

Tenants' Annual Report

2025/26





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Welcome to our 2025/26 Tenants' Annual Report

Looking back over the past year, I feel incredibly proud of what we have achieved together – but, more importantly, of what that progress means for you, our tenants.

In June 2025, EPIC achieved the highest possible regulatory grades for both our services to tenants and our governance – C1 and G1. That was an important milestone in EPIC's journey, and recognition of several years of hard work by our tenants, colleagues, Board, contractors and partners. But a regulatory grade is not what makes the difference to someone's everyday life. What matters is what you experience in your home and neighbourhood, and the relationship you have with us.

That is why I am particularly pleased with the progress you will see throughout this report. We have invested significantly in homes, replacing kitchens, bathrooms, doors, boilers, windows and roofs. Every EPIC home met the Decent Homes Standard at the end of the year. We have strengthened our approach to damp and mould, continued to prioritise building safety and supported more than 110 households through our Tenancy Sustainment Fund.

We have also continued to listen. Tenant Ambassadors, Community Voice, Estate Walks, surveys and conversations on your doorsteps are helping us understand not simply what we are doing, but whether it is making the difference you need it to make. Your feedback has influenced policies, services and investment decisions, and there will be even more opportunities to shape EPIC in the year ahead. This is the thinking that sits behind The EPIC Connection – our commitment to building relationships based on trust, clear communication, respect and doing what we say we will do. There is more for us to do here, and there will always be areas where we can improve. Where we get things wrong, I want us to listen, learn and put them right.

As we enter the final year of our current Corporate Plan, we are also beginning to think about what comes next. I want tenants to be at the heart of that conversation. We have achieved a great deal, but our ambition should go further than being a good landlord. I want us to continue asking how EPIC, working with you and our partners, can help create great homes, stronger neighbourhoods and opportunities for people and communities to thrive.

Thank you for your trust, your challenge, your ideas and your involvement throughout the year. EPIC is stronger because of them, and I look forward to continuing the journey with you.

Warm regards

Tracey Johnson
Chief Executive



A message from our Tenant Ambassadors

This year has been another important one for tenant involvement at EPIC. As Tenant Ambassadors, we have continued to work alongside EPIC colleagues and the Board, sharing our experiences, asking questions and helping to make sure tenants' voices are part of the conversations that shape EPIC's services.

During 2025/26, we have helped shape policies, supported Community Voice and Estate Walks, contributed to EPIC's regulatory inspection and continued to learn more about social housing and how other organisations involve their tenants.

It has also been a year of change. We have been closely involved in the development of EPIC's new Tenant Insight Group, which brings tenants and Board Members together to provide a stronger and more direct link between tenants' experiences and EPIC's decision-making.

With the Tenant Insight Group now established, we have agreed that the time is right for the Tenant Ambassador Group to come to an end. We are proud of what the group has achieved and, importantly, the work doesn't stop here. All of us are continuing our involvement as members of the Tenant Insight Group, taking our experience with us and building on what we have learned together.

We hope the Tenant Insight Group will create an even stronger opportunity for tenants to influence, challenge and help shape EPIC for the future. And it is only one way to get involved – Community Voice, Estate Walks, surveys and other opportunities will continue to give tenants different ways to have their say.

Thank you to everyone who has shared their views with us during our time as Tenant Ambassadors. We have been proud to represent tenant voices, and we look forward to this next chapter.

The Tenant Ambassadors

Chris Giannasi (Bentilee)

Maureen Kearns (Bentilee)

Karl Clowes (Bentilee)

Jemma Richards (Bentilee)



About us

Our name – Empowering People Inspiring Communities (EPIC) – says a lot about who we are and what we want to achieve.

We are a not-for-profit housing provider with charitable status, managing just under 1,400 homes across North Staffordshire. Most of our homes are in Stoke-on-Trent, particularly Bentilee, Meir and Hanley, with others in Newcastle-under-Lyme and the Staffordshire Moorlands.

But for us, being a landlord is about much more than the number of homes we manage.

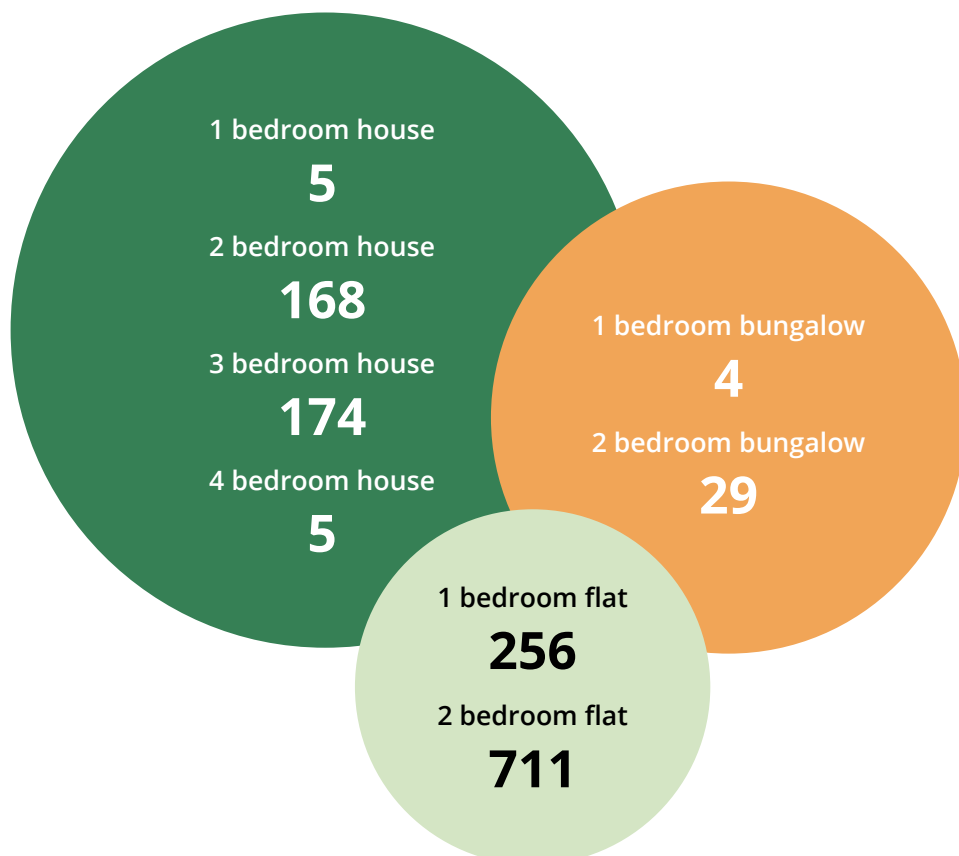
We are a small, local community organisation and we want that to be something our tenants genuinely feel. We want to know our tenants, understand the places where they live and build relationships based on trust, respect, good communication and doing what we say we will do. That's what we mean by The EPIC Connection.

Providing a safe, affordable and well-maintained home will always be at the heart of what we do. But we also know that a home is part of something bigger. That's why we work alongside tenants, local authorities, community organisations and other partners to help connect people with opportunities, advice and support that can make a difference to their lives.

We provide a mix of houses, flats and bungalows, including family homes, at social, affordable and intermediate rents.

Our homes

The figures below show the homes EPIC directly manages and allocates. In addition, we manage leasehold homes and homes provided in partnership with Gingerbread and Brighter Futures, taking the total number of homes we manage to just under 1,400.



Achieving top regulatory grades

In June 2025 we were proud to share that EPIC achieved the highest possible grades for both Consumer Standards (C1) and Governance (G1) following inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing.

The Regulator's inspection looked closely at how EPIC provide services to tenants, how safe and well-maintained tenants' homes are, how we listen to residents, and how effectively EPIC is governed and managed financially.

The inspection confirmed that EPIC is delivering services that meet the Regulator's standards, with strong governance, good oversight by our Board, and a clear focus on tenants and continuous improvement.

A journey of improvement

This achievement is particularly meaningful because it reflects the hard work that has taken place across EPIC over several years.

Following previous regulatory challenges, EPIC committed to a significant programme of improvement. The Regulator recognised the progress made and acknowledged the commitment shown by staff, the Board, contractors and tenants throughout that journey.

During feedback, the inspection team described EPIC as "truly EPIC" and recognised the organisation's successful recovery and the strong culture of continuous improvement now in place.

The inspection highlighted a number of strengths across EPIC's services, including the quality of our repairs and maintenance service, our understanding of the condition and investment needs of tenants' homes, the way we respond to complaints and learn from feedback, and our work with tenants and local partners.

The Regulator also recognised the strength of our governance and oversight arrangements, alongside our commitment to fairness, respect and transparency. At the same time, they acknowledged the work underway to continue improving the quality of our housing data, strengthening safety assurance, tenant engagement and influence and preparing for new requirements such as Awaab's Law.





Tenants made the difference

The inspection team specifically thanked the tenants who spoke to them during the inspection process.

They recognised that hearing directly from residents gave valuable insight into what it is like to live in an EPIC home and helped demonstrate the positive relationships we have built with tenants.

Continuing to improve

While we are encouraged by the outcome of the inspection, we know there is still more work to do. The Regulator identified areas where we can continue to strengthen our services, including improving how tenants can formally influence and scrutinise services, enhancing oversight of some safety-related actions, developing our tenancy audit processes, and making better use of tenant information to help shape services. We welcome this feedback and are already progressing with improvements as part of our commitment to continually learning and improving for positive outcomes for tenants.

We would like to thank all our tenants, staff, Board members and partners for the role they have played in this achievement.

Tenant feedback, involvement and support continue to help shape EPIC's services and future direction.

Together, we will continue working to provide safe, high-quality homes and services that tenants can be proud of.

Our Corporate Plan 2024-2027

Our Corporate Plan is now in its final year. At its heart is a simple ambition: to provide great homes and services, work alongside our tenants and use our local connections to help people and communities thrive.

Our priorities remain focused on tenants, homes, communities, information and people – but it is how these come together that really matters.

During 2025/26, this has meant investing in homes, strengthening the ways tenants can influence what we do, building better relationships through The EPIC Connection, and working with partners to connect tenants with support and opportunities beyond those we can provide ourselves.

Throughout this report, you'll see what we've delivered, the difference it is making and where we know there is still more to do.

And, as we look beyond 2027, we'll be working with tenants to shape what comes next for EPIC.





EPIC in the community



Charity funding

Bentilee Volunteers was our Charity of the Year for 2025-26 and we supported them in various ways, such as promoting their work on social media and donating Easter Eggs to their Rainbows Group. **We also raised £1,000 through our own fundraising efforts to support their work.**



Tenancy Sustainment Fund and campaigns

We know that everyone can need a little extra help from time to time. That's why EPIC sets funding aside to support tenants experiencing difficult or unexpected circumstances. This can include help with food or energy costs, one-off support in an emergency, as well as campaigns such as our support with back-to-school costs.

Between April 2025 and March 2026, we helped over 110 households with a range of support, including:

- Supporting a family who had suffered a fire at their home
- Supplying white goods and furniture to families suffering financial hardship
- Providing security measures to help a family feel safer in their home
- Providing support to various properties to assist in tackling damp and mould
- Providing food and energy vouchers to families experiencing financial hardship



In August 2025 we ran a School Shoes campaign in partnership with Hankinson Whittle Ltd, who carry out our empty homes works. Jointly, we issued 80 vouchers worth £20 each to families with children aged between 4 and 16, to help with the expense of back-to-school costs ready for the start of the new school year.

Partnership working

Being well connected to our communities means knowing when others are better placed to help. We work closely with local partners so we can connect tenants with the right advice, support and opportunities, while working together to make a positive difference in our neighbourhoods. During 2025/26, this included:

- Continuing to support the Community Lounge held in Bentilee Neighbourhood Centre, providing tenants with more ways to access our services.
- Taking part and supporting local community events organised by the Discovery Academy, Thrive at Five, Alice Charity, and Stoke-on-Trent City Council.
- Continuing our monthly Morning Café at our Normacot Grange Community Centre in Meir.
- Engaging with the Making Great Places campaign, working alongside Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Staffordshire Police and other partners to address anti-social behaviour and environmental issues in the Bentilee area.
- Our Resource Room in Bentilee was used by partners to provide support to local residents, including MoneyLine, Green Doctor, and local PCSO surgeries. The Resource Room is also available for tenants to use to access the internet for job searches and benefit applications.
- Expanding our support directory, available on our website, to help tenants find the support they need with their day-to-day lives.
- Working closely with New Era (domestic violence support) to provide training to frontline staff to be able to better support tenants when needed.
- Joining promotional campaigns run by partners, including Operation Transom (reporting nuisance motorbikes), and the Illegal Money Lending Teams' "We Will Help You Make The Call" campaign.

Tenant insight and influence

2025/26 was a great year for listening, understanding and acting on what tenants were telling us.

Our Tenant Ambassadors group:

- Helped shape our updated Allocations Policy, and Tenancy Management Policy
- Helped guide our programme of Estate Walks and Community Voice meetings
- Took part in sessions around our upcoming Tenant Insight Group, which is being launched in 2026
- Attended events hosted by TPAS (Tenant Participation Advice Service) to compare EPIC's engagement offer to that of other providers
- Continued with a programme of joint learning with Stoke-on-Trent City Council's Tenant Voice group

Our Tenant Ambassadors also took part in work with Regulator of Social Housing during our inspection in April and May 2025, and their feedback to the Inspectors helped EPIC to gain C1 status, showing our commitment to putting tenants at the heart of everything we do!



We held four Community Voice meetings throughout 2025/26, in Meir and Bentilee. More information on these is included on page 16.

Estate walks

Throughout 2025/26 we carried out six estate walks across Bentilee, Meir and Hanley. These visits gave us the opportunity to speak directly with tenants and discuss a range of topics, including local issues, repairs and general support.

These Estate Walks saw EPIC address 67 issues that mattered to tenants and their neighbourhoods, including:

- Removing trees that were causing significant slip hazards
- Clearing and updating bin store areas
- Installing a "slalom barrier" on a pathway that was being used by motorised bikes and scooters
- Replacing canopies to homes on the Hanley estate
- Repairs to communal areas that had not been reported

We are continuing our Estate Walks throughout 2026/27 – if you would like to know more about them or join in, please contact reception on **01782 252575** (Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm) or email reception@epichousing.co.uk



Our annual Tenant Engagement Survey in Summer 2025 identified a range of issues for us to follow up on, including:

- Contacted 72 tenants over damp and mould concerns
- Re-opened a number of ASB cases where new information had come to light
- 19 repairs booked based on comments
- Eight follow-ups over garden maintenance issues
- We also sent information on support available to tenants to all of our tenants, as many respondents had raised concerns over the rising cost of living

Housing Perks

EPIC tenants saved almost £4,000 through Housing Perks during 2025/26.

Another 80 tenants signed up during the year, taking the total to 479 tenants – more than a third of EPIC tenants. The biggest savings were on everyday spending, including supermarkets, DIY, gifts and fashion.

Housing Perks is free for EPIC tenants to use and gives you access to discounted shopping vouchers from a wide range of retailers. So, if you haven't signed up yet, it's worth taking a look – even small savings on your regular shopping can add up over the year.

You can use Housing Perks for supermarkets, home improvements, fashion, sports, electronics, gifts and more.

Want to start saving?

Download the Housing Perks app from your app store and use the code "EPIC" together with your rent reference number to sign in.

You can find out more at epichousing.co.uk/housing-perks/ or contact our reception team if you need any help getting started.

Community Voice

If you follow us on social media, or read our newsletters and emails, you'll have seen that we now hold open Community Voice meetings. These are held on a Wednesday or Saturday and rotated between morning and evening.

Community Voice meetings allow us to tell tenants about upcoming changes, proposals and performance, give tenants the chance to tell us about issues in their area, discuss any support they may need and ask questions about our performance.

Each meeting is attended by a Board Member and a member of the senior leadership team and is a great way to talk directly to the leadership of EPIC about the services we provide, what we do well and where we could improve.

We held four Community Voice meetings throughout 2025/26, and some of the key achievements from these include:

- Tenants having another opportunity to tell us their thoughts on our updated Allocations Policy
- Learning more about the impacts of the Renters Rights Bill and what it means for EPIC tenants
- Hearing about the opportunities to join up with the Pride in Place Bentilee and Ubberrley project
- Having an early opportunity to learn about our plans for the upcoming Tenant Insight Group

Tenants who attended Community Voice meetings also had a chance to raise their own concerns to staff, including repairs, local anti-social behaviour problems, and wider community issues.

These sessions are a great way for tenants to find out about what we are doing now and will be doing in the future. Tenants can also hear about ways they can get involved and use their experiences to improve our services.

Please keep an eye out for future sessions in Bentilee and Meir or contact our reception team to find out more, on **01782 252575** or email reception@epichousing.co.uk





Looking after your home

The table below shows the number of new kitchens, bathrooms and boilers replaced throughout 2025-26.

	Voids (empty properties)	Improvements	Total
Kitchens	12	94	106
Bathrooms	12	37	59
Boilers	-	93	93
Doors	-	246	246
Roofs	1	8	9
Window renewals (full property)	2	12	14

Thanks to improved planning, we managed to increase the number of kitchens and bathrooms we were able to update in 2025/26 – from 81 kitchens and 36 bathrooms in 2024/25, to 106 kitchens and 59 bathrooms in 2025/26.

To help reduce damp and mould issues in 2025/26 we installed 470 humidity fans across 359 properties. We have also installed 86 hard-wired smoke and carbon monoxide alarm systems to keep tenants safe in their homes.

We also trialled AICO smart link sensors in 11 tenants' homes for long-term data collection of humidity, carbon monoxide and temperature. This will highlight instances of damp and mould being prevalent and any indicators, which can help inform interventions. It is our intention to introduce these across a wider number of homes in the future.

In addition to this, in early 2026 we began our door replacement programme, enabling us to begin to update older wooden doors to new composite doors, with increased energy efficient properties and lower future maintenance costs. Up to the end of March 2026, we installed 246 new external doors.

We also replaced all windows to 14 properties, and nine homes had new roofs installed.

Through the Annual Tenant Engagement Survey (2025/26), 72 tenants told us about damp and mould issues in their homes. Everyone who contacted us received a phone call and, where needed, an at-home inspection to help identify and fix the causes of the issue and make sure their home is safe and warm.

"I wanted to take a moment to thank you for your recent visit and for taking such genuine interest in the condition of our property. We truly appreciate it – no one has ever shown that level of care before, and it really means a lot to us."

EPIC tenant

Gas safety

Our target is to complete 100% of our gas servicing obligations every year, but that is only possible with tenants' support and co-operation. On occasions, some tenants fail to allow us access for gas servicing works. This poses a significant risk to the tenant, and we continue to work extremely hard to ensure that we can gain access to carry out this vital work.

For 2025/26, we achieved 99.85% of our gas servicing obligations.

At the end of March 2026, two homes did not have a valid Gas Safety Certificate due to access not being provided for contractors to complete the safety check.

Gas Safety Checks are required by law and are vital for us to ensure that tenants' homes are safe and compliant with the law. Where there are cases of no access, we use every option available to us to gain access and will only pursue legal action as a last resort.

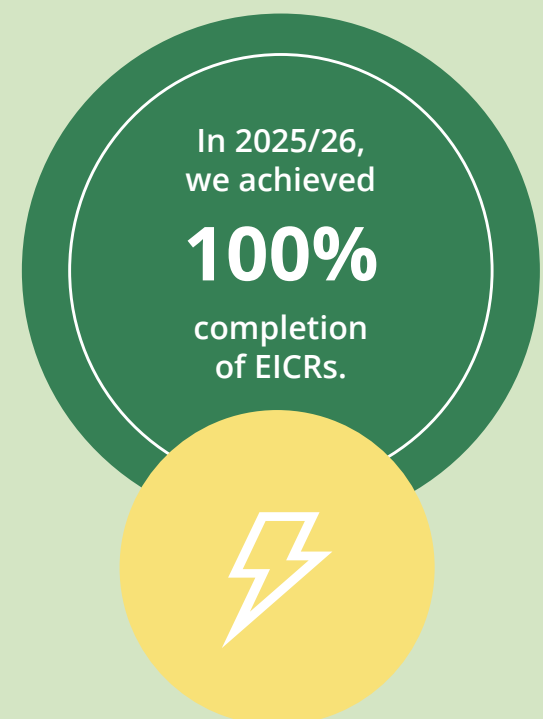


Electrical safety

Our current electrical safety policy states that all homes are required to have an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) at intervals of no more than five years, to be carried out by a qualified and competent person. Our target is to ensure 100% completion.

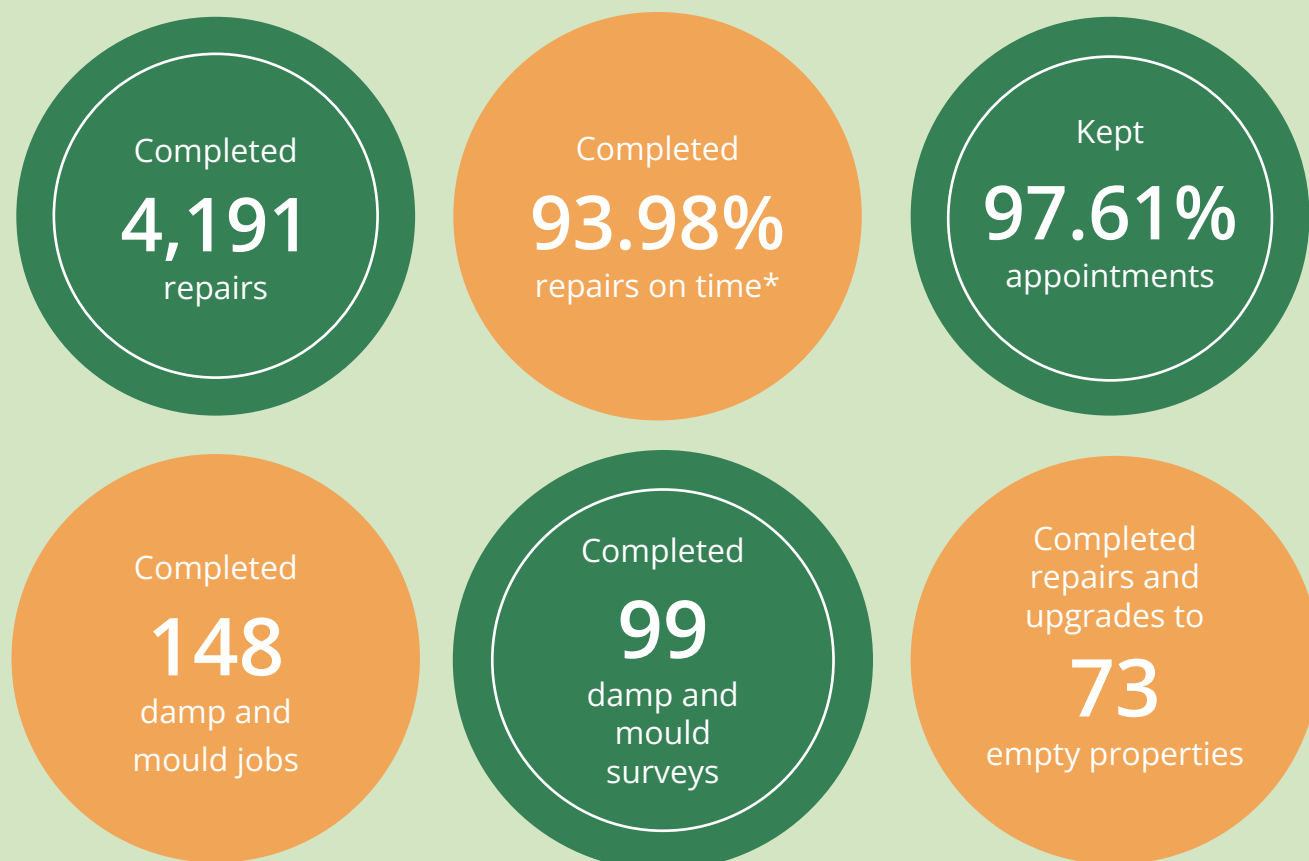
As with gas safety work, we continue to work alongside tenants to ensure that we can gain access to carry out these checks.

In 2025/26, we achieved 100% completion of EICRs.



Repairs and maintenance

Brenden Fern continues to provide our repairs and maintenance service to all tenants' homes. Tenants can contact Brenden Fern directly, at any time, to report a repair. We have continued to work closely with Brenden Fern to gain a better understanding of trends in repairs, so that we can identify and resolve issues proactively. We meet with them regularly to discuss performance issues to ensure that we can continuously explore ways to improve this vital service.



* Made up of:

3,925 non-urgent repairs completed within timescale (out of a total of 4,191 non-urgent repairs)

231 urgent repairs completed within timescale (out of a total of 231 urgent repairs)

We will continue to monitor our performance on repairs and planned maintenance to ensure a high standard of service.

"Fencing looks a lot better and feels more secure since repairs were completed following a complaint."

EPIC tenant

Damp and mould

We are committed to ensuring all tenants' homes are safe and suitable for their needs, and free from damp, mould and other health-related issues. All homes that report damp, mould and condensation are inspected by a surveyor within the necessary timescales set out in Awaab's Law. This allows us to identify the cause of any moisture and treat the issue.

Between June and August 2025, we contacted 72 tenants who used the Annual Tenant Engagement survey to tell us they had damp and mould problems in their home.

We contacted each tenant directly and where needed, visited their homes to inspect the problem and book remedial works. This included external works (such as roofing and pointing), internal works (including increased ventilation and treatments), and offering advice to tenants regarding using their heating and ventilating rooms.

All tenants who reported damp and mould issues outside of the Annual Tenant Engagement survey also received a swift response, with surveys conducted, repairs booked and advice offered to ensure that tenants' homes remain free from damp and mould.

In total, we carried out 99 Damp, Mould and Condensation surveys. 70 homes needed works to be carried out and for the remaining 19, whilst no works were required, we were able to issue advice and guidance to reduce the impact of condensation in the home.

In addition to all of the above, we trialled ten homes with AICO Home Link Systems, which monitor internal environments and act as an additional measure to support tenants in managing moisture levels within their home.

All empty properties are surveyed and any damp, mould and condensation is treated. This is further supported with the installation of Humidistat fans to help manage future moisture levels.

If you think you have damp and mould in your home, please get in touch so that we can help. Call our repairs line on **01782 252575** (select option 1 for repairs) or contact Brenden Fern directly on **01782 818577**.



Simon was “fantastic and amazing” for sorting out the damp and mould and “very helpful” with communication.

EPIC tenant



Allocations

Between April 2025 to March 2026, our average time to let an empty property to a new tenant was 30.29 days. This figure is a slight increase on previous years averages of 27.17 days, and just outside of our target of 28 days. One of the primary reasons for the length of time taken is that a small number of homes required significant work that takes a little longer, therefore pushing the average up.

	Number of new tenancies	Turnover
2025/26	69	5%
2024/25	103	7.46%
2023/24	98	6.97%
2022/23	140	9.95%
2021/22	85	6.03%

Our waiting list remained paused throughout 2025/26 due to the demand on homes. This also enabled us to carry out the necessary consultation and work to update our Allocations Policy, which came into effect in April 2026.

Part of this work involved contacting every tenant on our waiting list to ask for updated information, which would enable us to place applicants into bands based on priority need. This also helped us to complete further “housekeeping” of the waiting list, removing people who no longer needed a new home and gaining further insight into the needs of the remaining applicants. This reduced our waiting list from around 500 people in April 2025, to just over 260 in April 2026.

Based on the most recent information and taking into account our Nominations Agreement with Stoke-on-Trent City Council (where we allocate 50% of our void properties to applicants from the Council’s waiting list), it would take just over seven years to allocate everyone currently on our waiting list with an EPIC home.

Other work done around our updated Allocations policy enables us to monitor applicants needs more closely, which in turn helps to inform our plans in relation to additional homes being purchased that meet the needs of the community.

“I would like to say a big thank you to all the staff for a tremendous job you all have done on the kitchen upgrade. Thank you for treating my property with respect.”

EPIC tenant

Rent (and arrears)

EPIC's annual income from rent and service charges throughout 2025/26 was around £6.76 million. This income is used to provide services to tenants, including repairs, planned maintenance, and support to tenants in need.

We know that ongoing financial pressures have continued to affect tenants, and we've worked hard to provide support, referrals and advice for tenants who are struggling financially. Further information on this can be found on page 13.

The figures below show our arrears (unpaid rent) as of 31 March 2026, compared to previous years.

	Arrears 31 March 2021	Arrears 31 March 2022	Arrears 31 March 2023	Arrears 31 March 2024	Arrears 31 March 2025	Arrears 31 March 2026
Current tenant arrears	2.05% £96,606	2.54% £136,871	3.31% £188,873	2.81% £170,071	2.08% £138,298	2.55% £172,257
Increase in former tenant arrears	0.45% £21,194	0.61% £32,661	0.77% £44,082	0.66% £40,247	0.45% £29,763	0.36% £24,211

(Figures shown represent a percentage of the year's total collectable rent)

Four tenants lost their homes, through eviction between April 2025 and March 2026, all due to rent arrears.

We will always work alongside tenants who are struggling financially and provide support to help anyone in need. If you are struggling to make your payments, please contact us as soon as possible.

“Could you possibly thank Cindy for giving me a chance. She believed in me and I just want her to know I’m so grateful for her giving me that chance in the first place.”

EPIC tenant

Average property costs

The table below shows our average weekly rent (not including service charges, where applicable) for the different types of homes. Most of EPIC's rent continued to be below the Local Housing Allowance Rate for those in receipt of housing-associated benefits, meaning that most EPIC tenants in receipt of any housing-related benefit would not have had to make up any shortfall of rent, as this was covered entirely by benefits.

Property Type	2022/23 Average	2023/24 Average	2024/25 Average	2025/26 Average	Local Housing Allowance Rate 2025/26
1 bedroom flat	£64.42	£68.98	£74.29	£76.29	£97.81
2 bedroom flat	£71.45	£76.44	£82.32	£84.54	£110.47
1 bedroom house	£83.05	£88.86	£100.18	£102.89	£97.81
2 bedroom house	£94.87	£102.07	£110.32	£114.14	£110.47
3 bedroom house	£100.79	£108.43	£118.04	£121.39	£136.93
4 bedroom house	£110.67	£118.41	£127.53	£130.98	£184.11
1 bedroom bungalow	£79.12	£84.66	£91.18	£93.64	£97.81
2 bedroom bungalow	£94.02	£100.60	£108.28	£111.20	£110.47

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

We carried out our Annual Tenant Engagement survey in Summer 2025. This survey captured the outcomes of the 12 Tenant Satisfaction Perception Measures that all Registered Housing Providers are required to publish, alongside the ten management information measures.

Landlords are formally required to publish information on all these measures, so that tenants can see how their landlord is performing.

The following sections show how EPIC has performed in all these core areas.

Building safety

Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out	99.85%
Proportion of homes for which all required electrical safety checks have been carried out	100%
Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out	100%
Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out	100%
Proportion of homes for which all asbestos management checks have been carried out	100%

- EPIC does not own any properties with passenger lifts and that measure is therefore not applicable to us, although it must still be reported.
- EPIC values the safety and wellbeing of tenants above all else. In addition to the measures reported here, we regularly contact tenants to discuss issues and work closely with partner agencies where appropriate to offer extra support and advice (for example Staffs Fire and Rescue Service and Disability Solutions).
- Further information on our Building Safety performance can be found on pages 18-21.

Anti-social behaviour

	Per 1,000 homes	In total
Number of anti-social behaviour cases opened	41.42	58
Number of anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate incidents opened	0.73	1

More information on our commitment to dealing with anti-social behaviour can be found on page 29.

Decent Homes Standard and repairs

Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard

0%

Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale

93.65%

Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale

100%

On 31 March 2026, all our tenants' homes met the Decent Homes Standard.

We have continued with a programme of Stock Condition Surveys, which will allow us to ensure that the condition of homes is compliant with, or exceeds, the Decent Homes standard. These surveys will also help us identify any health and safety issues and ensure that we respond to them in a timely fashion.

In 2025-26, we carried out 194 Stock Condition Surveys. 98.76% of all our properties have had a stock condition survey carried out in the last five years.

Complaints

Number of Stage 1 complaints received per 1,000 homes

18.17
(25 in total)

Proportion of Stage 1 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales

100%

Number of Stage 2 complaints received per 1,000 homes

2.91
(5 in total)

Proportion of Stage 2 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales

100%

Our Tenant Perception Measures on complaints (shown on page 28) indicate a slight increase in satisfaction with complaints handling, up from 41.24% to 45%. However, only 5% of respondents to this question had actually raised a formal complaint; the remaining respondents had contacted us about a service request.

A service request is when a tenant asks us to take action on something – it could be telling us that a neighbour is playing their music too loud or that something in your home has broken and needs to be fixed. Many of these types of contacts will use the word “complaint” – for example “I want to complain about my neighbour” or “I have a complaint because my tap is broken”.

A complaint is when you are dissatisfied with something that we have done – for example, you might have a service request about a noisy neighbour, that becomes a complaint if we do not deal with the issue properly or keep you informed about what we've done; or you have told us about a leaky tap and our contractors did not turn up for the appointment to fix it.

Further information on our Complaints performance can be found on page 32.

Tenant Perception Measures

Each year, every social housing provider in the country is required to ask tenants for their thoughts on how their landlord is performing. These are called the “Tenant Perception Measures” and they help us to see where we can improve performance on issues like complaints handling, responding to anti-social behaviour, keeping tenants informed, and repairs and maintenance. These combine with other reporting information to make up our full suite of Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

The below figures were collected in Summer 2025. We have also provided the figures collected in Summer 2024 for comparison.

The figures are based on 520 responses from our tenants (516 tenants and four from other tenures), which represents 37% of all tenants. Ten tenants who completed the survey were randomly chosen to win a £25 shopping voucher.

Measure	2024/25	2025/26
Proportion of tenants who report that they are satisfied with the overall service from their landlord	81%	83%
Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the overall repairs service	80%	85%
Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair	82%	84%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is well maintained	80%	83%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is safe	81%	85%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	70%	74%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps them informed about things that matter to them	83%	81%
Proportion of respondents who report that they agree their landlord treats them fairly and with respect	85%	85%
Proportion of respondents who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are satisfied with their landlord's approach to complaints handling	42%	46%
Proportion of respondents with communal areas who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	71%	69%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood	75%	74%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with their landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour	68%	70%

While overall satisfaction is generally high, and in most cases equal to or improved upon the previous years' satisfaction, there is room for improvement in many areas.

One way that we are trying to improve satisfaction with surveys is by working directly with groups of tenants to ask about the things that matter the most. This offers tenants the opportunity to guide and influence what we do and the services we provide, ensuring that they meet your needs and expectations. Last year, we ran some targeted sessions to look at our capital works programmes (particularly bathroom and kitchen upgrades) and our Home Standard. Tenants can find out more about getting involved and give feedback online at epichousing.co.uk and going to the "Getting Involved" page.

We are working hard to make sure that the voice of tenants' is heard, and tenants can see the changes we are making to benefit them and the wider community. We provide regular updates through newsletters, social media (follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram – search "EPIC Housing") and regular email updates so tenants can stay informed about the things we're doing to provide the best services and support. If you do not receive these regular emails, please contact our reception team and we will sign you up to our mailing list.

ASB and tenancy breach information

Between April 2025 and March 2026, we dealt with 99 tenancy breaches, ranging from untidy gardens and noise nuisance to threatening and other anti-social behaviour.

We want tenants to be able to live their lives peacefully and therefore we take reports of anti-social behaviour seriously. We will pursue every option available to us, from support to enforcement, to ensure that reports of anti-social behaviour are responded to quickly and effectively.

Some cases of anti-social behaviour are more serious than others and require close collaboration with other agencies, such as Staffordshire Police or Stoke-on-Trent Council's ASB Team. We will always work hard to ensure that the action we take is effective and proportionate to each individual case.

Where there is ongoing, serious anti-social behaviour, and all reasonable attempts to resolve the matter have been exhausted, we will seek to take legal action, such as applying for injunctions or evictions if appropriate.

Throughout 2025/26 we worked alongside Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Staffordshire Police, and other partners, to help deliver the "Making Great Places" campaign that encourages joint working to tackle issues such as untidy estates, anti-social behaviour and nuisance motorbikes. These events are led by Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and we hope to be able to use similar events in other areas where we have tenants, should the need arise.

We encourage all tenants to report any instances of anti-social behaviour so that it can be investigated – please do not assume that someone else who is affected has reported the problem. All reports will be dealt with swiftly and in confidence, so you can talk to us about issues without worrying about being identified by the perpetrators you are reporting.

Access to services and customer care

We provide several ways for tenants to contact us, including phone, email, website and in person.

In September 2024, we listened to tenant feedback around our availability and extended our opening hours – our reception and phone lines are now open Monday to Friday, between 9am and 4pm.

Our Housing Officers are available at the Meir office every Tuesday – increased from every other Tuesday in 2023-24 – and details are available on the noticeboard outside the Meir office.

Our drop-in session at our Meir office have also grown into a monthly Morning Café, on the last Wednesday of every month, between 9.30 and 11.30am.



The EPIC Connection

Launched in June 2025, The EPIC Connection is about how we work with people day-to-day. It focuses on building better relationships with our tenants – through trust, clear communication, and doing what we say we will do. We want that relationship to feel consistent and respectful. This means being open and clear, and working with people to get the best outcome.

Working closely with a trusted partner, lots of work took place throughout 2025-26, including staff training, a “climate survey” of our leadership team, and consultation with tenants about what is important and what EPIC can do to help build trust and develop meaningful relationships.

There is still more work to do around this, so please keep an eye out for further updates and opportunities to get involved and tell us what you think matters most to you.





Complaints

We will always encourage tenants to contact us when they are not happy with a service we have provided and we can usually respond to any problems quickly and easily, and to the tenants' satisfaction.

When tenants do complain about a service, we will always deal with it in a fair and impartial way, and tenants who complain will not be treated any differently.

We aim to resolve all complaints promptly and fairly, and in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code. All complaints in 2025/26 were resolved within the timescales set out in the Complaints Handling Code.

Between April 2025 to March 2026, we received:

25 Stage 1 complaints

8 upheld

14 not upheld

3 withdrawn

This is an increase in the number of Stage 1 complaints, although fewer complaints were upheld in 2025/26 than in 2024/25.

5 Stage 2 complaints

2 upheld

3 not upheld

We received the same number of Stage 2 complaints in 2025/26 as in 2024/25.

-
- 100% of all complaints were responded to within the timescales set in the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
 - No complaints were escalated to the Housing Ombudsman Service in 2025/26.
 - We also received 41 compliments throughout the year, covering a range of services provided by our staff and contractors. Thank you to everyone who got in touch to tell us when we'd done something right!

We continue to work with our Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC), to review our responses to complaints to ensure that they are fair, and that we are applying any learning identified from these complaints. Our MRC also supported us with monitoring trends in complaints and improving our own internal recording and reporting of complaints, to ensure transparency in our responses. The MRC is a member of our Board who oversees our complaints performance to ensure that we act in a fair and transparent manner when responding to complaints. More information about our MRC can be found on our website under the section about our Board Members.

As part of our complaints handling process, we place great emphasis on learning from complaints.

Some of the changes we have made because of complaints throughout 2025-26 are:

- Contact with all affected tenants regarding communal cleaning expectations, scope and frequency.
- Reminders and training to all staff regarding EPIC's responsibilities in dealing with complaints, the complaints process and what constitutes a formal complaint.
- Information from complaints is being used to:
 - Inform future contact tenders re contractors' requirements
 - Inform upcoming project on tenant data collection – Phase 3 (what we do with disability data and how we use it to meet tenants required adjustments)
 - Inform work around The EPIC Connection
 - Has enabled better relationships with contractors, and our assurances that they treat tenants fairly and with respect:
 - Reminders to individual staff
 - Toolbox Talks
 - Updating their own processes (for example disclaimers used at the start of capital works)

Further information regarding our complaints process, our policy, and our annual self assessment against the standard set by the Regulator for Social Housing, can be found on our website at epichousing.co.uk

We deal with complaints in line with the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaints Handling Code:

- A complaint is defined by the Housing Ombudsman as “an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by an organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents”.
- A service request is when a tenant asks a landlord to act, for example to carry out a repair, to investigate anti-social behaviour, or to provide a service that they are entitled to.
- An appeal is when a tenant asks a landlord to reconsider a decision that has been made that affects them.

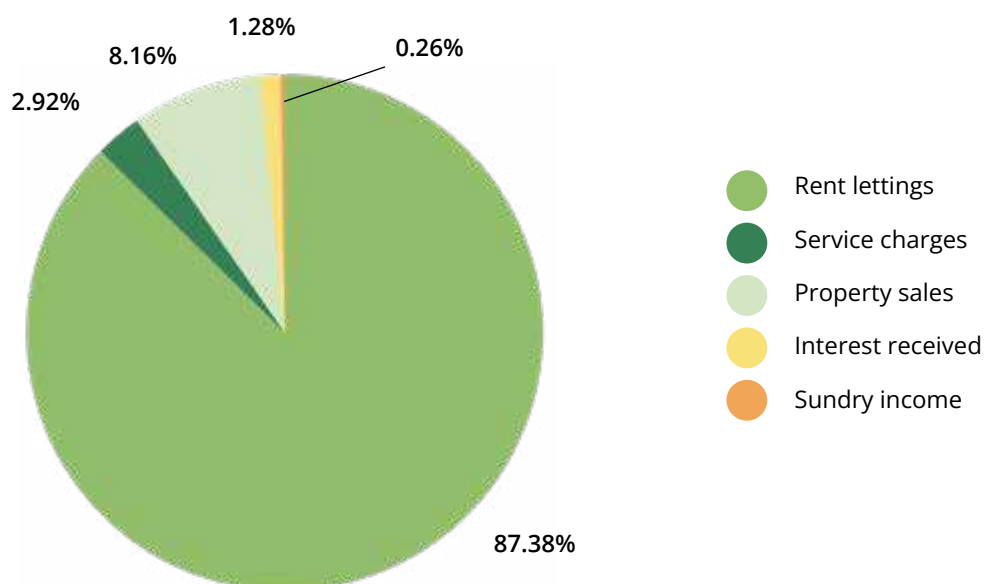
Business running costs

Our main income sources come from the rent we receive and a small amount of service charges. Additionally, we receive some charitable donations from our contractors and also raise funds internally, which has been spent on supporting local community groups and tenants.

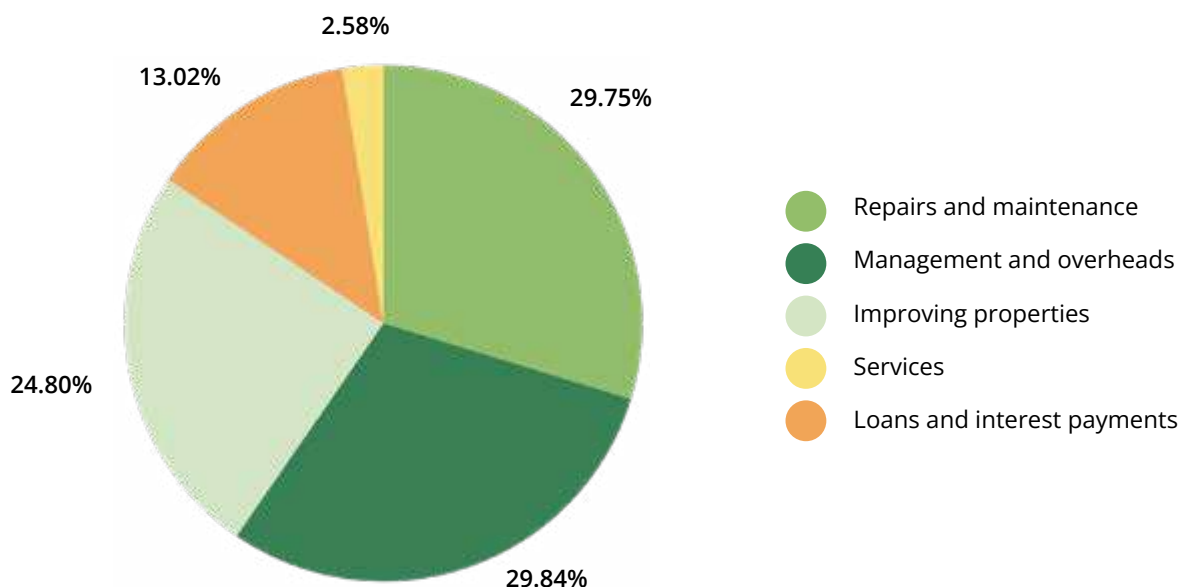
The illustrations below show where our income comes from, and where that money is spent in delivering services. This shows our commitment to maintaining homes and supporting tenants effectively.

A full set of financial statements for the year end 31 March 2026 are available on our website or by post on request.

Where our income came from



Where we spent money



Ways to stay informed



Online

epichousing.co.uk – our website contains all the information you need about our services and how to access them – you will also find the latest news about what we're doing, and a contact form if needed.



Email

mailbox@epichousing.co.uk – if you provide us with your email address, we will also use this to send you information about any issues that affect your tenancy, in a timely manner. We will also send surveys from time to time to give you the opportunity to tell us what you think. You can opt out of receiving emails at any time.



EPIC News

We publish a quarterly newsletter to keep tenants up to date and informed about our services and performance.



Telephone

You can call us with any enquiries on **01782 252575**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm. This phone line is also available 24 hours a day to report repairs.



Social media

Follow us on:

- Facebook at facebook.com/EPICHousingAssociation
- Instagram at instagram.com/epic.housing/
- LinkedIn at linkedin.com/company/epic-housing



In person

Our reception area at Ubbertley is open Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm. Our offices at Meir continue to have a Housing Officer present every Tuesday – details are available on the noticeboard at Meir. We also hold the Meir Morning Café on the last Wednesday of every month, between 9:30 and 11:30am.



Bentilee Community Lounge

EPIC attends the first Community Lounge of every month. This takes place at Bentilee Neighbourhood Centre every Thursday, between 9.30am and 12pm.

As a social landlord, EPIC is subject to regulation by the Regulator of Social Housing.



If you have any comments, suggestions, or questions about the content of this Annual Report, please contact:

Cindy Gleghorn, Director of Housing Management or Mark Bourne, Customer Services & Resident Involvement Team Leader

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