



Building
homes
Changing
lives



Raven
Housing Trust



Our story of the year

2022-23

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Please note: all names have been changed to protect the identity of the customers. This is the Raven Housing Trust customer annual report 2022-23.

Welcome from your Customer Voice Panel

Welcome to the story of Raven Housing Trust for the year 2022-23. It's been great to look back at the year, which was the first full financial year since the Customer Voice Panel was created.

We know it's been a difficult time for people, especially with the increase in the cost of living but we've seen people coming together to support one another through these challenges. There have been some fantastic examples of communities doing their best to make our neighbourhoods better places to live, alongside the ongoing efforts by the Raven Neighbourhood Wardens and other teams contributing to community initiatives.

As a panel, it's our job to challenge Raven's performance and to work with leaders and Board members to keep

us, as Raven customers, at the heart of decision making. So far it's been a great experience and we've created a really good relationship to voice our views.

This report shows us what Raven spent our rent and service charges on in 2022-23 and reminds us of the important support services that are available to us as customers. We want to make sure Raven is working to its core values of **Care, Trust, Collaborate and Understand**; so we thought it would be helpful to present this report under each of these headings.

We hope you find it a useful read and if you're interested in getting involved in the Customer Voice Panel, please visit: www.ravenht.org.uk/customervoicepanel

We hope to see you at a meeting soon!

Your Customer Voice Panel

Highlights 2022-23

Thank you to the Customer Voice Panel for their introduction to our story of the year, here are some of our highlights of 2022/23.



In the last year, our Moneywise team supported customers to apply for benefits and grants totalling £1.58 million.

83% overall customer satisfaction

We strive to ensure customers are satisfied and whilst we'd like this figure to be even higher, we're pleased we're above average for the industry.



We're committed to delivering you the best possible value for money, to do this we carefully review every financial decision we make.

Our Brighter Community Fund supported 13 projects in the last year.

“Since I’ve used the new website, I have found it to be very user friendly to navigate around showing clear information on all that I need to answer my queries and keeping my account up to date with all that I need to access easily.”

Customer Voice Panel member



“I like the customer service and how they deal with stuff, especially complaints. I have a nice neighbourhood, I would recommend Raven Housing Trust to a friend or colleague as the house is nice quality.”

Ms O from Horley - Raven customer



01 | Care

We care about providing you with good quality, affordable homes and services. We invest in your communities, take keeping you safe very seriously and have lots of additional free support if you need it.

“If something is wrong, I can always call Raven. They seem to care.”

Mrs L from East Grinstead

Investing in communities

Supporting local events

In the last year we've enjoyed getting involved in community events and working with our partners locally, supporting many of the fantastic community days throughout the year. It's been brilliant seeing events pick up again since the pandemic and we've really enjoyed being able to get our smoothie bikes out and about!

Working on community projects

Everyone at Raven has a chance to spend time volunteering in our local communities and each year we dedicate a day to this. Last year over **300** of our staff got involved in activities including organising stock for Stripey Stork, building planters for the LoveWorks allotment, helping to improve the outdoor learning space at Epsom Downs Primary School and afternoon tea and quizzes at some of our sheltered housing schemes.

“Raven is a key partner for the Community Development Team and have provided practical and financial support for a range of projects, events and activities that form part of our engagement with our communities. We really value the contribution Raven makes to helping residents get their voice heard and to make the changes they want to see in their neighbourhoods.”

Tracey Agnew, Community Development Team Leader at Reigate and Banstead Council



Brighter Community Fund

Our Brighter Community Fund is a pot of money which, as one of our customers, you can apply to use to make things happen in your community. For example, it could be used to fund an event, service or activity that local people would enjoy. In the last year we've funded **13** projects, including:

- Supporting the Wellbeing Project with Friends of Merstham Parks and Greens with a donation for benches in the wildflower meadow in Merstham
- Installing bike storage sheds in Homefield Gardens in Tadworth to provide a storage solution to stop items being stored in communal areas
- Donating towards the Junior Citizens Project with Reigate and Banstead council

If you have a project in mind that you'd like to apply to the fund for, visit

www.ravenht.org.uk/brighter-community-fund.

Customer Support Fund

We know times are difficult and we're here to help you. Our Customer Support Fund is here to support you if you're struggling to pay for new appliances, essential furniture, school uniform, heating costs and other often unexpected costs. Last year we received **153** applications to the fund and **86%** of those were successful. We paid out a total of **£30,870** to help customers like Mrs C from Merstham who was struggling to sleep because she was so cold.

"I received my blanket yesterday. I had a good night sleep without my dressing gown and hot water bottle. Thank you very very much for your help."



Keeping neighbourhoods clean and tidy

In 2022-23:



82%

of residents satisfied with estate cleaning



73%

of residents satisfied with window cleaning



77%

residents satisfied with grounds maintenance service

Whilst these are good scores, we'd like them to be higher so we'd appreciate it if you could report any issues to us so we can get them quickly resolved and to avoid them happening again.

We understand you want to live in a clean and presentable neighbourhood. Our Estate Cleaning Team works hard to keep communal areas looking tidy, they also work closely with our Neighbourhood Wardens who keep on top of issues such as nuisance vehicles, fly-tipping and littering.

In December 2022 we appointed a new grounds maintenance contractor, Groundscapes Limited. Our Estates Management team works in partnership with Groundscapes to make sure the work they're doing meets the standards you expect, and to create and maintain welcoming and enjoyable neighbourhoods.

"They are good I've got no problems it's a good area and safe place."

Mr H from Crawley

Moneywise

Our Moneywise team is here to help you with all things money - including benefits, accessing food bank vouchers, managing debts and applying for grants. In the last year, the team supported customers to apply for benefits and grants totalling £1.58 million.

Mr M from Reigate was in rent arrears. As a single Dad to four children and working part-time, he was facing the possibility of court action for not paying his rent. When he contacted Moneywise, the team was able to help. Moneywise got him food bank vouchers for his family so they were able to access food immediately. They then looked at his income and outgoings and were able to suggest realistic ways he could reduce some outgoings. He also worked with our employment support team to look at options for better paid work. Mr M was able to start reducing his rent arrears and now feels more confident with his budgeting and other bills.



Parashoot

Our Parashoot team works with people across East Surrey and Mid Sussex who have been referred by their local council as someone who is at risk of losing their home.

You don't have to be a Raven customer to access support from Parashoot. Last year Parashoot helped **117** people with support and advice allowing them to stay in their homes.

Employment support

In 2022-23:



121 people accessed our employment support services



65 of those have a long term health condition or disability



32 people secured work following our support



21 people were supported into education or training to improve their skills for work

We understand that it isn't always easy to know where to start when it comes to getting paid work. That's why our employment support team is on hand to help with:

- Considering and understanding what might be stopping you from finding work
- Identifying volunteering and work experience opportunities to develop your skills
- Advice for your CV, interviews and skills

We hold regular free drop-in employment support sessions in Redhill and Merstham.

To find out when the next sessions are and to register your interest, call us on **0300 123 3399**.

“Thank you so much to my employment advisor for doing such a great job on my CV. Being from another country I wasn't sure what level of detail was expected and with English not being my first language I was really struggling. Now I have a killer CV which shows my qualities and potential and I can't wait to get it out there to see what opportunities there are for me.”

Ms R from Horley



02 | Trust

We earn your trust by being open and accountable. We spend the money you pay us in rent wisely and we plan ahead for the future, with you in mind each step of the way.

“I have always trusted Raven because when I have issues, I call them and they always help.”

Mrs P from Redhill

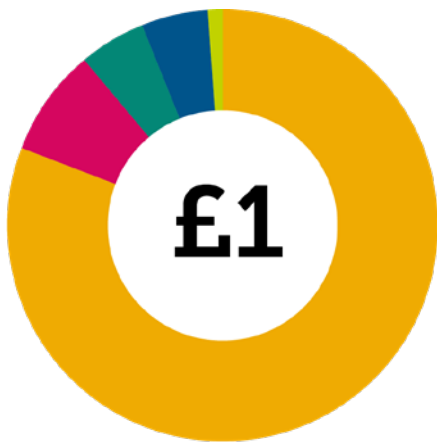
Value for money and controls

We're committed to delivering the best possible value for money, and we carefully review every financial decision we make. Each year, we compare how we're doing with other housing associations and publish this information in our annual accounts.

Our governance is overseen by our Board, who is responsible for funding and investment decisions, as well as ensuring we're meeting the strict regulations set out by The Regulator of Social Housing. In addition to this, independent auditors review our financial activities and processes to ensure transparency and accountability.

What we earn and spend

We carefully balance our income and spending to make sure we're giving you the best service we can, and can provide additional support for those who need it. We listen to your feedback and make changes and improvements where we need to. For example, we launched our new look website and we added booking and managing repairs to our MyRaven customer portal to make sorting repairs easier for you. We also provide additional free support services for customers including Moneywise, employment support, customer support fund and our community engagement activities such as events and our Brighter Community Fund.



Income

For every £1 Raven earned in 2022/23

- 81p came from rent and service charges
- 8p came from leaseholder contributions to major repairs, commercial interests and other sources
- 5p came from sale of homes
- 5p came from market sale properties
- 1p came from grants



Expenditure

For every £1 Raven spent in 2022/23

- 31p on staff and overheads
- 21p on home improvements and maintenance work
- 15p on major improvement works to homes
- 12p on commercial activities and other costs*
- 9p on building new homes
- 8p on service charge costs
- 4p on grand funded community activities

*such as garages and costs associated with our subsidiaries

Looking after your home

“They are always on time to check repairs and they understand you. They don’t give you trouble, it’s the most peaceful place I have ever lived. If I talk to them, they listen to me and when they come, they are polite.”

Ms G living in sheltered housing in Tadworth

We want you to live in a high-quality, safe and comfortable home. That’s why we’re committed to providing you with an excellent repairs service.

In 2022/23 our repairs team completed **13,953** repairs and **90%** of customers were satisfied with their most recent repair.

We spent:



£1,156 per property on repairs and getting empty homes ready for people to move in to.



£714 (on average) per job on responsive and major repairs, including staff costs.



£5,247 (on average) to manage and maintain each property.



£9.3m on investing in major works like replacing roofs and new kitchens and bathrooms.

Keeping you safe

As your landlord, the most important thing to us is that we keep you and your home safe. That's why we carry out annual gas safety checks and servicing on gas boilers, all properties have electrical safety certificates and all the communal areas in blocks of flats have Legionella risk

assessments. Our neighbourhood wardens carry out regular fire risk assessments and inspections to keep you safe.

In 2022/23 we spent **£1.4 million** on essential checks like gas and electrical safety, lift maintenance, water and asbestos tests.

At the end of March 2023



100%

of communal areas had valid fire risk assessments



99.83%

of homes had valid gas safety certificates*



99.69%

of homes had valid electrical safety certificates*



87.36%

of communal areas had valid Legionella risk assessments



100%

of passenger lift inspections were complete



100%

asbestos risk assessments were completed for communal areas

*Unfortunately due to issues getting access to some properties these areas are not 100%. We appreciate your support to allow our colleagues and contractors into your home to carry out these important safety checks.

Anti-social behaviour

We also help to keep you safe by working with the police and other local authorities on anti-social behaviour (ASB) cases. Our tenancy enforcement team supports those of you living with ASB, giving advice and guidance on the steps to take to get it resolved. ASB could be anything from property vandalism and littering to aggressive behaviour, drug abuse and excessive noise.

“The ASB my neighbour was causing had been going on for quite some time, I reported the ASB to Raven and they guided me through the whole process, installed CCTV to capture incidents and whilst it was a long road, there was light at the end of the tunnel. I finally feel happy and safer in my home.”

Ms O from Tadworth

Meeting the demand for new homes

We know something that concerns you is the lack of social and affordable housing available for those who need it. That’s why we also build new homes for shared ownership and affordable housing. This is

an area that we’re concentrating on and will continue to deliver in future years. We promise to be committed to building homes and changing lives so that everyone has a good quality, affordable place to call home.

In 2022/23



We completed 19 new homes - 13 for shared ownership and 6 for affordable rent.



03 | Collaborate

We collaborate with our contractors, service partners, councils and other bodies and most importantly customers and our Customer Voice Panel.

“I would just like to say thank you for giving Raven customers the opportunity to be involved in sessions/discussions with the Board.”

Mrs P from Redhill

Customer Voice Panel

It's now been a year since we launched our Customer Voice Panel as part of our #WeHearYou campaign and our promise to put customers at the centre of everything we do.

The group meets every six weeks and members of the Raven Board attend each session as a guest. There are two further meetings each year with both the Customer Voice Panel and Board to check the voice of the customer is being heard right throughout the organisation.

The panel is a brilliant way for your voice to be heard, to give your opinion and challenge us where it's needed. The panel looks at our customer satisfaction data, covering various areas of overall satisfaction, repairs, customer services and estate services, along with seeing what sort of complaints we're getting. The panel uses these customer insights to show where the key areas of dissatisfaction are and look at areas where we can improve to ensure a better customer experience.

For many of the panel members the reason for joining was so they could make a difference for other customers, by improving services.

One panel member said:

"I joined the panel following a poor experience I had with Raven which led to a complaint. Months on, I now have a very different view of what Raven do and have learnt so much from attending seminars with other social housing tenants. I often speak to other tenants where I live telling them to raise their issue and not give up, Raven is really making a difference."

If you'd like to play a part in reviewing Raven's performance, and influence change in services to improve the customer experience. Then the panel is a great option for you.

In return we'll offer you training and opportunities to attend seminars to develop your skills and knowledge, which are all transferable within employment. We'll also offer a financial incentive at the end of the year, as a thank you for the time you have given up.

The panel meets around 8 times in the year, meetings are held 6pm-7.30pm on Mondays at Raven House. There is the flexibility to attend the meeting in person or virtually to fit around your personal commitments, and even dip in and out to join the conversations and service areas that interest you. Travel and childcare expenses are also covered if required.

Find out more and register your interest here - www.ravenht.org.uk/customervoicepanel

The Customer Voice Panel works closely with the Board to ensure the voice of the customer is heard at a strategic level, through discussion groups. In the last year they've reviewed the complaints process following the new Housing Ombudsman changes and investigated further into what areas of service delivery have failed leading to complaints. Each meeting the panel reviews our customer insights and scrutinise our performance, triggering further inspection into areas where performance has dropped. The main area they've been focusing on is improving communication with repairs, which led to a change in service design, which will take place later in 2023.



04 | Understand

We take time to understand and listen to your feedback and use it to improve. It's important to us that we understand how you feel about the homes and services we provide and we continue to make improvements for the better. #WeHearYou

“They are very understanding and understand that I have anxiety, so they are very nice on the phone. They keep me in the loop with everything that goes on and they are just very nice, to be honest.”

Ms T from Redhill

Digital transformation

It's really important that we understand how you access the information that's important to you and how you interact with us. We know that it's not just our face-to-face service that needs to be of great quality, your digital experience of us needs to be too.

During the 2022/23 financial year we launched our new website and new and improved MyRaven customer portal.

The website is mobile and tablet friendly and has accessibility features including automatic translation with many language options.

The improved MyRaven customer portal now allows you to pay your rent and charges, request repairs and raise enquiries, manage your tenancy and book and manage your repairs.

We've worked hard over the last few years on our digital transformation programme to improve overall customer experience. We were absolutely delighted to win the Best Digital Transformation Award at the Housing Digital Awards, which recognised the work we've done with our Better Connected programme.

“Since I've used the new website, I have found it to be very user friendly to navigate around showing clear information on all that I need to answer my queries and keeping my account up to date with all that I need to access easily.”

Customer Voice Panel member

What you think of us



83% overall customer satisfaction – we compare our performance with other housing associations and we're pleased to say our performance is above average. The Housemark industry average for customer satisfaction is 79%.



82% overall repairs satisfaction – again this figure is slightly above the Housemark industry average of 80%.



80% of you think we're easy to deal with.



77% of you feel we listen and act.



75% of you trust us to do what's right.

What you say we do well:

“My housing officer is fantastic and supportive.”

Mr C from Oxted

“They are very understanding and you can generally work around things.”

Mrs D from Redhill

“They give us a good property and when I moved here my property was really clean and really good. They listen and we can trust them.”

Mr Y from Redhill

Where you say we need to improve:

“Listen to us when we have got a problem and resolve it.”

Mrs T from Coulsdon

“Keep us more informed on when things are going to happen.”

Mr H from Redhill

“More communication as there is no real follow up.”

Ms L from Epsom

#WeHearYou

We don't always get it right, but we listen and make changes where we need to. We're sorry when we do get it wrong but you can be assured we take your complaints very seriously and always try and find a solution.

“I do not take any pleasure in the complaints I have made but have reached the point where something has to be said and hopefully some positive change will be made.”

Mrs S from Horley

What we heard from you	The improvements we made as a result
Better communication is needed about timescales for planned works such as roof replacements and to have a single point of contact for questions.	We've appointed a Project Manager who is your contact for planned works and will hold contractors to account for service delivery. We've also reviewed letters for planned works making sure they're informative and will send follow up letters as needed.
Be more proactive if further visits for a repair are needed to be made – so we don't have to keep chasing.	We've launched a new repair monitoring system that tells our schedulers when a job needs another visit. It also shows specific timescales to ensure a quicker and more proactive solution to the issue.

Complaints in 2022-23



136 formal complaints were recorded

Of these:



76% were fully or partly upheld – this means when we investigated it was clear we hadn't got things right for the customer and the complaint was valid.



11 of these complaints went to appeal.



24% weren't upheld. This means it was evident we had delivered all we should have.



14 complaints went to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

The Housing Ombudsman Service is appointed by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and looks into complaints and helps with disputes between tenants and leaseholders with their housing associations.

Whilst we hope that you don't have to use it often, we do want to make sure our complaints process is clear and you know what to do if you're not happy with the service you receive from us. If you call us with an issue, we'll aim to resolve it when you first get in touch with us. If you're unhappy

with our response then that's when you can make a formal complaint. You can read our complaints procedure on our website and if you have any questions then please let us know -

www.ravenht.org.uk/making-a-complaint



Looking forward

It's always amazing to look back over the year, time goes so quickly and you forget how much has been achieved in that time. I'd like to thank our whole Raven team for their ongoing hard work to show examples daily of our dedication to Building Homes, Changing Lives.

It's hard to predict what the next year will look like for Raven and our customers but we do promise to keep working to our values and ethos. Please also remember during this unprecedented time, we do have support available to you – just ask us.

This year we'll continue towards our carbon net zero targets, including the fitting of more sustainable energy solutions, like solar panels, air source heat pumps and insulation to existing homes, as well as new homes.

The Regulator of Social Housing has introduced new Tenancy Satisfaction Measures, which you might see being called TSMs. We welcome this regulation to give our residents confidence in our services. We have always sought feedback on our services through telephone surveys and we appreciate your time in answering these questions when you're asked to. Your responses help us to

shape the services we provide, make sure we're meeting the expectations you have for us and make plans for the future.

In addition to this, the Regulator of Social Housing is currently consulting on new Consumer Standards, which it intends to be in place from April 2024. The revised standards have a clear focus on safety and quality of buildings and as a result of the tremendously sad case of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale, regulations around how housing providers handle damp and mould cases. If you have any concerns about the presence of damp, mould or condensation in your home please look at our website for further information, or feel free to call us.

Finally, thank you to everyone who fed back their ideas for what Raven should be focusing on over the next three years as we develop our plans to remain a resilient, sustainable housing provider that puts our customers safety, wellbeing and communities first.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report, we hope it's been useful.

*Jonathan Higgs,
Chief Executive of Raven Housing Trust*



Raven
Housing Trust



Building
homes
Changing
lives

Does this report cover everything you want to see?

We value your thoughts on this report and want to make sure it's useful and of interest to you. Please share how you have found our story of the year 2022/23 by emailing raven@ravenht.org.uk.

raven@ravenht.org.uk

www.ravenht.org.uk



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