

Customer homes:

working smarter, better
and faster for you

We know that keeping homes and communities in great shape is one of the most important things for us to get right.

- Between April 2021 and March 2022, we completed **35,437** repairs.
- Tenant satisfaction with these repairs was **91%**.
- **99%** of repairs were completed within the target deadline.



Here's just **three projects** capturing how we made that happen...

1 Better communication matters

This the year we changed how we communicate with people about repairs.

Feedback from our Insights team showed us that not knowing what was happening after reporting a problem was more annoying for our customers than how repairs are done or how quickly.

So we've changed how we do things. We reviewed when we communicate, how often and the methods we use.

As long as we have up-to-date contact details our customers now get confirmation of appointments, reminders a few days before, and a message to confirm we're on our way.

We also learned that if we have to revisit a repair, for example if we need replacement parts to complete a job, people wanted better information on when we'd return. So now, where possible, the operative will book the second visit there and then. Wherever possible we will arrange for the same operative to finish the job. That avoids customers having to explain the situation a second time.

All this change has been helped by us investing in a new IT system. Accuserve is an online, live diary that allows us to plan routes better to fit more jobs in, and also to track in real time what jobs have been done that day and where teams are. It means we can tell customers when we are on our way and avoid time slots that are tricky for people.

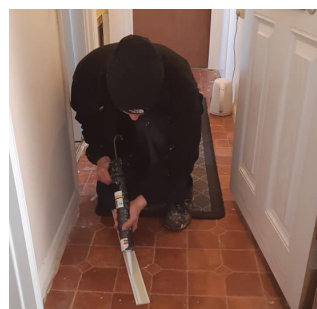
Feedback from customers is telling us this is making a difference. We'll continue to listen and learn.

2 Our award-winning Repairs Academy

Growing and developing our own workforce ensures that we have skilled colleagues who understand and live our values. It also allows us to create career opportunities for local people, including our own tenants, and to increase the diversity of our workforce.

One impact on customers is shorter time waiting for repairs, as we can send an apprentice out with an experienced mentor on jobs that require two people, freeing up the second experienced team member to attend another job with another apprentice. Recruiting familiar faces who really know the local area and our homes is another benefit.

Our approach also means a wider benefit for the community, as each year the apprentices complete a community project. This year Southbrook Community Centre was the beneficiary, receiving a free revamp as the apprentices put their skills to the test to help others and in 2021 a local school had an outdoor woodland classroom built.



2. Our award-winning Repairs Academy continued

Currently the award-winning Repairs Academy has 21 people learning a range of skills including painting and decorating, carpentry, electricals, plumbing and plastering. Many of them are now going on to further learning, having completed their end point assessments, with some now completing out-of-hours emergency repairs to hone their trade and boost this service to customers.

To provide further opportunities, in 2021-22 Futures became involved in the government's Kickstart programme which gave long term unemployed under-24s the opportunity of a work placement. This resulted in three out of the four placements (in the repairs team) being offered permanent opportunities with us. We also hosted ten work experience (year 11 pupils) opportunities through various local schools.



“Growing our own helps protect us against skill shortages, and invest in people who really want to learn and develop a specialist trade. We get really positive feedback from customers and colleagues about our academy team, and I’m very proud of them all.”

Lee Pratt, Repairs Academy Manager

3 Energy efficient:

better for the environment,
better for your pocket

We're investing significantly in improving the energy efficiency of homes, keeping people warmer for less. With energy bills rising, work to improve existing homes is a key priority.



Thanks to government grant funding and our own contribution, we fitted external wall and cavity insulation on more than 230 homes in 2021-22. We plan to improve a further 190 homes next year with external wall insulation, solar panels, low energy lighting and draught proofing.

One area to have benefitted is Ironville, where 70 properties (21 of them owned by Futures) have received external wall insulation and window upgrades where necessary. These homes were losing a lot of heat, but are now far better at keeping energy in - and the cold out! Render on the external walls has also improved the appearance of properties, while retaining the historic character of the area.

“Our focus has been on the right communication, at the right time in a way that suits customers. Feedback has shown it’s made a real difference to customer satisfaction with repairs and planned works.”

Paul Johnson, Director of Asset Investment