



WEALD
LIVING

BY SAXON WEALD

Spotlight

The Newsletter for Weald Living Customers | Summer 2022



Grounds maintenance - we listened

Meet Tom, our new Estate
Services Manager.



Money saving tips

How you could save money
on your monthly bills and
expenses.



Good neighbours

We're delighted to announce
the winner and runners up of
our good neighbour award.

www.wealdliving.com

A note from our Chair

At each of our Board meetings, the first consideration is our customers. Some of the specific measures we have decided to take to improve the service you receive are:

- Invest in our repairs and maintenance service to make it as good as we can.
- Increase resources to oversee and manage our grounds maintenance contractor's work.
- Develop and adopt the Saxon Weald Customer Charter. This sets out our commitments to you and what you can expect from Saxon Weald.

I hope you will see the results of these changes over the coming months. The team at Saxon Weald and I would really value your feedback, so do please get in touch.

We are also very aware of the cost-of-living crisis and the impact it is likely to have on all our customers and staff. We don't have answers to this problem, but it is something that we are taking very seriously.

We've also paid a lot of attention to investing in our homes at recent Board meetings. We are clear that getting the homes you live in up to the right standard must come first. However, we also aim to build as many new homes as we can afford.

Achieving these goals requires more people with the right skills, land on which to build and, of course, money. We are therefore currently:

- Recruiting more development specialists.
- Exploring opportunities to build on land we already own, including garage sites.
- Investigating borrowing money in the financial markets to pay for our planned development program.

I'm sure you'll understand these things will take some time to make a meaningful difference, but I will let you know as they progress.

Finally, I was delighted to celebrate the recent completions of our latest new development at Bennetts Road in Horsham. The funding for the project was supported by grants from Homes England and Horsham District Council. Thank you to both organisations, who continue to be important partners for Saxon Weald.

Simon Hardwick,

Saxon Weald's Chair of the Board



Being considerate in communal grounds

We want to ensure the communal grounds within our blocks and schemes can be enjoyed by everyone. To ensure this is possible, we ask residents to respect these areas and be considerate of others when using these spaces for activities. For example, you must not obstruct communal footpaths, shout and play music loudly, or smoke directly under a neighbour's window.

Please also be aware that any personal items left in communal grounds and gardens are left at your own risk. Saxon Weald will not get involved with disputes around items left unattended in communal grounds.



Our performance

How do we measure up?

We want to be open with you about how we are performing. In each edition of Spotlight, we'll be covering some of the satisfaction measures which will be monitored by the Regulator for Social Housing.

How do we collect the satisfaction information?

We run monthly satisfaction surveys via email and telephone, using your leasehold start date as a trigger for which month you'll receive a questionnaire. The results are very different depending on what survey method is used so we report the results separately.



The results

This edition we are looking at our performance in relation to keeping properties in good repair and maintaining building safety. There are some measures which are based on customer satisfaction and some based on our own performance monitoring. Results are shown for the last financial year unless stated.

Question	Telephone survey	Email survey
How satisfied are you with the repairs service you have received over the last 12 months?	74% satisfied	66% satisfied

Scheme manager service

63% of Weald Living customers living in retirement or extra care are satisfied with their scheme manager service

Communal Cleaning

68% of Weald Living customers are satisfied with the communal cleaning

% of safety checks completed:

FIRE SAFETY	100% on standard buildings. We have 40 checks outstanding on complex buildings.
ASBESTOS SAFETY	100%
WATER SAFETY	100%
LIFT SAFETY	90%
ELECTRICAL SAFETY	100%



A problem shared...

If something has gone wrong with our service, we want to make it as easy as possible for you to tell us about it. We also want to solve the problem as quickly and simply as possible. Our complaints process follows good practice set out by the Housing Ombudsman.



How does it work?

Step 1: Contact us by whatever channel you prefer and tell us what the problem is, and what you would like us to do about it. One of our service managers will contact you and aim to resolve the issue within 10 working days. 96% of complaints are resolved at this stage.

Step 2: If you are not happy with our response, please let us know within two weeks of receiving our reply and we will escalate your complaint to stage two of our process. It will be looked into by our customer experience team and we will aim to resolve the problem within a further 10 working days.

Step 3: In the unlikely event you are still not happy, you have the right to take your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service. The Ombudsman can be contacted at:

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

Need help?

If you need help making a complaint, please get in touch and we'll talk through how we can help. You can also contact the Ombudsman service at any stage of your complaint for impartial advice.

Want more information?

You can download a copy of our complaints policy from www.saxonweald.com/storage/downloads/complaints_policy-1651244847.pdf or contact us to request a copy.



Are your belongings covered?

As a resident, you are responsible for arranging and purchasing insurance to cover the belongings in your home. This includes your furniture, carpets and floor coverings, curtains, clothes, bedding, and electrical items, as well as any jewellery, pictures, and ornaments. So, it's a good idea to consider what a home contents insurance policy would cover you for.

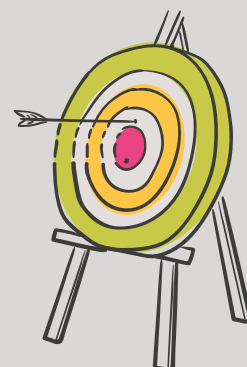
Find out more about contents insurance on our website: www.wealdliving.com/home-owner-services/insurance.

Repair timescales



Repairs to communal and external areas

We aim to complete communal area and external repairs within 28 days (sooner if it is a health and safety hazard).



Money matters

We know many of our customers will find the rising cost of living concerning. Here are some tips that can help you save money on your monthly bills and expenses:

- Cancel unnecessary subscriptions - whether it's a fitness app, TV or magazine subscription, it's easy to sign up for different services and then forget about them.
- Consider your water consumption - heating water equates to about 12% of a typical gas heated home's energy bill. Try taking showers instead of baths and using a bowl for washing up instead of running the tap, where possible.
- Switch off standby - turning appliances off standby could save around £55 a year.
- Avoid using the tumble dryer - as we head into the warmer weather, opt for air drying your clothes outside, where possible.
- Consider your washing machine and dishwasher usage – try and wait until you have a full load for both before using them.
- Avoid overfilling the kettle - only fill the kettle with as much water as you need.



Discover more helpful guidance here:

Energy Saving Trust: energysavingtrust.org.uk

Money Saving Expert: www.moneysavingexpert.com

If you're concerned about your finances and need some help or support, please contact our Money Matters team: moneymatters@saxonweald.com.



£150 council tax rebate

The government has announced a £150 council tax energy rebate for most households in tax bands A-D. This is part of their initiative to help households with rising energy costs.

If you live in an eligible property and pay your council tax by direct debit, you do not need to do anything. Your local council will make the payment directly into your bank account. If you do not pay your council tax by direct debit, your local council will write to your address with information on how to apply for the rebate. Claims for the rebate can be processed until 30 September 2022.

More information can be found on the Government website:

www.gov.uk/guidance/council-tax-rebate-factsheet.



You talked, we listened...

Meet Tom, our new Estate Services Manager

From the various consultations we've carried out with customers in the last year, it's been clear that grounds maintenance is an area of our service that needs improving. So, we're pleased to introduce you to Tom, our new Estate Services Manager.

We asked Tom to give us an overview of his role:

Q. What is the main focus of your role as Estate Services Manager?

The main focus of my role is to oversee and manage our grounds maintenance and cleaning contracts. I will be working closely with our housing team to gather information on our contractors' performances and will use feedback to highlight where things are going right and wrong. This will help us improve standards across our sites.

Q. Why has the role been introduced?

My role has been introduced to improve customer satisfaction with grounds maintenance. It's also been created to help us meet our corporate plan objective, which is to improve our communal areas.

If you have an issue with grounds maintenance or a communal area, please report this in the usual way, either by phone, online message, or email. Issues that need further investigation will be escalated through your housing manager to Tom.



Do you know what to do in case of an emergency?

There are lots of different types of emergency, including fires, floods, and power cuts. It's important to know what to do in an emergency, especially if you live in one of our schemes.

If you become aware of an emergency in your scheme, please call us immediately to report it. We may already be aware, but please don't assume that's the case. If an emergency occurs out of our usual office hours, our phone lines will automatically divert to our out-of-hours service. Where multiple residents are affected by an event, we will liaise with the relevant county council's emergency help team to see what support can be put in place.

Our team of scheme managers will be holding meetings with you over the coming months to discuss what to do in case of emergency. In the meantime, please let us know if there is any change to your emergency contact. We also recommend having a torch at home in case of a power cut, as well as a supply of batteries.



Sun's out, buns out (the burger kind)

Summer's a time for dining al fresco, and many of us will inevitably be dusting off our BBQs to make the most of the lovely weather. However, it's important to be aware of good BBQ practices to keep everyone safe.

- Make sure it's on level ground and away from anything that could catch fire
- Never light a BBQ in an enclosed space or on a balcony
- Use long-handled tools
- Don't leave children unsupervised near a BBQ
- Take care when getting rid of a disposable BBQ or coal, ensure they have cooled before placing them in the bin
- Check your BBQ is in good condition, especially if you haven't used it for a while

For more tips on staying safe this BBQ season, head over to:
www.fireservice.co.uk/safety/barbecue/.



Calling all green fingered residents... it's competition thyme!

Our annual garden competition is here, and we have two great prizes up for grabs.

'Best individual garden'

If you have a garden of your own that you're keen to show off, send in a picture to be in with a chance of winning a £50 voucher for a garden centre of your choice.

'Best communal garden'

Do you live in an apartment block or one of our retirement or extra care schemes? Send us a photo of your communal garden for the chance to win a £100 garden centre voucher for your block/scheme.

To enter, simply send your snaps to competitions@saxonweald.com by Friday 29 July. Don't forget to include your name, telephone number and the category you're entering in the subject line or message*.

*Terms & conditions apply.

Entrants must be Saxon Weald or Weald Living residents. Entries are limited to one per household. Employees of Saxon Weald are not permitted to enter. Entries must be submitted by Friday 29 July 2022. The winner will be chosen by Saxon Weald staff and notified by telephone, email or in writing within five weeks of the closing date. Vouchers cannot be exchanged for a cash alternative. By entering, you agree your name and photo submitted being published online and/or in future editions of Spotlight.



Bobby Buddies

One of our residents, Sylvia, has recently been putting her creativity to good use by knitting 'Bobby Buddies' for child victims of domestic abuse. The knitted bears are given to children by officers to help provide comfort when police attend a domestic incident.



Sylvia was keen to help children at a difficult time in their lives. So, since hearing about the initiative, she has knitted six Bobby Buddies for her local police station in Southampton. We'd like to give a big shout out to Sylvia for all her hard work in bringing comfort to those in need.

If you'd like to get involved and show your support, the knitting pattern for 'Bobby Buddies' can be found on the Hampshire Police website. Finished bears can then be handed in at your local police station.

Recipe for success

We are delighted to announce that our catering contractor, Atalian Servest, have recently won awards at Rosebrook Court.



Danny, Saxon Weald's area manager, won area/support contracts manager of the year. Meanwhile, Kathy, chef manager at Rosebrook Court, was awarded employee of the year.

Well done, Danny and Kathy!



Easter craft fun at Rosebrook Court

We recently hosted an Easter themed craft afternoon at Rosebrook Court in Southampton. Residents enjoyed the chance to get creative by making decorative plant pots and carrot sweet holders. With plenty of chocolate at hand, it was the perfect way to get into the Easter spirit.

Steven Dennis, Saxon Weald's Chief Executive, shared how much he enjoyed the event:

"The craft afternoon at Rosebrook Court was a wonderful occasion that allowed residents and staff to really connect with each other. We know how much days like these are enjoyed and appreciated amongst our customers, and seeing so many leave with a smile on their face was a great end to a lovely afternoon."



Platinum Jubilee celebrations

Many of our extra care schemes have been busy celebrating Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.



Leggyfield Court, Horsham:

On Thursday 2 June, Leggyfield Court enjoyed a traditional British afternoon tea. Throughout the day, residents tucked into a range of delicious treats, including cucumber sandwiches, cupcakes, scones, and even a glass of Pimm's. The afternoon was a huge success and put a smile on many residents' faces.



Highwood Mill, Horsham:

At Highwood Mill, residents also indulged in sweet treats with a traditional cream tea to mark the occasion. The afternoon was filled with brilliant live music, craft stalls and a raffle, which all helped to create a lively atmosphere. It was great to see so many residents get together for an unforgettable celebration.

Osmund Court, Billingshurst:

On Monday 6 June, residents at Osmund Court got together to enjoy cream tea and sandwiches and toasted the celebration with a glass of sherry. Local singer, Louise, sang a wide range of songs which had everyone smiling and singing along. Each resident was gifted a Platinum Jubilee mug from extra care manager, Dawn Lambert, which was a great end to a memorable afternoon!



Everybody needs good neighbours

Thank you to everyone who put forward a nomination for our good neighbour award.

We're delighted to announce that Alan Jones has won the award for continuously going out of his way to help his community. This includes doing weekly grocery shopping for several other residents, organising BBQs and coffee mornings, and frequently maintaining the communal garden. Congratulations Alan!

We'd also like to congratulate our runners up. Phil was nominated for always helping tenants out with odd jobs, and Holly and Craig were put forward for helping their neighbour settle into their new home.



Great homes, building futures!

In our corporate plan, we have committed to reducing our carbon footprint and delivering sustainable new homes that meet customers' needs. We're pleased to say that two of our redevelopment sites at Blenheim Road and Bennetts Road in Horsham completed earlier this year.

Elm Grove and Bennetts Road

Our redevelopment site at Elm Grove and Bennetts Road in Horsham has replaced six houses with 21 homes for affordable rent. As the development sits on the corner of Bennetts Road and Elm Grove, one of the blocks of flats has been named "The Elms". The other block has been named "Avery Place", after one of the previous Chairs of our Board, David Avery.

Back in May, before all the properties were occupied, we took the opportunity to invite members of Horsham District Council and the local ward council along for a look around. Our guests were very impressed with the properties, with one council member saying she would be happy to move in herself!



Blenheim Road

In June, we were pleased to invite members of the local council along to the official ribbon cutting and opening of Rowhook Court on Blenheim Road. The block of new homes has replaced an outdated garage site with nine, one and two-bedroom flats for affordable rent. A big thank you to all our guests for coming, and to Café Du Van for providing refreshments.

These brand new homes have been built in partnership with Sunninghill Construction Co Ltd. Each ground floor flat features a private garden, while all properties enjoy access to a communal outdoor space and secure bicycle storage.





How the new scheme will look

The Cobblers, Slinfold

We've been working closely with Slinfold Parish Council, the Scouts and the local community ahead of the redevelopment of The Cobblers. We will replace outdated and predominantly bedsit retirement accommodation with 12 self-contained, sustainable, modern flats for affordable rent. We've also secured outline planning permission for a replacement hut for the local Scouts, who showed a lot of care for The Cobblers residents at Christmas by cooking them a festive meal.

Sam Tippins, our Housing Manager for the area, also worked with the Parish Council and some local volunteers to rehome some of the plants from the existing gardens at The Cobblers. After the war, a lot of returning military moved into new builds in Slinfold. As they aged, some of them moved into The Cobblers and they and their families planted roses and shrubs in the gardens. We're delighted that these plants and cuttings will continue to thrive for years to come in the Slinfold community.



The Cobblers as it looks now

A new chapter

Rebecca and her son, Robert, recently moved into one of our new build homes at New Monks Park, Lancing. While everything about the area felt new, Rebecca soon felt right at home as her aunt and uncle moved in next door.

We asked Rebecca to tell us about her experience...

What does home mean to you?

Me and my son being here. We've now got a private garden that he loves playing in and feeding the birds, so we're very grateful.

What's your favourite thing about your new home?

We've got more than one room! Having moved from a studio flat, our home feels like a mansion. We have a lot more space, including our own garden, and the extra toilet will help with toilet training too.

As a new build home, there's not much I can do in the first year. That doesn't matter though, as all the time I have my son, it feels like the perfect home.

What did Saxon Weald do to make the move as smooth as possible?

I was at work, so my sister was able to go and collect the keys on my behalf, which was really helpful.

If you've recently moved into one of our properties, we'd love to hear about your experience. Get in touch at yourvoice@saxonweald.com.



Join the Saxon Weald team

It's the people at Saxon Weald that make us special. In exchange for your commitment, we'll make sure you get the training and benefits you deserve, including:

- 27 days annual leave, plus bank holidays
- An excellent pension scheme – with Saxon Weald contributing 6-12%
- 4 x salary life assurance
- A wellbeing plan including flexible working, cash back on day-to-day medical expenses, flu jabs, an employee assistance programme and cycle to work scheme

Thinking of becoming an apprentice?

Keep your eyes peeled as we'll be looking to launch a company-wide apprenticeship programme very soon.

To view our available positions or to find out more about working for Saxon Weald, please visit

www.saxonweald.com/careers.



SAXON WEALD

Great homes, building futures

Make life easier, get ☺ online!

Our easy-to-use, online self-service portals provide secure access to your information and services. They're available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from a desktop, laptop, tablet or mobile. Discover the benefits and how to register for your account here:

www.wealdliving.com/getonline



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PlaceShapers
Together we help communities thrive

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