

RavenTimes

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Changing the way we work to improve your experience

Our **Delivering What Matters** plan sets out how we can improve our homes and our services for you and the neighbourhoods you live in. As part of this work, we've listened to your feedback about what's important to you and where you live.

You've told us you want to see:

- Us recognising the needs of you and your family
- A reliable and responsive service
- Staff who understand your area and what it's like where you live
- More visible estate management – helping with community safety



By understanding your needs better, we've been able to change the way our teams work to provide a more neighbourhood focused service:

- We have a new Estates team made up of Caretakers, Cleaners and Ground Maintenance Management. You'll see members of the Estates team regularly out and about as they carry out inspections and continue to keep your neighbourhoods clean and safe.

- You will also have a dedicated Housing Officer for where you live, this includes if you're a homeowner with us. They will be your go to person for anything related to your tenancy, they will support with anti-social behaviour and they'll play a big role in getting involved in local community initiatives.

We're currently growing our Housing team from six Housing Officers to nine, who will be supported by two Team Leaders and a Housing Manager. We're also introducing a team of Housing Support Specialists, within our Customer Services team, who will provide dedicated administrative support to our Housing Officers so they can focus on resolving issues more quickly for you.

By increasing the number of Housing Officers, each officer will support fewer households, giving them more time to respond to you and better understand your individual needs.

Our strengthened team set up will also mean that more questions and concerns can be addressed at the first point of contact, so you don't have to wait for answers.

We'll be sharing more information soon, introducing you to your Housing Officer, as well as the wider Housing team, and what they can help you with.

Moving to this neighbourhood focused way of working means we will be more efficient and consistent with how we deliver services to you. We can support you to better manage your tenancies and strengthen community connections – making it easier for you to get what you need, when you need it.

For the latest news and important information, follow us on social media!

 Raven Housing Trust
 @ravenhousingtrust



Neighbourhood focus



See our friendly faces in your neighbourhood

Hello and welcome to the new look neighbourhood focus section of Raven Times! This is where we'll give you updates from your new Estates team, made up of Caretakers, Cleaners and Grounds Maintenance Management, and your Housing Officers.

You'll see our friendly faces in and around your neighbourhoods as we work closely together to create cleaner, safer and better maintained neighbourhoods.

We now work across set neighbourhood patches so you'll see familiar faces more regularly. This new way of working means that we can localise our services and can respond to issues more quickly.



Check when your communal cleans will be

We've listened to your feedback when you've said you'd like to be able to easily check when your communal clean is due. We've updated our website to show what day your cleaning visit is and what you can expect from communal area cleaning.

To find out more go to www.ravenht.org.uk/communal-cleaning



Grounds maintenance visits

Our grounds maintenance contractor, Groundscapes, regularly attends land owned and managed by us, to help keep neighbourhoods tidy and well maintained. We have a postcode search bar on our website to show when your last grounds maintenance visit was and when your next one is due.

You can access this at www.ravenht.org.uk/grounds-maintenance

Our Brighter Community Fund supports three more local projects

We're pleased to be supporting more local projects through our **Brighter Community Fund, awarding £8,250** in total to three community initiatives that build resilience, reduce isolation and improve wellbeing across Surrey.

The Brighter Community Fund provides grants to local organisations, charities and resident led groups to help strengthen communities, support wellbeing and deliver positive social impact in our neighbourhoods.



Banstead Pantry

Banstead Pantry will use its funding to launch a Pantry Savings Scheme that helps members build financial resilience through regular saving, money workshops and ongoing support from partner organisations and pantry volunteers.



Asian Social Group

Asian Social Group will establish the Checkmate Connections Community Chess Club in Redhill, offering weekly sessions that bring people together across ages and backgrounds while supporting wellbeing, confidence and social connection.



Woodfield School

Woodfield Special School Post 16 will create The Senses Garden, an inclusive outdoor space for young people with special educational needs. The garden will support sensory learning and life skills while involving families, volunteers and local community partners.



Angela Ellis, our Head of Thriving Communities, said:

“These projects show the power of community led ideas, whether that is helping families build financial resilience, bringing people together to reduce isolation or creating inclusive spaces for young people with additional needs. We’re proud to support work that strengthens our neighbourhoods and improves lives.”



We'll be following these projects and others supported by the Brighter Community Fund and sharing updates.

Community noticeboard

If there's something that you'd like to see included in the community noticeboard next issue please email us at raventimes@ravenht.org.uk

Free and low cost activities at your local library

We're lucky across Surrey and Sussex to have lots of libraries, which offer extra groups and activities to suit different interests. From pre-school rhyme time sessions and school holiday activities, through to digital support and poetry groups, there's plenty going on.



Surrey libraries
www.surreycc.gov.uk/libraries
East Sussex libraries
www.eastsussex.gov.uk/libraries
West Sussex libraries
www.westsussex.gov.uk/libraries



Support for children and families in Redhill

Welcare is a charity working with parents and their children in East Surrey. Based in Redhill, the centre provides emotional and practical support for children and their families experiencing short or long term challenges.

As well as one-to-one family support, the Welcare centre holds

lots of groups and workshops. Just a couple of examples of these are the One Step at a Time group for children under 5 with additional needs, the Encouraging English group for children under 5 who speak English as an additional language and Caring Dads for fathers with children of all ages.

Not sure who handles a repair – you or Raven?



Our repairs responsibilities web page is the quickest and easiest way to find out who is responsible for a repair.

Whether it's a tap, a fence, or the boiler – you can check who's responsible in just a few clicks – www.ravenht.org.uk/repair-responsibilities

Would you prefer a printed copy of our guide to repairs? Call us on **0300 123 3399** and we'll have one sent to you.

*This information applies to tenants only – if you're a homeowner, different responsibilities apply. Please refer to your lease or contact our Homeownership team if you're unsure.



Rent increase 2026 – what you need to know



You should have now received your individual rent letter, detailing your new rent amount from April 2026 and what steps you need to take. This year, most rents will increase by 4.8%. Please check your individual rent letter for your new amount and what the increase means for you.

What you need to do next

If you pay by Direct Debit:

You don't need to do anything. Your payment amount will be automatically updated from April 2026.

If you receive Universal Credit:

You need to update your online journal with your new rent and charges from the date your rent increases.

Universal Credit won't accept any updates in advance, so don't update your online journal before these dates:

- **If you're charged monthly, please update your online journal from 1st April.**
- **If you're charged weekly, please update your online journal from 6th April.**

If you don't update your online journal on time, you could miss out on money you're entitled to. If we have an email address for you, we'll send you an email reminder around this time.

If you receive Housing Benefit:

Let your local authority know your new rent amount as soon as possible. If you're with Reigate and Banstead Borough Council and your Housing Benefit is paid directly to us, we will let them know for you.

If you pay in another way:

Please update the amount you pay accordingly.



For more information about your rent increase and how we calculate rents, visit our website - www.ravenht.org.uk/changes-to-rent-and-charges



Spotlight on our Income team

While rent collection is an important part of the Income team's role, what they do day to day is so much more than that. They understand that your circumstances are individual to you and they want to help you to have a successful tenancy with us. You have a dedicated Income Officer who will be your point of contact for all things rent, so whenever you get in touch you'll speak to the same person.

What the Income team can help you with

Early support to prevent arrears

If your circumstances change, such as losing your job or having a long-term illness, please get in touch with your Income Officer. The sooner they know, the sooner they can help you, and prevent arrears from building up. If needed, your Income Officer may be able to discuss an affordable repayment plan with you to help get things back on track.

Rent account support

Understanding your rent amount, payment schedules, account balances and being on hand to answer any questions you have about your rent statement. Please remember, it's a requirement of your tenancy to pay in advance by the frequency your rent is paid. This means your

account is always ready for us to take payment and you won't fall behind.

Benefits and Universal Credit guidance

Understanding the benefits system can be confusing. The Income team can give advice on claiming Universal Credit and explain how these payments work with your rent account. They also work with our Moneywise team to help you make sure you're getting all the benefits you're entitled to.

How we use your rent

Rent income allows us to maintain and carry out repairs to your homes, meet regulatory standards for health and safety, invest in improvements, provide our extra services like Moneywise, our Employment support and our Brighter Community Fund where we invest in neighbourhoods.

What if I'm struggling to pay my rent?

The Income team is here to support you, not to judge. We understand that financial difficulties can happen to anyone from time to time.

If you're worried about your rent payments or experiencing financial pressure, get in touch as soon as possible. A quick conversation today can prevent bigger problems tomorrow.



Get in touch with your Income Officer

- Call: 0300 123 3399
- Message through your MyRaven online account

Listening to young people living in Preston, Tadworth



We're continuing to work on our redevelopment proposals for the Preston Area of Tadworth, so we can create homes that are fit for the future in a neighbourhood that feels safer, greener and easier to get around.

A big part of the project involves listening to the needs and experiences of residents who live in the area, including young people, so we can be sure we're making changes that will benefit future residents too.

Before Christmas we hosted a youth engagement event at the MYTI Youth Centre in Preston, attended by 40–60 children aged between 8–15 years. The session introduced our proposals for Preston and it was a brilliant opportunity to listen to feedback on young people's experiences and aspirations for the area.

Interactive activities and short surveys encouraged sharing of views on local strengths, challenges, future improvements, play space, green areas and community safety. It was brilliant to see thoughtful, enthusiastic participation to help us involve young people in shaping Preston's future plans.



Homeowner news

Over the past few months, we've held two more homeowner meetings, continuing our commitment to creating open, honest spaces where you can speak directly with us. We've also been to our Raven board to give them an update on the Homeowners' Improvement Plan, demonstrating their ongoing commitment to understanding your experience with us.

Improving the way we communicate

- You've told us how important it is to get through to the right person quickly. We've reshaped the Homeownership team, adding another specialist and team leader to increase capacity.
- We've moved all anti-social behaviour cases to our dedicated Enforcement team, ensuring responses are faster, more consistent and clearer.
- We're now redesigning how our Customer Services team works, so more of your queries can be resolved at first contact.

The Homeownership team will continue to be your specialist hub for things like service charges, major works, staircasing, and lease obligations.

Strengthening support for shared owners

We've also heard from our shared owners that certain areas need to be clearer and more supportive, especially early on. We're focusing on improving the onboarding process, so new shared owners fully understand what to expect from the start, and clarifying responsibilities, especially around repairs.

Thank you to all of you who have attended recent meetings and shared your experiences with us. Your feedback continues to shape our priorities.

Our emergency out of hours service

We want to make sure you can get help quickly when you really need it, which is why our out of hours phone line is there to deal with emergency situations.

This service is available outside of our normal office hours (9am - 5pm, Monday - Friday) by calling **0300 123 3399** so that urgent issues can be responded to as quickly as possible.



What is an emergency?

An emergency is something that:

- Puts you or others at immediate risk
- Could cause serious damage to your home
- Makes your home unsafe to live in

For example:

- Uncontrollable water leaks
- Complete loss of power or water
- Broken lifts
- Fire or flood damage
- Major structural damage
- Offensive or racist graffiti
- Smoke or carbon monoxide detectors not working
- Serious anti-social behaviour that poses immediate threat (always call **999** too)

What's not an emergency?

If your issue can safely wait until the next working day, it should not be reported through our out of hours service.

You can use your **MyRaven** online account 24 hours, 7 days a week to:

- Report non-urgent repairs
- Report anti-social behaviour
- View your rent account
- Check and manage your tenancy
- Raise an enquiry



MyRaven is the quickest and easiest way to get in touch about non-emergency issues.

Cleaner, quieter, greener – have you spotted our electric vans?

We recently added 17 electric vans to our fleet, as part of our commitment to sustainability. These vans are being used by our estates, repairs and maintenance teams as they travel around our communities to carry out essential work in your homes and neighbourhoods.

Introducing electric vans significantly reduces our carbon emissions and helps to improve local air quality.

Our electric vans currently represent 16.5% of our total fleet and we have future plans to switch more over to electric in the coming years.



Moneywise – ask us anything!

Send your questions to our Moneywise team for expert advice answered here in this regular feature.

If you have a money question for the next issue, email it to raventimes@ravenht.org.uk.

Remember, all customers - whether you're a rented tenant or homeowner - can receive **FREE** personalised Moneywise support. Raise an enquiry on **MyRaven** or call **0300 123 3399** for an initial chat.



Q I've heard an advert on the radio telling me that I might be able to wipe out some of my debt by getting something called an IVA. This seems too good to be true.... Is it?

A Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVAs) are a form of insolvency, like debt relief orders (DRO) and bankruptcy. They are formal agreements between someone who owes money and their creditors to pay back a certain amount of the debt over a certain period of time. At the end of that time any remaining balance is usually written off.

For most people there are other ways to deal with your debts that will probably be better suited to your situation. For example, debt management plans let you reschedule your payments to an amount you can afford; and a debt relief order can wipe out most types of debt in their entirety.

This is introductory information about IVAs and it's important to look at more detailed guidance

about them, which you can do through the National Debtline - <https://nationaldebtline.org/get-information/guides/individual-voluntary-arrangements-ew/>

It's always best to talk with a specialist debt adviser about the best options for you in your situation. You can get in touch with our Moneywise team for advice about finding the best specialist to help you.

Q I've heard that the government are getting rid of the 2 child cap from Universal Credit, does that mean I will get benefit for all 4 of my children?

A Back in 2017 the then government capped the number of children that could be included in claims for benefits to, in most cases, two children. In the budget last Autumn, the current government decided to remove this cap. That means households with more than two children will be eligible to receive Universal Credit and Housing Benefit for all their children from April 2026.

It is important to make sure that the Department for Work and Pensions knows about all the children in your household, even if you don't currently receive benefit for them. This will make sure you'll be getting all the benefits you're entitled to.

Do also consider that whilst Universal Credit will now pay benefit for all children in a household, the overall benefit cap isn't increasing. This means that for some people although you will be entitled to more money, you won't receive this increase because your total benefits are above the benefit cap level. There is more information about the benefit cap on our website Benefit Cap - Raven Housing Trust.

We can help you with understanding exactly how the removal of the two child cap on Universal Credit will affect your family. Book an appointment with **Moneywise** by calling **0300 123 3399** or raising an enquiry through **MyRaven**.

Parashoot – supporting people facing homelessness or eviction

Are you, or someone you know, worried about losing your home or facing eviction? Our free support service, Parashoot, is here to help.

Funded by Surrey County Council, Parashoot supports people living in the Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead, Tandridge or Epsom and Ewell areas who are going through challenging times. You don't need to be a Raven customer to receive help, you just need to live in one of these areas.

How Parashoot can help

Every day, our dedicated support workers help individuals and families to:

- Understand and access the benefits they're entitled to
- Deal with financial difficulties and rent arrears
- Apply for extra financial support
- Set up and manage new tenancies
- Move from temporary or emergency accommodation into more settled housing

Parashoot offers more than advice. The team works closely with you, providing practical, hands-on support to help you find real solutions to the difficulties you're facing.

The difference Parashoot makes

In the 2024-25 financial year, Parashoot received 191 referrals. Here are just two examples of how the team has helped:



Ms G, a Mum of four young children, was feeling overwhelmed. Her family was living in an overcrowded two-bedroom flat and she had built up significant rent arrears, which meant she couldn't bid for a bigger home. With the help from her Parashoot Support Worker, she successfully applied for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP). Her arrears were cleared, and she can now bid for a suitable home for her family. This has eased her worries and given her hope of a better future for them all.

Mr K found himself financially worse off after moving onto Universal Credit. He wasn't receiving a transition payment that he was entitled to, leaving him under serious financial strain. Parashoot worked closely with the relevant agencies on his behalf to resolve the issue. The payment was corrected, and he received a substantial back payment, helping him get back on track with his finances and giving him peace of mind.

These are just two stories of the life changing support our Parashoot service provides. If you're struggling, you're not alone. Our Parashoot team is here to help you through difficult circumstances and help you to build a more secure future in your home.

You can self-refer for Parashoot support or get a referral from a professional or agency such as a housing provider, social worker or GP. **Find out more on our website - www.ravenht.org.uk/parashoot.**

Have you noticed signs of damp and mould in your home?

Report it to us – we're here to help!

Watch for peeling wallpaper and bubbling paint

Cases of damp and mould are serious and we want to act quickly to fix the issues for you. If you see it, smell it or suspect it then please report it to us straight away.

The sooner we know, the faster we can fix it.

Awaab's Law requires landlords to investigate and fix reports of health and safety hazards, like damp and mould in your home, within strict timescales.

We are here to help you, please report any sign of damp and mould as soon as you notice it.

Signs to look out for:

- Black, green or white patches on walls or ceilings
- Peeling wallpaper or bubbling paint
- Musty smell
- Excess condensation on windows
- Damp patches

Watch for black mould near windows



Watch for window condensation

What happens when you report damp and mould

We will:

- Investigate reports within 14 days
- Begin necessary repairs within 7 days of the investigation, where there's risk of serious harm
- Agree next steps with you and produce a clear schedule of works
- Carry out follow up checks at six weeks and 12 months after work is carried out.

You can track your damp and mould case through **MyRaven** at any time to see progress.



Don't ignore it - Don't try to cover it up. Report damp and mould to us straight away. Report cases of damp and mould by calling us on **0300 123 3399** or through **MyRaven**.

Betty loves MyRaven. She can book a repair, pay her rent and do so much more.



MyRaven
Register here:
myraven.ravenht.org.uk

We Hear You – making improvements to our services

When you give us feedback – both the positives and the areas where we can improve – it allows us to make our services better for you. What you tell us through complaints and other feedback routes influences our decision making, helping to make sure we keep you, and what matters to you, at the heart of everything we do.

Here are some recent examples:



 **You said:**

You wanted better support for vulnerable residents when dealing with an anti-social behaviour case.

 **You said:**

You wanted better communication when appointments get changed.

 **You said:**

You wanted more empathy in written correspondence when responding to repair requests.

 **We did:**

We have improved communication and coordination between welfare support and enforcement teams when supporting vulnerable residents, ensuring needs are identified and addressed holistically.

 **We did:**

We've amended our appointment process to ensure clear communication and timely updates are given to customers regarding appointment changes to prevent confusion and distress, particularly for residents with health, accessibility, or support needs.

 **We did:**

We have added additional training empathetic communication, focusing on customer interactions, clarity of messaging, and clearly outlining our repairs standards.

 **How to provide feedback**

MyRaven: use your online account to make a complaint or raise an enquiry. **Call us: 0300 123 3399**

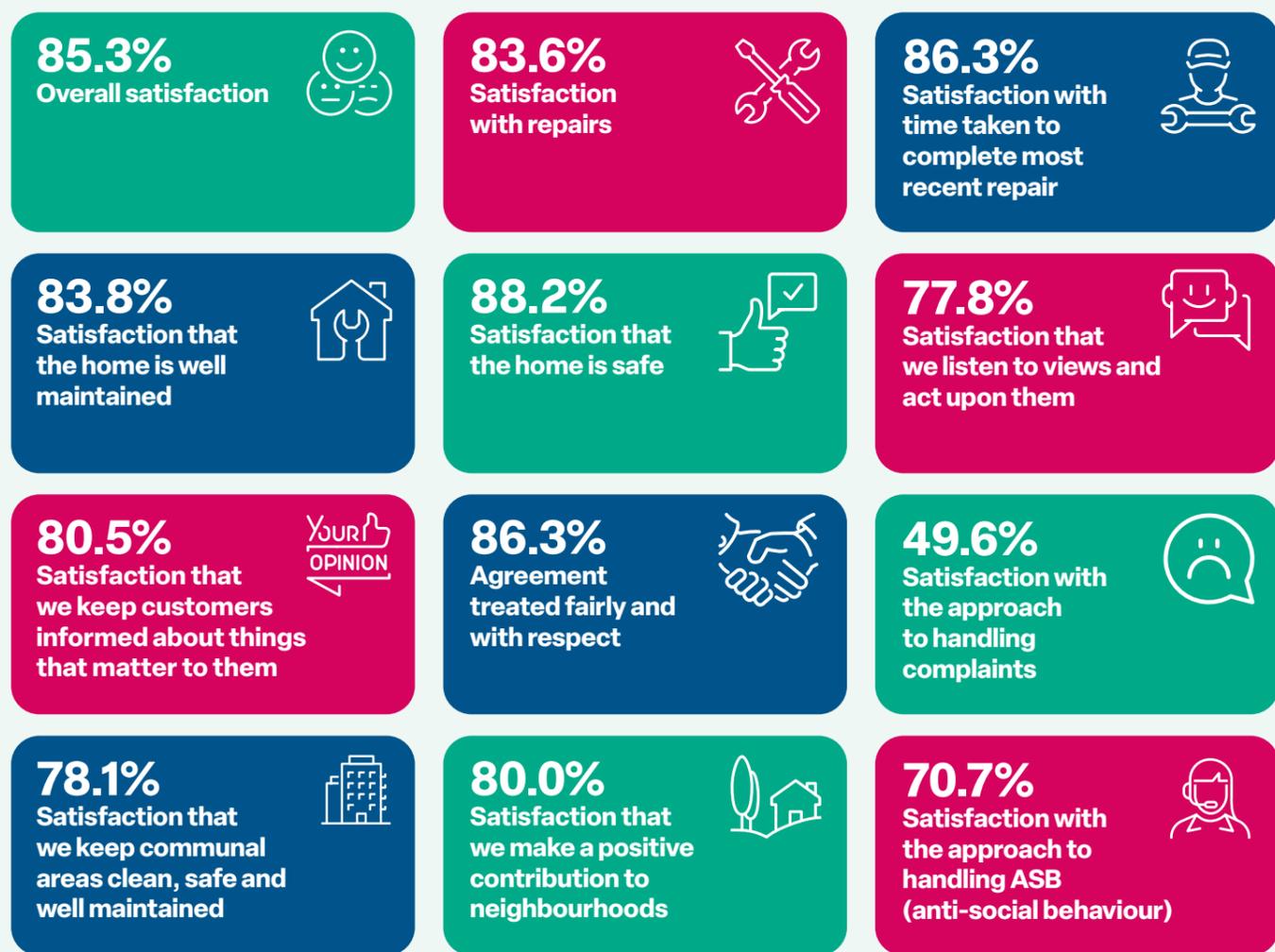
Tenant Satisfaction Measures – Year to Date results for 2025-26

The Regulator of Social Housing requires all social housing landlords, like us, to collect Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) and report them

annually. These show how well we're doing at providing good quality homes and services.

As well as reporting TSMs annually, we also share our year-to-date results with you, so you can see how we're doing throughout the year.

These TSM results are for April - December 2025, Year to Date (YTD) of 2025-26.



Delivering What Matters – How we're performing

You can find the latest information about our three year plan, Delivering What Matters, including year to date performance figures on our website – www.ravenht.org.uk/delivering-what-matters-performance.

Provide feedback

We welcome your feedback about our services. We want to know what we're doing well and where you think we can improve.

I have a complaint:

call us on **0300 123 3399** or raise it through **MyRaven**.

Our Board has a dedicated member with specific responsibility for complaints, Joanne Stewart, ensuring we are held to account and demonstrating our clear commitment to resolving complaints fairly, transparently, and promptly for our customers.



Report it!:

if you have a repair that needs fixing or need to report anti-social behaviour then get in touch through your **MyRaven** online account or by calling **0300 123 3399**.



Compliments:

if you have a compliment about a member of our team or our service then we'd love to hear from you. You can call us on **0300 123 3399**.



General feedback:

if you have an idea or suggestion about our services then please contact us on **0300 123 3399**.

Got an emergency?

Our out of hours service deals with emergencies outside of our normal office hours (9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday). Call **0300 123 3399** for emergency support for something that is putting you or others at risk, could cause serious damage to your home or makes your home unsafe.

If your issue can safely wait until the next working day, it should not be reported through our out of hours service.

What do you want to see in Raven Times?

This is your quarterly magazine to show you what's going on at Raven and in our communities. We'd love to know what you'd like to see more and less of to make this something you find informative and useful.

Drop us an email raventimes@ravenht.org.uk with any feedback – thank you!

Follow us:

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 [@RavenHousingTrust](https://www.instagram.com/RavenHousingTrust)