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Protected: Business Plan 2018–2020

Our Business Plan for 2018-20 sets out our action plan for delivering further improvements in the next two years.

A message from the Chair of the Board

“The past year has been of huge significance for the housing sector and for everyone who lives in social housing. The tragedy of Grenfell has brought with it some very important lessons that we all need to learn. In particular, that fire safety is the responsibility of us all. Builders and contractors need to maintain high standards in their work and in the materials they use. Landlords and local authorities need to ensure the necessary checks are carried out. Residents need to ensure they do everything they can to prevent a fire from starting.



Ainsley Forbes, Chair of the Board

I have no doubt the coming years will bring profound changes to our current practice. Some of this is already underway including the Hackitt report which is anticipated to recommend improvements in building regulations. Along with the London Fire Brigade, we have double checked our fire safety practice and are taking a zero-tolerance stance on anything that may present a fire hazard – removing motorbikes left in communal areas, buggies left in corridors, rubbish left too near a building. We have installed sprinklers in all our sheltered homes and have started installing them in hostels too. We will be considering whether the installation of sprinklers in our high rise buildings is an effective and feasible measure.

We will continue to strengthen our safety record and listen to residents to address health and safety matters. Where residents have raised concerns, we have started double checking work carried out and rectifying anything that does not meet the right standard. This will include checking the Decent Homes work carried out by our contractors and getting them to correct any work that is below standard.

We have many challenges ahead but we will benefit from having a boost of ideas and energy from new staff and Board members. Not least of these new appointments is our new Chief Executive, Margaret Dodwell, who has a strong track record of providing excellent customer service. I know she is eager to build on the substantial successes already achieved by Andrew Potter, whose hard work and commitment over the past 11 years has made us one of the most successful ALMOs in the country.”

Ainsley Forbes, Chair of the Board

A message from the CEO

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Fire safety in your home

- Fire alarm** Ring bells. They are usually with a siren. Smoke detectors are made of plastic. Connect them to your alarm. The will prevent a fire starting in your home.
- Fire escape** Get out if you have to. This is a way of a safe escape route. If you are in a fire, get out as soon as you can. Do not use the lift. Do not go back in until the fire is out. Do not use the lift.
- Smoke** If there is a fire, get out as soon as you can. Do not use the lift. Do not go back in until the fire is out. Do not use the lift.
- Fire extinguisher** Use the fire extinguisher. It is a tool to put out a fire. Do not use it if you are not trained. Do not use it if the fire is too big. Do not use it if you are not sure.
- Fire alarm** Ring bells. They are usually with a siren. Smoke detectors are made of plastic. Connect them to your alarm. The will prevent a fire starting in your home.
- Fire escape** Get out if you have to. This is a way of a safe escape route. If you are in a fire, get out as soon as you can. Do not use the lift. Do not go back in until the fire is out. Do not use the lift.
- Smoke** If there is a fire, get out as soon as you can. Do not use the lift. Do not go back in until the fire is out. Do not use the lift.
- Fire extinguisher** Use the fire extinguisher. It is a tool to put out a fire. Do not use it if you are not trained. Do not use it if the fire is too big. Do not use it if you are not sure.
- Fire alarm** Ring bells. They are usually with a siren. Smoke detectors are made of plastic. Connect them to your alarm. The will prevent a fire starting in your home.
- Fire escape** Get out if you have to. This is a way of a safe escape route. If you are in a fire, get out as soon as you can. Do not use the lift. Do not go back in until the fire is out. Do not use the lift.
- Smoke** If there is a fire, get out as soon as you can. Do not use the lift. Do not go back in until the fire is out. Do not use the lift.
- Fire extinguisher** Use the fire extinguisher. It is a tool to put out a fire. Do not use it if you are not trained. Do not use it if the fire is too big. Do not use it if you are not sure.

"It is a great privilege to be taking over from Andrew Potter as Lewisham Homes' new Chief Executive. Since the organisation's beginning in 2007, Andrew has demonstrated strong and effective leadership and, under his direction, Lewisham Homes' track record of achievements is incredibly impressive. This year will see the completion of thousands of homes being brought up to a Decent standard. As the Council's housing company, we have helped support Lewisham Council's goal of ensuring 500 new homes will be built for people in acute housing need.

Furthermore, in the ten years between 2006 and 2016, tenant satisfaction has risen from 58% to 77%. Staff satisfaction has also risen. In 2016, Lewisham Homes was awarded Gold Investors in People status and in 2017 over 88% of staff said that it is a great place to work.



Margaret Dodwell, Chief Executive Officer

We can now build on these firm foundations to develop some truly excellent services and improve resident satisfaction. Our customers need to be at the heart of everything we do and I will make sure we do that. We will involve residents more in our decision-making process and provide ongoing support to help residents manage their money to sustain their tenancies.

Lewisham Homes has real ambition and I welcome the challenge of modernising our services so they are easier to use, more cost effective, and enable us to invest further in our homes, green spaces and our communities."

Margaret Dodwell, Chief Executive Officer

Our 4 key areas of activity

Our strategy for delivering improvements lies in four key areas of activity. You can find out more about each area of activity here:

- [Providing Excellent Services](#)
- [Developing Thriving Neighbourhoods - properties](#)
- [Developing Thriving Neighbourhoods - communities](#)
- [Planning for a Sustainable Future](#)
- [Being an Employer of Choice](#)

Our plans and targets

- [Targets that we have set ourselves](#)
- [Plan of action for the next two years](#)
- [Our financial plans for the next three years](#)



Protected: Excellent Services

"We want to be sure we are delivering the services residents want, so we will improve the way we consult and listen, especially on issues we know are of great importance to them. Over the next three years, we will talk to residents about how we should spend £120,000 to enhance their estate environment and an extra £180,000 on managing the quality of the green spaces around their homes. We are also reviewing and improving our approach to resident consultation on the delivery of major works."



Jon Kanareck, Director of Operations

Jon Kanareck, Director of Operations

We improved several services during 2017-18. We have:

- Worked closely with the London Fire Brigade to make sure we keep our residents safe.
- Installed sprinklers in all 18 of our sheltered housing schemes and have begun fitting them in hostels and in every new home we build.
- Improved our estate sweeping and removal of large household items by ensuring we visit every estate once a week and respond to reports of fly tipping within two working days.
- Spent £15.4 million on carrying out repairs and maintenance. Our repairs team also replaced over 300 kitchens and bathrooms.
- Planted 6,000 brand new spring shrubs on 30 different estates.
- Helped residents make their money go further by helping them move to a cheaper energy supplier, run budget training sessions, and claim over £560,000 in entitled benefits.
- Changed our call answering targets to 90% of calls answered within 2 minutes.

You can find out what other improvements we've made to our services in our [Annual Report 2017](#).



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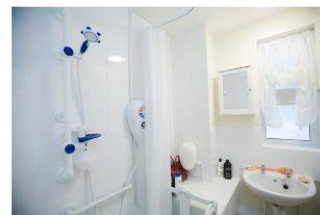
Excellent Services

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Our 2-year plan for providing Excellent Services

This includes:

- Investing in new technologies to further improve our online services. For instance, making access to our online services more mobile friendly and developing an App so residents have a more complete idea of services on their estate.
- Installing WiFi in all 18 sheltered housing schemes.
- Investing £180,000 in an additional grounds maintenance team to further improve the quality of the green spaces we manage.
- Investing £120,000 a year to improve the estate environment, e.g. restocking flower beds, upgrading bins stores, improving signage.
- Reviewing and improving our approach to resident consultation including on the delivery of major works.

See our strategy for delivering other improvements:

- [Developing Thriving Neighbourhoods - properties](#)
- [Developing Thriving Neighbourhoods - communities](#)
- [Planning for a Sustainable Future](#)
- [Being an Employer of Choice](#)



Protected: Thriving Neighbourhoods – properties

Investing in our properties

Investing in homes and improving the environment around estates is a key goal. We have made good progress in bringing existing homes up to a decent standard so they have a modern kitchen and bathroom. Nearly all of our homes now meet the Decent Homes Standard and work will finish in 2018.

We are proud to have supported Lewisham Council in its goal of building 500 new homes. These have either already been built, are under construction or have planning permission and are waiting for building work to start. This has made a big difference to residents who have already moved in.

To further reduce the shortage of accommodation for those in most need, we are also buying existing properties. By the end of 2017, we had already bought 118 new homes to provide temporary accommodation for families and to prevent local people becoming homeless. It's estimated this will save Lewisham Council £590,000 a year on temporary accommodation.

You can find out more about the improvements we've made to our properties in our [Annual Report 2017](#).



Our future goals, include:

- Increasing the number of homes.
- Ensuring all homes are of a consistently good standard.
- Making sure homes are energy efficient and the materials we use are sustainable.

Our 2-year plan for investing in our properties

This includes:

- Having built, or on site to build, 333 new Council homes by the end of 2020 (and 530 new Council homes by the end of 2021) (if planning permission is obtained).
- Improving safety and security on estates with better entry doors, electrical wiring and lighting in communal areas.
- Improving the energy efficiency of our homes and estates with, for instance, the installation of LED lighting.
- Continuing a rolling programme to improve sheltered housing.

See our strategy for delivering other improvements:

- Providing Excellent Services
- Developing Thriving Neighbourhoods - communities
- Planning for a Sustainable Future
- Being an Employer of Choice

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Thriving Neighbourhood – Communities

Investing in our communities

Our community programmes make a real difference to residents by helping them to get online, to access financial and budgeting advice, by helping with employment and training opportunities, and by promoting healthy lifestyles and wellbeing.

"We are supporting the Lewisham Deal and those residents who most need help by facilitating a range of community programmes in close liaison with Lewisham Council and other partners both inside and outside the borough. The Albany theatre is a key partner and continues to deliver our street dance and gardening programmes, as well as activities for older people to help boost confidence and self-esteem and reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness. Other programmes, such as our housing course delivered by London Metropolitan University, have been supported financially by Lewisham Tenants Fund. Contractors such as Travis Perkins have supported disadvantaged young people to attend adventure learning activities delivered by Wide Horizons. These partnerships are incredibly important to us and we are extremely appreciative of everyone's contribution as they help improve the quality of individual people's lives and help build stronger communities."



Alex Bush, Head of Corporate Services

Alex Bush, Head of Corporate Services

You can find out more information about our investment in community programmes in our [Annual Report 2017](#).

Our overall goal in investing in our communities, includes:

- Providing more opportunities for residents to influence the services we deliver.
- Supporting residents experiencing extreme financial hardship.
- Developing strong local communities that have their own sense of identity.
- Facilitating residents who want to build their communities online.

Our 2-year plan for investing in our communities

This includes:

- Investing £250,000 in community projects and obtaining social value from our contractors.
- Developing our relationship with partner organisations that can help us apply for additional funding to support residents in need as well as providing work experience and back-to-work opportunities.
- Supporting Lewisham Council to manage estate-based community centres.
- Building on our approach to help people get online and use digital technologies.
- Developing and delivering a one-day 'Introduction to Local Housing' course, funded by Lewisham Tenants Fund, to provide residents with a practical introduction to Lewisham Homes' roles and responsibilities and how residents can become more involved in influencing policy and practice.

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- Developing our programme with the Albany and other partners in order to support the health and wellbeing of residents – especially older people.
- Providing apprenticeship and work experience opportunities for Lewisham Homes’ residents.

These are some of the community programmes that residents tell us they've benefitted from in 2017/18:

- Three-day 'Improving Housing Services' courses: 18 people attended these courses run by London Metropolitan University with funding from Lewisham Tenants Fund. As a result, many have gone on to be more involved in their communities using their new knowledge and skills; 10 residents gaining accreditation which has helped with opportunities for employment.
- Love2Dance: Funded by Lewisham Homes, this weekly street dance programme delivered by the Albany and offered for free to 8 to 18-year-old residents, has increased aspirations, self-esteem and confidence and enabled parents to form strong local connections. In 2017, there were 150 participants in classes over three different sites; Deptford, Sydenham and Honor Oak. We also launched Love2Dance for age 5-7 in Sydenham with 17 young people attending. The programme has offered the opportunity for young people to mentor others, was a finalist in the 2018 London Youth Awards and came away with several successes in the 2017 UK Street Dance Awards.



- Meet Me at the Albany pop ups: Again run by the Albany, and funding jointly by Lewisham Homes and the Arts Council England, this arts, social and lunch club for older people provides a creative outlet for residents over 60 years old. It has helped combat loneliness and improved their mental health. Activities have run at 4 sites with over 100 residents benefiting.



- Getting online, e.g. co-ordinating digital skills training through GoON Lewisham, intergenerational programmes with local schools supporting older residents in sheltered housing.
- **Annual Garden Party:** Held at the Albany and jointly funded by Lewisham Homes and Lewisham Tenants Fund, this event was held on 22 July 2017 and attracted over 250 residents.
- Volunteer gardening projects at the Albany.
- Young People's Outdoor Adventure: Run by **Wide Horizons** and funding by **Travis Perkins**, 48 young people were able to benefit from their outdoor learning experience – for most it was their first experience of the countryside.



- Sponsorship of two young residents as London Fire Brigade cadets and the 2017 Lewisham Youth Conference.
- Food Bank: We worked alongside the Trussel Trust to give out 160 vouchers to residents and around 72 bags of food from our own food bank donated by staff.
- Budgeting Skills workshops and SELCE Energy Café workshops.
- Supporting work experience for the homeless via Emmaus.

See our strategy for delivering other improvements:

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- [Developing Thriving Neighbourhoods - properties](#)
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Protected: Sustainable Future

"We have improved our services and made considerable savings by becoming more efficient by doing more with less. To continue improving and being more efficient we must continue to innovate and make increased use of digital technologies. This will involve improving back-office systems and investing in new technologies and digital services so residents can access more of our services online anytime.

By innovating and being more efficient we aim to invest £1m a year in purchasing accommodation to meet housing need. We are looking to invest £1m a year in improving our technology to enable easier access to our services and a further £250,000 a year to invest in community initiatives.



Adam Barrett, Director of Resources

To achieve this we will need to deliver efficiency savings of £600,000 a year over the next 5 years.

We know the current economic environment is having a serious impact on our residents. We will therefore need to ensure service charge increases are limited to what is required to deliver good, effective services. Overall rents to tenants have reduced in the last year as a result of a 1% reduction in rents, and service charges have increased by less than inflation.

In order to provide further help, we will continue to support residents to manage their own finances, claim any benefits that are entitled to, and seek to develop partnerships with organisations that are able to access funding that our residents can benefit from.

Planning for a sustainable future means planning long into the future. We will invest now to achieve improvements in services and longer-term savings."

Adam Barrett, Director of Resources

Our track record in providing for a Sustainable Future includes:

- Reducing the overall cost of managing properties from £22.5m in 2007/08 to £21.616m in 2017/18.
- Making efficiencies and making improvements to services and properties.
- Reducing rent arrears from 5% to 3.5%; down £1m.
- Increasing the turnaround of properties and reducing how long they remain empty; reducing losses from £1.5m to £0.25m a year.
- Helping tenants to claim benefits they are entitled to, reaching a record of over £560,000.
- Recovering 300 properties over the last 3 years that were not legally occupied and re-allocating them to people in need.
- In 2016/17, we generated a surplus of £2.314m. Details of how we have invested this are given in our [Annual Report 2017](#).

Our long-term aim is to achieve:

- Affordable services for residents.
- Further efficiencies so we can invest in improving services.
- Better information so we can make the right decisions.
- A safe and secure environment for our residents.

Our 2-year plan for developing a Sustainable Future

This includes:

- Improving the quality and cost effectiveness of property components to improve customer satisfaction.
- Investing an additional £155,000 in staff resources to support tenants in light of Universal Credit.
- Investing in new technologies to create quicker, more user-friendly and

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more efficient means of carrying out administrative tasks and record keeping. This will include the way we manage customer records and staff records.

- Improving information management to enable better decisions, faster working and fewer errors.
- Reviewing our fire safety management policy.
- Keeping our residents and staff safe with improved health and safety monitoring and compliance and looking to win a Five Star award for Health and Safety from the British Safety Council.
- Improving the efficiency of environmental services.

See our strategy for delivering other improvements:

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Protected: Employer of Choice



“We are very proud to be an award-winning Investors in People Gold organisation. Lewisham Homes aims to attract staff who Share the Ambition through a range of

programmes aimed at bringing in new talent into the organisation through our innovative recruitment campaigns and our successful graduate and apprenticeship schemes.

Staff are supported to progress through the organisation through a range of talent management schemes, external and internal mentoring and coaching programmes. We have consistently exceeded our target of 30% internal promotions over the last 3 years and aim to ensure the organisation remains diverse by ensuring an even balance between existing and new staff joining us.



Alex Bush, Head of Corporate Services

Diversity is celebrated at all levels; 55% of our managers are from a BAME background and, as a result of our Gender Pay Audit, pay between men and women is broadly comparable with women earning on average 2.5% more than men. However, we know we need to do more by seeking to attract more women into our Repairs Service where there are opportunities to earn more.

In our 2017 staff survey, 88% of staff told us Lewisham Homes is a great place to work. We are particularly proud of our levels of staff engagement (average of 89% over the past 4 years). Over the next year we will be reviewing our People Strategy which aims to build upon our achievements, but also to support the organisation in meeting its goals and challenges.”

Alex Bush, Head of Corporate Services

We aim to:

- Produce motivated and engaged staff who are strong on customer care and capable of being innovative and able to drive improvements.
- Develop a strong reputation as a desirable employer.
- Offer development opportunities for employees entering at all levels.
- Celebrate a diverse workforce in all areas of the business.
- Have a reputation for fairness while setting high standards.
- Ensure residents hold staff in high regard.

Achievements so far, include:

- Winning awards and gaining accreditations such as the Excellence in Third Sector category in the IIP Awards 2017 where we were recognised for our transformative collaborative culture.
- Award of Investors in People Gold; only 7% of organisations have gained this status.
- Improving job and careers' information on our website.
- Providing mentoring, through the award-winning Housing Diversity Network programme.

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- Supporting the development of staff through our Aspiring Managers' Programme; a third of our managers are now BAME (Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic).
- Running a successful graduate trainee programme.
- Celebrating equality and diversity through the organisation of annual events such as LGBT Month, Disability Awareness Day, International Women's Day, Black History Month.

You can find out more information about how we are becoming an Employer of Choice in our [Annual Report 2017](#).

Our 2-year plan for developing a talented workforce

This includes:

- Attracting new and local talent. As part of this, we recruit graduate trainees every two years and take on apprentices on a rolling programme.
- Investing further in our existing staff enabling those who have the interest and aptitude to gain advanced technical or managerial skills through our Talent Management Programme.
- Review our People Strategy.
- Re-applying to achieve Investors in People Gold Standard.

See our strategy for delivering other improvements:

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