

A photograph of a baby crawling on a colorful, patterned mat. The baby is wearing a black and white plaid shirt and has a surprised expression. In the background, a man in a black t-shirt with a white logo and a woman in a black floral shirt are smiling. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an indoor setting with large windows.

Customer Annual Report 2018/19

karbon
homes

Providing a strong foundation for life

Welcome

I am pleased to introduce our Customer Annual Report for 2018-2019.

We publish this report to make sure that our customers are kept up-to-date on how we are performing against the standards that are set by the Regulator of Social Housing. These standards help show how well we are doing as an organisation and, more importantly, allow you to understand how well we are delivering our services to you.

It has been another exciting and busy year for Karbon. We've delivered even more affordable homes across the North East and Yorkshire and we remain committed to continued investment in our existing homes, spending £46 million in the last year on a range of maintenance activity.

We've embarked on new plans to develop our Karbon customer experience which helps us understand and respond to our customers' needs, whilst investing in our colleagues; restructuring and developing our teams to ensure the provision of a quality service.

I'm proud to see how much progress we've made in achieving our mission to provide customers with a strong foundation for life, and I look forward to watching Karbon continue to grow.

I hope you enjoy reading our report and I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Paul Fiddaman
Group Chief Executive



This report is for customers and it is important that it contains clear information that is relevant to you.

The customer feedback received at the time of last year's report told us that you wanted an easy to understand, open and transparent report. As well as the facts and figures, you wanted to see more of what Karbon has accomplished over the past 12 months through the use of small case studies.

The Karbon team has worked with the Strategic Residents Group to develop this report and make sure it reflects this feedback. We hope you find it useful and would welcome any comments.



Michael Lisle
Chair of the Strategic Residents Group

Did you know?

We're always on the lookout for more residents to get involved, helping us to shape our services and products in the future. Turn to page 12 of this report for more information.

Karbon key facts



Karbon owns or manages almost **27,000** properties across the North East of England and Yorkshire.

784 employees



Approximately **60,000** people living in our homes



A turnover of **£129 million**



Properties by area

-  over **7000** properties
-  over **11,500** properties
-  over **1,900** properties
-  over **1,000** properties



The remainder of our properties, located in Yorkshire, are managed by York Housing Association, part of the Karbon group.

Tenancy Standard

The Tenancy Standard focuses on the way homes are allocated and how customers are supported to maintain their tenancy.

Letting homes

- We let **2,259** homes in 2018/19
- Had an average re-let time of 51 days
- **252** customers found a new home in our sheltered and supported housing schemes to help them live independently
- **91.6%** of customers were satisfied with the lettings service

Collecting your rent

- Average weekly general needs rent was **£77.50**
- We collected **99.17%** of rent against a target of **100%**
- Current rent arrears for non-Universal Credit customers were **1.89%** against a target of **1.92%**

We recognise that household incomes are under more pressure than ever and we aim to support our customers to gain skills and find work.

In 2018/19, our Foundations for Life Team have helped:

- **125** customers find training opportunities to get qualifications
- **80** customers get into employment
- **90** customers improve their digital skills

Whatever it is that you set out to achieve, our experienced advisors are here to help.

✉ foundations@karbonhomes.co.uk
☎ **0191 223 8750**





“I’d recommend anybody to get in touch with Karbon’s Money Matters Team if they have concerns about their finances.”

Customer Marge Bolton, Morpeth

The Money Matters Team has:

- Supported **5,607** customers to provide benefit, money and debt advice
- Supported customers to get a total of **£5.3million** in unclaimed benefits

As well as help with benefits, the Money Matters Team can also support Karbon customers with budgeting and money management. No matter how big or small the problem, the team is here to help.

✉ moneymatters@karbonhomes.co.uk

☎ 0808 164 0111



Did you know?

A key priority of the year was supporting our 2,647 customers who were moving on to Universal Credit. Our Money Matters service offers personalised and confidential advice service on everything to do with finances, benefits and money.

Home Standard

The Home Standard focuses on the provision of quality accommodation; a cost effective repairs and maintenance service; the health and safety of customers; and the provision of an adaptations service that meets customer needs.



Repairing and investing in your home

- All of our homes meet the Decent Homes Standard (a standard, set by the government, that council and housing association homes have to meet)
- It took on average **11 days** to complete a responsive repair, against a target of 9 days.
- **99%** of emergency repairs were completed within the target time of 24 hours.
- Over **90%** of customers were satisfied with the repairs service.

Did you know?

Last year we invested **£46 million** in maintaining our existing homes:

- **150** homes had a new bathroom fitted
- **220** homes had a new kitchen fitted
- **365** homes had a new roof fitted
- **520** homes had new boilers fitted or heating improvements made
- We delivered **1,779 adaptations** helping customers who needed that service to remain independent and safe in their homes.

Keeping you safe in your home

The safety of you and your family is our top priority. This is why we carry out safety checks in your home to ensure appliances meet the required safety standards.

- 100% of gas services due were completed in **21,496** homes.
- **5,000** electrical tests were undertaken across our properties to ensure the condition of the electrical installation in our homes is safe.
- We invested **£1.86m** on fire safety related works and continue to invest heavily in this area.

If we've contacted you to say a safety check is due, please make every effort to keep your appointment. If you know you're not going to be home, please make sure it is rescheduled for as soon as possible.

This is not just a legal requirement, it is vital for your safety.



Investing in new homes



We provide a range of ways for customers to access homes: from homes to buy and shared ownership, to affordable housing, social housing and supported and specialised housing.

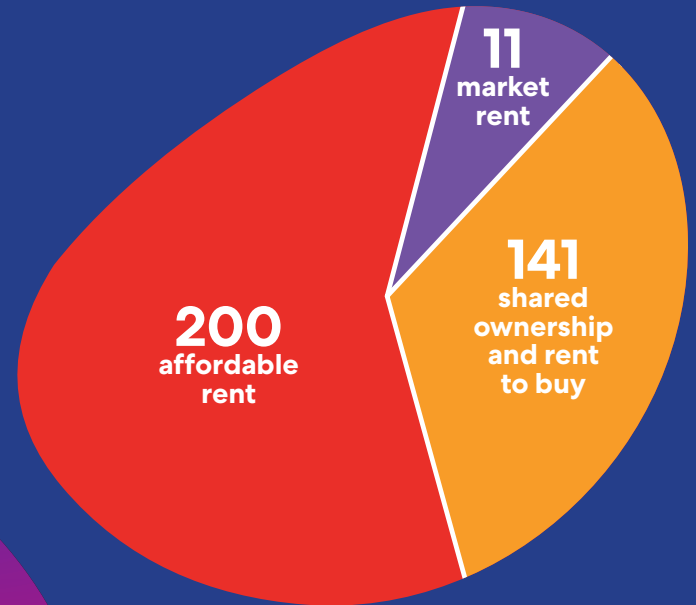
In the last year we've pledged to expand our build programme to deliver at least **500** high quality new homes every year.

Fred Dowson is one of the new residents to move into our £2.5m Foundry Close development of 24 affordable homes in Shiney Row, near Sunderland.

The 77-year-old great grandad has a long history in the village, working as a bricklayer on the storage buildings which once stood where his new home has been built.

Did you know?

This year we have invested **£47 million** in building **352** new homes.



“The new flat is beautiful. I can see Penshaw Monument out of the bedroom window, so I feel right at home.”

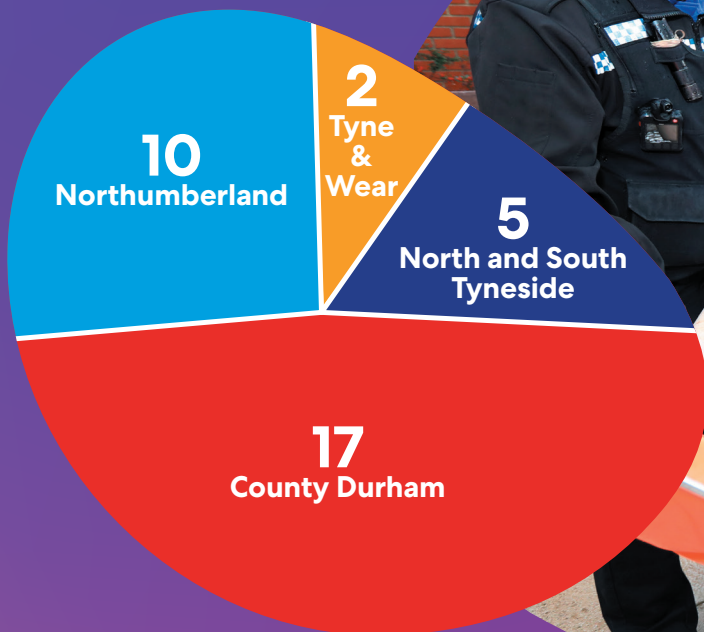
Neighbourhood and Community Standard

The Neighbourhood and Community Standard focuses on the cleanliness and safety of neighbourhoods and communal areas; the promotion of social, environmental and economic wellbeing; and the prevention and tackling of anti-social behaviour (ASB).

Your community

As well as providing good quality homes, we help shape the places around those homes and support the communities that live in them.

Over the past 12 months we've supported **34 projects in your communities** through Karbon grant funding, awarding organisations amounts between £50 and £40,000:



If you know of, or are part of, an organisation or community group who may be interested in working with us to support our customers, please contact our Community Connectors.

✉ mycommunity@karbonhomes.co.uk
☎ 0808 164 0111



Your neighbourhood

Across all our communities our housing teams dealt with **1,600** cases of anti-social behaviour, **455** of which were of a serious nature.

To allow smaller organisations access to Karbon's grants fund, we've also introduced our Small Grants Fund.

Our grant for **£932** helped Derwentside Breast Friends to raise awareness of its support for men and women undergoing treatment for breast cancer and those in remission.



Did you know?

Last summer, our housing and community teams hit the streets in our first community roadshows. We:

- Visited **37** Karbon neighbourhoods
- Covered over **1,000 miles**
- Spoke with **684 customers** to find out what they loved about where they lived, and what issues were the biggest concern for them.



Involvement and Empowerment Standard

The Involvement and Empowerment Standard focuses on providing opportunities for tenant involvement and empowerment; supporting customers to scrutinise and improve services; having a clear focus on good customer service, choice and complaints; and having a clear understanding and response to the diverse needs of customers.

The Karbon customer experience

Our Freephone number received
327,942 calls,
a 15% increase on the
previous year



It took an average of
33 seconds
to answer calls

We know that a number of you have been struggling to get through on our main telephone number recently and we'd like to apologise for that. We're working hard to increase the size of our Customer Relations Team and you will hopefully see an improvement over the coming months.

Customer feedback is really important to us so we can continuously improve, learn and develop our products and services.

In the last year:

- Received **291** compliments
- Received **1,302** complaints with **86%** resolved at first point of contact

Did you know?

Our ongoing aim is to create a truly customer focused service that is easy to engage with, and to help us achieve this we're developing a new set of customer satisfaction surveys.



Keep an eye out for surveys from us in your inbox. Your feedback on what we are doing well, and where we can improve, is important to us!



Connect with Karbon

We're looking for residents of all ages and from all walks of life to get involved with the things we do to improve your home and neighbourhood. We want to make sure that your thoughts and opinions are considered on topics that affect you.

Just like the residents who helped us develop this report, there are a number of ways that you can get involved with Karbon. If you're interested in finding out more about how you can help us shape our services and products in the future, please get in touch.

- ✉ connectwithkarbon@karbonhomes.co.uk
- ☎ 0808 164 0111
- www.karbonhomes.co.uk/get-involved

Economic Standard

The Economic Standard focuses on effective governance; the achievement of value for money; and how rent levels are set in line with the government's Rent Standard guidance.

Despite much change over the last year, Karbon is in a position of financial strength. This means we can continue to build more new homes for people who need them and invest in the communities in which we operate to shape strong, sustainable places and build strong foundations for even more people.

- Karbon Homes has a turnover of **£129 million**.
- We remain at a **G1/V1 rating** from The Regulator of Social Housing, the highest possible score for governance and financial viability (this means we are well run and financially strong, which will help us achieve our future plans).
- We are estimating that we will outperform our original target of **£14.5 million** of value for money savings by **£1.5 million**, as a result of our amalgamation.
- We set our rents according to the Government's regulations, which last year saw a 1% decrease.

As a profit for purpose business, we continue to invest any money we make into maintaining and improving our existing homes, developing the services we provide to customers, and building more new homes.

We'd love your feedback on this report, you can contact us in the following ways:

✉ communications@karbonhomes.co.uk

☎ **0808 164 0111**

📘 **@karbonhomes**



Get in touch and get involved

We want to hear from you and get your views. If you'd like to get involved in shaping our future products and services then please get in touch. Full service is available 8am - 6pm on weekdays.

☎ **0808 164 0111**

✉ info@karbonhomes.co.uk

🖱 karbonhomes.co.uk

Or visit our social media pages

