

# Annual Report 2012-2013

*Our commitment is 'to provide good quality housing services that meet your needs and are good value for money.'*

This report has been produced in partnership with the residents' focus group. We'd like to thank them for their assistance.

The Annual Report on performance tells you how well we have done in five key areas.

Council residents means council tenants, council leaseholders and people living in properties managed by a Resident Management Organisation.



A full copy of our annual report is available at:

[www.wandsworth.gov.uk/housingannualreport](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/housingannualreport)

## Annual report

A traffic light system is used to assess how well we have performed.



a lot of work to do to meet the quality standard



some work to do to meet the quality standard



standard met

Comparison figures in brackets represent performance in 2011/12.



Secretary of State Eric Pickles MP (centre) unveils 38 new hidden homes with Leader Cllr Ravi Govindia and Cllr Paul Ellis



Residents celebrate the opening of Harbridge Community Garden

# Tenancy

## We will;

- make the best use of the available housing stock
- be clear with residents about how properties are allocated
- provide support to residents to enable them to maintain their tenancy

## Allocations



Provide information on how we allocate properties and how to apply for housing.

Make sure we are making the best use of the housing available to meet a range of housing needs.

### How have we met the standard?

- We housed 1,344 (1,142) households
- We reduced the amount of time it takes to relet an empty property from 24 days in 2011/12 to **23.5 days**
- We moved **84** (46) under occupying households to smaller more suitable accommodation against a target of 60
- Despite difficult circumstances, we managed to keep the number of households in temporary accommodation to within the forecast of 600
- Completed the Rollo estate hidden homes project. It provided 38 social rent units and was included in a list of the 'Top 50 UK Affordable Housing Developments'.

## Rents



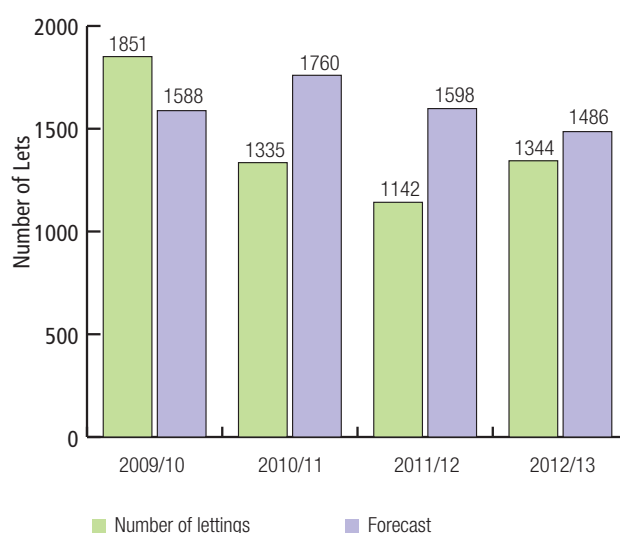
To provide an efficient, effective and responsive rent collection service.

Review rents and service charges each year and provide information on how we calculate them.

### How have we met the standard?

- **97%** (97%) of rent was collected
- There has been a small increase in the total arrears at year end with **£3.96m** (£3.78m). This equates to **3.3%** of the total rent collected
- Reduced the number of tenants with more than seven weeks of arrears from 7% to **6.4%**.
- Along with the housing benefit service provided advice and assistance to residents on the welfare benefit reforms - due to be implemented from April 2013.

Number of Lettings -Actual and forecast



## Tenure



Provide either introductory, flexible fixed term or secure tenancies.

Give new residents a copy of their tenant or lease agreements and explain the content.

Check our homes are occupied legally and take action where they are not.

### How have we met the standard?

- We implemented the council tenancy policy which identifies how the council will decide on the type and length of tenancy offered to new council residents
- **44** (41) illegally occupied properties were recovered by the council for reuse
- **2,463** residents use the WATCH Lifeline service which helps them to remain independent
- **174** (83) tenants were helped by the tenancy support team during 2012/2013

# Neighbourhood and community

## We will;

- work with partners to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour
- work with residents to improve local facilities and the environment
- respond to emergencies in a timely manner and work to keep our estates clean and safe
- provide affordable housing in the borough to meet the needs of residents

## Local area co-operation



Work with residents to improve local facilities and the environment.  
Work with other agencies and residents to protect them from risk and prevent harm to children, young people and vulnerable adults.  
Work to achieve wider borough objectives including improving employment opportunities and prospects.

### How have we met the standard?

- We began work on the council's Housing Into Work pilot scheme for young adults in housing need
- The Family Recovery Project is now working with 30 families in the borough with complex needs to improve their future
- We worked with residents' associations to improve our estates, projects have included; building a meeting room at St Margaret's sheltered scheme, establishing a meeting room for Manresa and Minstead residents' association and 17 residents' associations received funding for community gardens.
- **303** affordable dwellings were developed through joint working with partners.

## Tackling anti-social behaviour and crime



Work with other services and the police to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB).  
Take action against offenders and tell residents about outcomes.

### How have we met the standard?

- Prevented and taken effective action to deal with ASB (see table below)

	2011/12	2012/13
Number of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts signed	16	5
Number of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders served	2	0
Number of Notices Seeking Possession for ASB	44	50
Number of evictions for ASB	11	7

- Dealt with **759** new cases of ASB compared with 879 in 2011/12
- **84%** ASB cases have been closed and resolved successfully
- Improved how we inform you what we are doing to tackle ASB through one to one contact and Homelife articles.

## Neighbourhood management



Make sure estates are maintained to a good standard and improved where possible.  
Respond to emergencies in a timely manner.  
Work with other services and the police to keep your communities and estates clean and safe.

### How have we met the standard?

- **42,925** (33,547) emergency calls were handled
- **4,500** health and safety inspections were carried out in council owned blocks
- **79%** of residents were satisfied with estate services when a survey was completed in June 2012
- Continued reductions in the level of graffiti by 5,342m<sup>2</sup> from 25,098m<sup>2</sup> to **19,756m<sup>2</sup>**
- We have committed to develop plans to improve the Winstanley/ York Road estates and have commissioned master planners to engage with residents to develop those plans.



# Tenant involvement and empowerment

## We will;

- Involve residents in decision-making processes that affect them
- Support the development of accredited residents' associations
- Provide residents with a variety of methods to tell the housing department what they think of services and our performance
- Learn from complaints and make use of them to improve services

## Customer service, choice and complaints



Give residents good quality, up to date information.

Make sure residents know how to complain.

Learn from comments and complaints.

### How have we met the standard?

- Dealt with **1,225** (484) complaints (both departmental and contractor). The increase is largely due to parking appeals now being classed as complaints.
- **95%** (96%) of complaints were responded to within the target time of 10 working days
- Arrangements have been put in place to ensure that complaints which now progress to the Housing Ombudsman rather than the Local Government Ombudsman are dealt with correctly
- Overall satisfaction with services for tenants has increased to **81%** (70%) and for leaseholders to **69%** (58%)
- Three independent surveys were carried out (on estate services, participation and general housing department services) to find out residents' satisfaction with different housing department services all providing overall positive feedback but also areas for learning

## Involvement and empowerment



Encourage resident involvement.

Inform residents about services and give them the opportunity to check and challenge how well the department is doing.

### How have we met the standard?

- **73** (53) estate inspections have been carried out with residents and councillors
- Worked with the **67** accredited residents' associations in the borough to ensure residents can make their views known
- Celebrated 40 years of resident participation in the borough
- **£322,013** (£261,000) spent on community projects that residents told us were a priority
- Worked with residents who are dog owners, by providing a free dog neutering scheme. **60** dogs have been neutered
- Provided an outdoor gym on Doddington estate as a free fitness resource for residents

## Understanding more and responding to diverse needs



Treat residents with fairness and respect.

Make sure services meet a range of needs and are easily accessible to all residents.

### How have we met the standard?

- Published housing equalities information on the council's website, which has raised no issues which the housing department must address
- **233** (170) disabled adaptations for council and private residents have been carried out
- Reduced the average cost of carrying out a disabled adaptation

# Home

## We will;

- Provide cost effective, timely and good quality repairs and maintenance service for residents and at all times ensure that necessary health and safety checks are undertaken
- Maintain all homes to the decent homes standard
- Undertake decent homes plus work to improve blocks and estates where funding is available
- Monitor and report our performance for emergency, urgent and routine repairs
- Inspect a percentage of all repair orders after they've been completed to ensure value for money

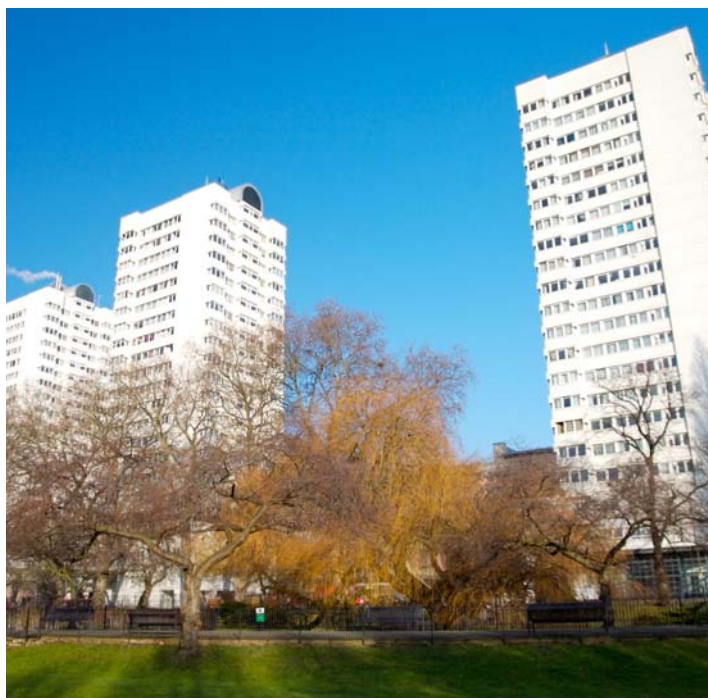
## Quality of accommodation



Meet the decent homes standard and where possible the decent homes plus standard.

### How have we met the standard?

- Continued to meet the decent homes standard and invested **£22.4m** (£25.4m) into the council's housing stock
- Started over **25** major works projects including; roof renewals, window renewals and external decoration schemes
- **237** private sector dwellings were made decent
- **83%** (88%) resident satisfaction amongst residents who had major works on their estate



## Repairs and maintenance



Provide an efficient and cost effective repairs service, which gets the job done right the first time. Carry out health and safety checks/inspections.

### How have we met the standard?

- **£24.0m** (£24.7m) spent on repairs
- **94%** (95.2%) of repairs were completed within target time. (In 2012/13 we aimed to complete 97% of repairs within the target time).
- Introduced the housing department's Resident Repair and Reward Plan that will reward tenants whose home is in good condition when they leave
- Carried out annual gas servicing in **99.64%** (99.79%) of tenanted properties that have gas appliances
- Completed **1,150** fire risk inspections in council managed blocks in the borough



# Value for money

## We will;

- Provide frontline services in the most cost effective manner
- Take action to prevent fraudulent use of council owned and managed properties
- Monitor the use of services to ensure they are fully utilised and providing value for money

## Value for money



Aim to achieve value for money by tendering services where, for instance, contracts have come to an end.

Consult residents on major works projects and inform them of smaller works, which do not require statutory consultation.

Each year look at our thirty year business plan to check it remains financially viable.

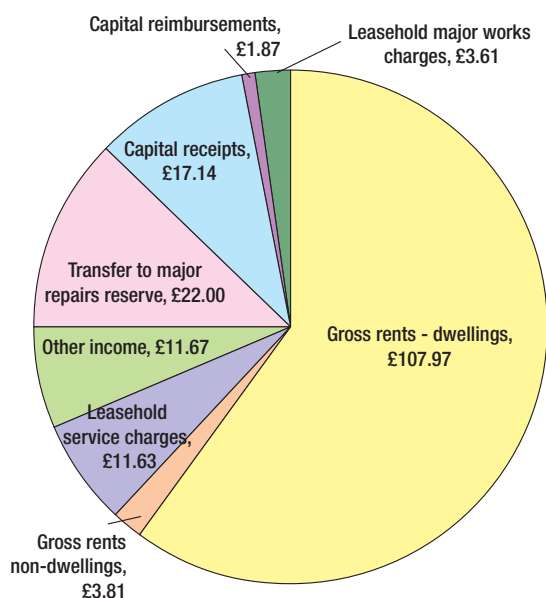
### How have we met the standard?

- Continued to effectively manage the Housing Revenue Account, demonstrated by a current reserve level of £210.5m
- The average weekly management cost for 2012/13 was **£18.78** (£17.82)
- The average weekly maintenance cost for 2012/13 was **£29.81** (£29.37)
- Average weekly rent was **£120.85** (£111.95)
- Work has taken place to ensure that the council is ready for the welfare reform changes being introduced
- Re-tendered **12** contracts that commenced during 2012/13

### Key aims/issues for 2013/2014:

- Make sure plans are in place to deal with a forecasted rise in the number of households seeking housing assistance from the council
- Establish a Wandsworth Affordable Housing programme to support low cost rental development
- The introduction of welfare reforms and the council's agreed approach to deal with any arising issues
- Review the council's Housing and Homelessness strategies

**Housing revenue account  
income 2012/13 (£ millions)**



**Housing revenue account  
expenditure 2012/13 (£ millions)**

