



Housing Annual Report 2024





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Introduction From Cllr Gambles, Portfolio Holder for Housing



Thank you for your support and involvement over the last 12 months, especially to the tenants that have designed this annual report (April 2023 to March 2024), which includes information that many of you told us was important. This last year we have faced a number of changes within the housing sector such as new regulatory and building standards. Although at times challenging, it is providing opportunities over the next twelve months to improve housing services. You can read more about these plans within this report.

Our work with the Housing Advisory Panel, and the committed staff teams will continue to make good progress and identify other areas needing improvement. The focus on Tenant Voice and Engagement remains at the core of everything we do, and I am delighted that so many of you want to get involved in shaping the services and responding positively. I have had the privilege of working with many of you and the committed and dedicated staff teams that we have across all our services.

We now have two tenant representatives on the Housing Ombudsman's Panel from our Housing Advisory Panel members, an indication of the Boroughs growing influence in the housing sector nationally. Our two representatives on this influential panel, means we are positioned to contribute to national discussions on housing standards and tenant rights.

Our Tenant Annual Report has been developed with your help, your suggestions and ideas. Listening to your feedback has been critical and again we are asking that you let us know what you think about it and perhaps get involved in next year's publication.

We have actively measured tenant satisfaction through surveys, comments and complaints received, community days and focus groups. Your views have been instrumental in shaping our approach, and we want to continue to receive your feedback, so if you do receive an invite to feedback on our services, it will be great to hear from you, and please do so.

This report sets out our plans for the next 12 months based on what you have told us. All the team hope you find this report interesting. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please email TVEAT@wigan.gov.uk – find out more via our website: www.wigan.gov.uk/FindaHome

Thank you for your ongoing support and involvement.

Housing Advisory Panel (HAP)



Chris Brady:

Once again, we had an interesting time in housing. All of us on the Housing Advisory Panel have been kept busy, for me that meant doing significant research into the service charge paid by tenants to the Council. This has been a collaborative scrutiny with various members of Housing, but with the tenant representative taking the lead. We have also had a new member join the HAP - so welcome David.

I was pleased to be appointed to the Housing Ombudsman's Panel, earlier this year. This means that (along with my colleague, Tom) Wigan has two members of Housing on this Panel, which is quite an honour; I look forward to the next three years on this Panel.

On a more personal note, in October '23 I gained a post as a staff nurse in a nearby hospital; and I was extremely pleased when in February this year, I was informed that I had passed my PhD, which I had been studying for six years. Now all I have to do is get the whole thing published!

Looking forward to the next twelve months in Housing!



David Ward:

Hello, my name is Dave Ward. I'm 59 years old and have been a tenant of Wigan Council for just over 4 years. My relationship broke down completely and I ended up homeless but thanks to Wigan Council and my Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Counsellor, I was offered my present home just in the nick of time. I owe a lot to Wigan Council who have been superb with me. In the four years that I've been a tenant my life has steadily got better and improved tenfold.

I work for the RAC on four on and four off shift basis and had started to struggle with my mental health again when I wasn't at work and felt like my four walls and ceiling were beginning to close in on me. I struggle a lot going out alone due to severe anxiety and depression and for this reason find it hard to mix in social environments.

I have a lot of life experience in various areas of my different work life, from Military to Transport Management and customer focused roles and I felt that joining HAP would help me immensely to get my mental health issues under better control, by helping others I would be helping myself.

So far, it's been the best decision I've made in a long time, and I hope this trend will continue, I want to expand my knowledge base so that I can pass on my experiences to help others.



Tom Dalton:

It has been another interesting and enjoyable year as a member of the Housing Advisory Panel. In addition to attending the Housing Advisory Panel meetings and workshops, I have also attended various focus groups across the borough where I have been honoured to meet other tenants in the borough. I have also been lucky enough to attend the TPAS regional meeting and the TPAS national conference. These meetings are an opportunity to network with fellow tenants from across the country; they are a chance to share good practice, and to learn about what is happening in the wider social housing sector.

I have also attended various training sessions where I have learned about changes to policy and legislation, which will help me to participate in shaping the changes to local policy which will be happening in the coming years. I am also proud to have been reappointed to the Housing Ombudsman's Residents Panel for the next 3 years.

I look forward to continuing to work alongside my colleagues on the Housing Advisory Panel in the coming year.



Neil O'Donnell:

What I would say for myself I am pleased that I have been given another 4 years to be on the HAP team and the work we do on scrutiny and our team. I have enjoyed doing this year the workshops and the training sessions on all different aspects to do with housing.



The main thing for me was being asked to assist in the set up for the new complaints policy and the meetings and training I attended with the Ombudsman. It has given me a broader outlook with anything to do with complaints going forward.

Finally, I like getting involved in my own area and meeting the officers and discussing anything to do with our tenants.

Ellen Rhind:

I have had a wonderful 4 years and am privileged to have been awarded a further tenure on the Housing Advisory Panel (HAP) for the next 4 years. I love what I do because I believe that my contribution will always be valued by Wigan Council because they respect tenant views and that's no lie.

I have attended several HAP workshops and Committee meetings, along with tenant engagement meetings and always contributed my views, when appropriate, during scrutiny projects. It gives me a voice and one that is heard so "I feel good, I knew that I would now" and long may it continue.

Feedback and Suggestions

If you have any feedback or suggestions for us regarding housing, please share your experiences or ideas via the link below.

We are always looking to improve our services based on your feedback.

Council Housing Feedback Form:

<https://forms.wigan.gov.uk/housingfeedback>

Or contact the team:

TVAET@wigan.gov.uk

Tenants shape the Annual Report for 2024

Our Annual Report 2023/24 is written for tenants and, very importantly, is written with tenants.

We have always taken your views into account when we write the annual report, to make sure we tell you about the things that you are interested in. However, this year we decided to do things a little differently.

Before we even started to put pen to paper, we asked tenants what they wanted to know about, and what would help you to hold us to account.



Starting with a completely blank sheet, we took part in two separate tenant focus groups. At the first, tenants told us what they wanted to see in the report that they would find useful, and at the second, they gave us some ideas about how we could present that information to make it more accessible and interesting.

Some of the things they wanted us to tell you were:

- The progress of plans we published in last year's report.
- When we have got something wrong and how we have put it right and learned from it.
- The views of tenants and how this has made a difference to our services.
- Types of complaints and the kinds of things we have done to resolve these.
- How your rent is spent on services.
- Key data, including repairs performance, the number of empty properties, and the number of people on the housing waiting list.

We have taken this feedback on board and used it to shape the report. We are also taking some other ideas forward so that this more detailed report will be followed up during the year with regular progress updates in different formats – including videos, which the focus groups were very keen on. We are also looking at promoting local updates throughout the year, so tenants can access information relevant to where they live.



Thank you to everyone who contributed to the focus groups and helped to shape this report, which the Housing Advisory Panel and the Readers Panel have also reviewed. We hope you enjoy reading it. Look out for our updates and videos throughout the year!

Progress Against Priorities

In last year's report we mentioned what we would be working on between 2023 and 2024. Below, you will get an insight into how we have worked to achieve these priorities.

More Efficient Responsive Repairs

We are working hard to ensure that we provide efficient responsive repairs. We are undertaking a full review of the repairs and maintenance service, listening to tenant feedback to shape the way we deliver the service. We acknowledge that communication is a significant factor, and we are looking at new technology to enhance the way we communicate with tenants, specifically on responsive repairs. We have developed a Damp and Mould policy to complement our proactive approach to targeting cases of damp and mould.

Improve the Quality of Our Homes

Work has started on the 7 High Rise blocks to ensure that they meet the new building safety regulations. This has improved addressing compartmentation between flats and the riser, installing a new fire warning alarm system and installing new lifts in all of the blocks. We have also completed more electrical checks on properties and continued to complete the annual gas safety checks. Damp and mould has continued to be addressed when identified and also surveying of properties to take a proactive approach to the damp and mould issues

Introduce a New Quality Assurance Framework

We have introduced a number of mechanisms to monitor and check on the quality of our housing services. These include refreshed performance reports, new Tenant Surveys, tenant scrutineers to review services, regular self-assessments by officers against national housing standards, and an independent audit of our tenant satisfaction measures. We plan to develop this framework further and document it clearly.

Be Led By Our Tenants

This year, we have collaborated on 34 documents with our readers panel for review. Together with our tenants, we have hosted a series of focus groups.

These focus groups are an opportunity to have your say and help influence services across housing.

The Focus groups we have held so far have been on:

- Repairs
- Performance
- Complaints
- Community Wealth Building/social value



Review our Housing Allocations Policy

We have started the initial review of our Allocations Policy looking at our existing policy and identifying any gaps. Over the next 12 months we will look to start the consultation process.

Improve Our Digital Offer

We are continuing to develop our digital offer. We want to ensure that you can easily access information about our housing offer and support services, so we are making changes to our online information and making it easier to apply and submit information online.

Review of Sheltered Homes

A review of the sheltered schemes and low-rise flats has been undertaken in relation to a fire strategy and works are in progress replacing fire doors and carrying out fire compartmentation works to ensure the buildings are fire compliant.

Deliver More New Improvements



Over the year we completed 111 new high-quality homes for council tenants, including 40 general needs apartments at 1 Brown Street, Leigh and a new extra care scheme, Eldervale at Beech Hill with 52 apartments designed for over 55s in need of care and support to remain independent in their own home.



We completed our first homes built to a Passivhaus specification at Priory Road, Ashton. The homes achieve high performance in insulation levels, heat loss and air tightness, and marks a key turning point in our net zero carbon aspirations and reducing fuel poverty amongst our residents.

This means that they use little energy to heat and the energy bills are low,

contributing to our net zero carbon aspirations and helping to tackle fuel poverty.

We are working on seven construction projects currently that will deliver 117 new homes this year and will be consulting on further proposals for new council homes this summer. We are eagerly awaiting the completion of our new extra care scheme at Meadowview Court, Miles Lane, Shevington and our development of Passivhaus homes at Derby Street, Ince this winter. Demolition is underway this summer at Logwood Place, Newtown to make way for a new development of 74 apartments, which is due to start towards the end of this year.

We have also introduced a pro-active approach to damp & mould and utilised the 'every visit counts' approach to identify if damp & mould is present at a dwelling, including our sheltered schemes.

Improving Our Offer to Care Leavers

Housing plays a crucial role in delivering our Care Leavers' Local. We continue to work with our housing partners to ensure that our care leavers have access to the best accommodation options available to them.

A Care Leaver is someone who has been in the care of the Local Authority for a period of 13 weeks or more spanning their 16th birthday. If you would like more information on care leavers in Wigan, please visit:

www.wigan.gov.uk/WholsACareLeaver

We have engaged with our care leavers to better understand what is important to them, the challenges they face when trying to secure accommodation, and to identify actions we needed to take. As a result, we implemented an action plan tailored to meet the individual housing needs and aspirations of our care leavers.

Updates this year are:

- Care Leavers Hub Engagement: Officers now regularly attend the Care Leavers Hub alongside councillors, ensuring that our care leavers have direct access to the support they need.
- Pre-Tenancy Training: We have introduced pre-tenancy training to help care leavers get off to the best possible start in their new homes.
- Dedicated Housing Support Worker: We now have an allocated Tenancy Support Worker who works closely with Personal Advisors (P.As) to provide additional guidance and support.
- Improved Commissioned Support Services: We have enhanced our commissioned support services, offering more tailored and effective support for care leavers.
- Bespoke Care Leavers Property: A new bespoke care leavers' property has been developed, providing additional transitional support to help young people become 'tenancy-ready'.
- Enhanced Information on Housing Options: We have collaborated with care leavers to develop comprehensive information on housing options and the support available to them.
- Increased Housing Options: We have expanded housing options with tailored support, making it easier for care leavers to access the right home.
- Youth Engagement in Housing (2024/25 Plans): We have plans to further increase youth engagement in housing during 2024/25, ensuring that care leavers have a stronger voice in the decisions that affect their housing journey.
- Our commitment to improving the housing experience and outcomes for our care leavers is ongoing, providing them with the best possible start in their independent lives is a key priority in the way we shape and deliver our services.

Maximising Community Benefits

We have worked together with our contractors and local communities to deliver benefits across the borough.

In Worsley Mesnes we have continued our partnership with Keepmoat Homes to deliver much needed regeneration. New local shops were opened in July 2023, residents have been given work or training opportunities on the site and a number of community projects have been held. In Shevington, we have been working with our contractor, M&Y Construction, at our site on Miles Lane to provide support to local groups such as Stockley Park, Vicarage Lane Allotments and Appley Bridge Football Club.

We have secured further community benefits to a value of £1.5m during the procurement of our recent contracts and will be engaging with local communities to deliver these.

We will work with our contractors and consultants to deliver the Community SOS project and promote other requests with them to ensure that we target resources and build capacity where it is most needed. We are also starting a programme of improvements to our sheltered housing schemes so that the communal spaces offer safe and welcoming spaces for residents and the community to use.

5th Manchester Regiment – Memorial Wall Build



Wigan and Leigh Building Services (WLBS) were contacted by Gill Burchall, Key Worker Armed Forces Community HQ in early January 2024, regarding the feasibility of providing a memorial to the 5th Manchester Regiment, who used the Drill Hall on Powell Street, Wigan until after the Second World War.

There is currently no sign or evidence that the drill hall once stood on Powell Street and nowhere for families to remember those who are no longer with us. The proposed memorial would be a place for those who had friends and family members based at the Drill Hall, to go to spend some time to remember them and to those who fell or are sadly no longer with us.



Wigan and Leigh Building Services were honoured to be asked to undertake the build, and a site survey was completed on the 24th January. The Armed forces hub veterans went to great lengths to locate & match the building components to those consistent with the original Drill Hall, whilst WLBS put together a build programme. After further site inspections and concerns over nearby trees,

Planning permission was granted by Wigan Council and the build began on Monday 15th July 2024. The memorial wall was formally unveiled by the High Sheriff on Thursday 22nd August, and included a speech by Hugh Darlington

– Grandson of Colonel Sir Henry Clayton Darlington former commanding officer of the 5th Battalion Manchester Regiment.

Cost of Living Support



As part of our Here for You campaign, we are hosting events at our Life Centres, libraries and local community venues to ensure that local people are getting all of the support they are entitled to during the cost of living crisis.

We know that both locally and nationally, many of us are missing out on income we're entitled to claim. Whatever your situation, you'll be supported throughout the entire process. www.wigan.gov.uk/helptoclaim

If you need any support, you can visit the Here For You webpage where you can find a range of support: www.wigan.gov.uk/hereforyou

You can also visit the Wigan Life Centre or visit the Turnpike Centre in Leigh to speak to someone in person.



Make Our Homes Greener

We are committed to creating sustainable communities and improving the quality and energy efficiency of your homes, which in turn may help save you money on your energy bills.

To help achieve this we have installed over 18,000 energy efficient gas condensing boilers and, as a result, many of our homes have improved their energy rating.

We have also adopted a 'fabric first' approach to improving the energy efficiency of the housing stock, primarily by improving the insulation of our properties. An initial target of Energy Performance Certificate band 'C' by 2030 target (bringing as many properties as possible up to the minimum standard) has been set.

We have also been successful in securing up to £1.9 million from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and this year commenced our first fabric approach project to approximately 200 dwellings, by installing improved cavity wall insulation, insulated flat roofs, new pvc windows and solar panels, which supports our longer-term goals of achieving a housing stock of net zero emissions. To achieve this, we are investing significantly in both renewable and low carbon technologies.

As a responsible landlord we are also dedicated to improving the quality and compliance of our homes and are progressing with works to ensure that the high-rise blocks of flats comply with the recently introduced building safety legislation.

A Year in Housing

1. Railway Arches, Leigh: Completed in early 2024, this scheme has brought forward 40 one-bedroom apartments, with associated parking and landscaping. All units have been offered as affordable rent and allocated as per Wigan Council's local letting policy to applicants on the housing register. The scheme is on the doorstep of all the shops, services, businesses, and employment opportunities that are found in Leigh town centre and near public transport links making it a sustainable location for the creation of this new community.



2. Tenant Satisfaction Survey: We have implemented a survey to get feedback from new tenants, after they have moved into their new home. The results are shared across teams working on lettings and empty property repairs, to identify areas for improvement. Improvements include spending more time with customers on sign-up to ensure everything is set up, designing a new sign-up pack, providing a sign-up* video with QR code on all offer letters so that customers know what to expect, and working with the Autism Board to ensure information is accessible.

*A sign up is the process where an officer meets the tenant at the property to explain the tenancy agreement and discusses the rights and responsibilities of the tenant and the council, the tenant/s then signs the paperwork to say they understand and will comply and the keys are handed over to the tenant.

3. Domestic Abuse Refuge: We recommissioned the Domestic Abuse Refuge within the borough, which is now operated by WHAG. This service ensures a sustained accommodation offer for those that require emergency accommodation and support when fleeing domestic abuse. In addition, we have recently been working with WHAG to secure additional dispersed accommodation as part of our future 'safe accommodation' offer.

4. Strategic and Private Sector Housing Team: £176K grant funding awarded to deliver the Local Energy Advice Demonstrator (LEAD) Project until March 2025, focused on testing and trialing new, innovative approaches to providing in-person energy efficiency and retrofit advice. Publicly branded as 'Feel the benefit', weekly energy advice drop-in's are now being held at Wigan and Leigh Life Centres, and outreach work via community venues and our Council partners to ensure fuel-poor, low-income households get the advice they need.



5. Sheltered: We worked with the New Build team around stock remodeling, and works required to update existing schemes, taking into account intelligence within the Greater Manchester population health plan, on the needs of residents. We now have a detailed 10-year plan for works, linking in with building safety works and planned maintenance works.



6. Homes and Communities Team: We have worked to ensure that the service we provide is consistent throughout the Tenancy Services team. Following the redesign of the service the previous year, we have been working on our service delivery, upskilling our Neighborhood Tenant Officers (NTO), training with Housing Quality Network (HQN) on Tenancy Management, reviewing our customer journey, policies and procedures, and customer journey, Estate Caretakers have undergone additional training to upskill them so they can complete additional tasks on the estates. Pre tenancy training is offered through our Tenancy Support Team.



7. Damp and mould: We have continued to meet as a cross-team taskforce to make improvements to ensure your homes are in a good condition and that we respond quickly to hazards that could impact on residents' health. This has included monitoring the emerging new national regulations known as 'Awaab's Law', developing a new Damp and Mould policy, piloting sensors in homes to monitor humidity levels, and working with professionals in other services who visit tenants' homes, so that they can easily refer cases to the relevant team to action.
8. Launched & recruited to the new Housing Scrutineers, these tenant volunteers work with our Housing Advisory Panel to look closely at how we provide our services and take part in an in-depth review. They complete the review by providing a report that tells us what is working well and how we can improve our services going forward – to find out how to get involved contact the team - TVAET@wigan.gov.uk
9. Neighbourhood Stars: We launched this new award to celebrate those who go the extra mile to care for their local communities and neighbourhoods. Tenants can nominate a neighbour who goes the extra mile and deserves to be recognised for their support, as well as any Wigan Council staff members who have gone above and beyond.

More information on how to nominate someone for a Neighbourhood Star is on the website at:

<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/housingengagementopportunities>

10. Income Maximisation: The cost-of-living crisis resulted in heightened need to provide targeted support to those residents who were being impacted the most, those with the least financial resilience. In order to identify those who needed our support, the council adopted a data led approach by creating a single view of residents which highlights those who need our support the most. Our campaign targeted residents where it appeared there was eligibility for benefits, discounts and support, but were presently unclaimed. Tenants who need support are invited to income maximisation events in their localities where they are supported by a team of experts who provide help and advice and make support residents through the entirety of the claims process, removing traditional barriers.

In a little over 12 months, over 2000 awards have been processed for our tenants, placing an additional £2.2m in their pockets.

To find out what you may be missing out on, how we can support you and where the latest events are taking place please visit

www.wigan.gov.uk/Helpclaim

Still not sure if you should come along? Listen to Colin and Linda's story on how the support they received through our campaign has changed their lives.



11. Wigan Council were successful in obtaining grant funding under the social housing decarbonisation grant scheme and have utilised this alongside match funding to improve the energy efficiency of the dwellings to groups of bungalows in the following areas:

- Scholes
- Worsley Mesnes
- Norley Hall
- Beech Hill

Under the initiative the properties have benefited from increased roof insulation and new roofline products i.e. fascia and soffit boards renewal of higher performing cavity wall insulation, installation of new pvc windows, installation of new composite doors where necessary, installation of solar panels and insulated panel areas in render or cladding.

The grant funding is applicable to properties that have an Energy Performance Certificate rating of less than a D rating and must achieve Energy Performance Certificate C following completion of the energy efficient measures. Energy Performance Certificates are a way of measuring the energy efficiency of buildings, with A being very efficient, and G being inefficient.

12. Ethical Lettings Agency (ELA): Through the Ethical Lettings Agency we take properties from private landlords onto a long-term lease (usually of 5 years) with the Council, taking on property and tenancy management responsibilities for this duration. These homes are let to local households in need – typically those facing homelessness – and the rent is set at an affordable rate, much lower than local private market rents. ELA tenants are Wigan Council tenants and can expect the same services in relation to day-to-day repairs, safety checks and general support throughout their tenancy.

Last year, we saw the continual growth of the scheme, with it now managing 87 units of affordable accommodation. We were also successful in securing funding to deliver the Greater Manchester Family Leasing Scheme delivery and are on track to deliver 21 homes for families in temporary accommodation.



Working with the Regulator

The Regulator of Social Housing monitors landlords to ensure they comply with the consumer standards. This includes the Safety and Quality standard, which covers condition of properties, repairs, and health and safety.

In 2023, Wigan Borough Council was issued a Regulatory Notice due to a number of overdue safety inspections, including gas safety inspections, fire risk assessments, fire remedial actions, electrical certificates and carbon monoxide detector fittings.

In our continuing program to reduce our Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) backlog we appointed an additional fire risk assessor at the end of 2023. They completed the backlog of assessments at the end of June 2024.

As of January 2025, we are now 100% compliant with all FRAs in date. This has been the conclusion of working with our contractor with Ridge and the carrying out of FRAs and subsequent actions.

We now have 195 High risk action of which 162 are out of date. These are mainly fire actions from our Scholes high rise buildings. We have just started a new fire door replacement program, and we will be replacing all fire doors in Scholes High Rise. This programme will take time and therefore contributes to the high-risk actions which are out of date. Our aim is to totally replace all the fire doors in two high-rise blocks by the end of March 2025.

We take the safety of your homes very seriously and have been focused on addressing these issues identified by the Regulator and improving our performance. We have been working hard with contractors and tenants to improve access to properties, to allow the annual gas servicing and 5-year electrical tests to take place. Joint engagement with contractors and our tenancy teams has increased access and this is proving very positive.

As a new initiative the gas compliance team decided to ask for support from all departments to have a day of action. We now have them every 8 weeks all tenants who have not had their gas safety certificate are contacted to book an appointment for as early as possible. After the telephone call, (this could be on the day as well), we have a team of engineers waiting to attend appointments. We also use this time to check contact details and update the system with contact details.

When the numbers are not recognised or have changed. We also check all systems across the council to see if there are alternative details and then we record this and make changes as necessary.

These days have seen a great success rate and we usually complete approximately 50 appointments within 3 days and make a further 75 appointments.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

The Regulator of Social Housing has set 22 tenant satisfaction measures that landlords must report on every year. These are:

- 10 management information measures that landlords hold already on their systems.
- 12 tenant perception measures, which landlords gather by sending out an annual satisfaction survey to their tenants.

Our tenant satisfaction survey:

We surveyed tenants during November and December 2023 to find out how satisfied they were. This survey asked very specific questions set by the Regulator to find out our results in relation to the 12 tenant perception measures. These questions could not be amended and had to be asked in a particular order.

We also took the opportunity to use the survey to ask some additional questions, including what you thought was most important about your home, neighbourhood, and housing services. We also asked if people wanted to get involved in their services and had a huge response to this question.

We worked in partnership with an external company, GovMetric to design and manage the survey, in line with the Regulator's requirements. This approach made sure the process remained without bias and results were kept confidential and independent.

The survey was run in 2 phases:

- Phase 1 sent out either an email or SMS survey to all households where we had a valid email address or mobile telephone number.
- Phase 2 looked at the representativeness of the respondents following reminders being sent out as part of Phase 1. This allowed us to identify any groups who were under-represented compared to our tenant profile and use other survey methods to encourage them to respond.



We had an excellent response to Wigan’s tenant satisfaction survey, with over 4,000 tenants having their say about their housing services. Thank you to everyone who gave us their feedback.

Survey Results:

REF	Tenant Perception Measures	Performance 23/24
TP01	Proportion of respondents who report they are satisfied with the overall service from their landlord	57.6%
TP02	Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the overall service	60.6%
TP03	Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair	66.6%
TP04	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is well maintained.	54.0%
TP05	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is safe.	61.7%
TP06	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them.	44.0%
TP07	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps them informed about things that matter to them.	51.1%
TP08	Proportion of respondents who report that they agree their landlord treats them fairly and with respect.	60.0%
TP09	Proportion of respondents who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are satisfied with their landlord’s approach to complaints handling.	33.0%
TP10	Proportion of respondents with communal areas who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained.	58.7%



REF	Tenant Perception Measures	Performance 23/24
TP11	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood.	42.0%
TP12	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with their landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour.	38.4%

What happens now:

As soon as we received the results from the Tenant Survey, we began to focus on areas where satisfaction is lower and to begin to dig deeper to understand why, so we could put action in place to address this. We held manager and staff engagement sessions to discuss the results to make sure we are listening to what our tenants are telling us and acting on this. We reported our results to the Housing Advisory Panel and published our results on the website in June 2024, so that you can review these. We also had to report our results for all the tenant perception and management measures by 30th June.

We designed our 2024 survey to ask follow-up questions about the services where satisfaction was lower. The survey ran through autumn 2024 and has now concluded, and we will report our results in June 2025.

Management Information:

REF	Building Safety	Performance 23/24
BS01	Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out	96.9%
BS02	Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out	61.5%
BS03	Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out	98.6%
BS04	Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out	100%
BS05	Proportion of homes for which all required passenger lift safety checks have been carried out	100%



REF	Decent Homes and Repairs	Performance 23/24
RP01	Proportion of homes that do not meet the decent homes standard	3.2%
RP02 (1)	Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's timescales	87.5%
RP02 (2)	Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's timescales	99.9%

REF	Complaints	Performance 23/24
CH01 (1)	Number of stage 1 complaints received per 1000 homes	45.6
CH01 (2)	Number of stage 2 complaints received per 1000 homes	0.9

REF	Complaints	Performance 23/24
CH02 (1)	Proportion of stage 1 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales	14.1%
CH02 (2)	Proportion of stage 2 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales	68.4%

REF	Anti-Social Behaviour	Performance 23/24
NM01 (1)	Number of anti-social behaviour cases opened per 1000 homes	83.6
NM01 (2)	Number of anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate crime opened per 1000 homes	0.5

Performance

On the next few pages, you will find a table containing the housing performance measures the Council tracks and compared to previous years.



Measure	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Number of council homes	21,575	21,447	21,372	21,334
Number of repairs completed	57,685	53,062	65,345	60,750
% of repairs completed right the first time	93%	90%	82%	82%
Satisfaction with repairs	95%	90%	85%	85%
Number of homes receiving planned works	8,760	8,448	6,920	6,800
% of planned works done right the first time	99.6%	99%	98%	100%
Satisfaction with planned works	99.8%	99.9%	98%	100%
Number of electrical checks completed	3,627	3,788	3,226	3,885
Number of gas safety checks completed	19,251	18,196	20,004	21,486
Number of applicants on housing register	10,365	13,278	14,176	13,616
Average number of bids per property	94	110	136	187
Number of new tenancies arranged	1,196	1,228	1,144	1,373
% of tenancies sustained longer than 2 years	87%	88%	89%	88%
Number of tenants who pay their rent by direct debit	4,981	5,683	5,657	6,018
Number of referrals to our Community Resilience Team	1,473	1,432	1,412	1,561
Affordable homes we have built	96	17	118	111
Satisfaction with new build home	94%	91.6%	100%	100%
Number of Ethical Letting Agency properties	24	43	55	74
Number of formal complaints received	181	547	913	993



Finance

In this section, you will find a breakdown of the Council's housing finances for 2023/24.

Revenue Budget 2023 / 2024	
Repayment of Debt	£12,474,339
Day to Day Responsive Repairs	£18,212,534
Interest on loans	£13,092,191
Void Properties	£6,070,095
Programmed Repairs	£8,562,681
Major Works and Capital Investment	£12,477,906
Cost of Delivering Services	£23,413,062
Other Landlord Functions	£1,853,633
Total Spend 2023 / 2024	£96,156,441

How We Invested in Council Homes During 2023 / 2024	
Aids & Adaptations	£2,189,000.29
Bathrooms	£554,472.49
Boiler replacement & heating changes	£4,293,908.12
Capitalised repairs	£7,889,849.83
Carbon Reduction	£87,726.63
Electrical rewiring	£923,294.49
Environmental works	£97,454.21
Estate regeneration (incl demolition)	£1,289,329.65
Fire safety works	£1,001,976.57
Footway Maintenance	£399,930.35
Kitchens	£3,543,074.00
Multi storey flat lift replacement	£385,073.27
Multi storey flats (various improvements)	£1,182,023.26
New build	£14,142,872.27
Property purchase	£1,709,504.06
Roofing works	£236,653.69
Sheltered works	£1,024,172.89
Total Spend 2023 / 2024	£40,950,316.07

Complaints and how we are improving

We are committed to learning and improving our services where we aren't getting it right.

Action we have taken this year:

Last year we reported that the largest increase of complaints was in relation to “delay in doing something” or a “failure to do something”, along with poor communication to our tenants. Since then, we have taken action to make improvements and, based on your feedback, we have:

- Improved our messaging when confirming repair appointments.
- Provided additional training for staff to ensure every visit counts and sufficient work is ordered to do a job correctly the first time.
- Strengthened the relationships with our contractors to get things done “right the first time”.
- Reduced delays in ordering works.
- Reviewed our processes to reduce the number of missed appointments.

In relation to complaint handling, we aligned our policy and procedures with the requirements of both the new Housing Ombudsman code and the Regulator for Social Housing. These changes ensure our complaint handling processes are fair and consistent. Last year we made a number of changes to our policy and improvements to the way we handle complaints, including:

- Refreshing our complaints policy to clarify the stages and timescales in the procedure, as well as make it clear how we will make reasonable adjustments so people can make a complaint in the way that suits them.
- Developing and implementing a new complaints IT system that supports the management of a complaint from first receiving it, through to response. It also helps us track any trends so we can make improvements to services.
- Rolling out a training programme to all complaint handlers on the new complaints IT system and the refreshed policy.
- Introducing a new complaint handling satisfaction survey, to complement the many other ways that we ask for feedback from our tenants.

Learning from complaints:

We want to tell you about how we have listened and acted on any opportunities to make improvements following investigation of individual complaints. We have also considered where there might be trends in the types of issues people are raising.

In June we published our first annual complaints report, containing details of the complaints received in relation to our housing services during the period from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. This report covers:

- Trends in the types of housing complaints we have received, outcomes, and our compliance with target response times
- Improvements we have put in place following tenant feedback, as well as some of the projects we have been undertaking in relation to improving customer care
- Tenant feedback on how we handle complaints, from satisfaction surveys and in-depth reviews carried out by a tenant focus group
- Actions taken in response to the findings of the Housing Ombudsman, where any complaints have been escalated, as well as details of how we are responding to recommendations within the Housing Ombudsman's recent spotlight reports
- Our latest self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Code

We are committed to being transparent in relation to the data and in what tenants are telling us. This gives us a strong baseline to measure the impact of the service improvements we are undertaking, and we will reflect this in future tenant reports.

For a full breakdown of our complaints data and how we have responded, please visit: www.wigan.gov.uk//ComplaintsAnnualReport2324

Tenant Voice and Engagement

Environment:

- Talk & Tidy – so far this year we have held 6 Talk & Tidy Tuesdays across the Borough supported by the estate caretakers and the Neighbourhood Tenancy Team. Look out for us in your area.

- Garden Competition – we launched our Garden Competition in March and we have had some fantastic applications. Shortlisted entries attended a presentation in the Town Hall in September 2024.
- Tool Shed – we are in the process of launching the Tool Shed Project. Tenants can borrow garden tools to assist with maintaining their gardens from designated locations. Initially this is being piloted in 3 areas with the hope to roll out across the Borough.

Better Connected Community Fund:



We have our Better-Connected Community Fund where those eligible can apply for up to £2000 for projects and ideas that benefit our neighbourhoods.

We also have annual and start up grants for tenants or residents who are looking to set up a new community group/association. Groups can apply for up to £500 to set up a new group or £250

annually to support with running costs.

To find out more visit our website:

www.wigan.gov.uk/HousingSupportFunding

Facebook:

We launched our Tenant Voice Facebook Page in February 2023. We currently have 482 members, and we are actively promoting to increase our followers. Please search for “Tenant Voice Group” on Facebook.

Website:

Want to find out the latest news, events, volunteer opportunities or find out how we are performing as a council? Take a look at our website:

www.wigan.gov.uk/TenantVoiceAndEngagementTeam

Events:

- Better Connected Community Fun Days – we have held 3 Better Connected Community Fun Days. These events were a chance to bring the local community together. These events have been really successful and a great way to engage with our local communities and we're pleased to have had a lot of positive feedback.
- Meet the Team – we held 2 meet the team events, 1 in Leigh and 1 in Wigan. These events were a huge success, and we gained new volunteers who have taken up various volunteer roles with our team.



- Pop up events/Community Cuppas – we have held 10 Community Cuppas/pop up events across the Borough giving tenants/local community the chance to come and speak to the team to find out ways in which they can get involved.

Newsletter:

We have recently launched our first Tenant Voice & Engagement Team newsletter. Tenants can find out various information including, events being held in your area, good news stories and other housing news. To sign up to our newsletter please email the team on TVAET@wigan.gov.uk

Plans for the coming year:

We have lots of exciting plans in the pipeline for the next 12 months, including:

- Youth Voice - our aim is to ensure that every young person living on our estates, aged 11-21, no matter their ethnic or social background can have their voice heard; allowing young people to have the opportunity to have their say and make informed decisions on key issues affecting them, their homes, and their communities, and helping us shape how our services are planned and delivered going forward.
- Mystery Shopper – tenants will conduct a mystery shop by using their own customer details and presenting a made-up scenario for staff to handle. It might mean phoning the contact centre or visiting reception. For example, we might ask them to test how quickly a call was answered, how our staff spoke to them and whether they were given the right information.
- Walkabout Wednesdays – our team will be out and about on our estates speaking to tenants finding out what's important to them and ensuring this information is fed back to the relevant teams. We want to be a visible presence in our neighbourhoods as much as possible.

Watch this space to find out more about these on our website in the near future.

Meet the teams

We know from your responses to the annual Tenant Survey that the two most important things to you about the place where you live are the appearance of your neighbourhood and dealing with anti-social behaviour.

When we spoke to our tenant focus groups to ask what you would want to read about in the annual report, they told us that you wanted to learn more about the teams responsible for estate caretaking and dealing with anti-social behaviour.

The Estate Caretaking Team

We have 20 Estate Caretakers who work across our housing estates to keep them clean and tidy. The caretakers sit within our Homes and Communities Team and they work closely with the Neighbourhood Tenant Officers to manage the estates and work together with tenants to make places for them where they are proud to live.

The Team also works closely with our wider council teams, such as Streetscene and our Environment Team.



Their main duties include:

- Litter picking
- Removing fly tipping from housing land and communal areas
- Completing minor repairs
- Building checks
- Supporting with access for our contractors and utility companies.

Here are some of the other things that the Estate Caretakers get involved in:

Talk and Tidy Tuesdays – with colleagues from other council teams, they go out on into your neighbourhoods and speak with you to listen to your concerns. You may have seen them out on your estate.

Tidy Up Tuesdays – the full team concentrate on a particular estate, carrying out a more in-depth clean of the area, cutting back overgrowth, bushes, clearing footpaths and improving the general appearance of the estate.

Estate inspections – as well as carrying out ad hoc walkabouts during the year, they attend our yearly inspection programme, working collaboratively with the Neighbourhood Tenant Officers to resolve issues identified from a full inspection of a specific estate. We welcome tenants, residents and elected members to get involved with this and to attend.

Building checks - the caretakers are also responsible for carrying out monthly building checks on all our communal block flats over 3 storeys high, reporting any defects and hazards discovered. Being the eyes and ears of our estates and reporting concerns about our most vulnerable tenants enables the wider teams to act swiftly to offer support and resolve issues.

Fly-tipping - Unfortunately, we have seen an increase in fly tipping this year across all our estates, and this has meant that the majority of the caretakers' time has been spent removing bulky waste. From 1st April 2023 – 11th January 2024, the team removed 441.74 tons of waste from our estates. We are working closely with our Environmental Enforcement team to find the perpetrators and to prosecute those responsible. Recently the Caretaking team supported on a number of cases which led to Fixed Penalty Notices being issued.

Improving our service - During this last year, Estate Caretakers have undergone additional training to upskill them and are now able to complete additional tasks on our Estates. Through enhancing their skills, the team can deliver more services to tenants moving forward.

Useful information:

Did you know that Wigan Council offer 2 free collections of up to 5 bulky items per property in a 12-month period. Extra collections in a 12-month period will cost £25 for up to five items. You can book a collection online via our website: www.wigan.gov.uk/BulkyCollections



The Community Resilience Team



The Community Resilience Team handle complaints relating to anti-social behaviour (ASB) within our neighbourhoods. They do this for both residents in social and private housing.

What is Anti-Social Behaviour?

Anti-Social Behaviour is a very generic term and covers a multitude of incidents and events. There are three main types of anti-social behaviour.

These are:

- Personal - incidents that deliberately target an individual or group of people, rather than the community. It is when an incident causes concern or stress and may impact on people's quality of life. For example: intimidation and harassment or noise from a neighbouring address.
- Nuisance - incidents affecting the community, rather than an individual victim. This is when an act, thing or person causes the community trouble, annoyance, inconvenience, or suffering. These incidents can interfere with public interests such as health, wellbeing, safety, and quality of life. For example: drug or substance misuse, vehicle-related nuisance, or animal-related problems.
- Environmental - incidents where individuals or groups impact their wider surroundings. It includes environmental damage and the misuse of public spaces or buildings. For example: criminal damage or vandalism, such as graffiti, littering or fly tipping.

For more information on what Anti-Social Behavior is, please visit:
www.wigan.gov.uk/antisocialbehaviour

Who are the Community Resilience Team, and what do they do?

The team is part of Wigan Council's Environment Directorate and investigates personal Anti-Social Behaviour, such as neighbour nuisance and neighbour noise. They also seek to address youth related ASB in conjunction with colleagues from the Council's Youth Services Team (REACH), the local Police and other third-party providers under 'Operation Bluefin'.

The service is people focused, seeking to problem solve the cause of the issue through a stepped model, referred to as the 'ASB Resolution Model'. A copy of this is available on the Council website:
www.wigan.gov.uk/ASBResolutionModel

This stepped model is to try and resolve issues between neighbors, but where that is not possible, building the case to ultimate enforcement. Work undertaken to resolve issues initially starts with a series of warnings, as well as offers of appropriate support. Where issues continue, this then escalates to formal action through the courts.

Tenants have asked that we include a case study in this year's annual report, to illustrate a typical case dealt with by the team to address issues on one of our estates.

This was a case that ended in eviction, but it highlights the complexities involved in seeking possession of someone's home, and how it is only possible through the tenacity of the investigating officer and the continued support of the public who are impacted by the issues.

Case Study:

In early 2022, the Community Resilience Team received reports of anti-social behaviour linked to a council tenancy. Allegations were in relation to visitors attending the address resulting in violent incidents, regular police attendance and damage being caused to windows to gain access when locked out.

The following steps took place:

1. Following the early steps of the ASB Resolution Model, an initial advisory letter was sent to the subject address, resulting in an easing off of issues.
2. In August 2022, a recurrence of issues started to be reported. Meetings were held with the tenant to make it clear that these incidents were putting their tenancy at risk and more formal warnings were served, again resulting in an easing off of issues.
3. In April 2023, there was a further escalation of issues linked to criminal activity and causing considerable concern to neighbours. Swift action was undertaken and a successful application was made for a Closure Order on the address, to ensure that no visitors were allowed for the next 3-months, whilst evidence was gathered to support a longer-term solution through possession proceedings.
4. In July 2023, legal documentation was served on the tenant to provide notice that possession proceedings were to be undertaken. The availability of the Court meant that it was necessary in August 2023 to seek an extension to the Closure Order, in order to continue the relative peace to the neighbours.
5. Whilst residents were reluctant to be actively involved in supporting the investigation, due to a genuine fear of reprisals, during this period we were able to engage with one particular neighbour who provided enough detailed information. It was then possible for a member of the Community Resilience Team to provide the evidence in place of the witness, thereby keeping the identity of the supportive neighbour confidential.

6. In November 2023, the Court granted possession of the property. Regrettably part of the direction was to allow the tenant to remain at the premises over the Christmas period and not vacate until 1st January 2024. Despite the Court order, issues continued over the festive period, with multiple calls to the police and continual alarm, harassment and distress being caused to the neighbours.
7. 1st January 2024 passed, and the problematic tenant refused to vacate their property, resulting in it being necessary to return to Court once again for a bailiff warrant to enable eviction.
8. In early February 2024, the eviction was carried out by the Court Bailiffs and the tenant was excluded from the housing register at Wigan, along with their immediate family members, meaning that they will no longer be entitled to have council owned accommodation.

"I cannot thank the officer enough for all the help and support she has given me throughout the entire time I have been dealing with nuisance neighbours. She is a fabulous credit to your team. She is polite, respectful, and an absolute godsend to your team" Neighbour quote.

What to look out for this year

Here are just some of our key priorities to improve housing services for our residents across the borough – this year we will be:

- We have been developing our new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy which outlines our New Era approach to delivering this priority area in partnership with all stakeholders in the borough. The Strategy will launch later in 2024/25.
- Preparing for emerging national and regional housing policy, working with our partners and residents to understand what this means for our local communities.
- Former Ince St Mary's, Ince: The scheme, which started on site in late 2022. St Mary's, Ince will be built to Passivhaus standards which is highly energy efficient. The development is set to complete by January 2025, with first phase handover of units due September 2024.
- Developing a vulnerability strategy to help understand and meet the needs of our residents, so we can make reasonable adjustments in delivering our services.



- Launching our refreshed tenant engagement strategy and embedding this across all our services.
- Procuring a contract for a rolling programme of stock condition surveys to provide up to date information on the condition of your homes, to inform future investment.
- Developing a new repairs policy that clearly sets out our customer offer and the processes we will follow in delivering quality repairs.
- Publishing a tenancy handbook, shaped through conversation with our tenants on what information is most important to them and they want this presented.
- Using feedback from Tenant Surveys to have a greater understanding of priorities for your neighbourhoods, including improving our communication on the work we currently do.
- Developing a 'Good Neighbourhood Management Policy' that sets out how we respond to low-level anti-social behaviour.
- Introducing our new 'See the Person, See the Home' training programme for all staff and contractors, to reinforce the importance of good customer care.
- Developing a digital asset management solution for managing the council's housing stock portfolio within an integrated system.

Information Pages

Regulatory Requirements

If you want to understand what national standards the government expects social landlords to deliver to their tenants.

Regulatory Requirements: www.wigan.gov.uk/LetableStandard

Wigan's local offer with its tenants

If you want to see the local standards that we developed with our tenants, that set out what you can expect from your housing services and what your responsibilities are.

Housing standards for tenants:

www.wigan.gov/HousingRepairsResponsibility

Contact Centre: 01942 489005

Home content insurance

Everyone should have this Home contents insurance is something everybody needs as replacing the contents of your home against events like fire, flood theft or accidental damage can be costly. Our tenants can now purchase contents insurance through us, underwritten by a major insurer at reasonable rates.

Home content insurance: www.wigan.gov.uk/HomeContentInsurance

Contact Number: 01942 486669

Wigan's repairs local offer

If you want to read our repairs local service standards developed with tenants, setting out repairs we are responsible for and those that are your responsibility.

Housing standards for tenants: www.wigan.gov.uk/HousngAboutUs

Contact Centre: 01942 489005

Volunteering opportunities in Wigan

If you would like to find out more about the range of rewarding opportunities to volunteer.

Wigan Borough Volunteering Hub: [Wigan Borough Volunteering Hub – Wigan Borough Volunteering Hub \(wiganboroughvolunteerhub.co.uk\)](http://Wigan Borough Volunteering Hub – Wigan Borough Volunteering Hub (wiganboroughvolunteerhub.co.uk))

Report a repair online

If you want to book a non-emergency repair online. This means that you can book, amend, and cancel a job online 24 hours, 7 days a week. You will also be able to choose a convenient date and timeslot for your appointment.

Housing repairs and improvements: www.wigan.gov.uk/HousingRepairs

For out of hours repairs, please call 01942 489005.

If you are homeless and in an emergency such as a fire or flood, please contact 01942 828777.

If you are dissatisfied

We aim to provide high quality services at all times. To improve our standards, we want to know if you think we have got things wrong. If you are dissatisfied you can tell us by logging a complaint at:

www.wigan.gov.uk/HousingComplaints

You can also send a letter to the Complaints and Information Team, PO Box 100, Wigan, WN1 3DS.

You may also call any public Council office.

TPAS

Join TPAS, If you want to know more about this not-for-profit organisation that champions tenant involvement in social housing across England and find out how to sign up to become a member.

TPAS: [Tpas :: Tenant engagement experts](http://Tpas::Tenantengagementexperts)

Tenant Voice and Engagement Team:

www.wigan.gov.uk/tenantvoiceandengagementteam

Tenant Voice and Engagement Team Phone Number: 01942 486645

Getting involved in your housing services at Wigan

If you want to get involved and have a real say in the services you receive, to make sure they improve and continue to meet your needs, then email us at Tenant Voice and Engagement Team: TVAET@wigan.gov.uk

Tenant Voice and Engagement Team Phone Number: 01942 486645