

# Business Plan

2016/19





## A MESSAGE from the Board Chair

In 2016 Ainsley Forbes was elected to the role of Chair of our Board. He succeeds Julia Cotton who previously held this role since Lewisham Homes began in 2007.

On behalf of the Board I would like to thank Julia for her hard work, dedication and commitment to Lewisham Homes over the past nine years. Julia oversaw the setup of Lewisham Homes and has been tireless in championing improved services and ensuring Lewisham Homes listens to its residents'. Over this time she has overseen a 13% increase in tenant satisfaction, a £3.8 million reduction in management costs and a £185 million programme of investment benefiting thousands of resident's homes across the borough.

We plan to build on the foundations over the next three years. We will continue our drive to increase satisfaction and add value to our services among tenants and leaseholders, providing new ways to access services online, give more options to get involved and help shape the services we provide.

The next three years will be challenging for our community. Housing costs are rising and the supply of truly affordable housing is shrinking. We will work hard with Lewisham Council to explore how we can provide more affordable housing for people in Lewisham.

Our success will be based on investing in our people, redesigning our services around new technology and strengthening our relationships with partners including Lewisham Council. By growing the organisation, evolving services, and continuing to be efficient we aim to generate the financial capacity to do more for Lewisham and our community.

**Ainsley Forbes**  
Board Chair

## NEW PROJECTS AND SERVICES



# The Board

We are governed by a management board. It sets our overall direction and checks on our progress in delivering on our mission to provide great housing services for thriving neighbourhoods. The Board is made up of seven residents, five independents and three Councillors who help to keep us focused and challenge our management team to ensure we are doing the right things to deliver improved services to our residents.

Our resident board members bring first-hand experience of our services and the issues and

concerns that are important to our residents. Our independent board members bring expertise in areas such as finance, development, property management and governance. Our council board members bring a wider perspective on community issues across Lewisham and help ensure we are working effectively with the Council and for the community. They provide a valuable challenge helping us focus on priorities and ensuring we have strong resident membership.

## THE MEMBERS

	<b>Ainsley Forbes</b> Chair and independent		<b>Ophelia Bobori</b> Resident		<b>Joan Reid</b> Councillor
	<b>Grace Padonou Addy</b> Vice chair and resident		<b>Gareth Siddorn</b> Councillor		<b>Sarah Smith</b> Independent
	<b>Terry James</b> Independent and chair of audit committee		<b>Nick Joslyn</b> Independent		<b>Neil Poppmacher</b> Resident
	<b>Steven McGann</b> Resident and chair of scrutiny committee		<b>Andrea Corsi</b> Resident		<b>Susan Wise</b> Councillor
	<b>Kevin Stearns</b> Resident		<b>Owen Fox</b> Independent		<b>Steve Gough</b> Independent



Lewisham Homes is an ambitious organisation set up to improve housing in the borough, currently managing 18,000 homes on behalf of Lewisham Council. We are a not-for-profit organisation undertaking a major local investment programme, operating our own maintenance company, and building new homes through a partnership with the local authority.

While housing management is our core business we also want to make a difference to Lewisham people by building new homes and improving our estates.

We are proud to be 100% focused on Lewisham and want to build stronger communities and partnerships through local investment and creating opportunity for our current residents, the wider community and future generations.



### A MESSAGE from the Chief Executive

As we enter the first year of a new management agreement with

Lewisham Council it is a good opportunity to reflect on how things have changed since we were set up, and what the future holds. Thinking back to when we started in 2007, the government was issuing grants to refurbish and build new social housing, people were conducting business in person or over the phone, rent rises happened annually and right to buy discounts were capped at £16,000. Nearly 10 years on we enter a more difficult time. Grants and rents have been reduced, and many of our partners face challenging times and are less able to support people. Ahead we face four years of reduced income through rent reductions, which means we have less money to deliver services for residents too.

However, our mission remains and we have made significant progress to date. We are committed to increasing tenant and leaseholder satisfaction with our services, building new homes, creating strong partnerships and doing our best to benefit Lewisham's community and neighbourhoods.

Over the past year we invested in all of our employees by running an organisation-wide customer care programme. We are also improving our offer of service to residents by giving more online and through self-service. Providing this means investing in some of our systems and technology, supporting residents to take their first steps online, and challenging ourselves to do things differently to be more efficient, and deliver value for money. We will ensure that despite financial constraints we build on and continue to deliver on the service improvements we have made over the last nine years.

We are ambitious for Lewisham, for our residents and for us. This plan sets out our areas of focus ahead. We will invest in our employees and recruit the best people to join us; use new technology to improve services; grow the organisation and add value; and challenge ourselves to be innovative to address the borough's housing need.

**Andrew Potter**  
CEO, Lewisham Homes

# Our mission

To deliver great housing services  
for thriving neighbourhoods

## OUR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES ARE:

Excellent services • Thriving neighbourhoods • Sustainable future • Employer of choice

## We value

### RECOGNITION

We recognise and value success, and a diverse range of talents. We take time to praise good work, and value each other and our customers.

### TRUST

We do as we say and lead by example. Our managers empower and trust staff, are open and inclusive and as an organisation we are committed to involving staff in decision making.

### PASSION

We have a positive attitude and take pride in our work. We try to break down barriers and aim to be the best at what we do.

### COLLABORATION

We build good relationships with each other and aim to understand pressures on others. We work together to solve problems and take responsibility for this.

### EMPATHY

We treat people as individuals, show respect to each other and take time to listen. We are customer-focused and think about things from the other person's perspective

### CHALLENGE

We tackle cynicism and challenge the status quo. We remind each other of our values, are proactive and never give up in pursuit of our goals.

# What we do

As a major local employer employing 500 people we work in London's third largest borough where diversity is both a defining characteristic and a key strength. We're committed to delivering great service, investing in Lewisham neighbourhoods, and growing our business to shape a bright future.



**DIRECTOR OF HOUSING**  
Jon Kanareck  
Excellent services

## HOUSING MANAGEMENT

Our team of officers work with the council to let homes to new tenants, advise on a range of requests including changes to tenancies and transfers for re-housing, enforce Tenancy Agreements and tackle antisocial behaviour.

## INCOME & CUSTOMER SERVICES

Our contact centre advisors offer comprehensive advice covering all aspects of housing management, and manage our complaints process. We have a specialist team collecting tenants' rent, as well as providing money and benefits advice.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

We have more than 100 caretakers and gardeners who look after communal areas, bulk refuse, and green spaces across our estates, keeping them tidy and clean.

## HOMEOWNERSHIP SERVICES

Provides services to 5000 leaseholders including consultation for major works, collecting service charges, and processing Right to Buy applications.



**DIRECTOR OF PROPERTY SERVICES**  
Mark Agnew  
Thriving neighbourhoods

## ASSET MANAGEMENT

Delivers long term investment programmes to improve and maintain residents homes, including major works and strategic planning to improve estates and neighbourhoods.

## MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SERVICES

Oversees gas servicing for all tenanted properties, as well as maintenance of lifts. The team also manage a number of contracts including pirate radio removals, mobile phone and CCTV installations.

## RESPONSIVE REPAIRS

We have around 90 employees who carry out repairs in and around tenants' properties, including installation of new kitchens and bathrooms.



**DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT (INTERIM)**  
Mark Baigent  
Thriving neighbourhoods

## DEVELOPMENT

We are the Lewisham Council's development partner to build the borough's first council housing in 30 years. Our team oversees projects under the New Homes Better Places programme – a joint initiative between the Council and Lewisham Homes.



**FINANCIAL SERVICES**

Supports the development of our business plan, provides financial management support, as well as effective performance monitoring to managers across the business enabling us to improve services and deliver value for money.

**ICT**

Provides up to date and effective ICT support to our business. This includes maintaining our core business systems, ICT network and telephony services as well as developing systems that enable us to work more effectively and deliver better services.

**PROCUREMENT**

Our team provides advice and support on procurement and good contract management so that we can deliver value for money through service improvements and cost savings.

**HUMAN RESOURCES & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (HR&OD)**

Supports and advises managers on employee relations as well as dealing with recruitment, payroll queries and changes to terms and conditions. Leads on staff development and ensuring we have the right skills in the organisation to deliver excellent services.

**COMMUNICATIONS & COMMUNITY**

Our team delivers a programme of engagement and information campaigns, and supports residents to influence housing services and access opportunities locally. We build networks and partnerships which support positive community development.

**GOVERNANCE**

Supports the Board and senior managers to make decisions and govern Lewisham Homes effectively, as well as ensure we comply with Company Law.

**HEALTH & SAFETY**

The safety of residents and employees is hugely important to us, we work hard to comply with legislation, carry out risk assessments and checks and develop clear policies, including staff training.

# National and Local Context

Policy decision and the economy at both national and local level have a major impact on the housing sector and our residents.

## National

## Local

### THE ECONOMY

The global economy is weakening and this is putting strain on public finances. The Government's drive to reduce the deficit has led to cuts in welfare spending and support for Local Government.

Wages in the private sector are rising and the Government policy to attract people into work has led to an increase in the minimum wage.

### THE ECONOMY

Cuts in local government funding are having a significant impact in London where the population and demand for services is rising, housing costs are high and affordability for those on low incomes is most stretched. Affordability is an increasing issue for Londoners and increasing housing costs are a key factor in putting pressure on household budgets.

### WELFARE REFORM

The welfare system is being reformed with a single benefit paid directly to individuals rather than to landlords. The maximum benefit is decreasing from £26,000 to £23,000 per year.

Pay to stay is being introduced, this means that tenants in social housing who earn more than £30,000 (£40,000 in London) must pay market rent.

### WELFARE REFORM

Benefit levels for a small number of households in Lewisham will be capped. Direct payment of Universal Credit is expected to see an increase in arrears. These changes will require an increasing level of support on welfare advice and prevention.

### HOUSING

A clear direction in policy is emerging with Government support being shifted away from affordable housing for rent and into new housing supply for ownership.

The Right to Buy has been extended to Registered Providers. They will be compensated for the properties they sell through receipts from the sale of high value council housing.

Social Housing rents are being reduced by 1% annually for the next four years.

These changes combined mean there will be a reduction in the overall supply of affordable housing across the country.

### HOUSING

Lewisham will face reductions in its housing income and housing stock over the next four years.

The Mayor's commitment to build 500 homes will compensate for this loss of stock, but will not address the increased demand for affordable housing in Lewisham.

Providing additional sources of affordable housing will continue to be a high priority across London.

# Excellent Services

**We want our customers to experience great service at all times. We will measure our success by increasing tenant satisfaction to 85% and leaseholder satisfaction to 60% by 2019.**

In 2015 we ran an organisation-wide training programme to equip our employees with skills to give customers a great experience with us. We've been able to help people access £500,000 in benefits they are entitled to, and we're tackling problems by investigating tenancy fraud – we've recovered more than 100 properties to relet to tenants who need it.

As a result of resident feedback through surveys resident forums, we have shaped a new approach to tackling antisocial behaviour through late-night patrols, introduced our new grounds maintenance service where staff have ownership over the estates they maintain, and begun to resolve complaints more quickly and informally through a 'two day outcome' target.

We've also worked on keeping residents better informed with major works, revamped our leaseholder statements, and offered more services and feedback opportunities through our website. We know we have work to do, particularly with leaseholders, but we are committed to doing better in the future.



This year we added more services online, including booking a repair, and polls and forums to share your views



- ★ View your transactions
- ★ Repairs & gas appointments
- ★ Balance request by text
- ★ Make payments
- ★ Check communal repairs
- ★ Forums & polls



**Lewisham Homes ASB @LH\_ASB Sep 11**  
Had a good patrol round the #PepysEstate, speaking with local residents who were pleased to see us. #Walking Talking

**The ASB team are on patrol until 10pm Thursday-Saturday. They use twitter to share what they get up to @lh\_asb**



**Lewisham Homes ASB @LH\_ASB Dec 19**

Domestic violence. Welfare check carried out, increased security. All is well on we go

## Our Plans

Over the next five years we will invest in technology and services to ensure we design these around what makes the most difference to residents and the way our employees carry out their work. We will do this by:

- > Developing **more customer-focused services**, particularly online, making them simple to access.
- > Continue our conversations with residents by **contacting residents personally** to find out views on our service and how we can improve.
- > Review and improve engagement with **leaseholders to help steer service improvements**.
- > Invest **£360,000 in environmental improvements**. Introducing a new **enhanced sheltered housing support** service for older residents.
- > Increasing the choices available to **diversify resident engagement opportunities** including developing our online channels.
- > Review problems with **overgrown gardens and untidy communal spaces**.
- > Support the **Resident Scrutiny Committee to complete a review** of safety and security and ensure recommendations are taken into account in future plans.

# Thriving Neighbourhoods

We will build thriving neighbourhoods by improving our estates and building new homes. We will generate investment in Lewisham to build stronger communities, provide training and employment opportunities and build local partnerships.

## Homes people want to live in

We have invested £185 million over the past five years in making residents homes comfortable, safe and more energy efficient. We've carried out a wide-reaching programme of improvements to communal areas and estates, and set out a long term plan for continued investment for the future.

Throughout the Decent Homes programme we have worked hard to provide good quality improvements and raise the standards for investment in homes we manage, contributing to the long term reduced maintenance costs. Energy efficiency is considered in all estate improvements and is part of our approach for ongoing heating and insulation programmes.



We are working with Lewisham Council to build the first new council housing in a generation. Aiming to build 500 homes by 2019 under the New Homes Better Places programme, in 2016 we begin building 17 new homes at Wood Vale in Forest Hill, 25 at Dacre Park South in Lee, and 27 at Longfield Crescent in Sydenham. We are also consulting on sites at Kenton Court (35 homes) and Forest Estate (50 homes). Our first six new homes were completed in 2015.

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## Community Investment



Our community investment programme sets out the areas we want to make a difference in, including four

**strands: Supporting residents to get online, access to money advice, promoting health lifestyles and wellbeing, and providing opportunities to employment and training.**

In 2015/16 this included placements for six apprenticeships, a £20,000 Community Fund for projects, a series of digital inclusion initiatives, and budget advice supporting residents through a range of changes as a result of welfare reform. We also help people maximise their income through giving benefits advice.

We are building on this programme in 2016/17 to maximise funding opportunities to add social value, and working with partners to deliver more than we could on our own.

## Help to get online



**67,500 adults in Lewisham do not have basic skills needed to use the internet and are missing out on estimated savings of more than £50 million per year.**

To help address this, we have joined the borough-wide Go On Lewisham initiative which aims to help the people understand the benefits online and learn how they can save time and money.

We will work with others to spread the message through initiatives and activities that boost the digital skills of employees, customers and communities. For us, this includes giving one-on-one training to help residents access the internet, gifting reconditioned ICT equipment, and installing wifi to some homes.



## Working Together



In 2015 we began a partnership with the Albany, a leading London arts venue and community hub. Our partnership is creating opportunities that help Lewisham families to form strong local connections, including:

- > Love2Dance is a free weekly street dance programme for 8-18 year olds. It aims to increase aspirations, self-esteem and confidence and allows parents to form strong local connections. In 2015 the classes grew from 25 to 112 participants.
- > Meet Me at the Albany pop ups – an arts, social and lunch club for older people that recognises the creative potential of the over-60s offering a way to combat loneliness and its impact on wellbeing. We plan to bring more pop ups to the borough in 2016.



Hanna Dimtsu, Deputy Young Mayor of Lewisham, performing with Love2Dance at the Albany

- > Subsidised tickets for high quality family shows at the Albany for Lewisham Homes residents – making a theatre trip truly affordable.
- > The gardening and food growing hub is a new initiative for 2016 supporting residents to learn and share new skills, carry out garden maintenance, volunteer and live healthy lifestyles. Food and flowers grown on site can be transferred to window boxes, balconies and gardens across the borough.

## Employability and training opportunities



We launched an innovative new course in partnership with the London Metropolitan University and celebrated with 11 graduates. Funded by Lewisham Tenants Fund the course aims to support residents into work and volunteering.

## Our Plans

We want our residents to live in comfortable and secure homes, and in attractive and safe neighbourhoods where communities can thrive. We will work with our partners to secure investment in community development. We will do this by:

- > Increasing the supply of affordable housing by **building 500 new homes.**
- > Providing good quality energy efficient homes by **completing our Decent Homes programme** and raising the standard of homes we manage.
- > **Acquire properties** and identify opportunities for additional development.
- > Invest **£4 million in homes for older people** to support independent living.
- > Deliver a range of initiatives to **support residents to get online.**
- > Work with the council to provide management and support the provision of **estate based community facilities**
- > Maximise investment with our partners and provide opportunity for people through projects identified in our **community investment programme**



# Sustainable Future

We will ensure our services are affordable and represent value for money so we can invest more in improvements to services and residents homes. In 2016 our management agreement was extended for 10 years, securing our future as a partner with Lewisham Council.

## Value for Money

Delivering Value for Money ensures we can do more for less and keep our services to resident affordable. We will achieve this by

### Growing our business

We will look at opportunities to take on services where we can add value and deliver efficiencies through spreading our costs more widely. We are planning to take on more housing and estate services from the council and to expand the range of work carried out by our Repairs Service.

### Investing in technology

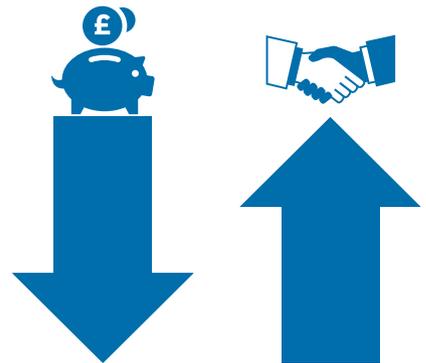
We will look to deliver efficiencies through using new technology to simplify the way we run our services and deliver better, more accessible services to residents at a lower cost.

### Buying and managing services

We are making improvements to how we buy and manage services. We are investing in training and development that will lead to better and more effective procurement and contract management. We will build relationships with our key suppliers that ensures we get real value for our community.

### Using business analysis to improve performance

We are investing in better information management systems that will help us to have the right information to make the right business decisions in the future. This will help us to target investment where it is needed and identify how we can improve performance and deliver savings that we can invest in improving services



We plan to invest **£1.75m** in improving services and providing more affordable homes

50 properties we've acquired for temp housing will save **£500,000** council housing costs this year



Our repairs service is continuing a programme of internal Decent Homes work, generating additional income and achieving 94% resident satisfaction.

In 2016/18 we will be fitting new kitchens at 18 sheltered housing schemes as part of a programme of £2.5 million investment.



We welcomed 25 new employees and invested £400,000 to deliver grounds maintenance

## Our Plans

We will build a sustainable future by ensuring that we are well managed and responsive to the needs of our residents, the community and our partners. We aim to deliver great value services ensuring we are as efficient as we can. We will set effective governance arrangements that enable us to perform well and deliver excellent and affordable services.

We will do this by:

- > **Growing business turnover by £3 million** by 2018/19 by delivering new housing, environmental and repairs services.
- > Supporting the council to look at **new forms of housing provision**, and purchase 30 homes to provide affordable temporary accommodation
- > **Investing more than £2 million in new technology** to deliver more efficient and effective services.
- > Delivering procurement and contract management training that will **maximise the value we get** from our suppliers
- > Investing in **better information management** systems and business analysis to improve performance and deliver value for money
- > Review value for money in our repairs service and **deliver more for less**
- > Review our options for **gas services** Take on management of the **hostels** service.
- > Taking over **environmental management of our estates** including bulk refuse and sweeping, and deliver more for less.
- > Providing a management service for the council's **temporary accommodation**.

Our annual employee awards recognise the contribution of individuals and teams who make a difference and make Lewisham Homes a great place to work.

**ICT**, Make a Difference Team of the Year



# Employer of Choice

**We are proud of our people and our work. We want our employees to be great leaders and to develop their skills and careers at Lewisham Homes. Together we will build a team who have the skills, flexibility and innovative spirit to do great things.**

In 2015 we invested in all staff to take part in a good quality customer care programme, to support delivery of excellent services. We are working to sustain the skills and knowledge gained, to ensure this investment gives long term value. This, together with our staff engagement programme, achieved a positive response in our staff survey, with 91% saying it's a good place to work. We are delighted to have been awarded the Investors in People Gold accreditation, which independently recognises our journey to develop and motivate our staff to achieve more.

We will continue to grow our own talent through our graduate and apprenticeship schemes (offering employment opportunities locally), and other established programmes such as leadership development and mentoring. We will use this to support our succession planning and to achieve a skilled and diverse leadership team for the future.



Our workforce is changing as we take on new areas of work, and we now have more manual than office workers. In 2015 we put more resources into supporting these teams; improving communications and forums for supervisors to develop their leadership skills.

We have integrated health, well-being and social responsibility into our engagement programme, supporting staff to take part in activities like exercise, choir and fundraising. Our new flexible working policy supports this and our plans for a more flexible future workforce.

90%



Employee engagement increased from 61% in 2014 to 90% in 2015

We're aiming for **93%** by 2018



91%

say Lewisham Homes is a good place to work!

## Our Plans

**To achieve our goals and deliver excellent services to our residents we need great people on our team. It is important to us to create opportunity and invest in our employees to ensure they give their best.**

**We will do this by:**

- > Developing our **employer brand and reward** offer so we can recruit and retain excellent staff.
- > Building on our success as a Gold Investors in People organisation, and work towards becoming a **Times Top 100** company.
- > Providing **targeted support and development** to talented staff who wish to progress their careers, reviewing our approach to talent management.
- > Opportunities for local young people to start their careers, and which supports our succession planning, by providing **10 graduate training and apprenticeship places** each year.
- > Supporting field staff to acquire skills that will enable them to progress their careers, including a **literacy skills programme**.
- > **Recognising and rewarding excellence** by celebrating our achievements.
- > Positioning ourselves as a fair employer, **achieving accreditation with the Living Wage Foundation**.





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📄 lewishamhomes.org.uk

📘 facebook.com/lewishamhomes  
📱 @lewishamhomes  
📺 youtube.com/lewishamhomes



**OLD TOWN HALL**

9AM-5PM MON, TUE, THUR, FRI  
10AM-5PM WED  
Catford Road,  
London  
SE6 4RU



**THE ALBANY**

9AM-5PM MON, TUE, THUR, FRI  
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