

What's been happening in South & Central Region 2022/23

Community Planning & Resilience

- We have launched 2 new community plans in Moss Green (Stoke-on-Trent) and Margate (Thanet). Patch plans have also been developed for our smaller communities where they have been needed: Thanet West (Thanet), Meir (Stoke-on-Trent) and Castleward (Derby).
- The Riverside Foundation Community Fund has awarded £6,474 to deliver local projects and these have included children and youth related outreach activities and a project supporting with the cost-of-living crisis.
- Support Directories have been created for Derby, Leicester, Sandwell, Stoke-on-Trent and Thanet. These directories contain listings of organisations and agencies providing a diverse range of support services such as young and older people services, food support, furniture resources, cost-of-living support services and domestic abuse services, to mention a few.
- In our community plan areas, we have delivered several initiatives to improve our neighbourhoods, such as environment improvement works, ASB enforcement action and initiatives, fundays and supporting community groups resume activities.
- In response to the cost-of-living crisis we launched our Well Fed Riverside Campaign to tackle food poverty, as part of this we distributed £11,998 of funding to 2 local food projects within South & Central who provide support within our communities.

Listening to Customers

- We gathered feedback from 1363 customers from the South & Central Region as part of the customer experience survey
- 548 households were contacted across the 2 new community plan areas (Moss Green and Margate) for customers to provide feedback and identify their priorities for their neighbourhood.
- We produced 2 local offer documents for Moss Green and Margate, and these have been sent out to customers informing of what we are doing in response to feedback given.

Digital Services

We have increased the use of our digital services.

- We have increased the membership of iCommunity, we now have 639 members in the region which represents 40% of the total membership
- There has been an 20% increase this year in people using My Riverside to log repairs (49.1%)

Delivering New Homes & Improving Existing Homes

- We have developed and delivered 310 new homes – 155 affordable rent, 16 social rent, 63 shared ownership, 2 rent to buy and 76 open market sale.
- Through our 2022/23 planned programme, we have delivered 730 improvements (19 kitchens, 222 windows, 244 doors and 245 cyclical decoration works).

Tackling Homelessness

- We have continued to support 10 customers as part of the Medway (Kent) Housing First Service as well as 5 customers through the Housing First Service in Guildford
- We secured Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funding to deliver a Housing First Service in Swale, Kent
- We delivered 8 homes for rough sleepers in Swale and Medway as part of the Next Steps Accommodation Programme.

Supporting Customers – National figures

- Our Money Advice Service had 1,200 successful claims and secured £4 million cash gains for our customers.
- Our Affordable Warmth team assisted 900 customers and made a savings of £100,000
- Our Employment & Training Team provided support to 270 customers, supported 65 people into jobs, and 54 into training.
- We gave 13 awards through our Ladders of Aspiration Funding, which gives people the opportunity to gain training and professional qualifications leading to employment or self-employment.
- We also awarded 60 Helping Hands Grants, these grants are to support people back into employment, some examples of what the grants are used for include: interview clothes, travel expenses and specialist workwear