

2021

PERFORMANCE REPORT TO RESIDENTS



SAXON WEALD

Great homes, building futures



If you received your copy of this report in the post, please consider doing your bit for the environment and go digital. If we have your email address, we will automatically send it to you electronically.

If you've changed your email address recently, please let us know or log in to mysaxonweald.com

Thank you.



Image: Treacle admiring the garden. From Mrs Johns, resident

Hello and welcome

I'm delighted to present Saxon Weald's performance report to residents, looking back over the year beginning in April 2020. And what a year it has been!

I'm sure that none of us could have imagined the extended measures needed to combat the Coronavirus back in April 2020, despite being in lockdown at the time. Throughout all this turmoil and uncertainty, we have all focussed on what is important – our families, friends and neighbours. A safe, warm and affordable home has never been more important.

It has been a real challenge to keep the services we provide running and my thanks goes to our great team, who have often gone the extra mile to help. I'd like to extend my thanks to you, our customers, for your patience and understanding while we have been dealing with a period of significant disruption.

In this report you will see how the pandemic has affected what we do. You are less satisfied with the service we've provided this year – no surprise really. We've had to postpone repairs jobs, cancel some planned major repairs and stop neighbourhood visits. For part of the year we were unable to move people into our empty homes. We are working really hard to get back to normal, although there is quite a backlog to get through.

In March, 1,375 of you responded to an important survey designed to help us shape what we do in future. We have considered your feedback in detail and have come up with a new three-year plan designed to focus on our customers and invest in our homes. We'll be spending more money to improve the services we deliver and will engage with you to find out how we are getting on.

I hope that you enjoy reading this report. If you have any feedback about it please email us at hello@saxonweald.com.

With best wishes,

Steven Dennis,

Chief Executive






Contents

Your voice in Saxon Weald	4
Performance at a glance	5
About us.....	6
Customer experience	7
A great place to work	9
Your homes	10
Housing management.....	13
Offering our support.....	14
All about money	15

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

61% of you said that you find our annual performance report easy to read. However, 30% admitted that they hadn't read it. Of those that had, most people felt that it contained the right level of information.

In terms of how often we publish performance information, over half would like to see it more than once a year. We've listened and been using our Spotlight newsletter to give you more regular updates.

Please note throughout this report, that unless otherwise stated figures are taken from the period 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021.

Your voice in Saxon Weald

YOUR
voice

We know it's important that we listen to what you think of our services and learn what we are doing well or need to improve.

Last year we launched a new section on our website dedicated to your voice. You can find it here: www.saxonweald.com/your-voice. You can also let us know how we're doing by: web message, using your [My SaxonWeald](#) account, on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#), by [email](#) or by phone.

SURVEYS

Email and text surveys:



In March this year, we carried out a survey to get your opinion on what matters most and where we should focus improvement. The results from the 1,375 responses have helped shape our new corporate plan, setting out our priorities for the next three years.

Another recent survey was in relation to our lettable standard. The feedback from this showed how important the cleanliness of a property is when you move in, so we've improved our cleaning standard.

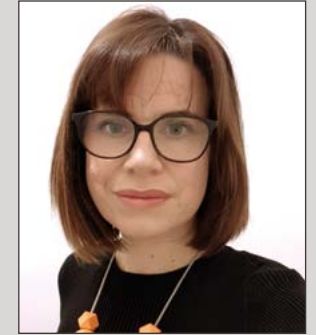
We deliver regular surveys through an email and text system and have seen encouraging response rates. The system includes alerts which enable us to act and respond to feedback as it is received.

Institute of Customer Service survey - September 2020

We had a good response with 573 customers taking the time to give us their opinions. Results showed an improvement on the previous year's scores, with more customers feeling they can trust Saxon Weald and believing we are open and transparent.

Feedback from the results of the previous Institute of Customer Service survey in 2019 have fed into a complaint process review, with a new policy being introduced in October 2020.

Resident on board



I have been a shared ownership tenant with Saxon Weald for seven years and I joined the board as a resident member in November last year. It's been incredibly interesting so far, and also very reassuring to know that my landlord is taking engaging with customers seriously. Listening to customers and being led by those views is one of the board's biggest priorities over the next three years and I'm really proud to have been a part of making that happen.

Since I joined, I've been pleasantly surprised by how welcoming everyone has been. The board is a team, with people having different specialisms and skills. What I really like is that all those skills are equally respected, and I know my perspective as a customer is really valued.

It can be challenging at times, but it's been really rewarding. I've had the chance to get involved in so much more than I thought. I feel like I'm able to build and develop my own skills while also contributing to Saxon Weald and the community. I'd definitely recommend getting involved and helping to make sure customers' voices matter.

Hannah Eaton,
Resident Board Member

TOGETHER WITH TENANTS CHARTER

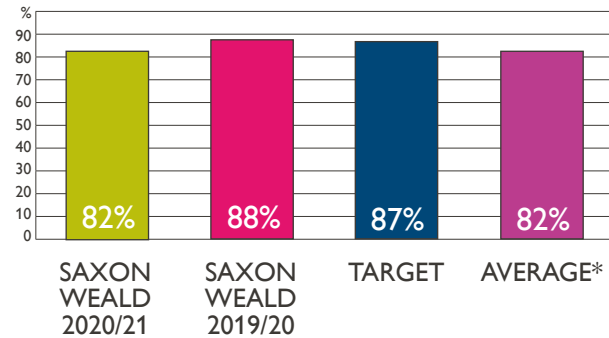
Saxon Weald has signed up to this charter to show our commitment to working together with our residents. It focuses on six key areas: relationships, communication, voice and influence, accountability, quality and when things go wrong.

For more information go to: www.saxonweald.com/your-voice.



Performance at a glance

OVERALL SATISFACTION



This result is below our target, but in line with the average and is largely due to the restrictions we had to put in place due to COVID-19.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT



31,854 phone calls and 6,673 voicemails answered - this number is lower than usual, which is partly due to our call monitoring system being unable to log calls received while staff were working from home during the COVID pandemic.



32,854 emails answered, which is an increase of 45% on last year.



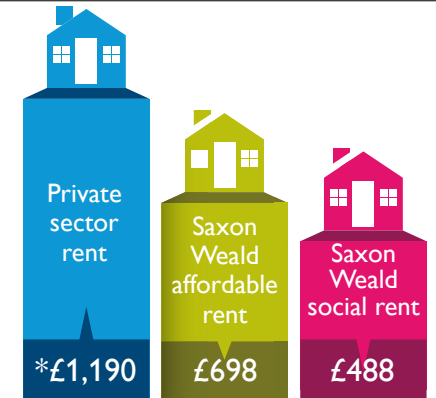
12,768 contacts via web message and 333 via social media, up 15% from the previous year.



24,399 repairs logged by the team.

RENTS

Average monthly rents for a two bedroom property in Horsham

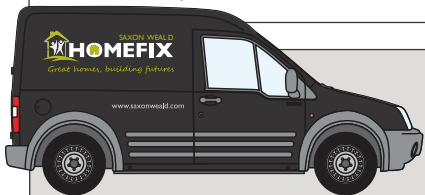


* From www.home.co.uk

RENT ARREARS



Rent arrears at the end of the year were 2.6%. In monetary terms, this means we were owed £1,060,193. This is slightly higher than the previous year when rent arrears were at 2.4%.



REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

14,189

Repairs completed last year



100%

2,623 Emergency repairs made safe within 24 hours of reporting



£4.7 million

Spend on property improvements and planned maintenance work

AVERAGE STANDARD REPAIR COMPLETION TIMES



Saxon Weald 2020/21 - 19.9 days

Saxon Weald 2019/20 - 12.8 days

Target 10 days

Days 05 10 15 20

SATISFACTION WITH REPAIRS SERVICE

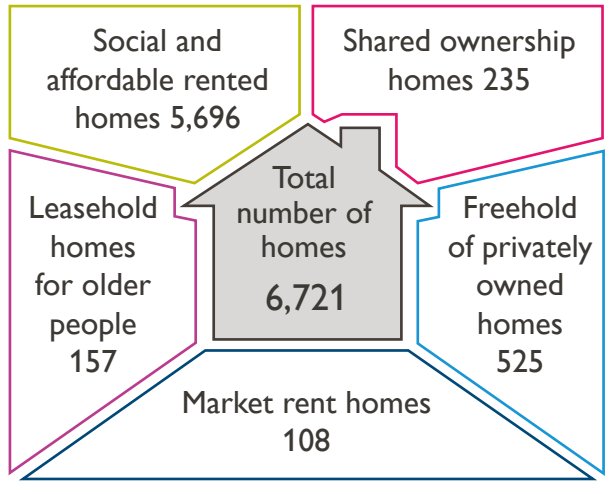


This disappointing result falls a long way short of our target of 90%. Mostly this was due to long waiting times and cancelled appointments when we had to suspend our repairs service in line with government guidance during a period of the COVID pandemic. While we have worked hard to catch up with missed appointments, there are still some delays due to the backlog of jobs and staff shortages.

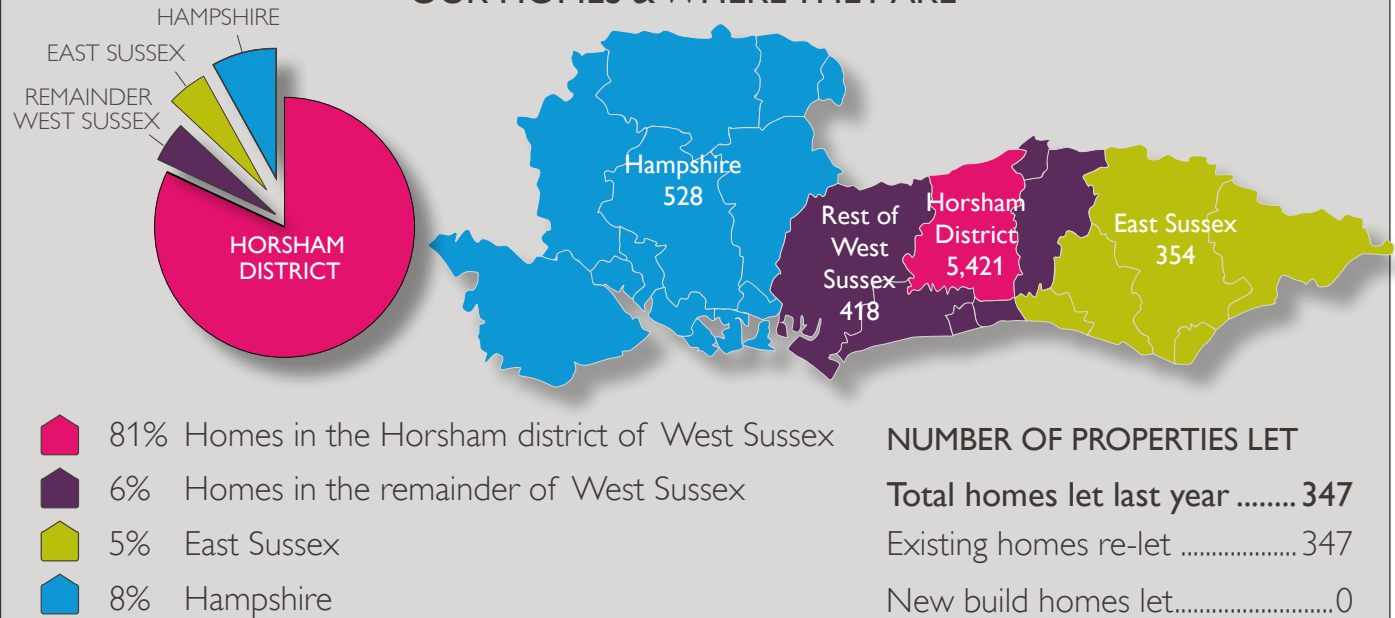
* We use information from a research company called Housemark to compare ourselves to 17 other regional housing associations with a stock size between 2,500 and 12,500 homes.

About us

NUMBER OF HOMES



OUR HOMES & WHERE THEY ARE



NUMBER OF PROPERTIES LET

Total homes let last year 347
 Existing homes re-let 347
 New build homes let..... 0

OUR CUSTOMERS

HOUSEHOLD TYPE

Families	32%
Single person	16%
Over 65s in general needs homes	15%
Over 65s in retirement properties	22%
Shared owners	4%
Leaseholders	8%
Shared equity	3%

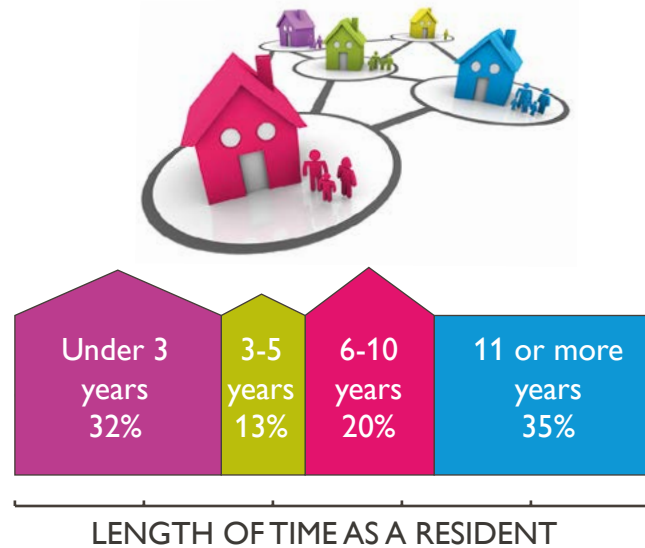


Image: the Cowdray family, residents

Customer experience

GETTING IN TOUCH

Our customer support team is made up of 15 colleagues. They had a very busy year responding to our customers' enquiries.

We are incredibly proud of how they managed to adapt their service during the lockdown periods when they had to work from home. Between them, during this time, they responded to **6,673 voicemails** from you.

Overall they handled over **96,879 enquiries** during the financial year. That's nearly **6,500 each!**



What does great customer experience look like? Here's what some of us think..



KEEPING YOU INFORMED

We work hard to keep our website [saxonweald.com](https://www.saxonweald.com) up-to-date with a wealth of useful information and any important service updates. Last year we had over 133,000 visits!

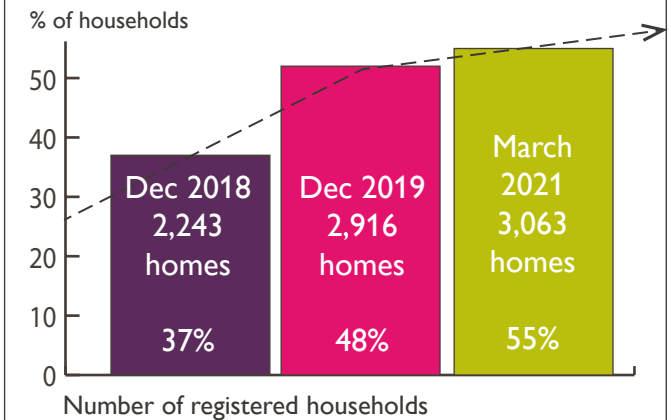
Likewise, our Facebook and Twitter pages provide handy tips, news and information, and offer an opportunity for you to ask questions or add comments on our posts. Last year between them we received over 7,000 views. Go to [Facebook.com/saxonweald](https://www.facebook.com/saxonweald) or [Twitter.com/saxonweald](https://www.twitter.com/saxonweald).



By the end of March 2021 more than 3,000 households had signed up to use MySaxonWeald, our 24-hour digital service. That's an increase of 3% 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 mysaxonweald.com and give it a go!



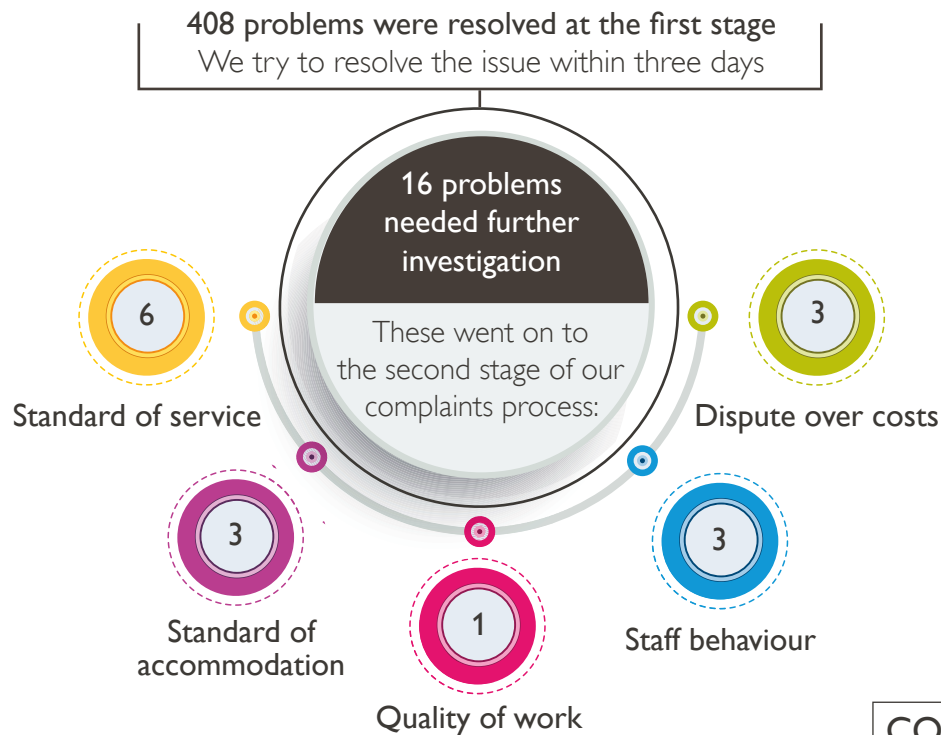
Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021 we had 44,861 logins on MySaxonWeald, which is about 25 logins per customer over the year. 58% of registered customers logged in.



COMPLAINTS

We take pride in delivering 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 in whichever way you choose and we'll take it from there. Full details of the process can be found at www.saxonweald.com/living-in-your-home/complaints



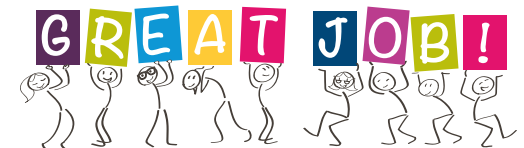
Two complaints were referred to the Housing Ombudsman. One was dismissed but the other, where we had recognised we made a mistake, advised we needed to offer an alternative resolution to the customer.

HOW YOUR VOICE HAS INFLUENCED WHAT WE DO

- We had a formal review of our complaints process taking into account our customer feedback. We have now created an easier to follow, two stage process.
- We have introduced 'fast-tracking' of repairs that relate to some complaints, by sourcing extra contractors.
- CCTV surveys will be carried out for all communal drainage repairs so we can identify issues quicker and reduce time scales for repairs. This also reduces costs for Saxon Weald and service charge payers.
- Where properties are to be disposed, we will notify our residents in the surrounding area to keep them better informed.
- We are now photographing gifted items (the items that are included when you take on a property), so we can record the condition that they have been handed over in.
- We are reviewing the process we follow for starter tenancy extensions as we recognise there needs to be more consistency.

COMPLIMENTS

We were also glad to receive 76 compliments. If you're happy with something we've done, let us know. It makes our day!

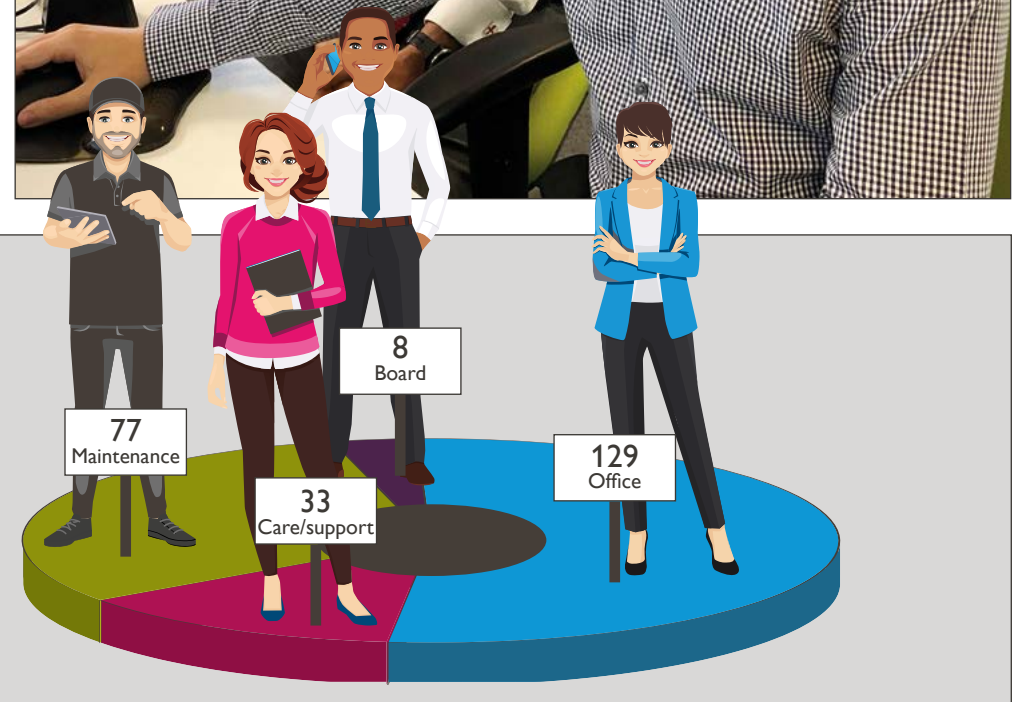


A great place to work

We think it's important that Saxon Weald is a great place to work, so we can recruit and retain the best people possible. After all, without the right staff, we can't deliver great services. We employ nearly 250 people, almost half of which used to be based in our head office in Horsham. Since the start of the pandemic, most of our office staff have been working from home.

We have taken advantage of having an empty office to refurbish Saxon Weald House, replacing worn out facilities and creating a new workspace more fit for the future. Originally, we had considered whether we needed to extend, as our staff numbers have grown over the past 20 years. However, with people adapting so successfully to home working, we realised that it was more important to create an office space designed for effective meetings and collaborative work. Environmental considerations have been very important to us and we are aiming to achieve a SKA Gold award for the renovation project. This means achieving the highest levels against a number of sustainability targets set by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

We're looking forward to the work being completed and hope to move back into the office in January.



OUR STAFF

	Number of staff	Percentage of staff
● Office and management	129	52.2 %
● Housing support and care	33	13.4 %
● Maintenance	77	31.2 %
● Board members	8	3.2 %
● TOTAL	247	100 %

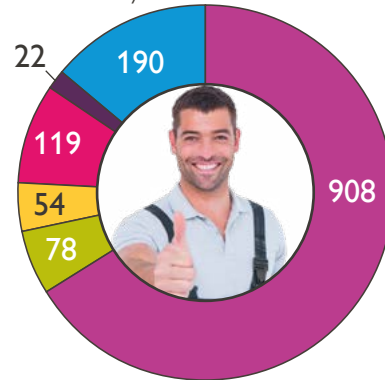
Your homes

LOOKING AFTER YOUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

Despite the lockdown in the earlier part of the financial year, our estate improvement team soon caught up. They took on 1,371 jobs to help make sure our neighbourhoods are kept clean and tidy.

This year they carried out:

- 908 Estate inspections
- 78 Garage block inspections
- 54 Garage lock changes
- 119 Garage checks
- 22 Garden tidying in empty homes
- 190 Empty homes clearances



NEW HOMES

In the financial year 2020/2021 we completed 23 new build properties, which is below our annual target of 100 new homes.

- 8 Flats in Angmering for shared ownership
- 4 Houses in Hassocks for shared ownership
- 8 Flats in Hassocks for affordable rent (Residents moved in during April 2021)
- 3 Houses in Shermanbury for shared ownership



Our programme was delayed, but we are almost back on track with 96 properties scheduled to complete in the present financial year.

Image: Adam and Abby, new owners in Angmering

LETTINGS

347 properties were re-let by the team last year. Nominations generally come from the local council, who hold a list of people who are considered the most in housing need.



During viewings, to help protect against COVID-19 the team has had to:



Last year the team completed 667 viewings in total, with 320 refusals after viewing.

Reasons for refusal:

- 86 Location unsuitable
- 70 Too small or studio
- 61 Circumstances changed
- 28 Property not suitable
- 22 Does not like property
- 21 Not ready to move
- 16 Too ill to move
- 16 Rent too high

Improving our lettings service

Where possible, we are now using the digital service, DocuSign, for our tenancy agreements. It's quicker and avoids the risk of transmitting Coronavirus.

In response to customer feedback, we have improved our lettable standard.

- Properties are decorated and given a sparkle clean.
- In hard-to-let properties or where customers are facing significant financial hardship, we are installing aerial points and flooring/carpets.

Your homes

DAY-TO-DAY REPAIRS

It was a difficult year for the HomeFix repairs team with COVID lockdown measures, staff shortages and difficulties getting materials all contributing to delays with our service. Unsurprisingly, customer satisfaction with their last repair has dropped to just 78%. We are very disappointed with this result, but it is being reported from other housing associations that they are also having the same struggles. We are working very hard to make improvements despite the continued challenges.

Average cost of a responsive repair
£151



Average cost of preparing a home to re-let
£4,892

- We completed nearly 14,189 day-to-day repairs to our homes last year. That's nearly 20% more than the previous year.
- 78% of customers were satisfied with their last repair. That's well below our target of 90%.
- We responded to 100% of emergencies within 24 hours of them being reported.
- Our average time to complete a standard repair was lengthened to 19.9 days. That's well over our target of 10 days.



INVESTING IN HOMES

We spent £4.7 million on property improvements and planned maintenance work. However, our programme of works was severely delayed for the same reasons as our general day-to-day repairs and a large percentage remained outstanding.

Number of improvements

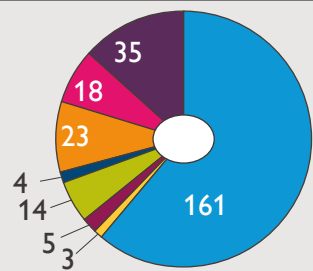
- Roofing — 20
- Kitchens — 90
- Bathrooms — 62
- Gas boilers — 119
- Windows & doors — 35
- Replacing lifts — 1
- Electric heating systems — 13

£4.7 million

STAYING INDEPENDENT

We spent over £39,000 fitting 263 mobility aids and adaptations to residents' homes to help them live more safely.

- 161 Ramps & rails (grab, hand, stair)
- 3 Doorway adjustments
- 5 Window winders
- 14 Lever taps
- 4 Raised toilets
- 23 Shower seats
- 18 Lighting and socket adjustments
- 35 Other



GAS SERVICING



By law, we have to carry out services on your gas boilers every year. This year we did 3,882 services!



It's really important we have up-to-date phone or email details, so that we can contact you to arrange your annual service. Let us know if yours have changed.

Your homes - health and safety

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

One of the key goals of our new corporate plan is to ensure customers have a safe, warm and dry home.

As part of our investment into your homes we are working to improve their energy efficiency and EPC ratings. Our ongoing planned programmes of work all strive towards this.

We also work with The Warmer Group, improving poorly insulated homes using Government funding.



ISO 45001 HEALTH AND SAFETY

We have made a commitment to achieve the ISO 45001 accreditation by March 2023. This is an internationally recognised standard for health and safety management. It aims to help staff work more safely and efficiently, identifying risks and in turn it helps protect them and our residents.

The effort we have been putting into staff training has already seen a huge impact. Since April our staff have raised an additional 93 jobs where they spotted something needing attention, which could be a risk to a resident.

Our dedicated health and safety team help make sure you and your homes are safe. Each year they ensure an incredible number of safety checks are made, from gas, fire and water assessments to security, electricity and lighting.

FIRE



- Every year we carry out an average of 204 fire risk assessments on our blocks of flats.
- We have dry risers at 15 sites for the fire service to use in the unlikely event of a fire. These have to be serviced twice a year.
- 68 properties have a full fire alarm system. This includes 1,883 units which have to be serviced and checked every six months.
- And our scheme managers have to carry out a weekly test on each fire panel to ensure they are working at all times. This means every year we carry out 3,536 tests!

ELECTRICITY



- Every year we carry out 6,277 electrical condition tests within our properties.
- There are 48 schemes where we carry out annual testing on all portable appliances in the communal areas. This can average 100 items at each property. That's nearly 5,000 plugs to check!

WATER



- We carry out 300 water risk assessments on blocks which have communal water.

SECURITY / SAFETY



- 243 blocks have emergency lighting. These have an annual service and a monthly test. This means they are tested 3,159 times!
- 29 buildings have lightning protection which is tested annually.

GAS



- 35 sites have commercial gas installations serving 1,192 properties, which we have to inspect annually.
- Every year we have to carry out safety checks on gas boilers. There are 3,882!

PLUS...

- The 68 lifts within our properties have a monthly check, an annual service and twice yearly insurance assessment.
- There's 432 asbestos inspections every year.
- 130 pieces of mobility equipment are serviced every six months. These include stairlifts, bath/therapy chairs and hoists.
- 19 sites have laundries with a combined 101 appliances, which have an annual service.

Housing management



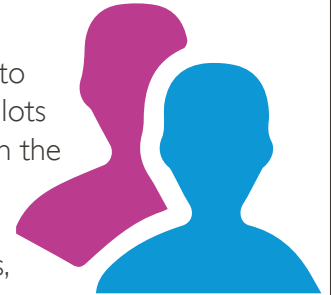
MANAGING HOMES AND TENANCIES

Our housing team are here to help people manage their tenancies. During last year's lockdowns they made thousands of welfare calls to our more vulnerable residents, helping ensure everyone stayed safe and had what they needed.

Unfortunately, they sometimes have to deal with some more difficult situations such as antisocial behaviour, rent arrears, tenancy fraud and domestic violence.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

At Saxon Weald, we believe everyone has the right to feel safe in their home. Abuse can be categorised in lots of ways, including emotional, physical and sexual, with the most common type of domestic abuse occurring in relationships. However, domestic abuse also covers abuse and violence between family members, such as adolescents to parents.



Last year we supported 16 families who were suffering from domestic abuse. Eight of the victims were supported into new homes.

We are dedicated to supporting anyone who is experiencing domestic abuse and staff have been educated on how to support survivors, working in partnership with agencies to help keep everyone safe in their homes.

More information can be found on our website: www.saxonweald.com/da

Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA)

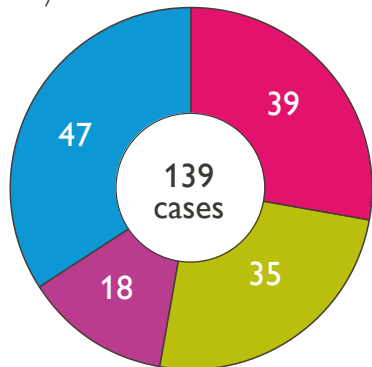
To demonstrate our commitment, we've signed up to the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation scheme. Their mission is to improve the housing sector's response to domestic abuse through the introduction and adoption of an established set of standards.



daha
Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

There were 139 cases of antisocial behaviour reported to our team last year.



Breakdown of ASB cases

- 39 Noise - 28%
- 35 Drugs - 25%
- 18 Harrassment - 13%
- 47 Other - 34%

RENT ARREARS

At the end of March 2020 we were owed **£1,060,193** **2.6% of total rents**. This is a little higher than last year.

We now have 1,197 Universal Credit claimants, 357 more than last year. There were no evictions during the year due to rent arrears.



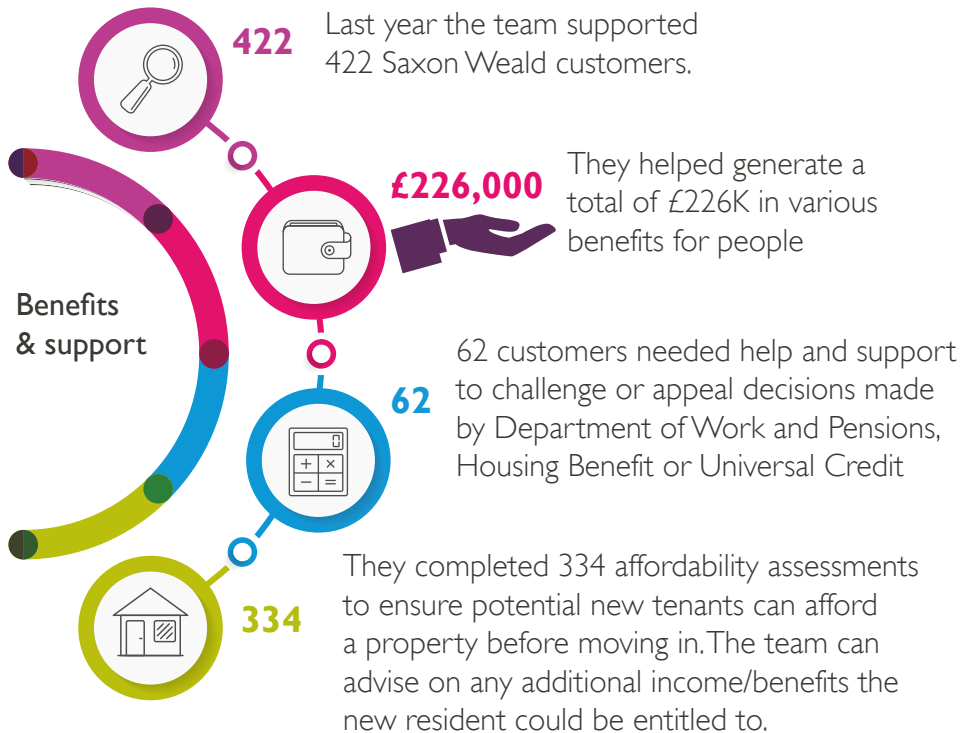
Offering our support

HELPING HANDS

Our friendly money matters team, Lisa, Steve and Clare have a wealth of knowledge to help residents when they need some financial support or advice with welfare or housing benefits.



The last year was particularly tough for many residents due to COVID-19, with many on furlough, losing jobs or income.



There's a benefit section on our website www.saxonweald.com where you can use our benefit calculator to check you are getting the right support available. You can also email us at moneymatters@saxonweald.com.



FOODBANKS & ASSISTANCE

Saxon Weald works in partnership with the Horsham Matters charity. They provide local people with support when they need it most.

The financial year 2020-21 saw a massive increase in people who needed help, mostly due to the impact of COVID-19.

How [Horsham Matters](#) helped our residents

	Number	Value
Foodbank vouchers	649	£19,470
School holiday food parcels	600	£18,000
Furniture packs	11	£2,200
White goods items	12	£2,400
Fuel vouchers	20	£800

TENANCY SUPPORT

We have a dedicated Tenancy Sustainment Adviser who can offer support to any customer who may be having difficulty or concerns about aspects of their tenancy.

Over the last year, we received about 85 referrals to people who needed support with a range of issues such as:

- Mental health
- Physical health and disabilities
- Domestic abuse
- Resettlement
- Perpetrators and victims of antisocial behaviour

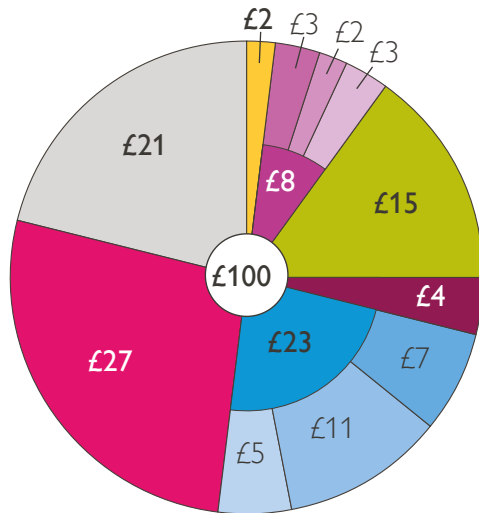
If you feel you could benefit from our service, please contact us by any of our means and ask to be referred to tenancy sustainment.

All about money

HOW WE SPEND OUR MONEY

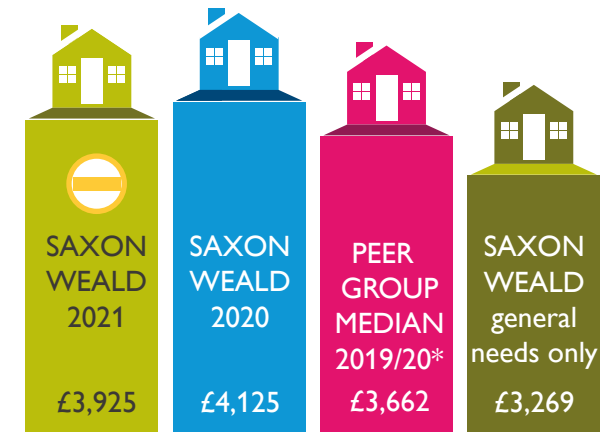
For every £100 we spend

■ Housing Management	£2
■ Service charge costs	£8
■ Cleaning and grounds maintenance	£3
■ Utilities	£2
■ All other services	£3
■ Staff costs	£15
■ Overheads	£4
■ Repairs and maintenance	£23
■ Day-to-day repairs	£7
■ Property improvements	£11
■ Regular servicing and maintenance	£5
■ Interest payments	£27
■ Investment in new homes	£21

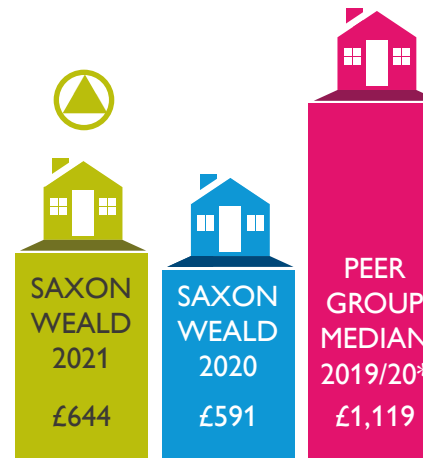


HOW WE COMPARE

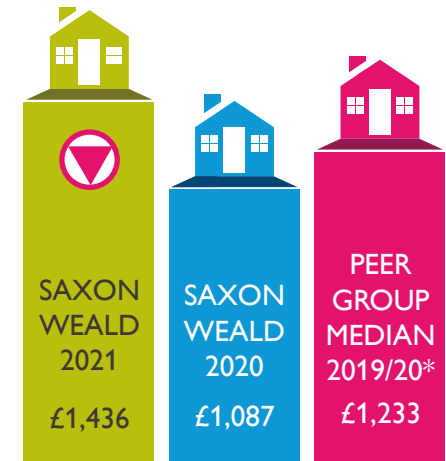
Our overall headline costs are a little higher than the average of our peer group, largely due to the high number of retirement and extra care homes we manage. These homes require more staff support and maintenance work than general needs properties. Our headline social housing cost per home, based only on general needs homes, is £3,269, putting us below the peer group average.



Headline social housing cost per home



Management cost per home



Maintenance cost per home

* We use information from a research company called Housemark to compare ourselves to 17 other regional housing associations with a stock size between 2,500 and 12,500 homes.

HEAD OFFICE

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TEL: 01403 226000

EMAIL: hello@saxonweald.com

WEB: www.saxonweald.com

Saxon Weald is a housing association, established in 2000, managing approximately 6,750 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.

