



Annual Report

2023-2024

Thank you for taking the time to read this Annual Report for the financial year April 2023 to March 2024.



Writing this report each year is a real pleasure and we hope that you find it both informative and useful.

Our primary purpose as the managing agent of customers' homes is to ensure that we provide good quality, safe homes and reliable services that customers can count on every day of the year. These areas are at the heart of Homes in Sedgemoor's new Corporate Strategy for 2023-2026, details of which are provided in this report.

Looking back at our performance during the last year, we have delivered customer satisfaction levels that are among the top for all landlords in England. This year was also the first in which every landlord in England was required to ask their customers the same questions on service satisfaction. Our results for these 'Tenant Satisfaction Measures' were very positive and demonstrate all the good work that is happening. Achieving these results is only possible with an incredible team effort from Homes in Sedgemoor colleagues, our Board who help oversee what we do, our partners and our customers, many of whom have worked with us tirelessly to help shape and improve what we do and how we do it. Our sincere thanks to you all.

The last financial year has seen considerable change for Homes in Sedgemoor. It was our first year working under our new owner, Somerset Council, and we have managed to build a close and productive working relationship. You may recall previous newsletters mentioning how the future of housing delivery might look across Somerset and during the last year we have worked closely together to see how we can

ensure consistency in service delivery and if we can achieve better value for money. In the coming two years we will continue this work, helping Somerset Council review the arrangements for housing services in the county to ensure the best possible outcomes for customers.

Like many councils across England, Somerset Council is facing very tough financial challenges, and we will continue to offer our support in whatever way we can. This promise applies in equal measure to our customers too, whom we know still face the challenges of a cost-of-living crisis. We are always here to help.

Within this Annual Report you will see the considerable amount of money that has been spent improving homes. This work ranges from new roofs to new doors and boilers. We have also made good progress improving the energy efficiency of our homes, which we hope lowers running costs at a time when energy has been so expensive. We are equally proud to have managed the completion of many new homes for customers. These homes have been built across the former Sedgemoor area and have been paid for by Somerset Council. We are very pleased to be managing this service on behalf of Somerset Council and look forward to building even more homes in the future.

As you read this report, we hope that you recognise the successes within it.

Of course, we know that we don't always get it right but when this happens, we are determined to put things right and learn from the experience.

In the last year our engaged customers have been incredible in this area, serving on complaint panels, reviewing services and policies and generally keeping us on the right path. A special thanks to all engaged customers and, in particular, members of the Sedgemoor Tenants Assurance Committee (STAC) who have supported the Board in many

ways over the last year and continually give up their time to help us deliver the services you deserve.

We hope you enjoy this report and thank you again for working with us over the past year.

Peter Hatch
Chief Executive

Paul Stephenson
Chair

Income and Expenditure

The table shows what income we collected and what expenditure we incurred during 2023/24.

The majority of the funding we receive comes from the rent and service charge income customers pay to Somerset Council.

During the year we spent less money than the funding we were given. This has been necessary to enable us to replenish depleted reserves impacted by very high utility costs during the previous two years, whilst also providing resource to invest in future initiatives and help improve the services delivered to our customers.

Income

Management Fee	£10,613,374
Capital Funding for Improvements	£10,416,172
Other Income	£570,697
Interest	£153,146
Total	£21,753,390

Expenditure

Property Repairs and Maintenance	£3,839,680
Capital Funding for Improvements	£10,416,172
Staff Costs	£4,039,413
Service Level Agreements with Council	£1,197,391
Housing Management Costs	£1,702,654
Total	£21,195,311

More expenditure than income £558,079

In autumn last year, we were excited to launch our new Corporate Strategy 2023-2026, which sets out the long-term vision and primary objectives for Homes in Sedgemoor.

This strategy is an evolution of our previous strategy (2020-2023), building on recent successes, yet developed to adapt to opportunities and challenges found within the changing operating environment that we now face.

To achieve this, the strategy is constructed upon five core strategic themes:

- 1 Healthy Homes
- 2 Customer Driven
- 3 Enriching Partnerships
- 4 Thoughtful Enterprise
- 5 Sustainability by Design

To deliver the strategic objectives, delivery plans have been developed that encompass each one of the five core themes and related objectives.

The strategy also reaffirms our core values:

- ✓ We are **Focused**
- ✓ We are **Innovative**
- ✓ We are **Trusted**

Fire Safety	Fire risk assessments completed	Target 100%	Actual 100%	Fire actions completed	Target 100%	Actual 99.6%	Fire system testing	Target 100%	Actual 100%		
	Water Safety	All relevant sites to have a risk assessment		Target 100%	Actual 100%	Legionella actions completed	Target 100%	Actual 100%	Monthly water temperature checks	Target 100%	Actual 99.53%
		Asbestos Safety	Blocks to have a management survey		Target 100%	Actual 100%	Garages to have a management survey		Target 100%	Actual 99.56%	
Electrical Safety	All homes to have an electrical installation condition report (5 yearly)				Target 100%	Actual 99.42%	All blocks to have an electrical installation condition report (5 yearly)				
	Gas Safety	Properties with a current gas safety certificate				Target 100%	Actual 99.89%	Commercial properties with a current gas safety certificate			
Lift Safety		All lifts to have been inspected (6 monthly/annual)				Target 100%	Actual 97.43%				

HEALTHY HOMES



Did you know?

Of the properties we manage, more than 3,000 have asbestos somewhere within the building, including communal areas. We work in partnership with contractor Environtec, which manages a reinspection programme and conducts surveys. Reinspection schedules are set at every 12 months for domestic dwellings and every 5 years for communal areas. If asbestos containing materials are discovered in poor condition, we are informed immediately and work with asbestos removal company Envirocall to correct the issue urgently.

Partnership working leads to successful fire simulation

We worked in partnership with Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service to stage a simulated fire evacuation of Westfield House, Bridgwater, Somerset's highest residential block.

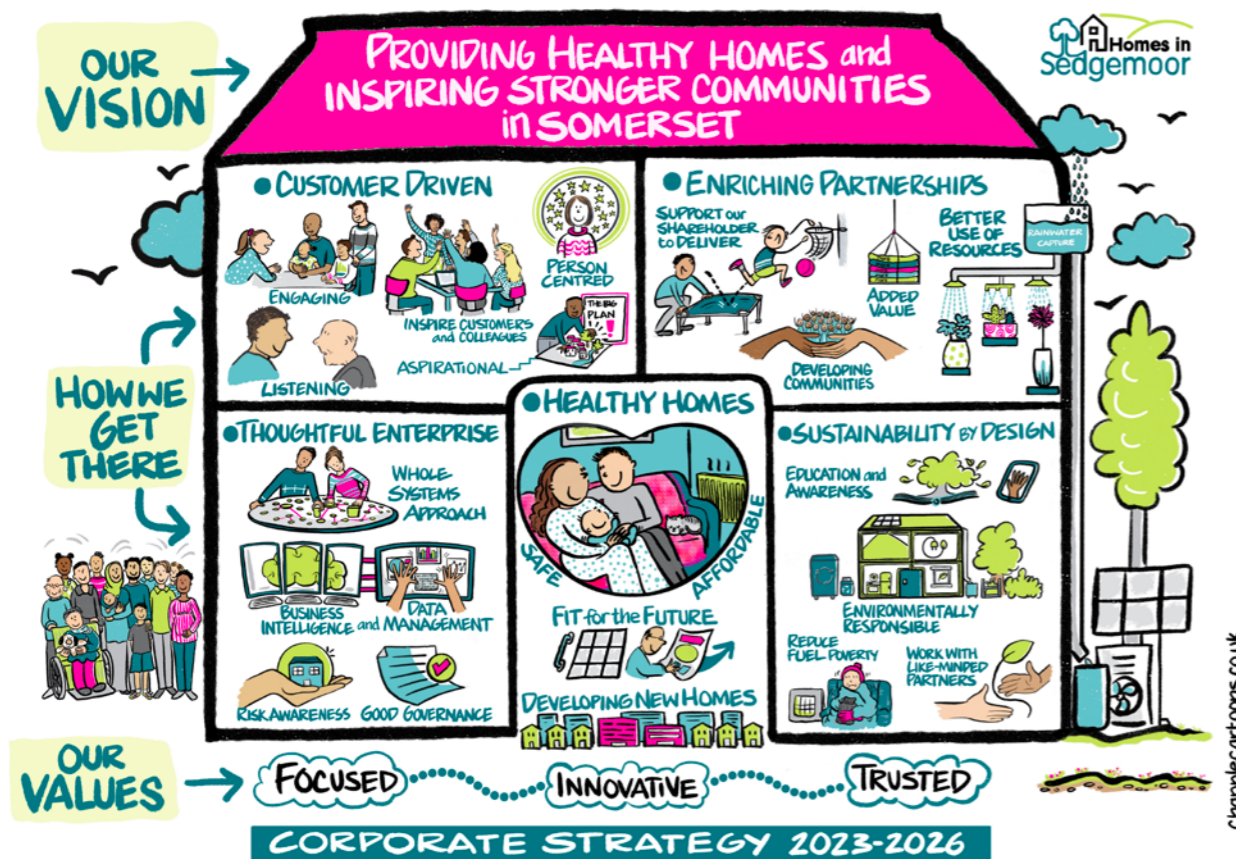
Neil Richards, Fire Safety Team Leader at Homes in Sedgemoor, said:

"This simulation of a real fire situation is an invaluable way for us to check our fire safety arrangements and ensure we have everything in place to keep residents safe in all eventualities. Working with the fire service on such a rigorous drill will make us all better prepared in the event of a fire. Whilst we hope this will never happen, the simulation exercise with the fire service is a great opportunity to ensure that we are delivering the highest standards possible."

Residents were informed in advance of the drill and were an integral part in the success of the simulation, which involved a whole building evacuation.

Peter Hatch, Chief Executive at Homes in Sedgemoor, said:

"Having built up an excellent working relationship with Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service, we were delighted to support this hugely important high rise training exercise. Our customers' safety is our number one priority and we hope that this exercise provides even more reassurance to residents."



Repairs and Maintenance

We always work hard to provide customers with safe, affordable, healthy homes.

We're proud to work closely with customers and partner contractors to carry out responsive repairs safely and efficiently, which is evident in customers' positive feedback of our service.

HEALTHY HOMES



New repairs portal

Committed to being customer driven, we worked in partnership with VerseOne, to launch a new, modernised, user-friendly repairs portal.

Through the repairs portal, customers can book an appointment at a time and date that suits them, track progress and chat to the engineer on the day of their appointment via LOCALZ.

The repairs portal was tested by customers, before going live, to ensure it was efficient and customer centred.

Rik Saunders, Property Services and Investment Manager said: "This system offers customers even more convenience when booking and monitoring repairs, giving them the whole package from start to finish at the click of a button. It really brings repairs reporting into the 21st century."

Repairs log automatically in our system and in our main repairs contractor's system. Some repairs need to be logged manually by Customer Services, but customers will still be able to report them online and where we do not offer repairs for certain jobs (e.g. replacing a toilet seat), there are self-help guides and videos.

The new repairs portal puts more control in the hands of our customers, while allowing better use of our resources.

Customers will still be offered same day appointments by calling our Customer Services Team.

We carried out
4,198
same day repairs
98.2%
of same day repairs were completed on time

We carried out
4,689
routine repairs
98%
of routine repairs were completed on time

We carried out
572
emergency repairs
98.8%
of emergency repairs were completed on time

92.7%
overall customer satisfaction with the responsive repairs service

Working with MD Group

Last year, we spent £2.9m on repairs and maintenance with MD Group.

- Repairs and maintenance (emergency, same day and routine) **£1,177,598**
- Small works (planned) **£796,978**
- Empty homes (standard) **£923,095**



Upgrading Homes

We do everything we can to make sure our customers love where they live, and work hard to complete the planned works programme, which, last year, saw us spend:

£980,170 on roofs

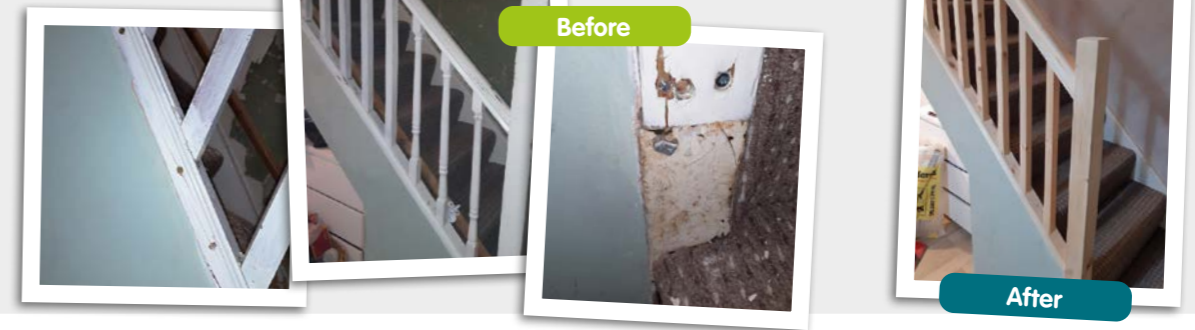
£561,100 on new windows

£420,800 on new doors

£402,300 on new bathrooms and wetrooms

£394,900 on new kitchens

Case Study 1



Case Study 2



Case Study 3



Developing New Homes



We're committed to developing new, safe, affordable homes which are fit for the future and environmentally responsible.

We supported Somerset Council's spend of
£25.6m to develop 125 new homes

£7.75m
of grant money secured from Homes England, Right to Buy and EDF

34 new homes
completed and rented to customers

Our in-house Development Team has had a busy year ensuring the approved and funded new build programme was built within budget and to predicted timescales.

The team also secured additional funding for **15** new rented homes during 2023-24, and construction will get underway later in 2024 at Taunton Road, Bridgwater. The team has also been working on future projects, aiming to secure funding to start construction during 2025-26.

It is anticipated that a further **74** new homes will be completed during the 2024-25 financial year, with a further **15** homes in 2025-26.



New homes completed

We are proud to have completed and let:

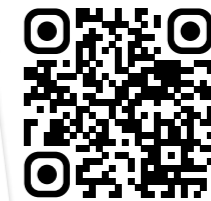


14 new homes

at the Sydenham Garage Project, Bridgwater

10 new homes

at Cricketers Farm, Nether Stowey with another 6 to be let later in 2024



You can find out more information about the latest development news on our website at:

www.homesinsedgemoor.org

Development governance and performance

The housing development service has been the subject of two audit reviews in 2023-24.

The first audit was an internal audit and review of the processes and management in place for the development of new homes. The audit concluded that the service has a sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the

achievement of objectives in the area audited. No improvements were recommended.

The second audit was carried out by Homes England. This audit investigated the governance and management of new build projects into which the government had provided public subsidy. This audit also had a reassuring clear bill of health.

Safe homes to provide refuge

We were pleased to take on the management of 13 (ten in 2023/24 and three in 2024/25) properties to provide safe homes for displaced persons.

Somerset Council was provided with £3.5m from the Government's Local Authority Housing Fund to buy 31 homes to house refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine.

Duncan Harvey, Development Manager at Homes in Sedgemoor, said: "We worked alongside Somerset Council to identify and purchase

properties, which provide sustainable housing for those unable to secure their own accommodation who are here under official resettlement schemes.

"Homes in Sedgemoor is pleased to be managing 13 of the 31 homes identified and purchased by the council."

These homes will be re-let to people on the council's housing waiting list when they later become vacant.

The funding was allocated from the Government's £500m Local Authority Housing Fund.

Sustainability by Design



Passionate about playing our part to reduce fuel poverty, we've introduced Sustainability by Design as one of our core strategic objectives, meaning we are committed to working with like-minded partners to make our customers' homes environmentally friendly and affordable.

We are working hard to ensure all of our properties reach an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C and above by 2030. Last year, we secured funding from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund which allowed us to begin upgrading some of our lower EPC rated homes.

We are proud to have delivered 22 homes in wave 1 (2023/24), we are looking forward to delivering a further 108 homes in wave 2.1 (2024/25 year) and over 200 homes in wave 3 (2025 onwards).

As part of the programme some properties will benefit from having solar PV panels installed on the roof to reduce bills and also provide additional income from feeding unused electricity back to the energy provider. We are also fitting additional insulation and upgrading windows to create warmer homes.

Last year we installed:



43 Solar Panels



123 Heat Pumps

Working towards greener futures

At Homes in Sedgemoor we are proud of our green credentials and work hard to ensure that our impact on the environment is as light as possible.

Our Communications Team held a meeting with our Service Improvement Group looking at our communications and marketing materials, including our newsletters.

The group was passionate about us going paperless for our newsletters. While we all agreed it was important that a print copy of the newsletter is always available, customers were keen to ensure we were being proactive in our commitment to being sustainable, and felt it was time to launch an opt in, opt out paperless service. We will be looking at the best way to implement this over the coming year.

As well as the newsletter, the group also discussed digital offerings, including the launch of a customer e-bulletin, which is hoped to be launched later in 2024.

Where we do use print marketing materials, we work with We Are Resource, which is a "Carbon Balanced Printer" that works in partnership with the World Land Trust and uses FSC sustainable papers, as part of a commitment to being as green as possible.



By using carbon balanced paper between April 2023 and March 2024, Homes in Sedgemoor has balanced, through the World Land Trust, 935kg of carbon dioxide, protecting 179 sq m of critically threatened tropical forest.

Did you know?

We work with partners to ensure new properties have the most sustainable solutions, such as EV charging points and PV panels, efficient insulation, and heating systems.

The Year in Photos

Bigwood and Staples development opening event



A fish and chip event with Westbow House customers



Firefighters at the fire evacuation simulation at Westfield House, Bridgwater



Out and about on one of our Walkabouts in the Hamp area of Bridgwater



winner

The winner of the Communal Garden category in the 2023 Garden Competition



The winner of the Small Garden in the 2023 Garden Competition

winner

The winning Photo Competition entry by customer Paul



winner

The Wednesday Club receives a grant from our Making a Difference fund



The opening event at the Chamberlin Avenue development



Customer Involvement



At Homes in Sedgemoor, we are truly customer driven, and passionate about inspiring customers and listening and acting on their feedback.

We have engaged with customers in a variety of ways to ensure their voices are heard, and we are always looking for new people to become involved to help us shape our services.

We have
25
formally involved
customers

We held
37
involved customer meetings
between April 2023 –
March 2024

16
customers took part in 2
scrutiny events to improve
our services

A total of
£5,000
Making a Difference
funding was granted to
9 community groups

Sedgemoor Tenants Assurance Committee (STAC)

6 meetings held by STAC between April 2023 – March 2024

STAC reports directly to our Board and ensures we are delivering against our agreed service standards and adhering to our policies and procedures.

In this time, STAC has:

- Directed scrutiny of our complaint handling process and grounds maintenance service
- Contributed to our response to consultation on the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards
- Monitored progress of our key strategies including our new Corporate Strategy

- Developed their own performance indicators and reviewed our Key Performance Indicators, compliance and Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) performance
- Ensured our Damp and Mould Policy and Process is robust and embedded
- Instigated a meeting with a key contractor to carry out a deep-dive on performance and service delivery for our customers

- Regularly received feedback on complaints and our responses to ensure we are adopting a lessons learned approach
- Had sight of the Capital Investment Programme to ensure we are completing works as required
- Reviewed key compliance policy documents relating to building safety measures



Service Improvement Panel

The Service Improvement Panel, made up of 10 customers, meets monthly to constructively evaluate the services we provide. Panel members also gather feedback from other customers to identify areas for improvement, ensuring the tenants' voices are being heard.

During the last year this group has shared their feedback on our voids standard, new tenant welcome pack, various policies, and communications and marketing materials.

Service Improvement Panel (continued)

You said ...

- Find new ways to increase engagement with customers
- We should make use of noticeboards and use leaflets
- Members would like to increase their knowledge and understanding of roles and departments within Homes in Sedgemoor

We have ...

- Started holding monthly community drop-in sessions within communities at local pantries
- Created more leaflets which we deliver during estate walks and we update customer noticeboards more frequently
- Ensured different colleagues now meet the panel every month to talk about their role



Making a Difference fund

Our Making a Difference fund helps to develop community groups by offering grants of up to £500 to groups and projects which develop estates and the environment, improve life chances and create communities.

Some of the groups which have benefitted from the funding include:

The Rangers

The leader of the Rangers group said the funding they received is essential in providing opportunities for families in the Hamp area to access various activities that promote personal growth, teamwork, and community engagement. By reducing the financial burden on families, this funding ensures that every child has the chance to participate and enjoy the benefits of being part of the group.

Forget Me Knot Group

One member from the Forget Me Knot Group, a women's group to encourage friendship and reduce isolation, said the funding enabled the group to book more activities for the women to get involved in and increase the group's attendance.

Did you know? ... we have now launched new drop-in sessions in Hamp, Highbridge, Sydenham and Newtown, working in partnership with local food pantries. We've met 23 customers so far since launching the sessions!

Listening to customers at scrutiny events

We held two customer-led scrutiny events last year, where customers discussed our complaints handling and ground maintenance services.

Here are some of the actions we have taken following the complaints handling scrutiny event:

You said ...

- Ensure information is targeted to those who may need additional help to make a complaint or request for service
- Review and publish our Service Standards to provide clarity and transparency about the services we provide
- Promote a positive culture around complaints to build trust and improve relationships

We have ...

- Included more information within customer newsletters about how antisocial behaviour reports are dealt with and how we work with police
- Committed to review and update our Service Standards later in 2024
- Empowered colleagues to log an initial complaint on our system, forming part of our Customers First training

Here are some of the actions we have taken following the grounds maintenance scrutiny event:

You said ...

- Consider how feedback on the standard of ground maintenance is fed back to colleagues
- Cleaning and caretaking should be included in some blocks without any service
- Could the website include a feedback area on Grounds maintenance

We have ...

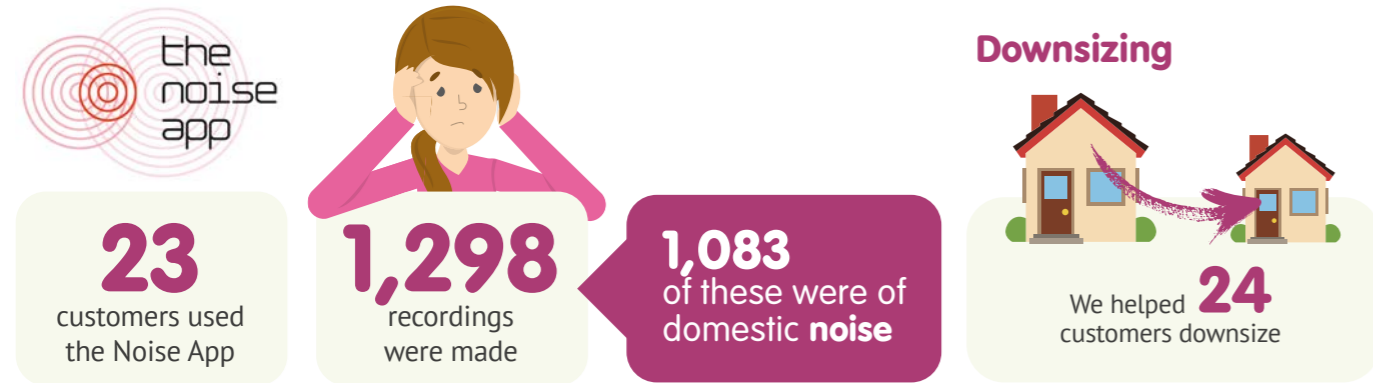
- Created a feedback process in the Patch meetings
- Launched a consultation to look at service needs
- Included a new feedback form on our website

Supporting Customers

CUSTOMER DRIVEN



Our Housing Team works closely with a range of different agencies and charities across the district to make sure customers receive the correct support and continue to love where they live. Through strong partnership working, we are able to better engage, listen and support our customers, ensuring everything we do has the customers' best interests at heart.



Did you know? we supported **17** domestic abuse survivors, offering support where necessary

Antisocial behaviour closure in Bridgwater

An antisocial behaviour (ASB) case was opened for an address in the Newtown area of Bridgwater which included incidents of general ASB and criminal damage. The Housing Officers worked tirelessly with complainants, the police, Somerset Council's Legal Services and Community Safety Team, customers, and residents, gathering and reviewing evidence and providing support and reassurance to the community.

Through our partnership working, and upon the police attending calls including a fence being ripped down and set on fire and an altercation outside the property on Christmas Day resulting in an arrest, the police were able to apply to the court for a three-month ASB Closure Order, which was granted. This also meant we were able to issue a mandatory Notice of Seeking Possession, which is the start of the legal

process to bring a tenancy to an end allowing a property be re-let to another family.

Several residents reached out to express their gratitude on how this case was handled by the Housing Officers, with one resident quoting "my child told me they now feel safe to play on their bike in the street".

We want people to feel safe in their homes and communities and we are lucky to have built such good working relationships with our partner agencies and commend those who came forward to share what they were experiencing. When it comes to ASB it is important that people tell us what is happening so we can support them in resolving the issue.



Independent Living Service

Our Independent Living Service offers person-centred, tailored support packages to support customers living independently for as long as they choose.

The Independent Living Officers are customer driven, confident in recognising individual needs and work with customers to understand how we can best help.



Voicescape



The Independent Living Service (ILS) continues to use Voicescape to provide weekly personalised automated welfare calls to Silver and Bronze package customers. After launching the service, we have worked closely with customers and Voicescape to understand what was working well and what could be improved. Following a few tweaks to the service, customers are enjoying the Voicescape service and the number of non-response alarms are steadily decreasing. By better utilising our services, this service allows the ILS team more availability to help customers more effectively and efficiently.

Working with customers

In spring 2023, our temporary Summer Hub Co-ordinator worked with customers, encouraging them to reconnect with their communities post-Covid.

Regular engagement activities were arranged, including both fun and educational events, such as flower arranging and wellbeing sessions with Age UK.

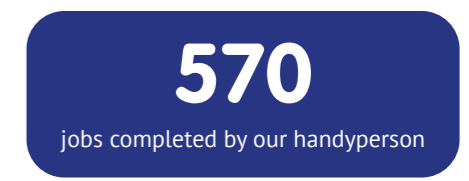
These sessions were popular with customers and helped pave the way for the introduction of weekly customer engagement events now organised by the Independent Living Service Team.

Making use of communal spaces, these events focus on meaningful conversations in a relaxed environment.

The team provides a personal link between customers and the wider organisation, as the service strives to be increasingly proactive in recognising customers' changing needs. It is also an opportunity to recognise our more vulnerable customers and offer them further specialist support either from us or from other appropriate agencies.

Handyperson service

Our Handyperson service helps ILS customers with a variety of jobs, such as installing curtain poles, adjusting heating systems, checking Lifelines and unblocking plugholes. This is a popular services with our customers.



Lettings

Our Housing Team works closely with new and existing customers to ensure the lettings process is smooth and efficient, which is evident in our high satisfaction score.

272 homes
let between 2023/24

All empty homes let in
79.3 days
on average

99.2%
of customers were satisfied with the letting process

74%
of customers were satisfied with the condition of their home

34
new homes into our management

HEALTHY HOMES



Case study

As part of our lettings work, we often support customers to move home. This may be over a period of months or years depending on property availability and the needs of the customer. For one customer, we were working with them on and off for a few years based on their needs and desire to move.

One customer had poor mental health, and some learning disabilities, in addition to experiencing domestic abuse, low level drug involvement, ongoing antisocial behaviour (ASB), and was in rent arrears. This customer was also vulnerable to adverse outside influences and their vulnerability meant their behaviour impacted negatively on other residents living nearby.

Working with a domestic abuse charity, a successful referral was made for support, and we worked closely with the charity, as key co-ordinator, and the customer.

We felt a different property would be better suited to the customer, one with their own front door, in a different town, where their vulnerabilities were less likely to be exploited.

Working closely with a colleague in a different area, we were able to identify a tenant that needed to move whose property would suit our customer.

The next step was to identify a property for the other tenant to free up their property.

The tenant was in a small one-bed property where the layout constrained their ability to get about due to the use of mobility aids.

While working on another case, we identified a suitable property that gave the opportunity for the tenant to be rehoused. The home provided the ability to park their car close,

had larger rooms to support their mobility and was equipped with adaptations and a wet room.

These moves resulted in a one-bed general needs home being freed up, which is the current highest demanded property on Homefinder Somerset.

In another area, another customer was experiencing severe damp and mould issues. There was little that could be done due to the construction and age of the property. We were also funding the use of a de-humidifier. The customer was doing everything they could to manage the issues but had a small child and was expecting another child.

We worked with the customer to move into a 2-bed first floor flat that worked for them.

In supporting these customers to move, we:

- Reduced risks to tenants
- Helped prevent long-term ASB issues
- Supported a safe move away from a domestic abuse perpetrator
- Reduced financial difficulties for tenant
- Provided a safe environment for a young family

In turn, we:

- Reduced officers' hours spent reacting to ASB
- Reduced the financial cost of the de-humidifier
- Reduced costs to Discretionary Housing Benefit budget as no longer under occupancy
- Increased time for officers to spend on working with other tenants
- Cleared a property (specialist officer)

Income and Rent Collection

HEALTHY HOMES



We collect your rent and pay it to Somerset Council. The council then gives us some of your rent back as a Management Fee so we can look after your homes, carry out repairs and do work in your neighbourhood. Last year, your rent was charged over 50 weeks.

Average Weekly Rents

Bedrooms	Affordable Rent	Social rent	Total
Bedsit	N/A	£68.19	£68.19
1	£100.68	£82.48	£83.11
2	£134.47	£90.75	£93.54
3	£160.84	£100.94	£102.44
4	£210.86	£110.08	£116.91
5	N/A	£114.51	£114.51
6	£214.80	N/A	£214.80
Total	£134.10	£91.35	£92.97

Income

99.18%
of rent charged in 2023/2024 successfully collected

0.79%
current tenant rent arrears for 2023/2024

4
tenants evicted for rent arrears

£7,182
reduction in former tenant arrears

Welfare and benefits

We made **27**
employment, benefit and welfare referrals to support partners

We supported **231**
customers with new Universal Credit claims

£10,330
of Discretionary Housing Payments awarded in total

We have issued **286**
Foodbank vouchers

Case study

We know that sometimes circumstances can change, and we are here to support customers if they need help financially.

A customer came to us struggling to pay their rent and essential household bills after unexpectedly falling ill left them unable to work. The customer was also suffering from anxiety and worried they would lose their home, after going into rent arrears for the first time.

After speaking with their Income Officer, we advised that they claimed Universal Credit and supported them through the process to ensure their rent would be covered.

Their Income Officer also reassured them that, through engaging with us, no action would be taken against their home and that we were here to support them. An arrangement was made for their rent to be paid directly to the council from the new Universal Credit claim and an affordable direct debit was set up to cover the arrears that had built up.

The customer was also sent a Foodbank voucher to help feed the family until the Universal Credit payments were made, and they also received support from our Winter Welfare Fund for essential household bills.

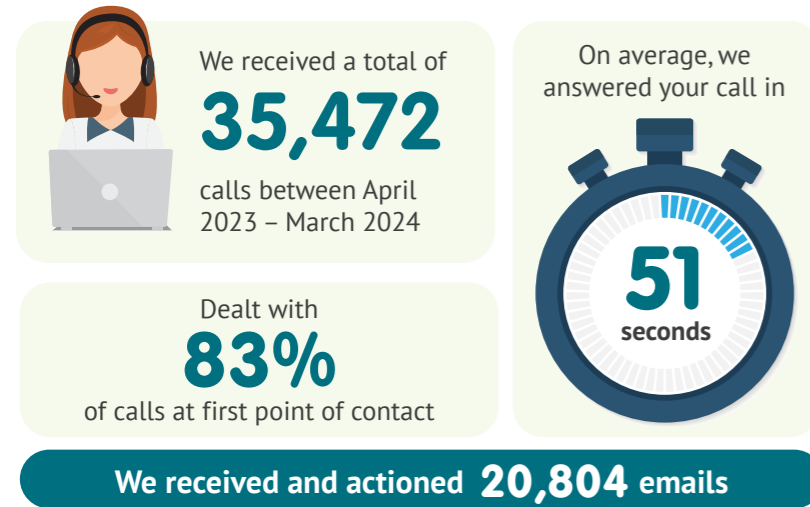
The customer was so grateful for all the support we were able to offer, and, although they have not been able to return to work yet, their arrears are now clear and all essential expenditure is covered in full each month.

Did you know? ... during the winter of 2023/24, 19 tenants received grants to the value of £6,534 to help over the winter after experiencing short term financial crisis.

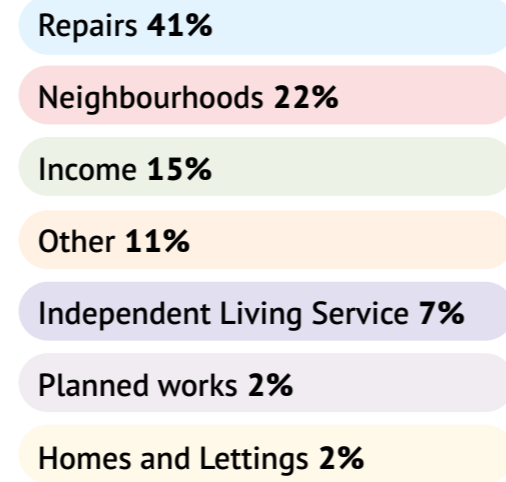
Customer Services and Feedback

Our dedicated Customer Services Team is committed to providing an excellent service to our customers, via our contact centre, email, social media or our reception service.

Last year...



What you called us about



Tenant Satisfaction Measures results

We're constantly monitoring ourselves as it's important to check how we're doing against specific targets including the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) which were set by the Regulator of Social Housing in April 2023.

The Tenant Satisfaction Measures assess how well social housing landlords, including ALMOs like Homes in Sedgemoor, in England are doing at providing good quality homes and services.

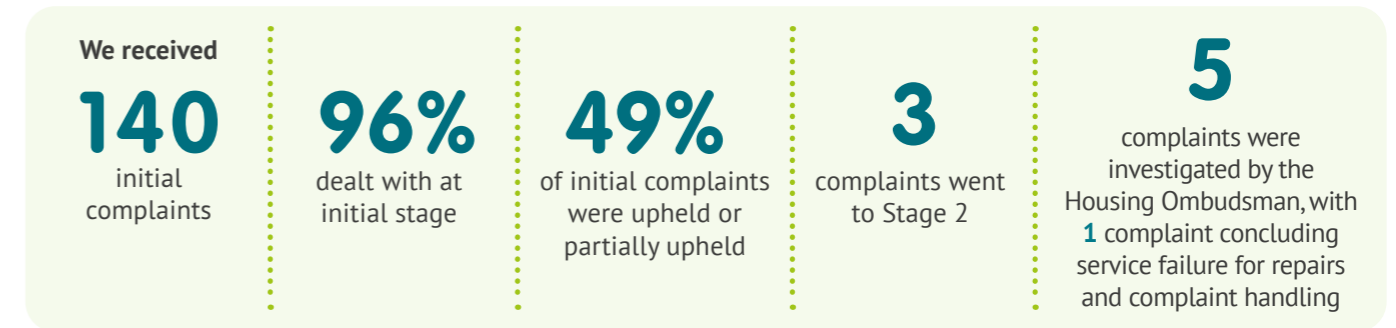
We aim to complete 100 surveys every month, and these results are bench-marked against other housing providers. We are pleased to report that we were in the upper quartile for the majority of the measures

TP01: Overall satisfaction	82%
TP02: Satisfaction with repairs	83%
TP03: Satisfaction with the time taken to complete repair	84%
TP04: Satisfaction that the home is well maintained	84%
TP05: Satisfaction that the home is safe	87%
TP06: Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	74%
TP07: Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed	85%
TP08: Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	87%
TP09: Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints	40%
TP10: Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	74%
TP11: Landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood	79%
TP12: Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling ASB	71%

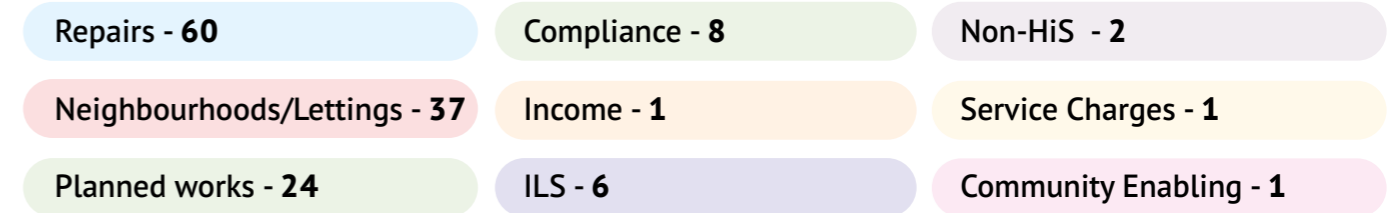


Complaints

During the last year we dealt with a total of 140 initial complaints through our complaints process, with 68 being upheld or partially upheld – 49%. The main service areas where complaints have been upheld include delays with repairs or planned works within customers' homes, and poor communication from us or our contractors.



What the complaints were about



Lessons learned

We regularly monitor all complaints, and customer feedback received.

Our Complaints and Customer Feedback Policy has been reviewed and updated, with some minor changes being made to adhere to the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

We often experience issues with making further contact with customers when they have logged an issue, due to customers not responding and can leave the problem unresolved. This is something that we aim to improve, so we are confident that nothing is being left unaddressed. We therefore now have a dedicated Customer Focus Assistant whose primary role is to follow up on all customer feedback and ensure that any problems are identified and addressed.

Poor communication from colleagues and contractors remains a key theme for complaints. Our Customer Led Scrutiny on complaints in October 2023 has implemented actions from this to improve our approach to complaints handling, and we hold regular meetings with our key contractors.

All Homes in Sedgemoor colleagues and contractors undertake regular Customers First refresher sessions to ensure that we continue to embed a customer focused approach. We do not currently carry out any transactional surveys for complaint handling but aim to re-introduce this over the coming year, so that we can compare perception against actual service delivery and identify any areas for service improvement.


We realise that the majority of customers want to have a quick resolution to their complaint or issue, so we enable all colleagues to resolve at the first point of contact wherever possible.



 HomesinSedgemoor  @HomesSedgemoor

 customer.services@homesinsedgemoor.org

 www.homesinsedgemoor.org  0800 585 360 / 01278 552400

 Homes in Sedgemoor, Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater TA6 3AR

