

## Highlight Summary Report

2023/24 Q4

### Housing Options & Homelessness

Priorities	Highlights & progress to support priorities	Substantive risks (if any) to delivering the priorities
<p>Encouraging homeless prevention initiatives to prevent people from becoming homeless.</p> <p>Encouraging private sector landlords to accommodate homeless applicants.</p> <p>Reducing the number and period of time of households living in temporary accommodation by continuing to focus on improving our access to alternative accommodation and move-on accommodation.</p>	<p>The team are increasing work in the Private rented sector to secure homes to prevent and relief homelessness</p>	<p>As the reliance on temporary accommodation rises this risks costs exceeding budget. Larger household costs particularly increases the pressure on temporary accommodation and we are keen to increase permanent lets to reduce the implications of this.</p>

### Repairs & Maintenance

Priorities	Highlights & progress to support priorities	Substantive risks (if any) to delivering the priorities
<p>Delivering a good value service with high customer satisfaction.</p> <p>Tackling the challenge of recruiting skilled staff, including by developing our in-house team to upskill them in all aspects of repairs and maintenance.</p>	<p>During the fourth quarter, the work planning team was reintegrated into the repair team. Throughout this period, the team focused on year-end procedures to finalise and close out projects. While this may not be reflected in the performance metrics, significant work has been done behind the scenes.</p> <p>The repair team, along with the council call centre, participated in workshops to review and streamline internal processes, aiming to reduce unnecessary “waste” across CBH repairs operation. These sessions have proven beneficial for all team members, contributing to the development of an action plan for the team to implement.</p>	<p>A substantial number of repairs have been completed, which has had a significant impact on the budget. The repairs team has received a high volume of complaints that require direct investigation. We are also experiencing a surge in service access requests and freedom of information inquiries.</p> <p>In addition, there has been a high volume of sickness within the team, including four cases of Covid and two operations. This has put a</p>

	<p>A comprehensive review of the service has been undertaken to distinguish between qualifying repairs and more complex cases. Supervisors will soon have scheduled inspections with residents for all complex cases, planning to reduce number of complaints with communications.</p> <p>It's worth noting that the in-house team achieved their highest satisfaction score for the year during this quarter, with a remarkable 93.92%. This is a testament to the team's hard work and dedication. We look forward to maintaining this momentum in the upcoming quarters.</p>	<p>strain on our team resources. We are actively managing these challenges to ensure minimal disruption to our services.</p>
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## Housing Asset Management

Priorities	Highlights & progress to support priorities	Substantive risks (if any) to delivering the priorities
<p>Balancing the requirements of the new Decent Homes Standard, Building Safety Act and New Zero Carbon agenda in an affordable and sustainable way.</p> <p>Focusing on essential works: kitchens, bathrooms, heating, windows, doors, roof replacements, etc. whilst developing and implementing programmes to ensure we meet future challenges.</p> <p>Working with the Council to develop an action plan for the delivery of the targets detailed within the new asset management strategy.</p> <p>Supporting the Council in ensuring the long-term sustainability of its 30-year Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.</p> <p>Supporting the Council on its ambitions for the development of new homes.</p>	<p>Capital Elements: The Asset Management team exceeded their target for completion of Capital Elements, achieving 92.2% against a target of 85%. This accomplishment reflects effective prioritisation and alignment with the Asset Management Strategy.</p> <p>Energy Efficiency: The team nearly achieved the year-end target for energy efficiency, with 86.47% of properties reaching an EPC rating of C or above. This demonstrates significant progress towards a more energy-efficient portfolio.</p> <p>Forward Planning for 2024/25: The Asset Management team has proactively initiated planning for 2024/25. This planning focuses on: Resource Allocation: Optimising the allocation of resources to ensure efficient program delivery. Pre-Commencement Surveys: Conducting necessary surveys in advance to minimize delays and ensure project readiness.</p> <p>Procurement Activities: Implementing strategic procurement activities to secure efficient contracts for required works.</p>	<p>To meet the increased volume of work generated through the 2024/25 programme it will be necessary to increase resources, and procurement activities. This is occurring during challenging times, and will require a great deal of planning, inputting and processing alongside robust project management. It will be necessary to review some current practices within the team to ensure that an efficient plan is produced and executed.</p> <p>While we are actively engaged in recruiting key personnel to support the substantial workload of the 2024/25 program, we recognize the ongoing challenges in filling these roles. Our team is exploring various options to ensure timely staffing and successful programme delivery.</p>

## Sustainable Homes

Priorities	Highlights & progress to support priorities	Substantive risks (if any) to delivering the priorities
<p>Focusing on properties where an improved energy performance rating is more challenging and requires a greater investment.</p>	<p>High Energy Ratings: Our housing stock boasts an impressive 86.47% of properties achieving an EPC rating of C or above. This signifies a healthy position and demonstrates our commitment to energy efficiency.</p> <p>Exceeding Benchmarks: The average SAP score of 75.71 surpasses the benchmark of 71. This achievement, verified by 'Parity Portfolio' software, highlights the exceptional performance of our housing stock.</p> <p>Reduced Emissions: Since monitoring began in 2021, we've achieved a remarkable 60kg per property/year reduction in CO2 emissions from heating. This demonstrates a tangible impact on our environmental footprint.</p> <p>Leading the Way: The average CO2 level is 20kg per property lower than industry benchmarks (source: 'Parity Portfolio' software).</p>	<p>There is a requirement to establish and adopt a strategy for the 'harder to insulate' properties within the stock, especially where these will require a significant investment to achieve energy performance targets.</p>

## Housing Management

Priorities	Highlights & progress to support priorities	Substantive risks (if any) to delivering the priorities
<p>Welfare reform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting tenants to sustain their tenancies and maintaining collection rates.</li> <li>• Continuing to develop staff knowledge and skills.</li> <li>• Working towards a better understanding of the support needs of our customers to help them sustain tenancies.</li> <li>• Being proactive and positively responding to rent arrears lessens both the likelihood of</li> </ul>	<p>Arrears have fallen across all arrears categories (except for the £701-£800 category), with low -level arrears between £1 - £200 seeing the largest reductions.</p> <p>ASB Policy has been reviewed following housing ombudsman recommendations.</p> <p>All CBH staff have now received basic domestic abuse awareness training throughout the last year to support our DAHA accreditation</p>	<p>Universal Credit migration has recommenced at a slow speed, but UC cases have now reached 2400 at the end of March 2024 (40% of all tenants) outnumbering HB cases. We estimate around 350 more cases in 2024/25. Irrespective of the work conducted by the Financial Inclusion Team and Lettings Team more UC tenants will always lead to higher rent arrears because of the nature of UC payments being monthly in</p>

<p>escalation and in turn the severity potentially saving the tenancy and preventing homelessness.</p> <p>Income collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing our rent collection processes and support available to tenants.</li> <li>• Delivering effective tenancy management to reduce the money owed by former tenants.</li> </ul> <p>Community safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with partners offering a range of interventions to victims and perpetrators of antisocial behaviour.</li> <li>• Ensuring that our estates and communal areas are clean and safe.</li> </ul> <p>We will provide a valued service to our leaseholders and maintaining collection rates for leasehold service charges and capital repairs will continue to be an important focus.</p> <p>We will continue to communicate more effectively to demonstrate to tenants and leaseholders that we listen and improve services.</p>		<p>arrears and initial delays in processing new applications. Significant resources are input to supporting all new tenants with UC and other benefit claims to try and prevent arrears.</p> <p>Continuing to receive increased numbers of ASB reports.</p> <p>Domestic abuse case reporting is increasing with 20 cases supported throughout 2023/24.</p>
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## Letting Homes

Priorities	Highlights & progress to support priorities	Substantive risks (if any) to delivering the priorities
<p>Starting, amending and ending tenancies more efficiently, minimising void times and rent lost through properties being empty.</p> <p>Maximising the use of Council homes, for example targeting underoccupation by promoting mutual exchanges and</p>	<p>The performance for the previous quarter has demonstrated a consistent upward trend on a month-to-month basis. The full year target was met, however, performance during the year improved and the target was met for a consecutive four-month period. Performance was very positive when compared to other national organisations, as per Housemark benchmarking.</p>	<p>Close monitoring of the new clearance process to ensure effectiveness.</p> <p>Communication between Repairs and Lettings team to avoid disruption to overall re let times.</p>

<p>encouraging tenants to downsize where appropriate.</p> <p>Carrying out pre-termination inspections to minimise delays and reduce money owed by former tenants.</p>	<p>Currently, we have 30 voids in progress, which are divided between the Houghton contractor team and our in-house team. There has been a slight decline in Houghton's performance this month, and we are actively collaborating with them to understand the underlying reasons and to rectify the situation promptly.</p> <p>All financial matters related to voids at the end of the year were accounted for within the stipulated timeframe and are presently being processed. There was an overspend on the allocated budget, primarily due to a higher number of voids than anticipated, the condition of the returned properties, and additional electrical/fire-related works required to comply with the relevant regulations.</p> <p>The Service Level Agreement with CCC for void clearance work has now concluded. We have engaged with Colchester Removal Services (CRS), who are performing well and are up-to-date with all assigned tasks, including evictions. CRS has taken over some tasks that CCC was unable to complete, which were subsequently returned to CBH.</p>	
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## Building Safety & Compliance

Priorities	Highlights & progress to support priorities	Substantive risks (if any) to delivering the priorities
<p>We will continue to ensure that high-quality health and safety and risk management frameworks are in place that ensure we can programme essential health and safety checks in respect of all areas of property compliance.</p> <p>We will put in place additional desktop and on-site checks/tests by an assurance specialist to ensure that contractors engaged on compliance works have completed their works correctly, and in accordance with relevant legislation.</p>	<p>We continue to focus on our key six compliance areas with excellent performance results across all measures. Our particular focus has been on closing down the remaining high risk fire safety actions and to begin the mobilisation of the new gas service and repairs contract with Aaron Services Ltd.</p>	<p>We will be picking up any gas services not attended to by Mears as we transition to the new contractor, Aaron Services, This will affect performance for the first couple of months of the new financial year. Aaron Services are aware of the immediate priority to ensure the impact is managed from their start date, being 1 May. They have brought in additional resources to help manage the</p>

<p>We will ensure there are robust processes in place to ensure actions arising from the above additional checks are addressed in an appropriate and timely manner.</p> <p>We will continue to monitor the impact of the Building Safety and Fire Safety Acts as they apply to the stock we manage and are planning to introduce additional work streams (e.g. planned maintenance of Fire Doors) to ensure our buildings remain safe.</p> <p>We will continue to ensure we meet all regulatory and legislative obligations.</p>		<p>workload and increase service visits during this period.</p>
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## Customer

Priorities	Highlights & progress to support priorities	Substantive risks (if any) to delivering the priorities
<p>We will continue to make improvements to how we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make our services accessible.</li> <li>• communicate with customers.</li> <li>• listen to customers consistently across our business.</li> <li>• support a customer-focused culture.</li> <li>• translate customer insight and feedback into priorities &amp; service design.</li> </ul> <p>We will focus on implementing the Social Housing Regulation Bill including in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrating best practice in customer engagement</li> <li>• dealing with complaints promptly and fairly</li> <li>• making improvements to our services in response to customer feedback</li> </ul>	<p>Complaints: The New Housing Ombudsman Code for complaints has been launched, and we are currently working to update our policies and procedures to meet the standards and address any gaps. We are also working on the required Self-assessment due to be submitted to the Regulator the end of June 24.</p> <p>We successfully achieved Complaints Accreditation with Housemark with a 'Good' grading. There was some very complimentary feedback and also some recommendations, which we will be addressing and drawing up an action plan.</p> <p>The newly established Complaints 'Customer Focus Panel' recently met in February and has taken a look at the complaints process and started the design of an 'Easy Read' version for people with vulnerabilities or whose English is not their first language, to increase our accessibility to customers. They will be meeting again in May to discuss the impact of the changes with the new</p>	<p>We have experienced an increase in the Housing Ombudsman cases, which is likely to continue and along with Determinations. This is a sector wide trend but does impact our resource significantly.</p> <p>To maintain our website requires ongoing resource.</p>

- ensuring customers are treated with respect.
- publicising satisfaction and other performance information.

Complaints Code, and also start looking at the customer complaints annual report.

We now have a second Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC), Geoff Beales, to accompany Ray Sharpe our Resident Board Member as MRC.

Housing Ombudsman Cases Received:  
Jan - March 2024 – 4 new cases opened by the Housing Ombudsman in this period, of which we have currently received 1 determination.

We have also recently received 1 determination relating to a case submitted to the Housing Ombudsman Service in July 2023.

A reminder of early requirements for complaint handling was sent out to all Responding Officers.

Service Improvement:  
Use of the Improvements log/lessons learnt is progressing and service areas are identifying improvements and capturing the monitoring achievements/actions, outcomes, measures, impact, and costs.

Communication has been identified as a major theme for improvement. Meetings have been set up with all teams across CBH to address these diverse issues, to discuss best practice, methods and effective channels of communication and also address the barriers and challenges people face.

Customer Involvement:  
The tenant Inspectors have now submitted their 4th Review, which is scrutiny of the Lettings process, this is due to go to the CBH Board in June.

There are many resident engagements taking place including consultations, new coffee and chats and the

pending launch of the Residents Performance Dashboard.

Gurden Road playpark opening following resident consultation.

The first Tenant Satisfaction Measures returns to the Regulator are due to be submitted at the end of June 2024, and we have already started working towards the next annual TSM survey this for summer.

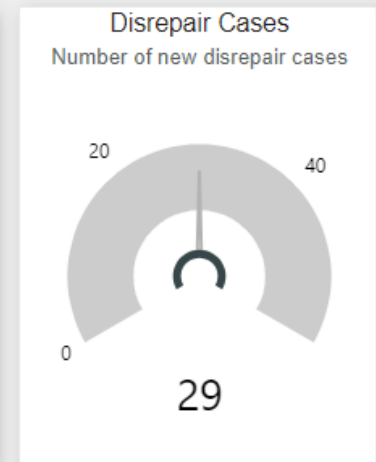
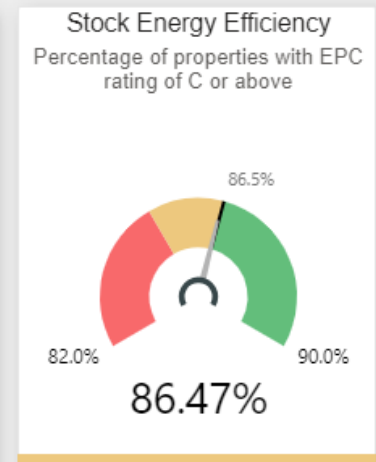
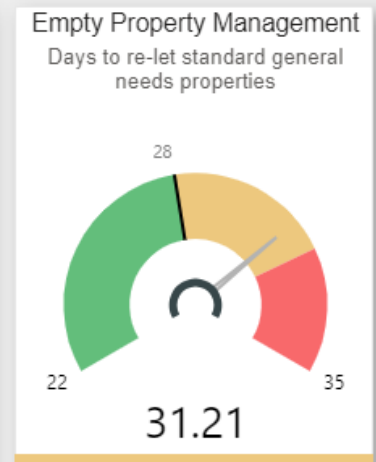
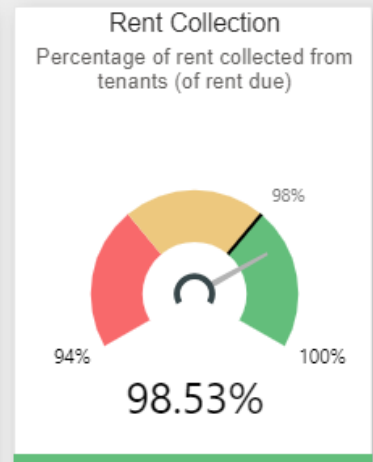
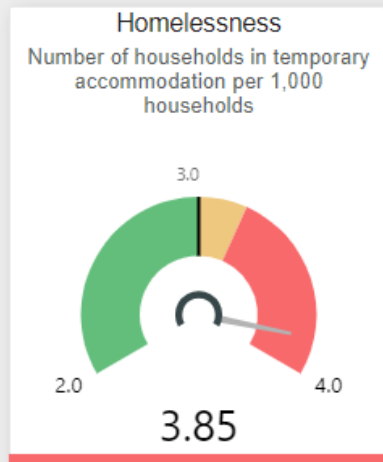
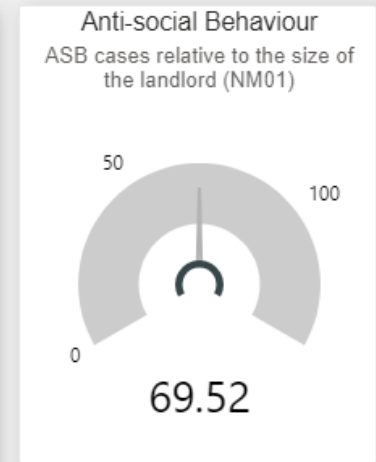
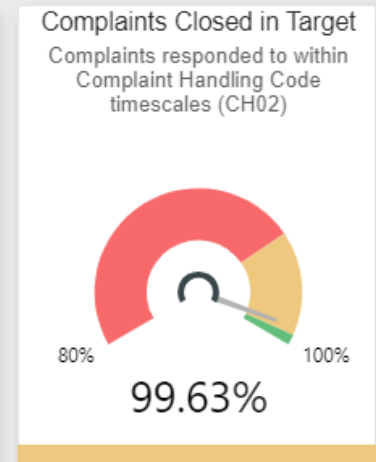
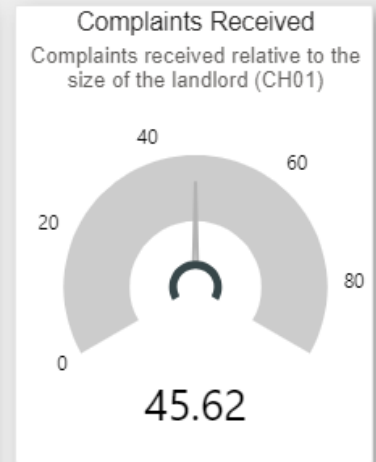
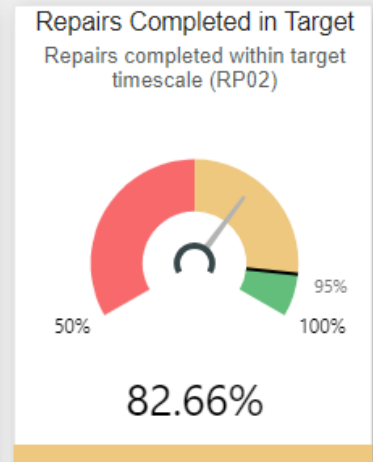
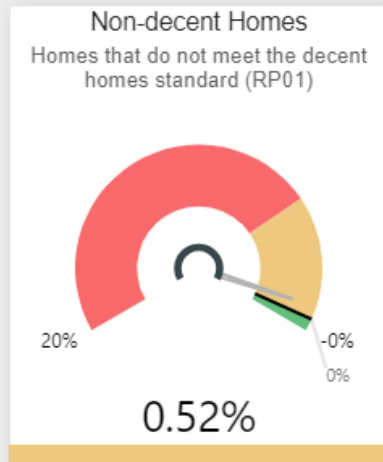
We recently completed a TSM survey Audit with TIAA. At the closure meeting there were no actions or recommendations to note.

Launch of Customer Dashboard at Residents Voice on 16th April 24.



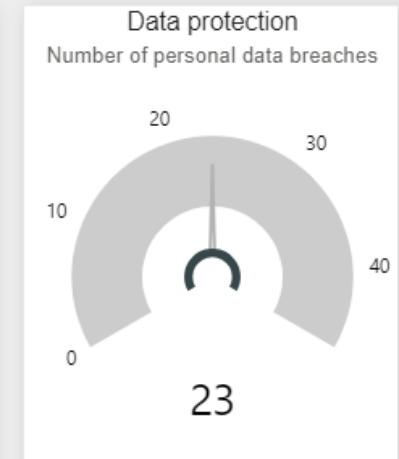
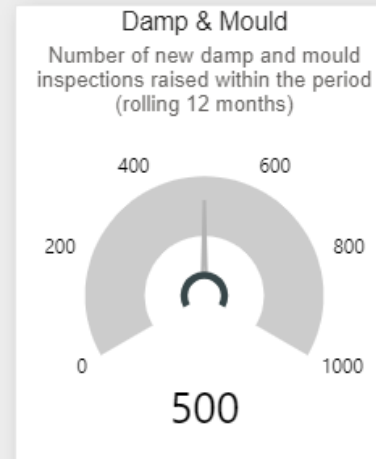
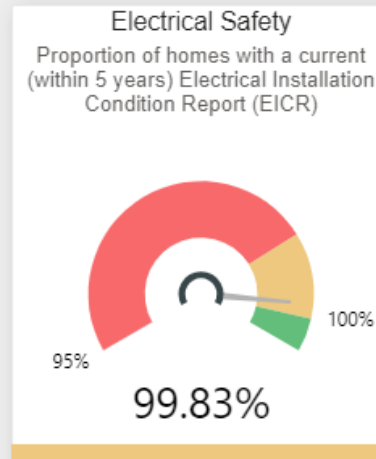
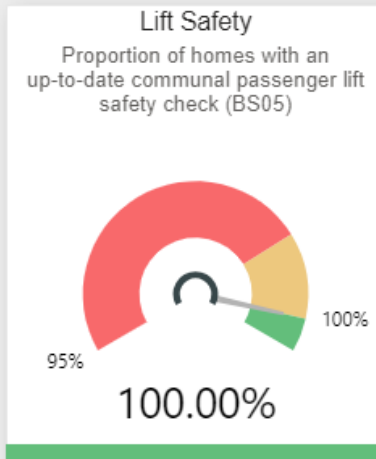
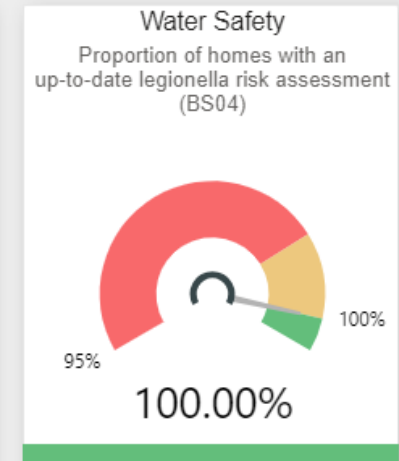
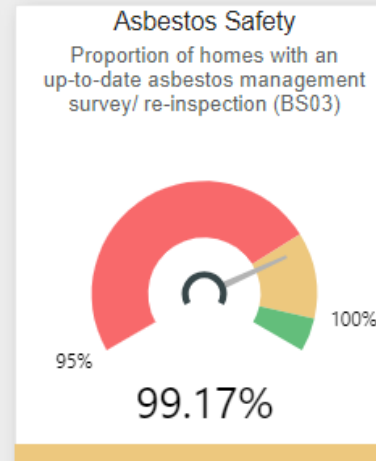
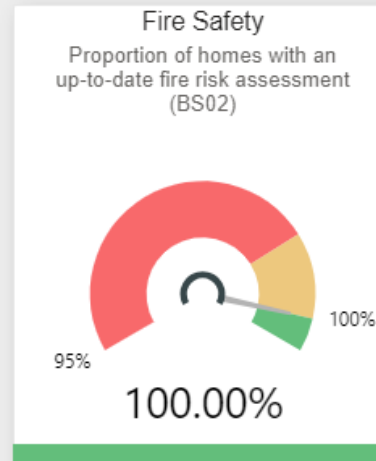
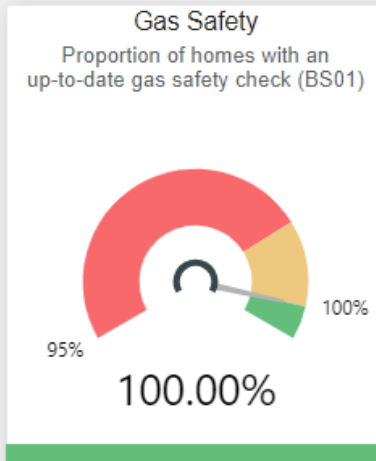
## Management Performance Summary

Year to date results



# Compliance Summary

Year to date results



## Satisfaction Summary

Year to date results

