

Annual Report

2010/11



If you want to get involved you can be sure of a warm, friendly welcome and the support of a team who really want to work with you.

Contact your housing office on 01432 377 902.

INSIDE



GET INVOLVED
BE EMPOWERED
MAKE A REAL
DIFFERENCE
SEE PAGE 2



WHERE YOUR
RENT
REALLY GOES
SEE PAGE 6
plus...



**FOOTBALL
PROJECT**
SEE PAGE 8

This year's report has been produced with the help of some of our customers who regularly get involved with our work. The report details lots of ways and examples of how our customers have been involved in developing and improving our services to you.



One of the aims of this report is to explain to you, how we are performing against the national housing standards as set by our regulator, the Tenant Service Authority (www.tenantservicesauthority.org)

The national standards are:

- **Tenant Involvement and Empowerment** - providing customers with choices, information and communication to meet their diverse needs, page 4
- **Home** - making homes decent and providing a good repairs and maintenance service, page 5
- **Tenancy** - letting and renting our homes fairly, page 7
- **Neighbourhood and Community** - tackling ASB and giving customers a say in shaping their local area, page 8
- **Value for Money** - providing cost effective, quality services to our customers, page 6
- **Governance and viability** - running the organisation professionally and managing our income correctly, pages 4 and 7

Need help in your own language? ☎ 01432 377 900

French
Vous avez besoin d'aide dans votre propre langue

Russian
Требуется ли Вам помощь на Вашем языке?

Lithuanian
Reikia pagalbos gimtąja kalba?

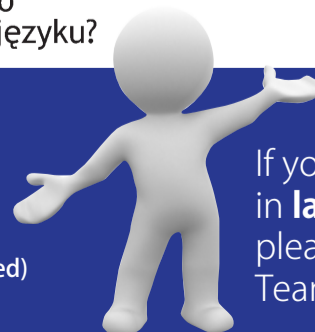
Polish
Wymagają Państwo pomocy w swoim języku?

Czech
Potřebujete pomoc ve svém jazyce?

Portuguese
Precisa de assistência na sua própria língua?

We would appreciate your Feedback...

- Email** Annual Report kemble@wmhousing.co.uk
- Write** to Annual Report Freepost WM Housing (nothing else needs writing on the envelope and no stamp is needed)
- Text** Annual Report 07748 983 795



If you would like this annual report in **large print or audio format**, please contact the Communications Team on 024 7676 7029.

HOW YOU REALLY MAKE THE DIFFERENCE



Our Customers and Us

The numbers of customers involved in developing and improving our services has increased because of the wide range of opportunities we offer including community events, surveys, complaints, responses to consultations, etc.

For more details about Kemble Housing or how you can become involved, please go to our websites at www.kemblehousing.co.uk

Customer Involvement

28 customers are involved in formal structures such as Kemble Board, Customer Panels, etc.

587 customer have given us their views through surveys and other feedback mechanisms (excluding complaints).



Customers helped us to develop our Customer Excellence Strategy which was designed to support our vision “Creating Places where People are Proud to Live and Work”.

Our customers identified 11 issues that we needed to work on to deliver excellence, including:

- Customer identification;
- Engagement and consultation;
- Customer satisfaction;
- Leadership, policy and culture;
- Staff professionalism and attitude;
- Information and communication;
- Access;
- Co-operative working;
- Standards;
- Problem resolution;
- Delivery




We are now working on these issues to improve our services to our customers. So far we have:

- improved our websites to give our customers easier access and more information about what we are doing;
- discussed our standards of service with customers and how we can improve them;
- developed local offers based on customer needs, priorities and feedback; and
- carried out lots of activities, from providing financial advice to organising and supporting summer schemes to divert children away from anti-social behaviour.

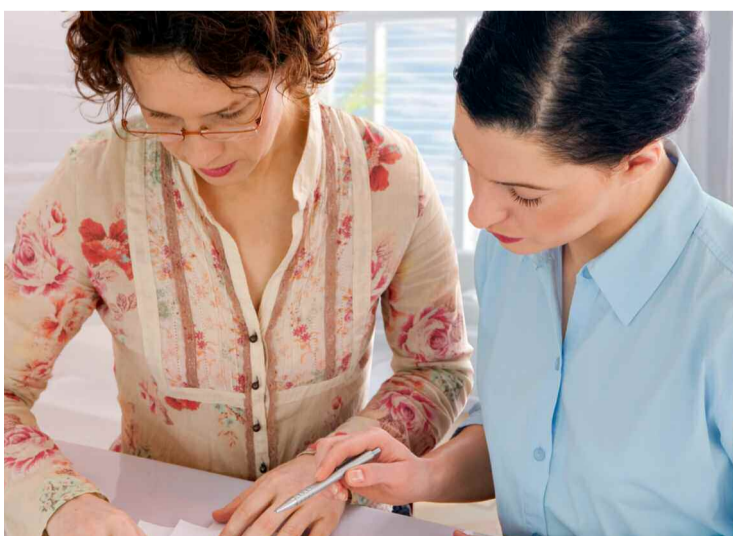
As part of the Repairs Review, we will be using Customer Journey Mapping to show us what it feels like to receive a repairs service from us. Customer feedback will help to inform the review.

This year we will focus on further developing our learning from customer feedback.

Throughout this report we have reported our performance as at 31st March 2011. We have also compared our performance with similar organisations to explain how we are performing. This information is from the nationally published 2009/10 data from the TSA website, which is the latest comparison data available. The symbol shows whether we are:

-  Performing well
-  Need to improve
-  Performing badly

These symbols reflect our quartile positions when compared to similar organisations.



Local Offers

We want our services to be based on what our customers actually want. We have been working closely with many customers to develop Local Offers, which we have decided to call Service Agreements.

The Joint Group Customer Panel

considered how customers would be involved in developing our Service Agreements and agreed that they must meet local needs and result in improvements for our customers.

We aim to develop and deliver our Service Agreements over three

years. The first ones started in April 2011.

We will develop more agreements for repairs and anti social behaviour in 2012 and will continue to develop more agreements based on local needs and customer priorities.

Kemble Service Agreements are:

- Estate Walkabouts
- A video of this Service Agreement can be accessed via our website on www.kemblehousing.co.uk/localoffers



Complaints

We received **69** complaints. We dealt with **9** of these 'On the Spot'.

The remaining **60** were dealt with as Service Investigations and **54%** of these were found to be justified.

We received **343** compliments.

Examples of Learning from Complaints:

We received a complaint from a resident about lack of heating in her property due to the removal of a condemned gas fire. We had failed to replace this with an electric one despite doing this in other flats within the same scheme. The issue was resolved, compensation paid, and we are addressing the issue of improving communication with our contractors and improving the accuracy of site surveys.

During the bad weather, a resident reported that the drain from the boiler in their property had frozen and that they were consequently without heating and hot water. The issue was dealt with the same day by our contractor, however, we were not aware that this problem could occur with the new style of boilers in our properties. As a result, we have ensured that all our staff are aware of this potential problem to enable similar issues to be dealt with promptly.

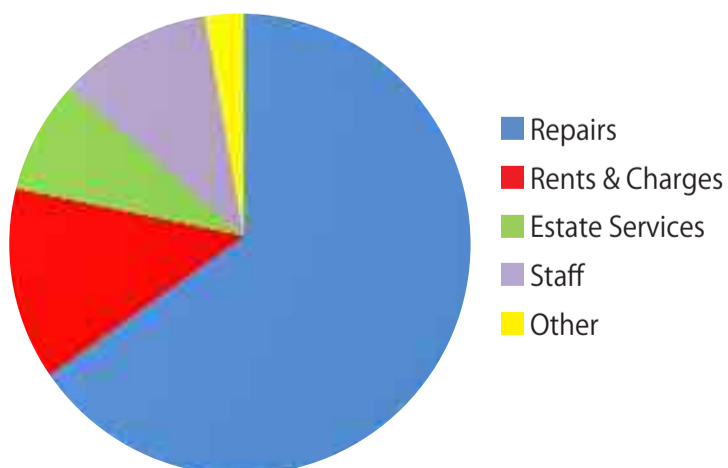
Complaints Satisfaction:

As at 31 March 2011 **75%** of complainants surveyed were satisfied with the way in which we handled their complaint and **50%** were satisfied with the outcome of the complaint investigation.

Service Standards – Responding to Complaints

Overall **83%** were responded to within 14 calendar days

Complaints by subject



Understanding our customers through Equality and Diversity

We have used demographic profiling information to improve our services for example, repair appointment times for working customers or for those on the "school run".

We report our performance on lettings, staffing, evictions and customer satisfaction to our Board and we include regular Equality and Diversity articles in the VIEW magazine. This year we will create a Champions Group to consult with and scrutinise our performance.

Equality and Diversity Profile

Profile Information	%
Male	40
Female	60
White British	87
BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic)	2
Ethnicity not known	11

We are currently reviewing our Equality and Diversity Strategy and policy to make sure they meet the needs of the Equality Act, and we will publish our plan for the next three years.



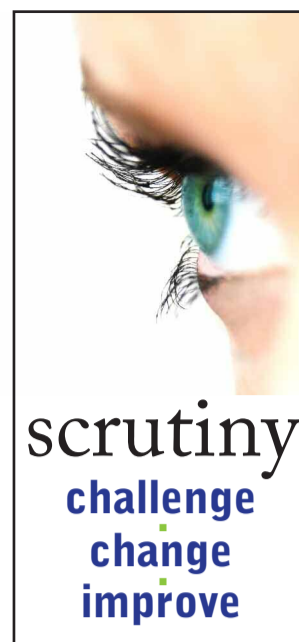
Estate Walkabouts

We are improving our management service through joint working with our customers by carrying out additional estate walkabouts, which are over and above our agreed service standard, at three schemes in Credenhill, Hereford and Kington. Our aim is to quickly address estate issues.

By working together with our residents, we have developed a Service Agreement to improve

our services and to increase customer satisfaction.

We will review the outcomes of the estate walkabouts with customers at 6 month intervals and will conduct a full impact assessment after 12 months. Our Customer Panel are involved in monitoring our performance including ASB and improvements made and we will keep you regularly informed of our progress and achievements.



scrutiny
challenge
change
improve

Customer scrutiny is the next big thing for us this year. We have employed the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) to help us develop our processes, train customers and staff to make sure that customers can really help us to improve our services.

Do you want:

- A valuable voluntary work experience?
- A personal development opportunity, with accredited training?
- To drive improvement in our services and how we are run?

Then sign up, to join up to our new Customer Scrutiny Panel, exclusively for customers.

For more information, please see our website – www.kemblehousing.co.uk/scrutiny

WE NEED YOU!





Andy Johnson, Chair of Kemble Board

YOU LEAD THE WAY!

Involving & Empowering Customers



Keeping an eye on the business

Governance

Kemble manages properties on behalf of West Mercia Homes and other landlords together with the SHYPP project and our Board of management has nine members including one tenant.

The Board have a role in setting strategy, developing policy, making key decisions and monitoring and challenging our performance.

The Board

We have four men and five women aged between 30 to 70+.

The Chair of the Board receives approx £4,000 per year and the majority of Board members receive nearly £1,000 per year for all of their hard work and commitment. Governance costs amount to 0.05% of Kemble's turnover.

Board members must follow the Code of Governance and Conduct, which is based on the National Housing Federation's best practice guide.

Our regulators, the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) judged that our board, governance and management arrangements maintain satisfactory control of the organisation. A review by our internal auditors KPMG, also confirmed these arrangements are satisfactory.

We are continually trying to improve our services and we are reviewing our current governance arrangements, including recruitment, induction and training to ensure they are effective, meet the needs of the business and help members to develop and fulfil their key roles.

We said, we would... work with the Joint Customer Panel to determine what our customers consider as "excellence".

We have worked with the Joint Customer Panel and the outcomes have informed the Involvement Strategy, Repairs Review, Customer Excellence Strategy, and a review of our Service Standards is currently underway.

We said, we would... work to understand our customers needs even better and look to improve records of where aids and adaptations have taken place.

We continue to capture profiling information for new customers and have increased our data by 5% in each diversity strand following a campaign in July 2010.

All aids and adaptations are recorded on our IT system.

In 2011/12, we will... continue to improve our services by building on our understanding of our customers and their needs.

We said, we would.. help more customers feel comfortable about becoming involved in our many customer groups and initiatives by

developing a package of customer training.

We are currently working with SHYPP (Supported Housing for Young People Project) to provide informal ways for customers to get involved with us which will allow us to identify any training needs which we can then deliver. We are looking to pilot this at Credenhill.

In 2011/12, we will... further improve the range of training we offer to our customers and provide training for staff on engaging customers.

We will also regularly review involvement pages on our website and publicise outcomes.

We said, we would... continue to build our understanding of our customers and say what changes we have made to our services, and the involvement activities we offer.

We have assessed our Customer Panel and Repairs Service Group on the impact their involvement has had in developing and improving our services.

In 2011/12, we will... improve how we assess the impact that customers have made on the business and to try to speak to customers who rarely contact us to understand their views.

Following the appointment of a Senior Housing Officer in July 2010, we have focused on improving our ASB processes, including:

- Monthly attendance at Herefordshire Multi Agency Tasking and Co-ordination meetings.
- Attendance at Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference meetings, when our ASB cases are featured, dealing with cases of Domestic Abuse.
- Attendance at Herefordshire's first Drug Treatment Seminar which includes looking at barriers and how agencies can work together to help assist and support drug users.
- Liaising with Herefordshire's Community Safety Partnership to improve working relations and support between Environmental Health and us.

In 2011/12, we will... continue to work with other agencies to improve the quality of services delivered to our communities.

We said, we would... work to involve more customers in what we do, particularly those from the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and disability groups.

We have a Disability Equality Group which meets regularly and who help us to understand how the delivery of our services affects them.

In 2011/12, we will... set targets to increase the capture of data profiling information.

We said, we would... work with customers to develop and publish local offers and demonstrate how we will involve customers in monitoring them and the national housing standards.

In 2011/12, we will... respond to customer feedback by developing more Service Agreements where needed.

Service Standards

Access to our Services

Requests for access to customer files completed within 14 calendar days* 100%

Responding to You

Telephone calls answered within 6 rings 92%

Letters and emails answered within 7 calendar days* 96.7%

*with the exception of office closures and Public Holidays

We will also regularly review customer feedback including complaints and we will use this information to further improve the services provide to our customers.

We said, we would... improve how we work with partners like the Police and voluntary agencies, on issues affecting our communities.

WORKING TO IMPROVE HOMES



We said, we would... monitor homes fitted with energy saving features to ensure they are financially benefiting the customer and minimising any effects on the environment.

In 2010 we completed the building of the new Code 4 properties at Queens Meadow, Wigmore, which have rainwater harvesting systems, solar panels and air source heat pumps. The aim is to reduce residents' costs in running their homes. We have asked the tenants to keep their bills for 12 months so we can compare the costs.

We said, we would... update our asset management database so

that we know what work needs doing and when we need to do it.

We are surveying our stock, which should be completed by 2013, and we update our IT with the outcomes of the survey.

In 2011/12, we will...

continue to update our Asset Management Database through annual surveys of a minimum of 20% of properties over 10 years old.

We said, we would... consult with customers, the Council, energy providers and government agencies about improving standards for existing and new properties. We also said we would improve the level of

data we hold on new build properties.

Homes are now routinely constructed to the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, achieving high standards in environmental and energy performance to benefit our residents. Consultation with local authorities and residents on our Development Strategy has ensured developments target the needs of local residents.

Defects identified in the first year after construction are routinely monitored, analysed and rectified and all new build renewable energy and low-zero carbon technologies details are now recorded.

In 2011/12, we will...

continue to focus on sustainability issues with an aim of reducing the impact of fuel poverty on customers by implementing options for improving the energy efficiency of our existing homes.

We said, we would... update our customers New Build Design Review Questionnaire.

The Design Questionnaire has been reviewed and the new version is helping us in designing new homes and 96% of customers are satisfied with their new homes.

We said, we would... involve customers more by:

a) offering better incentives to return our repairs satisfaction surveys. The surveys are now entered into a £25 prize draw.

b) increasing consultation on how our Planned Repairs

programme is developed. Consultation is ongoing as part of the Repairs Review. Another consultation with customers to consider and input to the wider Asset Management Strategy and the Planned Repairs Programme has also taken place.

c) simplifying and clarifying how to qualify for a decorations allowance. This is being considered as part of the Repairs Review.

d) increasing customers awareness of all of the services offered, especially Health & Safety. Customer panels meet regularly to discuss services and consider areas for improvement.

e) establishing a Repairs and Maintenance Customer Complaints Forum. Some customers have expressed an interest in this and we will be working with them to trace their experience using a Customer Journey Mapping exercise. The information will be used to improve the repairs service to meet customer needs and expectations.

f) looking at options for our Contact Centre telephone number. All options have been assessed and we plan to move to a new telephone number in the Autumn of 2011. It will be a 0300 number, which is free for landline users and a much-reduced rate for mobile users.

In 2011/12, we will... we will involve our customers more by increasing consultation on how our Planned Repairs programme is developed and will provide and make available better information on the range and extent of planned programmes being carried out.



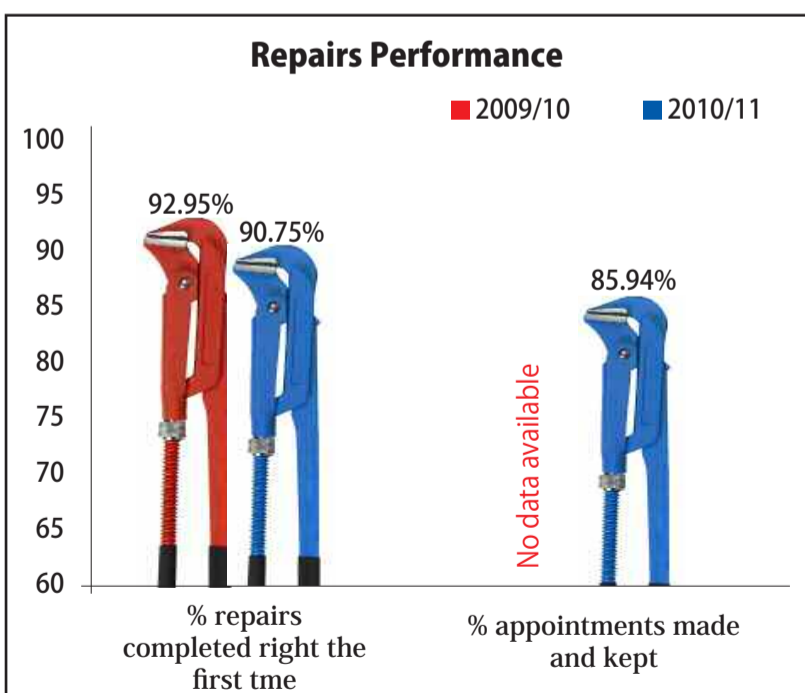
Health & Safety

We have undertaken:

- Fire Risk Assessments to all communal areas of flats
- flood risk assessments to all homes
- full tree condition surveys to all external communal areas
- regular inspection and servicing of lifts
- an annual gas safety inspection programme for all homes with gas appliances
- testing of communal equipment for Legionella and risk assessments on our installations

also we have:

- an asbestos register which details instances of asbestos in communal areas and we are undertaking individual home inspections as part of our investment programme
- an assessment for all homes under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System
- a programme of Access Audits to identify issues that impact upon the safety of people with disabilities within communal areas



Routine satisfaction surveys are conducted on completion of repairs:

	09/10	10/11
Residents who responded to repairs satisfaction surveys who were satisfied with completed job	94.4%	95.2%

As at 31st March 2011 our average SAP rating (energy efficiency) of properties was 70.38 😐

Last year's performance/comparisons (2009/10):

Marches Housing Association Limited	70.1%
Herefordshire Housing Limited	66.5%
Kemble Housing	64.91% 😞*

*based on 2009/10 TSA key performance indicator quartiles

The Great Big Repairs Review Results

In last year's Annual Report, **We said, we would...** develop local offers in customer priority areas including repairs. The repairs service offer review began in July 2010 and we have been reviewing our service with customers.

We held a customer conference in August 2010 and have gathered feedback through VIEW magazine, surveys, complaints and other customer involvement activities. Thank you to everyone who has got involved.

Your priorities - What you said you want:

- the cheapest way to report a repair, with an extended range of appointments to try to meet the needs of people who work;
- to let you know when the worker is on their way and that once they are in your home, that they are polite and professional;

- good quality workmanship, completed if possible, in one visit.
- more options for those who have disabilities or special needs;
- to be kept informed of changes, for example, if we are awaiting materials;
- to be sure follow-up work is reported and acted upon;
- target dates to be kept.

We aim to deliver a better, affordable repair service. Some of your priorities will cost more but we hope to find better ways of delivering other parts of the service so that we can invest in these improvements.

In 2011/12, we will... work with customers to develop and implement the new repairs service from April 2012, targeting areas where feedback has been low and to further understand the views of specific groups of our customers, like young families and people with disabilities.



Service Standards – Repairs	09/10	10/11
Emergency repairs completed or made safe within 24 hours	99.8%	99.7%
Urgent repairs were offered an appointment within 7 calendar days	99.5%	99.7%
Routine repairs were offered an appointment within 28 calendar days	100%	100%
Homes with gas supply received annual gas safety check	100%	99.7%

As at 31st March 2011 **0%** of our properties failed to meet the **Government's Decent Home Standard** 😊

Last year's performance/comparisons (2009/10):	0.00%	😊*
Kemble Housing	0.10%	
Herefordshire Housing Limited	1.20%	
Marches Housing Association Limited		

*based on 2009/10 TSA key performance indicator quartiles

PROVIDING VALUE FOR MONEY

We said, we would... Work with customers over the next 12 months to improve the Value for Money of our services.

We have directly engaged the Joint Group Customer Panel in defining value for money from a customer perspective. The Group placed priority on an efficient right first time repairs service; action against contractors who do not meet the standards expected and customer priorities reflected in budget and service planning.

In 2011/12, we will... work on developing Customer Scrutiny, ensuring that Value for Money is a thread that runs through all areas of scrutiny.

We said, we would... Establish a team to make sure that we get the best value for money from what we do.

A procurement team was established in the summer of 2010 to work across the Group to ensure that we get the best value for money for the goods that we procure and the contracts we enter into.

In 2011/12, we will... train a group of customers to have a more effective part in drawing up service specifications and appointing contractors in order to drive out the best value we can from new contracts.

We said, we would... Continue to develop effective partnership working to bring added benefits to local communities.

We have further developed our involvement in partnership working. Examples of this involvement and its impact on achieving Value for Money can be found within the Neighbourhood and Communities update.

During 2010/11, each £1 of income we received was spent in the following areas:

Purchase and improvement of housing properties	£0.36
Management of housing properties	£0.18
Interest costs on the Group's loans	£0.17
Day-to-day maintenance costs (repairs)	£0.13
Cost of providing services (e.g. grass-cutting and cleaning)	£0.10
Other costs	£0.06
TOTAL	£1.00

HOW KEMBLE IS SUPPORTING YOUR TENANCY



Financial Viability

The vast majority of our income comes from the rents from our properties. The money is used to provide services to our customers, repair and maintain our properties, invest in new homes, pay staff and to pay the interest costs on the loans borrowed by the Group from our lenders.

In challenging economic times, it is important to ensure we manage our resources and budgets well. We set our budgets before the start of each financial year and monitor them regularly. Getting 'value for money' is very important for us and we use the most efficient procurement methods to get the best value from our contracts.

Our financial viability is independently monitored/assessed each year by the Tenant Services Authority. They publish their annual viability review of us. Our accounts are externally audited, and they state our ability to continue as a viable business. We also must operate within loan covenants set by our lenders. Therefore, it's not just us saying we are financially viable!



As at 31st March 2011 on average we took **11.9 days** to relet an empty property 😊

Last year's performance/comparisons (2009/10):

Herefordshire Housing Limited	18.9	
Kemble Housing	22	😊*
Marches Housing Association Limited	24.1	

As at 31st March 2011 **1.4%** of properties were empty 😞

Last year's performance/comparisons (2009/10):

Marches Housing Association Limited	0.50%	
Kemble Housing	0.62%	😊*
Herefordshire Housing Limited	1.50%	

We said, we would... consult with customers to tackle issues of under occupation and overcrowding.

WM Housing is currently working on an under occupancy project in Coventry as a pilot. Following this pilot, we will be discussing with customers the potential of rolling out the project across the Group, if the relevant Local Authorities are supportive of our proposals.

In 2011/12, we will... contribute to the local review of Home-Point (Choice Based Lettings).

We will also implement our First Thoughts Survey for new customers.

We said, we would... develop a more robust system to ensure that homes continue to be lived in by the tenant to whom it was let.

We will continue to work on this issue in 2011/12.

We said, we would... focus on keeping rents affordable and providing support to our customers to maximise their ability to pay.

Our rents are one of the lowest compared to other social landlords in Herefordshire. We continue

to deliver our financial support project, which has resulted in over £215,000 in additional benefits claimed.

In 2011/12, we will... undertake an Income Management Review to ensure that our customers receive good advice and support to prevent customers getting into debt and maximising our income.

We will develop a Financial Inclusion Strategy around the challenges our customers face in dealing with their finances.

We said, we would... set challenging local targets for our rent teams to maximise rental income and

continue to improve our performance.

We have improved rent collection performance this year.

In 2011/12, we will... Continue to review the impacts of the Welfare Reform changes, and provide advice and support to customers.

Homes	
	10/11
Number homes re-let	138
New homes built for rent	35

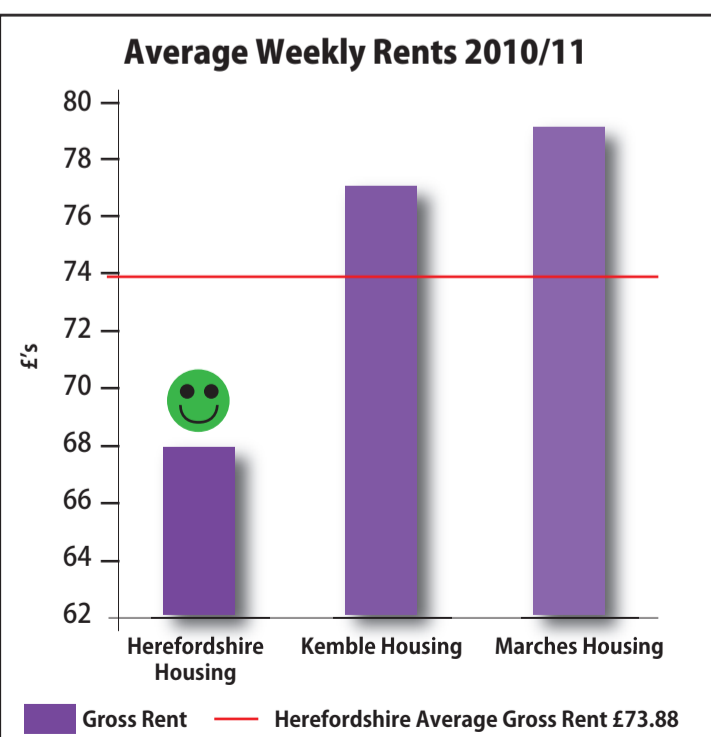
As at 31st March 2011 **2.57%** of the rent we expected to collect from current tenants had not been paid

Last year's performance/comparisons (2009/10):

Herefordshire Housing Limited	2.60%	
Marches Housing Association Limited	2.80%	
Kemble Housing	2.80%	😞*

Rent Collection and Arrears

	09/10	10/11
Rent collected	100%	100%
Rent income lost due to empty properties	0.6%	0.8%
Total rent collected	£4.2m	£4.26m



*based on 2009/10 TSA key performance indicator quartiles



Credenhill Football Project

This project was open to children aged between 5-18, with the aim of increasing the sense of community, reducing anti-social behaviour and raising awareness of the local residents association. The group obtained £8,800 worth of funding from the Football Foundations small grants scheme and other organisations in the area supported the group by sponsoring football kits.

The Flights Football project has just completed its third and final year with a flurry of successful results, a disco and a £100 donation to the local primary school where some of the sessions took place.

As well as having fun, and learning to get on with each other, the project has enabled some of Credenhill's youngsters to secure places in league teams, train as first aiders and take part in inter estate matches and tournaments.

We have also seen a marked reduction in complaints about children playing football in the street.



FOCUSING ON NEIGHBOURHOOD AND THE COMMUNITY

We said, we would... aim to develop a pet's policy with customers to clarify an issue, which can cause disputes.

We asked for volunteers to help us to develop a policy in February's Customer Newsletter and on our website and we have gathered some examples of policies used in other organisations to discuss during consultation.

We said, we would... more effectively address anti-social behaviour by:

Working with our Scrutiny Panel to develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure our performance. The Panel have now agreed the indicators.

Developing a customer/staff panel to decide on case closure - when there is no further practical action we can take. To date, nine cases were presented and agreed with the panel.

Improving our estate inspection procedure with the help of our Customer Panel. The estate inspections process will be also developed.

We said, we would... monitor local ASB performance and report these to the Scrutiny Panel.



We monitor ASB performance by estate basis as part of the Service Agreement and report the outcomes to the Customer Panel. We have contributed to the ASB Service Review.

In 2011/12, we will... report to customers through newsletter and website regarding partnership meetings.

We will also:

- Work with customers to deliver training to assist them with getting back to work.

- Review our management agreements/service level agreements.
- Work with SHYPP to deliver the Schools Project.
- Carry out scheme makeovers.
- Review comments regularly to check for service improvements.
- Carry out quarterly checks of our care and supported housing schemes.



WM Housing has a corporate and social responsibility to conduct and contribute to a wide range of activities that give benefit to the communities in which we work.

Supported Housing for Young People (SHYPP) was established

in 2001 to work in Herefordshire with 16-25 year olds, offering emergency and medium term accommodation in supported housing projects, outreach support to young people and young parents, a 'Nightstop' emergency accommodation project and education in schools.

The excellent work of SHYPP was recognised across the country when it won the TPAS (Tenant Participatory Advisory Service) supporting people award in 2010.

SHYPP has supported over 3,000 young people in Herefordshire, helping them to avoid homelessness, maximise their income, deal with debt, reinforce basic life skills and prepare and train for work.



Service Standards – ASB

	09/10	10/11
ASB reports responded to within 14 calendar days	84%	92.1%
Harassment or racial harassment reports responded to within 3 days	63%	91.7%
Harassment cases where a physical attack has taken place responded to within 1 day	100%	100%