



Residents' Report 2022-2023

**LISTENING TO RESIDENTS,
IMPROVING SERVICE**





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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to your annual report for residents, looking back on the last financial year from April 2022 to March 2023. The report has been written for you, with the support of the resident members of MTVH's Customer Services Committee and I hope you find the information in it useful.

This year we have been constantly listening to get a better understanding of your needs and are working hard to improve the service we provide. You have told us that you want us to get the basics right every time. To do what we say we will, when we say we will. To keep you informed at every stage, and make liaising with us simple, easy and worth it. Although we have further to go to truly achieve this, we have made progress and are moving towards fulfilling the goals of our five year strategy:

- **Customer Experience:** Ensuring residents' voices are heard as we work together to provide services and support that matter most to you.
- **People's Homes:** Making great places to live, building new homes and investing in existing properties to ensure they're safe, warm and dry for all of our residents.
- **Living Well:** Helping to meet the challenges faced by communities, making the case for change where it's needed, and supporting people to live well.

“Improvement begins with listening and we have taken several important steps to enable us to listen more effectively to residents

Improvement begins with listening. Last year, a number of you told us that you missed our Residents' Annual Report, we listened and worked with our involved resident groups to provide this report. Having heard from you that you'd like to receive more regular updates from us, we developed a Residents' Bulletin which was sent out to all homes in November last year. Alongside our publications, we have launched the YourVoice online platform, where you can learn more about how to share your voice with us, get involved in our customer groups and find out about activities in the communities we serve.

We haven't just been listening this year, we've taken action too. Our teams have responded with determination and innovation to the unprecedented cost of living crisis, providing emergency fuel bill support, food vouchers and money advice to those most in need. This year we delivered £3m in financial support to residents. This has been complemented by a range of initiatives delivered hand in hand with local partners. "Warm spaces" provided comfortable areas where people can meet while community kitchens and cafes give access to low-cost, healthy food in a friendly neighbourhood setting.

At the same time, we are continuing to work tirelessly to ensure that homes remain safe, warm and dry, giving you the security and peace of mind necessary to live well in your home. Last year we spent £31m on improvements to homes, including installing 470 new bathrooms and 770 new kitchens.



I was shocked by the tragic death of Awaab Ishak due to the appalling conditions he and his family had to endure. There is much to be learned from this tragic case and we have taken steps to reduce the risks of damp and mould in your homes. This includes a new £1.5m fund to specifically address damp and mould, a 12-month follow up check on cases where required and additional training for colleagues. We have also listened to you and used your feedback to produce a new leaflet to support residents affected by damp or mould.

We know that some residents are facing ongoing issues, which we will continue to work hard to help resolve. Too many leaseholders and tenants continue to face the stress, strain and uncertainty resulting from the need to remedy buildings. Our dedicated Safer Buildings team continues to work across the buildings we are responsible for with the original developers who must undertake the works, identifying risks and addressing them. This past year, we have inspected an additional 39 buildings and have spent £13.4m on necessary fire safety works.

For both current and future leaseholders, we have made beneficial changes to their leases. Where MTVH is the freeholder, we have introduced a 990-year lease, handing leaseholders greater security and reduced costs to ground rents and lease extensions.

Meanwhile, we continue working towards meeting our decarbonisation targets, in the knowledge that

not only will this work benefit the environment but at the same time generate very real financial savings for residents. During the past year, we have insulated over one thousand additional homes. These are important steps towards ensuring that by 2026, 75% of our directly managed homes reach EPC C standard or beyond.

Overall, we have built 657 new homes during the past year. Hundreds of new homes for rent are an important contribution towards alleviating the UK's record levels of overcrowding and the historically high numbers of people currently on housing waiting lists. Meanwhile, hundreds of new shared ownership homes will help tackle the cost of ownership crisis, with more and more people priced out of the conventional market, especially first-time buyers.

I am grateful to all my colleagues at MTVH for their invaluable contribution towards everything we have achieved this year and very grateful to you, our residents, for working with us and helping us to improve the services we deliver every day.

Geeta Nanda OBE
Chief Executive

WHO WE ARE

MTVH (Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing) is one of the UK's leading providers of affordable housing and care and support services. Until June 2023, we chaired the G15 group of London's largest housing associations.

Our founding mission continues to resonate today, with the organisation having been established to provide desperately needed decent homes to the Windrush generation arriving from the Caribbean. This year we will celebrate 75 years since the HMT Empire Windrush arrived in Britain. We continue to honour the legacy of our founding mission, by providing decent homes to people in need.

We work to provide as many people as possible with the security of a safe, affordable and well-maintained

home. We know that this can be the foundation they need to build better lives and to thrive.

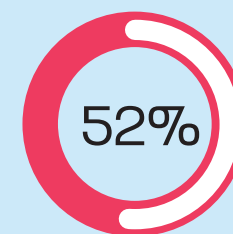
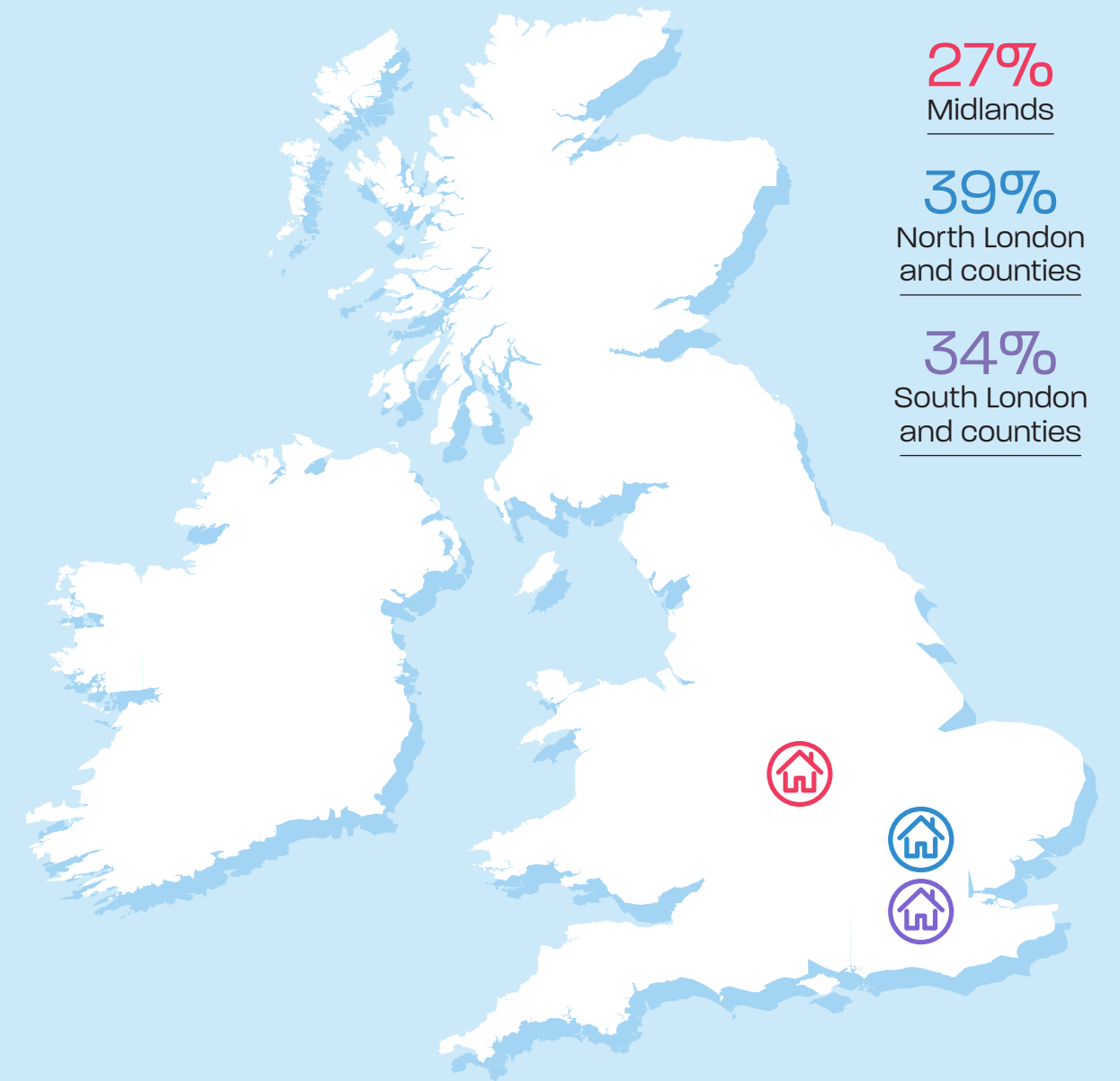
We also know that people need reliable, good-quality services in order to live well. This is not always what they receive. We are determined to continue improving what we do, to make sure that we always get the basics right. We will listen with respect and empathy. We will make things straightforward. We will be accountable. We will always be there for residents and the communities in which they live.



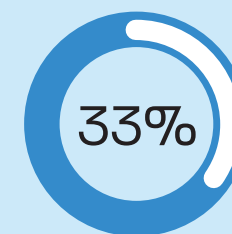
WHERE WE OPERATE

We own, manage and administer more than 57,000 homes.

This graphic shows percentages of housing stock by MTVH region and the breakdown of housing stock by tenure:



Social and affordable rent



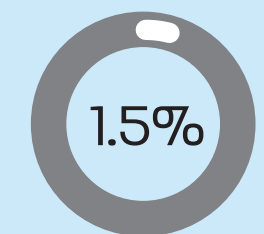
Home ownership (including equity loan)



Keyworker



Care & Support



Other (including market rented)

HIGHLIGHTS OF HOW YOUR MONEY* IS SPENT



£138m

on repairs and safety works to existing homes



£31m

on improvements to homes, including 470 new bathrooms and 770 new kitchens



£13.4m

on fire safety works



£202m

on building new homes and regeneration



£1.5m

additional funding to address damp and mould

*£388m total income from rent, service charges and other housing activities
Excludes other income sources such as development grants.

REPAIRS, COMPLIANCE AND OUR ONLINE SERVICE

Ensuring that your home is safe and functional is a top priority for residents. This year, in excess of 100,000 repairs were completed in total, with 89% being fixed on our first visit

Our safety and compliance team spent £30.7m last year to make sure that we are 99.9% compliant on gas safety measures and 99.8% compliant with electrical safety standards.

Our Property Desk and Customer Hub teams answered a massive 202,899 calls this year along with 109,057 emails and online enquiries. The time taken to answer your calls improved compared with the previous year with 59% of calls answered within two minutes, up from 39% of calls in 2021/2022. Your emails and online queries are now typically answered within 2 working days.

This year, we made significant improvements to our website and online customer service portal, MTVH Online. Our digital team worked with residents to develop new information, tools and forms for the things that matter most to you including complaints, anti-social behaviour, refunds, damp and mould, service charges and more. Using these forms allows our teams to resolve and act on your queries more quickly than through other contact methods.

The result of these upgrades has been a 59% increase in the volume of service requests logged through our website or MTVH Online and a 21% increase in the volume of online payments. 36% of all MTVH households are now actively using MTVH Online, an increase from 30% this time last year.

£30.7m

spent on compliance

89%

89% of repairs were fixed on our first visit

100,000+

repairs were completed



99.9%

compliant with gas safety measures last year

99.8%

compliant with electricity safety standards last year

RESIDENT SATISFACTION AND COMPLAINTS

We want to deliver great service to you all the time, but we know that occasionally, things can go wrong. We need to know when this happens so we can put things right and learn how we can improve

This year saw an overall increase in new complaints received. In part, this was due to the ongoing residual impact of the pandemic, which at times reduced the capacity of our repairs service. Another factor was the increased overall awareness of residents' rights regarding complaints, owing to government initiatives such as the Make It Right campaign.

During this year, 4,356 Stage 1 complaints (4,094 in 2021/22) and 936 Stage 2 complaints (941 in 2021/22) were received. Although 21.2% of these complaints were escalated from Stage 1 to 2 (18.6% in 2021/22), our working practices and commitment to putting things right quickly saw an improvement in the number of complaints resolved at Stage 1.

In cases where we are not able to resolve complaints, we work closely with the Housing Ombudsman (a free, independent, impartial service for residents) to understand what they expect from us and learn from the decisions they reach. In 2022/23, 96 complaints were referred to the Ombudsman and their decisions were:

- **Severe Maladministration: 3**
- **Maladministration: 35**
- **Service failure: 43**
- **Early resolution/Adequate redress: 39**
- **No Maladministration: 16**

● **No jurisdiction: 8**

● **Withdrawn: 2**

Compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Code is reviewed periodically or each time the Code is updated. Our latest self-assessment was completed in March 2023, following updates to the Complaint Handling guidelines. MTVH remains compliant with all requirements and we continue to make the Code a key focus of the way we work.

Monthly risk meetings take place between our Complaints and Executive teams, ensuring that we identify trends and themes affecting our service to you and take actions to improve. Complaints data is also shared with the regional customer panels every quarter.

In February 2023, a new mandatory module was launched on our internal training and development programme to support colleagues to resolve your complaints more effectively.

We have maintained our overall customer satisfaction from last year at 71%. We are committed to working tirelessly in order to become an organisation which truly gets things right every time. We have this year incorporated questions from the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) set by the Regulator of Social Housing into the 16,000 resident surveys we carry out each year. These questions will increasingly help us to assess how we are doing and provide us with the feedback needed to improve the quality of homes and services.



This coming year, we will introduce a new CRM (customer relationship management) platform, which is designed to streamline resident information for colleagues in order to more efficiently deal with requests and complaints. In addition, two further software systems will also be introduced to similar effect. The Housing Management System will see resident information which remains from our legacy organisations integrated into one synchronised platform. Meanwhile, the Nourish Care platform offers a fully digitalised and more efficient information system for care and support customers and their families.



4,356

stage 1 complaints



936

stage 2 complaints



Feb 2023

new mandatory training programme launched



16,000

resident surveys carried out each year



71%

customer satisfaction rate



coming up

new streamlined systems including CRM



“
It's inspiring
to see the
difference that
residents are
making and
I'm really glad
to be involved

Amplifying residents' views, making an impact

Ashley Johnson, Regional Panel Chair and member of our Customer Council, outlines the type of issues these groups engage on and shares some examples of how resident voices are making a difference

As Chair of the Regional Panel for North and Central London, my role is to represent the views of residents in my region, and I work closely with MTVH Regional Directors and local teams to help enhance the services MTVH provide.

I also sit on the national Customer Council with eleven other residents from across the three MTVH regions, providing insight into different resident experiences. It's an effective way to feedback resident issues and success stories to MTVH, so that together we can develop effective policies and processes that will have a positive impact on residents.

I participate in these groups because I want to make a difference in peoples' lives. In 2016, having previously worked as an Early Years teacher, I decided to open a small non-profit baby group to support vulnerable families. This experience inspired me to make an even bigger contribution, so in 2020 I decided to join the MTVH Regional Panel and Customer Council to help support families at a national level.

I really enjoy chairing Regional Panel meetings and have learnt a lot about myself and others during this time. Of course, there are residents and customers on the Panel and Council that see things differently, and that's fine because we always find ways to work alongside and support one another – whether we agree with each other's viewpoints or not.

Together, we have really sunk our teeth into different areas of MTVH including anti-social behaviour, repairs and the complaints procedure. Many of our Regional Panel discussions have led to issues being explored at a deeper, national level with the Customer Council.

This is where MTVH, together with the Council, makes suggestions which are put forward to the Customer Services Committee so that improvements can be made and the organisation can truly say, "you said, we did, you felt!". ■



LISTENING TO YOU

When we launched our five-year strategy in 2021, improving the day to day experience of residents topped the list of strategic priorities

Since then, we have been creating new opportunities to listen to resident experiences of MTVH, and using this feedback to shape and improve the way our services are delivered. We want residents to be involved in the decisions affecting them.

In 2021, a Customer Council and three Regional Panels were established to help us listen to residents and gather feedback from all over the country. It has been a busy 12 months for these groups, who have advised us on a number of important issues including the topics for our continuous learning scrutiny reviews and how best to share the results of our Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

Perspectives from these groups were included in our responses to consultations by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on Social Housing Rents and the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard.

Colleagues across MTVH have also been working together to listen to resident voices whenever they share their views with us, not just through formal resident engagement activities. As well as reviewing 16,108 resident surveys this year, the issues affecting residents have been identified through conversations with our Customer Hub and other front-line colleagues. Listening through these channels and analysing different sources of data in this way helps our teams gain a fuller understanding of what matters most to you, so we can take action to continuously improve our services.

AMPLIFYING RESIDENT VOICES

In May, informed by comments and suggestions from our Customer Council, our Customer Voice Framework was launched to establish a new approach to the way we listen to residents, act on your feedback and amplify your voices across MTVH. Running from 2022 to 2025,

the Framework will ensure you can influence the way we deliver services and can see the impact of your voice reflected right across the organisation.

Last year, residents asked us to share more about what's happening in MTVH communities and how you can get involved, so with support from our Customer Council, September saw the launch of YourVoice. This new online platform is designed to help you find out about MTVH in your local area, enabling you to provide feedback and participate in local activities.

To help residents stay informed about the different ways to access our services, our new resident bulletin, 'Here to Help', was launched in November. The first edition contained information about the services we provide, how to access them and the front-line colleagues delivering each service. Future editions of the bulletin will continue to feature the topics highlighted as being most important to residents.



It's great that MTVH put all this together, because otherwise I wouldn't have started volunteering and I wouldn't be where I am today

One local resident tells us how Nottingham's Good Grub Café is making a real difference to everyday life

MTVH resident Sam has been volunteering at the Good Grub Café and mobile supermarket for almost a year

Here, she shares how it has had a positive impact on her personal and professional life and helped her connect with the local community.

"I started out volunteering at the mobile supermarket and really enjoyed selling good food to local people at affordable prices. The customers were always really lovely and appreciative, and we often had a good laugh and shared recipes, tips and information.

I then started volunteering at the Good Grub Café which has been fantastic. We have an amazing chef and together serve the local community a delicious two-course meal for free. We can have up to fifty people at a time in the Café and the vibe is always incredible.

Volunteering has helped me get to know lots more people in my local area, which is great because I'm

a mother and have caring responsibilities at home and sometimes feel quite isolated. I really love walking down the street and being able to stop and chat to people.

My work with MTVH has been about much more than volunteering, it has had a positive impact on my confidence, self-esteem and has really changed my life.

I got a job four months ago as a midday supervisor at a local school and really enjoy it. Recently, one of the girls from school came up and gave me a big hug. This showed me that I'm really rooted in my community and doing my job properly – not only being a good mum, but volunteering with MTVH, working with children in the area and getting to know their parents as well. It all gets me out the house and helps me feel connected. ■

EMPOWERING FUTURES – SUPPORTING RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITIES

Our Empowering Futures and Assessment and Support teams have offered direct assistance to more than 7,500 residents and customers in all sorts of ways, from advice on debt or benefits problems to coping with food and fuel poverty

We work with external partners including charities and other funders, as well as using our own funds. As a result, around £3m of financial gains were delivered directly to residents in 2022/23, compared to £2m in 2021/22. £180,000 was also secured in contributions from local authority household support funds and Children in Need grants.

In addition, through our partnership with Pocket Power, a free phone service that helps social housing residents to apply for discounts and switch to affordable providers for their household bills, £100,000 in financial savings has been achieved in total since December 2020. During 2022/23, for every £1 invested by MTVH, Pocket Power saved residents £18.

Meanwhile, in order to help residents on variable incomes and expenses to remain out of rent arrears, we joined the 'Flex My Rent' partnership with HACT. This partnership enables residents to agree a rent payment schedule with their landlord, by which they are able to under pay in difficult months and overpay when they have more money available.

We have been pleased to participate in the Love London Working programme, an initiative funded by the European Social Fund and 8 other London housing associations, which helps unemployed and economically inactive Londoners into employment. MTVH exceeded the programme's targets,



including for the number of jobs secured by participants.

We give free confidential advice on financial issues including benefits, applying for relevant support funds, help with energy bills and how to maximise your income. Email communitysupport@mtvh.co.uk or you can call 0203 535 3535 and ask for the Empowering Futures team.

MTVH
**Empowering
Futures**

£3m

financial gains delivered directly to our residents in 2022/23



VARIETY OF COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Our Empowering Futures team has been responsible for a wide range of projects to provide social, financial and wellbeing support to our communities. Here is a brief summary of a small selection of initiatives.

Nottingham Social Cafe

The Good Grub Social Café and Kitchen in Nottingham was developed to provide support in response to the cost-of-living crisis.

Open every Thursday in St Ann's, Nottingham, the cafe provides a free, nutritious meal while at the same time giving an opportunity for people to gather and for families to eat out in the atmosphere of a local restaurant. Run by local volunteers alongside MTVH colleagues, it has quickly become a popular hub for residents.

Local Councillors Leslie Ayoola and Rosemary Healy recently visited the project to meet residents, volunteers and MTVH colleagues. They commented: "The Good Grub Café at



Hill View is a fantastic initiative bringing the local community together during what is an extremely difficult time. Through the hard work of all those involved, the café has created a warm, sociable environment where people can enjoy excellent food with their neighbours."

Fight 4 Change Men's Mental Health

This initiative at Clapham Park is funded by Lambeth's Public Health Team and aims to address the high levels of male suicide in the borough. The sessions create a safe and comfortable space for men to talk about issues affecting their mental health and address barriers to accessing services.

Participants have the opportunity to take part in dominoes, boxing sessions and a barber is also on hand. At the same time, a qualified counsellor runs sessions to talk about issues such as societal and cultural expectations, the impact of unemployment and worries about the cost-of-living crisis.

Chair of the Housing Association Youth Network

MTVH continues to chair the Housing Association Youth Network (HAYN), which exists to work with and for young people aged 11-25 that live in and around the communities we serve. It is a peer network of youth focussed representatives from the social housing sector. Through this framework in summer 2022, a major event was held for young people in London to find out more about housing options, how to access them and other opportunities.



Derby City Youth Alliance

MTVH is a member of the Derby City Youth Alliance, a network of providers working collaboratively to support Derby's young people to be safe, develop and prosper. The focus of the Youth Alliance is based around the needs of the most vulnerable and challenged young people. Through this network, over 100 young people were referred to local providers over the past 12 months. Meanwhile, place led projects engaged 1,300 young people in and around priority areas where we work, including Normanton and Arboretum.

Chalkhill Place to Remember

A 'Memorial Wall' was unveiled at the Chalkhill Community Centre as part of an initiative helping to promote mental health and wellbeing among local residents.

More than 30 Chalkhill residents were trained as mental health first aiders, with some using their skills to help other members of the community. This group identified the impact of grief, bereavement and loss on the mental health of local people and initiated the 'Memorial Wall' project as a way of remembering and helping process

the loss of those who passed away. In addition to the creation of the 'Memorial Wall' itself, the project included three workshops for residents on art and wellbeing, and it also included the creation of a poetry resource book for children.

MTVH partnered with several Brent-based community and voluntary organisations to provide support for the wall.





HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

ONLINE

Our easy access forms are a quick and simple way to send us a message about:

- Neighbourhood concerns
- Estate maintenance issues
- Payments
- Repairs
- Complaints

Visit www.mtvh.co.uk/contact-us

CALL US

From 8am – 6pm, Monday to Friday our phonelines are open with support for emergencies available 24 hours a day.

A call back feature is available so you don't have to hold too long waiting for an answer. Choose the call back option when you phone and keep your place in the queue – let us call you.

Call us on **0203 535 3535**

MTVH ONLINE

Request and track your repairs, make a payment or check your balance through your personal MTVH Online account.

24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Visit www.mtvh.online

WRITE TO US

Our address for letters is:

MTVH
Waterfront House
Technology Drive
Beeston, NG9 1LA