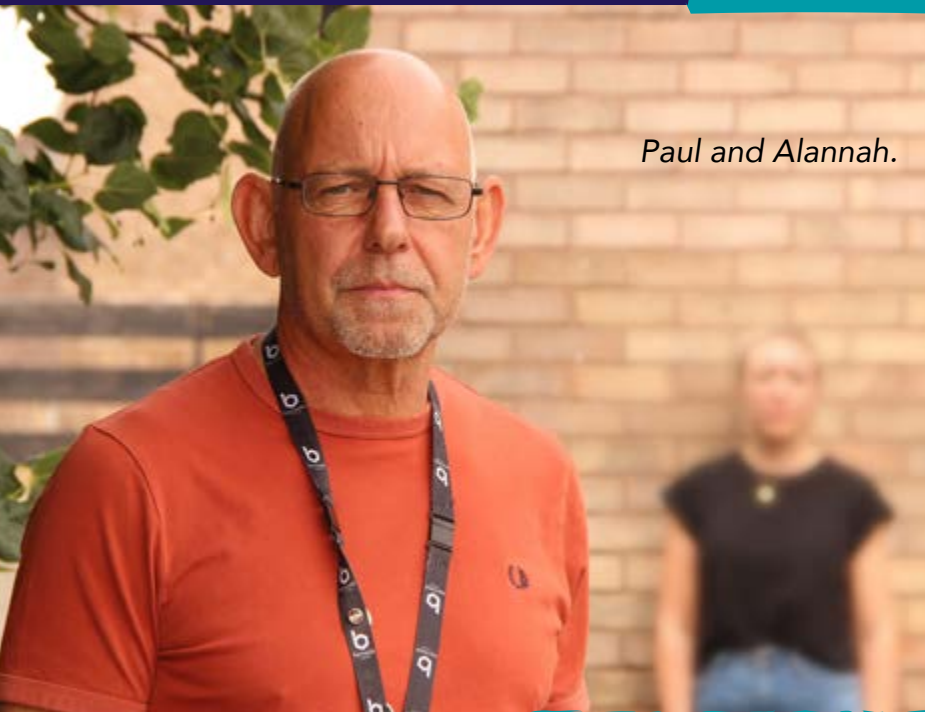
✓ Financial SUPPORT referrals accepted.

£689,059

✓ BENEFITS gain value.

£103,168

✓ FUNDING and grants value.



Paul and Alannah.

In all honesty, if it wasn't for Paul, I'd be dead. I've got nothing but praise for him, I used to be a heavy drinker and I'm off it now thanks to him.

Alannah, a Berneslai Homes tenant

Since her mother's death, Alannah* had struggled to manage her home environment and her physical and mental wellbeing. Drinking heavily, she was living without heating or hot water.

We became aware of Alannah's situation when she failed to respond to her annual gas safety inspection. When a Heating Services Inspector visited unannounced, he became concerned and referred her to the Tenants First support service.

Since then, Mental Health Housing Support Officer, Paul Ironmonger, has helped Alannah turn her life around. We helped clear Alannah's home of unwanted waste and dealt with a pest control problem. We've carried out repairs to make the property safe and more habitable, helped address debt problems with utility bills and arranged for a gas inspection so her supply could be uncapped. Alannah now has heating and hot water and we've supported her to access grants and extra benefit payments to replace damaged household goods.

Paul has supported Alannah to work with her GP and District Nurse to manage both her medication and mental wellbeing, and organised a detox to help with her alcohol misuse. She has started to work with the Social Services Prescribing Service and has discussed returning to her former career as a podiatrist on a voluntary basis.

*Name and personal details have been changed.

IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, WE'LL BE:



Responding to the cost of living crisis, offering practical information and support in the community.



Responding to the increase in referrals to our service for tenants who are hoarding.



Developing the housing coach model, to support more tenants at risk from rent arrears, anti-social behaviour and threats of action.

TEA WITH THE QUEEN – OUR TREMENDOUS TARAS!

Our Tenants and Residents Association (TARA) groups have achieved so much despite it being another difficult year working with the ongoing pandemic restrictions. The groups responded in creative and resourceful ways – including learning new skills so they could engage digitally and join in with the local area meetings using Microsoft Teams.

The response from many of the groups was extraordinary, they stepped up to support the communities they work with. They provided shopping, handed out COVID packs, and gave much needed emotional support – going above and beyond to help people. The TARAs are now moving into a new phase of ‘living with COVID’ and are meeting again face to face and planning their community events and annual days out.

Many of the groups held fabulous Jubilee events in their local areas and it was lovely to celebrate together after such a tough time!

#Cheersto70Years

TARAs are a great way of connecting people and communities.

We’re the eyes and ears on the front line and work closely with Berneslai Homes to improve services.

Mrs D Williams, Great Houghton TARA.

Berneslai Homes tenants greet a special guest.





GET INVOLVED

Our customers are at the heart of everything we do and you've told us that being listened to is really important. We agree and we're always looking for new ways to capture more customer voices. You don't

need lots of knowledge to join us, as we're looking for lived experience, and as our tenants you more than meet the brief!

There are many ways you can get involved, so if you're feeling inspired to join in after reading this report, here are some of the ways you can. We'd love to hear from you!



Tenant Voice Panel

making sure we meet the standards set out by the regulator



Tenant Scrutiny Panel

taking a deep dive into our services



Tenants and Residents Association (TARAs)

making a difference in the local communities



Drop us an email at:

communityengagement@berneslaihomes.co.uk

COUNCIL COMMENT

Once again Berneslai Homes and our Tenant Voice Panel have worked in partnership to provide all tenants with the annual report for 2021/22.

The report is an honest appraisal of performance over what has, once again, been a challenging year for the sector, our contractors and suppliers and, of course our tenants and residents. It is written by tenants, for tenants and hopefully focusses on the areas that matter to you.

There has been some great performance against key indicators, but there have also been some challenges which continue to impact service delivery and our resources (both financial and human) within this coming year. The cost of living crisis impacts on the Council and Berneslai Homes' energy bills and purchases as it does those of individual households. In these difficult times, the Council and Berneslai Homes are here to support our tenants and encourage you to visit the **More Money in Your Pocket** website if you're worried about rising energy bills and other cost of living expenses.

Sarah Cartwright

Head of Strategic Housing,
Sustainability and Climate Change.



**MORE MONEY IN
YOUR POCKET**



Visit [barnesley.gov.uk/more money in your pocket](https://www.barnesley.gov.uk/more-money-in-your-pocket) or scan the code to find out more:

Enter our **20TH BIRTHDAY!** quiz for a chance to **WIN** a
£200 shopping voucher



...by simply answering these five questions.

1. What percentage of our tenants are satisfied with our service?
 - a. 85%
 - b. 82%
 - c. 80%
2. What is the name of our newest Tenant Voice Panel member?
 - a. Alan David
 - b. David Allen
 - c. Dave Allane
3. Which of these can you get involved in as a Berneslai Homes tenant?
 - a. TVP and TARA
 - b. TCP and CARA
 - c. BBC and BARA
4. Which of these can our Tenants First team help you with?
 - a. Finding a new property
 - b. Support with the cost of living crisis
 - c. Getting online
5. This year, we celebrate a special birthday, but which one?
 - a. Five years
 - b. Ten years
 - c. Twenty years

Email your answers to:

communityengagement@berneslaihomes.co.uk

before 5pm on Monday 10 October 2022 to enter the prize draw.

Contact us

We now have one number for all enquiries and to report urgent or emergency repairs.

01226 787878



Android



iPhone

To report non-urgent repairs, please download our App:

Housing Ombudsman Service

The role of the Housing Ombudsman is to encourage and assist landlords and tenants to resolve a dispute at the earliest opportunity. You can contact them to talk about your concerns and see if they can help in this way at any point before or during the complaint process.

After you've gone through both stages of our complaints procedure, if you still remain dissatisfied, you can complain to the Housing Ombudsman. During 2021/22 we received just three enquiries from the Housing Ombudsman and no complaints or determinations.

- **Phone:** 0300 111 3000
- **Email:** info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
- **Post:** Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ.



berneslai
homes



www.berneslaihomes.co.uk

Berneslai Homes Limited is a company controlled by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council. A company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, number 4548803. Registered office: 10th floor, Gateway Plaza, Off Sackville Street, BARNESLEY, South Yorkshire S70 2RD.

September 2022