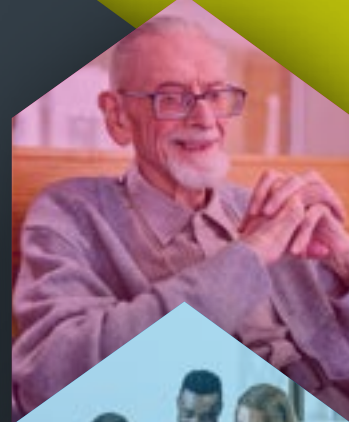




SAXON WEALD

Great homes, building futures

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND
GOVERNANCE
REPORT 2022 -2023



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At a glance



6,866

Number of properties



80.5%

Customer Satisfaction



97%

of homes meet the Decent Homes Standard

G1 / V2

Highest rating of governance



Regulator of Social Housing

Official adopter

Together with Tenants



64%

Our rents are an average of 64% of the Local Housing Allowance

46

new homes completed in 2022/23 & 153 in progress



£1.6 million

of extra benefits raised for our customers, who were missing out on what they were entitled to



100%

of new homes have an EPC B or better. 9% achieved EPC A



Saxon Weald pays the living wage








About us

Saxon Weald manages close to 7,000 affordable homes across Sussex and Hampshire, providing essential services to more than 10,000 people. As a community benefit society, we reinvest our income into the management, maintenance and building of homes. Over the last 20 years, we have built 1,750 new homes, making a valuable contribution to easing the chronic shortage of affordable housing in the South-East.

Our values and focus

Saxon Weald’s values are what matter to us most. They guide us every day in everything we do. At Saxon Weald we will:

-  Be customer led
-  Be one team
-  Be forward thinking
-  Be inclusive
-  Do the right thing



Our corporate plan sets out three clear priorities:

Focus on our customers: we will engage with customers in a positive, open way. We will listen to their feedback and use it to ensure we are providing good quality services that meet customer needs.

Invest in our homes: our homes must be safe, warm and affordable while communal areas should be well looked after. We will invest in improving the energy performance of our homes, reducing our customers’ fuel bills while improving our carbon footprint.

Be a great place to work: we seek to create an environment where everyone feels welcome and valued. By investing in training, development and staff well-being, we equip our staff to deliver the best services to customers.

The Sustainability Reporting Standard (SRS) for Social Housing

The Sustainability Reporting Standard consists of 12 themes and 48 criteria for us to show our performance against. These criteria align to international frameworks and standards, including the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

This ESG report covers our performance for the 2022/23 financial year. While we are able to demonstrate a strong commitment against all core criteria, we recognise there are some enhanced criteria where we need to develop our approach. Our Asset Management HomeFix repairs teams had major restructures during the year, which led to our asset, sustainability and development strategy being delayed. We now anticipate this to be complete later in the 2023/24 financial year.

Instead, this year saw us focus on our asset management strategy and customer strategy, which puts investment into our existing homes into the forefront and the voice of the customer at the heart of what we do.

The themes covered in this report are as follows:

	Theme	Criteria
Social	Affordability and security	C1 – C5
	Building safety and quality	C6 – C8
	Resident voice	C9 – C11
	Resident Support	C12
	Placemaking	C13
Environmental	Climate change	C14 – C19
	Ecology	C20 – C21
	Resource management	C22 – C24
Governance	Structure and governance	C25 – C30
	Board and Trustees	C31 – C41
	Staff wellbeing	C42 – C46
	Supply chain management	C47 – C48

Affordability and security

Through the turmoil and uncertainty of the past two years, the importance of a safe place to call home has never been more apparent. With the growing cost of living crisis, being able to afford that home is an increasing concern for many. For Saxon Weald, providing safe, affordable homes is the very essence of our business. Our rents are set below Local Housing Allowance rates and we offer security of tenure through assured tenancy agreements.

C1 – How our rents compare

Overall, our rents are an average of 52% of the median private sector rent in the area in which we work. Furthermore, our rents are an average of 64% of the Local Housing Allowance.

C2 – An overview of our existing owned and managed homes, completed before the last financial year (31 March 2023)



TENURE TYPE	NUMBER OF PROPERTIES	PERCENTAGE OF STOCK
General needs (social rent)	3,419	59.8%
Intermediate rent	1	0%
Affordable rent	1,028	15%
Supported Housing	59	0.8%
Housing for older people	1,274	18.6%
Low-cost home ownership	441	6.4%
Care homes	0	0%
Private Rented Sector	108	1.6%
Other (leasehold) homes	536	7.8%
TOTAL PROPERTIES	6,866	100%



C3 – We completed 46 new properties during the financial year 2022/23

Our aim is to build 393 homes over the next five years (2023-2028). These will be made up of 269 for affordable rent and 124 for shared ownership.

DEVELOPMENT	AFFORDABLE / SOCIAL RENT	SHARED OWNERSHIP	TOTAL	%
New Monks Park, Lancing	6	6	12	26%
Ecclesden Park, Angmering	7	16	23	50%
Ashplats, East Grinstead	7	2	9	20%
Hawksbourne, North Horsham	-	2	2	4%
TOTAL PROPERTIES	20	26	46	100%



C4 – Reducing the effect of fuel poverty on our residents

Our new Asset Management Strategy 2023-26 was approved by our Board in March 2023. One of the key themes of strategy is energy efficiency.

We will:

- From April 2024, bring forward an additional £1m capital investment per annum over the next four years to meet our EPC target for 2028/29.
- Gather and save much more accurate EPC data on our property assets over the next three years, following a process of reassessment.
- Carry out a new energy performance assessment as work is done to improve energy efficiency.
- Evaluate the reality of meeting net carbon zero by 2050. Where possible, we will start the process of decarbonisation through existing programmed maintenance work.



We regularly offer our customers advice on how to find the best energy deals and save energy within the home. We publish this in our newsletters that are sent to all our residents and keep our website updated with new information as we receive it.

In October 2022 we published a 'Helping Hand Guide' which contains lots of information to help with the cost-of-living, including a guide to government support with energy costs and information relating to the costs of running different heating systems and domestic appliances.

C5 – Security of tenure.

We don't offer fixed-term tenancies, but provide more long-term security of tenure with assured tenancies.

We want our customers to feel able to put down roots. We provide all our social housing customers with long-term security through assured tenancy agreements, following the successful completion of a 12-month starter tenancy. Our 108 private market rent customers have assured shorthold tenancies on a rolling term basis.

Building safety and quality

C6 – Gas safety

99% of our properties have an up-to-date, accredited gas safety certificate.

C7 – A commitment to fire safety

As at the end of March 2023, 98.6% of our homes had an up-to-date and compliant fire risk assessment.

The complexity of the building determines the frequency of assessments: complex buildings have an annual fire risk assessment while standard buildings are assessed every three years.

In December, we sent out specific fire safety leaflets to every one of our flats, in line with new legislation.

C8 – Meeting the Decent Homes Standard

97% of our properties meet the Decent Homes Standard. We are concerned that 164 of our homes (around 3% of what we own) do not meet the standard due to problems with their roofs. We will be checking them all over the coming year and repairing or replacing them as needed.



Resident voice

C9 – Enabling customers to hold us to account

As adopters of the National Housing Federation’s Together with Tenants charter, we are committed to having an open, honest and transparent relationship with our customers. We are also committed to listening to customer views, using this feedback and being accountable to customers for our decision making.

We have an annual customer engagement plan, setting out opportunities for customers to have their say at individual, neighbourhood and strategic levels. This plan is co-ordinated by our dedicated customer experience team, ensuring customer voice is heard across the organisation.

This year we launched our first customer ‘task and finish’ group, where a group of customers looked in detail at the quality of our repairs service. This was launched with a drop-in event for all customers, with seven customers then committing to investigating and preparing a report for consideration by our Board. This creates a direct feedback channel between customers and our Board.

Two of our nine Board members are customers, ensuring resident views are heard at the most strategic level of the organisation. We also have a ‘customer voice’ Board working group consisting of three Board members and three colleagues, to ensure Board maintain a customer focus.

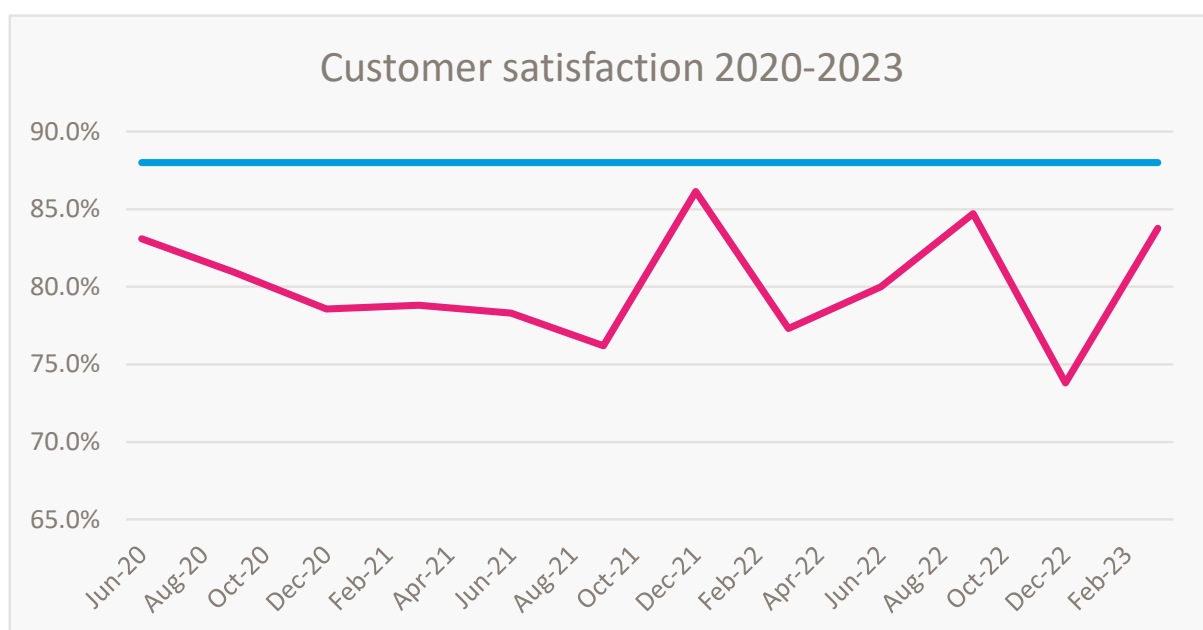


C10 – Measuring customer satisfaction

Saxon Weald measures overall customer satisfaction through monthly telephone surveys. These are conducted on our behalf by IFF Research and comply with the Regulator of Social Housing’s requirements for collection of the new tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs). Information on our performance is reported monthly to our Leadership Team and at every Board meeting.

We also conduct a transactional repairs survey, and satisfaction surveys for new lettings and complaints handling. We send these surveys via email and text and provide service managers with regular reports on their results.

Our target for customer satisfaction is 80%. We achieved overall satisfaction of 80.5% for the 22/23 financial year. This is very slightly down from satisfaction of 80.8% in 21/22 and 81.8% in 20/21. While this small decrease is something we are working hard to reverse, it is a common trend across the social housing sector. Indeed, the Institute of Customer Service’s UKCSI report shows customer satisfaction with public services at its lowest since 2015. Against this backdrop, Saxon Weald’s performance remains solid.





C11 – Managing complaints

In the 22/23 financial year, we had one case investigated by the Ombudsman, which resulted in a decision of no maladministration.

We recognise that complaints provide valuable feedback and an opportunity to learn and improve. During the year we made the following changes as a result of our complaint investigations:

- **Change to service charge calculations:** we have made changes to the way we calculate service charges for residents who live in homes linked to retirement developments. If they are not part of the main building, they will not have to pay towards the upkeep of elements of the building they do not use, for example, the lift.
- **Repairs operatives taking photos of completed work:** our operatives are now required to take photos of finished work. This enables speedier resolution of complaints as managers have to carry out fewer on-site checks.
- **Additional appointment reminders:** we have introduced a repairs appointment reminder 72 hours before the due date. This is in addition to the existing reminder 24 hours before the appointment, as we had feedback that this wasn't sufficient notice.
- **Change to compensation process:** we have introduced a new system of paying compensation to customers who have been offered temporary heaters while awaiting a repair. They will now automatically receive the payment rather than having to submit a request.

Resident support

C12 – Supporting customers and improving outcomes

Our Money Matters team help our customers maximise their income by ensuring they are getting all the financial support they are entitled to. They can help customers to claim welfare benefits, including supporting with tribunals and claims for backdated benefits. In 2021/22 the team helped 544 customers, resulting in additional income for those customers of £1.6 million.

In addition we have a Wellbeing Adviser who assists our more vulnerable customers with issues such as mental health, hoarding and substance abuse. They help these residents get much-needed support from external agencies, whilst helping them maintain their tenancies.

Case study: Money Matters support

“ For years, we suffered as a family; I couldn't afford my son's shoes for school and I used to eat my children's leftovers. We were at the end of the poverty line ever since I had a car crash and I'm sad that my children had to go through that.

I knew I wasn't going to be able to pay my rent and I'd been running on foodbank vouchers. So, as a last resort, I contacted the Money Matters team. The adviser asked me about my situation and what benefits I was getting. I told him about the car accident I'd been in and he said that the amount I was getting didn't sound right with the injuries I had.

He helped me make new claims and apply to backdate them. The adviser had been right and the money I received was life changing. I managed to pay off all my debts, buy my son a laptop for university and get carpet laid in my home. I also bought a new TV, a table and chairs to sit at and so much more. I am so very, very grateful to the team for the support they provided. ”



At Saxon Weald, we believe everyone has the right to feel safe in their home. We're proud to say that we are part of the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation scheme, and became accredited in October 2022.

We are dedicated to supporting anyone who is experiencing domestic abuse, and have equipped our staff with the skills and knowledge they need to effectively handle domestic abuse disclosures. Our staff are, and will continue to be, educated on how to support victims of domestic abuse, working in partnership with agencies to help keep individuals and families safe in their homes. In 2022/23 Last year we supported 40 households who were affected by domestic abuse. 16 of the cases resulted in us supporting a home move.



As an inclusive company, we are committed to ensuring that the information we provide to our customers is accessible and suitable for a range of needs and requirements. This includes supporting customers who have impaired vision or hearing, or speak a foreign language. We have recently renewed our contract with LanguageLine, our interpreting service, and expanded the list of services we can provide to our customers. Now every member of our staff can access the service if they need help communicating with a customer either via a phone call or a video call similar to Facetime. The new video interpreting service also allows us to get a British Sign Language interpreter.

A financial support fund of £100k was set up for 2022/23 to provide support to customers who may find themselves in crisis or financial hardship during the cost of living crisis. We supported 301 customers and spent the entire fund (plus a little more). The majority of customers we supported were either single households or single parents and we mostly helped customers with food and fuel costs. We found that demand for food and fuel costs increased over the winter months. We had to limit the support available for white goods during the second half of the year, to ensure we could support as many customers as possible with food and fuel. Between April and June, we were also able to make referrals to West Sussex County Council’s Household Support Fund on behalf of our tenants and, in total, 54 households were awarded in the region of £10k from this fund.

In Autumn 2022 we produced and sent our customers a 20-page Helping Hand Guide to help support them through the cost of living crisis. We wanted residents to know that we understand and are here to help where we can. The guide provides tips, advice and support to help their incomes stretch a little further. Examples included energy usage of heating systems and appliances, financial advice and available support, local foodbanks and tips on how to help keep bills down and stay warm over winter.

Place making

C13 – Supporting communities with placeshaping activities

This year, we launched our first Youth Awards, aimed at recognising the achievements of young people in our community. We had four awards covering achievement in learning, sports and physical activity, young carers and contribution to the community. This helped us build links with local authority youth teams, community organisations and schools.



We held a series of wellbeing roadshows. Over six months, we visited 16 of our estates and neighbourhoods with a team of staff giving cost-of-living advice and support, together with free refreshments and competitions. Again, we were able to involve community organisations such as Citizens Advice and Horsham District Council’s community development team.



Case study: Community café, Abbotswood extra care, Rustington

Since September 2022, one of our extra care schemes, Abbotswood, has been piloting a free community café organised in partnership with Sage House dementia support services. Each week, people from the local community are invited to join our residents at the scheme to socialise with them over a coffee. Around 30 non-residents attend each week and can also enjoy lunch purchased from our on-site restaurant if they choose. Some of those attending had been feeling very isolated since the Covid lockdown periods and describe the café as a lifeline. Our residents have made lots of new friends and have been venturing out more into the local community to spend time with them.

We’ve also seen visitors purchasing shared equity properties at Abbotswood since the community café began, a true testament to how welcome they feel at the scheme.

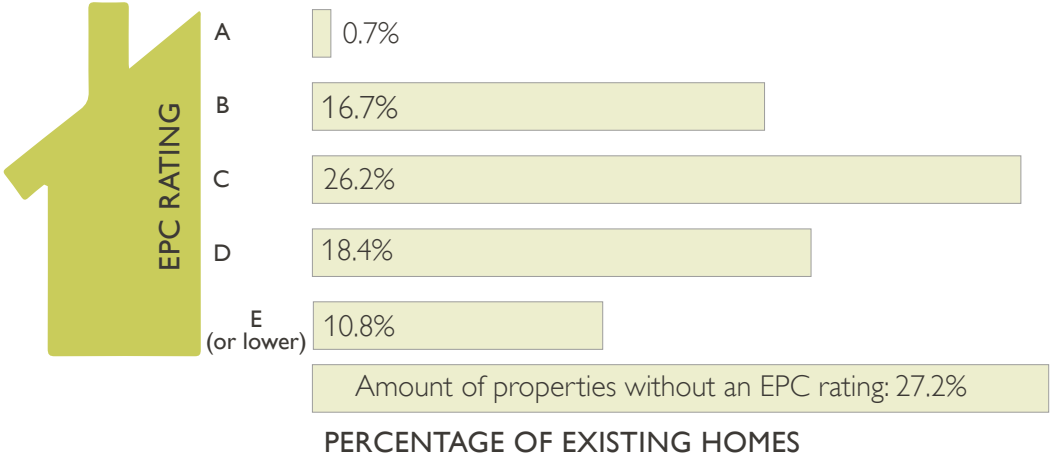
Where possible, we are now setting up similar partnership cafés at our other Extra Care schemes.



Climate change

C14 – EPC rating of our homes built prior to 2022

As part of our new Asset Management Strategy, we want to ensure that all our homes meet EPC-C by March 2029. Whilst most of our homes have an EPC rating, some of the data is now out of date owing to subsequent investment work, or is cloned. However, we are committed to improving the accuracy of the data we hold. We will bring forward an additional £1m capital investment per annum over the four years starting from April 2024 to assist with achieving our EPC C goal.



C15 – EPC rating of new homes

We're pleased to report that of the 46 homes that were completed in the 2022/23 financial year, 9% achieved EPC A and 91% EPC B. Looking forward, all the homes we build will be designed to achieve a minimum of EPC A in operation, with the aspiration for some of them to achieve net zero carbon.



C16 – Greenhouse gas emissions

The table below provides a summary of the carbon data we have been able to validate as our baseline.

ACTIVITY	SCOPE	% OF TOTAL CO ₂ e	CO ₂ e EMISSIONS (TONNES P.A.)
HomeFix fleet	1	1	268
Communal and office electricity	2	4	766
Communal and office gas	2	14	2,513
Housing assets	3	81	14,506
TOTAL			18,209

We are aware however, that there are areas of business activity where we are yet to capture data. This includes the footprint of our staff’s commute and business travel and the supply chain of our materials and service providers.

From 2024, we will be investing additional money in our homes to improve the number which meet SAP C. This will reduce the total CO₂ emissions in our homes.

C17 – A proactive approach to energy efficiency

The measures we have taken during the year to improve our overall energy efficiency include:

- Working with developers to ensure new homes currently under construction achieve EPC A or above.
- Carried out works to six bungalows in a West Sussex village to vastly improve their energy efficiency from EPCs E and F to EPC B.
- We've been progressing with our Zero-Carbon build at The Cobblers, Slinfold, to replace an outdated scheme with 12 one and two-bedroom flats for affordable rent. We received a generous grant of £660,000 in December 2022 from the local housing authority towards this project, in recognition of our commitment to energy efficiency at this scheme. There will be no gas installed and instead, heating and hot water will be delivered using air source heat pumps. In addition, all of the new homes will have electric vehicle charging points installed, photovoltaic panels on their roofs and triple glazing, which will help to minimise energy costs for our customers.

Case study: Brookview, Coldwaltham bungalows

Six older bungalows at Brookview, in the rural village of Coldwaltham, have been having extensive work done to bring their low energy performance of just E and F, up to a much more efficient B rating.

Works have included new roofs, new windows and doors, increased loft insulation, solar panels and external insulation and cladding. The properties look almost new on the outside while being much easier to keep warm on the inside. Later in the year, they are due to have the current electric heating upgraded, ensuring these properties meet our long-term energy efficiency goals.



From this...



To this...



C18 – Mitigating climate risks

In terms of existing homes, we use local authority flood risk management strategies to highlight areas where our customers may be affected.

For new homes, we carry out comprehensive flood risk assessments on all potential development sites.

Many of our properties that are at risk of damp, condensation and mould are being retro-fitted with new extraction and ventilation systems, which will also mitigate some excess warmth. However, we recognise that our approach to the increased risk of homes overheating needs developing, and that we need to assess which properties may require work. We have increased the number of surveyors that work for Saxon Weald and we will include this in our Environmental and Sustainability plan that will be drawn up later in the year.

C19 – Keeping customers well informed about correct ventilation, heating, recycling etc.

We regularly publish and send our customers information on topics such as recycling, heating and ventilation, damp, mould and condensation, preparing for winter and energy efficiency. We also have a wealth of information on our website and post regular environment-focussed posts on our social media channels.

Last year we sent all our customers our Helping Hand Guide, which went into more detail about different types of heating, running costs and energy usage.

In our schemes where there are communal bin stores, bins are labelled with a guide to correct recycling for that specific council and what goes in which bin.

When moving into a new home, our residents receive our home user guides that detail specific information for their property.

Ecology

C20 – Increasing green space and promoting bio-diversity

All our new developments meet local planning requirements for bio-diversity. Features include creating wildlife habitats such as hedgehog boxes, insect hotels and even a frog subway. We will be building on this work as part of our net zero carbon commitment.

We have been collaborating with local re-wilding projects, such as Steyning for Trees, a charity who plant trees and hedges to fight climate change, absorb carbon, increase biodiversity and support the wellbeing and beauty of the local area.

We encourage no mow areas within our sites and have been adding extra planting to shrub beds to increase biodiversity. We have also had ecology reports raised for dew ponds and other natural areas to ensure they are maintained appropriately and avoid harming any endangered species.



C21 – Reducing the use of pollutants

Our newly procured grounds maintenance contractors use non-chemical means of weed removal i.e. hand pulling of weeds where possible. If they do need to use weed killing solution, it only targets the weed itself and is diluted to the extent it doesn't cause harm to other wildlife. Fertilising products are organically based and do not use products containing peat.

In addition, all our contractors are committed to reducing fuel consumption and are replacing their fleet with electric vehicles and increasing their use of electric tools.

Our Environmental and Sustainability Plan will highlight further areas we can develop.

Resource management

C22 – A commitment to responsibly sourced materials

Several of our main contractors have developed sustainability policies in relation to both the sourcing and disposing of materials.

Our Employer's Requirement encourage improved waste management with a focus on reduction and re-use. Waste information is provided by Contractors as part of their monthly Health and Safety Reports but this does not form part of a Key Performance Indicator at present.

C23 – A commitment to robust waste management, incorporating building materials

We do not yet have a formal strategy for this. Our Environmental and Sustainability Plan will address our commitment to this.

C24 – Efficient water management

We are planning to develop our work on good water management as part of our upcoming Environmental and Sustainability Plan. For new build developments, water management is considered as part of the Considerate Contractors Scheme. All new homes need to demonstrate water neutrality and we will achieve this by offsetting water usage in our existing properties.



Governance criteria

C25 – Registration and regulation

We are registered with the Regulator of Social Housing (registration number L4299).

C26 – Achieving regulatory excellence

Our most recent regulatory review (November 2022) shows our rating as V2/G1.

C27 – A recognised code of governance

Saxon Weald follows the National Housing Federation Code of Governance 2020.

C28 – Providing a not-for-profit service

Saxon Weald is a community benefit society registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (number 7971). As such, the money we receive in rents is re-invested in the management, maintenance and building of homes.

C29 – Managing organisational risk

Saxon Weald is proactive in risk identification and management. We have a robust risk management policy and framework, along with a comprehensive risk map, within which our key strategic and operational risks are recorded, assessed and monitored. This helps to ensure that our key organisational risks are managed in line with the risk attitude and appetite agreed by the Board.

The Audit and Risk Committee monitors risk through regular reports to each meeting and the strategic risks are reviewed the Board on a regular basis. Internal audit of the risk management framework provides assurance of its effectiveness.

We have commissioned the services of an independent risk management specialist to review our risk management arrangements and provide critical support and challenge to our risk management on an ongoing basis. This included them working closely with the Board and Leadership Team to reconsider and update our risk appetite, resulting in the creation of a new and better-defined risk appetite.

The Sector Risk Profile, regular risk review bulletins provided by our external risk specialist, self-assessment and continuous horizon scanning enable us to recognise and respond positively and quickly to any emerging risks

C30 – Adverse regulatory findings

We have not had any adverse regulatory findings relating to data protection breaches, bribery, money laundering or HSE breaches in the last 12 months.



Board and trustees

C31 – Demographics of our Board

MEASURE	DATA
% of board that are women	33%
% of board that are BAME	0%
% of board that have a disability	22%
% of board that are LGBTQ+	Unknown
Average age of board members (years)	56 years
Average board tenure (years)	3 years



While we currently have no board members from ethnic minority groups during this reporting period, on 1 August 2023, we had a new Board Member join, taking our BAME statistic to 10%. We remain committed to increasing the diversity of our board, and being representative of the communities we serve.

C32 – Board and management team turnover

We have seen a 22% turnover in our Board in the last two years. Two members left as they had reached the end of their term, while two left for personal reasons. In the same period, we had a 20% turnover in our management team, with two people retiring after 20 years' service and two people leaving for personal reasons.

C33 – Board tenure

The maximum tenure for a Board member is six years, ensuring there is opportunity to bring in fresh opinion, experience and knowledge.

C34 – Non-executive directors

89% of our board are non-executive directors.

C35 – Financial leadership

Saxon Weald has three board members on the Audit and Risk Committee with recent relevant financial experience. The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee is a Chartered Accountant by profession, was a CEO of an engineering company, holds a portfolio of non-executive positions and was Chair of the Risk Management and Audit Committee at Family Mosaic for over 10 years. The Vice Chair has had a career in investment banking and was Treasurer of Merrill Lynch Europe. Another Board Member in the committee has broad international experience as a financial professional, and extensive experience working with company boards dealing with all areas of corporate finance.

C36 – Number of executives on the Remuneration Committee

No executive directors sit on the Remuneration Committee.

C37 – Succession planning

A succession plan was presented to our Board for key roles in the business. A leadership development programme, as well as coaching, support and job shadowing (where appropriate), will ensure we have a healthy pipeline of people ready to progress.

C38 – External audit arrangements

Our current external auditor, Beever and Struthers, has been responsible for auditing our accounts for the last three years.

C39 – Independent Board review

We commissioned Campbell Tickell to carry out an independent review of our Board's effectiveness in May 2023, and prior to that in March 2020. We repeat this process every three years, in line with best practice. Our Board Chair also leads an annual in-house review process.

C40 – The roles of the Chair and CEO

The roles of CEO and Chair are held by two different people, thus aiding accountability and corporate responsibility.

C41 – Managing conflicts of interest

Our Code of Conduct for Board members, staff and involved residents sets out the association's approach to managing conflicts of interest. All members are required to sign an annual declaration of interest form, as well as to declare any relevant interests at the start of each Board and committee meeting. How any conflicts of interest declared are dealt with is dependent on the circumstances. This can range from requiring a member to withdraw from meetings or discussions on specific matters, to requiring a member to resign from the Board.



Employee wellbeing

C42 – Commitment to the Real Living Wage

We apply, and operate within, the provisions of the Real Living Wage in all areas of our business.

C43 – Gender pay gap

Our median gender pay gap is 13.4%. We are confident that we offer equal pay, with employees paid equally for the same or equivalent work regardless of gender.

Case study: Recruitment of more women into trade roles

In the UK, just four percent of tradespeople are female. While this figure has increased in recent years, there’s still a lot to be done to encourage more women into our trades. We are pleased that we now have a woman as part of our 80 strong in-house repairs team and we are keen to recruit more to boost our female numbers.

Our female electrical apprentice is keen to help raise the profile and was happy to be interviewed as an ambassador for women in trade. This was published on our website, in our newsletter that we send our customers and on our social media channels.

We are proud to also be a member of the Women’s Trade Network, an initiative founded by housing and property organisations to increase the representation of women in trade roles.



C44 – CEO-worker pay ratio

The Chief Executive to average pay ratio is 6:1. This compares favourably with FTSE 100 companies where the median ratio is 80:1 (Source: Deloitte).

C45 – Supporting the health of our staff

Staff wellbeing is a priority, and we are committed to supporting people with both their physical and mental health. We provide:

- a health cash plan with money back on day-to-day medical expenses
- an employee assistance programme, including access to counselling
- generous life assurance, pension and company sick pay
- access to online wellbeing training resources
- discounted gym memberships

We seek regular feedback from staff to help inform our wellbeing offering. We offer a range of different working patterns and hybrid working for many roles, providing a blend of working from head office/home. Our head office has been especially designed for collaborative working and to be an inclusive environment. Our health and safety team with the business to ensure health and safety risks are minimised and well managed.

In 2023, we will be introducing regular check-ins across the organisation to encourage open lines of communication about work, personal development and to talk about any physical/mental health concerns team members may have and provide appropriate support.

C46 – Average employee sickness

The average number of sick days taken per employee during the 22/23 financial year was 8.9.



Supply chain

C47 – Commitment to creating social value through procurement

Ensuring contracts bring added value is an increasing concern, with Saxon Weald keen to develop a consistent approach.

We are pleased that our new grounds maintenance contractors have been selected with a focus on covering smaller areas, more local to each team. This ensures their workforce are working closer to their homes and take more pride in working in their communities.

Our catering contractor for our 11 extra care schemes helps organise monthly themed events for the residents as part of their contract. These can be anything from summer barbeques and Christmas parties, to afternoon teas and royal celebrations.

Our appointed estate agent for property disposals continues to donate £100 to local charities on our behalf for every sale.

More recently, we have appointed local independent recruitment agencies, based within the communities we operate in to ensure we are offering local people job opportunities and supporting small businesses. We also partner with local job centres to advertise our vacancies, which again helps with offering local people jobs

We have also recently started using a new training provider for our apprenticeship, a small organisation based closer to us in Sussex. Our female electrical apprentice visited the centre as part of the recruitment process for a new apprentice and gave a talk about working at Saxon Weald to all the candidates.

Case study: Local recruitment drive, partnering with schools

Our People team have established links with local schools and volunteered, providing career advice and completing mock interviews with the Year 10 pupils. We had some great feedback from the students that it had really helped them both with finding out more about specific careers and practising their interview techniques. Most importantly, a number of pupils were interested in working at Saxon Weald as a result. We hope this mutual arrangement will help us develop a talent pool of local young people for future vacancies and apprenticeships.



C48 – Considering the environmental impact of procurement

We understand the importance of procuring new contracts with the environment in mind. We recently changed mailing provider after our previous contractor moved their operational business a long distance away. This meant any printed materials had to be sent via courier overnight from our local print supplier to their new premises, taking more time and fuel to do so. We re-procured the service to a much more local mailing house, with better GDPR and environmental policies themselves. The location now means our print arrives at our mailing house within just five minutes!

Case study: Grounds maintenance procurement

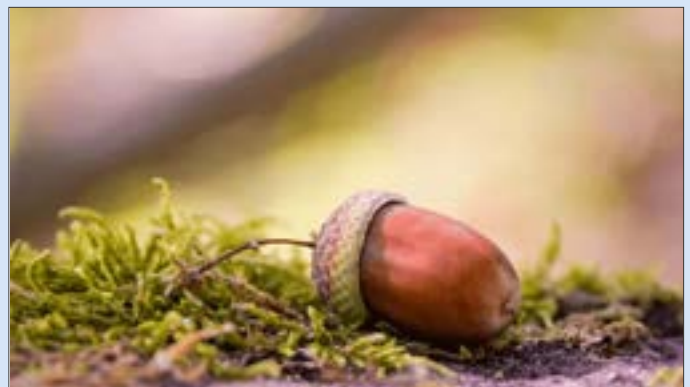
Last year we put our grounds maintenance contracts out to tender and are pleased to report that mitigating environmental impact was a key element of that tender process.

We split our sites into three core areas, with local contractors covering each. This mitigates travel between jobs and minimises waste disposal and depot visits

Each company was assessed on their own commitment to the environment, with factors such as a commitment to using more 'green' equipment and vehicles taken into consideration. The successful contractors all showed a move towards the use of electrical or battery powered solutions that reduce fuel consumption, carbon emissions and noise pollution

Some of the key environmental benefits from our new grounds maintenance contractors

- Each contractor carefully plans their routes and timetables to avoid excess travelling between each job
- Contractors operate a cut and fly service on mowing. This creates less waste and boosts fertility to the lawn
- Diluted weed killing solution is used minimally if pulling from the root is not possible. It only targets the weed itself and is gentle enough not to cause harm to wildlife
- Additional planting on shrub beds has been planned to increase biodiversity
- Use of organic fertilisers and non-peat based soils
- Online portals have been set up for each contractor, which allow images to be loaded online, thus eliminating site inspection visits
- We are collaborating with re-wilding projects, allocating no mow areas and contributing financially to support the planting of trees and shrubs that absorb carbon
- Protecting birdlife with no hedge cutting during nesting season
- Commitment to sourcing local products
- Recycling – woodchipping is re-purposed as biomass fuel for power stations
- Re-use – sale of logs and wood chips





Saxon Weald is a housing association, established in 2000, managing just under 7,000 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.



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TENANT ENGAGEMENT EXPERTS
tpas
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