

Welcome to our annual report summary

This annual report summary captures our performance and key projects for 2014/15. It has been a year of change for the organisation but also one of success.

Working with our partners, including you – our customers, we have built more than 60 new homes, including 11 for low-cost home ownership, launched a new corporate plan, refreshed the way we involve customers, improved our efficiency, invested significantly in our existing homes and strengthened our board. We have also adopted The NHF Corporate Code of Governance.

All this work, and the many other successful projects you'll read about in this annual report summary, will ensure Wellingborough Homes is well placed to meet the considerable changes now facing providers of affordable housing, and is able to build on its strong financial position, track record and solid reputation.

Our Board and Executive Team are already responding to the new challenges and opportunities presented by the Government as we seek to strengthen our core responsibility to meet housing need. Changes in our ability to control our own rent setting and the extension of Right to Buy to housing association tenants will require us to make some tough decisions in the coming weeks, months and years ahead to manage our reduced finances but still provide the number of homes needed in our region. As a result, we expect the Wellingborough Homes of 2016 to look very different to the organisation of old, but with the same commitment to development and providing people with opportunity.

We produced this report with customer input to show how we spend our money, to explain more about our work and services you might want to access, and to demonstrate our governance and financial position. We hope you find it useful. As part of our commitment to delivering value for money, this year's full report hasn't been printed and sent to all customers, but you can find the full report online at www.wellingboroughhomes.org. If you have any feedback, please contact our Customer Services team as we'd be delighted to hear from you.

Thank you to all our customers, communities and partners for your contribution to a very successful year for Wellingborough Homes. We look forward to working with you to build on our success into the future.



Jo Savage
Wellingborough Homes
Chief Executive



Tim Davy
Chair of Wellingborough
Homes



Our year in numbers



New corporate plan

Our mission statement:
Wellingborough Homes
will work successfully
with its customers
and communities to
provide great services
and high-quality living
environments.



New homes

This year has been our busiest yet for building new homes.

In 2014, we handed over more than 60 homes to customers moving into newly built properties.

With house prices rising far more quickly than local wages, we recognise the role we can play in ensuring a new supply of affordable homes with a mix of tenures.

We have worked hard this year to identify the type of homes needed, where and when, including the need for homes for shared ownership. This forms part of our ambitious development programme over the next five years.

Key developments include new homes at Masefield Close and Wordsworth Close which were built on former garage sites, the remodelling of Diana and Sylvanus House which has seen 70 one-bedroom energy efficient apartments let to local residents, and the handover of six two-bedroom flats and 20 one-bedroom flats on the site of the Old Dun Cow pub in Gold Street.

Looking forward

We will make a significant contribution to providing affordable homes in Wellingborough, through our plans to build around 500 homes over the next five years. We already have underway a 48 unit scheme at Mitchell Court. This development, on the old Railway Club site off Broad Green, should be completed at the end of 2016.

Improving homes

Home is where the heart is, so we committed more than £3.8m this year to ensure our properties meet the Home Standard.

This year 94% of all reactive repairs were completed within target timescales agreed in consultation with customers, and we have improved the level of satisfaction with our repairs service.

We have continued with our replacement window programme, with 60 properties benefiting this year. We have also provided new roofs for 60 homes and installed external wall insulation on 14 properties, helping to reduce fuel bills for families who live in these homes.

We've also made significant investment in our homes to ensure they meet the changing needs of our residents, for example older people who may need a walk-in shower or customers with reduced mobility.

Looking forward

We will invest to improve our existing homes, including completing window replacements in 79 properties and in Autumn, launching phase four of our flat enveloping work.

We will review the standard of our properties when they are let to new customers. The aim will be to achieve a standard which is fair to new and existing customers at a level of investment that is affordable and offers value for money for Wellingborough Homes and our customers.

Neighbourhoods

We are proud of the role we play to ensure our communities are places where people enjoy living and working.

We have worked hard to contain the impact of Welfare Reform, specifically the impact of the Under Occupancy Charge. Between April 2013 and April 2015 we helped 50 households move to smaller accommodation, removing or reducing their Under Occupation deduction liability.

We have also worked with young people to help them understand what makes a great community. This is the seventh year we have taken a lead role in delivering the Young Citizens initiative to year six pupils in primary schools across Wellingborough.

This year we dealt with almost 200 cases of Anti Social Behaviour and launched a number of schemes to reduce nuisance behaviour.

Where garages aren't used, they have been demolished to either build new homes or replace them with block paving to reduce our maintenance costs and parking issues.

This year, we've taken more estate maintenance work in-house so we can improve the service to customers and keep costs down.

We re-launched our Neighbourhood Walkabout programme.

Looking forward

To improve our rent arrears and voids performance, we completed a restructure and now have specialist Income Officers and a specialist Voids and Lettings Co-ordinator.

Dates are already planned for our 2016 Neighbourhood Walkabouts, you can find these in Well Informed or on our website.

Getting involved

Your input into what we do ensures we can build strong and resilient communities.

The Tenant Advisory Panel (TAP), a core group of around six committed residents, continued to shape our work in 2014/15. As part of the changes to our involvement work, TAP has been disbanded. We would like to thank all the members for the time, skills and passion they have given to this.

We also had excellent support from the Scrutiny Panel, who reported on rent arrears and our response to Welfare Reform.

The main focus for the 50 Plus Group was health and wellbeing, and the Customer Art Group grew in confidence and numbers thanks to customer Clifford Knight.

We teamed up with Women's Aid to run Expect Respect sessions with year eight secondary school students, to reduce the impact such violence can have on pupils' ability to achieve academically.

Our youth work also continued thanks to the Community Stars Youth Group. Members held thought-provoking sessions including looking at how to stand up to their mates.

A group of residents from Kilnway and Minerva Way helped plan and host an event to welcome the new residents of Diana and Sylvanus House to the neighbourhood.

To keep our communities green, the Environmental Group is working up plans for a wildflower meadow and other estate makeovers.

Looking forward

Changes to our funding mean that we may not be able to continue to do all the things we have in the past. We have a new Customer and Community Investment Strategy which sets out how we will work with our customers. You can view this online or find out more in your copy of Well Informed.

Rewarding aspiration and developing independence

We invest in services which impact positively on our customers' lives, offer value for money and support our partners' own ambitions for a successful Wellingborough.

More than 17,900 people were helped by FISH (Free Impartial Support & Help), which offers free and impartial advice on such things as debt, housing and health.

Our Training Academy offers free or means-tested courses to help people boost their employability, skills and confidence. More than 12 courses ran this year, attended by more than 259 people. Of those who undertook a course, 72% were very satisfied.

The Intensive Management Accommodation project sees us offer 42 existing homes to homeless people who would have previously been housed in short-term, emergency accommodation.

Our Lottery-funded programme for Good Neighbours has recruited 25 volunteers helping more than 40 vulnerable residents improve their wellbeing. Our Affordable Warmth programme helped customers save an average of £200 each on gas and electric bills.

Our new three tier flexible support package is there for those who need a helping hand to live independently.

Looking forward

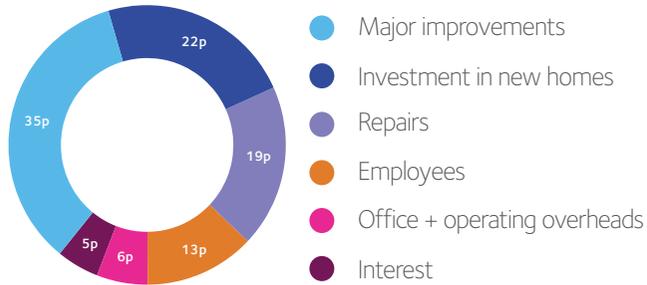
We will take a closer look at the number of our customers who use our services, so we can check that you are getting maximum benefit. For example, we are reviewing our Training Academy to focus its activities on projects which make the most difference to:

- supporting customers into employment
- reducing digital and financial exclusion
- developing the skills customers need to get involved in our work.

Our performance

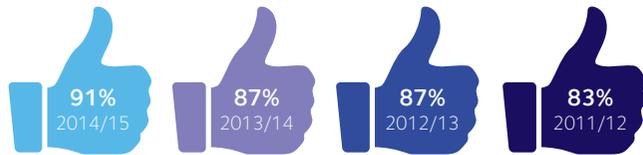


Spending each £1



Customer satisfaction with overall service provided by Wellingborough Homes

Customer satisfaction has improved with the overall service received from Wellingborough Homes. Our performance has improved to 91% in 2014/2015.



Customer service

Target set: We said that 90% of all calls would be answered within our target timescale of three rings.



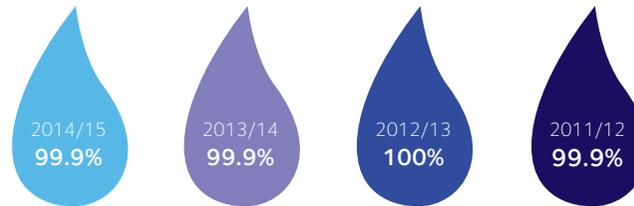
Rent collection

Target set: We said we would collect 100% of the rent due to us. This was slightly down, but we are working hard to minimise the impact of welfare reform changes on our business.



Gas certificate

Target set: We said that 100% of properties would have a valid gas certificate. Three properties failed to allow access so we are taking legal action to ensure we can complete this vital annual check.



Routine repairs

Target set: We said we would complete 95.5% of routine repairs on time. We slightly missed this, completing 94% on time.



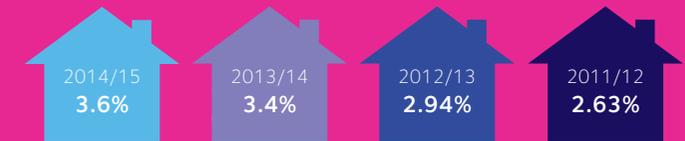
Letting properties

Target set: We said it would take an average of 32.9 days to re-let properties. We missed this target and have already started a voids review to improve our performance.



Current customer rent arrears

In this year the number of customers in arrears rose slightly to 3.6%. There is considerable change to the benefits customers receive, so we are working hard to support you through this.



Emergency repairs

Target set: We said we would complete 96% of emergency repairs on time.

