



WEALD
LIVING
BY SAXON WEALD

PERFORMANCE REPORT TO RESIDENTS

2022





Image: A resident enjoying the garden at Charles Wyatt House, Southampton

Contents

■ The year at a glance	4
■ Your voice in Weald Living	5
■ Customer experience	7
■ Your homes	8
■ Making changes to your homes and lease	9
■ Service charges	10
■ All about money	11
■ A great place to work	11

Hello and welcome to this year's performance report.

We believe in building trust with customers by being open and transparent and this report provides information about how Saxon Weald is performing - the good and not so good. I hope you find the report informative and easy to read and are reassured that Saxon Weald are working as hard as ever to provide great homes and services.

We recently published our customer charter to explain what you can expect as one of our residents. You can find out how we're performing against this on page 8.

There have been significant challenges to overcome this last year, with Covid, Brexit and the war in Ukraine all having a detrimental effect on the economy. Like many sectors, we have struggled with staff shortages and a difficult recruitment market, whilst inflation is having an impact on the price of the materials we use to repair homes and the fuel we put in our HomeFix vans.

We know things are financially tough for many customers right now and that heating costs will be a big concern come the winter. We are piloting a number of initiatives to improve the thermal efficiency of our homes which will have the dual effect of helping the environment and be better for your

wallet! We also offer a fantastic advice service through our Money Matters team. They can access a variety of support and are never judgemental. Please do get in touch if you are struggling.

Finally, I want to say a big thank you to everyone who has taken the time to give us their views and feedback this year. We've had a fantastic number of responses to our surveys, consultations and focus groups which have really influenced our thinking. We are working on launching even more ways for you to have a say, from a formal review panel, to neighbourhood walkabouts and mystery shopping. Keep an eye out for more detail in our newsletters and on our website.

With best wishes,




Steven Dennis,
Chief Executive



Key

In some sections of this report we show how we have performed against our targets.

The colours indicate:

-  We achieved our target
-  We were close to achieving our target
-  We did not achieve our target

FEEDBACK

Your feedback is important to us. It helps us understand where to make improvements or to do more of what you like.

If you received this report by post you'll find a survey at the back. Please take the time to give us your thoughts and send it back to us:

Marketing and Communications team, Saxon Weald, Saxon Weald House, 38-42 Worthing Road, Horsham. RH12 1DT.

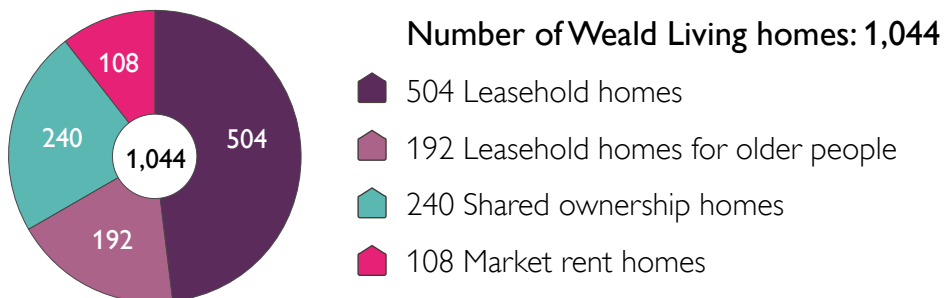
If you received your report by email, you'll receive an online survey via SurveyMonkey.



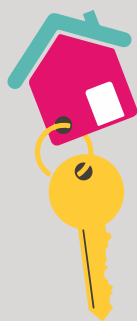
The year at a glance

NUMBER OF WEALD LIVING HOMES

Saxon Weald manages 6,793 properties overall. Of these, 1,044 (just over 15%) come under our Weald Living brand. This includes:



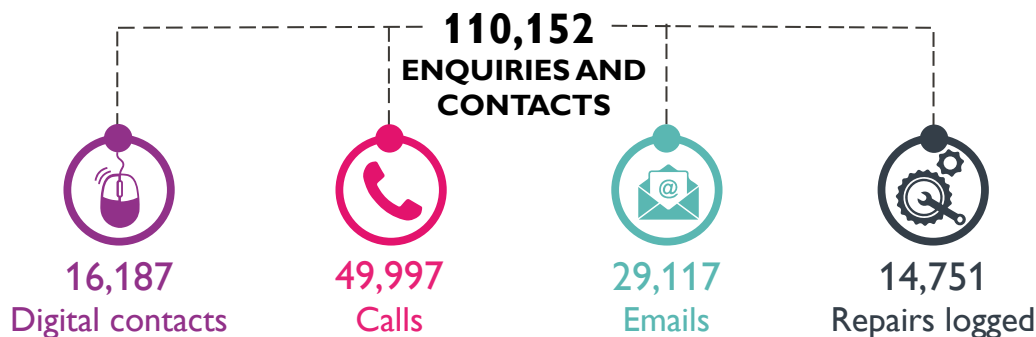
MOVING IN AND MOVING UP



- 5** Saxon Weald rented households became homeowners last year, having bought their properties under the Right to Buy or Right to Acquire schemes.
- 8** Households moved into new shared ownership homes.
- 20** Shared owners moved. Two were retirement living residents and 18 were general needs residents.
- 21** Properties in extra care schemes have been resold. Of these, 17 were shared equity apartments and four were outright leaseholders.
- 9** Shared owners have staircased (bought additional shares in their home). Three of those staircased to 100% and outright ownership.

HERE TO HELP

Our customer support team is made up of 10 customer support advisers, one senior customer support adviser and a customer support manager. Over the last year they handled over **110,000 enquiries!**



Our busiest call times are after a weekend or bank holiday, and your call waiting time may be that bit longer. Consider calling us a little later in the day or use your [MyWealdLiving](#) account to report your concern quicker.

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

You'll find a lot of information for our home owners on our website, www.wealdliving.com Last year we had nearly **19,000 visits!**

if you want to keep up with what's going on check into our Saxon Weald website. We work hard to update it regularly with loads of useful information and any important service updates. www.saxonweald.com.

Likewise, our Facebook and Twitter pages provide handy tips, and information, and offer an opportunity for you to ask questions or add comments on our posts. Last year between them we received around 34,000 views. Go to Facebook.com/wealdliving or Twitter.com/wealdliving.

OUR CUSTOMER CHARTER



In November 2021, we were joined by Kay Clough in a new role of Customer Engagement Manager. Kay's job is to build on all the good things we were doing, to gain your feedback, to make sure we truly listen to our customers and act on what we are hearing.

One of Kay's first actions was to create a customer charter, using the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants charter as a starting point. Of course, it's not enough just to have a charter, we have to show how we're meeting it. It's early days, as the charter was only agreed in May, but here's an overview of how we think we're doing so far.



80% of customers agree that we treat you fairly and with respect.



63% agree that Saxon Weald gives you the opportunity to make your views known. But lots said they didn't know how to when we asked this question. This shows we need to do more to promote our feedback channels.



72% of customers say they are happy with the quality of their home and 73% say they feel their home is safe and secure.

Customer feedback shows that heating concerns and window issues are a factor here. We're looking into what we can do to improve this.



Relationships – Saxon Weald will treat customers with respect. Our relationship with you will be based on openness, honesty and transparency.



Communication – We will give you clear, straightforward information about your home and community, our services and how we are performing. If there are problems, we'll be open about what we are doing to improve.



Voice and influence – We will listen to your views and use your feedback in our decision making. We will make sure there are lots of ways to get your voice heard and that everyone feels included.



Accountability – We will ensure you have the information and contact channels needed to review our performance and hold us to account for our decisions.



Quality – We will provide good quality homes that are well maintained, safe and well managed.



When things go wrong – We will make it easy for you to tell us if there is a problem, we'll listen to your concerns and act fairly in finding a solution. Where things take time to resolve, we will let you know what is happening.



74% of customers feel we keep you well informed

Your feedback tells us our information channels are good (our newsletter, website, monthly emails etc) but we need to do more to improve day-to-day service communication and tell you more about our planned property improvements. We are already reviewing our repairs service communication and hope you notice the improvements soon.



We've added performance information to every edition of our Spotlight newsletter, in addition to publishing performance results in this report.

We're setting up a customer review panel as a formal way for you to hold us to account.



We comply with the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code and openly welcome complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve. So far this year, 74% of complaints were dealt with within our target timeframe.

Customer experience

YOUR VOICE

COMPLAINTS

We want to deliver great customer service to our residents. However, occasionally, things can go wrong. We need to know when this happens so we can put things right and learn from any mistakes.

To make a complaint, just contact us with details of the problem and we'll take it from there. Full details of the process can be found at

www.wealdliving.com/your-voice/complaints-and-compliments

In the last financial year we received 101 complaints from our Weald Living customers

1

Breach of policy

55

Dispute over costs

29

Standard of service

4

Staff behaviour

8

Standard of accommodation

5

Quality of work

Most of these were resolved at the first stage with only three Weald Living complaints going on to stage two of the process.

One of these complaints was referred to the Housing Ombudsman. It was dismissed as the Ombudsman found the issue was outside their jurisdiction.

COMPLIMENTS

We were delighted to receive 88 compliments from a mix of Saxon Weald and Weald Living customers. If you're happy with something we've done, let us know. It makes our day!



YOUR FEEDBACK MATTERS



We carry out a range of surveys to help us find out how you think we're doing. It's really helpful if you can complete these for us, so we get a picture from a wide range of people of where to focus our attention and improve what we do.

These are some of the surveys or feedback requests we sent out.

- **HOMEOWNERS 129 responses from 717 issued.** This survey is sent annually to shared owners and leaseholders on the anniversary of the month of when their lease commenced. It contains 18 questions regarding your home, our service and repairs.
- **DEVELOPMENT & SALES 20 responses from 61 issued.** Seven questions sent to people following a move into a newly built property.

Weald Living overall satisfaction 43%

This is an extremely disappointing result. From feedback, we realise many of our customers are unhappy with our grounds maintenance and communal repairs services, and we are working hard to try and improve upon this.

THE INDEPENDENT HOUSING OMBUDSMAN

If you have been through our complaints process and are not satisfied, you have the right for your complaint to be considered by a 'designated person'. This could be a local councillor or your MP. This person can either help resolve your complaint or refer you to the Independent Housing Ombudsman. You can contact the Ombudsman direct eight weeks from the end of our complaints process or at any time for impartial advice.

Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ
Telephone: 0300 111 3000 | Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

WE'RE ALL EARS

One of the commitments of our customer charter is to listen to your views and use your feedback in our decision making.

How your views have made a difference:

Improving project management ✓

We've carried out major works at Dennis Court this year in an effort to improve the energy efficiency of the properties. Feedback from customers shows that the work has been good but that our communication could have been better. We'll be using some of their suggestions to improve our project management as we roll the programme out to more homes.

Grounds maintenance contract management ✓

Your feedback last summer about the poor performance of *idverde*, our grounds maintenance contractor, directly led to us creating a new role of Estate Services Manager. This has enabled us to monitor performance more closely, holding *idverde* to account where they are not delivering. We have also started to recruit some customer volunteers to be our 'eyes on the ground', working with us to keep *idverde* on their toes!

Changing our domestic abuse policy ✓

Customers involved in reviewing our domestic abuse policy requested that we included information on gas lighting in the policy. Gas lighting is a form of psychological manipulation whereby the abuser attempts to get someone to question their own reality, memory or perceptions. They also ensured we included more information on the support available for survivors.

Improving complaints handling ✓

Customer satisfaction with how we manage complaints has dropped recently. As a result of your feedback, we have decided that complaints should be reviewed by managers at a more senior level than previously.



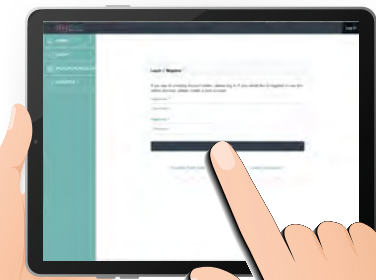
MyWEALD
Living

Safe, secure... sorted!

By the 31 March 2022, 206 households had signed up to use MyWealdLiving, our 24-hour digital service. That's 37% of our Weald Living households and an increase of 2% since the previous year.

Registered users can report repairs, change appointments, have access to their rent balance, make online payments, update their details and more, at any time of day.

Go to mywealdliving.com and give it a go!



DOMESTIC ABUSE

No one deserves to be a victim of domestic abuse or feel unsafe in their home. However, unfortunately, it is not uncommon.

We have provided all our staff with training and have updated our procedures and policies.

We've have a dedicated area on our website with a wealth of information and support and we're aiming for accreditation with the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) later this year.

If you're experiencing domestic abuse or concerned about someone you know, please remember that you are not alone. There are a range of support networks and services available to you. More information can be found on our Saxon Weald website: www.saxonweald.com/da



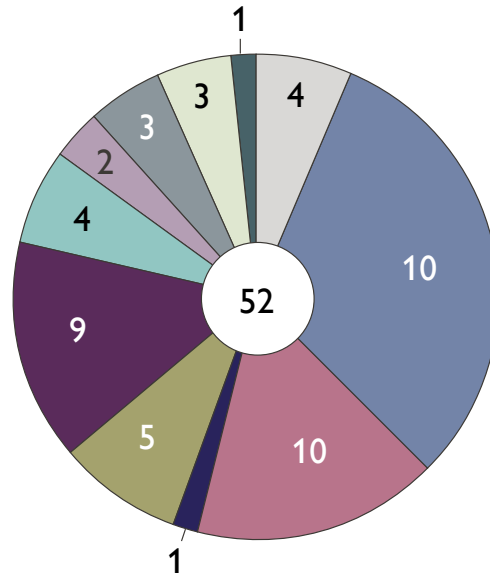
Your homes and neighbourhoods

MAKING CHANGES TO YOUR HOME

Last year 37 leaseholders applied for permission to make changes to their homes. A number of these included applications for several alterations.

Changes that were approved:

- 4 Boiler/heating
- 10 Kitchen refit
- 10 Bathroom adjust/refit
- 1 Electrical/lighting works
- 5 Garden/driveway works
- 9 New windows/doors
- 4 Sheds
- 2 Flooring
- 3 Building works
- 3 Plumbing
- 1 Electric car charging point



Of these, six applications were made retrospectively before the homes could be sold and cost the leaseholder a lot more than if they had applied when originally getting the works done.

If you're planning some home improvements, you'll need our written permission for any structural alterations or changes to the fixtures and fittings of your property. **You may also need to get planning permission and/or building notice from your local authority.**

There's more information on our website: www.wealdliving.com.

LOOKING AFTER YOUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

Our estate improvement team has three operatives who are kept busy making sure our neighbourhoods are kept in good order.

Their jobs are really varied, but we think you'll agree make all the difference to the area where you live.

Last year they carried out 2,314 jobs!

- 885....Estate inspection
- 198....Gutter clearances
- 85.....Kitchen & bathroom clearance
- 129....Garage checks
- 65.....Garage lock changes
- 79.....Heater deliveries
- 175....Void clearances
- 42.....Void garden works
- 72.....Affixing signage jobs
- 113....Adhoc rechargeable jobs
- 394....Clearances (binstore, fly tipping, communal areas etc)
- 12.....Car park line marking jobs
- 65.....Lighting

HEALTH SAFETY MATTERS



Our health and safety team support our scheme managers, housing team, neighbourhood team and HomeFix to help keep them, you and your homes safe and secure. All our staff have been trained to monitor, assess and report risks and to ensure we operate in a safe manner.

Each year our teams ensure an incredible number of safety checks are made, from gas, fire and water assessments to security, safety, electricity and lighting.

Every week our colleagues do building safety walks throughout our blocks. This amounts to 4,628 checks a year!

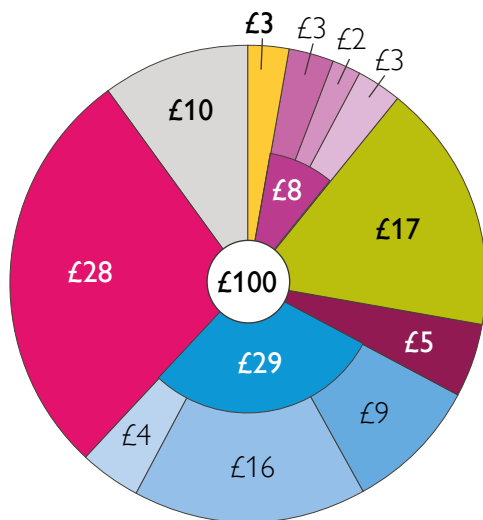
In addition, over the last year, 270 reports were made by staff about potentially unsafe conditions, which we worked on to rectify.

All about money

HOW WE SPEND OUR MONEY

For every £100 we spend

Housing Management	£3
Service charge costs	£8
Cleaning and grounds maintenance	£3
Utilities	£2
All other services	£3
Staff costs	£17
Overheads	£5
Repairs and maintenance	£29
Day-to-day repairs	£9
Property improvements	£16
Regular servicing and maintenance	£4
Interest payments	£28
Investment in new homes	£10



CONSULTATIONS FOR WORKS

As a leaseholder, you pay towards the cost of any works to the building of your home as part of your service charge. As the freeholder, we must consult you on the work required.

Last year, we consulted with 55 leaseholders for works.

While leaseholders pay for their share of works in their service charges, tenants rents are set to include the costs of any works we do.

27	Roofing
8	Asbestos removal
3	Drainage
17	Refurbishment

CONSULTING WITH YOU ON NEW CONTRACTS

It is our responsibility to let you know when and why we are tendering for new contracts. This allows you to have your say in potential contractors and the service they provide.

Last year we contacted 282 leaseholders for the re-procurement of service contracts relating to intercom and alarm systems and waste management services.

EXTENDING YOUR LEASE

If your lease has less than 85 years remaining, it may be harder to sell on your property and affect its value.

Last year there were seven lease extensions completed and four new applications received.

SERVICE CHARGE DEBT

If you are having problems with paying your service charge, Please talk to us. We always try to put reasonable arrangements in place to help people.



Unfortunately, there are occasions where people try to avoid paying what they owe. In these circumstances, in the first instance we are obliged to contact their mortgage provider for assistance.

Last year we had to take court action on two leaseholders and contact the mortgage companies of five others. Through these actions, we recovered £15,633 in total.

Last year 65 people contested their service charges. Of those, we made 22 adjustments. We also adjusted the costs for the other properties in the same building too!

A great place to work

Providing our customers with a safe, well-maintained, affordable home is a huge responsibility. Our success depends on employing the right people and getting the best from them.

Saxon Weald employs 256 members of staff in a wide range of roles from project management to customer experience, housing managers to IT specialists, as well as our trades people who make up nearly a third of our workforce. We offer roles at different levels of experience from apprenticeships, to management and leadership.

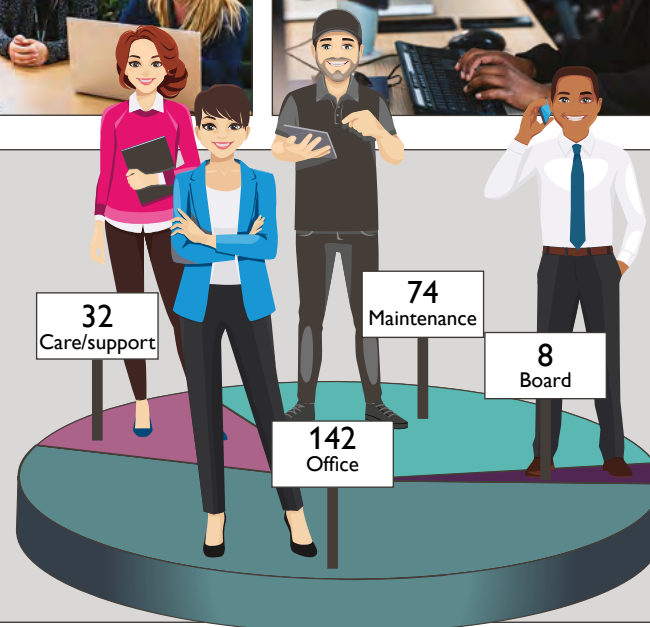
We believe that a dynamic and diverse workforce contributes to the success of our organisation. We recruit the best people for the job, regardless of race, age, disability, sexuality or religion. We are also proud holders of the Investors In People gold award, in recognition of our practices as an employer.

If you, or someone you know, is interested in working with us, please keep an eye on our careers page on our website, where we post all our job vacancies. www.saxonweald.com/careers.



OUR STAFF

	Number of staff	Percentage of staff
● Office and management	142	55.5 %
● Scheme managers	32	12.5 %
● Maintenance	74	28.9 %
● Board members	8	3.1 %
TOTAL	256	100 %



Please give us your views

Your opinions are important to us and helps us shape our service to you in the future. Please take the time to answer our short survey following the link below. All completed surveys received by Friday 14 October will be entered into a free prize draw for the chance to win £50 of high street vouchers.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YY3VWCV>





WEALD LIVING

BY SAXON WEALD

Why am I receiving my copy of this report by email?

If we have your email address, we automatically send communications to you electronically. Thank you for doing your bit for the environment and going digital!

If you change your email address, please let us know or log in to mysaxonweald.com and change your details.

Thank you.

Saxon Weald is a housing association, established in 2000, managing approximately 6,800 homes across Sussex and Hampshire. We provide affordable rented and shared ownership homes for individuals and families, as well as properties exclusively for the over 55s. We also provide homes for market rent and shared ownership sale through our Weald Living brand.

We are a charitable community benefit society, with the money we make from rents being re-invested in the management, maintenance and building of homes. We are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing.

Why am I receiving this information?

The Regulator of Social Housing requires us to be open and share our performance information with customers.

HEAD OFFICE

Saxon Weald House, 38-42 Worthing Road, Horsham, RH12 1DT

TEL: 01403 226000 | EMAIL: info@wealdliving.com | WEB: www.wealdliving.com



PlaceShapers
Together we help communities thrive



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE** | Gold

