



“My home means a lot, with memories and pictures of loved ones all around me.”

Margaret

“I was unsure about moving to a retirement scheme at first, but was convinced to have a look around, and fell in love with it. I’m closer to my daughter, and as I was raised only a few streets away, I feel like I’ve come home.”

Before moving into the retirement scheme, Margaret lived in a one-bedroom flat. After her husband passed away, she found the stairs hard to manage on her own, and often felt quite stuck there. Margaret adds, “I didn’t see many people and felt lonely at times, so last March, I decided it was time to move.

Saxon Weald and the scheme manager were a huge help and managed to get everything sorted quickly.

The best thing about moving into a scheme is the security. When I lived on my own, I used to get worried about every little noise, especially at night-time. Now I feel safe and secure even when I’m on my own.”

But Margaret adds that it’s the people at her scheme that have helped her settle in so well. “Everyone makes you feel welcome - there is always someone around to help if I have a problem. People don’t realise what a difference it makes having that support.”

Hello and welcome to this year's report



Knowing that our homes are safe is one of our top concerns. We carry out thousands of safety tests in our properties every year to provide the reassurance you deserve. This includes 3,264 domestic gas safety checks, 206 fire risk assessments and 1,191 electrical checks. New, tougher safety requirements introduced after the Grenfell tragedy mean we have carried out even more safety work than usual. Checking fire doors and upgrading them where needed has been a particular priority.

We've also been updating the information we hold on the overall standard of our properties. This involved employing a team of surveyors to carry out checks. We are now using this information to help us plan the investment needed in maintaining and improving homes. We expect to launch this plan in April 2025. We estimate spending over £57 million in the first five years, with a focus on enhancing key components in homes (such as kitchens, bathrooms, heating) and works to improve energy efficiency.

During the year, we may also have contacted you asking for information about you and your household. This included letting us know about any health conditions or other circumstances which we should take into account. The most common request so far has been to give you a little more time to open the door due to mobility problems. Thank you to everyone who has responded, and please contact us for a copy of the questionnaire if you've not yet filled it in. It really will help us deliver better services.

Finally, I am pleased to say that we have seen an increase in customer satisfaction this year. I believe this reflects the work undertaken to improve our core services, including repairs and grounds maintenance. We also know you value our support services, providing help with everything from financial problems to neighbour issues, property adaptations and much more.

There is always room for improvement of course. You can help by giving your views and feedback, either through completing one of our surveys or joining one of our consultation groups and activities. My sincere thanks go to all of you who have got involved this year – your voice makes a difference.

With best wishes

Steven Dennis

Chief Executive

CONTENTS

Welcome from Steven Dennis	3
Our regulatory judgement	4
Performance at a glance	5
Residents at the heart of what we do	
Complaints, compliments and learning	6
Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)	8
Customer Task and Finish Group.....	9
Your information and data privacy.....	10
Domestic abuse and ASB.....	12
Support from Money Matters.....	13
Homes and neighbourhoods	
About our homes.....	14
Lettings and sales.....	15
Maintaining and improving homes	
Repairs	16
Investing in homes	17
Empty homes.....	17
Aids and adaptations.....	18
Keeping your homes safe.....	19
Condensation, damp and mould	21
Maintaining and improving your neighbourhoods	
Works to neighbourhoods	22
Grounds maintenance and cleaning.....	23
All about money	
How we compare.....	24
How we spend our money.....	24
Rents.....	25
Our people	26
Other information	27
How to contact us	28





G1/V2/C2

Saxon Weald received a regulatory judgement from the Regulator of Social Housing of **G1/V2/C2** following our recent inspection against the government's new consumer standards.

What the gradings mean:

G1: Governance - we meet all of the required standards when it comes to our Board and governance framework.

V2: Financial viability - we are financially stable, although pressure from increased investment in homes and external market conditions means this needs careful monitoring.

C2: Consumer standards - we are compliant, but do have some areas for improvement.

We are proud to say the judgement acknowledges our customer-focused approach. It notes how customer feedback has directly influenced our services, and that we have a wide range of meaningful opportunities for you to have your say.

Areas to improve

Lack of data on the condition of properties: we are addressing this through a programme of property inspections. We have already completed this on 57% of our homes and will have checked all homes within two years.



Backlog of repairs or improvements needed following fire risk assessments: these have now almost been completed.

Improvements are needed to our repairs service: these are already underway, including changing our parts provider to reduce wasted travel time for our operatives.



Lack of data on our customers' needs: we have been collecting information on your circumstances and needs since January, to help us tailor our services effectively.



Regulator of Social Housing

The Regulator of Social Housing is a public body of government that sets consumer and economic standards for social housing providers. They are focused on driving improvement and ensure that we are well-governed, financially viable and offer value for money. Appropriate action is taken if the standards are not being met.

From 1 April 2024, they began carrying out regulatory inspections of social landlords.

Around a third of customers have shared their data with us so far, but to get a better picture, we need to increase this amount.

- If you haven't completed the survey, you can update your details via your online [MySaxonWeald](#) account, or call us to request a copy of the questionnaire.



PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE

OVERALL
SATISFACTION

80%

10% higher than our peers



18,842

Day-to-day repairs
completed


COMPLAINTS
291


COMPLIMENTS
84



**£1.9
Million**

generated by our
Money Matters Team in extra
benefits for customers



**21.5
days**

Average time to
complete a standard interior
repair from when it was
reported



479 HOMES LET

More homes for
more people

84,644

CUSTOMER
SUPPORT
ENQUIRIES



- 21,868 Digital contacts
(emails and online contacts)
- 45,251 Phone calls



81%

of customers satisfied
with their repair

**SUPPORT
FUND**

£105k

was used to support 465
customers in need



**INVOLVED
CUSTOMERS**

- 7,262 survey responses
- 159 residents on our
email register

1,204

Scheme meetings held



**£5.2
Million**



Last year we spent £5.2
million improving our
customers' homes



Learning from complaints

Feedback from customers makes a real difference to our services. Quite often, a complaint can lead to us changing the way we do things for the better. Your compliments also let us know when we are doing something well, and can really give a colleague a welcome boost.

Last year we received 291 complaints and 84 compliments.

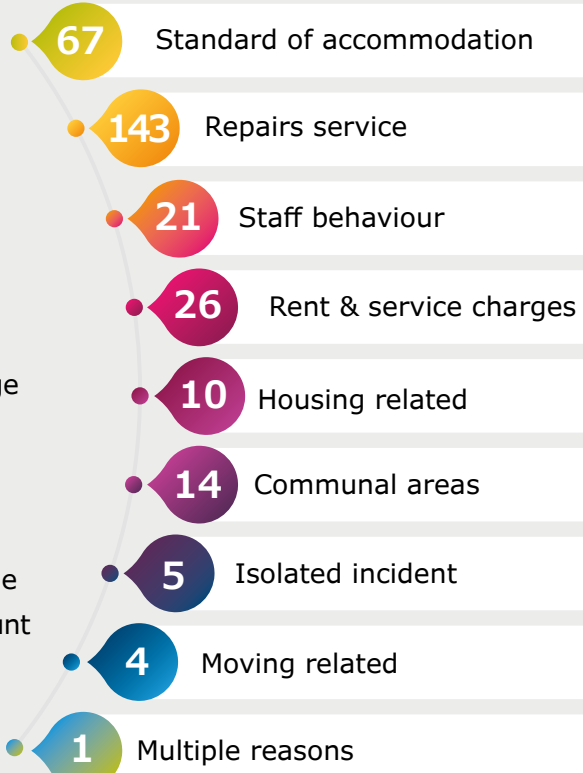
243 Complaints were resolved at the first stage

48 Complaints were resolved at the second stage

You can make a complaint to us by

- Phone: 01403 226000
- Email: hello@saxonweald.com
- Letter: Please see our address on the back page
- Secure message from your [MySaxonWeald](#) account
- Completing a form on our website: www.saxonweald.com/your-voice/complaints. You can also find details on there about the complaints process.

291 COMPLAINTS - Breakdown



You said - we did

We believe that complaints can help us improve our services. Here are a few examples of changes we've made for the better.

You said... A surveyor visited my property and said I needed a repair, but I haven't heard anything since.

We did... We have introduced a new procedure. The surveyor and customer can now call in to report repairs during inspections.

You said... I recently moved into a Saxon Weald property after a mutual exchange, but things are broken and damaged and I don't know which are my responsibilities to fix and what are yours.

We did... We have a new process for mutual exchanges. Surveyors now visit properties prior to exchange completion. Where there are any concerns about property condition, exchange is delayed until the problems are resolved. Clearer information is also now given to the new resident on their specific repair responsibilities.



Sometimes it's not a complaint we receive from a customer, but more of an observation. This feedback is still useful to us. Here are two examples of how we changed what we do, based on your comments:



You said... I missed my repair appointment and don't know when you are coming back to do the job.

We did... We should always leave a card letting the customer know that we've attended. The card also says how to rebook an appointment. However, this was sometimes being missed, so we have also started to send a survey by text asking if the work still needs to be done, so that we can book in a new appointment.

You said... I was looking for information on antisocial behaviour on your website and couldn't find it. It slowed me down in reporting the problems I was having.

We did... We updated the search facility of our website to include more abbreviations and misspellings, so that people are more likely to find the information they need.

Compliments from our customers

Last year, we were really happy to receive **84 compliments**.



"Today I had a housing manager pay an annual visit to me in Slinfold.

I would just like to say how lovely it was. She took time to chat and made sure everything was ok. Thank you so much."

"We have just had a HomeFix guy round to clean the mould in the bathroom.

I just wanted to say that I was really impressed with him. He was very friendly and super informative about everything he was doing. He also left our bathroom in such a clean condition after he was finished. Please pass on our thanks to him for everything."

"I just wanted to say a huge thank you for the help and support you have given me during a difficult time in my life personally & financially. I find it very difficult to ask for help, so I appreciate you reaching out to me with such kindness. The help you give people like myself in difficult times is truly amazing."

"We are both disabled and wheelchair users. This is just to say sincere and grateful thanks for all you do. Bless you. We love it here!"

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

All housing associations must carry out an annual satisfaction survey to comply with regulatory requirements.

There are 12 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) which we ask customers about on a monthly basis via telephone, and a further 10 measures where we collect data ourselves.

Our results from April 2023 - March 2024, and those of similar-sized housing associations (with between 1,000 and 10,000 homes) are shown here.

There is always room for improvement, but we are happy to share that in most areas, we performed better than our peers.

Keeping you informed

If you'd like to follow how we are performing, our TSM ratings are updated every six months on our website:

www.saxonweald.com/your-voice/TSMs

TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURE	SAXON WEALD	OTHER HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS
OVERALL SATISFACTION	80%	70%
KEEPING PROPERTIES IN GOOD REPAIR		
Satisfaction with repairs overall	76%	70%
Satisfaction with repairs – time taken	70%	66%
Well maintained home	78%	70%
Homes NOT meeting Decent Homes standards	0	0.3%
Repairs completed within target	74%	82%
Emergency repairs completed on target	93%	95%
MAINTAINING BUILDING SAFETY		
Provide a home that is safe	86%	76%
Gas safety checks carried out	100%	100%
Fire risk assessments carried out	99%	100%
Asbestos surveys carried out	100%	100%
Legionella assessments carried out	93%	100%
Lift safety checks	100%	100%
RESPECTFUL AND HELPFUL ENGAGEMENT		
Listens to your views and acts upon them	69%	60%
Keeps you informed about things that matter to you	79%	70%
Saxon Weald treats me fairly and with respect	86%	77%
EFFECTIVE HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS		
Satisfaction with Complaints handling	44%	34%
Number of stage 1 complaints per 1000 homes	40.7	39.7
Number of stage 2 complaints per 1000 homes	5.9	5.3
Stage 1 complaints responded in target	85.7%	85%
Stage 2 complaints responded in target	91.4%	83%
RESPONSIBLE NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT		
Communal areas clean and well maintained	68%	66%
Makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood	69%	63%
Approach to handling anti-social behaviour (ASB)	65%	57%
ASB cases relative to size of landlord (cases per 1000 homes)	14.1	38.6
ASB cases that involve hate incidents (cases per 1000 homes)	0.2	0.7



Customer Task and Finish group

A Task and Finish group is a panel of residents who get together to influence the way Saxon Weald delivers services to residents.

Last year's Task and Finish group included six enthusiastic customers and an independent chairperson. We asked them to assess our complaints procedure and complaints-related communications.

Group members Jill and Jacqui explain:

The first thing we did was think about what a good response might look like from a customer point of view. We checked what the official requirements were, but then also thought about the emotional impact, and how a letter might make a customer feel. We came up with nine elements we thought a good response should have. We then used this checklist to review examples of complaint letters and emails that Saxon Weald had sent.

The main thing we found was inconsistency in the quality of the responses. Some were spot on, but some lacked any empathy or weren't clear enough. We also found that some didn't give enough detail of how they had reached their decision or what would happen next.

We came up with 27 recommendations which we think would improve things. Some of us presented these to Saxon Weald's customer experience committee. It was a bit daunting at first, but we felt they really listened and appreciated our work.



Jacqui, a member of the Task and Finish group.



The task and finish group in a meeting.

It's been a great experience for me personally. You get to meet new people, help improve things for others and have a bit of fun along the way. We all want to carry on and be involved in the next group.

Here are some of the group's recommendations:

- Complaint acknowledgements to always include details of who the issue has been passed to for investigation.
- Produce guidelines for staff on the best way to carry out an investigation and set out their findings.
- Make sure staff have training in showing understanding and empathy in their communication.
- Establish a quality assurance system for monitoring complaint responses.
- Adopt the group's quality criteria and use it as a checklist before sending a complaint response.

You can find out more about Task and Finish and how to join a group by taking a look on our website under the "Your voice" section.



Why not join the customers who are already shaping our services?

- We have 159 residents on our email register
- We had 7,262 survey responses during the year
- There are 40 'green team' volunteers helping monitor grounds maintenance
- We held 1,204 scheme meetings
- There were 34 entries to our Youth Awards
- We have 14 members on our policy review team
- 10 customers are members of our task and finish groups

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





Using your information to tailor our services

We have been improving the information we hold on customers. This is to make sure our services are shaped by your needs. The information we hold can also be used to check that our services are fair and accessible to everyone.

We have been encouraging customers to complete and update their details by logging into their MySaxonweald account and filling in the new 'About me' section. You can still do so by visiting [MySaxonweald.com](https://www.saxonweald.com).

Some customers may have received our household questionnaire in the post or been given one from a scheme or extra care services manager. Others may have been invited to complete their details online.

To date, we've received just over 2,000 responses.

Some of the information we hold can help us deliver better, more-focussed services and support. For example, it may help identify when a customer needs more time to answer the door or phone, or may need additional support in other areas. It can also help further analysis of other surveys and see if trends of particular groups are developing in positive or negative ways.

Your information is in safe hands

Once you have given us your information, you want to be certain that it is safe.

We are committed to protecting the privacy and security of your personal information. All staff throughout the business have training on data protection.

We are also proud to retain Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation, demonstrating our commitment to cyber security and offering customers the reassurance that their data is protected in our systems.

What information do we hold?

We need names, addresses, dates of birth, contact details and financial information so we can provide housing and other services to our customers. We may also need additional information such as certain medical and benefit details.

To monitor equal opportunities and only with your explicit consent, we may also ask you for information about your ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation.

Should you want to know more about your privacy rights and data protection, please visit our website: www.saxonweald.com/privacy.

Welfare checks



Our Scheme Managers have an important role in supporting the wellbeing and safety of our older customers.



Every quarter, they carry out checks to the emergency pull cords in our residents' homes. Where possible they like to do these in person and use the opportunity to see how the resident is doing and check the property condition is okay.

If a resident misses two in-person visits, we will insist the next one is with the resident, so that we see each person and property at least once a year.



“Home is
somewhere you
go from and
dream of coming
back to.”

Derek



Derek has lived in the same bungalow he used to share with his late wife for 24 years.

‘We asked Derek, “What do you love most about where you live?”.

“Everything’s within easy reach. It’s a friendly town, with facilities close to hand and a nice community around.”

Derek is known by his neighbours for being kind and caring, and regularly checks in on people in his community.

He adds, “I have a neighbour on one side who’s 89 who I pop in and see daily, and a neighbour on the other side who’s 95. He knows to open the door by 8 o’clock or he’ll get a call from me!”.

We asked Derek how he would describe his home. “Clean, simple, and comfortable. But a bit of hoovering and dusting needed!”.

Derek also takes great pride in his garden, which is immaculately kept and features a beautifully crafted windmill that he made himself.



Our housing management team support residents to manage their tenancies.

They sometimes have to deal with difficult situations including anti-social behaviour, rent arrears, tenancy fraud and domestic abuse.

Domestic Abuse

No one should be subject to domestic abuse or feel unsafe in their home. We can help you by dealing with your disclosures of domestic abuse quickly, effectively, and sympathetically by a trained staff member. We offer a non-judgemental and person-centred approach and will help put support and intervention in place that works for you. We want you to be safe in your home and can arrange for additional security if you need it. We can also arrange for referrals on to specialist support services.



There is helpful information available on our website www.saxonweald.com/da or you can call and speak to our trained customer service team, who will be able to help you.

In 2023/24

- 17 domestic abuse cases reported
- 15 female survivors/2 male survivors
- 8 customers helped with moving



Domestic Abuse survivor

How we helped

We supported customers with additional security to help them feel safe in their homes, and moved customers who were at risk of harm.

What next?

We are preparing for re-accreditation with the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance in Autumn 2025. This will see us deliver additional training to staff, strengthen partnerships with specialist agencies who provide support to survivors and increase publicity about the support we can provide to those affected by domestic abuse.

Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

Anti-social behaviour can sometimes occur, even in the safest of neighbourhoods.

117 cases of anti-social behaviour were reported to us last year. This is around 20% more than the previous year.

Breakdown of ASB cases

- 31: Drug and alcohol related nuisance
- 30: Noise
- 27: Verbal abuse / harassment
- 8: Criminal behaviour
- 8: Misuse of communal areas
- 6: Physical violence
- 4: Pets and animal nuisance
- 1: Hate related incidents
- 1: Vandalism and damage to property
- 1: Vehicle nuisance

We work in partnership with the police, environmental health and local ASB / mediation teams to help manage anti-social behaviour. Legal action is a last resort and we'll always try other methods first. These may include using sound monitoring equipment, verbal and written warnings and ASB contracts.

After receiving a report of anti-social behaviour, a Housing Manager will be in contact within three working days. However, if the incident is serious, you'll hear from us within 24 hours.

To help us investigate, it's important to keep a log of incidents, recording what happened, who was involved and the date/time this occurred.

More information, including our anti-social behaviour policy, can be found on our website: www.saxonweald.com/living-in-your-home/antisocial-behaviour/



Support from our Money Matters team

Money Matters Advisers help maximise our customers' income. They carry out benefit checks, help customers make benefits claims and challenge unfair decisions made by the Local Authority or the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). They also offer basic budgeting advice, complete affordability checks for new tenants and process referrals to our Financial Support Fund.

For help with any of the issues on this page, please contact money.matters@saxonweald.com

How we supported our customers



£105k

Saxon Weald has a support fund for customers experiencing severe financial hardship. Last year, we received 465 successful referrals and spent a total of £105,000. This included a charitable donation of £4,000 to Horsham Matters who help support our tenants with food parcels and fuel top ups.

Horsham Matters

Horsham Matters is a local charity that supports people in the Horsham area when they need it most. It is the area where the largest proportion of our customers live.

Last year they provided foodbank vouchers to 2,044 households

Value = £91,980

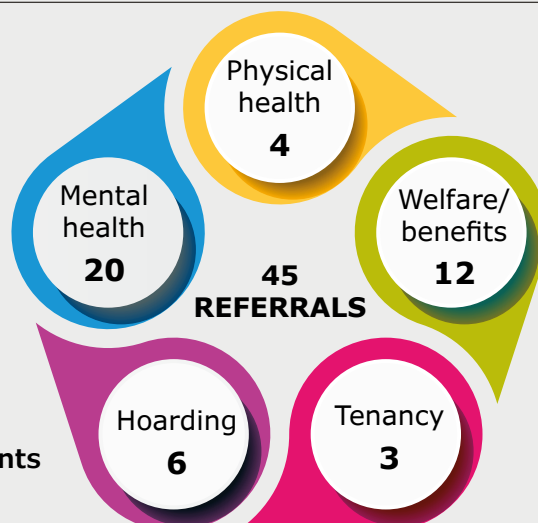
Plus furniture and fuel vouchers worth £1,500

Tenancy Sustainment

Our Money Matters Wellbeing Adviser provides targeted housing-related support to vulnerable residents to help them sustain their tenancies and maintain their independence.

They work collaboratively with Scheme Managers, Housing Managers, Surveyors and HomeFix, to provide support to customers on a range of housing related issues including:

- Mental health
- Physical health
- Hoarding
- Maximising income
- Disabled facilities grants
- Under occupation



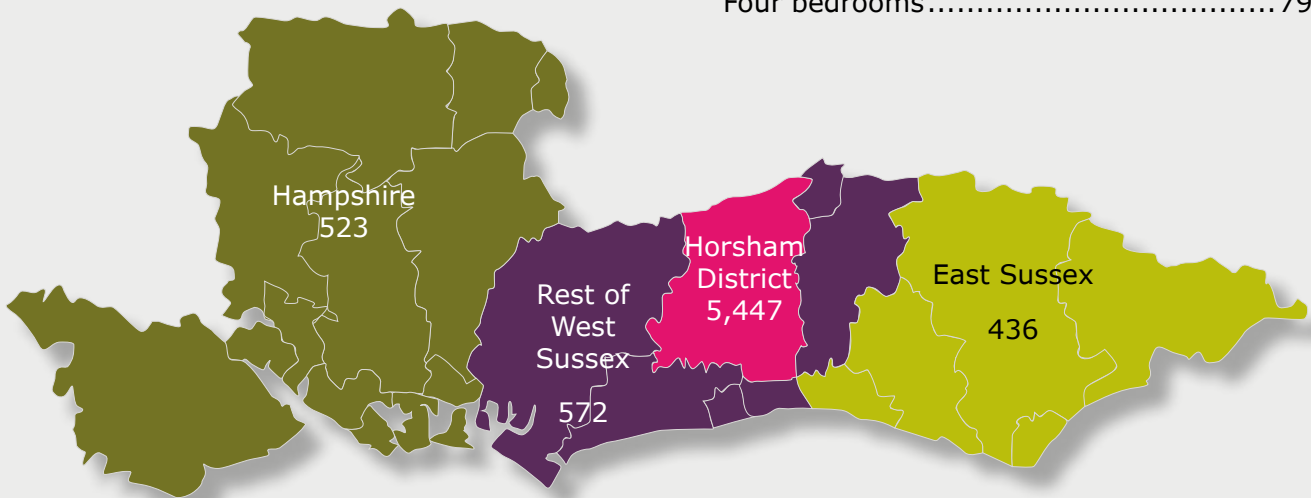


Our homes and where they are

At the end of March 2024, we had 6,978 properties in our main area of operation

	Horsham District	5,447	78%
	The rest of West Sussex	572	8%
	East Sussex	436	6%
	Hampshire	523	8%

We also managed 17 properties in Surrey



Our rented stock includes :

Size of property	Number
Non self-contained.....	14
Bedsits.....	235
One bedroom.....	1,907
Two bedrooms	1,943
Three bedrooms	1,660
Four bedrooms.....	79

Our housing tenures

83% of our housing stock is for social or affordable rent.

15% of our customers own a share or all of the home they live in.

Under 2% of our properties are available for market rent.

Newly built homes

Between April 2023 and March 2024 we completed 101 new build homes.

64 properties were for affordable rent.

37 were for shared ownership.

We received £425,250 in grant funding towards building much-needed new homes.

“ This wonderful home is a dream come true for all of us and our family are so thankful to have a happy place for our kids to grow and call home. Thank you so much. ”

Mobeen and Salma



YOUR voice





Lettings

Last year we let 479 properties, including 67 brand new homes.

There continues to be a huge demand for affordable housing, and we work closely with our local authority partners to help those most in need.

This year has seen a rise in people over 55 in private rented housing who have suddenly been served 'no fault' eviction notices. This is usually due to their landlords wishing to sell the property. We meet weekly with Horsham's Homeless Prevention Team to help get applicants into our retirement housing, preventing people having to move into temporary accommodation.

There is also huge demand for three- and four-bedroom family homes, with approximately 370 families waiting locally. We only had 49 of these properties become available last year, so unfortunately, people can be waiting a long time.

Mutual exchanges

A mutual exchange is where customers apply to swap their homes. Sometimes this is the quickest route for people to move.

42 households exchanged last year.



Is it time for you to downsize?

There may come a time when the cost and work in running a large home becomes too much.

Something smaller may save you rent and running costs. Or perhaps you'd like to be part of a community at one of our retirement schemes.

For a no-obligation chat, please email: home.move@saxonweald.com or call 01403 226000

Buying and selling

-  **New build sales**
Last year we sold 39 new shared ownership properties.
-  **Shared ownership resales**
Our Weald Living sales team processed 35 shared ownership resales.
-  **Staircasing**
Last year we saw nine shared owners buy a larger share in their property, with six of them reaching the full 100% and owning their home outright. This is known as staircasing.
-  **Property disposals**
Sometimes, we need to sell our properties. This could be when the property needs more work than is economically viable, is in an area that is outside of our main area of operation, or no longer meets the purpose of our business. Last year our sales team sold 17 properties.

"Home is family, warmth and love". Aaliyah



Aaliyah moved into her two-bedroom general needs flat in November. She had previously been with her partner, baby son and dog in temporary accommodation before finding a place they can call home. She loves having a garden for her son and dog to play in.

Her home looks modern and bright, decorated in greys and whites.

"This has been a good place to settle with my family. I had lots of support when I moved in, from financial help getting white goods, to my family helping with decorating and getting other bits I needed. I have really good neighbours too. Everyone helps each other."





Day-to-day repairs

Our HomeFix repairs team handle routine maintenance in your homes and are on hand to respond to emergency repairs as they are reported.

Last year we completed 18,842 repairs, an increase of 7% on the previous year.

We understand that our customers value how well we fix things and how fast our service is.

To see how we are doing, we ask customers to answer a satisfaction survey about their repair once it has been completed.

From the 2,527 completed surveys we received:

81% of customers satisfied with the repair

70% of customers are satisfied the repair was completed right first time

The average cost of a responsive repair rose to £198

That's 5.5% more than the previous year, mainly due to the rising costs of materials and parts.



YOUR voice

I'm really pleased with the way Saxon Weald responded to this repair. I didn't expect this to happen within a couple of hours from reporting it! This made me feel that Saxon Weald cared about me feeling safe in my home with my son.

Standard repair times



The average time taken to complete a repair from when it was reported was:

- Inside a home 21.5 days
- Outside a home 33.3 days
- Communal area 27.9 days

Emergency repair times

93% of emergency repairs were made safe within 24 hours of being reported.

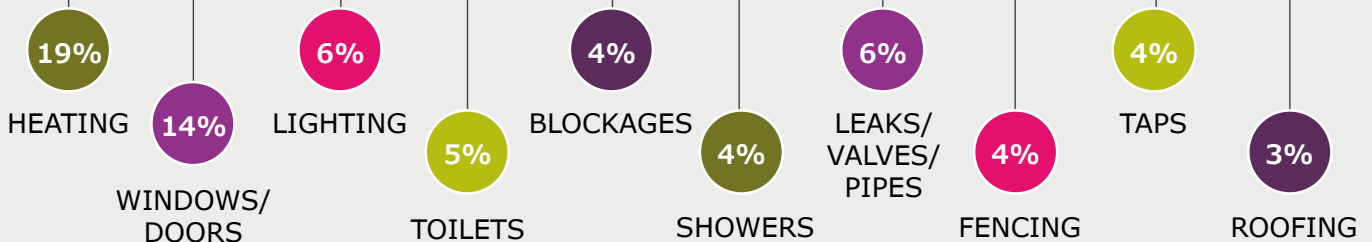
We aim to make sure all emergency repairs are made safe, on time. Unfortunately, sometimes we do not have the exact parts or materials at hand to complete a job immediately.

YOUR voice

Thank you for repairing the toilet cistern so quickly. The guys that came were very pleasant and lovely. I'm very happy with the repair and it was done to a high standard with no mess left behind.



Top 10 repair requests:





Investing in homes

Last year we spent **£5.2 million** improving our customers' homes

Where we invested:

Over £1m spent refurbishing kitchens in 132 homes

Over £700,000 spent on bathrooms in 103 properties

160 homes had new boilers fitted

Over 100 properties had electrical rewiring

Nearly £100,000 spent on door entry systems in eight property blocks

438 windows/doors replaced



YOUR voice

Thank you for your hard work and our lovely kitchen. You have made the experience very painless for us.

1,963 properties improved

Repairs to empty homes

When a rented home is vacated, it is important to re-let that property to people in housing need as soon as possible. However, we need to ensure that everything in the home is in working order, safe, secure and clean, ready for the new tenant to move in.

Work needed can vary from property to property, and sometimes extensive work, such as installing a new kitchen or bathroom, is needed to get a property ready.

In 2023/24 we prepared 395 homes to re-let

- 118 needed major works
Average cost per property £12,456
- 282 needed minor works
Average cost per property £3,481

savills



Working to assess property needs earlier

Earlier this year we instructed Savills to begin surveying a quarter of our property stock to get a picture of where we need to invest in the future.

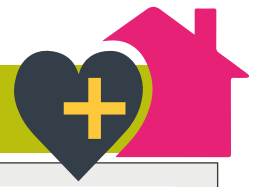
During the surveys some early concerns were spotted with some properties, which we are prioritising.



Letting empty homes

We've had a backlog of work in getting empty homes ready for a new tenant to move in. This means that in 2023/24 it took an average of 90 days to re-let a home from when the keys have been handed back (excluding properties where major refurbishment is needed). This is bad for customers who have to wait longer to move in, and bad for us as we lose rent.

We've been working hard to catch up, and have already got the average time down to 68 days. We will be working hard to reduce this time over the coming months.



Aids and Adaptations

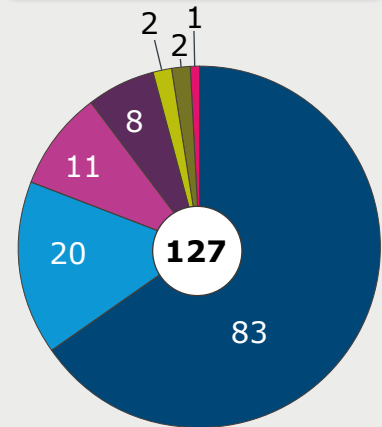
Sometimes small changes to a home can make all the difference. We regularly make adaptations to homes to improve the safety, health and wellbeing of residents.

Often it can be the simplest of things, such as lever taps or an adjustment to the height of electrical sockets that can make life that bit easier. Other times we may need to install a ramp or adjust a doorway for safer, easier mobility and access.



In the last financial year we fitted 147 adaptations to residents' homes costing £62,166

- 83 Ramps & hand rails
- 20 Shower seats
- 11 Window winders
- 8 Lever taps
- 2 Raised toilets
- 2 Lighting and socket adjustments
- 1 Doorway adjustments



Plus 20 other modifications

Some other adaptations we helped with:

- Door security chain to stop a child leaving the house when sleep walking
- Sliding door inside a property to give a wheelchair user access round her home
- Linking a fire alarm to support a deaf resident
- Supplying a wireless heat control unit for a resident who was unable to reach the heating controller



YOUR voice

"I would love to give a special shout out to the gentleman that came to fix my gate today. He made an amazing suggestion that can help with my mobility getting into the front door. It was not something I was aware could be done. He then sorted it there and then and booked the appointment straight away. It's staff like that you should be proud of."

Can we help?

If you, or someone you live with, needs some of these small adjustments made to your home, please let us know and we will assess your requirements.

For larger adaptations, such as a level-access shower or stairlift, you need to apply to your local council. If they approve, please let us know what is planned before any work begins.

You can contact us by emailing hello@saxonweald.com or call 01403 226000.



Keeping your homes safe

Our health and safety team help keep your homes safe, secure and compliant with legal standards. This includes ensuring appropriate training and guidance is given to all our staff, so they can operate safely, and assess risks.

Every week, building safety checks are done on all our residential blocks, adding up to nearly 5,000 checks annually.

Our teams carry out all manner of safety checks each year; from gas, fire and water assessments, to security, electricity and lighting.



If you notice something that doesn't look right, please let us know so that we can check it out and put it right.

Email hello@saxonweald.com or call 01403 226000.

Fire Safety



Last year we completed:

- 206 Fire risk assessments
- 47 Fire safety visits to schemes
- 2,400 Fire alarm tests
- 2,456 Means of escape inspections
- 525 Emergency light flick tests

We have been conducting checks on the front doors of properties within our blocks to ensure they meet safety standards.

Smoke alarms save lives

As your landlord, we are required to provide you with a smoke alarm but you are responsible for making sure your smoke alarm is in good working order. Test your smoke alarm every month by pressing the circular test button on the alarm. If the expiry date is close or has passed, please contact us to arrange a replacement.

Other things you can do to stay safe

- Keep all exits clear, especially in communal areas. This includes prams, pushchairs and mobility scooters and wheelchairs.
- Keep fire doors closed. They can prevent the spread of a fire in your home by up to 20 minutes.

Gas Safety



Every year we're legally required to carry out annual inspections of all gas appliances and installations we've put in your home. Our gas contractor, TSG will notify you when your annual inspection is due.

Last year we completed:

- 3,264 Landlord gas safety checks to domestic properties
- 228 Gas safety checks in schemes

Electrical safety



We need to conduct regular electrical maintenance checks to make sure your home is safe every five years.

We will send you details of your electrical maintenance check when it's scheduled in. It is important that you are present and allow us access to your home to perform the checks.

Last year we completed:

- 1,191 Domestic EICR electric checks
- We also carry out annual testing on all portable appliances in the communal areas at all 54 of our retirement and extra care schemes.



“Home is a
sanctuary where
you feel happy.”

Linda

Linda moved into a bungalow in January. Having previously rented in the private sector, Linda says that the benefits of being in a housing association property include having more stability and the freedom to decorate as she chooses to make her home perfect. “It is my home for as long as I’m here” she adds.

Linda says “I feel very fortunate. When I first saw the bungalow the garden was very overgrown and the property looked rather tired, but Saxon Weald were brilliant. They did everything from installing a new boiler and kitchen, to ensuring everything was refreshed and refurbished, ready from me to move in and make the place my home.”

“The garden was a wilderness: full of brambles and everything was overgrown. However, I could see that someone had once loved this garden and was excited to see what was hiding underneath all the grass and weeds. It took eight hours for someone to clear the front and back gardens, just to a state where I could start to care for it. This year, I’ve focussed on getting the front and sides planted and it really makes me happy when people stop by and tell me that it is beautiful.”



Condensation, damp and mould

Some condensation in homes is common and can usually be managed by letting warm, moist air escape. However, excessive moisture in the home can cause mould or indicate a bigger issue, such as damp.

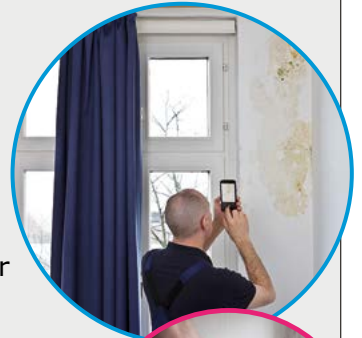
We want to reassure you that we take these issues very seriously. If you are worried that there is a damp or mould issue in your property, please report it to us, including photos of the problem if you can.

You can get more information about damp and mould and complete a reporting form on our website: www.saxonweald.com/condensation. Alternatively, email: homefix@saxonweald.com or call us on 01403 226000.

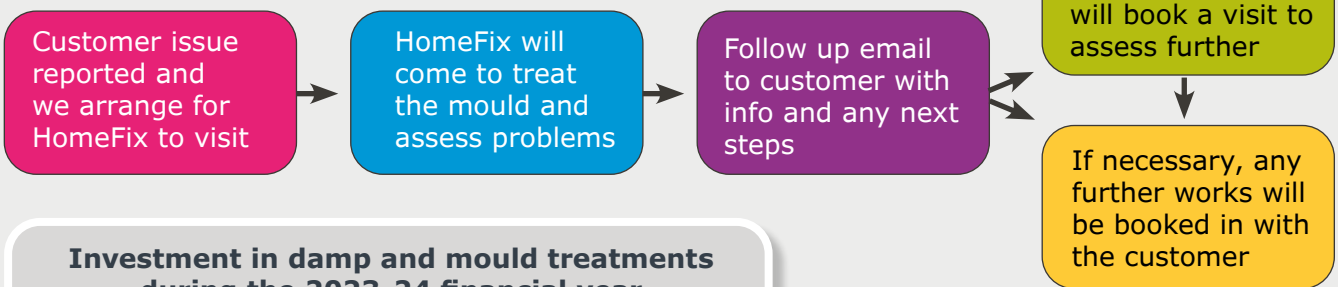
What we do if you report mould in your home

We will arrange for HomeFix to visit your home to wash down and treat the affected area. The team will also carry out some checks on your home to see if there are any underlying issues.

Based on these checks, we may need to send a surveyor to do a further inspection. We may also book in works such as fitting an extractor fan or topping up / renewing loft insulation.



Step-by-step approach to tackling damp and mould



Investment in damp and mould treatments during the 2023-24 financial year



£321,575

Costs associated with wash downs, minor remedial works etc.



We spent

£295,306

adding extractor fans to homes with excessive condensation

Improving our processes



Damp and mould issues should be resolved for customers as quickly and efficiently as possible:

In April, we established a dedicated new damp and mould team.

Proactive ways of working:

Some condensation and damp issues stem from poor air circulation. A ventilation programme will train colleagues to understand more about the equipment we use.

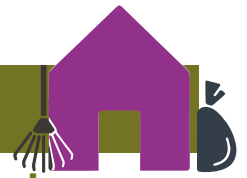
Customers should be kept informed at all stages of the process:

We now send follow-up emails and useful information to customers after we complete washdowns.

YOUR VOICE

The surveyors who came were so professional. They talked to me about what they were doing, but they also listened to me and answered my questions. They were brilliant, it really felt like they cared. Then they explained what work was needed and that they would keep me updated.





Managing our estates

Our Estate Management Team help keep your neighbourhoods tidy and safe. They manage contracts with our grounds maintenance, tree maintenance and cleaning contractors.

Within the team are our own Neighbourhood Improvement Operatives. Whatever the weather, the team of five operatives are out and about clearing up and making a big difference to the area where you live.

Here is a breakdown of the jobs they did last year:

571	Estate inspections
242	Gutter clearances
239	Clearances / fly tipping
212	Fire / Legionella assessment actions
126	Empty homes clearances
120	Asbestos collection
83	Communal area clearances
43	Empty homes garden works
18	Garage lock changes
14	Car park line-marking jobs
11	Garage checks
4	Kitchen & bathroom clearances
3	Lighting jobs
3	Heater deliveries



Please give a big shout out to the Neighbourhood Team. They have gone above and beyond to help a tenant at Highwood Mill by collecting unwanted pieces of furniture for their flat. This tenant had nothing at all - not even a bed. So, thank you again to all the team. You have all been amazing.

The team frequently has to remove items that create a safety risk.

Any belongings or rubbish left in communal hallways may be removed. These items are a potential fire hazard and a safety risk, blocking emergency escape routes.

Coming together to help a community

A team of enthusiastic Saxon Weald volunteers joined some of our Neighbourhood Improvement Operatives for an afternoon tidying up and meeting our customers.



They hired a skip for the day and helped residents get rid of bulky items they no longer wanted. The wheelbarrow became a friend as they lugged everything from rocks, furniture, old tyres, broken swings and even a mobility scooter!

The group also helped with litter picking and weeding, fixed a garden gate and had some great conversations with local residents.

YOUR voice

The community day was a really good idea. It's great to see people out and about and the skip was useful. I got rid of a few things that were lying about: some remnants of carpet and some old bits and bobs.



YOUR voice

I think the skip is a brilliant idea. I had quite a bit of stuff that I needed to throw away, but with a one-year-old and being pregnant, it's not that easy. The team have really helped me today.



Grounds maintenance

In May last year, our new grounds maintenance contractors began their contracts. The new contractors are:

- Groundscapes, covering sites in the Horsham District and West Sussex
- GreenServe covering East Sussex
- Grounds Care Group covering Hampshire

We have seen a significant improvement in service quality since the new contracts began. As well as being able to see the difference, we've had positive feedback from our customers and colleagues across the region.



YOUR voice

I would just like to compliment you on the grass cutting at my flat in Steyning. Having complained for many years, I'm now pleased you have found a regular contractor.

YOUR voice

I just wanted to say how much improved the grounds around Abbotswood are looking now that we have new contractors. It is good to see that we are now regularly visited by them. Without any prompting, my visitors this weekend commented on the trimmed bushes and tidier look of the grounds.

Thank you for your perseverance!



Complaints 6

This year we had just 6 complaints regarding grounds maintenance. Last year we had 32.



Compliments 14

We received 14 compliments relating to grounds maintenance this year. Last year we had none.

Tree works

Connick Tree Care looks after all of our tree maintenance. They protect the health of the trees, the local environment and biodiversity, and the safety of the areas surrounding the trees.

Since May 2023, they have assessed and collected data on all 2,980 trees across our sites (excluding customer gardens). Their surveys detail the coordinates, species, height, maturity and health of the trees.

Where needed, they monitor and re-survey the trees, and work through any recommended actions.



Keeping it clean

Our contractors, Cleanscapes currently clean 217 of our blocks/schemes.

The number of visits varies from one to five a week, depending on the property type and size.

In total, that's nearly 15,000 cleans per year.





How we compare

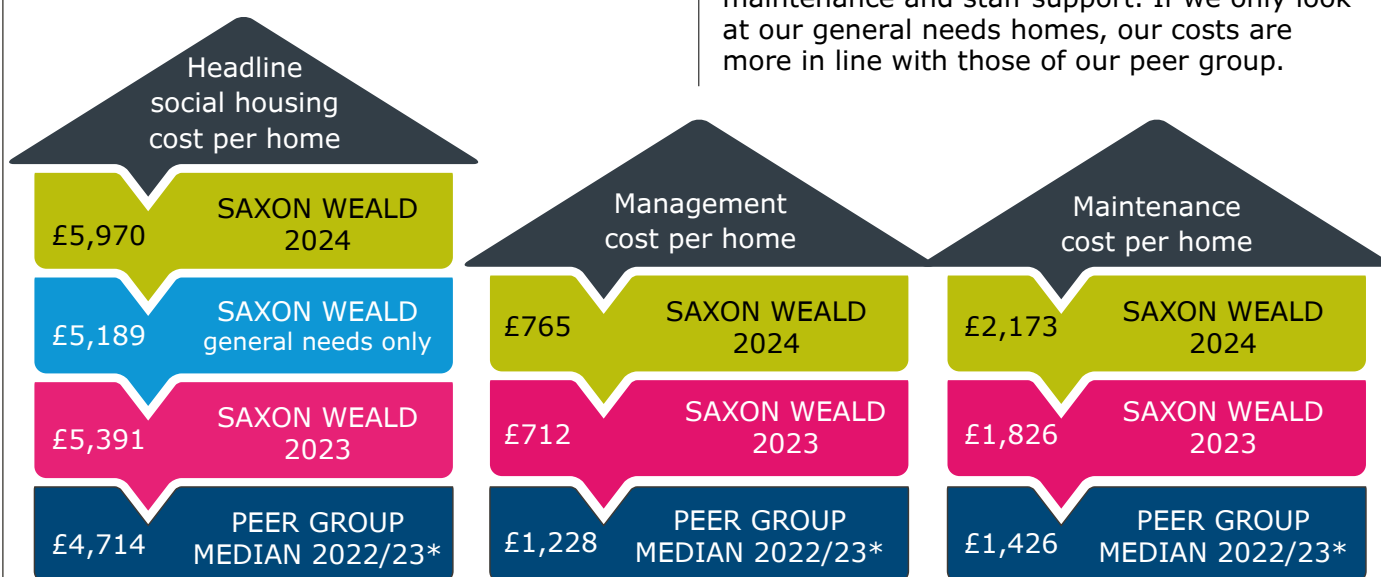
During the last financial year our operational costs were higher than the previous year. This was mainly due to the increased expense of maintaining and repairing homes, with more money needed for building safety, energy efficiency and building materials.

This meant that our social housing costs per year went up by just over 12%. Our management costs also increased by 7.5% and maintenance costs rose by 19%.

The income to cover these operational costs is generated by the rent we collect. To help meet these costs we need to generate more rent. We increased rents by 7.7%.

We benchmark our costs against those of similar sized housing associations (our peer group), to compare how we are performing. Our headline costs per home for the 2023-24 year are about 28% higher than those of our peer group.

However, we have a high number of retirement and extra care homes that need more maintenance and staff support. If we only look at our general needs homes, our costs are more in line with those of our peer group.

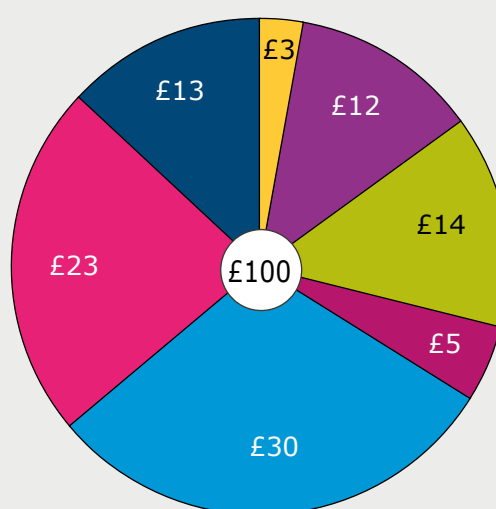


* We use information from a research company called Housemark to compare ourselves to 17 other regional housing associations with a stock size between 2,500 and 12,500 homes.

How we spend our money

For every £100 we spend 2024

Housing Management	£3
Service charge costs	£12
Cleaning and grounds maintenance	£3
Utilities	£6
All other services	£3
Staff costs	£14
Overheads	£5
Repairs and maintenance	£30
Day-to-day repairs	£9
Property improvements	£17
Regular servicing and maintenance	£4
Interest payments	£23
Investment in new homes	£13



During this year we spent:

- 2% more on maintenance and repairs
- 1% more on utilities
- 2% less on staff costs
- 5% less on new homes



Rents

Last year we collected 97.5% of all the rent due to us

9% of tenants were over four weeks in arrears last year

32% of tenants were in credit on their account last year

At 31 March 2024 arrears totalled £1,195,604

When a customer gets behind with their rent, we offer support to try and get them back on track. However, if the tenant does not make the effort to clear their debt with us, we may need to take legal action to recover the amount owed.

Last year, one case of rent arrears resulted in a tenant being evicted from their home.

This is always a last resort. If you are in arrears, please contact us to put an affordable repayment plan in place and protect your tenancy.

The best way to ensure you're rent account is always up-to-date is to pay by Direct Debit.

The payment automatically comes out of your account on a chosen day from the 1st to 28th of each month. You can instruct your bank yourself or complete the form on our website:

www.saxonweald.com/storage/downloads/saxon_weald_direct_debit_form-1545308619.pdf



Are you missing out on financial help?

Our Money Matters team can help you make sure you are claiming all the help and support you are entitled to.

For advice or to request an appointment, please email: moneymatters@saxonweald.com.

YOUR voice

Thank you for all your help supporting me with my benefit claim. You have made a big difference to my life and I am very grateful.

Coming soon... Employment support programme

Later this year, Saxon Weald customers will be able to access employment support through the Workwise Surrey and Sussex Employment Support Programme. This could be help with writing CVs, finding employment and work placements, or help with career development and progression. This exciting five-year partnership project is lead by Raven Housing Trust who will be working with other housing associations, councils and education providers.

Keep an eye on our newsletters, customer updates and our website for further information.



OUR PEOPLE

A dynamic and diverse workforce contributes to the success of any business. At Saxon Weald we are committed to equality of opportunity, being fair and inclusive and to being a place where all our colleagues feel they belong.

Having the right people working for us helps us deliver a positive experience to our customers and is at the heart of all we do at Saxon Weald.

Our colleagues

In the 2023-24 year we employed:

283	Full and part-time staff (268 full time equivalent)
154	Office-based staff
35	Scheme managers
85	Maintenance / repairs
9	Board members



I appreciate the opportunities to talk to tenants and hearing from them how the homes and services we provide have made a difference to that person or family.

These conversations remind me of the positive impact we make working for an affordable housing provider, and why the work we do is so important.

The favourite part of my job is helping to solve problems and discovering new ways of working - these both involve talking to lots of lovely people.



I love being part of a team that puts a plan together... and then seeing the difference that plan can make to the lives of our customers.



I am passionate about what I do and enjoy turning negativity into positivity; be it with staff, our customers or any tasks that need doing. I often visit unhappy residents. This helps keep me grounded and in touch with our customers.



Who does what at Saxon Weald

Our Executive Team is responsible for making decisions about the way Saxon Weald operates. It also advises the Board on the company's strategic direction. The team is made up of five members of staff who bring wide-ranging expertise and knowledge to their role.

Chief Executive: Steven Dennis

As Chief Executive, Steven leads the Executive Team and is also an executive member of the Board. He has overall responsibility for the operational running of the business.



Executive Director - Customer Operations: Kath Hicks, BSc (Hons)

Kath is responsible for service delivery, including repairs, customer support, housing and neighbourhood management. She also oversees compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards.



Executive Director - Finance & Governance:

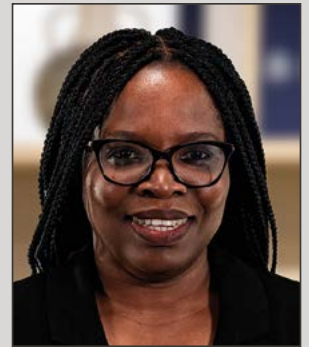
Michael Chinn, FCCA,
CPFA (also Company
Secretary)

Michael is responsible for all things money. He also ensures we meet legal and regulatory requirements.



Executive Director - Asset & Development: Becky Utuka, MSc, PGDip, BSc (Hons)

Becky is responsible for our property investment programme (improving existing homes) as well as the development of new homes. She is also Saxon Weald's designated health and safety lead.



Chief Information Officer: Debbie Chun, BA (Hons)

Debbie leads our IT and transformation programme and is responsible for driving positive change and innovation at Saxon Weald.



Other information and publications:

We publish a wealth of up-to-date information on our website, including publications and informative leaflets. To find the full list and read or download any, please go to: www.saxonweald.com/about-us/publications/



USEFUL CONTACTS:



General enquiries: Our customer service team is on hand to answer most enquiries. Email hello@saxonweald.com or call 01403 226000

Money matters: If you are struggling financially please email moneymatters@saxonweald.com or call 01403 226000 and ask to be referred

Housing managers: email housing.managers@saxonweald.com or call 01403 226000 and ask to be called back by your housing manager

Repairs: For general repairs (or gas if you live in extra care or retirement schemes) email homefix@saxonweald.com, call 01403 22600 or use your My SaxonWeald account

Gas: If you have gas but don't live in a retirement or extra care scheme, please call TSG on 0800 781 2739 or email saxonweald@tsgplc.co.uk

Information for leaseholders & shared owners: go to www.wealdliving.com or call 01403 226060





Saxon Weald contact hours

Our phone lines are open:

Monday - Thursday from 8.30am – 4.30pm
Friday from 8.30 - 4pm

Ways to contact us:

Secure message via your online account service: MySaxonWeald.com

Email: hello@saxonweald.com

Our website:
www.saxonweald.com/contact-us/

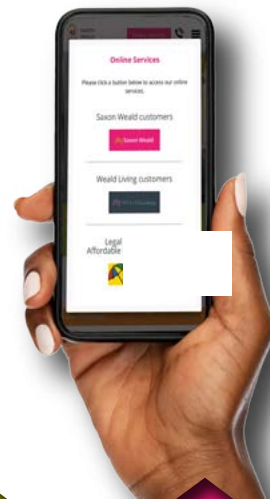
Facebook:
www.facebook.com/saxonweald

Telephone: 01403 226000

Visits to our office are by appointment only. Please contact us to make a booking.

Online, anytime, anywhere

Our easy-to-use, online services put you in charge of your home, anytime, anywhere. They provide secure access to your information and are available 24 hours a day, seven 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

Sign up today at:

www.saxonweald.com/getonline



Reporting repairs

Most general repairs are carried out by HomeFix, our in-house repairs team.

You can report a general repair:

- Through your online account at any time at mysaxonweald.com
- On our website www.saxonweald.com
- By email - HomeFix@saxonweald.com
- By phone on 01403 226000



Head office: Saxon Weald House, 38-42 Worthing Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1DT. TEL: 01403 226000

EMAIL: hello@saxonweald.com | WEB: www.saxonweald.com

