



Email on: enquiries@starhousing.org.uk

Or call us on: 0345 678 9005

Follow us on Twitter @star_housing

Like us on Facebook by searching for "Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing"

Visit our web-site: www.starhousing.org.uk

For more information about Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing visit our website.

Our contacts



Annual Report 2013-14



www.starhousing.org.uk





Introduction

Our annual report covers 1st April 2013 – 31st March 2014 and shows details of what we have achieved during our first year as Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing Ltd, managing properties on behalf of Shropshire Council.

It also highlights where we aim to make improvements to the services we deliver. Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing is run by a Board made up of 5 tenants, 5 Shropshire Council representatives, 4 independents and 1 staff member. Our staff look after the day to day running of things, but we also work very closely with tenants, residents, leaseholders and other partners and stakeholders.

We manage approximately **4200** tenancies on behalf of Shropshire Council across the Oswestry and Bridgnorth areas

We currently manage **149** leasehold properties



We employ approximately **100** staff to manage your homes and tenancies

We sold **26** homes under the Right to Buy



We are currently building **68** new affordable homes

Carry on reading to find out even more about what we have achieved in our first year

JANUARY 2015



Park Hall, Oswestry

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Neighbourhood & Lettings

We have housing teams based in our local offices in Oswestry and Bridgnorth, who deal with tenancy management, anti-social behaviour (ASB), working with communities on neighbourhood projects, lettings and allocations.

75 cases of ASB were reported to us, **30 less** than the previous year. **69 of these cases** were closed, **2 resulting** in tenants being evicted



We worked with communities on **14 Neighbourhood** projects

It costs on average **£2122** to get our void properties up to the lettable standard and takes us on average **35 days**



We let **357 homes** 58 more than the previous year



We carried out **19 area walkabouts** in the South and **16 in the North**

On average we receive **17.7 bids** on each home we advertise on Shropshire Homepoint



The number of people registered on Homepoint dropped from **6500 to 2783**

FEBRUARY 2015



Riverside, Bridgnorth

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- 26 Thu
- 27 Fri
- 28 Sat

 Bridgnorth 01743 257828 or Oswestry area 01691 677369

 Neighbourhoods@starhousing.org.uk

 www.starhousing.org.uk



Rents

We have income teams based in our local offices, who ensure that rent is paid (as rent is a priority payment) and support tenants having difficulty with this. They are friendly and approachable and available to discuss and arrange the most suitable payment method for you. If you have any concerns about paying your rent please don't hesitate to contact your local rents team.

We collected
97.8% of rent owed.
Which equates to
£16,976,498



£149,507 of rent
was owed to us by current
tenants, this has reduced
by **£72,000** from the
previous year

10 tenants 
have been **evicted**
due to their rent debt.
We consider this the
last resort and
assistance is available

The average weekly
rent of our homes is
£82.73



£172,729 is the amount of
rent owed by former tenants

MARCH 2015



Much Wenlock

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Responsive Repairs

Our Responsive Repairs team is made up of a central contact centre who answer calls, emails and make appointments, Inspectors and Repairs Operatives in the Oswestry and Bridgnorth areas, who will visit your home.



We completed **12,666 repairs**, an increase of just over **2500** from the previous year

We spent
£1,383,680
on responsive repairs



It took us on average
12.87 days
to complete a repair



96.46% of you were satisfied with your most recent repair. This has increased from **80.30%** the previous year



We have to prioritise repairs that are reported to us, in order to make best use of our staff and provide you with value for money. So for example, a leak that can be contained using a bucket would be classed as an urgent repair and we would aim to complete within 7 working days, but a routine repair, such as an extractor fan not working would have a target completion within 28 calendar days. Guttering and other repairs such as fencing and groundwork are batched together. We aim to complete these within 6 months.

APRIL 2015



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0333 3212 200

repairs@starhousing.org.uk

Report it online: www.starhousing.org.uk/report-a-repair-form/



Planned Maintenance

We are continuing to work towards achieving the Decent Homes Standard for 100% of our homes (the standard set by the Government) and expect to meet this by 31st March 2015.

We spent £2.6 million on programmed works



We replaced
**100
kitchens**



We rewired **159 homes**

Replaced
**120
external doors**



Adapted 
75 homes

94.4% of you
were satisfied with
the planned works
completed on your
homes

94.34%
of our homes
met the Decent
Homes
standard

Painted
**755
homes
(external)**



Upgraded
or replaced
**28
heating
systems
/boilers**



99.5% of our
houses had a valid
Gas Safe Certificate

Help us keep you and
your family safe in your
home by allowing us
and Liberty Gas Ltd
access to your home
to complete an annual
heating service.

It is part of your
responsibility
as a tenant.



MAY 2015



Bridgnorth



01743 210214



plannedmaintenance@starhousing.org.uk



www.starhousing.org.uk

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New Build Programme

We are working in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to deliver 68 affordable homes in Shropshire. These will be built by our Design and Build contractor Speller Metcalfe.



15 sites were granted planning approval in Highley, Bridgnorth, Shifnal, Oswestry, West Felton, St Martins, Gobowen, Whittington, Babbinswood & Maesbury

We have secured an extra **£80,000 of funding** from the HCA towards our new build programme



We're building 68 homes by April 2015



- 65 houses and 3 bungalows
- 25 as Shared Ownership
- 43 for affordable rent

If you want to rent one of our new, affordable homes you must register with **Shropshire Homepoint**: www.shropshirehomepoint.co.uk or 0300 303 8595

FOR RENT

Do you know of any land for sale, suitable for us to build on?

Please get in touch and let us know - see contact details below

FOR SALE

If you are interested in purchasing one of our **Shared Ownership** homes please contact your local **Your Move** sales agent

Your Move - Perton

Telephone: 01902 744111 or Email: Perton@your-move.co.uk

Your Move - Oswestry

Telephone: 01691 654989 or Email: Oswestry@your-move.co.uk

JUNE 2015



Hignett Close, Oswestry



01743 210218



housing.development@starhousing.org.uk



www.starhousing.org.uk

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Customer Feedback

When you contact us, you will get in touch directly with the team who delivers the service you need (please see the contact card at the back).

If you would like to let us know your opinion about our service, good or bad:

- 1 You can contact any member of staff from any team; in person, in writing, by phone, by email or using our on-line form
- 2 If you are making a complaint, let the staff member have the details and tell them how you would like it to be resolved
- 3 Hopefully, your complaint can be resolved at this point, if it can't, it will be investigated and you will receive a written acknowledgement within 3 working days of logging this with us
- 4 You will receive a full response within 10 working days. This will tell you if we uphold (agree with) your complaint, and what we will do to resolve this and say how we will try to make sure that the same thing doesn't happen again

We received **88** complaints



94% of complaints received were resolved at stage 1

71% of complaints received were either partially or fully upheld



73% of complaints were handled within time. We have reduced the target response time from 15 days to 10 days



JULY 2015



St Martins

✉ customer.support@starhousing.org.uk
 📄 Report it online: www.starhousing.org.uk/contact-us/
 Write to us: Customer Support, ST and R Housing, The Spruce Building, Sitka Drive, Shrewsbury Business Park, Shrewsbury SY2 6LG

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Involvement & Empowerment

We want you to be at the heart of everything that we do, after all it is rent money that pays for the services that we provide.

We are always on the lookout for tenants and residents to work with us to improve communities and our services. Why not get in touch and see how you can take part?

During the last financial year 15 services have been changed, improved or withdrawn following feedback from you, some examples include:

Reduced the amount of time

it takes us to respond to a complaint from 15 days to 10 days for a full response



Changes were made to the layout of the **customer face to face hub** at Castle View in Oswestry



We worked with residents and a local school to improve a **communal garden** area at Greenfields Court in Bridgnorth



A post for a **Caretaker** was created following consultation at Castlefields in Oswestry



We reviewed the language and **accessibility of our website** with a group of tenants and service users and implemented changes



Changes were made to **your rent statement** layout, to make it clearer and easier to understand

AUGUST 2015



Highley

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01743 210205 or mobile 07837 821 029 or 07837 821 076

involvement@starhousing.org.uk

www.starhousing.org.uk



Financial Support

Our Financial Inclusion Officer started at ST&R Housing in July 2013, and has already had a positive impact on the lives of tenants who:

- £ Fall behind with rent payments and other household bills
- £ Are borrowing from payday and doorstep lenders, at high rates of interest
- £ Have to use a friend's or partner's bank account or are unable to pay bills by Direct Debit
- £ Are always in debt, overdrawn, paying high bank charges and not able to save
- £ Don't open post anymore and are afraid of red letters, bailiffs and court summons
- £ Regularly borrow and get further into debt
- £ Do not insure household contents against fire or theft



We have supported tenants to apply for **£5000 worth of discretionary housing payments**



We have given financial support to **140 households**

We have helped secure £2700 worth of external grants, for example to help tenants fill their oil tank up

We can help you with any of these issues - please get in touch. Contact details below

SEPTEMBER 2015



Pant, Oswestry

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Community Support

This service aims to help vulnerable people, either on a short term or long term basis, to develop the skills and experience to be able to maintain their own accommodation and live independently in the community. Support services are provided through individual and group support aimed to help people to develop their own networks and friendships.

We supported **3344** people compared to **1623** the previous year



99.29% of those we supported, developed the skills and experience to be able to maintain their own accommodation and live independently in the community



There are four main areas our Support Services cover:

- Turning lives around – for people of working age
- Homesafe – for people where work is not appropriate
- Community Alarms
- Intensive Housing Management – provided in sheltered schemes



We installed **130** community alarms

Often, funding is available for these services to be provided for you. Call us on the numbers below and we will be happy to discuss this with you.

OCTOBER 2015



Llanymynech

Community Support

01630 698708
supportedhousing@starhousing.org.uk

Community Alarms

01691 677367 or 07582 003487
communityalarms@starhousing.org.uk
www.starhousing.org.uk

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Finance & Budgets

In the last financial year the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) made an overall surplus of £1.5m, which means that after meeting all of its running costs for the year, we were able to put around 8% of the total income aside to fund future expenditure on projects such as building new affordable homes.

The majority of this expenditure relates to the management and maintenance of your homes, and paying interest on the 'self-financing settlement debt' of £83.4m (note that this was debt Shropshire Council was told to take on by the Government in April 2012).

The Housing Revenue Account paid a management fee of £7.1m to Shropshire Towns & Rural Housing for 2013/14. From this fee, ST&RH paid for the majority of the expenditure shown opposite under 'Repairs & Maintenance' and 'Supervision & Management'.

The chart below shows how much income was generated and how this was spent:

INCOME

- Dwelling Rent
- Non-dwelling Rent
- Charges for other services & facilities



TOTAL INCOME: £18,100,092

EXPENDITURE

Repairs & Maintenance	£4,900,807
Supervision and Management	£2,935,528
Provision for Bad or Doubtful Debts	£70,000
Depreciation – Dwellings	£4,171,900
Depreciation – Other	£43,030
Other	£305,006
Loan Repayment	n/a
Interest & Capital	£4,169,103
Total Expenditure	£16,595,374
Surplus for the year	£1,504,718

TOTAL EXPENDITURE: £16,595,374

NOVEMBER 2015



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Future aims & challenges

Here are some of our aims for next year...

-  To continue our Decent Home programme and make our homes even better
-  To hand keys over to our new affordable homes and start building more!
-  To continue to support our tenants to prioritise their budgets
-  To support even more community projects via our Area Panels and Community Chest
-  To involve even more tenants in improving our services
-  To support our tenants and residents to get online
-  To support more neighbourhood projects, and work with you to make communities better

Here are some of the challenges that we expect to deal with...

-  Continuing welfare reform
-  Further cuts to local services
-  Meeting the increased demand on affordable housing in Shropshire

We look forward to an exciting and challenging year ahead, working with you to provide the best service possible!

DECEMBER 2015



Hignett Close, Oswestry

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Money Saving Tips

Are you entitled to a Winter Fuel Payment for 2014/15?

www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment

Has the cost of heating your home increased? **Consider switching your supplier...try uswitch.com or www.moneysavingexpert.com**

Did you know you can get a free TV licence if you're 75 or over and a discount if you're registered blind? Call 0300 790 6165

Still reeling from Christmas? Everyone needs a plan – a Christmas savings plan. Contact your credit unions and be prepared this year 01743 252325/01743 240403. £5 per week soon adds up...

Do you live alone? Are you getting your single person discount for council tax? **Check and apply now 0345 678 9002**

Do you need help to get on line? Never tried it but would like to give it a try? For further information contact your Financial Inclusion Team on 01743 210206

Save money on your electricity by washing your clothes at 30C, put lids on saucepans, only boil the kettle for what you need, switch off lights and don't leave anything on standby especially overnight

Has your child turned 16? Don't forget to let Child Benefit know if they are staying on in education. You could risk losing it if you delay call 0300 2003100

Need help with School Uniforms? Don't resort to high cost loans, contact your Financial Inclusion Team for advice on 01743 210206

Back to school..... Are your children entitled to free school meals? Call Shropshire Council on 0345 678 9000

Not sure how to pay for Christmas? Speak to your Financial Inclusion Team on 01743 210206 for cheaper alternatives to payday and doorstep loans

Useful contact information

SHREWSBURY

The Spruce Building, Sitka Drive,
Shrewsbury Business Park
Shrewsbury
SY2 6LG

BRIDGNORTH

Customer face to face point
The Hub, Bridgnorth Library,
Listley Street, Bridgnorth WV16 4AW.

*Please note Westgate closed on the
23rd September 2014*

Postal address

Canern Brook Offices , Stanley Lane,
Bridgnorth, WV16 4SF

OSWESTRY

Customer face to face point
The Hub, Oswestry Library, Castle View,
Oswestry SY11 1JR.

Repairs	Phone: 0333 3212 200 Email: repairs@starhousing.org.uk Report it online: www.starhousing.org.uk/report-a-repair-form/	
Neighbourhoods	Phone: 01743 257828 Email: neighbourhoods@starhousing.org.uk	Phone: 01691 677369 Email: neighbourhoods@starhousing.org.uk
Rent	Phone: 01743 257832 Email: rents@starhousing.org.uk	Phone: 01691 677230 Email: rents@starhousing.org.uk
Planned Maintenance	Phone: 01743 210214 Email: plannedmaintenance@starhousing.org.uk	
Community Support	Phone: 01630 698708 Email: supportedhousing@starhousing.org.uk	
Community Alarms	Phone: 01691 677367 or 07582 003 487 Email: communityalarms@starhousing.org.uk	
Involvement & Empowerment	Phone: 01743 210205 or mobile 07837 821 029 or 07837 821 076 Email: involvement@starhousing.org.uk	
Financial Support	Phone: 01743 210206	
Customer Feedback	Phone: relevant department or service area Report it online: www.starhousing.org.uk/contact-us/ Email: customer.support@starhousing.org.uk	
General Enquiries	Phone: 01743 210202 Email: enquiries@starhousing.org.uk	