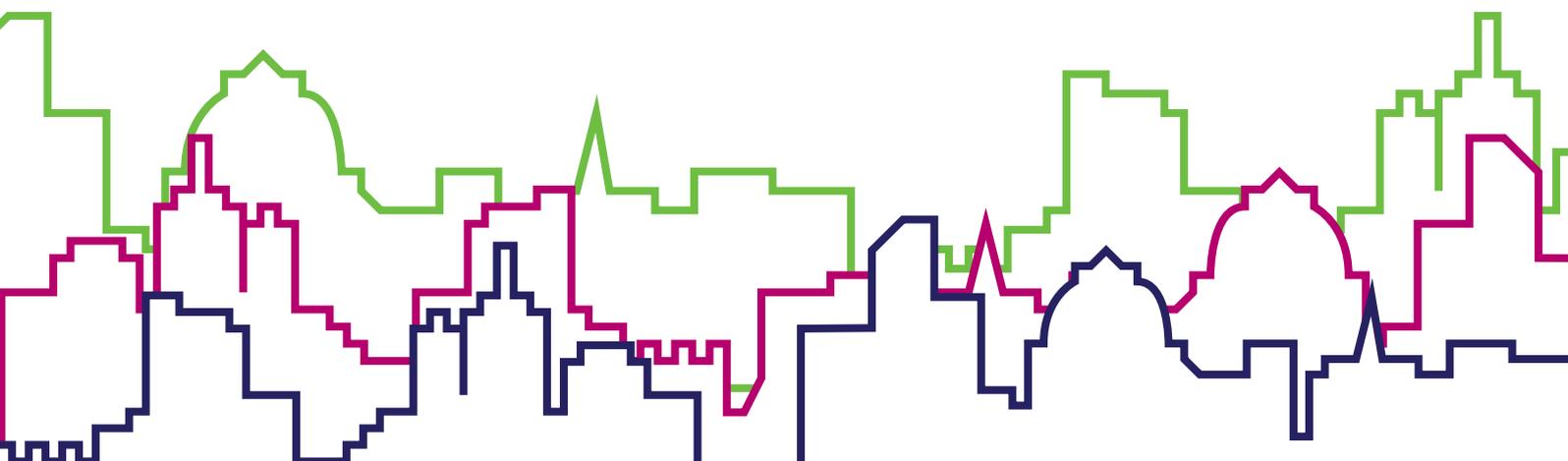
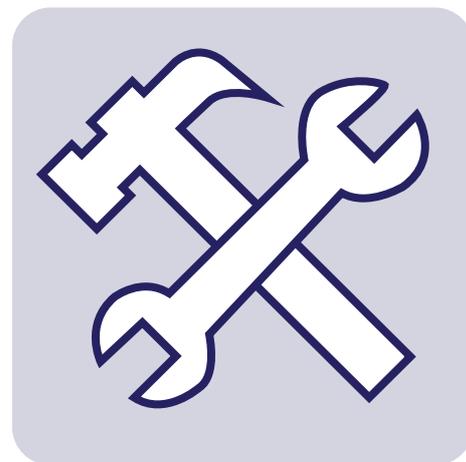
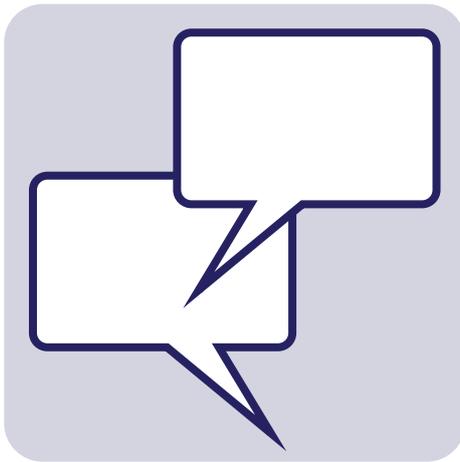
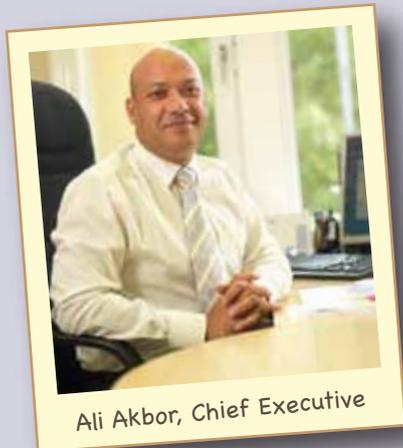


Annual Report To Tenants 2011/12



Foreword



Ali Akbor, Chief Executive

Unity is extremely proud to be marking 25 years of providing choice, improving life opportunities and addressing inequalities.

It is a very exciting time for Unity and we have very ambitious plans for the near future that will see the organisation grow.

We have new housing developments planned and we are looking to make significant investment in our business centres both of which will have a positive impact in all aspects of our local community, but it is the service we provide to our tenants that we pride ourselves on.

This annual report however serves as a reminder of some of Unity's achievements, not least in the service we provide to our tenants and customers. At a glance you will be able to see how well we have performed in relation to previous years and in relation to our ambitious targets.

Here at Unity we believe in continuous improvement and recognize there is more we can do to best serve our tenants and customers. This report also includes our plans for the future so that you can see the changes you can look forward to.

Unity's Silver Anniversary



Mrs Denver Adams, mother of Olympic boxer Nicola, speaks proudly of her daughter at the event.

On Wednesday 12 September, Unity Housing marked its silver anniversary with a golden guest. Denver Adams,

Unity resident and mother of Olympic champion boxer Nicola Adams, attended the 25th anniversary celebrations at Unity's Annual General Meeting.

The evening not only recognised the association's achievements over the past 25 years but also Unity's contribution to help Golden girl Nicola make history.

Chief Executive of the National Housing Federation, David Orr, was chief guest at the meeting with keynote speeches also from Naz Parkar, Head of North & West Yorkshire Area, Homes & Communities Agency.

Guests also heard from Belinda Latham, representing Unity's Tenant Scrutiny Panel who told the meeting about the part the panel plays in shaping how housing services are delivered to Unity's tenants.

Former students of the Leeds College of Music, where the celebration was held,

provided entertainment alongside poetry from Leeds Young Authors based at Unity Enterprise's Media Centre.



Media Centre-based Leeds Young Authors give an energetic and heartfelt performance.

Ali Akbor, Chief Executive of Unity said 'Unity is extremely proud to be marking 25 years of helping local communities to achieve their full potential. What better example of our success than Nicola Adams and her family. I am delighted that so many people could join us tonight to recognise Unity's achievements.'

Leeds Reggae Concert



Unity is proud to sponsor Leeds' annual Reggae Concert.

Leeds Reggae Concert is an event which takes place annually in Potternewton Park. The tradition started in 1990 as a means of bringing communities together. The concert is entirely free to enable anyone to attend; in the past, the concert has attracted audiences in excess of 80 000 people.

The Reggae Concert has such a good reputation for bringing harmony, in more ways than one, to the area that Unity has committed to sponsoring the concert every year to help enable it to become an annual tradition.

Yorkshire Sensory Experience

'Yorkshire Sensory Experience' has designed four sensory rooms which can be found in Unity's Business Centre. The rooms were originally designed for those in need of care in the community but they are now open to the general public.

The rooms appeal to all of the senses and feature music, flashing lights, moving images and tactile surfaces as well as a whole host of other stimulants. The rooms are used by a wide range of people, including young children, the elderly and people with disabilities. Similar facilities exist in just two other locations in the UK

The mayor of Leeds was one of the special guests invited to the opening ceremony of the four sensory rooms at Unity Business Centre.

Unity is happy to endorse such a worthy cause and strongly recommends a visit. To book a room or for more information about Yorkshire Sensory Experience visit on their website: <http://www.yseltd.co.uk/home.html>



The four sensory rooms feature a range of stimulants to serve a variety of needs.



The mayor of Leeds attends the opening ceremony of the sensory rooms at Unity Business Centre.

Chapeltown's Tiled Wall



Unity's presence in the community was marked by the opening of a cash machine outside the office.

Unity has had a presence in the community of Chapeltown for 25 years now. Evidence of this can be seen in Chapeltown's tiled wall - designed by individuals and organisations from the local area.

Each tile on the wall is unique and reflects an aspect of Chapeltown's rich and vibrant culture. The project was carried out by Groundwork, Leeds City Council and Leeds Housing Concern.

The artwork not only benefits the people that live and work in the area, but serves as a colourful greeting for the many people who travel up and down Chapeltown Road each day.

Supporting Deafblind Charity Sense

Unity believe in helping the most vulnerable in society and as such has recently sponsored deafblind charity Sense to take five visually impaired people with learning difficulties on a daytrip.

Sense are a national charity that supports and campaigns for children and adults who are deafblind. They provide tailored support, advice and information as well as specialist service to all deafblind people, their families, carers and professionals who work with them.



Unity's donation will contribute to recreational activities for their Ashley Road, Leeds, care facility.

Appointing A Financial Inclusion Officer



Worried about benefit changes or struggling with debt? Our Financial Inclusion Officer may be able to help you.

The next financial year is going to be a challenging time due to the impact of the Welfare Reform. You may be worried about the changes that are going to occur and would like some help understanding them and what you can do about them.

We have appointed Clive Greenwood, as our new Financial Inclusion Officer who may be able to help you. Clive has worked as part of a mortgage rescue team, has experience with financial assessments and will be able to provide advice and support with debt, budgeting and benefits. Clive will be able to help you maximise your income, and point you in the direction of help and advice from other organisations.

Regeneration & Development

Unity strives to continue the regeneration of target neighbourhoods and continue to increase housing choice linked to the aspirations of BME communities. The developments that have been built in recent years serve a range of different needs, not only for individuals but to the wider community.

Shared Ownership Developments



Properties on our latest development, Scott Hall Square, were available for rent and shared ownership.

Unity believes in giving people every opportunity to own and manage their own property and as such has created several shared ownership developments. These developments give people the chance to own a percentage of their home and in some cases provide opportunities for first time buyers in what is an increasingly challenging economic climate. 2011/12 saw the completion of two major developments:

Scott Hall Square

The £2.4million development, supported by the Home & Communities Agency, is made up of a variety of properties including two, three and four bedroom houses as well bungalows for older people and adapted properties for people with disabilities. All properties have been built to Code For Sustainable Homes Level 4, which makes them about 40% more energy efficient than typical properties of their type. 15 of these properties were available for shared ownership and a further 13 were available to rent.



The construction of the development also provided jobs for local people including Asmond Williams (centre)

The Beverleys

The completion of The Beverleys marks the start of an ongoing process of regeneration in the area of Beeston. Unity worked in partnership with Chevin Housing Association to complete the development, which includes 21 properties, all of which are built to Code For Sustainable Homes Level 4.



Chapeltown Housing Investment Project

As part of the Chapeltown Housing Investment Project, Unity will be working with a host of other local social housing providers and the Council to collect information about housing stock in the area. This information will include the location of the stock and its condition, future development proposals, void and relet trends as well as information on tenant satisfaction and aspirations.

Sholebroke House, formerly owned by Leeds Federated Housing is an example of the type of property that will benefit from the project. The former hostel is being renovated to be brought back to one and two-bedroom accommodation of which there is a shortage in the area.

Apprenticeship Schemes

It is Unity's aim to continue the regeneration of target neighbourhoods. This regeneration is not only physical, but also social and economic. This means that wherever possible Unity will help local people find employment. Helping people to attain apprenticeship placements is an example of how we might do this.

Unity Homes & Enterprise has a dedicated Employment Team who can help you to develop a range of skills. They work largely with our tenants, but liaise with various other organisations and individuals within the community. The Employment Team can help to identify opportunities that are available to you and point you in the right direction for where to find work.

Not only have apprentices been employed by Unity's contractors in the construction of Windrush Court and Scott Hall Square, Unity's contractors Forrest have also given our tenants the chance to enhance their employment prospects through such apprenticeship schemes.



Apprentices were employed by Unity's contractors during the construction of Windrush Court.



Unity's Employment Team

Unity's Employment Team offer free tailor-made employment service to suit the needs of individuals. The Employment Team can help you to identify opportunities that are available to you and point you in the right direction of where to find work as well as helping build your confidence and develop your CV writing and job interview skills.

In the past year the Employment team have worked with 86 clients and as a result 42% of these now have jobs. Here are just a few of the people they have helped:

Kerry, 34



Determined Kerry secures a placement as a result of all her hard work.

The Unity Employment Team has helped Kerry to develop and build her confidence for interviews and applications. She has worked very hard to improve her chances of employment by gaining a better understanding of the job market and what roles she is best suited for.

Kerry has started to complete three IT courses and attended several interviews with our support. Unity Housing Association felt that as Kerry has worked so hard she is a deserving person to receive a contribution towards her final qualification as part of our 25 year celebrations. As a result of all her hard work, Kerry has since secured a voluntary placement.



Miss P & Mr L

This couple are living together and have two children under 3. Before meeting The Employment Team this lady had been made unemployed due to contractual changes that had happened when she was on maternity leave. Her partner was unemployed due to being made redundant.

The team helped her build and develop her CV. They helped them with job searching, filling in application forms and interview techniques. This lady was then offered an interview with Sainsbury's so The Team guided her through the Maths and English test; she was then offered temporary Christmas employment. She is now a permanent member of staff and is going to apply for a more senior role within the company. Her partner has also been successful in gaining permanent employment through the support of The Employment Team which means this couple are now financially stable.

Mr Z

For 9 years he was in and out of prison, involved in gang activity and substance dealing and misuse. After gaining some qualifications in prison he decided he no longer wanted to be involved in crime and began volunteering at a community project as a project coordinator. He had started attending college but due to the economic conditions in construction many companies had stopped taking apprentices.

The Employment Team helped find job opportunities so he could finish his gas engineering course. We improved his CV to send to different companies and helped him fill in application forms. During this time we had been given the task to find six local people to help build one of our new developments. The Employment Team helped him with his CV and application forms to the company who in turn offered him an interview. The Employment Team provided interview preparation and mock interviews so he didn't feel as nervous when attending. This resulted in the company deciding to take him on and they also agreed to pay him and fit the work around his college attendance. This has enabled him to pursue a career he wants and get paid to learn at the same time. He has successfully completed his qualification and is now getting paid to renovate a house in his local community.

Involvement, Complaints & Customer Service



We take pride in providing our tenants with the best services possible, and actively seek to involve you in shaping the services you receive. How do we do this? By listening... We constantly monitor how satisfied you are, and respond to complaints, issues raised or suggestions on how we can improve. Your voice is vital to our development.

2011/12 Highlights

Tenant Panel member involvement in end of year maintenance contract reviews

Carrying out a 'Neighbourhood Needs' satisfaction survey with Unity tenants

Setting the resident involvement calendar for 2012/13

Reviewing the Resident Involvement Strategy and local standards

Partnership working with Leeds Collaborative Group

Our Performance

	Target	Target Met?
We answered 78% of all calls within six rings.	85%	
Satisfaction with services provided by Unity increased from 79.4% (STATUS 2010) to 87.8% (mini-STATUS 2012)	80%	

Target Target Met?

63% of tenants were satisfied that their views were taken into account.

70%



73.6% of tenants said they were satisfied with the way Unity kept them informed about issues which may affect them as tenants.

70%



Complaints

Unity is open in its complaints handling and reports its performance at every Operations Committee and at year end to tenants.

Unity sees complaints as an opportunity to learn from mistakes and as an opportunity to improve service delivery. The organisation received 18 formal complaints in this financial year (2011/12) of those complaints 17 were resolved at stage 1 (complaint reviewed by a service manager) and 1 at stage 2 (complaint reviewed by a senior officer) of the Association's complaints procedure.

100% of complaints were responded to 'on time' (within 10 working days),

96%



72% of tenants were satisfied with the way Unity handled their complaint.

85%



Understanding & Responding To The Diverse Needs Of Tenants

- Unity has implemented an IT module which flags tenants' vulnerable indicators, to allow staff to support those with diverse needs more easily.
- Plans are in place to begin developing and implementing a 'Single Equalities Scheme' document, with a view to organising annual equality impact assessments.
- During 2011/12, Unity conducted its customer profiling project with the 'Census' with the hope of gathering information and updating our systems to assist us in tailoring our services to our tenant group.



Letting Homes, Rents & Tenancy



This section of our annual report concerns the current rental status of our properties, who is living in our homes and how satisfied they are with their condition.

2011/12 Highlights

Rents are set in accordance with HCA regulations.

99.74% of general needs rents were collected

66.3% of tenants stated they were satisfied that they were receiving value for money for their rent payments.

During 2011/12 there were 65 new lettings.

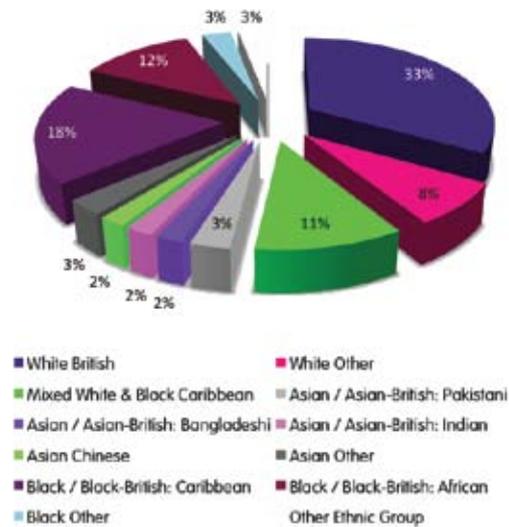
75.4% of new tenants felt the condition of their new home was good and 21.7% felt it was satisfactory.

87% rated the overall service received from Unity during sign up as 'Good' with 13% rating it as satisfactory.

Our Performance

	Target	Target Met?
81.5% of Unity's lettings were to council nominations	50%	
Lettings to BME groups was 64.6% of all re-lets	50%	
The re-let time for 2011/12 was 31.6 days	21 days	
Overall rent collection for general needs properties was 99.74%	98%	
Former Tenant Arrears stood at £272,613 for the financial year 2011/12	£245,964	
During 2011/12 rent arrears stood at £298,619	£245,695	

Lettings To BME Groups



Average Rents - Local & Regional

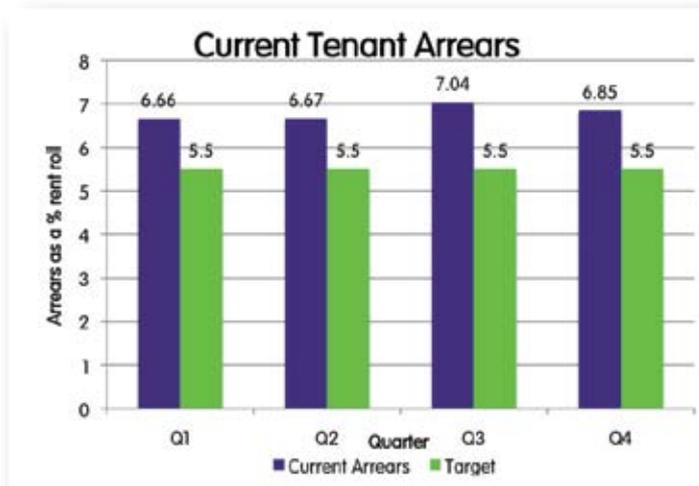
UHA	Leeds	West Yorkshire	Yorkshire & Humberside
£70.98	£69.81	£63.74	£65.28

Figures taken from Communities & Local Government website:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingresearch/housingstatistics/housingstatisticsby/rentslettings/livetable>

Current Tenant Arrears

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
6.66	6.67	7.04	6.85
UHA	Yorkshire Housing	Leeds Federated	Sadeh Lok
6.85%	3.02%	3.81%	4.60%



Rent Loss Due To Empty Homes

UHA	Yorkshire Housing	Leeds Federated	Sadeh Lok
1.00%	1.24%	0.93%	1.05%

Neighbourhoods & Community



Unity's responsibility to its tenants does not end once we have placed them in their homes. Unity attempts to deal with any problems that arise in the neighbourhoods and communities in which we have properties and ensure that our customers are satisfied with the upkeep of any communal areas.

2011/12 Highlights

Unity Employed an Employment Outreach Worker, to assist our unemployed tenants and local residents find employment in their areas of interest or experience.

In its first year the employment services team helped 86 clients with 42% gaining employment.

We offer work placements for tenants to gain experience of working within an office environment.

During the development of our Scott Hall Square & The Beverleys housing schemes, apprenticeships were created and the some trainees successfully found full time employment with the contractors when the schemes had reached completion.

74.9% of Unity tenants were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live

Housing Officers conduct estate inspections every two months, ensuring neighbourhoods are in a clean and tidy condition and any problems residents may have are recorded.

Anti-Social Behaviour

- ✓ Housing Officers completed 32 estate visits (each)
- ✓ 24 cases of anti-social behaviour were reported 2011/12



- ✓ Unity Housing have a 'zero tolerance' policy towards ASB and partnership working with the Police & Local Authority has been essential in 'stamping out' any neighbourhood issues.
- ✓ Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour - During 2011/12 Unity evicted one troublesome family who had caused major problems for their neighbours.
- ✓ We have implemented the use of 'Good Neighbour' agreements, which are used as effective tools to manage low level issues.
- ✓ Developing diversionary activities (raised as a priority by tenants) linking in with youth teams and other agencies to deliver this. For example, we have worked closely with the police in delivering preventative approaches for diversionary activities for young people focussing on play activities.
- ✓ Ensuring that ASB is discussed as part of the sign up process.
- ✓ Working with Registered Social Landlord partners to introduce more intensive housing management practises.
- ✓ Working with the community to identify hot spots and measures to resolve any issues of ASB
- ✓ We have had a greater involvement with external agencies including West Yorkshire Police Anti-Social Behaviour Unit and other housing providers.

Our Performance

	Target	Target Met?
100% of ASB cases reported were acknowledged within 5 working days	80%	✓
93% of tenants were satisfied with the gardening service.	80%	✓
99% of tenants were satisfied with the communal cleaning service	80%	✓
100% of tenants were satisfied with the advice provided by staff when reporting Anti-Social Behaviour and the outcome.	80%	✓
82.7% of tenants were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.	80%	✓

Repairs & Maintenance



We aim to keep your home up-to-date with modern fittings and fix things quickly when they go wrong. This section of the annual reports describes our performance in this area in a little more detail.

2011/12 Highlights

£921,000 investment into home improvements & cyclical works - Over 500 tenants benefited from new kitchens, bathrooms, efficient CH boilers

Joint working with our Tenant Panel to review repairs, gas, painting, cleaning and gardening services - including the re-tender of the gas contract and the appointment of IDM.

Introduced a 'handyperson' to deliver an in-house, cost effective, minor repairs service

Home upgrade works (i.e. loft & wall insulation) to improve energy efficiency continued during 2011/12, with the aim of helping tenants reduce their fuel bills.

Our Performance

	Target	Target Met?
Overall satisfaction with Unity's repairs and maintenance service increased from 74.3% (STATUS 2010) to 86.3% (mini-STATUS 2012)	85%	
98.5% of repair jobs logged were 'first time fixes' (didn't need a return visit from contractor)	85%	

Target Target Met?

99.1% of appointments made were kept 2011/12, an increase of 2.1% from 2010/11 (97%).

99%



100% of Unity's properties were issued with gas safety certificates

100%



76 Energy Performance Certificates were issued to tenants during 2011/12

65



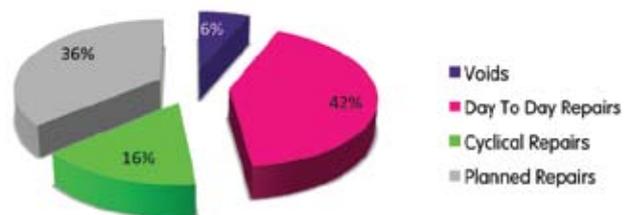
A total of 3,148 repair jobs were logged.

Where Repair Costs Were Spent

Actual figures for repairs expenditure (2011/12):

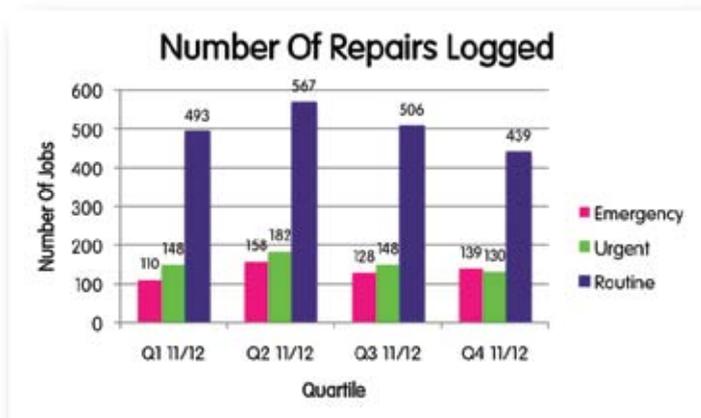
Repair Type	What It Is	Expenditure
Voids	Repairing a home that has been returned to us. To bring it back to a livable standard for the new tenant	£56 913
Day to Day Repairs	Repairs completed as required	£371 533
Cyclical Repairs	Repairs completed routinely, i.e. painting of fences every 5 years, etc	£139,306
Planned Repairs	Repairs that have been planned to take place, i.e. replacement of kitchens.	£320 974

Where Repairs Costs Were Spent

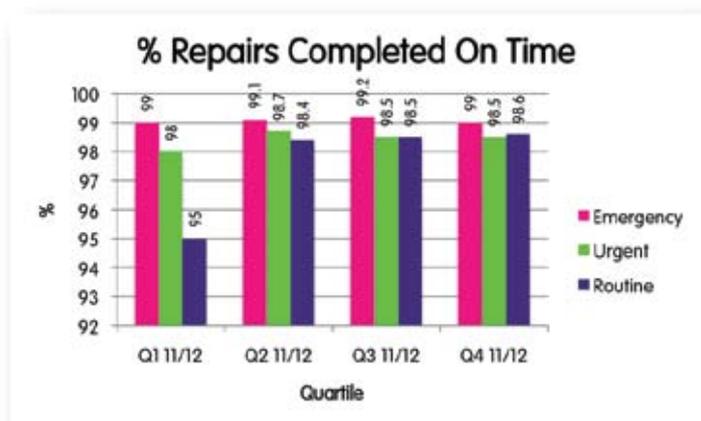




Repairs Statistics



	Emergency	Urgent	Routine
Unity Housing	99.00%	98.50%	98.60%
Yorkshire Housing	98.00%	98.00%	97.00%
Leeds Federated	98.69%	94.70%	94.90%
Sadeh Lok	95.70%	98.50%	98.60%



Planned Maintenance

- ✓ 96 kitchen renewals have been ordered this year with 90 completed.
- ✓ 87 full / partial bathroom refurbishments have been ordered this year with 78 completed.
- ✓ 95 door / window renewals have been ordered this year with 81 completed.
- ✓ 25 boilers have been ordered this year and all completed.
- ✓ 16 properties have benefited from extensive roofing works this year all are complete.
- ✓ The remaining 26 aerial upgrades have been ordered and completed.
- ✓ All external and communal painting has been ordered and completed.
- ✓ 993 have been programmed for gas servicing and all are completed.

Programme Area	Number Programmed For Full Year	Number Ordered This Year	Number Completed This Year
Kitchens	94	96	90
Bathrooms	78	87	78
Window & Doors	23	95	81
Boilers	25	25	25
Roofs	16	16	16
Digital TV Aerials	26	26	26
External Painting	205	205	205
Communal Painting	10	10	10
Gas Servicing	993	993	993

Value For Money



This section of the report aims to answer questions such as: Does my rent charge represent good value for money? What is my rent spent on? Where else does Unity makes money? And is Unity reinvesting the money it makes sensibly?

2011/12 Highlights

66.3% of Unity's tenants stated they were satisfied that their rent charge represented Value for Money

Tenant Scrutiny Panel and Unity staff tendered the day to day and planned maintenance contract entering into a five year contract with Forrest. Similarly with the cyclical painting programme entering into a 5 year contract with Bagnalls.

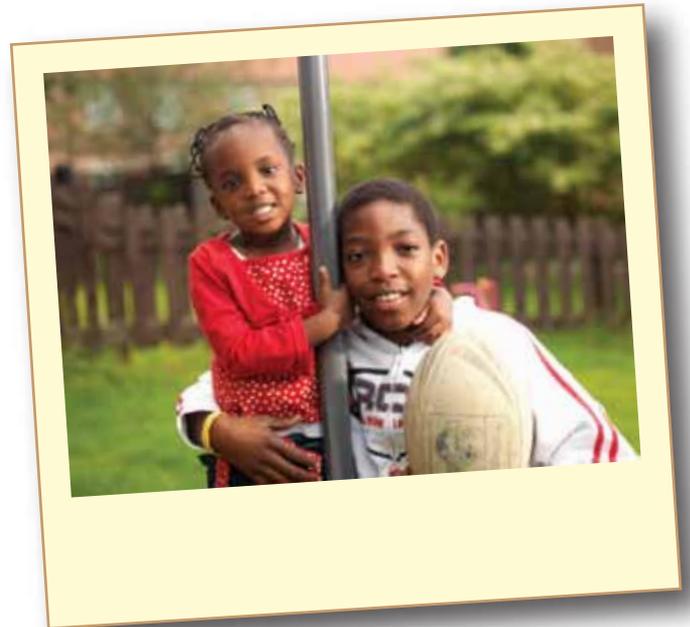
We have our Tenant Panel and Scrutiny Panel who review our services and their costs to ensure tenants are getting good value.

Negotiate new pricing structure with Allpay, allowing tenants to pay by direct debit and replace Streamline for credit card payments with these new services being available on line, at tenancy start up and to convert existing tenants who pay by standing order - possibly even extending to Unity Enterprise in the future

Switched gas and electricity to Group Inenco
Annual saving £5,091

Our Performance

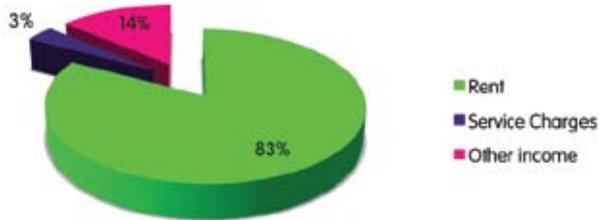
Action	Annual Savings Impact (£)	Contract Savings (£)
Purchase of electricity & gas on the wholesale market through a buying agency (Inenco)- 3 year contract - year 1 savings	£5,091	-
Reduced waste management costs renegotiating contracts with LPR & Biffa costs reduced from £7,460 to £5,236	£2,224	-
The cost of producing Newsletters externally has been compared against producing them in house on the new photocopiers and has been found to be cheaper now - cost of print run now = £418 compared to printing of £810	£392	£1,568
Cost of gas repairs and servicing - Re-tendering of contract over a 1 year period, to be followed by a 5 year contract.	£10,000	-
Re-tendering of external painting contract over a 5 year period	£20,000	£100,000



Where The Money Comes From (£)

Rent	Service charges	Other Income
£4 256 436	£180 717	£698 122

Where The Money Comes From (£)



Where The Money Goes (£)

Void Costs	£56 913
Routine Repairs	£371 533
Cyclical Repairs	£139 306
Planned Repairs	£320 974
Loan Interest	£515 598
Service Charges	£236 409
Admin Costs	£1 082 704
Other Costs	£1 950 377

Where Each £1 of Rent Is Spent



Plans For The Future



Here at Unity we believe in continuous improvement and recognize there is more we can do to best serve our tenants and customers. Here you can see our plans for the future so that you can see the changes you can look forward to.

Publicise within the newsletter and have a dedicated page on the website how anti social behaviour (i.e. loud music, drug abuse, dog fouling, etc) has a negative impact on our neighbourhood and how tenants can report ASB.

We will complete at least 2 litter picking exercises per year with our Housing Officers working together with tenants in the most affected estates

Estate walkabouts (done by Housing Officers) will be publicised at least 7 days before we visit your street

Plans For 2012/13

5 Year Planned Maintenance Programme

Working with tenant maintenance to design a new programme of planned works.

Designing Our New 30 Year Business Plan

This is how we prove we can survive financially and sets our budgets - so our staff team know exactly how much we can spend while promoting value for money in the services we deliver to you.

Service Charges

Government regulatory changes mean we will have to review our service charges.

Launching A Brand New Website

We'll be changing our website to make it more tenant focussed.

Gardening Service Review

Looking into reviewing this service to make sure we provide you with the best service at the best cost.



Local Offers

We shall provide information in via our quarterly newsletter and website regards to crime prevention and arrange at least 2 crime awareness sessions with the Neighbourhood Policing Team and others as required.