



SAXON
WEALD

Spotlight

The newsletter for Saxon Weald residents | Spring 2024



Universal Credit

The latest on migrating to Universal Credit and what you need to do if it affects you.

Managed Migration



Tax Credits
are being replaced by
Universal Credit.
Read this guide to
find out more.

Poetry competition

Get your creative juices flowing and send us your spring-themed poems for a chance to win a £50 book voucher.



Easter Eggscapades!

A selection of fun things to do and places to go over the Easter holiday.



A note from our Chair

You'll be aware that during the past year, we have made a significant investment in our repairs service, HomeFix. Hopefully, you have seen this deliver reduced waiting times for repairs and, generally, an improved service. We plan to continue this increased level of investment into our budget for the coming year and foreseeable future. Your Board is focussed on achieving efficiencies and savings in other areas of Saxon Weald, so that we can continue to improve the quality of service we provide to all our customers.

A big 'thank you' to everyone who responded to our recent 'Spotlight' survey. We value your input and are committed to listening to your views. Our new Customer Experience Committee has now been set up and has already started work. We recently started the recruitment process for existing Saxon Weald customers to join it, and will be interviewing some of them next month. We will keep you updated on further developments.

Finally, I would like to flag our customer data collection project, which is mentioned

subsequently in this edition. It is intended to help us better understand what you need from us so that we can try to tailor our services to meet those needs. This is a big, complicated project, which will take time to fully implement. Do please engage with it now, though, as your input is essential.

In the meantime, please continue to provide your feedback about how we are doing and any suggestions about how we could do better:

www.saxonweald.com/your-voice/having-a-say-in-our-services



Simon Hardwick,

Saxon Weald's Chair of the Board

We're reviewing Spotlight

We recently sent surveys to a random selection of our customers to get their views on what they like or don't like about our resident newsletter, Spotlight. We want to use the feedback they gave us to help shape some changes and refresh what we send to you. In our next edition, we'll let you know what those customers told us and hopefully, you'll see some changes that we'll be putting in place.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete a survey and congratulations to Mrs McKean of Horsham, who was randomly selected to win a £50 gift certificate.

If you'd like to be involved in reviewing our publications and websites in the future, we'd love to hear from you. Simply email marketing@saxonweald.com or give us a call on 01403 226000 and our customer service team will take your details.



An inspiring Youth Awards

In December, we wrapped up our second annual Youth Awards evening at Saxon Weald House. This was an event to highlight some incredible achievements of young people in our community.

The 2023 categories were for young carer, contribution to the local community, sporting success and achievement in learning. We received many excellent nominations, but our panel of judges, which included Dan Fairchild, Youth Provision Officer for Horsham District Council, managed to select four very worthy winners, aged between 11 and 18.

Kayden, Ryan, Chelsea and Brandon all attended a small reception and ceremony with their families on 7 December 2023. They each received a certificate, engraved glass star award and a £100 gift voucher.



Another win for Brandon!

Having scooped the contribution to the local community youth award, 18-year-old Brandon's name cropped up again in December, when he was named as Horsham Resident of the Month!



Organised by the West Sussex County Times and sponsored by Horsham-based solicitors, DMH Stallard, Brandon's dedication to fundraising for his school was recognised for the second time that month. Nigel Winter, partner at DMH Stallard presented Brandon Burrows with a certificate. He said: 'I was told about [his] many qualities, and having met him, I'm delighted to confirm he is a very special young man... he is a credit to his family and school and a most deserving recipient of the Resident of the Month award.'

As part of his award, Brandon enjoyed a complimentary meal at a local restaurant. If you would like to nominate someone who you think deserves to be a Horsham Resident of the Month, please email enquiries@dmhstallard.com

Customised services

The Priority Services Register (PSR) helps utility companies look after their more vulnerable customers in an emergency, such as an interruption to the water supply.



You may be eligible if you are of pensionable age, live with children under five or use medical equipment reliant on electricity or water. There are lots of other criteria, so you can check to see if you are eligible and sign up free here: www.thepsr.co.uk/

Services will be tailored to support your household if you need some extra help.

Here at Saxon Weald, we are collecting customer data so that we can also look at priority service options for our customers and other tailored support we could offer you in the future. To help us with this, please log into your My SaxonWeald account to update your details. We will be making contact with all our customers in due course and reaching out to those who are not online by telephone or post.



New customer experience committee for 2024

In July last year, the Board approved a new Customer Strategy for Saxon Weald. This outlined how the organisation will reset and renew its focus on customers, which is one of the key strategic aims. Part of the new approach is the creation of a Customer Experience Committee for the first time in the organisation's history, and I was delighted to be invited to chair this.

The thinking behind the new committee is to have a forum where we can examine customer feedback from all our sources in more detail. This will help us to understand what our customers expect from Saxon Weald and evaluate how well we are meeting those needs. The overall purpose is to hold the organisation to account for the delivery of the customer strategy, and to assess how well we are doing against the strategic aim of 'focus on our customers'. I will report back to the Board regularly.

I'm delighted that we already have two members of the committee who are residents: Hannah Eaton and Susie Morris, both of whom are also Board members. The Board has endorsed our decision to recruit two further co-optees from the communities that we serve. This is a great opportunity to help shape how Saxon Weald evolves and develops services to better meet

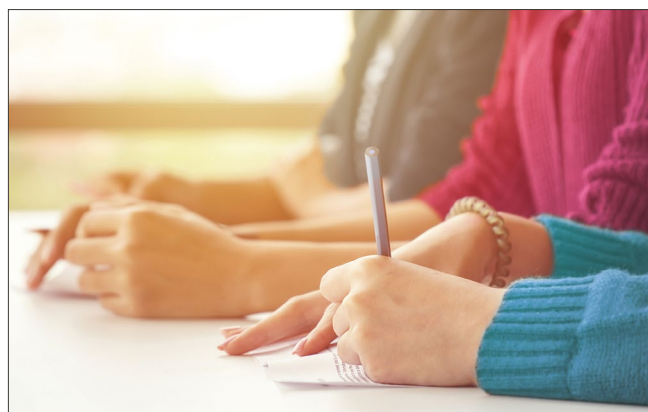
the needs of the diverse communities who live in our homes. We are keen to welcome a different perspective to our discussions that will challenge our thinking.

For my part, I'm committed to bringing my own professional expertise to constructively challenge my Saxon Weald colleagues and focus on the delivery of tangible improvements that our customers will notice.



Jo Boswell

Chair of the Customer Experience Committee



Jewson Partnership Solutions (JPS)

Our new materials supplier

After working with our current builders' merchant and parts supplier for nearly 10 years, we decided it was time to research other suppliers. As part of our search, we focussed on companies who offered effective stock control systems, value for money and overall customer service. We are pleased to announce that we've chosen Jewson Partnership Solutions (JPS) to become our new materials supplier. Previously, we had just one branch in Southwater to collect supplies from but JPS has offered us multiple Jewson locations we can use. This means our repairs



**JEWSON
PARTNERSHIP
SOLUTIONS**

operatives will spend less time and fuel driving to pick up supplies and have more time to focus on getting repairs completed.

In addition, JPS has great stock management technology, ensuring that materials we need for repairs are more readily available.

The new contract will begin in April 2024, and we are very much looking forward to working with JPS.



Saxon Weald sponsors Henfield tree planting

Late last year, Henfield Parish Council started brightening up the Wantley Estate, where we have several Saxon Weald properties. Funded by donations from Rampion Wind Energy and Saxon Weald, the project is now underway thanks to the collaboration of all parties and Wantley residents.

During the first phase, back in early November, crocus bulbs were planted on the verges. We can expect these to bloom beautifully in the spring. Later in the month residents got busy again with Henfield Parish Councillors and planted some apple trees, working together to complete the work in just two hours!

One very special apple tree, a Blenheim Orange heritage, was planted in memory of Walter and Suzanne Morley, grandparents to resident Rachel Morley. The tree is also in memory of her parents and features a bronze plaque to honour their memories.

As the project progresses, more trees, shrubs, and other finishing touches will be added, making the area a pleasant place to live for Wantley residents.

Keeping an eye on performance

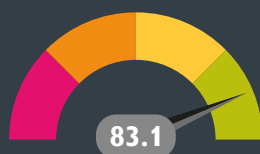
We'll soon be submitting information on our performance to the Government's Regulator of Social Housing. We are assessed against 22 different measures. Twelve of these come from a customer satisfaction survey, while 10 are based on our own data. Collectively, these are known as tenant satisfaction measures or TSMs.

Here's a taster of how we are doing (correct at 31 Jan). You can find more detail on all the measures on our website:

www.saxonweald.com/your-voice/TSMs

TSMs: six month results and benchmarking

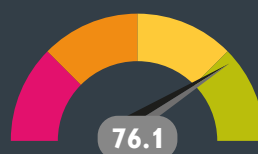
Overall satisfaction



SAXON WEALD 83.1%

Housemark (national): 72.3%

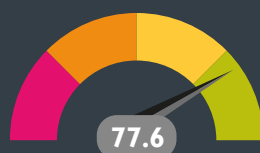
Satisfaction with repairs overall



SAXON WEALD 76.1%

Housemark (national): 74.5%

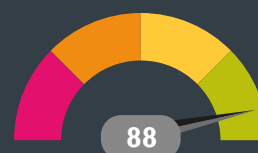
Well maintained home



SAXON WEALD 77.6%

Housemark (national): 72.2%

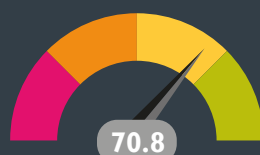
Provide a home that is safe



SAXON WEALD 88%

Housemark (national): 78.7%

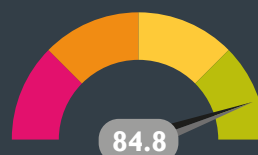
Listen to your views and act upon them



SAXON WEALD 70.8%

Housemark (national): 61%

Keep you informed about things that matter to you



SAXON WEALD 84.8%

Housemark (national): 71.4%

Data is taken from our January 2024 results

Moving to Universal Credit

If you are under state pension age and receive a legacy benefit, you will receive a 'migration notice' when it is time for you to move to Universal Credit. You don't need to do anything until you receive your migration notice.

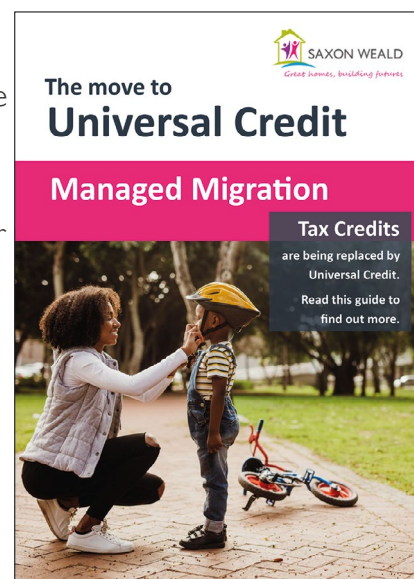
Please note that you may receive an information leaflet on how to prepare for the move to Universal Credit, but this is not a migration notice. Wait for your notice or seek advice from our Money Matters Team or Citizens' Advice before you make a claim, or you could be financially worse off.

For more information, visit:

www.saxonweald.com/money-matters/universal-credit-managed-migration

Remember to report your rent change

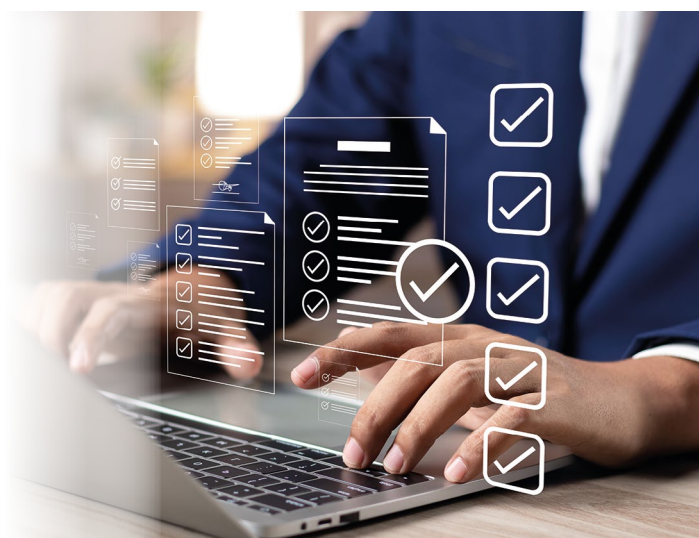
If you receive Universal Credit, please report your rent change on or soon after 1 April 2024. To report the change, you must log into your online journal and complete the 'Confirm your housing costs' to-do action. If you report this change before 1 April 2024 or you don't report it via the to-do action, the rent change will not be recorded, and you could lose out on any additional payments.



Improving our processes through complaints analysis

Complaints analysis can give us some important insight and help us improve our services to you. We recently received several complaints regarding missed appointments, but we didn't know why. Investigation showed that these were as a result of 'no access' being recorded by HomeFix. If a booked appointment didn't go ahead due to the door not being answered, there was an expectation that the customer would contact us again to book a new appointment. However, some complainants reported that they were unaware of the appointment or they hadn't received a note to say that we had tried to attend.

As a result of this, we introduced a new survey, which is either emailed or sent via text to customers the day after HomeFix haven't been able to access a property. The purpose of this survey is to enable residents to have a new job and appointment raised without having to contact Saxon Weald again from scratch. The brief questionnaire asks why the resident was unavailable (such as they didn't know about the appointment or no longer required the work). This extra information helps us analyse if there are additional areas for improvement.



Another area where we have improved is by introducing a template for our Customer Support Advisers to complete when a customer reports a complaint to us. Some customers had mentioned that they were unaware of our complaints process or what it involves. The new form allows us to tailor complaint investigations to residents' needs. We collect preferred communication methods and the best days and times to make contact. We also ask if they have any specific vulnerabilities we should consider as part of our investigation into their complaint. We hope that this new process is helpful and leads to a more effective resolution of complaints.



98 years young

A belated happy birthday to Charles, who turned 98 on 30 January 2024. A resident of Alan Chun House in Netley Abbey, Southampton, for almost 25 years, he enjoyed a small party with family and friends to celebrate his day.

Charles often walks around the corridors in the day to help his mobility and settles in the lounge each afternoon for tea and cake with his neighbours. He was pleased to see some leftover birthday cake the day after the party, which he ate with his Scheme Manager, Lin.

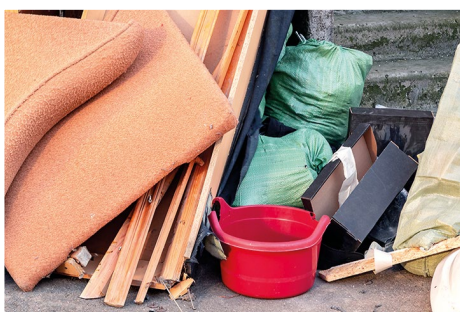
When asked if he would be happy for his photo to be shared in Spotlight, he happily agreed to sign a consent form, pausing to joke with Lin that he hoped he wasn't signing up to join the Foreign Legion.



Maintaining tidy estates and communal areas

You've told us you would like more visibility of Saxon Weald employees across our estates. As a result of this feedback, we are increasing the number of estate inspections we carry out on general needs sites. We will review the performance of our contractors, check the condition of communal areas, carry out minor repairs and remove dumped items that could be a safety or fire risk.

We are committed to keeping communal areas clear of clutter; so will be enforcing a zero-tolerance policy for items stored in communal hallways and cupboards. Dumped or poorly stored items breach fire compliance legislation. They may prevent a safe exit for residents and could release toxic fumes in the event of a fire. They also look untidy and spoil the enjoyment of communal spaces for others.



Items that have been abandoned or incorrectly stored will be removed, and unfortunately, we will have to issue a charge if you would like to retrieve something. We will share more information about this in due course, but in the meantime, please do help keep the communal areas safe and clutter-free.



Knock, knock...fire safety calling

New fire safety legislation means that we have to inspect our customers' front doors to ensure they meet the correct requirements. If you live in a flat with a front door leading to an internal communal area, we will be in touch to arrange an inspection.

Why do you need to check my front door?

We need to help ensure the safety of everyone in your block in the event of a fire. Previously, we would have carried out a visual inspection on the outside of your door, but new regulations mean the check now needs to be carried out on the entire door.



Will you need access to do this?

Yes, we will need to inspect the door from the corridor and from inside your flat. We will let you know when the inspection is due to take place so that you can plan to be at home. Each door inspection will take a maximum of 30 minutes.



Who will be carrying out the check?

The checks will be carried out by Saxon Weald staff who are trained as inspectors.



How often will my door be checked?

In blocks over 11m high, retirement and extra care schemes, this will be an annual check. In other blocks of flats, the checks will be carried out every three years.



Will I pay towards the check?

If you pay service charges, the cost will be included in the Fire Safety charges.



What happens after the inspection?

We may need to arrange for remedial works as a result of the inspection. If you are a leaseholder and are responsible for the maintenance of your own front door, we will write to advise you of the work that you need to arrange. Not all leaseholders are responsible for the maintenance of their front door; this will depend on your lease.



Having your say

Our customers are at the heart of everything we do, and your feedback plays an important part in shaping our processes and decisions. So far this year, we've conducted surveys, knocked on doors, and interviewed residents for honest feedback that we can use to improve our services.



Here are a couple of snippets from our recent interviews with Saxon Weald residents, Eve and Jacqui, who is pictured above:

What do you think of the service at Saxon Weald?

Eve: Every time I call it's always a friendly conversation on the phone. They have a good talk with you and ask how you are. If there's a problem with our home, they always try and sort it out as soon as possible.

Jacqui: I think it's absolutely excellent. I've had a few problems and the phone has always been answered quickly and people have bent over backwards to help me. I feel like I'm important, like I'm part of something.

What do you think we could do better?

Eve: Sometimes the call-out process takes longer than normal. Recently we had a leak in the bathroom and the process took a bit longer than we wanted.

Jacqui: More organisation in HomeFix, like sending the most relevant staff to the most relevant jobs. I'd also like to see Saxon Weald make their presence more known to their tenants, especially to more vulnerable or difficult residents.

If you have feedback on our services, we'd love to hear your thoughts! Find out more:

www.saxonweald.com/your-voice/having-a-say-in-our-services

Have an egg-cellent Easter holiday

The Easter holidays can be an exciting time for little ones, but avoiding the dreaded “I’m bored!” can be a challenge. Grab your baskets and bunny ears, and take a look at our guide to a great Easter break:

Put some spring in your step

Head out into the sunshine at a National Trust location near you. They have several Easter events for all the family, including:

An Easter egg hunt at Bodiam Castle

29 March - 14 April, 10am - 4pm

Spring family trail at Petworth

23 March – 14 April,
10am - 5pm

Easter party trail at Standen

23 March – 14 April,
10am - 4:30pm

Springfest at Nymans

23 March – 14 April,
10am - 4:30pm

For full details, visit: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/sussex

These events do come with a small fee, so if

you’re looking for a budget-friendly option, why not create your own Easter egg hunt in your garden? Picnics are also a fun way to enjoy the great outdoors with family – you could even make some Easter treats together with BBC Good Food’s child-friendly recipes:

www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/easter-kids-recipes



Get crafty!

It’s always smart to have some indoor activities on hand in the event of some serious April showers. Whether it’s handprint chicks, lollipop-stick baskets, or fluffy cotton-ball bunnies, Pinterest has a variety of Easter craft ideas for all ages:

www.pinterest.com/ideas/

Or, if you’re looking for a project for yourself, take a look at House Beautiful’s website for some DIY Easter décor ideas:

www.housebeautiful.com/entertaining/holidays-celebrations/g17051349/easter-crafts/

Kids eat for less this Easter

To help out parents and carers during the holidays, kids can eat for less at a number of cafes and restaurants across the UK. Participating vendors are still being confirmed, so keep an eye on Money Saving Central for the full list: <https://moneysavingcentral.co.uk/kids-eat-free>

Roses are red, violets are blue...

We’re looking for a poet, could it be you?

Let your creativity bloom and try your hand at our spring poem competition!

You’ll be in with a chance of winning a £50 Waterstones book store gift voucher and having your poem featured in the next edition of Spotlight. There are two categories, for children (under 16s) and adults.

To enter, simply send your spring-themed poem to our office (see address on back page) or email: competitions@saxonweald.com to arrive by Tuesday 30 April. Please include your name, address, and telephone number, plus your age if you’re under 16.*

*Terms & conditions apply. See our website for full T&Cs: www.saxonweald.com/news/roses-are-red-violets-are-blue.html

POETRY COMPETITION!



Combating condensation

Condensation is mostly a seasonal problem, occurring between October and April in the UK. During the winter months, we are more likely to keep doors and windows tightly shut and dry our wet laundry inside. An average family can produce around 20 litres of water per day with everyday activities such as cooking and showering.

Air can only hold a certain amount of moisture until it reaches its saturation or dew point. As temperatures drop at night, the cooler air can't hold as much moisture, and condensation occurs. As we sleep, our breathing adds more moisture to the air, so you may notice condensation on bedroom windows and sometimes on walls during the colder months.

Opening a bedroom window at least once a day for just 10 minutes will improve air quality and release

humid air. You can also crack open a window where you are drying laundry, while you are cooking, or in the bathroom after a shower. Using extractor fans can also help.

We are currently carrying out a ventilation improvement programme in homes. We've installed over 300 fans to date, mainly in properties that have reported damp and mould, during kitchen and bathroom upgrades, and when properties are empty. Get in touch if you have a broken or non-working extractor fan by emailing homefix@saxonweald.com

If you spot excessive condensation, damp or mould in your home, we want to tackle it. Please report it via your My SaxonWeald portal or call us on 01403 226000. You can also use the form at the bottom of this web page: www.saxonweald.com/condensation

Helping out at Horsham Matters

In the run-up to Christmas, three Saxon Weald teams headed to Horsham Matters headquarters to lend a hand during their busiest time of the year. We helped put together Christmas packages, which were then delivered to over 300 families in the district.

We also dropped off supplies for their festive foodbank, which weighed in at 71.23kg.

Linda Emery, Chair of Horsham Matters, said: "The cost-of-living crisis continues to stretch residents' budgets to breaking point: our aim is to uphold dignity with compassion for those in need."

"Your very generous donation will enable us to continue to helping those in our community who are most vulnerable, to return to self-sufficiency and a more stable and positive future. Our sincere thanks once again to everyone at Saxon Weald for your wonderful support."

Please visit the Horsham Matters website to find out more about their vital work for the local community: www.horsham-matters.org.uk/



Being Tintastic

In January, we were delighted to support Horsham Matters' 'Tintastic' campaign by collecting a range of tinned goods.

Horsham District Foodbank provided 10,220 emergency food parcels last year, which is the most they have ever provided. As 2024 began, they were bracing themselves for an even busier year with demand increasing and donations dropping. Thanks to a generous donation of tinned foods, we were able to help raise awareness and provide much needed food to local people facing hardship.

If you need a little extra help, Horsham Matters can provide emergency food parcels to residents of Horsham District, and can sometimes offer a fuel voucher, if available. Contact Horsham Matters by emailing info@horsham-matters.org.uk, or call them on **0300 124 0204**.



Christmas Jumper Day

In December, Saxon Weald staff dug out their best festive jumpers for Christmas Jumper Day 2023! We raised a total of £106 for Save the Children, which will go towards their incredible work in transforming the lives of children who need it most.

We would like to say a big thank you to everyone who took part, donated, and helped spread some festive cheer!

Development news

Building new homes is fundamental in the fight to beat the housing crisis, and at Saxon Weald and Weald Living, we are doing our bit with several property developments across West Sussex. Here's a roundup of where we are creating new homes.

New Monks Park, Lancing - Following the success of the first phase of our build at New Monks Park, Lancing, where we delivered 75 homes for affordable rent and shared ownership, we are proud to have partnered with Cala Homes again. During the second phase at this coastal village, we will be creating 27 new homes. This time, seven homes will be available for affordable rent and 20 for shared ownership. Our first homes are due to complete in May this year, with the remainder following later in the year.

Ecclesden Park, Angmering - We handed over keys to the final completed homes at Ecclesden Park, at the end of January. At this development, we built 53 homes; 27 of which were for affordable rent and 26 for shared ownership. We want to wish the residents many years of happiness in their new homes.

The Cobblers, Slinfold - In September last year, building work was suspended on our development of 12 flats for affordable rent at The Cobblers, Slinfold, when our contractor unexpectedly went into administration. We are therefore delighted to have entered into contract with Sunninghill Construction, who will complete the build for us. We are expecting to finish these properties in autumn this year, when we hope to welcome 12 new sets of residents to these brand-new homes.

Hawkesbourne, North Horsham - In Spring this year, we will start another development programme with Cala Homes, building 25 homes North of Horsham. Six of these will be available for shared ownership purchase and 19 for affordable rent.



Visiting New Monks Park, Lancing



New flats at Ecclesden Park



Architect's drawing of The Cobblers



A surveyor calls...

We have commissioned a firm of surveyors called Savills to update the information we hold on the condition of our properties. This information helps us plan our future investment programmes, such as window replacements and kitchen upgrades.

Savills will be visiting homes over the next two months. If you are in when a surveyor calls, we would be grateful if you could provide access. All surveyors will be wearing a Savills identification badge. If you are in any doubt, please call us to confirm. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes and there is no need to move furniture etc.

You won't need to take time off work or wait in for a surveyor at this stage. If you are not in and a surveyor needs access to your specific home, they will leave a card asking you to make an appointment.

For further information, please scan the QR code or visit

www.savills.co.uk/vod/savills-stock-survey

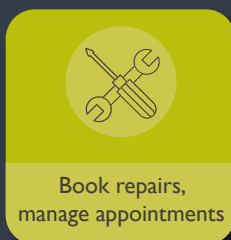


Online, anytime, anywhere

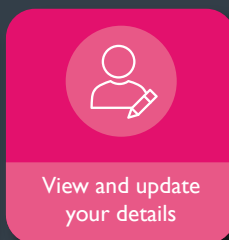
Our easy-to-use, online self-service portals put you in charge of your home, anytime, anywhere. They provide secure access to your information and are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from a desktop, laptop, tablet or mobile.



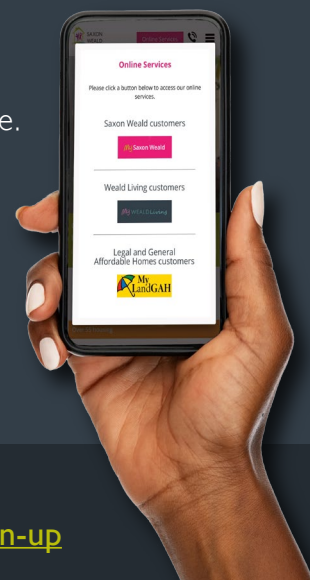
Pay your rent,
check your balance



Book repairs,
manage appointments



View and update
your details



Need help signing up?

View our online video at www.saxonweald.com/online-services/sign-up



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PlaceShapers
Together we help communities thrive

