

# wandle

## Residents' Annual Report

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2021-22

*Providing homes to be proud  
of and services you can trust*



# Welcome

## Resident's Charter



### We set out our commitments to you.

We want to make sure you get the best experience as a Wandle resident, and we are dedicated to providing excellent services which are shaped by you.

We promise to:

- Communicate clearly and effectively
- Get things right first time and resolve problems quickly and efficiently
- Treat you and your home with respect
- Use what we learn to improve

## Supporting Customers

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, we committed to making welfare calls to all of our 1723 identified vulnerable residents.

We decided to target three main groups – those with vulnerabilities, single parents, and lone occupants. The project highlighted our residents' need for emotional support, as well as help with accessing food.

During the first lockdown, we found that customers were asking for support with access to food and medication.

However, as the pandemic continued, there was a noticeable increase in need for emotional and wellbeing support.

By doing this we were able to spot gaps in our service delivery, as well as improving our ways of working to provide tailored support to customers.



# Going the extra mile

## Helping Hand Fund

The Helping Hand Fund is an initiative that aims to support residents by providing vouchers for food and basic household items such as furniture, white goods, carpets and even technology as internet access is essential for claiming benefits and other online services.

Wandle's Helping Hand Fund has provided 335 people with over £195,000 worth of essentials in response to the financial strain many of our customers were experiencing because of Covid.

Mrs V\* is an elderly resident who lives in Wandsworth. Due to multiple health issues, she had been shielding alone since March 2020. Unfortunately, most of the activities she enjoyed before the pandemic were paused or moved online.

To make matters worse, she unfortunately lost several family members during lockdown, including her eldest daughter, three sisters and a very close friend. Battling grief whilst in isolation was starting to seriously impact her wellbeing and mental health.

She applied to our Helping Hand Fund for some Argos vouchers to purchase an iPad so she could keep in touch with her friends and family, alleviating her loneliness, depression and disconnection from wider society.

She said: "Thank you for the Argos e-gift vouchers, I am really grateful for the grant and once again I thank you."

The Helping Hand Fund is available to Wandle residents who are struggling financially. We can provide vouchers for food and other household items from supermarkets, furniture, carpets, washing machines and technology.



**Applications for the Helping Hand Fund will open in Spring 2022.**

# Performance at a glance



## Number of homes owned and managed:

### Homes for rent, shared ownership, and outright sale

	2020/19	2020/21
General needs	5,776	5,692
Supported housing	151	173
Intermediate rent and keyworker	58	69
Shared ownership	796	796
Leased units	509	513
Market rented	4	4
Other	36	36
<b>Total units owned and managed</b>	<b>7,330</b>	<b>7,283</b>
Equity loan products	60	55
<b>Total units</b>	<b>7,390</b>	<b>7,338</b>
Number of units managed by a third party	228	222
Number of units managed by a third party	–	4

# Property compliance



Keeping our customers safe continues to be our number one priority and our performance across property compliance shows that we have been successful in this area.

Compliance area	Performance
Gas safety	100%
Fire risk assessment compliance	100%
Asbestos audits	0 overdue
Water risk assessments	100% completed
Electrical testing	95.49%
Passenger lifts	100%
Automatic gates	100%
Waste water pumps	100%

# How we spent your £\*

We strive to achieve Value for Money (VfM) so that we can do more for our customers, in terms of service and new homes. How we measure value for money has been updated to reflect the impact of Covid-19. The data below shows our social housing cost per unit targets. More information is available in our latest Strategic Report and Financial Statements.

Category	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 Projected	2022/23 Projected	2023/24 Projected	National			Peer Group
							Lower	Median	Upper	Median
Headline social housing cost per unit	£4,805	£4,195	£4,765	£5,128	£5,186	£4,896	£3,340	£3,830	£4,860	£6,041

## Wandle Turnover



## Overall Surplus



## Operating Margin (Social Housing)



\* For a fuller breakdown of these figures please see the Wandle Strategic Statutory Review, available on our website.

# Responsive Repairs



The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns meant that our regular repairs service was put on hold. The service did bounce back, with the service being outsourced to support clearing the repairs backlog. In addition, calls to our contact centre remain high and increased by an average of 50 calls a day since January 2021.

# Customer Satisfaction



Following the publication of the Charter for Social Housing Residents in November 2021, a new system was developed and implemented to allow us to ask our residents for their views on a more regular basis. Our first *'Tell us how we are doing'* surveys were sent out to residents in March 2021 and asked questions related to the draft resident satisfaction measures listed in the Charter.

60 residents responded to our first survey in March and since then we have received on average 75 responses each month.

The feedback has shown that we have a long way to go to improve our services and deliver on the promises of our Target Operating Model and how important it is to keep all our residents up to date on what we are doing to deliver this model.

We have carried out a review of our service charge processes and implemented a new finance system to help support the improvement of this process in the future. In addition, we consulted with residents and implemented a new complaints policy in line with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, resulting in significant reductions in our complaint response time.

In particular we have heard from our leaseholders and shared owners that we need to do more. Our Leasehold and Asset Management teams are closely monitoring the latest government developments and will be working to ensure that we provide timely and relevant communication to you.

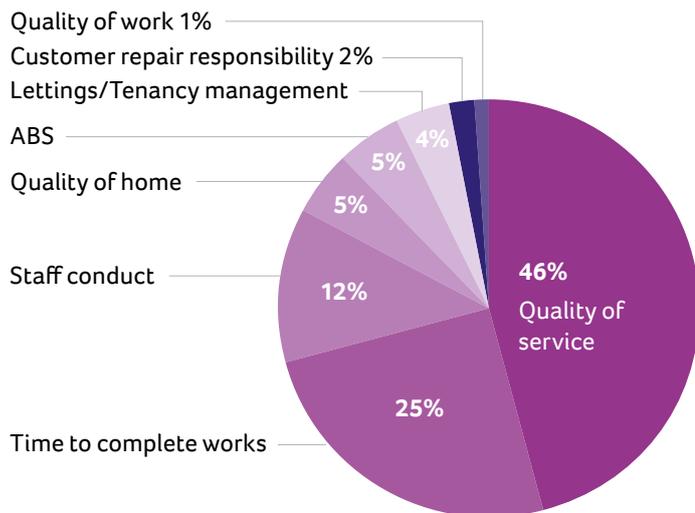
Your feedback so far has highlighted that you want to see Wandle engaging more with residents and doing more in the local community. Our newly formed customer empowerment team have already begun working on the formation of our customer excellence panel who will help us to develop our own Together with Tenants Charter, which will guide how we engage with our residents in the future. We don't want to assume we know what you want us to do more of so we will work with the customer excellence panel to find out what residents really want in their communities.

# Complaints

Between April 2020 and March 2021, we received 943 new complaints from our customers.

88% of complaints were resolved at stage 1 of our complaint process,

11% were responded to at stage 2, the final stage of our complaint process.



The Covid pandemic and lockdowns earlier in the year presented a number of challenges but also gave us an opportunity to work through older, more complex complaints. This meant that in the first half of the year (from April to September) it took us an average of 20 days to respond to a stage 1 complaint and 74 days to respond to a stage 2 complaint. This was outside of our standard timescales for response however once we had worked through these older cases, we were better able to manage new complaints and in the second half of the year (from October to March) response times were back under our policy timescales with stage 1 complaints responded to within 11 days and stage 2 complaints responded to within 20 days. (Policy timescales are 14 calendar days for a stage 1 complaint, 28 days for a stage 2 complaint).

## Learning from our complaints

- In December 2020 we adopted a new complaints policy that focussed on providing prompt responses and resolutions to customers whenever possible. This followed feedback from residents and the Housing Ombudsman about the time taken to put things right for our customers after a complaint was made.
- With our repairs team receiving 37% of our complaints, we decided to recruit a quality and compliance officer to the repairs team. This role ensures that complaints regarding repairs are responded to quickly and fairly.
- With some customers stating that it was difficult to know how to make a complaint or find out how to ask for a review of their complaint, we updated the complaint information on our website to make it easier to understand. We also now provide clear advice about how to access the Housing Ombudsman Service for independent advice too.
- Complaints about how we communicate our service charges have helped to develop our new finance systems with a new approach to this taken in 2021.

## Membership of the Housing Ombudsman Service

Wandle are members of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme and are working hard to ensure that we respond to complaints in line with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

Each year we will complete a self-assessment against the Code and you can find the most recent version of this on our website at [www.wandle.com/complaints](http://www.wandle.com/complaints); you can also find more information on how to access the Housing Ombudsman Service from this page.

Last year the Housing Ombudsman investigated six complaints from Wandle residents. Their findings showed us that we needed to be better at responding to our complaints quicker, ensuring that when things go wrong we communicate regularly with those affected and ensuring that we meet the timescales set out in our repairs policy. Following the findings of the Service, we have revised our complaint policy and provided training to complaint handlers across Wandle on the importance of communication. Our repairs policy is currently under review with a number of residents already having given their feedback on the new proposals.

# Domestic abuse taskforce



**DOMESTIC ABUSE**

#YouAreNotAlone

Wandle is a founding member of Homes for Cathy, like many other members, was set up in response to concerns about rising levels of homelessness. Over 50 years on, the aim hasn't changed and we are working to try and end homelessness by providing safe and affordable homes in South London.

Under our long-term strategic plan, we began a project in 2019 to overhaul our approach to domestic abuse. Our aim is to achieve accreditation from the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA), an organisation which is driving a step-change in tackling domestic abuse across the social housing sector.

One of the key changes we have made at Wandle is to acknowledge that anyone can be a victim or

perpetrator of abuse. Given that potentially one in three of our female tenants will endure domestic abuse in their lifetime, we are committed to meeting the needs of our vulnerable tenants.

We can do this in numerous ways, including transferring someone to a property away from their abuser or putting extra security in place to keep them safe in their home. Even just sign-posting to other support services can be a vital first step.

## Resident focus

*TW: The article below may be distressing to some readers.*

A Wandle resident, a single mother with two young children moved into one of our properties in 2017 after previously experiencing domestic abuse. Her former partner was serving time in prison and held a non-molestation order that stopped him from contacting her and the children.

Unfortunately, in March 2020 at the start of the pandemic, the perpetrator was released from prison and managed to track down where his family lived and turned up unannounced demanding to see the children.

Due to being frightened and the non-molestation order, she refused him entry, and he quickly turned violent. The police were called, but by the time they had arrived he had run away from the house. However, he was watching the property and returned to inflict more harm on his family once the Police had left.



To further protect our resident, the Police placed an alarm in the property and encouraged her to speak with her neighbourhood officer who could support her to feel safe in her home.

Our neighbourhood office team worked closely with the Police and Victim Support to complete a DASH risk assessment form, that identified our resident was at high risk. They successfully organised additional security to the property, including a security bar to the door and frame and stronger window locks. The resident felt safer but requested to be moved to a new property as soon as possible.

The voids team found an empty two-bedroom property that was available, and as a team they ensured the necessary repairs were completed as a matter of urgency. We supported our resident as she moved to a safer property at 3am in the morning.

