

Annual Report to Members

2023/2024





Welcome from Andrew

Welcome to the 2024 Annual Report to Members from the RBH Representative Body

A message from Deputy Chair, Andrew Johnson

I would like to welcome you to our 2024 Annual Report to Members.

Our mutuality is focused on bringing genuine voice and influence to our customers and our colleagues in how we deliver our services, and we will continue to work hard to ensure participation for those who want to be heard through open membership of our Society. We will ensure there is a long term commitment embedded in our Corporate Strategy to bring our mutuality to life for our colleagues and people living in our homes.

I am proud of the work the Representative Body have achieved this year, but we know there is still more to do. We continue to face significant challenges in dealing with the rising cost of living and we will continue to work with teams across RBH to support tenants and members with advice and signposting where possible.

We will continue to work with Members and encourage them to be involved in creating a thriving and active community. Together, we can drive improvements to services, so that quality homes, in thriving communities, make Rochdale a great place to live and work.

I would like to thank Alex Allen for his contribution to the Representative Body as the previous Representative Body Chair who has been vital in the work that we've done this year.

I would like to welcome Claire Dalton who is the new independent Interim Representative Body Chair who was appointed in June 2024. She will help lead the Representative Body and drive the development of the new Membership Strategy as well as supporting the new scrutiny function.

**Andrew Johnson,
Representative Body Deputy Chair**

Members' Community Fund

Our grant funding initiative is designed to support local grassroots organisations and community groups. We prioritise aiding smaller local groups over larger charities and social enterprises, as the latter often have access to additional resources from national funding sources.

Over the past year, the Members' Community Funding Panel, consisting of tenant and employee members, has awarded numerous small grants to various community groups throughout the borough, significantly impacting the local community. In total, we supported 18 projects, allocating £58,883 in funding, benefiting nearly 2,500 individuals.

Case study

Uniform for All (Received £5,000).

The "Uniform for All" project provided recycled, good-quality school uniforms to families across Rochdale. This project collected donated uniforms, cleaned and repaired them, and made them available to those in need. It helped children attend school in proper attire, reducing the risk of bullying and ensuring they could focus on their education.

Spotland Estate TRA (Received £1,715).

The Spotland Estate TRA project, in collaboration with the Rochdale Field Naturalists' Society, ran a series of four outdoor workshops throughout the year. The project successfully reconnected young people and local communities with nature, fostering a sense of responsibility towards their environment, and promoting biodiversity in the area.

Q Gardens (Received £2,020).

The Q Gardens project invited schools, clubs, and other groups to adopt raised beds in the garden to grow their own food. This initiative aimed to reduce isolation, promote social interaction, and encourage healthy eating. Surplus produce was donated to The Pantry in the Hub at the Strand, further supporting the community.

Maverick Lab CIC – New Pioneers Bursary (Received £5,000).

The New Pioneers Bursary created a vibrant and supportive community through various events and initiatives, including Christmas and Halloween parties, as well as Iftar celebrations. The project benefited over 150 individuals, fostering community engagement and improving the quality of life for residents.

In this report, we highlight a few of the many valuable groups and the positive effects their services and support have had on the community.

18

Number of projects supported

£58,883

Total amount of funding allocated

Almost 2,500

Number of beneficiaries

Projects Supported

- **Association of Ukrainians**
Language Café
- **Become United**
Nature Sessions
- **Caring & Sharing**
Foodbank and Pantry
- **Celestial Church of Christ**
Health Launch Out
- **Freehold TRA**
After school club and Food Pantry
- **Echoes of Hope**
Over 40's ICT learning & mental health skills
- **Heywood Foodbank**
- **Our Local Pantry Smallbridge**
Pantry
- **Maverick LAB CIC**
New Pioneers bursary
- **Q Gardens in the Community**
Wellbeing through gardening
- **Army of Kindness**
- **Spotland Estate TRA SETRA**
Improving biodiversity in Rochdale
- **Uniform for All**
- **Boarshaw Amateur Boxing Club**
- **Rochdale Foodbank**
Pantry
- **Zeal Empowerment Advocacy**
Wellbeing matters

Representative Body scrutiny

How your Representatives are undertaking their new scrutiny role

In the year 2023/24, the Representative Body have made some big strides in its role working as a key part of RBH's governance and working with the Board and the Executive to improve how things are done. In November 2023, members voted to give the Representative Body more responsibility to carry out in depth reviews of different parts of the business, otherwise known as scrutiny. It was agreed that they would carry out three scrutiny reviews each year to assess how our services are delivered, capture good practice and look at where improvements can be made.

To help them get started, Representatives worked with tenant engagement experts, TPAS. These experts helped the Representative Body learn new skills and to guide them through their first review. Using information from customers and performance data, the Representative Body picked out a few areas they wanted to look into more closely.

One of the first things they decided to review was how RBH handles gas servicing, especially when they can't get access customer's homes. They will be looking at the processes and how RBH communicates with customers about appointments. The goal of this review is to provide feedback and recommendations that make things work better for both the the business and more importantly, our customers.

Once the Representative Body finishes their review and gathers their recommendations, they will present them to the Customer Services Committee. This Committee, which includes Board Members and two Customer Members, will look at the recommendations and make sure these are put into action. This way, the Representative Body is helping to make sure RBH keeps improving and providing better services for everyone.

Membership in numbers



The Representative Body met **eight times** in 2023-24.

33.4%
of all
tenants

As at 31 March 2024, we have
4,558 tenant members
and **392 employee members.**

64.5%
of all
employees

The Representative Body also held four special briefing sessions and held two joint sessions with the Board and Executive Team in October 2023, and March 2024.

Update on the Membership Strategy

An interim Membership Strategy has been developed alongside the one year Corporate Strategy which includes a commitment to having a positive impact in all that we do.

Our mutuality gives us a great opportunity to demonstrate how we are listening to customers and colleagues, ensuring their voice is heard loud and clear throughout our business.

We aspire, and will work towards, 100% of the membership within RBH being knowledgeable, engaged and active about mutuality and customer/colleague ownership however we recognise that this is not attainable for a variety of legitimate logistical, cultural and practical reasons.

We aim to provide Membership that is meaningful and enables our Members to see how their involvement has made a real difference to how we do things.

There are three key aims of this interim strategy:

- Ensure customers and colleagues understand what mutuality means
- Develop the membership offer to provide clarity on the benefits
- Making it easier for Members to have their say and communicate the outcomes of their contribution

These aims will ensure that we are providing a wide range of opportunities for Members to provide their views and feedback to us, which help inform the development of a new three-year Membership Strategy in March 2025.



Feeding back

What your Representatives have been up to on your behalf this year.



The development in collaboration with the Board of Directors and Executive Leadership Team of the new Corporate Strategy and Values.



Approved the Mutual Rules which were approved by the Special Members Meeting in November 2023.



Carried out a review of its governance functions and working groups to ensure these were fit for purpose and delivering their objectives.



The Representative Body also received reports on the delivery of the recovery plan, damp and mould taskforce, Regulator update and MyRBH/ Digital Services.



Approved the appointments of Non-executive Directors.



Approved the appointment of the Chief Executive.



Reviewed the Empty Homes Standard.



Approved the budget spend of the Support and Development budget.



Approved its new Terms of Reference and Representative Body Role Profile.



Approved its new Scrutiny Terms of Reference and areas for scrutiny for 2024.



Approved changes to the remuneration of the Board Chair and Non-executive Directors.



Monitored the delivery of the Membership Strategy.

Representative Body

The year ahead

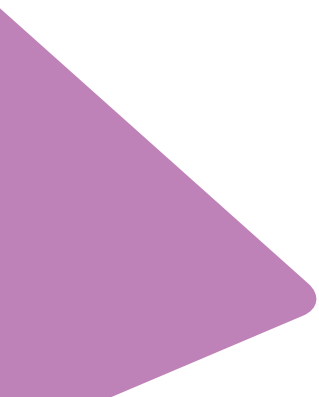
As we look ahead to the coming year, we intend to progress with renewed vigour, passion, and commitment to make a difference to Members, customers, our colleagues and the local community here in Rochdale.

We are confident that knowledge from lessons learnt, coupled with empowerment to do the right thing first time, will shine through.

The Representative Body will be focused on delivering the aims of the interim Membership Strategy, in order to develop a new three year Membership Strategy, which will be launched in March 2025.

This will involve consultation with both Members and Non-Members to gauge their views on the Membership aims over the next three years.

We will also be focused on developing our scrutiny role and considering what areas of the business to focus on with a view to improving services for customers and employees.



Tenant Representatives



Claire Dalton

Interim Representative Body Deputy Chair



Andrew Johnson

Representative Body Deputy Chair



Muhammed Ansari



Andy Brown



Atif Hussain



Kate Lowerson



Andrew Butterworth



Bernard Cass



Ziggy Prusinowski



Olufemi Shangobiya



Donna Chadwick



Donald Ferguson



Mark Slater

Employee Representatives



James Coutts



Stephen Edwards



John McDermott



Sam Purdy



Piotr Sipowicz



**Get in touch
with your
Representatives**

Email rep.body@rbh.org.uk,
call Freephone **0800 027 7769**
and ask for the Governance
Team, or visit www.rbh.org.uk.

Thank you to the Representatives who have retired from the Representative Body over the past year:

Employees:

Alex Allen, Bede Nicholson, Yasmeen Hasnain, Natasha Snape, Cass Hasford

Tenants:

Linda Petrecz, Lucia Ogunniran, Debra Anderson, Haroon Mirza, Agata Gorczyca, Jane Taylor and Mohammed Akhtar (all resigned between April 23 and September 23).

Rochdale Boroughwide Housing Limited is a charitable community benefit society. FCA register number 31452 R.
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Registered as a provider of social housing. RSH Register number 4607.