

# ANNUAL STATEMENT CUSTOMER UPDATE

## Celebrating our first year of Thriving Futures





**JULIE  
GUILDFORD  
SMITH**  
Honeycomb Group CEO

# Welcome to our annual statement



**As a Honeycomb Group customer, we know it's important for you to see how we're performing when it comes to our Thriving Futures ambitions. As you know, Thriving Futures is our five year corporate plan. It launched in July 2024 and will run until March 2029.**

It's all about building a stronger, more connected organisation that puts you at the centre of everything we do.

Thriving Futures builds on the progress we made in our previous plan and brings everyone in our Group together around a shared vision: helping you feel safe, supported, and confident in your home and community.

To make sure we get things right, we've broken the plan into three key phases. This step-by-step approach helps us focus on the essentials first, so we can keep improving the services that matter most to you.

Last year was our Improve phase, and it was all about improving the basics.

We focused on strengthening our finances, updating our systems, improving our customer data, and making sure we're delivering better services, all so we can create a strong foundation for the future.

During our recent customer events, coffee mornings and wider engagement sessions, you told us you wanted to hear more about our Thriving Futures progress.

Although we already share progress with involved customers several times a year, we loved the idea of sharing a full overview with all of you.

Within this document, you'll find an open and honest update of how we're doing. We've highlighted achievements and our Improve year success stories, but also shared areas where we know we need to develop.

We hope this proves an insightful update and look forward to hearing your thoughts when we see you next.

All the best, Julie







# Homes that help people thrive





# HOMES THAT HELP PEOPLE THRIVE

QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HOMES THAT ARE ECONOMICAL TO RUN, SAFE AND A PLACE THAT CUSTOMERS CAN FEEL PROUD OF

## We want your homes to be:

- Safe
- Warm and efficient
- A place you're proud of

## WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED IN OUR IMPROVE YEAR

### **96.5% of inspected homes meet the Decent Homes Standard.**

This year, we carried out inspections on 66% of your homes as part of a major stock survey. The results show that 96.5% of inspected homes meet the Decent Homes Standard, which means they're safe, warm and in good condition. We've also brought in new contractors to inspect a further 800 properties, aiming to reach 100% coverage soon. All empty homes now get an EPC assessment too, helping us plan for a more energy-efficient future.

### **We've introduced a smart new safety system to secure your homes.**

We completed the rollout of C365, our new system for tracking safety checks across all homes. It helps us stay on top of important areas like gas, fire, electricity, and water safety by pulling everything into one place and automating reporting—making sure nothing gets missed.

### **We tackled damp and mould by clearing gutters in over 100 homes.**

Blocked gutters can lead to water damage and mould. That's why we've cleaned gutters in more than 100 homes. We also launched "See Something, Say Something"—a campaign that encourages our staff teams to report any early signs of damp or mould, so we can fix problems quickly before they grow.





# HOMES THAT HELP PEOPLE THRIVE

**QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HOMES THAT ARE ECONOMICAL TO RUN, SAFE AND A PLACE THAT CUSTOMERS CAN FEEL PROUD OF**

## **We've helped more customers find the right home, even if it's not with us.**

Thanks to stronger partnerships with other housing providers, we've been able to signpost customers who need a different type of home—especially those who are looking for something outside our own stock. This means faster, more effective support when you need a change.

## **We've improved homelessness accommodation for women and are looking to do more.**

We've secured funding to upgrade our women's homelessness scheme at Snowhill, making it feel more like home. This is part of a wider plan to expand and improve female-focused housing, with more suitable properties being considered to meet growing needs.

## **We launched a home-swap Facebook group that's already connecting people.**

For customers looking to move, our new Mutual Exchange Facebook Group is already helping. Over 200 of you have joined, making it easier to find someone to swap with and move into a home that better suits their needs.

## **You helped shape a better repairs service.**

We launched a Repairs Focus Group where you have been directly involved in designing how we handle repairs. Your number one message? Contractors should treat each home as if it were their own. Your feedback has also helped create a better process for empty homes (voids) and supported funding bids through our sustainability work.

## **Keeping your landlord accountable.**

In January 2025, we launched customer Void Inspector roles. This is an important role in which trained customers view vacant homes to make sure they're ready to be let. If a Void Inspector feels the home isn't quite ready, this is fed back to the property and housing teams.

## **Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)**

We saw a significant improvement across TSM measures in January to March 2025 with a 28.8% increase in customers feeling their home is safe, a 19.5% increase of customers feeling their home is well-maintained, and a 20% increase in communal areas feeling clean and well maintained. A big thank you to all who shared this feedback!

# HOMES THAT HELP PEOPLE THRIVE

QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HOMES THAT ARE ECONOMICAL TO RUN, SAFE AND A PLACE THAT CUSTOMERS CAN FEEL PROUD OF

## ROOM FOR GROWTH

**A better repairs service is on the way – and it's what customers asked for most.**

We heard you loud and clear: repairs matter. In 2025/26, we'll roll out a brand-new repairs service, designed with your feedback at its heart. Whether it's fixing things faster or treating your home with more care, this is a major step forward – and one of the most important changes we'll make this year.

**We'll finish checking every single home.**

We've already inspected two-thirds of homes to check they meet the Decent Homes Standard – now we're going all the way. By the end of the year, we'll have visually inspected 100% of homes, giving us a full picture of where we need to invest and improve.

**Setting a new quality bar: "Proud to Call Home".**

We're not just checking homes – we're raising the standard. Alongside the government's new Decent Homes Standard 2.0, we'll launch our own "Proud to Call Home" standard, based on what matters most to customers. This is about making sure homes feel safe, comfortable, and truly lived in – not just ticking boxes.

**Supporting new homes and funding bids.**

We're working hard to support new homes and secure funding to improve existing ones. This includes helping Glow's Elizabeth House get vital repair funding, looking to expand into areas like Newcastle-under-Lyme, and growing supported housing options where they're needed most.

**Furthering our training to spot the signs of damp and mould.**

Damp, mould, and other safety issues can't be ignored. That's why we've trained all staff to spot the signs sooner – from front-line teams to support workers. This has helped us act faster and keep your home healthy and safe. We will continue to deliver and further this training - your safety is our priority.

**Campaigning for better housing for people with a history of domestic abuse.**

Housing shouldn't be a barrier to starting over. That's why we're planning a new campaign to tackle the challenges faced by people with a history of domestic abuse – including perpetrators where appropriate – and working toward safer, more suitable housing solutions. Everyone deserves a second chance in a safe place.



# Thriving customers





# THRIVING CUSTOMERS

EFFECTIVE SERVICES THAT HELP BREAK DOWN BARRIERS TO A HAPPY HOME FOR CUSTOMERS.

## We want our services to:

- Be easier to use
- Meet your needs
- Support your wellbeing

## WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED IN OUR IMPROVE YEAR

### We changed how we work in neighbourhoods to give better local support.

Our staff now look after smaller areas, so they can get to know the people and places better. This means customers see staff more often in their area, like during estate walkabouts and community meetings, and we work more closely with local people.

### We opened a new customer hub to answer questions quicker.

This new hub helps deal with calls and queries in one place. It's already helping to reduce waiting times from a 12 minute average in April - June 2024, to just over a 3 minute average in March 2025.

### We grew our volunteering programme and started new support services.

We now have a staff member who focuses on volunteers. We launched new services, like one at the Glow refuge with six volunteers, and expanded our Peer Mentor programme to support more people and work with new partners.

### We collected better information about our customers.

We now know more about our customers' backgrounds, including things like age, gender, and ethnicity, for 91% of them. We've also started recording shared spaces and customer needs during repair calls, so we can give the right help.





# THRIVING CUSTOMERS

EFFECTIVE SERVICES THAT HELP BREAK DOWN BARRIERS TO A HAPPY HOME FOR CUSTOMERS.

## **We started building a better housing system.**

Our old systems are slow and hard to use, so we're creating a new one to make things easier for staff and customers.

Your neighbourhood team will be able to access key information through the system from any location (so you'll receive a response right away, and not need to wait for our teams to head back to their office or desk).

## **We made our complaints process easier and clearer.**

We updated how we handle complaints to meet new rules and make things simpler for customers. We also started a review to learn from customer feedback. A group called the Customer Assurance Group, led by a customer, now helps us improve services.

## **'Deep dives' into the things that matter most**

Following your feedback, we have completed deep dive investigations to find the root cause of any challenges. We've also put actions in place to overcome any issues, and held ourselves accountable to make sure they're completed.

## **We held events to get more customers involved and set up new groups.**

We ran events in local areas to get more customers to help us shape services. New groups, like ones focused on repairs, are working well, and customers will soon help with checks on empty homes and support services.

## **Expanding anti-social behaviour support.**

We've taken a closer look at how we handle anti-social behaviour and made some real improvements with satisfaction up to 84.5% this quarter.

You told us the most important things are clear communication, feeling safe (with things like lighting and CCTV), and working well with other organisations. We're focused on these areas to help make your community a better place to live.

# THRIVING CUSTOMERS

EFFECTIVE SERVICES THAT HELP BREAK DOWN BARRIERS TO A HAPPY HOME FOR CUSTOMERS.

## ROOM FOR GROWTH

**A brand-new housing system is launching in summer 2025.**

We're introducing a modern, easy-to-use housing system that will make it simpler for you to get the help you need. Whether it's managing your rent, reporting a repair, or checking updates, everything will be faster and more straightforward.

**New webchat and self-service tools are on the way.**

You'll soon be able to contact us instantly online through webchat and manage more tasks yourself—anytime, anywhere. These tools will save you time and give you more control over your housing services.

**Complaints will be easier to make—and resolved quicker.**

We're improving how we handle complaints, so if something goes

wrong, it's easier to tell us and faster to fix. Our aim is to make the process clearer, fairer, and more focused on you.

**We're bringing in more diverse customer voices to shape our services.**

We're looking for customers from all backgrounds to get involved and help us make our services better for everyone. There will be new ways to share your ideas and influence real change in your community.

**More help for more people through charity and peer support.**

Our charity services are growing, and so is our peer mentor programme. That means more people with lived experience will be on hand to support others—whether it's recovering from a tough time or finding a new path forward.

**Driving positive tenant satisfaction measure change.**

In a recent report, some of our tenant satisfaction measures were lower than we hoped and we know we need to focus on increasing the number of peer mentors, our work around complaints and listening to your views and acting upon them.





# Thriving communities





# THRIVING COMMUNITIES

**BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS TO ACHIEVE OUR AIM OF CREATING AND SUSTAINING THRIVING, WELL-DESIGNED AND CONNECTED COMMUNITIES THAT ARE WELL-MANAGED AND SUSTAINABLE.**

**We want our communities to be:**

- **Friendly and connected**
- **Well-managed**
- **Safe and supportive**

## WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED IN OUR IMPROVE YEAR

### **Brought local housing groups together to solve big problems.**

We're a founding member of a new group in Stoke-on-Trent for leaders from all the local housing organisations. They now meet to talk about shared issues and plan better ways to help people with housing.

### **Worked closely with councils, MPs, and community groups.**

We joined local and national meetings to help with important issues like keeping people safe and dealing with problems in communities. We also worked more with MPs to solve local problems and got to know people better through estate visits.

### **Spoke at big national events and won award shortlists.**

We talked about our work at major conferences, like ones about homelessness and domestic abuse. Our work was recognised with five national awards.

### **Reached more people through social media.**

By the end of the year, over 112,000 people had seen our messages online. This helped more people learn about what we do and how we help communities.



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## **ROOM FOR GROWTH**

**Working together to reduce homelessness and domestic abuse.**

We're teaming up with local councils, charities, and support services to build stronger plans that prevent homelessness and tackle domestic abuse. This means more joined-up support, better services for those in crisis, and safer, more stable homes for everyone. Whether it's early help, refuge spaces, or long-term housing options, we're focused on creating real change in our communities.

**A new Social Value Report to show how we're making a difference.**

We're proud of the work we do – but we want to prove how it really helps people and places. That's why we're writing a brand-new Social Value Report, which will

show you how our services go beyond bricks and mortar to make life better. From job support to community wellbeing, you'll be able to see the impact of every pound we spend and every project we run – and how it all benefits you.

**Building stronger local networks to support your neighbourhood.**

Your neighbourhood is more than just where you live – it's your community. So we're strengthening our local networks, connecting with other organisations, community groups, and volunteers to bring in more support, activities, and resources. Whether it's local events, neighbourhood safety, or getting quicker help when you need it, these partnerships will help your area thrive.





VIVIAN CULVERT HOUSE  
**WELCOME**

**Thriving  
business**



# THRIVING BUSINESS

**BUILDING ORGANISATIONAL STRENGTH SO WE CAN DO MORE FOR NEW AND EXISTING CUSTOMERS. A STRONG AND RESILIENT BUSINESS, WE FOCUS ON VALUE AND INVESTING WHERE IT MATTERS MOST.**

## **We want our business to be:**

- **Strong**
- **Well-run**
- **Focused on value**

## **WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED IN OUR IMPROVE YEAR**

### **We're in a stronger financial position: We're spending money wisely and saving more.**

Our financial results are much better, and we've kept our costs lower than other similar organisations. We've also saved more money for the future, so we can keep helping people long-term.

### **We're using better systems to help us work smarter.**

We've started work on a new finance system called Rubixx Finance. It makes things quicker, helps us avoid mistakes, and gives managers a clearer view of their budgets so they can plan better.

**We're improving our technology: We have a new plan to upgrade our computer systems.** This includes making our systems safer from cyber attacks and looking at ways to use artificial intelligence to work more efficiently.

### **We've secured funding to keep important services running.**

We've extended contracts for our support and wellbeing services so customers who need help can keep getting it.

### **We've strengthened how we lead and make decisions.**

We've made sure we meet all the rules for good leadership, started a new Charity Board, and added experienced people to our Board, including a new Chair. This helps us make good choices and stay on track.

### **We're tracking our progress better.**

We've created a new way to measure how we're doing. It includes better data checks and clear reports for leaders,

so we can focus on what really matters to our customers.

### **We're managing risks and staying on top of the rules.**

After a review of our risk plans, we've made improvements and trained our teams to be ready for any problems. We're also checking that we follow important rules, like those about rent and customer service.

### **We're getting ready for a big inspection.**

Since June 2024, we've been preparing for a visit from our regulator. We've set up a team, with weekly meetings, and completing practice interviews and document checks to make sure we're fully ready and meeting high standards.





# THRIVING BUSINESS

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## ROOM FOR GROWTH

### **Making sure we always meet high standards.**

We're committed to meeting all the rules and standards that apply to our charity and housing services. That means doing things properly, keeping customers safe, and making sure our homes and support meet the highest expectations – now and in the future.

### **Welcoming a customer onto our Board.**

We've recruited a customer onto our Board member team. This is a big step in making sure real customer voices are heard at the top level of decision-making. It's your experiences, ideas, and priorities that will help shape our future.

### **Strengthening how we manage risk and use data.**

We're continuing to improve how we manage risks and use information. Better systems and data mean we can spot issues early, make smarter decisions, and respond faster when things go wrong – keeping you and your home safe, secure, and supported.





Champions for  
Happy Homes



# Thriving culture



# THRIVING CULTURE

A 'CAN DO' CULTURE WITH A SKILLED AND HAPPY WORKFORCE THAT WORKS TOGETHER AND GOES OUT OF THEIR WAY TO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN FOR CUSTOMERS.

## **We want our staff to be:**

- **Skilled and supported**
- **Positive and helpful**
- **Focused on you**

## **WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED IN OUR IMPROVE YEAR**

### **Launched a new People Strategy to attract and keep great staff.**

We've introduced a brand-new People Strategy focused on bringing in the best people – and keeping them. It looks at every stage of a colleague's journey with us, from recruitment to development, so they feel supported, motivated, and proud to deliver the best for our customers.

### **Improving staff pay fairness through the Parity Project.**

We're committed to fairness for all. That's why we launched The Parity Project, which is helping us make sure pay and rewards are fair and consistent across the organisation.

It's all about treating everyone equally and recognising the value every colleague brings – no matter their role.

### **Listened to staff through wellbeing and engagement surveys.**

We asked colleagues how they feel – and 78% told us this is a great place to work. We didn't stop there. We ran a dedicated wellbeing survey as part of our Thrive at Work programme, showing we care about both the physical and mental health of our team. We're also on track to achieve foundation status from the West Midlands Combined Authority.

### **Relaunched staff inclusion and engagement groups.**

We've relaunched our EDI (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion) forum, staff engagement forum, and leadership forum – giving colleagues more voice, more influence, and more space to shape how we work. Both the EDI forum and involved customers helped to develop the EDI Strategy for 2025–2029, making real impact from the inside out.

### **Improved how we track performance and support teams.**

Supporting great performance matters. That's why we relaunched My Check In, our tool to track one-to-one conversations between staff and managers.

We also know it's important to set our teams objectives to ensure we're achieving the ambitions set out in Thriving Futures, our five year corporate plan.

To further this, we have created a new appraisal process and sickness policy to make sure every colleague feels seen, supported, and set up to succeed.



# THRIVING CULTURE

A 'CAN DO' CULTURE WITH A SKILLED AND HAPPY WORKFORCE THAT WORKS TOGETHER AND GOES OUT OF THEIR WAY TO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN FOR CUSTOMERS.

## ROOM FOR GROWTH

**Launching a new HR system to support our staff even more.**

We're bringing in a brand-new HR system that will make it easier for our staff to get the support they need. This means less time spent on admin and more time focused on helping customers like you. When our staff feel supported, they can give you the very best service.





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