Plus Dane Housing

a year like no other

Annual Report 2020|21

hello

I have great pleasure in presenting our Annual Report for 2020/21, my first as the chief executive of Plus Dane. In what has been the most challenging of years, I want to thank my colleagues at Plus Dane for the way in which they changed and adapted throughout the year to continue delivering services while supporting customers in a way never experienced before. They have demonstrated outstanding commitment, hard work and integrity throughout, very much focussed on doing the right thing. I am immensely proud of what we have achieved, even though some of the targets have not been met this year.

I also want to say a huge thank you to you, our customers who have shown your support, patience and understanding as we have navigated through the different phases of the pandemic and different levels of restrictions - **it hasn't been easy but together we have hopefully come through the worst**. So many of you have rallied round to support your neighbours and communities where you've been able to, and we really have seen community spirit at its best.

A big focus for us during this year has been to work with local community organisations that really stepped in during the pandemic to make sure communities had food and other essential items to keep them going - **thank you to each and every one of them who did and continue to do outstanding work for our customers**.

We have highlighted just a few short stories in this report to give you a flavour of how we have all worked together to support each other.

Looking to the future, at the start of this year, our Board signed off a new corporate plan, which will provide the focus for our work for the next five years. We were also proud to retain the highest regulatory judgement possible; G1 V1, in July so while 2020/21 has been a challenging year, Plus Dane is poised to do whatever we can to support the recovery at a regional, local and community level.

Ian Reed
Chief Executive
Plus Dane Housing

our finance

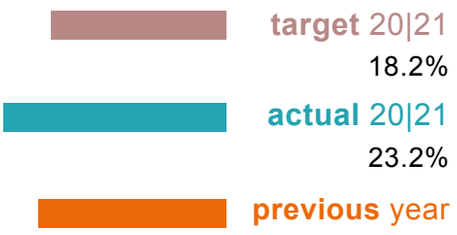
turnover

Income for the year from rents, services, sales etc

target 20|21	actual 2020|21	previous year
£74.4M	£76.1M	£74M

operating margin

The percentage of income that is not spent on operating costs



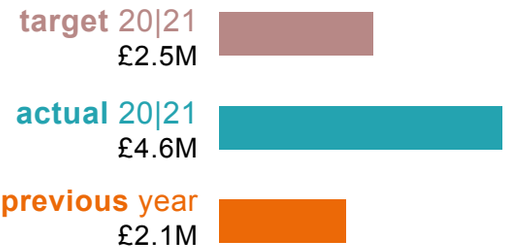
operating surplus

The amount of money after operating costs are deducted

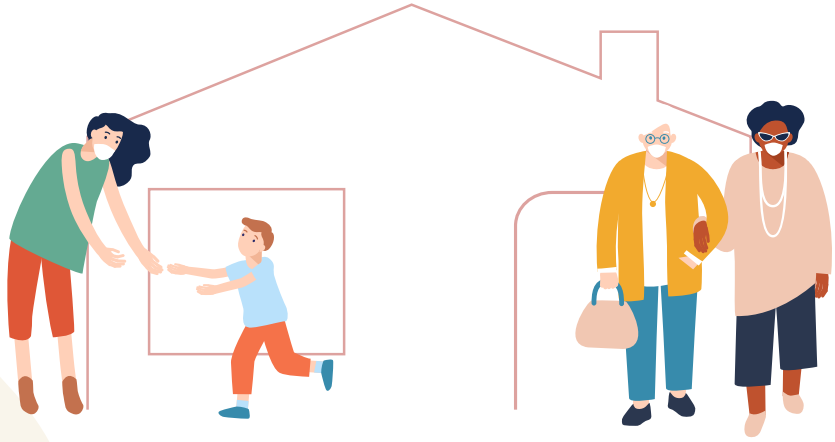
target 20|21	actual 20|21	previous year
£13.5M	£17.7M	£14.4M

surplus after tax

What is left of the operating surplus after paying loan interest and any tax due



The information contained within this report tells the story of how our colleagues, teams and partners strived to continue to deliver the very best possible services to our customers throughout one of the most difficult years any of us has ever known.



We would like to thank our customers for their patience and understanding as we have worked as quickly as possible to understand Government guidance, and prioritise the safety of our customers and colleagues at all times. We'd also like to thank customers for following our protocols in order to help us achieve this goal - it has really been a team effort but we have hopefully overcome the worst safely.

In addition to our regular performance data, we have included some information and stories about the additional support we provided to our communities during the pandemic - we hope you will find this useful.

As we have said in previous annual reports, we set our own performance targets for all services we deliver. These are set with past performances in mind, and designed to challenge us to keep improving. If a service is achieving its targets we will review and increase them as appropriate. However, if a target is not being met, we will investigate the reasons why and make the necessary changes to improve performance.

helping our **customers** into **homes**

Despite the impact of the pandemic we were still able to:

Build
87
brand new homes

Let
762
homes

Helped
22,375
customers into **home ownership**

97.5%
were **satisfied** with their **new build** home

Process
15,599
Help to Buy applications

what our **customers** said

78% (LAST YEAR 89.1%)
were **satisfied** with their **neighbourhood**

74.4% (LAST YEAR 90.6%)
were **satisfied** with their **home**
[our target was 93%]

'The lady was very nice & kind & she let me ramble on without interrupting me. She was a lovely lady'

toy appeal

We were **successful** in **securing toys** from both the **Radio City Toy Appeal** & **Congleton Town Council's** 'Congleton Cares campaign'. As a result we were able to provide **112** Plus Dane customers with toys for their children, benefitting a total of **290 children**.

83.6%
were **satisfied** with **Plus Dane** overall

81%
feel that we do **what we say we will**

75% (LAST YEAR 87.9%)
were **satisfied** with **Plus Dane** as their landlord

our **repairs service**

we completed
36,522
repairs in total

we spent
£3.86M
on **repairs** in total

'Very polite, face mask on & kept to social distance. Job was well done & on time & very quick, I'm very satisfied'

'I couldn't have asked for better workmen'

98.6%
were **satisfied** with our **planned investment** works

on average it took us
19.2 days (LAST YEAR 15days)
to **complete** a **repair** from the time it was **reported** to us
[our target was 14 days]

christmas cards and afternoon tea

New Beginnings & **Wishing Well** (two community partners) supported us to prepare & deliver **516 afternoon teas** & bespoke **Plus Dane Christmas cards** for every customer living in our **sheltered housing schemes**. Thank you to our strategic partner **Penny Lane Builders** for funding this.

86.9% were **satisfied** with our **repairs service**

LAST YEAR 89.6%

[our target was 91%]

0.92% of repairs **resulted** in a **complaint**

keeping you **safe**

we completed **311** **Fire Risk Assessments**

we serviced **214** **fire alarms**

we serviced **67** **fire extinguishers**

we completed **100%** of **gas safety checks**

new start

We were **able to support** one of our **tenants** now living in **Everton** after fleeing their home country. We provided **food parcels** & used our **emergency fund** to make sure the family had enough **gas** & **electricity** to get them through a period of crisis. We also provided them with a **tablet** & **internet connection** so that the children could join their school classes online & we supported the dad back into work.

your **feedback**

‘The person I spoke with wanted to hear my explanation of what caused me to complain in the first place.’

‘Plus Dane listened to me & took action’

we received **648** **complaints**

we received **184** **compliments**

64.7% **satisfaction** with **complaint handling**

50% of **complainants** were **satisfied** with the **outcome** of their **complaint**

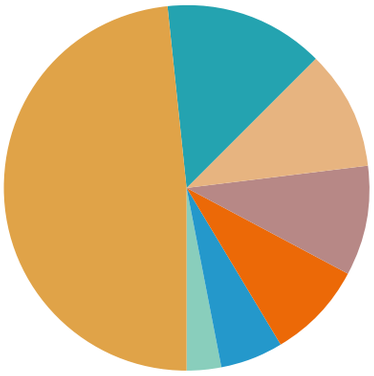
56.2% of **complaints** were **upheld**

we responded to **91.8%** of **complaints** within our **stated timescales**

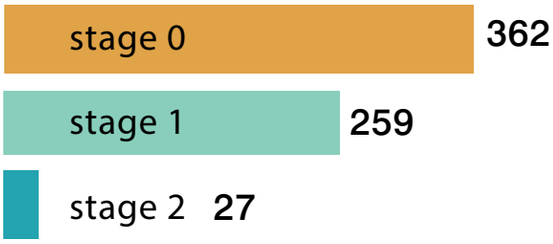
what our customers **complained** about:

- quaility of service **48.6%**
- communication **13.9%**
- policy & process **10.8%**
- property condition **9.7%**
- quality of repair **8.5%**
- staff attitude / behaviour **5.6%**
- administrative / system error **2.9%**

total 648



what stage **complaints** were resolved at:



total 648

our **definition** of a **complaint**

"An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents"

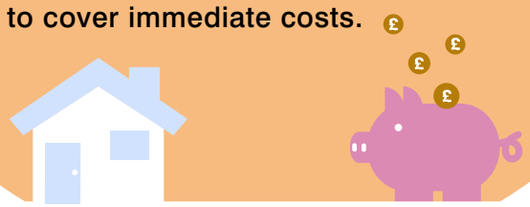
What changes have we made following the implementation of the **Housing Ombudsman Code**:

- we've adopted the Housing Ombudsman's definition of a complaint.
- we've refreshed our policy document
- we've removed the informal stage 0, & adopted a formal two-stage complaint process.
- we have a clear focus on putting things right

our **emergency** fund

We set up our Emergency Fund in 2019 to support customers in hardship & without access to funds for basic requirements such as food & fuel.

This year, we used the fund to support 66 households across Cheshire & Merseyside, at a total cost of £2,635.37. This included helping customers to pay for top-ups with their supply of gas & electricity, food & cooking facilities for those moving from temporary accommodation into their own homes. Many had seen their circumstances change due to Covid & required support to cover immediate costs.



helping hand

We **helped** one of our tenants, a **young care leaver** who was struggling financially after delays in his PIP claim. At risk of losing his home, we supported him to make a local authority claim so he could buy food & fuel, we also used our emergency fund to help take some of the immediate pressure out of the situation. We have been able to offer practical support in how to manage finances better which has removed the risk of him losing his home & as a result he has seen real improvements in his mental health & is now enrolled onto a **CIA course**.

a great place to work

Plus Dane has been awarded the Workplace Wellbeing Charter for our efforts to support colleagues, whether working from home, office-based, or out in our neighbourhoods helping customers.

We have also been recognised as a world-leader when it comes to being a healthy and safe place to work, having achieved a second successive Gold RoSPA Health and Safety Award.

91% of our **colleagues** said that their **personal safety** is **taken seriously** by Plus Dane

88% of **colleagues** would **recommend** Plus Dane as an **employer**

contributing to Congleton

Plus Dane made a £1,000 contribution to support Congleton Town Council to fund:

- a **toy appeal** in which over **600 toys** were received & passed on to over **400 children**
- a group known as the **Congleton Hubbers** who deliver **essential food items** to families in need in Congleton
- the **Congleton Cares** appeal which issued over **750 Christmas hamper** bags to elderly residents across the town
- to create **activity packs** for the spring holidays for **400 primary school** children who receive free school meals

there when **you needed us**

we responded to over **145,400** **customer contacts**

we completed **14,404** **emergency repairs**

we helped our customers **achieve** over **£1.7M** in **financial gains**

we supported **1,200** customers to access **universal credit** for the **first time**

we processed **1,542** **referrals** to our **welfare team**

we were able to support **76.3%** of **new tenancies** to **succeed**

helping people **off the streets** and into **homes**

With our partners, we played a key role in finding homes for **1,450** people in Liverpool who had nowhere to live

Together, we also sourced & distributed over **365** furniture packages to help these people set up home.

our **floating support team** have worked with **265** **customers** across Cheshire & Merseyside, who were in need of more in-depth assistance

anti social behaviour

we managed **154** separate **ASB cases**

5 cases were **referred** for **mediation**

19 individuals were **served** with **injunctions**

ASB type	cases
Noise	47
Verbal abuse/Harassment /Threatening behaviour/Intimidation	40
Drugs/Substance misuse/Drug dealing	38
Physical aviolence	19

we helped to safeguard **56 individuals** & **families** who had been suffering **domestic violence** or serious **ASB**

Criminal behaviour/Crime	12
Vandalism & damage to property	11
Misuse of communal area/public space or loitering	6
Nuisance from vehicle	5

family matters

On the run up to **Christmas**, we were providing some **welfare support** to a tenant in **Congleton** with a large family who was under immense pressure at what can be a challenging time of year. As part of our support, we hand delivered two hampers filled with **food**, **festive treats** & **toys** for the children which helped to lift the spirits & allow the family to have some enjoyment over the festive period.

supporting our **communities**

our **winter campaign** helped over **3,725** customers to manage the **toughest christmas** in memory

our holiday **hunger projects** supported **313** children from **220 families**

our **colleagues** do their bit

One of the elements of our **Winter Campaign** that was most impacted by **Covid** was the ability to invite our own colleagues to volunteer to get involved in delivering the campaign. However, by using one of our larger community centres we were able to put social distancing in place so a small number of volunteers from our Caretaking, Housing & Executive teams could help to prepare & distribute the **hampers**, **vouchers** & **toys**.

households turned to our **emergency fund** for support

we **delivered food parcels** to

436

homes

helping people **back** into **work**

we supported

107

customers into **work** & **training**

we played a leading role in creating over

150

kickstart placements across Cheshire East

we created

12 kickstart placement opportunities at plus dane

lending a hand to our partners

we contributed over

£32,500

to **community partners** to help them support our customers

we invested

£14,318

in **social value** on community projects

we provided New Beginnings CIC with **free accommodation** to enable them to continue delivering their **food bank**, saving them

£5,250

in venue hire

we invested

£23K

in providing **free repairs** to partners' & a dedicated driver to help them with **food deliveries**

working with our **contractors**

we raised over **£29K** from our **contractors**, **suppliers** & **grants** to put to our **winter campaign**

tackling **holiday hunger**

We raised over **£40,000** from the **LCR Cares fund**, the **Halton Borough Council Health Improvement Team** & **Persona Insights CIC**, to put towards our **Holiday Hunger project**. We worked in partnership with a total of **15** other **support** & **community organisations** to deliver **activities** to families across Merseyside, Halton & Cheshire. The programme included providing **food vouchers** to families who were experiencing immediate hardship, providing **small grants** to **community partners** who were offering support to Plus Dane families, running a **Healthy Holidays programme** in Halton, & making regular **welfare calls**, to check-in & follow up on families. Over **300** children benefitted from the campaign.

we secured over **£28,500** in **grants** to deliver our **holiday hunger project**

we achieved **£299K** in **social value** through our **contractors** & **suppliers**