

Annual Report

2015 / 2016



Flip the publication over to read Southway Stories 

Southway Housing

A landlord that delivers



In 2015 we set out our Future's Strategy – full of our priorities for 2015-2020. In order to deliver the ambitions in the strategy, we've had to look at the way we work to address the many new and demanding objectives. Our annual report looks at how we have been getting on with this task in 2015/16 and - very importantly – how we have continued to deliver a top class landlord service to our customers.

Contents

Delivering a Quality Landlord Service

- Maintaining your Home 3
- Providing more Homes 4
- Rent 5
- Contacting Us 5

Supporting Tenants and the Community

- Employment 6
- Digital Training 7
- Age Friendly 7
- Money Matters 9

- o Affordable loans 9
- o Responding to food poverty 9

Caring for Neighbourhoods and the Environment

- Anti-social behaviour (ASB) 10
- Environment 11
 - o Sustainability 11
 - o Green strategy 12
- Vulnerable Tenants 14

- Changes 14



Delivering a Quality Landlord Service

Maintaining your home

According to YOU... have we delivered what you wanted?



99.4%

repairs completed on time



28,587

responsive repairs



99.6%

of customers satisfied



18,186

Number of repairs appointments made



4.7

Average number of calendar days taken to complete repairs

92.8%

Percentage of repairs completed at the first visit

4.1

Average number of repairs per property



Praise for our Property Services team has always been high -

- **More than 4 pieces of positive feedback letters/emails/calls every month**

- and demonstrates that operatives regularly go above and beyond to ensure tenants are happy with the work completed. They maintain a high level of customer service while doing so.

A massive thank you to Southway Repairs. They carried out extensive work in the property, and the quality of work exceeded my expectations. I was very impressed with repair worker who did a brilliant job and cleaned up everything after he had finished. Ms Worrall

Please pass on our sincere thanks to the repair worker for dealing with an electrical problem at our home out of hours. They worked really hard to resolve the issue, Thank you! Mrs and Miss Ward - Withington

Thank you to Steve Clancy who completed a repair today; he was a diamond and a gentleman and I have never had such good customer service!

Give my compliments to the repairs team, who did a brilliant job, would highly recommend them! Mrs Daly - Shawbrook Road

Providing More Homes

One of the main functions of Southway Housing is providing more homes with affordable rent to meet the ever-increasing demand in south Manchester. South Manchester has the highest house prices of all areas of the city and Manchester's highest house price to income ratio. There is a huge (and often well-publicised) housing need across the country, particularly for affordable housing – and also for smaller properties, allowing for downsizing.

In 2015/16 we delivered:

Two new build developments that were targeted at downsizers: Talbot Court, (18 apartments) White Swan Court (12 apartments).

Westbrook Close, an Age Friendly regeneration scheme (15 apartments, plus 3 refurbished bungalows (a net gain of 7).

Holland Court Refurbishment Scheme - converting 11 bedsits to one-bed apartments and creating two new apartments while the remaining 8 apartments saw improvement work.



During 2015/16, work also began on building 22 new homes:

- **Beverly Road** - 18 one-bed apartments and 8 two-bed cottage flats. Features include a communal garden with planting to encourage local wildlife and external landscaping providing full access to persons with disabilities. Completion is due January 2017.
- **Green End Road** - 14 one-bed Age Friendly apartments. This was the former site of a City Council work depot previously overwhelmed with fly tipping, which we have regenerated and improved access to. Completion scheduled for October 2016.

Three properties were acquired in 2015/16 through the market rent pilot. (See our Futures Strategy Review on our website for more details)

'Social' homes for older tenants

The delivery of the remodelled development in Westbrook Close was part of our wider Age Friendly project in Old Moat and helped people like Derek Taylor to keep in touch and involved with his community.

"After 36 years in a 2-bedroom cottage flat, I have been very lucky to be given a 1-bedroom bungalow. Downsizing has been the best thing ever for me. There's a community feel to the design here; it'll bring people out a bit."

The development addresses access issues and has brought significant benefits to the wider community, including: reducing anti-social behaviour; enabling bin collections; and ensuring access is available for deliveries and emergency vehicles. It has also increased the number of homes that can benefit older people and released more family accommodation for the growing waiting list.

Future

2016/17 Activities

We intend to deliver more than **750** additional homes over the next five years and we'll keep you informed in Southway Stories of how we are getting on.

750
ADDITIONAL
HOMES

Rent

The Year End Rent Performance figures showed a strong performance over the last year.

We collected **99.8%** of the amount due, compared to a target set at the start of the year of **99.5%**.

Collection from those tenants affected by the so-called bedroom tax was even higher - **100.6%**.

Overall this means income over and above what was forecast at the start of the year of **£129,759**.

This will partly be due to this year's new 'Rent First - Every Contact Counts' approach.



£129,759
income over and above

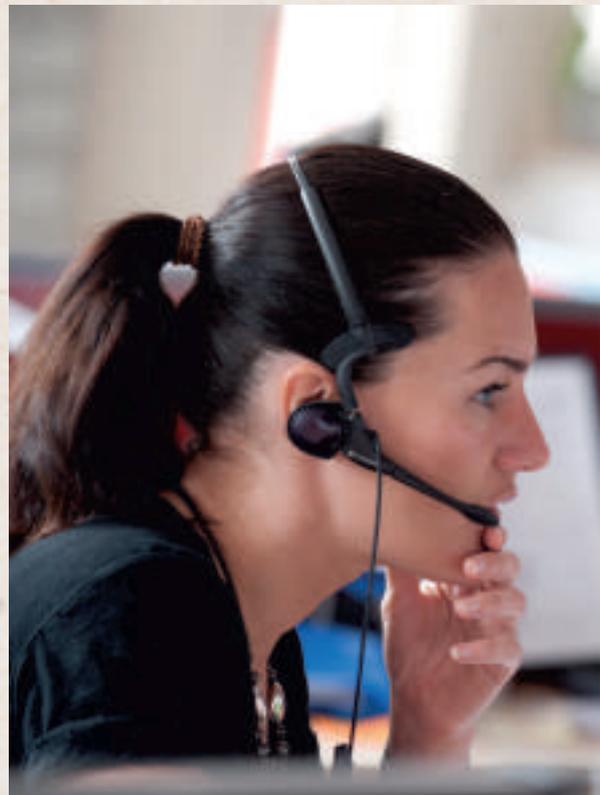
Contacting us

- **94%** calls answered

Our target of **98%** was not achieved. Performance was high until Quarter 4 when it fell to **88%**. This was largely due to the implementation of the new internal structure; you can read more about the changes to our services in this issue of Southway Stories.

Our aim with these changes is to provide an even better service, but with such significant changes we had expected they would negatively affect performance in the short term. We thank our customers for their patience and apologise for any inconvenience that has been caused. We would also like to remind customers that you can use our website or Facebook and Twitter to contact us in a variety of ways and even to book repairs.

- Number of calls answered **76,559**
- Average time taken to answer inbound telephone calls (in seconds) **17**



Supporting Tenants and the Community



Employment

Key Achievements in 2015/16

- Social value of **£1.5M** achieved.
- **86** people were supported into employment.
- **302** people received general advice and training to help them into work.
- **9** tenants provided with apprenticeships
- **6** young people were given paid work experience placements through a partnership with Manchester College.
- Expansion of the Time Bank into Chorlton, Burnage and Old Moat.
- Time Bank volunteers delivered **2,536** of volunteering hours (and expanded into Chorlton, Burnage and Old Moat).
- **268** individuals and **48** organisations volunteered through Time Bank.

86 PEOPLE WERE SUPPORTED INTO EMPLOYMENT.

YOU'RE HIRED

TENANTS PROVIDED WITH APPRENTICESHIPS

9

Thrilled with Work

Jackie Scott originally came to us in September 2015 to apply for a bursary to fund cooking equipment for a Hospitality course she had signed up to.

Jackie had been out of work for nine years and experienced bouts of depression. However, after being deemed fit to work she moved from Employment Support Allowance onto Job Seekers Allowance. Finding employment can be stressful for any individual, but for those with mental health issues it can be particularly challenging.

Jackie wanted a job but had been finding one difficult, so got in touch with Southway Housing's employment support service. "Back in December/January it was just a dream!" she explains, "but very patiently and kindly Southway has helped me gain self-belief so that it was possible to get a job."

Our Employment Officer revamped Jackie's C.V. and helped her with her applications for various roles. Through this she was invited for some interviews.

"After two interviews I was offered a front-of-house job at the beautiful location of Quarry Bank Mill!" Jackie says. "I am finding it so wonderful. I feel extremely lucky to be working."



Digital Skills

- We supported over **500** tenants to get online in 2015/16

Helping them to save money, reconnect with family members, gain skills, find jobs, to book repairs and much more.

How have we achieved this?

Digital Champions

Digital Champions can come to your home, meet you in a local library or community centre or even a local coffee shop. All Champions have their own equipment and know their way around a computer.

Digital training courses

We run regular Drop In sessions and run UK-online Centres at our community centres and learning hubs.



You can also register for Internet Savvy training or Silver Savvy courses for over-55s.

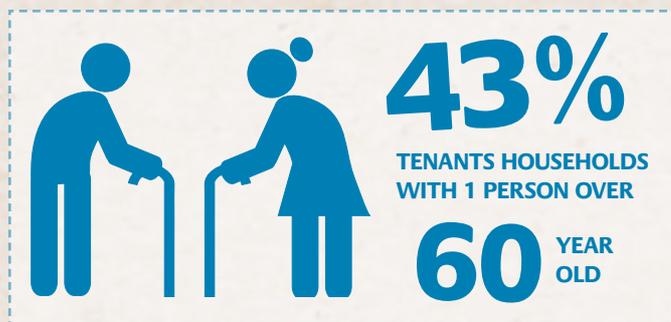
- Last year more than **60** Southway Tenants became “Internet Savvy” with a **92%** pass rate among those who opted to take the exam.

Find out more in Southway Stories.

Age Friendly

- **674** older people involved in Age Friendly projects

With over **43%** of Southway’s tenant households having one person over **60**, making South Manchester Age Friendly has been a priority for 2015/16.



Our initiatives covered three main areas:

HOUSING

- Age Friendly housing developments & gardens
- Assisting older tenants to downsize within the same area or ‘ageing in place’

THE COMMUNITY

- Public benches and noticeboards enabling residents to rest on journeys, meet people and learn about events



- Large and dementia-friendly signage and improved access in Old Moat
- ‘Take a Seat’ campaign - seating for people to rest in shops

SERVICES

- Social prescribing service known as ‘LinkAges’ set up with GPs and NHS in Old Moat and Ladybarn
- Peer-to-Peer Support Network set up
- Tailored IT support

Funding

Southway secured over **£200k** of funding working in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University to support work with older people in Burnage and identify ways to make the area more Age Friendly.

Over the last year we worked hard to engage with as many older people as possible and achieved the following:

- **655** people engaged in Age Friendly projects and events including, Health and Wellbeing Sessions, Advice Events and Consultations
- **132** older people supported into digital access
- Grove Lane sheltered scheme set up as an Over-50s ICT Hub as well as running a full schedule of sessions for older residents
- Dementia awareness sessions provided to over **60** people to enable staff to better support this client group
- Three Safe & Secure events held with **97** advice packs distributed
- Three Winter Warmth events took place with **150** Winter Warmth packs distributed



Princess Anne visit

We were delighted to be joined by HRH Princess Anne at our Age Friendly meeting in Old Moat. HRH and a group of 15 leaders from around the Commonwealth took part in discussions about the progress of and future priorities for our Age Friendly programme.

This was a great opportunity to showcase the work we have done in making Manchester a better place for older people, and to get some very high level recognition for our Age Friendly work.

Money Matters

Affordable loans

Our affordable loan scheme 'Southway Solutions' in partnership with South Manchester Credit Union issued:

- Loans to **241** tenants of up to **£300** to pay for a home emergency

for a range of purposes including car repairs, home improvements and cooker or washer replacements.

"In the past I've used doorstep lenders and dread to think how much interest they charged. I never seemed to pay it off. The Southway Solutions loan took no time to repay."

The scheme was shortlisted for a National Credit Award in 2016 for the 'Responsible Approach to Consumers Award' category.

Debt advice

Over the last year the team has been particularly successful, in total dealing with **942** case issues and generating over **£2 million** in financial gains for tenants. Over **£179,000** has been gained in Housing Benefit alone:

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| New cases opened | 118 |
| Total debt dealt with | £482,000 |
| Debt written off | £196,500 |
| HB & DHP awarded | £12,800 |
| Charity grants awarded | £7,500 |



Responding to food poverty

We continue to see an increase in the number of tenants requesting food vouchers for local foodbanks, mainly due to Benefit delays and sanctions, but we are also seeing greater numbers who are in work but not earning enough to feed their families. The proposed cuts to Tax Credits will likely see even more families suffering from food poverty.

- Opened **2** new Quids in Food Clubs helping **92** families



To help households on very low incomes we worked with Fareshare and volunteers to run two food clubs from the newly refurbished Pop Up shop on Merseybank Avenue and Buckthorn House on the Arrowfield Road estate. Unlike with foodbanks members pay a membership fee and also receive fresh and chilled items.

"I don't know how I managed without it. What I collect now feeds my family for over half the week."

Davina, a member who was struggling to afford enough to eat and was losing a lot of weight told us: "Joining the food club has helped me and my partner to eat better and we are now more healthy and are putting on weight. I look forward to coming to the shop as everyone is so friendly and I don't feel judged."

If you need help or advice with any money, debt or welfare matters please contact the Hub and ask for the Advice Services team.

Protecting Neighbourhoods and the Environment



Anti-Social Behaviour

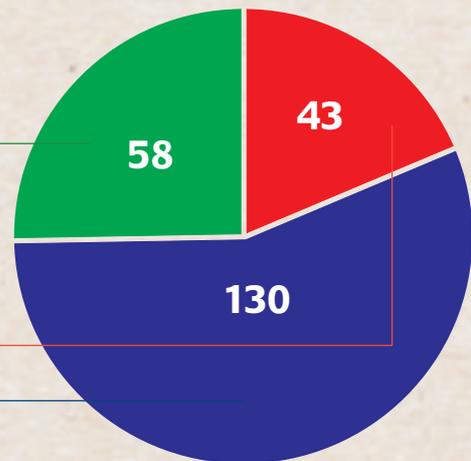
Since the introduction of the new powers for Social Landlords to resolve Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Southway's ASB Team has been working hard to ensure that swift and decisive action is taken when tenants are subjected to unacceptable behaviour.

ASB statistics

231 new cases of Anti-Social Behaviour were reported to Southway Housing from

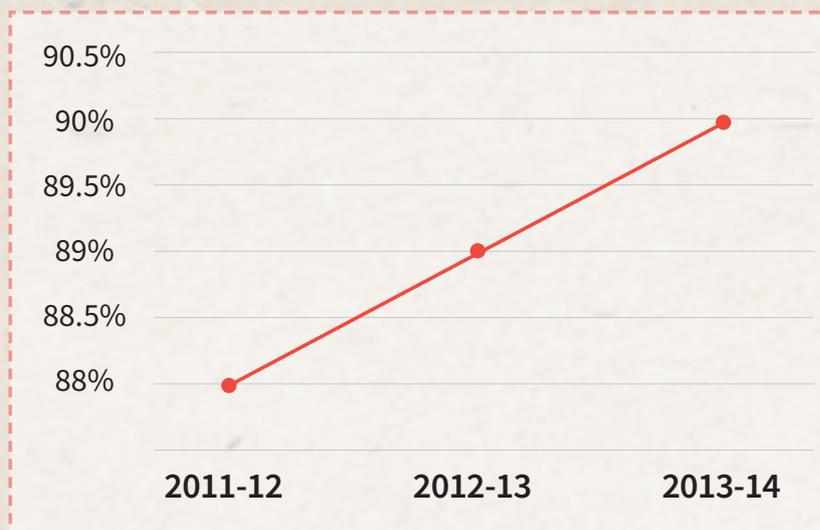
April 2015 - March 2016

- Central area (Withington and Old Moat): 43
- East area (Burnage): 130
- West area (Chorlton and Didsbury): 58



According to YOU... have we delivered what you wanted?

87% of people contacted were satisfied with the handling and outcome of their ASB case. Improving every year



Total cost per property of ASB

| | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Upper quartile | £43.36 |
| Median | £59.72 |
| Lower quartile | £81.17 |
| Southway | £50.40 |

Average time to deal with issues – **31 days**

Look out for our (ASB BOOKLET) showing you more about the powers Southway has when it comes to ASB *

We do try to minimise legal costs through methods such as mediation (where we invite people to have controlled discussions in order to resolve domestic matters); however, this is not always possible, and in more extreme cases it is necessary to take legal action to help protect our communities in a firm and appropriate manner.

In the last 18 months there have been two separate legal cases that have incurred a significant cost. A contested possession application has resulted in legal costs of **£27,118**. The other case involved multiple actions against two perpetrators (both Southway tenants) and in total has cost **£19,165**.

ASB powers in action

In May 2015 Southway was awarded a without notice injunction and power of arrest against an adult tenant living on Woodcroft Avenue in Burnage. The injunction was the first Southway has been awarded under new ASB legislation and is thought to be one of the first awarded by Manchester County Courts.

The tenant threatened his elderly next door neighbours. Within **48** hours of the incident being reported to Southway, an application to court had been made for an emergency hearing and a 2-year injunction was awarded against the tenant. The injunction has a power of arrest attached to it, meaning if the tenant behaves in the same way again to his neighbours, to any other residents on Woodcroft Avenue or to any members of staff, he will be arrested and could be sent to jail.

Who to contact and when

If you think there is a risk of someone getting injured, if someone is being threatened or a crime is being committed, you should report it to the police on 999. All other acts or types of ASB can be reported to the police on 101. ASB can also be reported to Southway Housing online at www.southwayhousing.co.uk/report-antisocial-behaviour, on 0161 448 4200 or via email to ASBteam@southwayhousing.co.uk.

Environment

Sustainability

Panel power

Over **1650** Southway homes have benefited from our free solar panel scheme.

The systems save between **£130** and **£260** a year, assuming that a majority of the free electricity is used.

We've also helped tenants access energy-saving kit that links up to the panels such as I-Boosts, which provide free hot water from solar panels.

"I'm very happy - since my I-Boost was fitted in early May I have had to put the boiler on just twice to heat water. More piping-hot water than I know what to do with! Even when it's chucking it down outside, the water is heating! Amazing! Thanks, Southway!"



Energy Doctor

339 Energy Doctor visits

Our Energy Doctor programme continued in 2015/16, providing personalised energy efficiency and switching advice to tenants. On average this service can save tenants between **£300** and **£400** per year.

Tenant surveys told us that:

- **100%** of Energy Doctor service recipients rate the service **8-10 / 10**
- **64%** say they have definitely saved hard cash

"The Energy Doctor is the best man to visit my property in 27 years! He was fabulous, informative and helpful; he should be given 5 stars."

Lightening up

In June 2015 we installed lighting in the communal area of a 2 and 4-block of flats as a trial. **1 year** on we have reduced energy use by between **45** and **52%**. In the long run this should reduce the service charge tenants pay, and cut the Southway Carbon Footprint.

We're hoping that this paves the way for further investment in LEDs across our estate.



energy use reduced by

**45% -
52%**



Environmental work

Our environment team work tirelessly within the community to develop and maintain gardens and the **150** public access Green Spaces within our estates which are open to all. Some highlights from the past year include:

- Creating **3** new community gardens

At Withington Fire Station, Westcroft Community Centre and Merseybank Shopping Parade – Merseybank's has a 'recycling' theme and hosts educational workshops on the environment and climate change for the public.

Community gardens provide a space for residents to grow, spend time in a beautiful outdoor setting, meet like-minded people and develop a support network to encourage gardening.

- Winning a Bronze Green Apple Award 2015 for Environmental Good Practice.

The award acknowledges efficient use of resources and sustainable development, including social benefits through community and staff involvement.

This is a massive achievement that puts Southway on the map - with international recognition.

- Wildflowers project

We gained funding in partnership with Grow Wild Kew Gardens, Manchester City Council (MCC), Landlife and Liverpool Everton Park to plant wildflowers across our



areas and pathways into Manchester, linking Manchester with Liverpool in 'A Tale of Two Cities'.

"I just wanted to say how fantastic I think the wild flowers are on the Princess Road. I have heard loads of people commenting on them completely randomly. I hope you are really proud - you should be - absolutely beautiful." - Councillor Mandie Shilton Godwin, Labour and Co-operative Member for Chorlton Park

Future

Over the coming year we're working to transform the green space along Darley, Mottram and Leeswood Avenues in order to apply for a Green Flag Award.



Vulnerable Tenants

Hoarding

Southway partnered with Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service (GMFRS) to launch an innovative hoarding project which has caused quite a stir in the professional arena.

- We had **17** cases of hoarding/property condition from 2015/2016
- **4** cases are closed and they have successfully maintained
- **5** cases moved (downsized) and have maintained
- **4** cases Support Officer is still working with
- **4** cases haven't engaged, are classed as high risk by fire service and are pending enforcement action

The partnership agreement is proving very successful and we now work with a named officer at GMFRS on all cases where tenants have vulnerability issues.

What is evident is that generally mental health and

traumatic issues have occurred in hoarders' lives, the fallout from which has materialised as hoarding – the triggers mainly being sexual abuse, neglect, being brought up in care system or death of a family member.

We have made huge progress this year, but may only be scratching the surface. If you feel that you or someone you know would benefit from support, contact the Customer Hub.



Changes

This year has been a big year for Southway, with lots of structural changes taking place:

- A new Executive Officer structure and team established
- A new governance structure put in place, including **2** subsidiaries
- A new Board and Committee structure with a skills-based membership
- Revised funding arrangements including additional capacity to support delivery of a bigger development programme
- Development Strategy adopted with a wider geographical area and tenure mix
- Commercial pilots launched

Neighbourhood Promises

During 2015/16 the Trust achieved **50** Neighbourhood Promises across a range of **11** core service activities.

Highlights included the successful environmental improvements on Merseybank, supporting Age Friendly work in Old Moat and the continuing development of activities being delivered from Westcroft Community Centre.

2015/16 was the final year of Neighbourhood Promises. In future the performance of the Trust and its delivery standards will be monitored by customers through the Resident Consultative Group, Service Improvement Groups and the Tenant Scrutiny Panel.

New Developments coming in 2016 – see page 4 of Southway Stories!