

# ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS.



From your Representative Body  
July 2018 to June 2019





### Hello!

The Annual Report to Members is an overview of the work we have done on your behalf in 2018-9.

Being a mutual society means that we have a strong and direct voice on how our homes, neighbourhoods and services are managed. It is important that we reflect the views of Members and the Report keeps you aware of the work we have done as your Representatives.

We write about how we worked with Members to shape and influence the on-going work of the Society and look towards the challenges and opportunities of the year ahead.

We would like to hear your thoughts on this report and the work we outline. Our contact details can be found on the back page.



### The Representative Body

## CONTENTS

VIP Awards	3
Membership Update	4-5
Our Mutual Year	6-7
Board and Representative Body - working together	8
Together	9-11
Democracy - Elections	12
Democracy - Annual Members' Meeting review	13
Community Funding	14
Representative Body	15
Contacts and Information	16

## OUR PLEDGE TO MEMBERS.

### Our Pledge to Members - We will make sure that:

- we uphold our values in representing members' interests and fulfilling our role in governing RBH
- tenants and employees work together as members to get the best services within available resources
- we use a variety of ways to find out your views and inform you how they are being used to make a difference
- we are honest, open and accountable to you, the Members

# VIP AWARDS

## TENANTS AND EMPLOYEES HONoured AT RBH AWARDS



Members, tenants, and employees had their commitment and community spirit celebrated at the annual RBH Values in Practice (VIP) awards. This year the awards were held on Wednesday 26th June, a date chosen to coincide with the sixth birthday of RBH as a mutual housing society.

The VIP Awards night, held for the second year running at Rochdale Rugby Club, is a chance for RBH to officially say “thank you” to some of the many people who reflect our values through making a real difference to neighbours, colleagues, and local communities.

Over 80 nominations were received, reflecting the hard work of community volunteers and employees in Heywood, Middleton, Rochdale, and the Pennines area.

The tough decisions on the shortlist and the overall winners were left in the capable hands of an awards panel of RBH tenant and employee members. After much deliberation they agreed

on the following winners:

- Best newcomer: Nicola O'Neill
- Community volunteer: Nichola Helliwell
- Constant contributor: June Jones
- Independent Living Scheme Volunteer of the Year: Derek Harwood
- Outstanding Leader: Vincent Jennings
- Community Spirit: Mohammed Zaheer
- Supporting RBH Colleagues: Graham Hobson
- Involved Member of the Year: Lynne Brosnan
- Team of the Year: Customer Experience Service Advisors

RBH Chief Executive, Gareth Swarbrick, was then invited to choose from the eight winners for a special “Chief Executive’s Choice” award, which he awarded to Derek Harwood for his sterling support for his friends and neighbours at Olive Stranding House in Littleborough.

“There were so many fantastic nominations this year and all the winners and nominees can be truly proud. It was a very tough choice to decide on an overall winner with so many worthy choices. Derek’s story resonated with me, and the support that he provides for his neighbours really demonstrates the value of community.”

**Gareth Swarbrick, Chief Executive.**

”



# MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

**As Representatives we establish, maintain and monitor progress of the Membership Strategy.**

## RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS

We have been delighted to see so many new members join RBH this year! The target is for 40% of tenants to have joined by April 2020 and we are confident we will achieve this. The target for employees is for 90% to be members by April 2020 – we're working with Leaders across the Society to explore how they can support member recruitment within their teams.

Each year we look at the diversity of membership and recommend what actions should be taken to ensure that membership is accessible to everyone and reflects the



Thank you to all the new members who have joined us this year – welcome! Do you know a neighbour or a colleague who hasn't joined yet? Please encourage them to sign up!

**Anne Black,**  
Tenant Representative

make-up of local communities. We would like to say thank you to the Neighbourhood Housing Team who do a great job in promoting and encouraging membership to new tenants at their welcome visits – three-quarters of the tenants they talk to choose to become members. We know that the best way to encourage membership is by having a face to face chat, so we look for opportunities to encourage other RBH colleagues and Members to talk to tenants and employees to help boost numbers even more.

## 1,128 new members joined in 2018/2019



**453** out of **576**  
employees are Members

**78.6%**



**5,571**  
out of **14,716** tenants are  
Members

**37.9%**

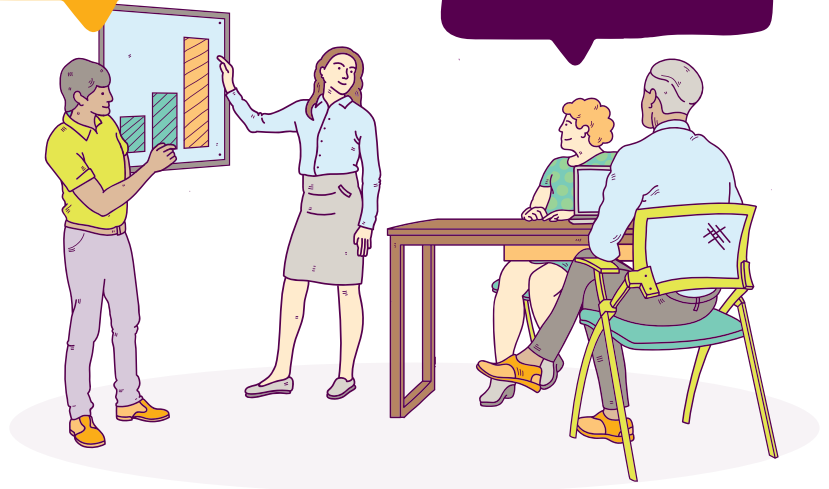
As at 31st March 2019

## BUILDING AN ENGAGED MEMBERSHIP

Membership at RBH means more than having high levels of membership, it's about ensuring RBH is a better business and has better neighbourhoods because of our membership. We work hard to establish ways for members to get involved and share their views and ideas that appeal to members and encourage them to take part. The more Members who get involved, the more that we as a Representative Body can be confident that our work and decisions reflect the views of Members.

**772 Tenant Members and 261 Employee Members** took part in one or more of the engagement activities available during 2018/19. This is in addition to all the Tenant and Employee Members who complete one-off surveys.

**“ I feel there is a positive benefit to me from being a member of RBH ”**

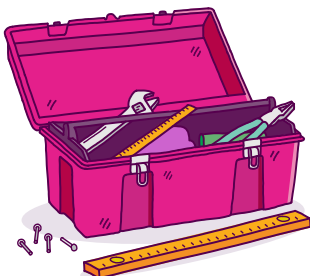


## YOUR MEMBER BENEFITS

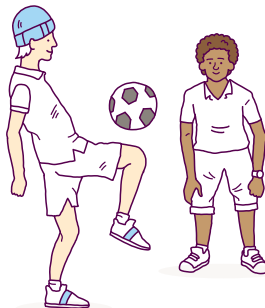
The biggest benefits of membership are having a voice and a stake in the decisions that affect how RBH manage homes, deliver services and support our communities. Getting involved brings personal benefits like learning new skills and increasing your confidence, meeting like-minded people and making new friendships. There is also the satisfaction that comes from knowing we've made a difference.

Why not check out the full range of member offers available at [www.rbh.org.uk/benefits-of-membership](http://www.rbh.org.uk/benefits-of-membership) or ring **0800 027 7769** and ask for a printed copy.

**RBH also likes to say thank you to Members with a range of member offers. Here's a flavour of some of those over the past year:**



29 Members claimed handyperson jobs. These offer help with small DIY type jobs around the house for Members who are aged 60+ or disabled.



The Edwards Family won VIP tickets to Rochdale AFC and young Benjamin Tattersall, whose mum is a Member, won an exciting experience day as team mascot.



The 10% discount on the already fabulous prices at RBH's Paint Shop continues to be a popular member benefit.



Pauline Earl won Super Night Out tickets and treated her grandchildren to the Pongo's Party performance.

**We reviewed and approved our Mutual Governance Excellence Framework (MGEF).**

This is a series of documents covering the governance of the Society, including the Representative Body, the Board and its committees and subsidiary Boards. We review these documents every three years – this is really important to help us ensure that RBH continues to run in a way that upholds our values and represents the interests of our Members.

**We have worked hard to appoint a new Non-executive Director**

to replace Phil Brown whose second and final term of office ends at the Annual Members Meeting in September. Thanks for all your hard work Phil!

RBH employees delivered the “**RBH Experience**” to all RBH employees and the opportunity was also open to all tenants. A number of external partners also experienced the Experience, including Andy Burnham the Mayor of Greater Manchester.

Lynne Brosnan and Andrew Johnson were successfully elected onto the national steering group of the “**see the person**” campaign – a national campaign led by tenants to end stigma and stereotypes around social housing.

The Homes Panel met with RBH’s head of Asset Performance and Investment, Abid Hanif, to scrutinise the investment in RBH homes carried out in 2018.



# A QUICK PEEK AT

**We've continued our work monitoring RBH's Corporate Strategy**

more information about this is available on pages 9, 10, and 11.

Last year, people volunteered a total of:

**2,708 hours**

(over 112 days) to help us improve our services. For most people this was five minutes to fill in a survey but **one tenant member volunteered 80 hours of their time** through various involvement opportunities.

The Communities Panel recently met with the RBH lead for housing management to talk about how the RBH Neighbourhood Housing Team prioritise support for different neighbourhoods.

**We've looked at ways to work more closely with the RBH Board**

read more about this on page 8!

The Customer Panel have monitored the **development of the new tenancy policy** and how tenant views contributed to make it **more accessible** and easier to read and understand.

**We approved** the re-appointment of Asrar UI-Haq to another term of office as a member of the RBH Board. Thank you to Asrar for all his contributions over his first three years as a Non-executive Director and we look forward to continuing to work with you!

**OUR MUTUAL YEAR.**

# BOARD AND REPRESENTATIVE BODY – WORKING TOGETHER.

Over the past year, as Representatives we looked at ways in which we can work more closely with the Board to help RBH deliver the services that RBH members and customers deserve and expect!

The RBH Board consists of six Non-executive Directors and two Executive Directors (the Chief Executive and the Director of Resources). As your tenant and employee Representatives, we have the important task of appointing the six Non-executive Directors. These six Board members are vital to the success of RBH, as

they provide the expertise and inspiration needed to guide RBH and ensure that RBH delivers for our customers. Our mutual model ensures that it is our Representatives who directly appoint the majority of the RBH Board.

It's our job to hold our Board members to account, but more importantly we want to work closely with our Board to make sure that we are delivering for our Members and customers – and also make sure that our Members remain at the heart of decision making for RBH!

We've held two joint meetings to enable us to discuss our priorities and to look at how RBH is delivering against our Corporate Strategy, Together.

We make sure that there is a Representative present at every Board meeting and that a Board member attends each Representative Body meeting. We share information between the Board and Representative Body and regularly update each other on what we have achieved.

We're working together to continue to set stretching targets for our mutual to achieve – and then checking to make sure that we're delivering on those targets!

We appointed "Representative Body champions" for each Corporate Strategy priority – these will mirror the Board, who already have a champion for each priority.



# INTRODUCTION TO TOGETHER.

As Representatives, we are responsible for approving and monitoring the performance of the Board and the Society against delivery of our Corporate Strategy. Our Corporate Strategy, Together, is our plan for what our mutual will achieve over the three years from 2018 to 2021. We want to make sure that we are heading in the right direction for our members, tenants, employees, and communities. We voted to approve the Corporate Strategy back in January 2018.

Over the past year, we've been performing our crucial role of monitoring the delivery of Together to ensure that our mutual delivers what has been promised! Over the next two pages, we'll take a look at some of RBH's achievements over the past year and how we've been making sure that these achievements continue to be delivered. Firstly, here's a quick recap of our key priorities as set out in Together:

## GROWING TOGETHER



Delivering the right mix and quality of homes to make RBH communities strong and successful.

## THRIVING TOGETHER



We will make the Borough a great place to live and age. We will support people through life changes by offering new and tailored services.

## IMPROVING TOGETHER

We will change and improve the way we work with a clear focus on value for money to deliver services that our customers value whilst ensuring that RBH is a strong financially successful Society resilient to future challenges.



## BUILDING ROCHDALE'S ECONOMY

As one of the Borough's anchor institutions we have a key role in helping to directly build the local economy through delivering our strategy.

Rochdale - birthplace of co-operation



# THRIVING AND IMPROVING TOGETHER.

## THRIVING TOGETHER

### **Making the Borough a great place to live and age**

RBH is currently undertaking a discussion with tenants in our Independent Living Schemes about what they think works well and what might need to change. Sessions have been held in the schemes and this feedback is now being reviewed. A working group has been set up with some tenants and employees to work together to design the way the service is delivered in future.

As Representatives, we were really excited to see the development of RBH's new Housing Options for Older People (HOOP) service. This launched in September 2018 and has already supported over 134 local people. It's a personalised service for older people whose home may not be suitable for them any more – and the solutions are tailored to the needs of each individual or couple. We were also really pleased to learn about the great feedback received by the RBH Response service.

As a Representative Body, we know the importance of the services RBH provides to older residents. We also want to make sure that RBH provides great service to younger tenants, and we continue to emphasise this in our meetings.



It's been really exciting to work with other mutual housing societies across the country to learn from them – and hopefully they've learned from us as well!

**Jonathan Walton,**  
Vice Chair of the  
Representative Body

## IMPROVING TOGETHER

Over the past year we've been keen to hear about how RBH proposes to improve services by improving the digital offer – including the upcoming improvements to RBH's website and a new customer portal. We have listened to how RBH plans to encourage more people to get online and access services. We also want to make sure that RBH continues to provide appropriate services for those who will not be able to get online – they can't be left behind.

We've worked with the Confederation of Co-operative Housing (CCH) to develop a mutuality scorecard which will help us to measure our progress and success against that of fellow mutual housing societies around the country.

We received a presentation about the review of RBH's Value for Money Strategy and we were pleased to see that Members are involved in this review and have been consulted on their priorities.

# GROWING TOGETHER AND BUILDING ROCHDALE'S ECONOMY.

## GROWING TOGETHER

In December 2018, the new Strand Community Hub opened – a brand new community hub delivered alongside a new parade of shops and 16 new apartments for affordable rent, all fully let. As Representatives we are delighted to see the new building open, and in particular the extensive use of the community facilities by groups not just in Kirkholt but across Rochdale Borough.

The next stages of RBH's regeneration proposals have progressed in Rochdale town centre. Nineteen new family homes have been built on a former garage site at Lower Falinge – and we're particularly excited that many of these new homes have a Toad Lane address! As Representatives, we've held two separate briefing sessions with our Development and Regeneration team to discuss plans for College Bank and Lower Falinge, and to discuss what support is available for residents who may have to move.

Work is underway in Hollin and Smallbridge to deliver RBH's first homes for shared ownership. These will provide a new affordable option for local people.

The Strand Hub is a fantastic facility and it is great to see it being well used by local residents and by community groups based all across the Borough.

**Julie Greenwell,**  
Employee Representative

## BUILDING ROCHDALE'S ECONOMY

Did you know that RBH procures around 50% of goods and services locally? As Representatives we'll continue to encourage RBH to do more to spend money locally.



RBH has produced a Social Value Guide to enable suppliers to do what they can to contribute back into the community. For many businesses responding to the social value element may be new, so RBH's short guide outlines the different ways they can offer value and how they can demonstrate it.

RBH was already a Living Wage accredited employer but in December 2018 they took the decision to pay apprentices and trainees the real Living Wage rate.

# DEMOCRACY IN ACTION.

Your Representative Body is the decision-making group that represents the views of Members and the interests of the wider community – part of our mutual model which places Members at the heart of everything that the Society does. Everyone has a role to play as a member of our Society.



A big thank you to everyone who put their name forward to stand in the Representative Body elections and to all those members who voted.

**Donna Chadwick,**  
Tenant Representative

## Members

RBH Members are made up of both Employee and Tenant Members (including Members of tenant households).



Tenant Members vote to elect Tenant Representatives on the Representative Body

Employee Members vote to elect employee Representatives on the Representative Body

Representative Body

**4**  
Council

**15**  
Tenants

**3**  
Appointed  
External stakeholders

**8**  
Employees

**1**  
Tenant Management Organisation (TMO)

Board

The Representative Body appoint Non-Executive Directors on the Board. The Non-Executive Directors appoint the Executive Directors

**6**  
Non-executive Directors

**2**  
Executive Directors

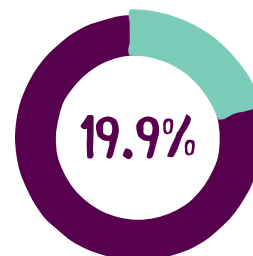
Our membership plan aims to have a contested election each year for new Representatives, and we want to increase voter turnout each year. The 2018 Representative Body election achieved:



**904** out of **5,341**  
tenant Members voted



**255** out of **479**  
employee Members voted



Total turnout

**8** tenant  
representative  
candidates

**5** positions

**6** employee  
representative  
candidates

**6** positions

The results of the ballot were announced at the 2018 Annual Members' Meeting.

# DEMOCRACY ANNUAL MEMBERS' MEETING REVIEW.

**Almost 100 Tenant and Employee Members attended our 2018 Annual Members' Meeting, which was held on 11th September at Middleton Arena.**

Last year we decided to hold the meeting on a weekday evening to see if this encouraged more people to attend. However, we saw a slight reduction in the attendance compared to 2017. As your Representatives, we're undertaking a full review of what went well and what could be better to ensure that the 2019 Annual Members' Meeting is bigger and better! We also want to learn from the successful Mutuality Matters event held last July.

The Annual Members' Meeting is a great opportunity to meet other members, discuss our achievements and challenges, and look ahead to the future. A large number of questions were asked by RBH Members to our Board and Executive Team and these were all recorded – along with the answers! – on the RBH website for all Members to see.

We were delighted to unveil our new Members' Charity at the 2018 meeting – RBH Members chose Alzheimer's Research UK to be our nominated charity for 2018-20.

Alzheimer's Research UK is the UK's leading dementia research charity, dedicated to diagnosis, prevention, treatment, and cure. Their mission is to bring about the first life-changing treatment for dementia by 2025!

Since September, RBH members have taken the charity to heart and have already raised over £5,000 through their fundraising. We're looking forward to raising even more money over the coming year, as well as raising awareness about dementia research in our communities and across the Borough!



# COMMUNITY FUNDING.

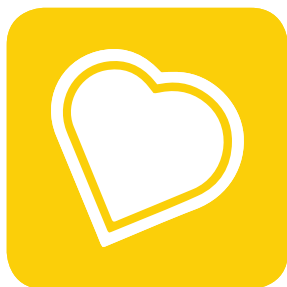
Each year RBH allocates money to a community fund to be invested in our communities and neighbourhoods. Members decide how this funding is allocated through either a panel consisting of both Tenant and Employee Members or by a vote of Members in the neighborhoods likely to benefit from the project.



**This year we funded 29 projects all across the Borough!**

Here are two examples of recently funded community projects.

## REFRESH COOKERY COURSES



Refresh Cookery is part of the healthy Eating Healthy Life project. Bounceback provide cookery workshops and learning programmes that improve health, wellbeing and employability skills.

They delivered six two-hour free courses at Hollin Sure Start Centre which were well attended by local residents. They have also delivered a course in Kirkholt. The course showed how to prepare tasty, economical and healthy meals from around the world. Comments from participants include:

“I enjoyed learning how to cook these healthy recipes and from now on I’ll be using more fresh fruit and veg when I prep meals.”

“It was brill! I’ll definitely be sharing what I’ve learned today.”

“The workshops were calm and friendly. I now know how to prep food properly with the right measurements and how to cut certain foods.”

## LIGHTHOUSE PANTRY

Lighthouse Pantry is a membership food club at the Lighthouse Project in Middleton helping people to reduce weekly food costs and keep more money in their household. It follows a similar model to the Kirkholt Pantry, and RBH hopes to support a third pantry in Smallbridge in the near future.



The Lighthouse Pantry opened in March 2019 with 88 members who pay £3.50 a week to take home items worth around £12.00. That saving of £8.50 has a big impact on low income household budgets.

As well as the direct help it provides for Pantry members, the project also provides training and skills building for 11 volunteers – which includes two former Pantry users.

# YOUR REPRESENTATIVE BODY. JULY 2019



**Lynne Brosnan**  
Chair  
Turf Hill Estate  
Management Board



**Jonathan Walton**  
Vice Chair  
Employee Representative

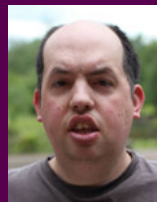


**ELECTED  
REPRESENTATIVES**

## TENANT REPRESENTATIVES



**Anne Black**



**Andrew Brown**



**Peter Brown**



**Martin Burke**



**Donna Chadwick**



**Andy Littlewood**



**Sue O'Donovan**



**Jane Taylor**



**Mary Tomlinson**



**Sharon Worsley**

## EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES



**Anne Bond**



**David Bulcock**



**Stephen Edwards**



**Julie Greenwell**



**Elliott O'Brart**

## COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES



**Councillor  
Daalat Ali**



**Councillor  
Wendy Cocks**



**Councillor  
Sultan Ali**



**Councillor  
Linda Robinson**

# FIND OUT MORE



## YOUR REPRESENTATIVES

Find out more about us: Log on to [www.rbh.org.uk/membership](http://www.rbh.org.uk/membership), click “your representatives” and then “meet your representatives”.

### Get in touch with us:



Email [representatives@rbh.org.uk](mailto:representatives@rbh.org.uk). If you want to contact a particular Representative please include their name in your email.



Come and see us in action at our meetings – keep an eye out for your member newsletter for more details or visit the RBH website. You need to let us know you wish to attend a meeting at least two days beforehand so that we can make the appropriate arrangements.



Contact the Governance Team on Freephone **0800 027 7769** and they can put you in touch with us.

## HELPFUL LINKS

### Together

Visit our website to find out more:  
[www.rbh.org.uk/together](http://www.rbh.org.uk/together)

### Community Funding

Find out more at:  
[www.rbh.org.uk/communityfunding](http://www.rbh.org.uk/communityfunding)

### Member Offers

To learn about our on-going and special offers visit: [www.rbh.org.uk/benefits-of-membership](http://www.rbh.org.uk/benefits-of-membership) or contact the Membership Team on **01706 273829**

We hope that this report helped you to understand what we've been doing on your behalf, please do get in touch if you would like to find out more.

**Lynne Brosnan,**  
Chair of the  
Representative Body



If you need this report in a different format or language, please contact us to ask how we can help.

✉ [communications@rbh.org.uk](mailto:communications@rbh.org.uk)

☎ **(01706) 273774**

# HOW WE'RE DOING

---



We want to share with our customers some details about our performance in a number of important areas and some of the things we have done to improve our services between April 2018 and March 2019. It should be read in conjunction with our Annual Report to Members which is produced by our Representative Body.



# OUR **KEY** MEASURES OF PERFORMANCE

**This is the first year of delivering the priorities set out in our Corporate Strategy, Together, which was launched on 1st April 2018. We want to be open and honest about how well we are delivering on our priorities, and we'll make this information available to our members and customers.**

This document gives details about our performance in a number of important areas across the organisation and some of the things we have done to improve our services. We want to tell you about performance for areas that were identified as part of our corporate strategy but also other service areas that affect our customers and their homes.

Overall, we are pleased with our performance, but we are always looking for ways to improve on what we do and better meet the needs of our members, tenants and communities.

## LISTENING TO YOU

We have a diverse range of customers and we believe it is important for us to listen to feedback and take action. We want to make sure that you have the opportunity to get involved and help us to improve our services each year, and we also look at other feedback given to us through complaints, compliments and surveys.

Thank you to everyone who has given us feedback over the past year.

### Some of the things you have helped us to improve include:

- Making sure your feedback was listened to when looking at our key business priorities for 2018/19
- Working with us to inspect your local areas, checking the quality of the environmental services you receive
- Giving us new ideas on how we can communicate with you and what information is important to you



Customers gave us **feedback** on our services



Average time to respond to complaints



Contact centre calls answered



# INVESTMENT IN HOMES

In 2018-19, we spent £11.8m on improving homes. This included replacing kitchens, bathrooms, boilers, and installing new windows and doors. We also carried out a range of environmental improvements, which included boundary schemes and work to improve neighbourhoods for our customers and our communities.

## £11.8m invested in our existing homes



# REPAIRS

We are responsible for carrying out a range of repairs in your homes to ensure they are kept in a good condition.

We implemented a new repairs system in February 2019. The new system has improved the way that we allocate repairs jobs to our team, which has meant improved services and increased customer satisfaction. We hope that over the coming year we'll see a further improvement in our repairs performance and tenant satisfaction in our service.



Repair appointments  
made and kept

Target 98%



Day to day repairs  
carried out



Repairs completed  
on first visit

Target 98%

# RENTS

Our rent and payments team help customers who may be struggling financially and are in need of support or advice.

In the last year, we have helped customers to claim over £600k in benefits to help them with their rent payments. To help with the implementation of Universal Credit, we have employed specialist team to give customers support and advice with their claims.



# SOCIAL VALUE

Social value is the effect an organisation’s actions have on the economic, social and physical wellbeing of people and communities. It is the wider benefit to society that we can create through the way that we make decisions, deliver services, purchase goods and work in partnership.

Last year we published our first ever Social Value Strategy which sets out our ambition and commitment to increasing our impact in Rochdale communities. We have chosen to focus our approach on creating community wealth. By growing local skills, employment and supply chains we want to grow the prosperity of the borough.

## In the 2018/19 financial year:



# OVERALL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES

Customer satisfaction is one of the major factors that provides us with a focus for our services. The level of satisfaction among customers gives us a good indication of the effectiveness of the services we provide and also where we need to make improvements. We listen carefully to what customers tell us through a number of surveys that we carry out with them.

