

FIRST CHOICE HOMES  
OLDHAM LIMITED

# Annual Report

2016 -17





It's been another exciting year for the team at First Choice Homes Oldham, as we move to the next phase in the organisation's journey.

Last year, we celebrated our fifth birthday, and fulfilling the promises we made to our customers in our offer document. Now we are looking to the future, and intensifying our efforts to improve lives in Oldham.

I am delighted that our organisation's hard work and innovation was recognised nationally when we won Social Landlord of the Year at the Housing Excellence Awards. We were also proud to receive the Best Landlord award at the North West Energy Efficiency Awards for the dedication to making sure our customers' homes were energy efficient in the best possible way.

We have developed exciting plans that will see us work more closely with our customers than ever before. We want to better understand their needs, and build our services around them.

We have invested millions of pounds to bring our properties up to the Oldham Standard, which went above and beyond the criteria for the Government's Decent Homes Standard. The focus will now be on building the new homes that people desperately need – and tackling the housing crisis in our communities.

We will continue to invest in the programmes and projects that will help create thriving communities – building new partnerships to tackle issues around health and wellbeing, poverty, and employment and skills in the communities we serve.

First Choice Homes also welcomed a new Chair of the Board in 2016. We are thrilled to welcome Ged Lucas to the team, and would like to thank our outgoing Chair Bernadette Callaghan for her wonderful service over recent years.

**Cath Green**

**Chief Executive  
First Choice Homes Oldham**



## About Us

### Our Vision:

*Improving lives in Oldham*

### Our Mission:

*To be a trusted provider of quality homes and support services and an excellent landlord; creating thriving and independent communities*

### Our Values:

*We Listen. We Act. We Keep It Simple. We Own. We Learn. We Care*



**2011**

year we were  
launched



**92**

new homes built  
since 2011



**11,571**

homes we own &  
manage in Oldham



**100%**

homes that meet the Government's  
Decent Homes standard



**£121,000,000**

spent improving our housing stock  
and the surrounding communities so far

## Our Priorities

First Choice Homes has identified three key pillars that will help us deliver on our vision of improving lives in Oldham. Over the past year we've been developing some exciting plans based on these areas.

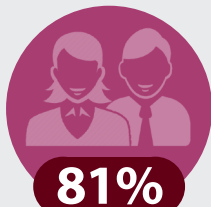
**Excellent Landlord Service**

**Building New Homes**

**Creating Thriving Communities**

# Excellent Landlord

Being an excellent landlord is at the core of our offer. We are constantly looking at how we can improve the way we work so we provide the right services for people living in our neighbourhoods. We want our services to be right first time, every time, so they deliver the best value.



**overall customer satisfaction  
with landlord services**



*winner Social Landlord of  
the Year at the Housing  
Excellence Awards*



*Best Landlord at the North West  
Energy Efficiency and Healthy  
Homes awards*

Property Care is our in-house repairs and maintenance division. The team is reaping the rewards from investment in new job scheduling and agile working software which has helped drive up satisfaction in a number of areas.



**satisfaction with our  
repairs service**



**repairs completed  
first time**



**satisfaction with  
appointments kept**



**average cost of  
responsive repairs  
down from £437 last year**



All of our properties meet the Decent Homes Standard, but that has not stopped us investing in homes and communities in Oldham.



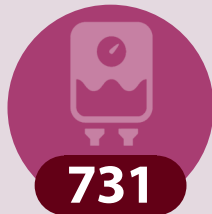
**£15m**  
spent improving homes and  
neighbourhoods in 2016/17



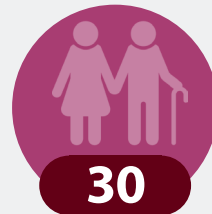
**818**  
new kitchens and bathrooms  
fitted in 2016/17



**100%**  
valid gas certificates



**731**  
boilers replaced saving  
customers an estimated  
£180 per year



**30**  
adaptations made to properties  
to allow customers to live  
independently in their homes

First Choice Homes' new customer portal, MyFCHO, will allow customers to access more of the services they want, when and where they want. In 2018 the portal will be expanded to offer even more features to customers, including reporting repairs and booking appointments.



**1851**  
now signed up to  
MYFCHO



**148,000**  
visits to our website  
to access services

# Building New Homes

First Choice Homes is committed to helping address the housing crisis across Oldham. There are currently around 15,435 households on the housing waiting list. We want to build the right homes in the right places and start to help more families take their first steps onto the property ladder.



This year our Board approved a £100m development programme to build 820 new homes over the next five years. In December 2016, the Homes and Communities Agency confirmed we would receive £5.9m grant funding from the Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme (SOAHP).



**development programme to  
build 820 homes over five years**



**grant funding secured from HCA  
to build new homes**

*We're exploring all kinds of ways deliver more homes, including:*

*Launching our New Living Homes company will help us make the most of our resources so we can meet the needs of people in Oldham*

*Created a dedicated development team and developed a process for assessing sites to make sure we build the right kind of homes*





# Creating Thriving Communities

We are investing in projects that will help people improve their lives and create thriving communities in Oldham. We're focusing on schemes that will improve the health and wellbeing of our residents and tackle fuel poverty.

*Our employment service, Directions, has continued to deliver employment opportunities for customers; and help keep people in work.*

**287**

customers supported  
with job seeking

**152**

customers were supported  
into 152 jobs

**69%**

of customers sustained work  
for six months or more

Volunteering

Placements

Employment

Training

## Directions





We are leading the way in linking health and housing services. Greater Manchester's devolution deal is allowing us to work with partners in new ways to create better services for our communities.

***This year we launched our Hospital 2 Home discharge service along with the launch of our Housing Options for Older People service (HOOP). They give people access to advice and support so they can stay living in their own homes.***



**93**  
customers were supported through our Hospital2Home discharge service



**4300**  
people no longer in fuel poverty thanks to the Warm Homes Service

First Choice Homes has helped to create a brand new community hub for the Holts Villages and Lees area of Oldham.

Developed with a wide variety of partners, including police, the local authority and local charity groups, the new hub brings together a huge range of public services under one roof, making them easier to access for residents.

The hub will change the way that public services are delivered, by avoiding costly overlaps between different service providers and giving the community a single point of contact when seeking support.

The facility hosts a range of events every month for residents, building community spirit and tackling issues around loneliness and isolation.



2017 saw us change the way we tackle anti social behaviour (ASB) with new projects aimed at prevention and early resolution to problems.

**500**

***ASB cases were opened, with just over 40% relating to noise***

**£20,000**

***of savings from our mediation service***

**97%**

***satisfaction with our ASB service***

**24**

***Community Protection Warnings issued following partnership with Greater Manchester Police***

## Getting Things Done

We're about getting things done and making a lasting impact on our communities. To do that we need to make sure that we are an effective business with great people that knows its customers.

### Great Place to Work

**89.5%**

*colleagues satisfied or very satisfied with their job*

**65%**

*of colleagues live in Oldham*

**65<sup>TH</sup>**

*in Sunday Times 100 Best Not For Profit Organisations*



**£15,000**

*raised for TOG Mind, our Charity of the Year*



*Winner Social Landlord of the Year at the Housing Excellence Awards*



**Investors in People Gold status**



**Living Wage employer**



**320 staff hours volunteered**



**best landlord at Energy Efficiency Awards**

### Financial Strength



**£49.290m**

*turnover*

**£15.3m**

*pre-tax surplus*

## Service Delivery

To finance our new homes and allow people to access our properties quickly, we need to make sure that we're managing our housing stock well.



**32**

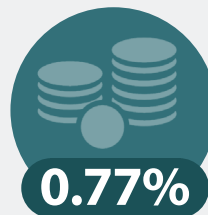
days average turnaround  
for empty properties

**100.12%**

*rent collection*

**133,560**

*calls answered  
at our service centre*



**0.77%**

rent loss due to empty properties

**2.55%**

*arrears on rent  
and service charges*

**438** complaints

*dealt with, with 85% resolved  
within our target timescale*

## Good Governance

**£3.3m**

*of efficiency savings made  
to cover the costs of the % rent  
reduction*

*Fully compliant with  
National Housing Federation's  
2015 Code of Governance*

*We've been given top  
rating from the Homes and  
Communities Agency for  
Viability V1 and Governance G1*

## Engaging Customers

We've established our Customer Congress. The role of the Customer Congress is to scrutinise the work we do and make sure that we are hitting our targets and delivering on our promises. The Congress is made up of ten customers, and gives them a chance to be a 'critical friend' to the Board and other decision makers.

**10-15** customers sit on our customer congress, scrutinising performance and improving services

**1805** engaged customers working with us to improve services and their communities

**13** community bases and five digital hubs let us work closely with our customers





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