



# ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS

From your Representative Body  
July 2022 to June 2023



# HELLO AND WELCOME TO YOUR ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS



As your Representative Body, this is our opportunity to showcase some of the great work that has taken place since July 2022. In doing so, we must also acknowledge the challenges RBH has faced over the past year.



The death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale has been a tragedy that has shaken our community. We are committed to learning from it and the whole organisation is taking steps to prevent anything like it from happening again. We have a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould and we've put a robust recovery plan in place that focuses on 5 main aims:

- 🏠 Homes
- 🏠 Governance
- 🏠 Tenant involvement & empowerment
- 🏠 Rebuilding trust & confidence
- 🏠 Lessons learnt

You can find out more about RBH's recovery plan, including regular updates [here](#)

As a community, we continue to face significant challenges in dealing with the rising cost of living. We will continue to work with teams across RBH to support tenants and members with advice and signposting where possible.

I am proud of the work the Representative Body have achieved this year, but I know that there is still more to do. We will continue to work with members and encourage them to be involved in creating a thriving and active community. Together, we can drive improvements to services, so that quality homes, in thriving communities, make Rochdale a great place to live and work.

Finally, I'd like to thank Phill Worthing and Lynne Brosnan for their huge contributions to the Representative Body and the wider community. Phill and Lynne have been vital in the work that we've done, and their efforts will still be evident in our future successes. read about Phill and Lynne on Pg 10.

## The Representative Body

# MEMBERS COMMUNITY FUND

## Our grant funding programme is targeted to local grassroots organisations and community groups.

Our focus is on supporting local groups, rather than larger charities and social enterprises, as they often have access to additional resources from national funding streams.

Throughout the year, the **Members' Community Funding Panel**, which is made up of tenant and employee members, have provided several smaller grants to various community groups across the borough that have made a huge impact on the local community.

Here, we get to hear from a few of the many worthwhile groups on the impact their service and support has on the local community.

### **MK Diamond Morris Dance Troupe**

are a group of young, talented dancers who received **£5000** grant funding, which has been a significant boost and a financial benefit to their dancing family.

The funding has enabled them to buy new uniforms and equipment for their first championship, as well as providing a low-cost hobby to many local families, due to subsidised fees for room hire and travel to competitions. The troupe has also increased its members from 26 dancers to 38, offering more young people the opportunity to get involved.



“without the funding, I don’t think our troupe would be able to compete or get to the championship.”

One of the MK Diamond dancers

### **Maverick Lab**

The Evening IT project, run by Maverick Lab, was an idea that originated following an initial conversation with a woman who wanted to improve her digital and IT skills. She wanted to improve her IT skills, but work commitments meant this was only possible in the evening - and she could not find any evening classes near her home in Heywood.

By receiving **£4,980** in grant funding, an experienced tutor was able to deliver classes to 35 participants and 13 laptops were donated to learners who needed one.

Learners enjoyed the course and found they improved their knowledge and confidence.

## Trishaw Project



Rochdale Cycling Without Age (RCWA) is a small local voluntary organisation that takes older people on bike rides in parks or country areas to improve their wellbeing. Participants are often socially isolated and have limited mobility, so the bike rides take place on specially constructed three-wheeled bicycles known as a Trishaws.

The project is focused on the impact of loneliness and social isolation on the wellbeing of older people with limited mobility in the community.

The Trishaw rides aim to give cyclists access to green spaces, where they can feel the wind in their hair, connect with nature and with other people.

The Trishaw Project, based at **Hare Hill Extra Care scheme**, received **£5,000** grant funding and has 16 happy cyclists to date. All participants said they enjoyed getting out and felt better after the rides. One of the participants said that they wished they could go out every day!

## Your Local Pantry at Back O'th Moss

**Community Centre** in Heywood opened in April and has been a great addition to the community centre, providing needed resources to so many. £5000 in grant funding was provided to the centre, which has now served 43 members over the past few months.

Like all local pantries across the borough, it is a vital lifeline for so many families and the project is extremely important to the Representative Body. The use of the pantries is critical to so many, especially during the cost-of-living crisis. We, along with many colleagues across RBH, actively support tenants and the local community through tough times, by finding additional support.

Over the past few months, due to cost-of-living increases, the centre has been engaging with users on what they would like to see. Feedback included an affordable food pantry, which is now in operation, and somewhere to have a free hot meal. Uptake for both have been impressive and appreciated by the local community.

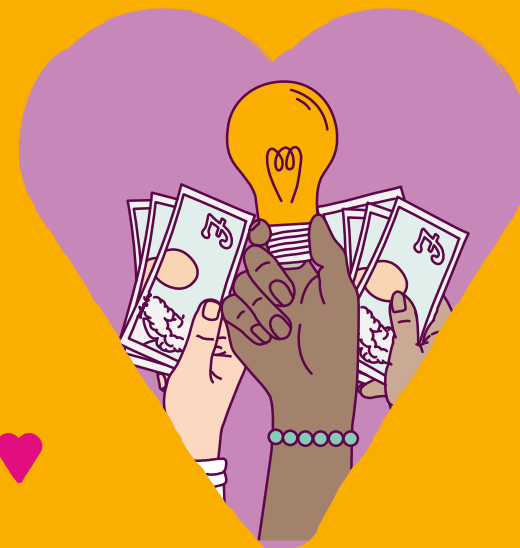


**DID YOU KNOW,** at BOM Pantry, for £5.00 you can get eggs, cheese, chicken, bread, veg, fruit, pasta and tins – all the essentials, packed and waiting for you. BOM is currently open every Thursday between 10-12.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**By supporting organisations with funding, 1043 customers have benefited.**

In addition, **23** micro grants of **£250** each were given to **23** Independent Living Schemes for social and wellbeing activities.



# MEMBERSHIP DATA AND PERFORMANCE

Now more than ever, it is vitally important that we provide a wide variety of communications options for members, tenants, employees and the local community. This will enable them to voice opinions, provide scrutiny and to have opportunities to be involved in the design of programmes of work, policies, strategies and neighbourhood projects.

It is important everyone feels they can become actively engaged and involved in decision making, whether that be at a strategic level through the Representative Body, or at a local level.

We pride ourselves on **being fair**, on **being human**, and in cooperating with others to drive service improvement.

As a Representative Body we will continue to work with our members to enable opportunities for every voice to be heard, which is so important to us. We will continue to shine a light on tenant engagement and mutuality so we can create a thriving community of active and involved members.



**35%** (4,805)  
Tenant members



**71%** (390)  
Employee members

# REPRESENTATIVE BODY ROUND UP

**There have been several significant events that have impacted RBH, and throughout, the organisation's focus has remained on Damp and Mould and continuing to progress our Recovery Plan. Both are incredibly important to the Representative Body, and we will continue to monitor and advise where feasible.**

Moving forward, the Representative Body aims to have a prominent voice in shaping and implementing future activity that benefits members, tenants, employees, and the wider borough of Rochdale.

Over the past 12 months, the Representative Body maintained focus, dedication, and passion to drive several initiatives forward on behalf of members, including:

## **Customer Engagement Strategy**

The Representative Body were directly involved in the development and approval of the Customer Engagement Strategy. A key focus for members was how RBH teams, at all levels, were getting out into the community to talk directly to tenants. The Representative Body did and will continue to strongly advocate the need for regular community drop-in sessions.

## **Voice of Tenant Dashboard**

The Voice of the Tenant Dashboard was developed to assist the Representative Body to a broad overview of customer feedback and engagement across key service areas; from how quickly complaints are being resolved to satisfaction with repairs. With quick access to such information members were able to identify areas where RBH could improve and they are able to question relevant service areas on how they plan to make improvements.

## **Membership Strategy**

The Representative Body approves the Membership Strategy and has ongoing involvement to ensure membership is accessible to all tenants and employees. Representatives feel passionate about membership. Being a member means you can be actively involved in making important decisions, ensuring we get the best positive outcomes for all members.

## **Appointments of Non-executive Directors & interim CEO**

The Representative Body were involved in the recruitment and appointment of Yvonne Arrowsmith as the Interim CEO, Kevin Brady as Chair of the Board, and five Non-executive Director members.

**Visit our website for more information on our Board.**

We received an overwhelming response to the vacancies and selecting the right people was critical. We are looking forward to working with all of them on the Recovery Plan, lessons learnt and most of all, putting engagement and mutuality at the heart of initiatives...

## Approval of the Community Investment Strategy

This is an important strategy, focusing on 3 key themes:

### Financial inclusion

#### DID YOU KNOW?

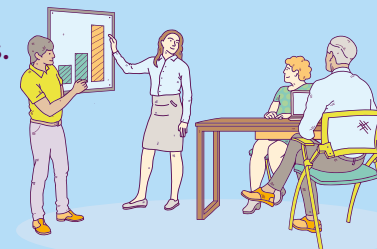
- 🏠 **2,024** people were supported.
- 🏠 **£480,637** was saved for tenants through Money Advice, including finding £281,282 additional income for tenants, whilst Your Local Pantries at Kirkholt, Smallbridge and Freehold provided essential support for shopping and food during the cost of living crisis.
- 🏠 Many of our tenants were able to turn their house into a home by using vital services from the Paint Shop and Pass It On Scheme.
- 🏠 **39,127** kg of food, furniture, and paint was saved from going to landfill.



### Work and Skills

#### DID YOU KNOW?

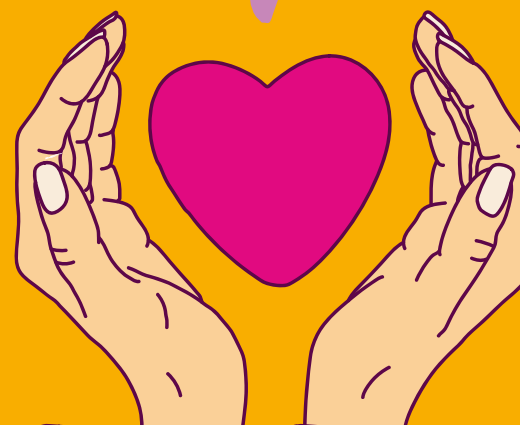
- 🏠 **4488** hours given by volunteers.
- 🏠 **15** work placements completed.
- 🏠 **10** new apprentices from RBH homes.
- 🏠 **205** people were supported towards work.



### Health and wellbeing

#### DID YOU KNOW?

- 🏠 **375** young people were supported through funded projects.
- 🏠 **£76,077** was giving in funding to local organisations.
- 🏠 **£8,538** was secured in external funding.





# LOOKING AHEAD...

**As we look ahead to the coming year, we intend to progress with renewed vigour, passion, and commitment to make a difference to members, tenants, employees and the local community. We are confident that knowledge from lessons learnt, coupled with empowerment to do the right thing first time, will shine through.**



You can contact your Representative Body at any time by emailing [rep.body@rbh.org.uk](mailto:rep.body@rbh.org.uk)

## In the meantime, RBH will continue to focus on:

- 🏠 Providing safe and well-maintained homes that meet the needs of tenants and regulatory standards.
- 🏠 A thriving and efficient Repairs Service that continues to provide a high-quality repairs and maintenance service with a right first-time approach.
- 🏠 A dedicated and professional Damp and Mould Taskforce.
- 🏠 Maintaining effective methods and channels to ensure all tenants are treated fairly and with respect and have their voice heard, including communicating better with tenants who don't speak English as a first language (**small plus for Language Line**).

And we are all eagerly anticipating the arrival of our new **Chief Executive Amanda Newton**.

As your Representative Body, we are excited about the future of RBH and more importantly, the role that we, members and tenants can play within that.

# THANK YOU TO PHILL WORTHINGTON & LYNNE BROSINAN

**We would like to give a huge and heartfelt Thank You to Phill Worthington, our former Chair, and Lynne Brosnan, deputy Chair of the Representative Body. We are sure you will agree, they both served passionately and were extremely dedicated during their time working for and on behalf of members.**

Phill, an employee representative, was first appointed onto the Representative Body in 2019, and reappointed in 2022. Phill was appointed as Chair in October 2021 and remained in that role until he left RBH in March 2023.

Lynne Brosnan, tenant representative, was on the shadow representative body, back in 2012. Lynne was also appointed as a Tenant Management representative for Turf Hill. During her time with the Representative Body, Lynne was Chair and Deputy Chair, until she left in March 2023.

Thank you, Phill and Lynne. Your legacy lives on!



## FRANK ALTHAM

**It is with great sadness that we learned that Frank passed away in 2022.**

Frank was one of the founder tenant members of our Representative Body back in 2012, as well as a valued member of our Continuous Improvement Groups and our Together With Tenants panel. Frank was a passionate and dedicated advocate for tenants in Rochdale for many years. He loved literature and carried a Terry Pratchett book to every meeting he attended.

Frank sadly passed away in November 2022 and will be fondly remembered not only at RBH but across Rochdale.

# YOUR REPRESENTATIVE BODY

**JULY 2023**



**Alex Allen**  
Chair



**Andrew Johnson**  
Deputy Chair

## TENANT REPRESENTATIVES



**Andrew Johnson**



**Debra Anderson**



**Muhammed  
Ansari**



**Andrew  
Butterworth**



**Donna Chadwick**



**Donald Ferguson**



**Andy Brown**



**Kate Lowerson**



**Lucia Ogunniran**



**Ziggy Prusinowski**



**Olufemi Shangobiya**

## EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES



**Alex Allen**



**Yasmeen Hasnain**



**James Coutts**



**Stephen Edwards**



**Bede Nicholson**



**Natasha Snape**

Please note, vacant positions are currently not displayed. Two places are also reserved on the Representative Body for the Council, these are currently vacant.