



Supporting BAME communities to thrive



TENANTS ANNUAL REPORT

2020/2021



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Officers, Principal Advisors and Registered Office



CHAIR
Bishop Wilton Powell
OBE



VICE CHAIR
Prof. Martin Levermore
DL, FRSA, MBE



CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Bishop Llewellyn Graham
MBA, MA, BA (Hons),
MioD, MCIH



COMPANY SECRETARY
Ms Janet Dubidat
MBA, Chartered MCIPD

Bankers

National Westminster Bank Plc, 33 Park Street, Walsall, West Midlands WSI IER
Santander UK Plc, Bridle Road, Bootle, Merseyside L30 4GB

External auditor

Mazars LLP, 45 Church Street, Birmingham B3 2RT

Internal auditor

RSM Risk Assurance Services LLP, St Philips Point, Temple Row, Birmingham B2 5AF

Registered office

I-3 Beacon Court, Birmingham Road, Great Barr, Birmingham B43 6NN

Chair's statement

This year has been like no other. At the beginning of the financial year, when we launched our new corporate plan, *Growing Stronger Together*, we were mindful of the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic but were determined to maintain essential services whilst keeping our customers and staff safe.

Looking back over the year, with the many government restrictions it has been in the wider interests of the population, to make changes in patterns of behaviour, and normal ways of doing business to maintain the health and safety of our customers and staff as well as the sustainability of the organisation.

I am so proud to say that the staff of Nehemiah Housing, led by the Executive team and my fellow board members worked together to ensure good service delivery was maintained within government constraints.

Despite the coronavirus pandemic bringing extraordinary changes to the way we worked, we are proud of the 95% customer satisfaction with the repairs service, 100% gas safety checks and strong financial performance confirming the resilience of our organisation.

The surplus of £1,330,347 for the year to March 2021 reflects the organisation's effective management and ongoing financial viability during what has been challenging times for the whole economy. We continued to make substantial investment in maintaining our housing stock during the year to ensure that all properties met the Decent Homes Standard. During 2020-21 the organisation has invested £1.0m in improving the homes of our tenants equating to 14% of our turnover. A further £1.47m has been spent on repairs and maintenance.

This robust financial position gives us a great platform to continue to deliver the high-quality services our customers and the communities expect and deserve. We continue to be true to our original beliefs and our concept of Nehemiah being relevant to the local economy.

Building communities means we must look at the economy as well. So going forward we want to ensure our plans and partnerships with key stakeholders have the local community and local people at the heart of what we do. Building the resilience in housing, health, and the broader aspirations of those that live in the areas in which we operate.

The pandemic has re-defined our society. Clearly government, institutions and all major stakeholders in society have to now re-examine how we go forward and how we recalibrate our vision of what our society should be like in the future.

As we move forward, we are now being subjected to the parameters around the climate change agenda and how we prioritise investment to meet government policy to reach net zero carbon emission by 2050. This will have far reaching implication on our strategy going forward in the next five years and beyond.

However, periods of uncertainty presents both challenges and opportunities. We intend to apply clear strategic thinking and rigor in our approach that has served us well in meeting our delivery objectives in challenging times to take advantage of the opportunities anticipated ahead, as we look forward to the future. I am confident that we will achieve success by working together and helping each other.

Covid-19 has been a tragedy for so many families in the UK and wider world. Sadly, a number of our residents as well as our own staff lost friends and family to coronavirus. On behalf of Nehemiah, I would like to offer my sympathy to all who have lost loved ones during the year.

Finally, I would like to end by congratulating our Chief Executive Llewellyn Graham on the occasion of his selection by His Excellency, The Most Honourable Sir Patrick Allen, Governor-General of Jamaica, to receive The Governor General's Diaspora Achievement Award for Excellence 2021 for his leadership of Nehemiah's frontline staff in the delivery of exemplary services to some of the most vulnerable members of the Jamaican Diaspora community in the UK during the Covid-19 pandemic. The announcement was made during the Virtual Jamaica Diaspora Sustainability Symposium on 16 June 2021.

Chief Executive's statement

This report captures our work during a period of global crisis which, for most of the UK, began in March 2020 when the lives of all changed very suddenly and Nehemiah's need to respond quickly and effectively to sustain key services and keep our communities safe became clear. Maintaining the wellbeing of customers has been the top priority throughout the year and this has led to major changes in the way we've been working.

Ensuring the continued welfare of customers (especially our most vulnerable tenants living in sheltered schemes) has meant upholding the safety and security of our homes and acting to keep our front-line staff appropriately protected and supported in challenging circumstances.

During the height of lockdown, it was vital that our statutory responsibilities as a landlord were not compromised. Therefore, gas and electrical safety checks, as well emergency repairs, were essential services that needed to be maintained in support of our tenants.

The aspiration set out in the first year of our corporate plan Growing Stronger Together certainly rang true last year. I believe we are well on our way to achieving our ambition to grow from a position of strength with the active involvement of our tenants and key stakeholders. In this report I want to highlight some of our achievements over the year, including our performance as it relates to the corporate strategy.

Part of our strategy is to be effective as an organisation and to grow in a sustainable way. Throughout the pandemic, however, instead of pursuing asset growth, we concentrated on effectiveness, working with the Board to strengthen our governance, systems, and processes to be able to take full advantage of the post-pandemic opportunities to achieve our mission. The challenging times to which I have referred have presented opportunities for Nehemiah's Board, Executive Team and staff to show 'what we are

really made of'. The Executive Team are undertaking leadership development coaching which, together with a board effectiveness review conducted during the year, will be pivotal in ensuring that the Association's leadership has the requisite complement of skills to lead the Organisation progressively and effectively beyond the present uncertainties.

Despite the challenges, we have managed to achieve the completion of the extension and refurbishment of Nehemiah Court, our retirement living scheme in Walsall in January 2021. The facility now boasts, an additional four new apartments, refurbished communal areas and a fresh modern look throughout.

To ensure the continued delivery of excellent services, we moved quickly at the start of the pandemic, accelerating digital and remote working, with our housing officers, property service officers and customer engagement officer, adapting well to new ways of working to carry out essential services. Our focus has been to maintain as many services as possible to support tenants, to repair and let homes and to maintain collection of rental income. Proactive contact has been made with tenants on an ongoing basis. Housing Officers and our Customer Engagement Officer mobilised quickly to carry out regular wellbeing check-ins with their tenants over the phone and other communications technologies. In doing so, they were able to make tenants aware of where to get relevant support information on a range of advice topics and practical assistance, including foodbank referrals and support for tenants who were shielding. It has always been our aim to make our tenants' lives better by improving the places where they live. We thus take pride in being close to our customers, providing the high-quality services they deserve - quality which is borne out by rising customer satisfaction levels.

As a member of the National Housing Federation's (NHF) Regional Committee, we have during the last year been discussing how the Together with Tenants Charter (TWT) could be integrated with the requirements of the Government's new Social Housing White Paper to encourage and test new ways of working with tenants. We are developing a regional approach and mechanism to deliver the six principles

in the TWT charter and the seven in the Social Housing White Paper. There is also a new requirement in the NHF Code of Governance 2020 to report progress against the Charter and how we are giving tenants a stronger voice. In order to facilitate this, our Operations Team, together with some of our tenants, have been engaged in a series of webinars designed to open up conversations between Landlords and Tenants to begin to shape this important work of increased collaboration.

This has been an exciting project for Nehemiah as we played a pivotal role in the Government's Green Paper consultation which, of course, led to the White Paper. It is fantastic that we, together with our tenants, are still part of this journey and we, therefore, embrace the proposals contained in the White Paper.

We also embraced the Kickstart Housing Partnership which is part of a £2 billion national scheme provided through the Department of Work and Pension to support young people gain access into employment. Nehemiah will be taking on 4 Kick-starters, aged 16-24, in this first round of the programme (commencing July 2021). It is an exciting scheme and I look forward to reporting on its success next year.

In addition, we have started a new partnership arrangement with Axis Europe Plc to deliver our responsive repairs service. In this contract we have committed to providing apprenticeship and placement opportunities, and training and development skills for local people in the communities in which we operate. This will ensure that we provide added value to the local economy both now and in the future.

Finally, we intend to build on the successes we have achieved over the last financial year, with increased customer satisfaction rates reaching 82% for the overall service we provided, and for the quality of our homes. 92% of our customers surveyed believed we provided homes that were safe and secure, and once again we achieved satisfaction levels for our repairs service of 95%. These satisfaction levels are all the more impressive when we consider that they were achieved in the midst of the challenges of the pandemic and associated lockdowns.

I want to end by paying tribute to all our staff and especially those on the front line, including all our staff working in our Retirement Living Schemes, keeping our elderly customers safe and supported. The commitment of our staff in discharging their responsibilities during a time of prolonged stress has made possible the ongoing success of the Association, enabling it to continue its work of quality housing provision and community building by which its beneficiaries are made safe and thrive.

This work of excellence has been recognised by the Government of Jamaica in their most recent Diaspora Symposium hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, I was awarded the prestigious Governor General's Award for Excellence which I attribute to our collective efforts in the delivery of services to our communities.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Bishop Llewellyn Graham

Vision

Our vision is to be the leading independent BAME housing provider in the UK delivering a range of services which are unsurpassed in the community.

Values

Passionate We are passionate about empowering people to build communities alongside homes

Diversity We believe diversity is a strength in every aspect of our work and the communities around us

Integrity We act with integrity in all that we do even when that is not the easy option

Sustainable We believe our actions and their impact must always be sustainable

Objectives

Nehemiah will passionately pursue the following objectives

- 1 To be effective and grow
- 2 Deliver excellent services
- 3 Be open, transparent and accountable in governance and risk management
- 4 Deliver Social investment through monitoring our environmental, economic and social impact

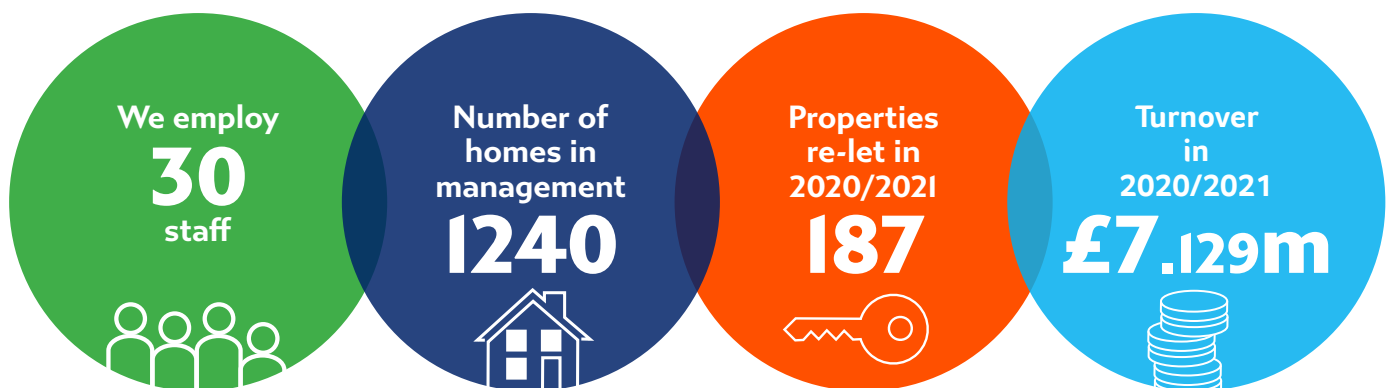
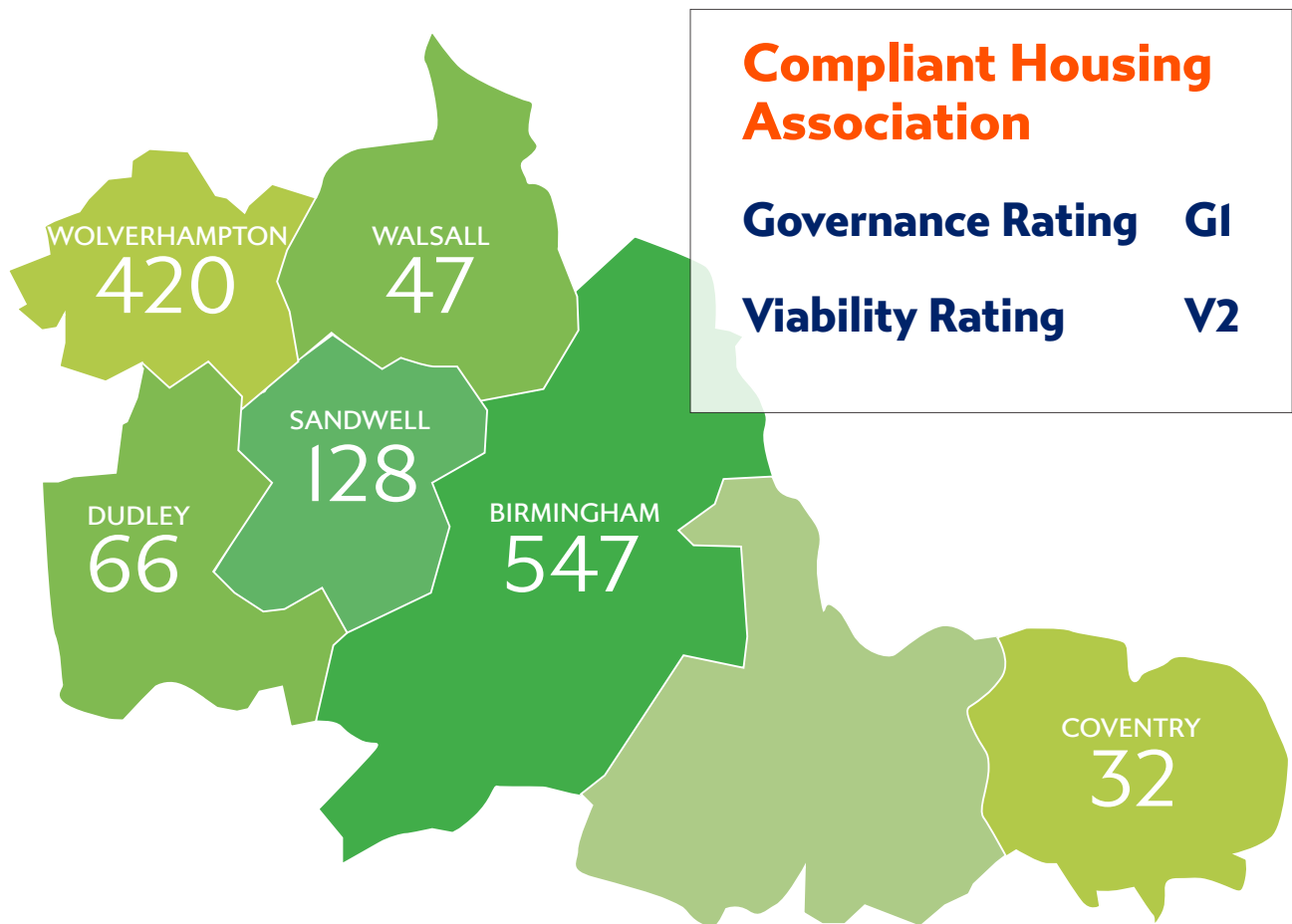
Mission

'Our mission is to build successful, sustainable and diverse communities by providing housing and well-being services in a culturally sensitive way to our current and our future customers!'



Nehemiah at a glance

Nehemiah has a **portfolio of 1240 properties** serving the multicultural African Caribbean, Asian, Irish, and European communities within the West Midlands. We have **properties in 6 local authorities** in the West Midlands.



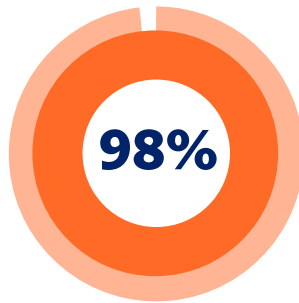
Improving your home

We know repairs are important to you

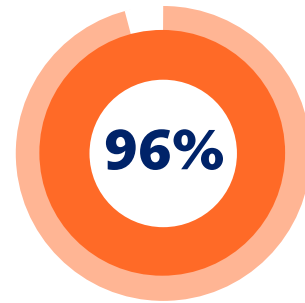
We know that how we help you look after your home is very important to you, so we compare our performance where we can against other social landlords. Nehemiah’s performance relating to repairs is generally in the upper/ medium level when measured against how other landlords are doing.



Emergency repairs completed on time



Urgent repairs completed on time



Routine repairs completed on time

How we looked after your home in 2020/21

We spent **£150k** on bathroom refurbishment works which equates to **41** new fully refurbished bathrooms.

We spent **£69k** on new boilers which equates to **30** properties had new boilers installed.

We spent **£37k** on new storage heaters which equates to **17** properties had new storage heaters

We spent **£189k** on new gas heating systems which equates to **53** properties had new gas heating systems installed.

We spent **£155k** on new kitchens which equates to **41** properties had new kitchens installed.

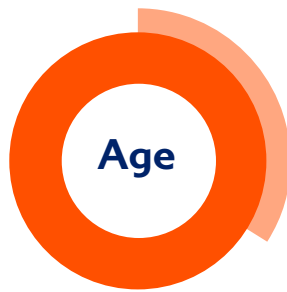
We spent **£94k** on new windows and doors which equates to **27** properties had new windows and doors.

Our communities and Equality & Diversity

Equality & Diversity – Letting our differences work



65% of our tenants are female and 35% are male.



34% of our tenants are over 60. 66% other age range.



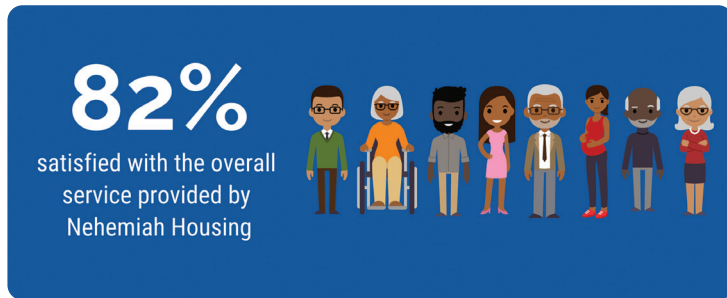
60% tenants from BAME Communities (Excludes White British or Undeclared)



Working in Partnership



“Over the last year we have been working with Nehemiah to contact customers on their behalf, asking about their satisfaction with the services they receive. Nehemiah is committed to providing great customer service, and being responsive to customers’ needs,



but know they don’t always get it right. Over the last year, we’ve heard from customers to get their feedback, good or bad, to help Nehemiah learn and make sure they get things right. This has been particularly important during the unsettling year we’ve had and the surveys we conduct have enabled Nehemiah to understand how they can better support customers, as well as improve services.



We now look forward to working with Nehemiah for another year, continuing to hear from a range of customers to enable them to have their say.”

Adam Knight-Markiegi, Research Director, M-E-L Research

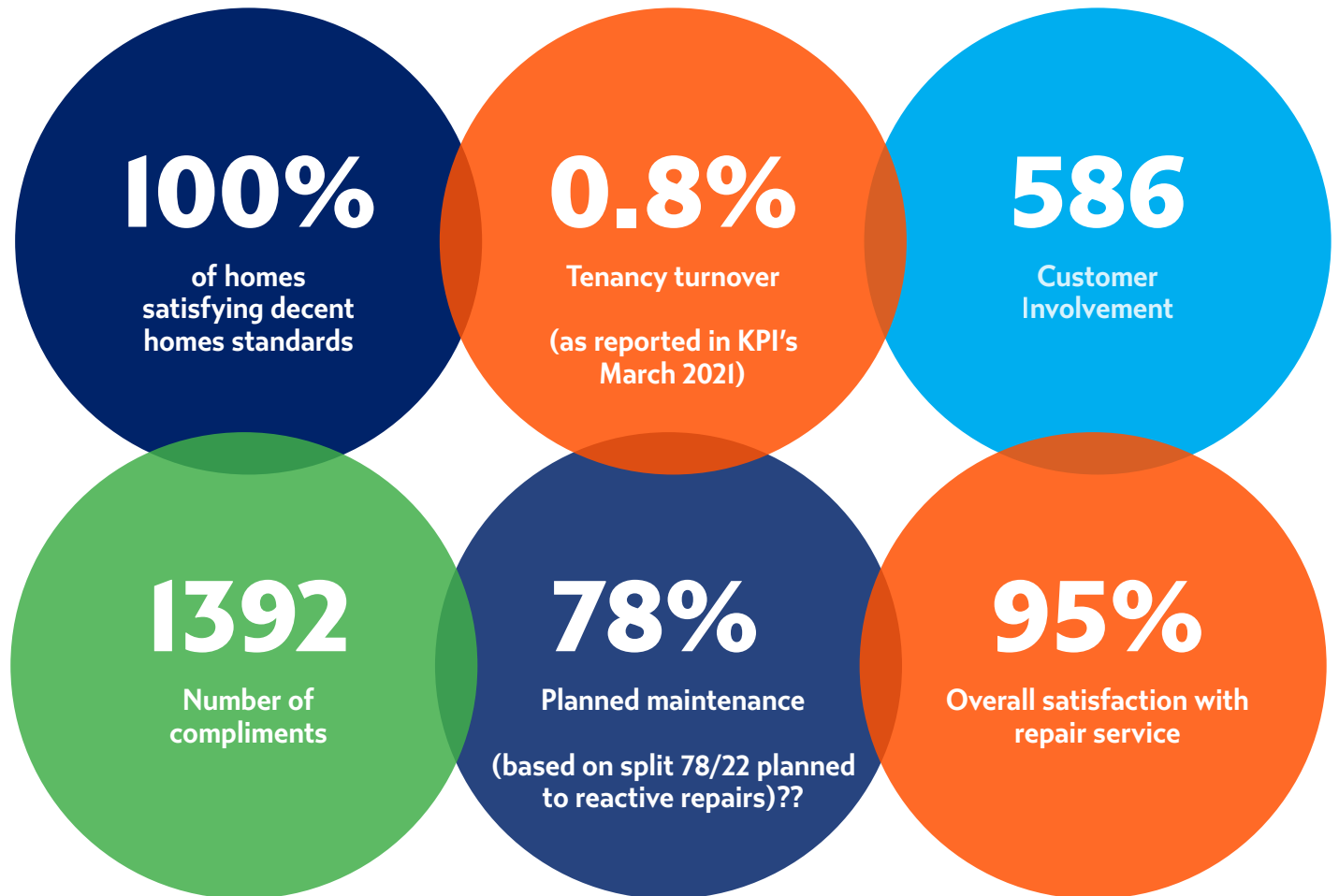


“We have been working in partnership with Nehemiah for several years providing debt and benefits advice to Nehemiah tenants. This year has been challenging for all of us during the Covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, we were able to work together to reach the tenants who needed support the most during this difficult time. We look forward to growing and nurturing our relationship in the future helping Nehemiah tenants to become more financially resilient.”

Birmingham Settlement



How did we do - Nehemiah Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)



Making a difference - A year in review

The Coronavirus, Covid-19 pandemic, and our response to it, has been our top priority over the last year. It has led to major changes in the way we've been working since the official lockdown 23rd March 2020 so we have not undertaken as many events as we would normally but here is a quick review of some of the key milestones from April 2020-April 2021.

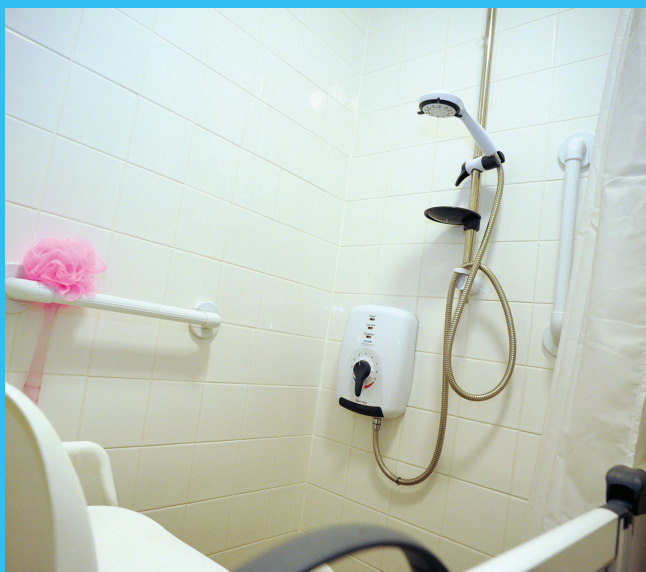
You helped us choose a new repairs contractor

Three residents helped us to select our new repairs contractor - Axis. They brought their valuable insight from a customer perspective of what standard of service is expected. Miriam, Mary and Jimoh took part in an online training workshop to help them with their role, including looking at repair response times.

Miriam said: "It was interesting to examine and score the tenders and to see the care that goes into making the right choice," says Miriam. "As a Nehemiah resident for 24 years, I know how important the repairs service is to us. I'll be watching closely to see that the service and quality of workmanship is what we expect for our homes."



Making a splash



In the last 12 months Nehemiah homes have been fitted with the additional feature of a shower in all new bathrooms. This is something that residents have requested and we are very pleased to be able to provide. The improvements took place in a Covid-secure way to benefit 50 homes this year and many more in the months ahead. In the past year we have spent over £2 million on planned improvements like this, including new heating systems, kitchens, windows, and doors. We've also just finished the major refurbishment of a dated house, which we'd inherited with an impractical layout including a bathroom next to the kitchen but the toilet upstairs! The house has been completely modernised. It is now a warm bright home for the family who have moved in.

Creating Opportunities – The Kickstart Scheme

We've always tried to help young people into jobs. So we are excited to be part of a new national Kickstart Housing Partnership, led by Clarion Housing, to help young people. Kickstart provides six-month, paid jobs – giving the chance to gain valuable work experience, as well as training and support to boost skills. Given the difficulties caused by the ongoing pandemic, it is wonderful to be able to help young people find work and to start their careers in housing.

We are offering housing trainee positions to four 16–24-year-olds claiming Universal Credit. You have to apply through Jobcentre Plus, so talk to your work coach for details or about other Kickstart placements.

KICKSTART SCHEME

Nehemiah Court Extension and Refurbishment

Nehemiah Court is a complex of 34 flats that was first opened in 2002 by Sir Bill Morris and in 2020/21 the scheme has undergone a £1 million pound refurbishment programme which included the refurbishment of all the communal areas and a two-storey extension.

As part of the refurbishment we carried out an extension to the upper floors to extend the lift and add additional internal corridors. We also relocated the lounge and the office facilities. On the lower ground floor we converted what was an unused kitchen and lounge into three flats, also adding a scooter store room and we also converted an unused staff room into a fourth new flat. We moved the internal bin store externally creating a designated bin store area and we reconfigured the car park to allow for a more secure

car park with fob access. We also refurbished all the internal corridors adding additional lights and upgrading the fire alarm system.

The extensive refurbishment means we can now provide more independent and assisted care living to tenants from across the Walsall area.



Community Partnership and Activism

We have continued our community engagement and collaborative work over the last year. We are partnering with African Caribbean Community Initiative (ACCI) a mental health charity based in Wolverhampton to lease a property from Wolverhampton City Council and provide a landlord service to enable them to support individuals recovering from mental illness.

The RACE Equality Code 2020

Over the summer months in response to the Black Lives Matter movement, we have been involved in the work of The Governance Forum in developing the RACE code designed to enable organisations across all sectors to achieve better representation of people from BAME backgrounds on boards and in senior leadership positions. The code draws from a range of previous Race Equality reviews and provides an integrated framework to monitor and report on progress being made. The code is endorsed by the Chartered Institute of Governance, (former ICOSA) and Baroness Doreen Lawrence - member of Labour Party Race Advisory Unit.

Nehemiah is seen as an exemplar of good practice in this regard and as such by adopting the code, we can use the framework to highlight our achievements and commitment to equality and diversity in the workplace and its benefit to society at large.



Covid 19 Vaccines



In response to the slow take up of the Covid-19 vaccine in the BAME community, Nehemiah's Chief Executive Llewellyn Graham took part in a series of webinars with voluntary community sector organisations, churches and the West Midlands Combined Authority to encourage take up of the Covid-19 vaccine, in an effort to protect the most vulnerable.

Nehemiah Vice Chair Appointed As New Windrush Independent Adviser

In April 2021, the Vice Chair of Nehemiah Housing Association, Professor Martin Levermore MBE DL, was appointed by the UK Government as the new Independent Person to advise on the Windrush Compensation Scheme.

Launched in April 2019, the Windrush Compensation Scheme aims to ensure that the Windrush generation are fairly compensated for difficulties they may have faced in establishing their lawful status in the UK.

Corporate social responsibility

Although the Association's portfolio is modest in comparison with many larger and more established housing providers, the organisation is committed to growth by developing new housing properties and also seeking other opportunities to enrich the communities it serves by exploring partnerships with Local Authorities, other housing providers, community groups and agencies.

Partnerships have resulted in the provision of youth apprenticeship programmes and services for supported housing schemes and the community, whilst most recent partnerships have delivered health and IT learning programmes for the elderly. Nehemiah Housing is committed to the continued provision of such programmes which go beyond its main social housing delivery.



Nehemiah Housing has initiated new programmes using its own resources, where grant funding and external partnerships were unavailable, examples of which are the Nehemiah Academy (by which it has hosted student and work experience placements and internships) and the Nehemiah Charitable Aid Foundation (through which it will make annual bursaries to individuals pursuing higher education).

Nehemiah Housing has engaged with Local Authorities and other agencies to discuss what assistance the Association can give to the BAME community and general public by bringing back into operation dormant community assets designated for the benefit of the BAME community.

Value for money at Nehemiah

Nehemiah Housing is committed to the principle and delivery of Value For Money (VFM) and, to this end, is determined to provide high quality homes and associated services, and to maximise the other social benefits it contributes to the various communities it serves in the most cost-efficient manner.

The Association's current Corporate Strategy "**Growing stronger Together**" sets out our objectives to March 2024 a revised Value for Money Strategy 2021-2023 highlights how we will deliver VFM to our stakeholders.

Achieving VFM is fundamental to the attainment of Nehemiah Housing's goal of creating 'successful, diverse communities', shaping how the organisation conducts its business planning, social housing and

other activities. To achieve this, the Board and Executive team are working to embed VFM principles within the business at all levels through active engagement with staff, tenants, and other key stakeholders.



Cost performance

We are in the business of providing quality, affordable homes, and significant sums have again been invested to improve the condition of housing properties over the course of the year.



Along with other housing providers in the sector, government imposed lockdowns during 2020/21 and these impacted on our programme for the improvement of homes but where safe and practical we have remained focussed on delivering our programme.



Quality performance

The Association is committed to continued ongoing engagement with social housing customers to better understand the nature of any dissatisfaction and feed this back to housing staff and maintenance contractors to improve service delivery to residents and their homes. Meaningful engagement with customers and repairs contractors helps to reduce costs, improve efficiency (by reducing waste) and raise effectiveness (by doing the right things).

The following provides a snap shot of performance against our strategy over the year.



We remain financially strong.

Our compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing is confirmed by the most recent regulatory judgements conclude that in relation to governance and financial viability, Nehemiah is G1 and V2. This demonstrates a continued compliance with the regulatory standards and we are working towards meeting VI Standards.

2020/21 Statement of comprehensive income

Year ended 31st March 2021

	2021 £000	2020 £000
Turnover	7,129	7,005
Disposal of fixed assets	44	115
Operating costs	<u>(4,803)</u>	<u>(4,858)</u>
Operating surplus	2,370	2,262
Finance income	3	9
Interest and financing costs	<u>(1,043)</u>	<u>(1,133)</u>
Surplus for the period	1,330	1,138
Actuarial gain/loss on pension scheme	<u>(830)</u>	<u>844</u>
Comprehensive income for the year	<u>500</u>	<u>1,982</u>

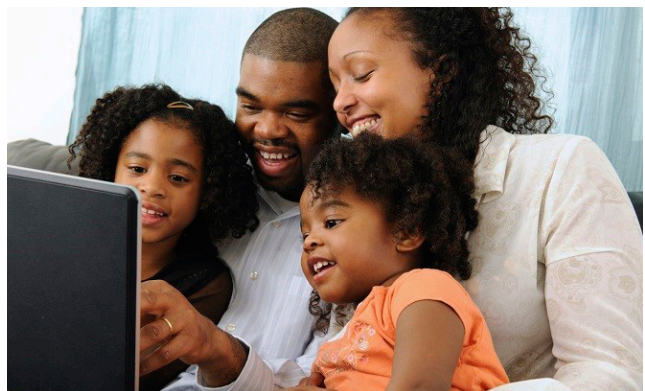
We are passionate about delivering excellent customer engagement

We strongly believe that our tenants deserve the best. To achieve that aim, we strive constantly to ensure our communities are supported, their homes are well maintained, and their individual boundaries are respected, no matter what their ethnic origin.

We provide services to an increasingly diverse range of customers and work closely with them to ensure that our service is truly representative of their needs.

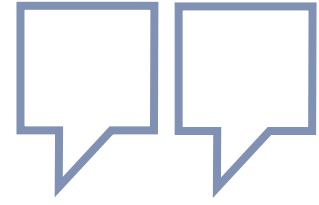
Over the past 12 months the pandemic has not held us back and our customer engagement team have:

- made weekly phone calls to over 70's who are not living in one of our retirement schemes – that's over 3500 phone calls in one year.
- arranged multiple food parcels to be delivered to tenants who were in need on a weekly basis and this is all thanks to Adventist Food Group, Birmingham Care group, Walsall Black Sisters, Handsworth Wood Youth Group and Birmingham Irish Association to name but a few
- held a virtual quiz night for black history month
- held virtual tenants meetings to keep abreast of tenants views and ideas
- visited tenants in the retirement schemes to ensure they were okay
- made Christmas gift bags for tenants in retirement schemes and had them all hand delivered by management and other members of the team
- held policy review meetings
- included tenants in virtual meetings to choose our new repairs contractor



We would like to say a big thank you to all our partners who supported us including Birmingham Care Group who delivered multiple food parcels to Charles Pearson Court Retirement Scheme.

Customer satisfaction At a glance

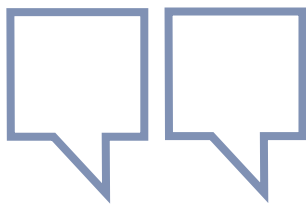


What you have said:

“Don’t know what I would have done without the weekly food parcels – they have helped me out so much and the free hot meals 3 times a week is fantastic.”



“ Really enjoyed the visit and gift at Christmas & looking forward to it this year.”



“The flowers made my day”

Donated flowers from
Guardian Angels School



“thank you for the food parcels. At a time when we were nervous to go out the food parcels were a lifeline to us.”

Food parcels were delivered to Charles Pearson Court Retirement Scheme via Bethel Temple of Christ Church

Our Board and Management

Board members:



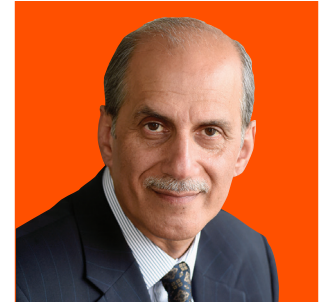
Mr Bishop Wilton Powell
Chairman



Martin Levermore
Vice Chair & Chair Audit
& Risk



Llewellyn Graham
CEO



Amarjit Singh
Chair of Operations



Winston Weir
Chair R&N



Dexter du Boulay



Martyn Hencher



Tina Mustafa



Juliana Crowe



Tom Murtha

The Nehemiah Executive Management Team



Llewellyn Graham
Chief Executive



Patrick Bryan
Director of Corporate Services



Kevin Fearon
Director of Operations

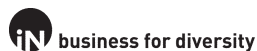


Janet Dubidat
Company Secretary



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Registered office is at I-3 Beacon Court, Birmingham Road, Great Barr, Birmingham, West Midlands, B43 6NN

Nehemiah is registered under the Co-operative and Communities Benefit Societies Act 2014 registration number 25952, governed by the National Housing Federation ("NHF") 2011 Model Rules. It is an exempt charity for tax purposes.

Nehemiah is a Registered Provider of Social Housing, registration number L3833 and regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing ("RSH").

Nehemiah Ventures Ltd is a subsidiary of Nehemiah Ltd is registered with the Registrar of Companies for England and Wales, registration number 10933356.