



**2010/11**  
**RF ANNUAL REPORT**  
to Tenants

# Welcome to the second **Richmond Fellowship (RF)** Annual Report to Tenants

## 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 277 people in properties we own. We also work with other landlords and manage another 400 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 Tenant Services Authority (TSA) which monitors our Housing Services to ensure we meet all required standards.

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

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

## Your Involvement

### Tenant Involvement and 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 2010-11 27 Service Users attended National Active Involvement Training**

**In our pilot survey 77% 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:

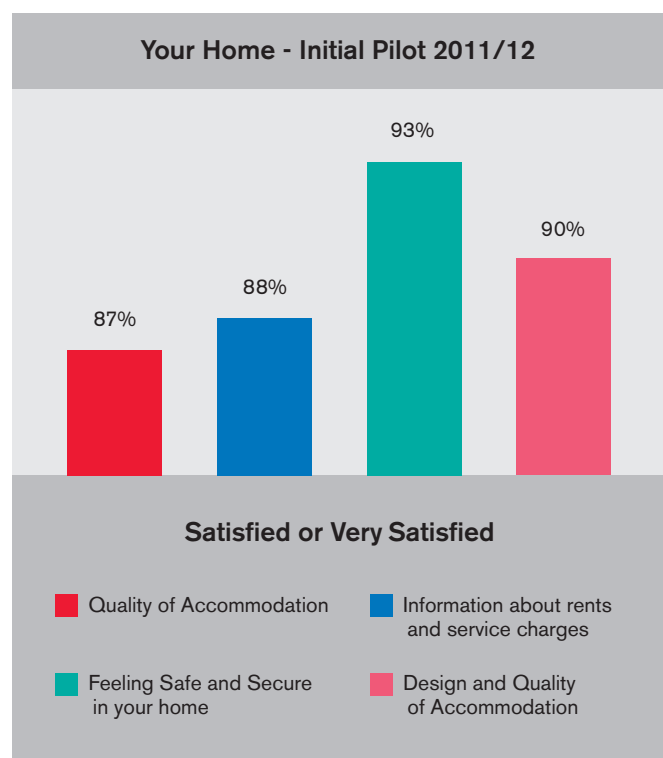
- a Tenancy Handbook which tells you about your tenancy and what responsibilities and rights you have as a Tenant.
- a "Statement of Service" which gives details of the type of support to be provided.
- a Complaints Leaflet which outlines how concerns, comments and suggestions can be made.

### In 2010-11 we:

- reviewed the complaints policy to make it simpler and easier to use
- developed our diversity strategy to increase our understanding and responses to the diverse needs of RF's Service Users.

Later this year we will invite you to tell us how you find the services we provide through a national survey. We have some initial results from a pilot survey of Tenants which are detailed below:

- 87% of Tenants surveyed said that they were satisfied with the quality of the accommodation
- 88% were satisfied with the information provided on rents and service charges
- 93% were satisfied with the safety and security of their homes
- 90% were satisfied with the design and quality of the accommodation

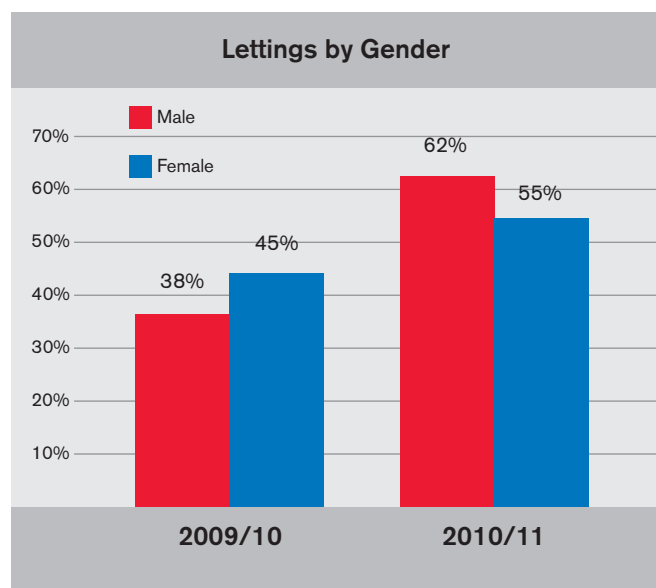


## Your Tenancy

During 2010-11 we let 62 properties to new Tenants, up from 50 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 2010-11

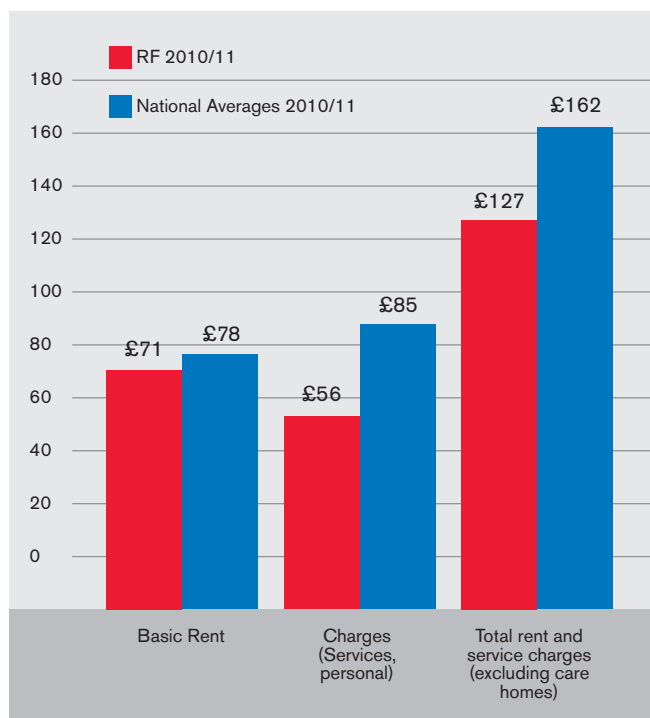


The average age of new Tenants in 2010-11 was 36, an increase from 2009-10 where the average age was 35. Our new Tenants are younger than the national average of 43 years.

The number of lettings to Tenants from BME backgrounds (16%) remained above the national average (15%).

Lettings by Ethnic Group	2010/11 RF Lettings	2010/11 National Average	Difference from National Average
White British	79%	81%	▼
White Irish & White Other	5%	4%	▲
Mixed	5%	3%	▲
Asian or Asian British	3%	4%	▼
Black or Black British	6%	7%	▼
Chinese or other ethnic group	2%	1%	▲
Total BME	16%	15%	▲

Each year we set rents for our properties, these are regulated by the TSA 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 below the national average as was the total of service and personal charge.

In 2010-11 we collected 97% of all 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 TSA 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.

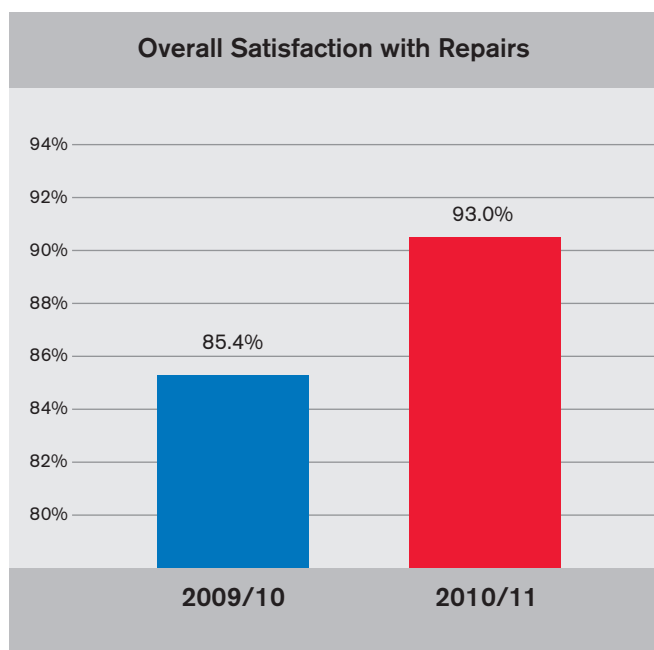
Repairs and maintenance are provided by our Property Services Department. We use approved contractors who have been selected for their expertise and ability to deliver high quality repairs and other works. We test the market regularly to ensure that we are getting value for money.

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

- In September 2011 the Building Maintenance Policy and Procedures were reviewed and approved by the Policy Review Group.

## Repairs Performance 2010-11

Overall there was an increase in satisfaction with repairs this year, up 7.6% on last years satisfaction levels.



## Your Neighbourhood and 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.

This year we retendered our maintenance contracts for works to our empty properties to get better value for money.

We have also found new suppliers for Gas and Electricity and any savings will be reflected in service charges passed on to Tenants.

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 and comprises representatives of Service Users, senior managers and the Board.

RF is regulated by Companies House, the Tenant Services Authority 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 a 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 and we will be inviting more to become assessors later this year.
- RF is currently obtaining feedback from Service Users, including Tenants, regarding their view of the service provided to them.
- We will be ensuring that more Service Users and Tenants are offered opportunities to be involved in policy development and review, training and recruitment in the next year.

