

Item 5b

“ Let’s show you how we supported our tenants, looked after your homes and neighbourhoods and how we spent your money. ”

ANNUAL REPORT

2014/15

A PICTURE OF BERNESLAI HOMES

www.berneslaihomes.co.uk

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In association with



A fresh approach to people, homes and communities



Welcome from our Chief Executive

Welcome to our Annual Report 2014/15, "A Picture of Berneslai Homes". This year we've kept it fresh and done something different to explain:

- how we performed last year;
- how we spent your rent and service charges; and
- our plans for this year.

We've worked with a community artist, our staff, board members and customers who together have created a picture of Berneslai Homes in 2014/15. And I'm proud to present that picture here in the DVD film and the magazine. You choose - watch it, read it or do both!

I'm proud that even in these difficult financial times, we're improving homes to a high standard, building new social housing, buying properties and investing in energy efficient heating systems.

I'm proud of the way we're adapting our services to support tenants to improve their quality of life and protect the future of services by getting the rent money in.

I'm proud of our staff who work hard and go the extra mile putting something back into the community.

I'm proud of the involved customers who tell it like it is and hold us to account.

But most of all I'm proud of you and the difference you make by turning our properties into your homes and making Barnsley a better place.



Helen Jaggar

Are you a #proudentenant?

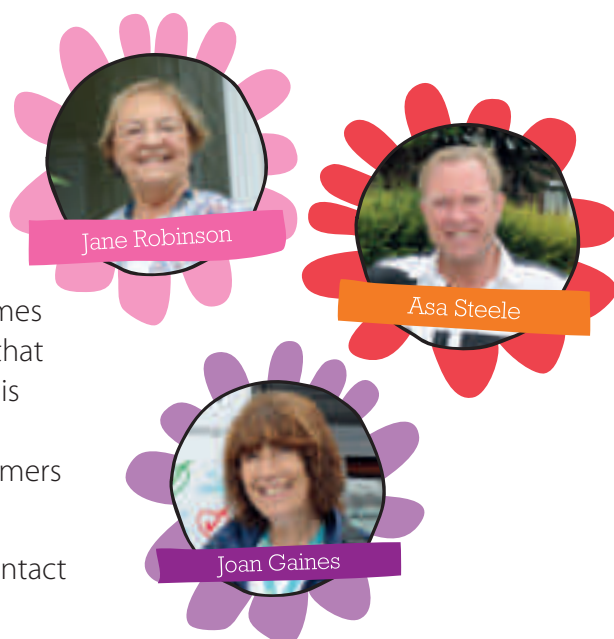
Over the summer we ran our 'Proud to be a Tenant' campaign and we got a fantastic response from some very proud tenants!

Visit www.berneslaihomes.co.uk and watch a summary of the campaign. Or if you want a printed version give us a call on **01226 774376**.

Meet our Tenant Board Members...

We are tenant board members with an equal role on Berneslai Homes board, but as tenants we have a particular interest in making sure that the tenant voice really does influence the decisions we make. In this annual report we'd like to explain from a tenant point of view how Berneslai Homes performed last year. Also some officers and customers will share their plans for the coming year.

If you want to know more about being a tenant board member contact board@berneslaihomes.co.uk or phone **01226 774263**.





Letting the homes

Jane Robinson says...



By managing the waiting list well, working closely with housing association partners, buying properties on the open market, continuing the new build programme and promoting mutual exchanges, Berneslai Homes continued to have a healthy balance between the supply of available homes and the demand for them from their waiting list. And as a tenant, I'm really pleased with how quickly they let them, which kept rent loss to a minimum and meant they were available quickly for new tenants to move in to.



Relet **1578** homes in an average **23.6** days

Every day a property is empty it costs us **£12** in lost rent!



Bob Cartwright our Lettings Manager on the priorities for improving the lettings service...



We're improving our online lettings services and are encouraging more customers to use them.

We want to increase the number of mutual exchanges by better marketing and matching services, and we're continuing to market the short wait homes we have available.



Register for a mutual exchange at www.houseexchange.co.uk, or phone us on **01226 775454** to find out more.



Supporting tenants



Joan Gaines says...



As tenants last year we probably all had to work harder to make our money go further and deal with the many changes to the welfare system. Because of this Berneslai Homes were fully expecting to collect less rent and service charges. This would have been bad news for all of us, as they would have had less to spend on services such as repairs and improvements. So they invested £100,000 into the rent service to make sure they got the balance between enforcement and support right.



For every **£1** spent supporting tenants we gained **£2.10** in benefits through the Tenant Support Service and **£4.40** through the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Lloyd Hamilton and Louise Leather, our Rent Officers tell us about the priorities for this year...



It's going to get tougher as Universal Credit is rolled out along with other changes to benefit processes. The bigger rent and tenant support team will help us work closely with those affected by the changes to make sure that our support prevents eviction. And we're encouraging as many tenants as possible to get online as it's the only way they can claim benefits.





Supporting independence

Asa Steele explains...



Berneslai Homes has a good supply of accessible homes with communal facilities and services. Last year they no longer offered one to one support with daily living but they still made sure that the communal areas were welcoming and that there were lots of social activities going on. They even held a recipe competition to celebrate National Older People's Day. Berneslai Homes wanted to find out what tenants thought of the service and so they held a card game style conversation with tenants. Even though tenants told them that they were mostly happy with the homes, facilities and services, by September Berneslai Homes will still have an action plan to improve things for each scheme.



£300,000
 spent remodelling
 3 schemes at
 Pendon House, Penistone
 Shipcroft, Wombwell
 Heather Court,
 Bolton upon Dearne.

Wi-Fi & internet kiosks in 26 schemes

2000 homes with communal facilities

21 staff arranged over 700 social activities

Supported 13 volunteer managed community centres

Jill Barker, Community Buildings Manager shares the priorities for the year ahead...



We're completing improvements to communal areas at Hillcrest in Hoyland Common, Church Street Close in Thurnscoe and Woodhall Flats in Darfield and we've just finished improvements at the New Lodge Community Centre.

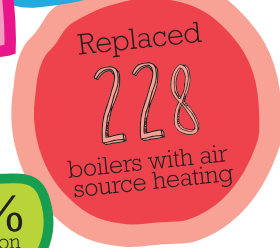
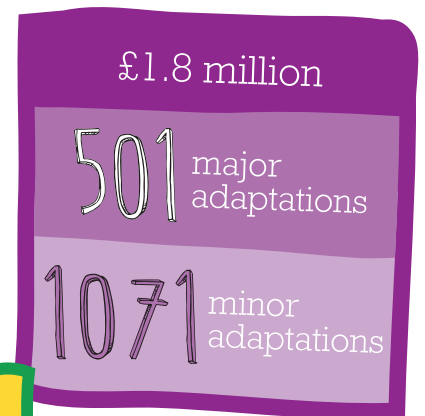


Repairing and investing in homes

Jane Robinson says...



We tell Berneslai Homes that our top priority services are repairs and maintenance, and investing in the quality of our homes. Last year Berneslai Homes continued to meet those priorities with 85% of us being happy with the quality of our home and 83% of repairs being completed right first time which mean they turn up on time and do the repair to our satisfaction.



Ken Tann, Asset Manager & Rachel Hutchinson, Senior Capital Projects Officer highlight the priorities for the year ahead...



We're improving 812 homes under the Barnsley Homes programme, continuing our new build programme which will see 41 homes completed and up to 50 more started, buying more properties on the open market and importantly for our tenants continuing with green initiatives.

After listening to tenants we're developing a new investment plan.



Keeping neighbourhoods safe and clean

Asa Steele explains...



We've got some fantastic estates in Barnsley which 89% of tenants are happy with as a place to live. This isn't just down to Berneslai Homes investment and good management – it's because most of us take pride in our homes, gardens and environment.

After investing an extra £100,000 in the grounds maintenance service, Berneslai Homes were pleased that satisfaction with the service had risen to 85%.

And Berneslai Homes continued to listen to tenants at a local level working closely with Tenants and Resident Associations and the "Your Community Your Say" groups to plan how to spend the local estate improvement budgets.

Their family intervention service continued to help over 200 families with multiple and complex needs turn things around and I'm really pleased that funding of £225,000 for this vital service has been secured.



£300,000
estate improvements in Aldham

£320,000
local estate budgets on lots of different projects

Dealt with
60
reports of graffiti in 5 days

Cleared
163
incidents of fly tipping in an average 4 days

168
estate walkabouts

Resolved
336
reports of ASB

Tony Griffiths, Housing Management Group Manager, on our priorities for neighbourhoods...



Tenants tell us that the biggest problem on their estates is litter. Clearly the solution to this isn't that we spend more cleaning it up - we all have a responsibility to clean up after ourselves. So over the coming year we'll be working with local communities to try to reduce the litter problem. We'll be engaging more with younger people on our estates to understand more about their needs and we'll be having more local conversations, particularly in areas where satisfaction is lower.



Took action to deal with **1185** low standard gardens

Local Conversations in Kendray and Worsbrough



Delivering excellent customer services

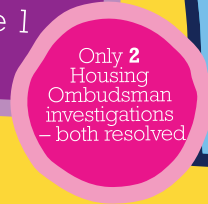


Asa Steele reflects on how we delivered great customer services last year...



We continued to be really happy with the service Berneslai Homes provided last year. With 50% of tenants now telling Berneslai Homes that they are online, last year more of us used their online services. Customer testing of the telephone and face to face service was positive and it was great that so many tenants took the time to say well done to our landlord.

Not many of us complained over the year but Berneslai Homes still learned from complaints and made 8 changes to their service. So if you have a complaint, no matter how small let Berneslai Homes know – they will respond quickly and honestly.



Sarah Barnes, Customer Services and Engagement Manager on how we are improving customer services...



This year we're investing £15,000 in a new Berneslai Homes website which should be ready in February 2016. Because we're designing it with a group of tenants and residents we know it will be much easier to use and will mean customers can do a range of simple transactions online at a time that suits them. And we are investing £100,000 in mobile technology for our Housing Management Officers so they can spend more time on your estates.





Tenants at the heart of the service

Joan Gaines says...

Around
4000
volunteers giving
3500
hours



From tenants and residents associations, to working groups, to Challenge Berneslai tenant scrutiny, or listening to what tenants told them in surveys, our landlord continued to work closely with us in lots of different ways. They also had conversations with younger tenants to find out why they were less satisfied with the service.

Berneslai Homes was one of the few landlords in the country to have received full marks in the recent accreditation of their resident involvement service by Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) an independent organisation championing the tenant voice.

And the independent tenant scrutiny by Barnsley Federation of Tenants and Residents kept Berneslai Homes on their toes and improved services for tenants.



June Walker and Brian Whitaker, two involved customers say...



We are residents with an interest in making sure our landlord delivers for us. Last year we worked closely with them to see how we can make the new tenant experience better. We got lots of new members on scrutiny and over the next year will continue to challenge our landlord. So come and join us or let us know if there is an area of Berneslai Homes service you want us to look at.





Join us at the Federation
 Email: barnsleytaras@gmail.com
 Phone: 01226 240110
 Website: www.barnsleytaras.org.uk

Giving something back



Jane Robinson says about the people who work for Berneslai Homes and their partners...



Berneslai Homes is a big employer in Barnsley and last year they continued to look after the health and wellbeing of their staff. They supported the development of the wider community through different training and community initiatives – paying a particular focus on getting people online.

The staff have a charitable heart and took part in lots of different fundraising activities to raise a whopping £11,000 for charity.



We employ

494	BERNESLAI HOMES
126	KIER

We supported
724
people to get online

26
community volunteers supported to deliver training

We develop
CRAFT & OFFICE
apprenticeships



SOUTH YORKSHIRE CREDIT UNION LTD
SAVINGS & LOANS CO-OPERATIVE

Hannah Bailey, our Digital Inclusion Co-ordinator...



A priority for next year is to work with South Yorkshire Credit Union to help tenants reduce the cost of getting online. Being online opens up so many opportunities and saves most people money in the long run.



If you want to get online, we can help. Contact Hannah on **01226 772789** or email: digitalinclusion@berneslaihomes.co.uk



The financial stuff

Joan Gaines says...



As a tenant board member it's my responsibility to make sure that Berneslai Homes does the right thing, in the right way and for the right price. Your £71 million rent and service charge payments are paid into a pot of money called the Housing Revenue Account. The council pay Berneslai Homes around £12 million each year to manage the service and to allocate the money you pay in rent and service charges to do repairs and improvements, manage the estates and to pay interest on the loans and borrowing which fund the improvement schemes we run.



The chart below shows how each £1 of income to the Housing Revenue Account in 2014/15 was spent.

Where each £1 came from	How each £1 was spent
96p rent	24p management of our service
4p service charges and other income	27p day to day repairs
	31p major repairs
	18p interest on loans and borrowing



Last year, on behalf of the council, we also spent £25.8 million on the following:

£13.4 MILLION on 1082 improvements Barnsley Homes Standard schemes.

£5.7 MILLION completing 9 new homes, starting 41 and buying 51 more on the open market.

£1.8 MILLION on major adaptations.

£4.9 MILLION on other capital investment.



myRent

You can now check your rent account balance, see your payment history and make a payment online, thanks to a new service called **myRent**.

These online improvements help you manage your rent account securely, making it quick and easy to keep rent payments up to date.

To use **myRent** visit www.berneslaihomes.co.uk and click on the 'Do it online' section.

Get **£50** off a top notch internet device for your home!

We know how important it is to have a good quality device to access the internet. This is why we are working in partnership with South Yorkshire Credit Union to give your household **£50 off** a pre-selected range of high quality devices from top brands including Apple and Samsung.

To find out more, contact Hannah on **01226 772789** or email: digitalinclusion@berneslaihomes.co.uk



Win a Kindle Fire

You could be in with a chance if you enter our free prize draw. Just watch or read our Annual Report, go online, fill in a short survey to tell us your views.

To take the survey - scan the code opposite with your smartphone.

Or visit: <http://consult.barnsley.gov.uk/portal/berneslaihomes/annualreport15>



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Registered Office: Gateway Plaza, off Sackville Street, Barnsley S70 2DJ.

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