

IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS

RF ANNUAL REPORT TO TENANTS 2012



WHAT WE DO

RF has over 100 services across the country, offering a wide range of housing, care, employment and community support services to enable people to live life to the full. We work with over 9000 people, directly providing housing with care and support to 262 people in properties we own. We also work with other landlords and manage another 243 bed spaces on their behalf.

We aim to provide you with accommodation that meets your needs, is safe and secure, and services that respond to your concerns effectively. RF is regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) who monitors our housing services to ensure we meet all required standards.

This report looks at how RF meets HCA standards in the housing we provide:

- lets you know how we are performing
- and how we will improve our services

YOUR INVOLVEMENT

Tenant involvement & empowerment standard

Currently RF has a number of ways tenants and Service Users can influence and shape our services by:

- completing our “Active Involvement Training” to enable you to communicate your ideas, build your confidence and become actively involved in developing our services
- involvement in our Service User Best Practice Groups which tenants can attend to share ideas to promote their recovery and social inclusion
- participation in your local service meetings and events, facilitated and co-ordinated by a member of Staff known as a “Service User Lead”

- involvement in reviewing our policies and procedures at a local level and nationally at our Policy Review Group
- representing the views of our tenants at our Service User Advisory Group
- **In 2011-12 National Active Involvement Training was delivered to 12 service users**
- **In our national survey 76% of service users said they were satisfied with their involvement at service level**

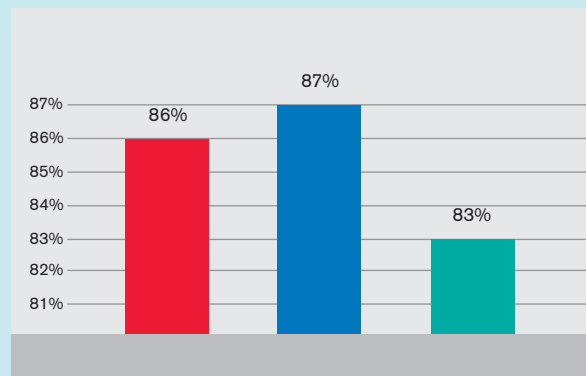
We have developed a series of information leaflets which provide you with basic information about our services and what you can expect. These include:

- a Tenancy Handbook which tells you about your tenancy and what responsibilities and rights you have as a tenant
- a “Statement of Service” which gives details of the type of support to be provided
- a Complaints Leaflet which outlines how concerns, comments and suggestions can be made

In 2011-12 we:

- conducted a national satisfaction survey to ask you what you thought of our services including accommodation
- developed a system for monitoring tenancy enforcement actions taken including arrears and anti-social behaviour

Results from the national survey are detailed below:



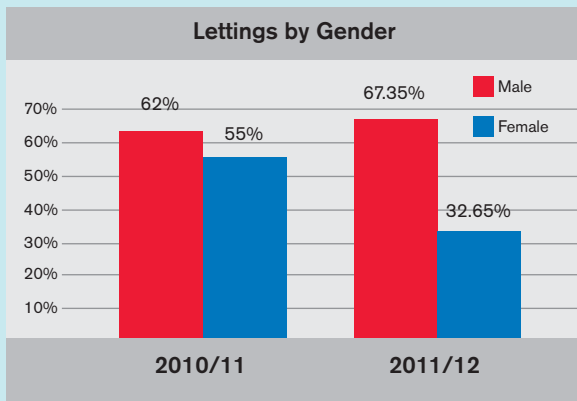
- **86%** of tenants agreed that premises were clean and suitable for use
- **87%** of tenants surveyed said that they were satisfied with the design and quality of the accommodation
- **83%** were satisfied with the information provided on rents and service charges
- Overall **90%** of Service Users felt safe and secure using RF Services

YOUR TENANCY

During 2011-12 we let 49 properties to new tenants, down from 62 in 2009-10.

RF has an allocation policy which specifies how people may apply for housing with us and what selection criteria are used. We monitor a range of information to ensure that we continue to house those in greatest need, both for accommodation and the range of support we offer to our tenants.

Lettings by Gender 2011-12

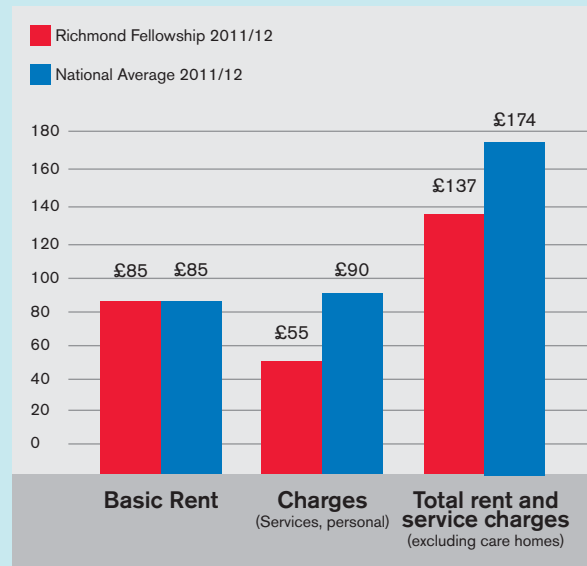


The average age of new tenants in 2011-12 was 36, the same as in 2010-11. Our new tenants are younger than the national average of 43 years.

The total number of lettings to tenants from BME backgrounds (22%) remained significantly above the national average (14%).

Lettings by Ethnic Groups	2011-12 RF Lettings	2011-12 National Average	Difference from National Average
White British	75%	81%	▼
White Irish and White Other	2%	4%	▼
Mixed	8%	3%	▲
Asian or Asian British	2%	4%	▼
Black or Black British	6%	7%	▼
Chinese or other ethnic group	6%	1%	▲
Total BME	22%	14%	▲

Each year we set rents for our properties, these are regulated by the HCA and there are specific rules about how much your rent can increase. As a housing association we are determined to provide you with housing that is affordable and



where rents and service charges are realistic and appropriate to the service you receive.

RF's average rent for new lettings was at the national average of £85. The average total of service and personal charges was £55 below the national average of £90.

In 2011-12 we collected all the rent and service charges due on our properties.

We offer a range of tenure in our services reflecting the nature of the accommodation and services on offer. We are required by the HCA to offer the most appropriate form of tenure to you depending on for example whether you live in permanent or short term accommodation.

We offer support to you to in meeting the obligations of your tenancy such as paying your rent and service charges, reporting repairs, and managing your relationships with your neighbours. If you have had difficulties in previous accommodation we can work together to reduce the risk of this happening in the future through your support plan.

YOUR HOME

100% of our homes meet or exceed the Decent Homes Standard, a government requirement which means that homes must be in a reasonable state of repair, with relatively modern facilities and services, and be warm and comfortable.

Repairs and maintenance are provided by our Property Services Department. We use approved contractors who have been selected for their expertise and ability to deliver high quality repairs and other works. We test the market regularly to ensure that we are getting value for money and check that contractors behave in accordance with our standards.

It is important to us that your home is well maintained and safe so we have a range of programmes and servicing arrangements.

REPAIRS PERFORMANCE 2011-12

The 2011/12 national Service User Satisfaction Questionnaire indicated that 78% of RF Service Users felt that repairs and maintenance were dealt with quickly and efficiently. The previous data was not obtained from tenants directly so there is no comparison currently available from previous years.

YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD & COMMUNITY

RF values community links as part of the recovery journey for Service Users. We recognise that often the sense of community that comes from living in a supported housing scheme or care home can help build confidence and encourage aspirations.

Neighbourhood initiatives are developed locally such as links with community groups, resident associations, and community safety groups.

We will continue to develop links in the community and promote social inclusion.

RF has a legacy fund which now makes funding available to Service Users for initiatives which promote social inclusion.

VALUE FOR MONEY

All RF services which are provided by external people or agencies are subject to a process of competitive tendering to ensure the services provided (e.g. maintenance) are of a good standard at a fair and acceptable price.

We will continue to seek better and more cost effective ways of providing services to tenants.

GOVERNANCE AND VIABILITY

Issues that relate to Service Users and tenants organisationally are discussed by our Service User Advisory Group which reports to the RF Board. This group comprises Service Users, Senior Managers and representatives from the Board.

RF is regulated by Companies House, the Homes and Communities Agency and the Charity Commission. RF complies with all these bodies' regulatory requirements as well as a wide range of other legislation, including the following Acts that affect tenants and other Service Users: Data Protection Act, Disability Discrimination Act, Equality Act, Care Standards Act, and the Mental Capacity Act.

The governance of the organisation, i.e. the rules and standards by which RF as an organisation is run, conform to the requirements of its regulators and is checked annually by our auditors. You will find more details about our governance in the RF Annual Report.

DEVELOPMENTS PLANNED FOR THE COMING YEAR 2012-2013

RF now has an established programme for reviewing Services. The reviews are intended to ensure that issues of performance and quality are addressed in a systematic and consistent manner across RF and include tenancy and accommodation issues. Tenants and Service Users are helping to carry out these reviews.

RF will review all housing management policies in 2012-13. These include policies relating to arrears, tenure, rent setting and anti-social behaviour amongst others.

RF is developing a strategy identifying those properties that would benefit from investment to ensure that in the future any accommodation provided is of a high standard.

