



LODDON
HOMES

Annual Report to residents

75%

of our residents say
we are a “great” or
“good” landlord



2022/3 A modern social housing landlord
you can trust

Stay in touch on our social channels

 @LoddonHomesLtd

 @LoddonHomesLtd

 @LoddonHomes

Loddon Homes is a Registered Provider of
affordable homes across Wokingham Borough.

A Wholly Owned Company of



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Welcome to our

Annual Report to Residents

2023

This report provides essential information for you, our residents, on our performance for the financial year 2022/23. We also want to let you know what we are doing in 2024 to address the issues that matter to you.

The current economic climate and national focus on housing has impacted both households and their landlords. This report highlights our commitment to creating thriving communities, by delivering good quality, sustainable housing to the residents who make them their homes.

We also remain committed to providing safe and supportive accommodation for residents with more specialist housing needs, working closely with Wokingham Borough Council and our partner care providers.

One of the best ways we can improve our services is through resident engagement and interaction. We want to encourage and increase resident involvement and will be creating more opportunities for our residents to become involved in what we do over the coming year. We see the sharing of information about your home and the area where you live as an essential part of our commitment to residents, and our Annual Report forms a vital part of this commitment.

We were delighted to be able to bring back our Community Fun Days in 2023 and will be hosting more in 2024, providing a unique opportunity to meet our residents face to face.

Please follow us on social media to find out more. If you would like more information about Loddon Homes’ performance, or want to ask us a question, please feel free to contact us at hello@loddonhomes.co.uk or visit our website loddonhomes.co.uk.

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Meet the Team

Any of the Loddon Homes team can be contacted at hello@loddonhomes.co.uk

Message from the Chair



2022/23 was my first year as Chair of the Loddon Homes Board. During this time, I saw the organisation restore many services and functions that had been impacted or ceased entirely because of the pandemic. Loddon Homes then reacted again as both our customers and the organisation were faced with a cost-of-living crisis. Our residents' needs are considered on all occasions: service charges aren't set without first assessing the impact, maintenance and servicing contracts aren't renewed without first ensuring that value for money is being achieved, and safety and compliance are not compromised at any cost. Whilst we may not get it 100% right 100% of the time, I can attest to the continued commitment of the Loddon Homes team to delivering good quality housing for a cross section of the Borough's community.

Whilst this report outlines details of the management services provided in financial year 2022/23, it is during the subsequent 12 months where every effort has been made to reinvest in our housing, identify and address long term resident issues, and improve service contract arrangements, as well as getting back out into our communities so that we can really get to know our customers.

I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved and would like to particularly thank members of the Board, the dedicated staff team, colleagues at Wokingham Borough Council, and our partner care providers and contractors who have worked diligently together to not only maintain the excellence achieved in our management information, but to also make improvements where it was clear that change needed to happen.

Councillor Stephen Conway
Chair, Loddon Homes



Simon Dale
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Simon is the boss! He has many years' experience in housing which he puts to good use directing our business strategy and growth, making sure that Loddon Homes is a well-run organisation. Simon is a keen golfer and amateur actor.



Karen Howick
HEAD OF OPERATIONS

Karen is the problem solver of the team, making sure that our operations run smoothly and effectively. She's worked for Loddon Homes the longest, so knows our stock inside out. Karen loves fitness and the cinema.



Tracy Garner
SERVICE IMPROVEMENT OFFICER

Tracy wants to get things right for our residents! Her focus is on improving the customer experience, giving our residents a voice so they are heard. She also makes sure we meet our regulatory commitments. Tracy has a pet pooch named Lazlo who keeps her company on long walks.



Amy Griffiths
SERVICE & COMPLIANCE OFFICER

Amy makes sure we are a good landlord! Her day to day includes ensuring we meet all legal responsibilities so our properties are safe for residents, and the information we present is accurate and thorough. Amy can often be found swimming outdoors even in the coldest months of the year.



Camille Dell
BUSINESS SUPPORT ASSISTANT

Camille is the newest member of the team, and fills the gaps whenever we need help. She's currently working to make sure all our repairs are satisfactory, as well as ensuring that our Board meetings run smoothly. Outside of work Camille loves photography, reading and musicals.



Michele Johnson
WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH
COUNCIL'S
DEDICATED HOUSING
OFFICER FOR LODDON
HOMES RESIDENTS

Michele is our residents' go-to person for every day questions and queries about their tenancy or rent. As well as looking after our residents, she is also our eyes and ears out and about in our communities, making sure the grounds and communal areas are as they should be, and is always happy to drop in to see any resident who needs her assistance. Outside work, Michele loves walking with her dog, Lexi, and volunteers at her local Youth Club.

Michele can be contacted at
loddonhomes@wokingham.gov.uk
or on **07562 169 337**

Support for those in financial hardship

The ongoing cost of living crisis means many people continue to experience, or are facing for the first time, financial hardship. Whatever your circumstances, if you are struggling with your household bills, support is available if you need it.

Wokingham Borough Council has a dedicated **Cost of Living Help Hub** which can be accessed on its website:

wokingham.gov.uk/cost-of-living

Visit the UK government's website for information about cost of living payments:

gov.uk/guidance/cost-of-living-payment

For help with local food banks, visit the Wokingham Borough Food Map:

wokingham.gov.uk/cost-of-living/help-essentials/help-food

Find out about the UK government's Warm Home Scheme:

gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme

There are many more services, and these can also be found on our website. We also regularly post information about support services on our social media channels:

 **@LoddonHomesLtd**

 **@LoddonHomesLtd**

 **@LoddonHomes**

loddonhomes.co.uk

You can also talk to us if you are struggling: **hello@loddonhomes.co.uk**

If you need any help with money problems or are struggling to pay your rent or other bills, contact your housing officer, **Michele Johnson** either by phone on **07562 169337** or by email at **loddonhomes@wokingham.gov.uk**



The year in figures



Performance data



*whilst all grounds maintenance and communal cleaning visits were completed, it was recognised that the service needed to be improved. Please see page 10 for more on this.

178 There were a total of 178 fire risk recommendations made throughout the year as a result of our Fire Risk Assessments. There were no substantial fire risks found, 2 moderate risks and 176 low risks, with just 3 low risk recommendations outstanding at the end of the year. Most of the fire risk recommendations were identified in the additional supported living properties that we bought on the open market or refurbished properties which have all needed alterations to bring them up to fire standards.





Where we have made improvements



Grounds maintenance Whilst we met **100%** of our target grounds maintenance visits, a review of the service and listening to residents' opinions told us that in some locations, it was not keeping up with the needs of the landscaping. In light of this, we put in place a personalised approach to make sure that grounds maintenance now meets the needs of each individual site.

Communal cleaning We're pleased to report that we met **100%** of our target communal area cleans. However, thanks to resident feedback and our regular site visits we found that in some places, the standard was not quite what would expect so we have been working closely with our cleaning contractor and we're pleased to report that there has been a general increase in the quality of the cleaning.

Get social with us!

Social media – stay up to date with our news and local borough news. It's often the fastest way to find out information about things that might affect you, your home or the area you live in!

 @LoddonHomesLtd

 @LoddonHomesLtd

 @LoddonHomes

Where we are working to make improvements:

Repairs and maintenance

71% satisfaction with repairs against a target of 95% As a landlord **Loddon Homes** has high expectations when it comes to our residents' satisfaction with repairs, so a 71% satisfaction score is disappointing for ourselves and for our residents. In light of this score, we are working in partnership with Wokingham and Reading Borough Councils to find out why residents may be dissatisfied with the service that is being provided. We will also be working more closely with our residents over the coming months to gather views on the repairs service.

Resident engagement

Whilst Loddon Homes provides the house, it's our residents who create a home. That's why your thoughts and opinions are so important; you play a key role in helping us to build on the things that we do well, and develop the areas where we can do better.

We believe that by involving you in decisions that affect your homes and neighbourhoods, we can make sure we are delivering services that meet your needs.

There are a range of opportunities for you to give feedback, scrutinise our performance, challenge our decisions, and share ideas to help influence and improve services for everyone. **We are currently recruiting a new RESIDENT BOARD MEMBER**, details of which can be found in the attached leaflet. If you have any questions or would like more information about this role, or for more information on becoming an involved resident, contact us directly at hello@loddonhomes.co.uk



Nursery Gardens



Michele Johnson
WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH
COUNCIL'S
DEDICATED
HOUSING
OFFICER FOR
LODDON HOMES
RESIDENTS

Your Housing Officer, **Michele Johnson**, is out and about in our communities every Wednesday, it's the the perfect opportunity for you to talk to her face to face with any concerns you may have. If you would like to schedule an appointment with Michele, please contact her either by phone on **07562 169337** or by email at **loddonhomes@wokingham.gov.uk**

Supported living

Over 50% of our properties offer specialist supported living, through a diverse mix of housing, including accommodation for older people, adults with physical and learning disabilities, young people leaving care, people leaving hospital settings, people with a history of rough sleeping, and adults with mental health conditions.

This is all made possible through the relationships we have with our care providers, our residents and their support networks. Specialist supported housing is a core part of our business and ensures the continued provision of housing for vulnerable people within the Borough.



Fosters Independent
Living Scheme

Social Housing Regulation Act

The UK government's **Social Housing Regulation Act** is set to increase social housing tenants' rights to better and safer homes and enhance their ability to hold social landlords to account.



The Act received royal assent on 20 July 2023, so it is now law, but many provisions need regulations before they can come into force. These are expected to be published in 2024. In order to empower social housing tenants to hold their landlords to account, a new government funded training scheme is available, providing **free training events for residents**, webinars, videos, and guidance for social housing residents. You can find out more here: fourmillionhomes.org



Complaints handling process



Our procedure for dealing with complaints, which was updated in 2021, has two stages, each allowing complainants to take the matter further if they are unhappy with the outcome. Complainants also now have the right to involve the Housing Ombudsman at any stage of the complaints process.

The Housing Ombudsman expects landlords to carry out regular self-assessment of their complaints process and to take appropriate action to ensure their complaint handling is in line with the Code. We will be reviewing our process in the coming months as a result of further guidance from the Housing Ombudsman.. Landlords are also expected to report the outcome of their self-assessment to their Board members and to make the assessment available to the public. You can read our most recent self-assessment on our website.

Please go to loddonhomes.co.uk and click on the About Us tab.

Southlake Crescent



Norton Road



Our future plans

Lifetime tenancies

Some of our residents have told us they feel that having a fixed term tenancy does not give them the security they would like in their home, and that it's hard to feel settled knowing they will have to renew their tenancy in a few years' time.

We think everyone should feel secure and settled in their home without having to worry about whether their tenancy will come to an end every five years. During 2024 we will be consulting with our tenants on this with a view to transition all fixed tenancies to assured periodic (also known as 'lifetime') tenancies. Look out for your invitation to take part in the consultation which will be coming to you soon.

Rent increases

You will have received a letter earlier in the year letting you know about your increased rent for the coming year from 1 April 2024.

In line with Government guidance, we are increasing rents for our social and affordable rented homes by **7.7%** and for our shared owners by **9.4%**. Like most other housing associations, we've decided to do this so that we can spend more on our existing homes, services and communities, as well as invest in more much-needed homes.

We understand that times are tough for many people. If you think you will struggle with your new rent, please don't suffer in silence – get in touch and we'll do whatever we can to help, from signposting you to organisations who can help, to giving you advice on a range of benefits, debt and money management, and energy-saving advice. **Contact us at hello@loddonhomes.co.uk or your housing officer, Michele Johnson, at loddonhomes@wokingham.gov.uk or by phone on 07562 169337. We're here to help.**

How to report repairs

Email housingrepairs@wokingham.gov.uk

(monitored 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday)



WBC Facebook page

(monitored 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday)

For **non-heating repairs**, contact the repairs helpdesk on:

0800 515 287

(monitored 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday)

For **heating-related repairs**, call the heating repairs helpdesk on:

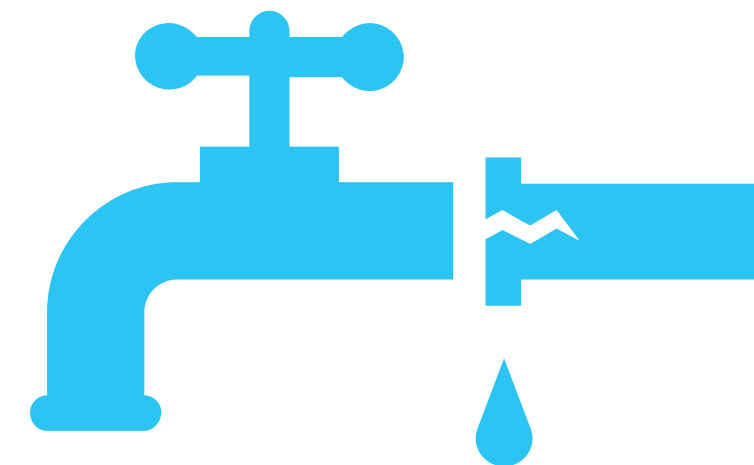
0800 389 8789

(monitored 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday)

For the **emergency repairs helpdesk** please call:

0800 515 287

(Outside office hours, weekends and bank holidays)



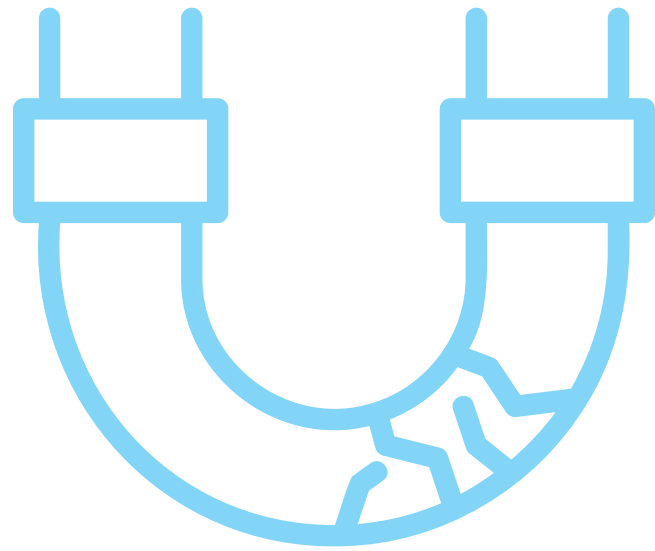
Reporting disrepair

If you are not happy with a repair or are still waiting for one, please report this online, or by sending us an email or giving us a call:

loddonhomes.co.uk/report-a-repair

hello@loddonhomes.co.uk

0118 9088479



Bin it – don't block it!

Please think about what you throw down your loo, one of the most common repairs and maintenance jobs we attend to is to unblock your drains, we are sure you would agree there are much better ways to spend our money. You can download a quick guide to keeping your drains clear on our website. www.loddonhomes.co.uk



Damp & mould

You can find tips to avoid condensation, damp, and mould in your home on our website. If you have any issues, then please get in touch so we can help. hello@loddonhomes.co.uk



Fire evacuations

Do you know your fire evacuation procedure? Is your property 'stay put' or 'evacuation'? If in doubt, please get in touch. Call **0118 9746000** and ask for **Housing Repairs**.

Compliments from our residents

"I am very happy in my flat and with my surroundings. It's a great place to live."

HENNERTON HOUSE

*"Very grateful to have a property with **Loddon**, [my housing officer] Michele has been amazing and very helpful throughout."*

"This is my first time living in a facility like this, I love it and wish I had done it sooner."

FOSTERS EXTRA CARE SUPPORTED SCHEME

*"I love it at **Loddon Homes**, thank you."*

FOSTERS EXTRA CARE SUPPORTED SCHEME

"Always very helpful. Quick answers to questions; can't fault Loddon homes."

"[my flat is] one of the best I have had for the past four years I've been homeless."

YOUNG PERSONS' SUPPORTED SCHEME



Loddon Homes Ltd
Civic Offices
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1WN

Loddon Homes is a Registered Provider of
affordable homes across Wokingham Borough.

e hello@loddonhomes.co.uk

T 0118 908 8479

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Loddon Homes is registered with the Regulator of Social Housing (Reg No 4827).

loddonhomes.co.uk

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**Wokingham Borough Council
as Management Agent**

Annual report results reported in line
with Key Performance Indicator targets
as set by the Loddon Homes Board as
per legislative requirements and desired
performance expectations.