



# ANNUAL REPORT TO TENANTS 2020



Spring 2021

Group photo of BeST staff and tenants  
at one of our properties in Nottingham

# Welcome to our Annual Report to Tenants

This report provides an overview of our performance and what has been happening across BeST and the housing sector from 2019 to 2020.

You can find more information on our performance in our Annual Report and Financial Statements 2020, available for download at [www.bestha.co.uk/reports.php](http://www.bestha.co.uk/reports.php)



Shelley Hobbs

## During the last year we:



Spent **£3.5 million** on repairs, maintenance and improvements.



Supported **215 new tenants** moving into our properties.



Carried out detailed stock condition **surveys** on **over 90%** of our schemes

We are proud of our achievements this year, but we are always looking for ways to improve and would love to hear your feedback and ideas. Find out how on page 4.

We want to thank all our tenants who have provided us with feedback and been involved throughout the last twelve months. We look forward to hearing from more of you over the coming year.

Shelley Hobbs  
Managing Director

## About BeST

**BeST** is a Charity and Registered Social Landlord (RSL).

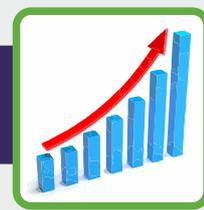
**BeST** provides homes to adults with support needs across England and Wales. We work closely with tenants to support with housing and tenancy-related issues.

**BeST** is led by our Executive Management Team (EMT), which consists of our three directors.

The EMT oversee our day-to-day operations and report to our board members.

**Shelley Hobbs, Managing Director**  
**Steve Boyd, Commercial Director**  
**Irene Bailey, Finance Director**

# Performance Overview



We now have a 30-year business plan and a clearer understanding of our stock and long-term costs. We have also established financial, operational, and strategic measures against which to judge performance in the future.

We have improved our systems and processes - key performance indicators (KPIs) were agreed with the Board for 2020/21 covering maintenance, health and safety (H&S), void management, arrears and complaints. In addition, the enhanced performance monitoring will enable the Board to assess performance and Value for Money (VFM) more effectively.



We are proud members of Learning Disability England.



In April 2020 we joined the Northern Housing Consortium.



In 2020 BeST joined Acuity. This membership gives us access to data from other registered providers and enables us to benchmark and measure our performance against others.



We also joined Tpas, England's leading tenant engagement experts, to support us in developing our tenant engagement activities.

## FEEDBACK

We completed our first ever annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey (TSS). A huge thank you to everyone that responded.



**Some key findings include:**

**72%** of tenants are happy with the overall services provided by BeST

**81%** are happy with their home

**72%** of tenants are happy that their rent and service charge provides good VFM

**73%** of tenants are happy that their housing officer delivers a good service

The survey highlighted several areas for improvement, including customer service and repairs. We have commissioned the Northern Housing Consortium to carry out a detailed review of our repairs service. We are updating our telephone system which should improve our customer service. We have also appointed a tenant engagement lead officer who will be reaching out to our tenants and listening to what you have to say. We are hoping to get as many tenants involved, in any way that best suits you, to help us improve our services for you.

# Tenant Involvement



Over the last year, we have been developing our Tenant Engagement Strategy and action plan. This will help us work closely with you and your support and include things like focus groups, scrutiny panels, surveys and much more.

This will be shared with our Board in spring of 2021. A more detailed action plan will then be developed with tenants and we will also review the strategy with you once we establish a tenant panel or committee.

We have already identified and spoken with several tenants who would like to get involved through our Tenant Satisfaction Survey and help us improve.

If you would like to know how you can get involved in any way that best suits you, please contact our tenant engagement lead Casey Willis.

In 2020 we improved our website. You can now report a repair, get in touch and leave feedback via our website. We also improved the design to make it easier to navigate, giving it a cleaner look.



Our Snippets newsletter went digital, due to staff working from home. We also decided to publish a summer and winter edition and increased the size from 6 to 12 pages.



Write to Casey at:

**Casey Willis**  
**Bespoke Supportive Tenancies**  
**2a Sentinel House**  
**Albert Street**  
**Eccles**  
**M30 0NJ**



Use our feedback form on our website

[www.bestha.co.uk/feedback-and-suggestions.php](http://www.bestha.co.uk/feedback-and-suggestions.php)



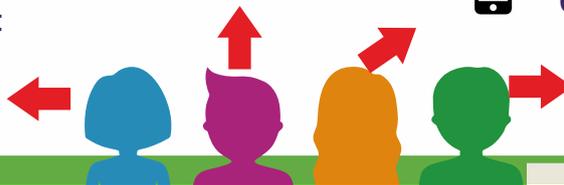
Phone / Text / WhatsApp Casey on:

**07525 277308**



Or email Casey at:

[casey.willis@bestha.co.uk](mailto:casey.willis@bestha.co.uk)



Above: Photo of our tenant, Paul.

Right: Our tenants Emily, Jo and Loz from Cannock



We engaged with tenants and did some competitions, including the BeST Bake Off. We also worked with tenants who wanted to do some home improvements, including Paul who painted his own fence.

# Repairs and Maintenance



**13,590**

repair jobs  
were logged  
during 2020.

| Job Priority      | Issued (1446) | Outside Target | % Performance | KPI % Target |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| Same Day          | 427           | 8              | 98%           | 99%          |
| 24hr              | 703           | 27             | 96%           | 95%          |
| 3-10 Working Days | 316           | 13             | 96%           | 95%          |

A far more proactive approach to maintenance, and closer relationships with our partnering contractors, has been the most significant contributing factor to our improved performance.

**NEW KPI  
FOR  
2021**



Target  
**90%**

## COVID-19 Impact on Service

So that we could continue to deliver the best service, a decision was made for the repairs team to remain in the office during the tighter tier 4 restrictions. A health and safety audit around Covid-19 was commissioned, advising on social distancing, sanitisation and signage to minimise the risk of infection. This was further supported by the successful implementation of twice-weekly Covid-19 tests later in the year.

We have worked closely with our key partnering contractors and followed all guidelines and advice regarding the delivery of our reactive repairs service during the pandemic. BeST continued to instruct all same day and 24-hour emergency repairs without any significant issues throughout the year. In addition, from June 2020 a programme of catch-up works for the non-urgent repairs was instructed, carefully managed and monitored to maximise outputs and adhere to the many local restrictions that impacted on the ability to gain access. We are pleased that the backlog of work has been kept to a minimum and all our tenants' expectations have been managed in a proactive way.

We have reported regularly to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) on our statutory CORS survey data during lockdown. Despite the lockdown, delivery of our repairs and maintenance services have remained stable, with no material backlog in emergency repairs.

# Regulatory Compliance



We are still engaging with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and have added four new and experienced members to BeST's Board. We continue to make good progress to become compliant and many of the urgent elements of our action plan have been completed.

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, maintaining H&S compliance remains a top priority across all our critical areas of responsibility to ensure our tenants are safe.

| Compliance H&S Key Performance Area   | Position as of Dec 2020 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Asbestos Reinspection</i>          | 99%                     |
| <i>Fire Risk Assessment</i>           | 100%                    |
| <i>Fixed Wire Certificates</i>        | 100%                    |
| <i>Gas Safety Certificates</i>        | 100%                    |
| <i>Legionella Risk Assessments</i>    | 93%                     |
| <i>Portable Appliance Testing PAT</i> | 90%                     |



## Value for Money

BeST is currently undergoing a significant change programme as the Regulatory Recovery Plan is being worked through. Improvements around our Value for Money (VFM), performance data collection and reporting are being made and will continue into 2021 and beyond.

### How do we approach VFM?

As part of the key outputs in achieving a financially viable business plan and meeting the requirements of the regulatory standards, improvements in BeST's VFM performance data collection and reporting are being made. We now have a 30-year business plan, where the long-term maintenance costs are supported by up-to-date stock condition surveys.





## Tenant Satisfaction Survey Work

The housing team conducted a pilot tenant satisfaction survey exercise. The response rate was higher than expected, with 31% of the 200 surveys sent via post, online and in-person completed.

From the responses, 72% of tenants said they are happy with the overall services provided by BeST. 89% said they are happy with their support staff, and 81% said they are happy with their home.

However, we have identified areas of improvement where tenants are less satisfied, and we are working on making those improvements.



## Rent Collection and Rent Arrears Improvement

The housing team supported over 215 tenants with housing benefit applications. Joint working with our rents and benefits team has resulted in our rent arrears position improving considerably from a high in April 2020 of £2.05m to a vastly improved position of £1.25m in March 2021.



## Complaints

A new complaints handling code of conduct was introduced in July 2020 by the Housing Ombudsman. A self-assessment of BeST's overall complaints performance in 2020 was published on our website in December 2020 and will be updated annually. You can access this by visiting [www.bestha.co.uk/policies-and-procedures.php](http://www.bestha.co.uk/policies-and-procedures.php)

In 2021 we are publishing our revised Complaints Policy & Procedures on our website. Along with the option to complain or leave a compliment via our website.

BeST introduced new in-house software to help us become more efficient in our complaints recording and analysis, and we hope this will improve the complaints experience overall.

Thank you for reading.  
If you have any feedback or would like to get involved in the production of next year's Tenant Report, please contact Casey Willis on 07525 277308.



Registered Office:  
2A Sentinel House, Albert Street, Eccles, Manchester, M30 0NJ.

Bespoke Supportive Tenancies Ltd is a Registered Charity,  
registration number 1143046.

Bespoke Supportive Tenancies Ltd is a Registered Provider of Social Housing,  
registration number 4718.

Bespoke Supportive Tenancies Ltd is a Not-for-Profit Organisation,  
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