



2021-22
Annual report to WFHA tenants





**we
RESPECT**

People and communities through our belief in equality, inclusion and the value of diversity. We believe we have more in common than things that separate us.

**we
EMPOWER**

People and communities by maximising strengths and opportunities and building resilience.

**we are
AMBITIOUS**

Constantly improving, delivering better value for money and striving to provide more homes and services.

**we
CARE**

About what we do, step up to take responsibility and are passionate about our social purpose and making a positive difference.

**we are
HONEST**

Act with integrity and are accountable to our tenants, our partners and each other.

A challenging year for us and for you

Navigating the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic threw up challenges for every housing provider around the country, including WFHA. As in the previous year, our staff and Board worked tirelessly to minimise the impact on tenants, whilst prioritising safety.

As a result, our services remained strong and tenants showed their appreciation, giving us great tenant satisfaction feedback.

Despite the challenges, we were also able to maintain high levels of fire risk and health and safety compliance – which remains one of our key priorities, as well as being an important concern for tenants.

There is no doubt that 2021-22 was a difficult year for our tenants too. We know that many of you were already struggling to make ends meet and that you are now faced with the cost-of-living crisis. We will continue to offer our support wherever we can and we will also signpost you to other agencies where possible. Please call us or have a look at our newsletters and website.

Since the publication of the Government's White Paper, The Charter for Social Housing Residents, and the formal launch of the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants initiative, the social housing sector has been rebuilding and strengthening its relationships with tenants.

Taken together, these documents encourage landlords to commit formally to providing safe, good quality and well-maintained homes. We are also expected to keep you well informed, to be accountable, to listen to your views and to give tenants genuine influence over our work. Some of these areas are likely to be set in law when the Government's Social Housing Regulation Bill finishes its progress through Parliament.

So, with all this in mind, we were very pleased to restart our Tenant Scrutiny Panel. Its members have already made valuable contributions and we look forward to more. We continue to encourage tenants and their household members to get involved if they can.

We will shortly be saying goodbye to our Board Chair Duncan Howard, as well as longstanding Board members Emma Brett, Nevil Osborne and Joe Mensah-Dankwah. We will also be saying farewell to Cheryl Whittle, Director of Operations and Deputy CEO. We wish to thank them warmly for their hard work over a number of years. We really appreciate their support and wish them all well for the future.

Finally, let us end on a positive note. Our Board, executive and staff team are committed to our mission, values and, most importantly, to our tenants. So, we are all pleased to see this



reflected in high levels of tenant satisfaction. Overall tenant satisfaction is a pleasing 87.5%, while satisfaction with repairs is 97.5%. Better still, when we ask tenants if they feel listened to, treated fairly and with respect, tenant satisfaction is a gratifying 100%.

If you have any ideas about how we can improve the services we provide you with, please do get in touch with us.

About WFHA

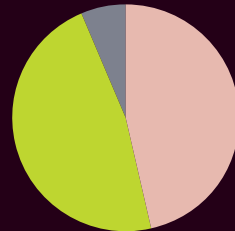
WFHA is an independent, not-for-profit, Registered Provider of housing. We currently work entirely in the London Borough of Waltham Forest.

We belong to the g320 group of small housing associations in London. The group now has around 70 members – all with fewer than 2,500 homes.

g320 members are locally focused, house a rich mixture of Londoners, and many of us offer specialist or support services.

The g320 provides us with a forum for good practice, networking and partnership working.

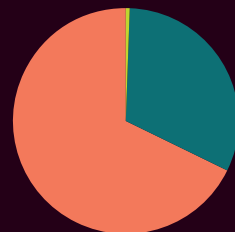
Type of home



- General needs (47%)
- Sheltered (46%)
- Supported (7%)

329 homes in total

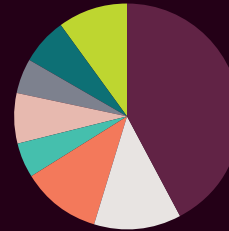
Age of tenants



- 18-24 years (<1%)
- 25-54 years (32%)
- 55+ (67%)

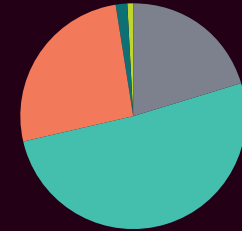
325 tenants in total

Ethnicity of tenants



- White British (42%)
- Black/Black British Caribb. (12%)
- Black/Black British African (11%)
- Black British other (5%)
- Asian/Asian British (7%)
- Mixed white other (6%)
- White Irish/White other (7%)
- Other/No information (10%)

Size of home



- Studio flats (20%)
- One bed flats (51%)
- Two bed flats/houses (26%)
- Three bed houses (2%)
- Four bed houses (1%)



Tenant Scrutiny Panel

We were really excited to announce the relaunch of our Tenant Scrutiny Panel at the beginning of March 2022. Our Panel members – Laverne Earle, Dulcie Southam and Mark Southam – were able to attend their first meeting in person at our head office and have met several times since.

Tenant scrutiny is a way of giving tenants greater influence and the ability to hold their landlords to account. It gives them more power over our business decisions, performance and the way we are governed.

We want our tenants to have an active stake in the way we run WFHA – because we know we can do better when we work as partners. The Panel now forms a strong part of our governance arrangements, alongside the Board, and are also developing links with our Human Resources, Remuneration and Governance Committee.

Panel members began by reviewing their role and the Panel's terms of reference. They have since discussed our current Business Plan and our Tenant Engagement Strategy for 2021-26.

The Panel have had strong input into recent tenant newsletters – overseeing a special edition about keeping tenants safe and secure in their homes. They have also scrutinised and discussed our health and safety performance.

To help them develop stronger scrutiny skills, members have begun attending seminars. They also have access to TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service) for training, webinars and networking.

We would encourage all tenants to get involved at some level. However much or little time you have available, we would be pleased to hear from you. To find out more, email us at info@wfha.org.uk or call us on 020 8524 6987

I feel
the tenant scrutiny
panel meetings have been
very successful on a local level,
giving fascinating insight into how the
housing association works.

The skillset and ability of such a small and
diverse team is remarkable, as most staff
members have to perform multiple
roles within the organisation.

Mark Southam



Keeping your homes in good condition

Repair satisfaction

Our Asset Services Team regularly speak to tenants following a repair call out, to check that you are happy with our repair service and the repair just completed. If you are unhappy with your repair, we can address this straight away.

We are extremely pleased to report that your overall satisfaction with the repair service is 97.5% – a fantastic achievement (it is 95% for the similar social housing landlords we compare our performance with).

Health and safety update

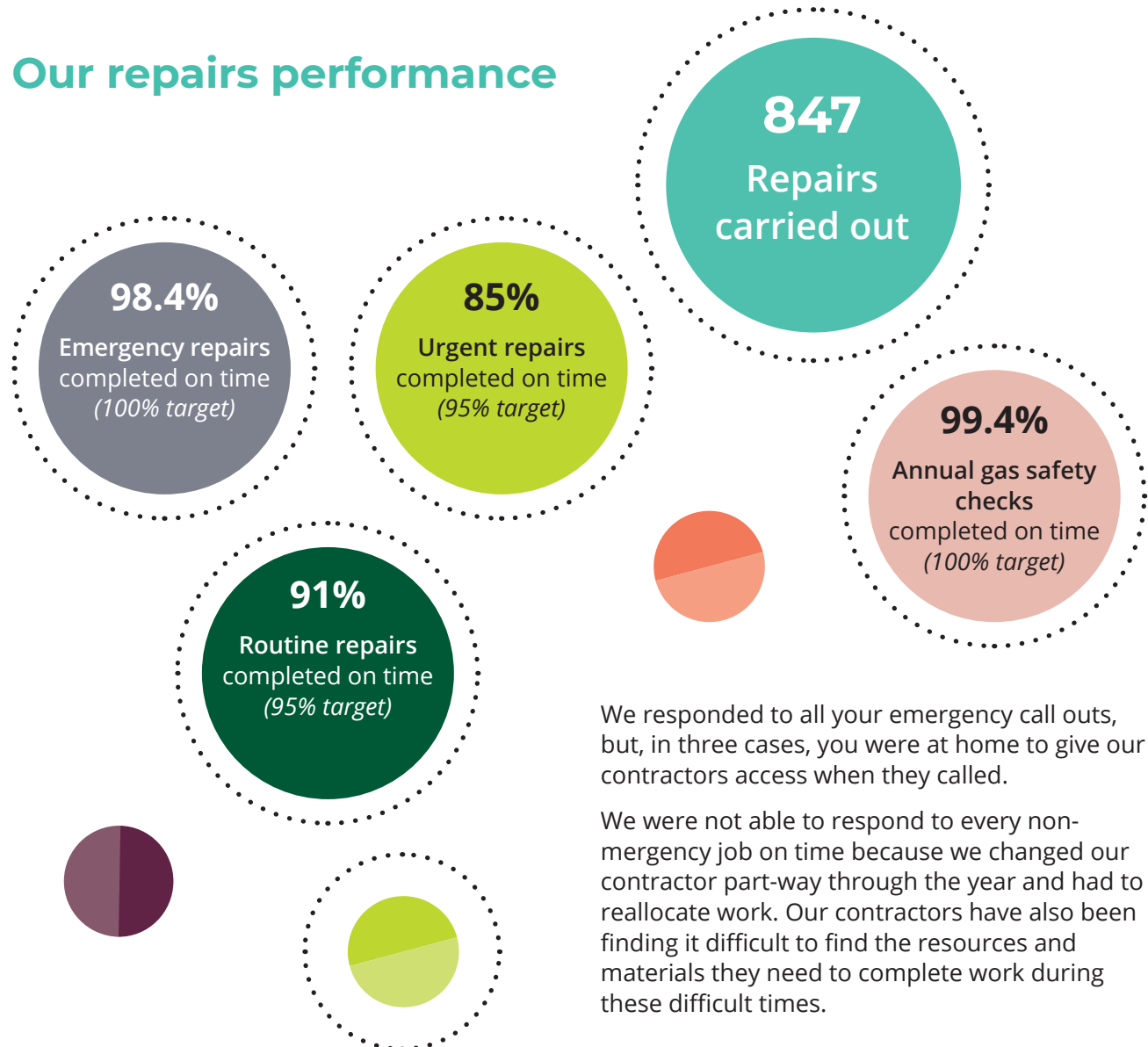
Keeping tenants safe is our number one priority.

During the year, we spent almost £288,000 on fire safety works. This included upgrading front doors to meet regulatory standards. We also carried out fireproofing and associated works at various schemes.

In recent tenant newsletters, we have highlighted important information about water hygiene, managing asbestos in the home, and damp and mould.

If you have any questions or concerns about safety in your home or at your scheme, please let us know.

Our repairs performance



We responded to all your emergency call outs, but, in three cases, you were at home to give our contractors access when they called.

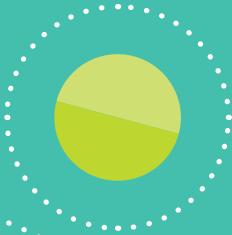
We were not able to respond to every non-emergency job on time because we changed our contractor part-way through the year and had to reallocate work. Our contractors have also been finding it difficult to find the resources and materials they need to complete work during these difficult times.

Investing in homes

During the year, we completed more Decent Homes works.

We fitted:

- 24 new kitchens – spending £142,594, and
- 21 new bathrooms – spending £92,965.

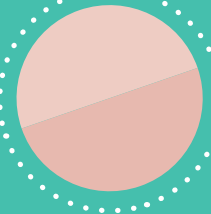
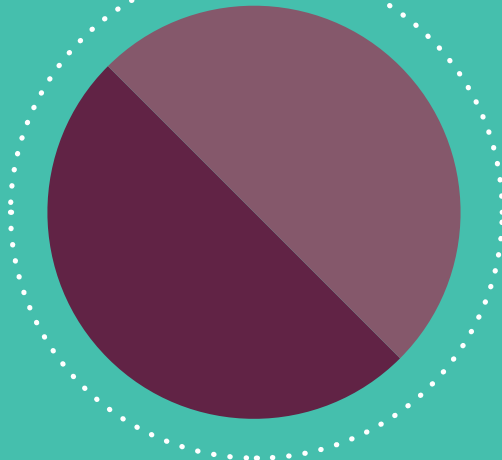


Reducing emissions

We installed external insulation at our Woodland Road scheme. This stops heat getting in or out – keeping homes warm in winter and cool in the summer. We are doing work like this to lower heating bills and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

At Woodland Road, it also improved the look of the building.

Pictured: Woodland Road before (below) and after (above) the works.



Operations

Our frontline staff have had to respond to various challenges during the pandemic. This has transformed the way we provide you with services.

Like many other organisations, we have adopted an agile working policy. Agile working uses technology to enable staff to complete their tasks wherever they are. They are no longer tied to the office.

In practice, this new way of working gives us more time to spend with our tenants. Using our mobiles and our laptops, we have instant access to the information we need when we are in working from home, or making a home visit.

Our newly installed phone system adds to the picture – helping us to work away from the office and making it easier for tenants to reach us. We can also make welfare calls to our sheltered tenants remotely, if we need to.

Visits to our office are now by appointment only. This allows us to deliver a more efficient and fairer service. We can plan and prepare for your visits, to make the most of everyone's time.

Because we are focused on delivery outcomes, we are able to be more responsive. Staff sickness continues to decrease and this has helped staff manage a balance in their work and home life.

Complaints and anti-social behaviour



You made 14 complaints this year. We were able to resolve satisfactorily:

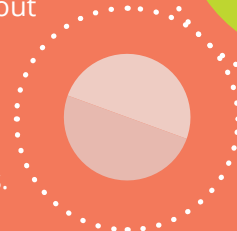
- 11 at stage 1
- two at stage 2, and
- one at stage 3.

Six of the complaints were about repairs and five were about anti-social behaviour. There was a complaint about housing management, a complaint about health and safety, and a third complaint about another issue.

Empty homes and lettings

We relet 24 homes during the year, re-tenanting our empty homes in an average of 24.8 days.

We let 91% (22 out of 24) of these homes to Black, Asian and other ethnic minority tenants.





Working partnerships

We continued to work with:

- The London Borough of Waltham Forest through a compact agreement
- Outlook Care and Outward Housing, who provide support at our disability schemes
- Erosh – the national consortium for older people’s housing and support
- TPAS, the tenant involvement experts
- our Head of Operations and Deputy CEO works with the borough’s ‘Team around the Person’ initiative to provide multi-agency, person-centred, care and support to adults
- The Build London Partnership for new developments, and
- Kickstart.

Sharon’s story

Sharon, who lives in Chingford, says:

“WFHA have been so helpful. If I’ve ever needed anything or wanted information on something, everyone has been on the other end of the phone to assist me.

“Absolutely everyone is here to help you – it’s great, it’s exactly what you need when you’re on your own.

“Having someone there to help me whenever I need it puts my mind at ease. I’m very happy with them.”



The staff team

After 14 years at WFHA, we are sad to announce that Cheryl Whittle, Director of Operations and Deputy CEO will be leaving us.

Shahron Shah, Chief Executive, said: "Over her 14 years of service, Cheryl has seen and been part of many changes that benefit our tenants and staff, and has made a huge contribution to the work of WFHA. Many others outside of WFHA have benefited from her outreach in the community too. You can't walk down the street with Cheryl without someone she knows coming up to say hello.

We will miss her very much and are grateful that others in our sector will be benefiting from her dedication and experience. I, and all at WFHA, wish Cheryl the very best for her future and say 'Thank you, for all you have done!'"

Cheryl said: "WFHA has been a large part of my career in the sector. I would like to thank all of the staff for their dedication and commitment and wish the very best to the association for the future."

We have also said goodbye to Tyla Williams, Sarah Baptiste, Janet Djan-Ologun and Tanisha Ramgoolam and give thanks for their contribution as members of the WFHA team.

Tanisha joined WFHA as part of the Kickstart Scheme – a government programme that delivered funding to employers who offered



Top picture: Samir Dahhane, Independent Living Officer; Angela Hendrick, Operations Manager; Kevin Marius, Asset Services Manager



Middle picture: Angela Hendrick, Operations Manager; Linda Wright, Head of Governance



Bottom picture: Sally Rowe, Head of Asset Services; Nicky Anderson, Head of Operations.

temporary new job roles to 16-24 years olds who were getting Universal Credit. The programme, which ended in March 2022, was aimed at preventing unemployed young people from facing long-term unemployment.

Tanisha spent a successful six months with us as a part-time PR and Communications Assistant. She gained lots of useful work experience, while also learning about the housing sector.

Governance: the Board

Board members met remotely throughout the year, but did have the opportunity to meet in person for a Board away day in July 2021, which was a great success.

The Board oversees our work, ensures we remain accountable, keeps track of our risk map and agrees our strategic direction.

During the year, members approved our new three-year Business Plan for 2021-2024, which has four objectives: improved accountability; safe and good quality homes and services; environment sustainability; a stronger organisation.

They also agreed our new Tenant Engagement Strategy and action plan (available on our website). In addition, the Board regularly reviews our 30-year plan.

Our Chair, Duncan Howard, and three other long-serving members came to the end of their term in September 2022. In advance of this, members put a lot of thought into planning how we would manage Board succession, so that a new Chair and members could be chosen and integrated as seamlessly as possible.

We would like to thank our members for their hard work this year. They are truly focused on achieving the best outcomes for our tenants. We are pleased to welcome Dale Walker as our new Chair from November 2022.

The Board in 2020-21

Pictured clockwise from top left:

Duncan Howard, Chair

Marina Robertson, Vice Chair

Julia Andrews, Chair of Human Resources, Remuneration & Governance Committee (resigned September 2021)

Emma Brett, Chair of Finance, Audit & Risk Committee and Treasurer

Not pictured:

Nevil Osborne, Chair of Asset Management & Development Committee to September 2021

Richard F Sanders, Chair of Asset Management & Development Committee from September 2021

Dale Walker, Chair of Human Resources, Remuneration & Governance Committee from September 2021

Ben Hutton

Joe Mensah-Dankwah

Maggie McCann (elected to the Board in September 2022)

Gareth Jones (co-opted to the Asset Management & Development Committee in September 2019)



Our financial year

At 31 March 2022, the WFHA has a strong positive balance sheet with cash of £902,523 (2021: £1,181,319) and net current assets of £823,801 (2021: £841,028).

Overall, our finances are strong. We have low levels of historic debt and have secured a £5m loan facility for our development programme. We have so far drawn down £500,000.

Restrictions on planned works during the pandemic reduced our spending on major works during the year.

Rents

We collected 96% of rent due (99.7% in 2020-21), against a target of 100%. The median for our benchmarking group of similar landlords was 100%.

Rent arrears stood at 4% (2.7% in 2021-22) against a target of 4.5%. The median for our benchmarking group was 5.11%.

Balance sheet for the year ending 31 March 2022

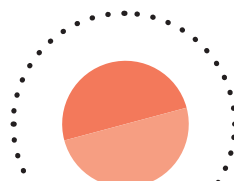
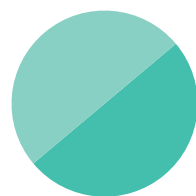
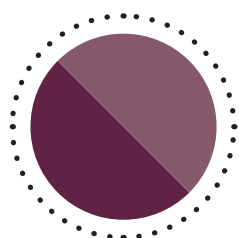
	2022	Restated 2021
Fixed assets		
Housing properties	13,837,224	13,477,669
Other fixed assets	159,593	192,045
	13,996,817	13,669,714
Current assets		
Debtors	656,351	339,859
Cash and cash equivalents	902,523	1,181,319
	1,558,874	1,521,178
Creditors		
Amounts falling due within one year	(735,073)	(680,150)
Net current assets	823,801	841,028
Total assets less current liabilities	14,820,618	14,510,742
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	7,303,148	7,061,997
Provision for liabilities	144,000	274,000
	7,447,148	7,335,997
Capital and reserves		
Called-up share capital	19	19
Not revenue reserves	7,373,451	7,174,726
	14,820,618	14,510,742

Cash flow statement for the year ending 31 March 2022

	2022	2021
Net cash generated from operating activities	192,541	612,478
Cash flow from investing activities		
Interest received	604	426
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(731,571)	(490,406)
Net cash generated from investing activities	(730,967)	(489,980)
Cash flow from financing activities		
Interest paid	(56,170)	(62,325)
New bank loan	500,000	—
Repayment of borrowings	(184,200)	(69,920)
Net cash used in financing activities	259,630	(132,245)
Net (decrease)/ increase in cash & cash equivalents	(278,796)	(9,747)
Cash & cash equivalents at start of year	1,181,319	1,191,066
Cash & cash equivalents at year end	902,523	1,181,319

Statement of comprehensive income for the year ending 31 March 2022

	2022	Restated 2021
Turnover	2,571,824	2,599,771
Operating costs	(2,391,533)	(2,529,400)
Operating surplus	180,291	70,371
Interest receivable	604	426
Interest payable	(62,170)	(62,325)
Surplus for the year	118,725	7,472
Actuarial gain/(loss) on defined benefit pension plan for the year	80,000	(266,000)
Total comprehensive income/(loss) for year	198,725	(258,528)



Delivering value for money

Our value for money strategy commits us to delivering economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity. This is mapped to our Business Plan for 2021-24.

Our development strategy is centred on increasing the number of homes we own by 23% over the next three years. As a larger organisation, we will be able to benefit from economies of scale and it will be easier to find efficiency savings.

Over the year, we made some progress working with the London Borough of Waltham Forest to return a home to social housing. We strengthened our relationship with London & Quadrant (L&Q) under the Build London Partnership programme and expect to seek planning permission to develop new homes on our land during the coming year.

We continued to look for efficiency savings to reduce our overall cost for managing and maintaining each unit.

The benchmarking data shown compares our results to the average performance of other similar landlords.

Value for money metrics 2021-22

	Achieved 2020-21	Achieved 2021-22	Target 2021-22	Benchmark 2021-22	2022-23 target
Reinvestment (spend on homes as a % of total stock value)	3.43%	5.64%	5%	4.4%	5%
New supply delivered (how many new homes)	0%	0%	0%	0.7%	0%
Gearing (our debt levels – loans allow us to invest in existing homes or develop new ones)	(2.46%)	1.89%	<5%	40.5%	5.2%
EBITDA MRI interest cover (measures our surpluses against the amount of interest we pay)	649%	903%	672%	118%	223%
Headline social housing costs per unit (average spend on each home – includes managing, servicing, repairing & upgrading costs)	£6,271	£6,008	£6,467	£6,200	£5,500
Operating margin: social housing lettings (surplus before loan interest paid)	0.78%	5.68%	9.7%	23.7%	9.18%
Operating margin: all homes (surplus before loan interest paid)	3.46%	7.8%	9.94%	19.4%	8.95%
Return on capital employed (surplus as a % of capital used)	0.49%	1.22%	0.79%	2.1%	2.93%

Ricky's story

Ricky in Walthamstow reported a plumbing repair to us and was very pleased with the results.

On his satisfaction form he told us that he was "Very happy" with the service we provided.

On whether our staff were helpful, he fed back: "Reported the repair one day – fixed the very next day – it does not get any better than that! Excellent!"



Janice's story

Janice lives in Walthamstow. She told us:

"I've only great praises about Waltham Forest Housing – nothing to moan about!

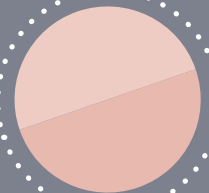
"They're so nice. Ever since filling out the form, everything has been great. I was previously in a ground floor flat with a garden, but since I am getting older can no longer take care of gardening work.

"My brother lives in housing provided by WFHA and recommended that I apply. We're so close to one another now, which is nice – right opposite each other in fact – and we can help each other whenever needed. I was able to bring my cat with me too – I've had her since she was a baby and she is now 15 years old.

"I was housed within one year, a really quick process.

"Everyone at WFHA has been so pleasant, polite and helpful. They answer my questions with honesty and direct me to the right member of staff when I have queries. Ruth was really nice and helped me through the process of filling out forms, the whole thing was sorted in a week!

"I've only got good things to say about everybody at Waltham Forest!"



Waltham Forest Housing Association

Energy Centre, 31 Church Hill
Walthamstow E17 3RU
Phone: 020 8524 6987

Email: info@wfha.org.uk

Web: www.wfha.org.uk

Executive Team

Shahron Shah, Chief Executive

Cheryl Whittle, Director of Operations and
Deputy CEO

Michael Pughsley, Director of Asset
Management and Development

Stephen Leonard, Interim Finance Director,
January 2021 to March 2021

Neil Thorneycroft, Interim Finance Director,
March 2021 to July 2022

Professional advisors

Bankers: Lloyds Bank

Auditors: CLA Evelyn Partners (formerly Nexia
Smith & Williamson) – External
Mazars – Internal

Solicitors: Blake Morgan

Regulator of Social Housing Registered Number: L0461

Co-operative and Community Benefit Society Number: 21186R

