



# Annual standards report

2021 - 2022



# Introduction

Katie Bond Chief operating officer

Hello and welcome to our annual standards report for 2021/22. I'd like to introduce myself as the new chief operating officer. This is a new role and gives me responsibility for ensuring one high standard of services, one standard of quality housing and one high quality of environment, for all residents regardless of tenure.

The last year has seen more challenges, and while we've seen an overall relaxation in Covid-19 restrictions the virus has not disappeared, and it continues to cause anxiety and illness for many of us. We are also starting to feel some of the longer-term implications of having lived through a pandemic - from children who have missed socialising at school, to parents who have struggled financially and mentally, to older people who have suffered health anxiety and loneliness.

Our staff have focused on getting back out on patch and meeting residents in person again. We are pleased this is starting to have a positive impact in helping us solve problems and address the issues that are important to you.

While the year ahead will bring a new set of challenges for us all, I am excited by the positive change we can deliver. We are launching our new strategic direction, which will help us to re-focus on you, our customers, and the things that are most important to you. We have more detail on this later in the report which I hope will assure you of our commitment to continue to improve.

Our chief executive Kate Davies has announced her intention to step down within the next year, so we will be moving into a time of transition at Notting Hill Genesis. I will lead my department through this period, while continuing to drive improvements in our services to you.

I hope you will enjoy reading this report and hearing about all the work we've done in the past year to improve while providing extra social and economic support to our residents and communities. I would like to thank everyone who has taken part in resident involvement activities, completed surveys, attended meetings (online and face to face), as well as all who are involved in resident associations. We truly value the time and opinions you give us, helping us to shape our future as your landlord.



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# Who we are

Notting Hill Genesis is one of the largest housing associations in London and the south-east. We own and manage more than 66,500 homes and employ around 2,000 staff. We provide homes across a range of tenures and are committed to continuing to deliver housing that is affordable to all. Our roots reach back to the 1960s when our legacy organisations were established by local people who shared a similar vision – to house west London’s working poor, providing them a home from which to build themselves and their families a secure future.

## Our new strategic direction

In March 2022, we revealed a new strategic direction which will build on our existing corporate strategy, but focuses more fully on what we must achieve to become a truly customer-centric organisation. The new direction concentrates on three core elements:



**One level of customer service**

We need to get closer to our residents and focus on their experience, providing one service standard (including repairs) across all tenures and increasing satisfaction.



**One standard of housing**

We need to survey all our homes and identify what major works are required to make each one warm, safe and comfortable. We are developing a retrofit programme to ensure energy efficiency and lower bills for our residents, which might result in disposing of some homes that cannot meet our standard.



**A high-quality local environment for all**

We need to understand how residents experience our places and identify issues that fall between the gaps. We have appointed a director-led placemaking team to test a new approach to estate management, focusing on our customers and communities.

# Residents

We aim to provide a modern, digitally enabled housing service that residents are happy with and that keeps them safe. We want to achieve sector-leading resident satisfaction levels at a lower cost.

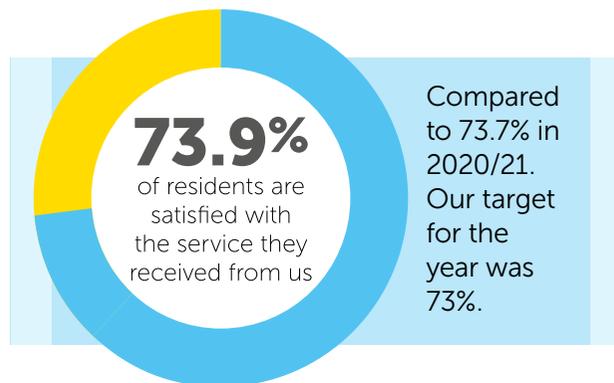
Over the last year, our primary focus was getting back out into the community and meeting residents face to face. We transitioned our staff to working back in the office and in the community in a safe way. We welcomed residents back into our offices and have loved the increased engagement and feedback opportunities that this has brought. We have returned to completing annual visits and this will continue to be the focus for the coming year, understanding the positive customer experience that comes from having dedicated officers listening and responding to any concerns.

## Annual visits

We carried out over **11,600 annual visits**, and in October we started measuring residents' satisfaction following their annual visit, which is 82% so far.

## Resident satisfaction

Throughout 2021/22, we carried out regular transactional surveys after interactions with residents. The scores from those show that:



We didn't carry out an annual resident survey this year. This is because we are awaiting the outcome of government consultation on new tenant satisfaction measures, which will form the basis of our surveys going forward.

Very understanding of my query, very professional and made me feel very confident that my query was going to be sorted out.

Smooth sailing and straight to the point. Appreciate the attitude.

A very willing officer who was exceptionally helpful and clearly explained the issues raised and resolved them.



## Local officers

As much as possible we want our residents to be able to self-serve via our website – making payments, raising repairs and opening cases. We are continually working to develop and improve our My Account platform, which enables us to simplify, standardise and automate key business services. Data is stored securely, and residents can access their account at their convenience.

Every Notting Hill Genesis resident also has a named local officer, whether that's a housing officer or a property management officer. These colleagues are part of our personalised offer, providing a first point of contact for any queries relating to residents' homes. Local officer responsibilities vary by tenure, and include repairs and defects management, rent and service charge collection, re-letting empty homes, estate inspections and resolving complaints. Residents can also contact their local officer for any tenancy or lease-related queries. Details of local officers are on our website at [www.nhg.org.uk/contact-us/officer-search](http://www.nhg.org.uk/contact-us/officer-search).



## My Account

**Almost 65% of households have at least one person registered for self-service My Account.** Self-service has increased, corresponding with the roll-out of more self-serve case types in September 2021.



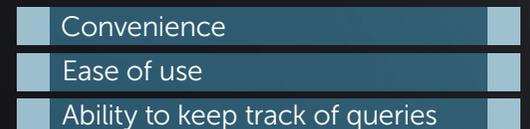
**34% of all cases were raised by residents** in 2021/22 compared to 27% in 2020/21.

Repairs and defects accounted for 30% of all cases raised in 2021/22, a similar proportion to 2020/21.



We have seen a **30% increase in payments** being made through My Account in the past year. Residents have found self-service payments a quick, easy and convenient way of paying rent and service charges.

When surveyed, the top three reasons residents gave for using My Account were:



# General needs housing

Our housing directorate manages more than **34,000 homes** across **59 boroughs** in and around London. Housing officers provide a single point of contact to our residents, and each support between 180 and 220 households.

## Voids and lettings

### 98.8%

Occupancy rate on 31 March 2022, compared to 98% on 31 March 2021.

### 72 days

The average number of days taken to let properties that have become vacant and do not require major repairs (standard relets). In March 2021, it was 66 days.

### 80 days

The average number of days taken to let new development properties, compared to 70 days in March 2021.

### Numbers of lettings in 2021/22:

	General needs	Supported housing
Number of standard relets	531	401
Number of lettings of new build properties	405	0
Number of relettings after completion of major works	397	29
<b>Total lettings</b>	<b>1333</b>	<b>430</b>

## Rent collection



We know that as cost of living rises some residents may struggle to pay their rent and household bills. Please speak to your local officer to find out how we can support you and your family - help is available.

### 5.8%

Current tenant arrears as a percentage of annual rent due. Target 5.2%. (2020/21: 5.5%)

### £28.2m

Cash value of debt. (2020/21: £25.4m)

### 99.3%

Income collected as a percentage of the rent due. This is calculated as a year-to-date figure. Target 99.8%. (2020/21: 100.5%)

It was so refreshing to be able to contact my housing officer and be listened to. She genuinely wanted to help.

It was really easy to contact my housing manager. I had her email address and she responded immediately and arranged a visit very, very quickly. She came, she was friendly, she was helpful.

Before and after pictures of our voids pilot at Star Street, W2:



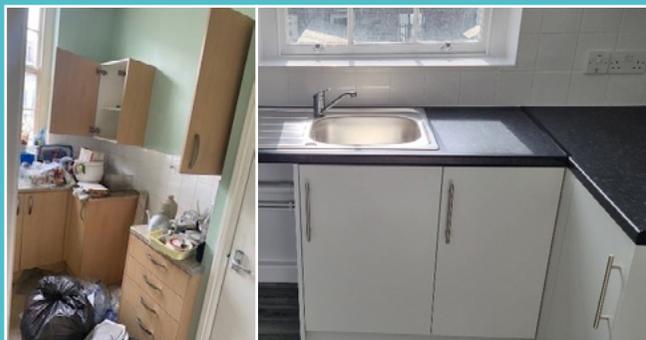
◀ Bedroom



◀ Bathroom



◀ Hallway



◀ Kitchen

# re:new

Lettings standard pilot



A home to be happy in



A home ready to move into that is safe and warm



A home that meets modern expectations



A standard reviewed by residents and staff

**We're working on a pilot project to improve the standard of our void properties with the aim of increasing resident satisfaction and the condition of our homes.**

A lot has changed since we last looked at our lettings standard. Under our current void standard, properties often do not meet the needs of new residents, who don't have much disposable income and can struggle to carpet their new home if needed.

After running resident and staff workshops, we are piloting a new void specification that considers external and communal areas, as well as providing floor coverings and humidistat fans to help manage condensation. Some improvements will also increase the energy efficiency of our homes, helping to cut energy use.

Throughout the pilot, we will carefully monitor resident satisfaction and analyse the results of the new standard properties against the control group. If we see clear benefits for our residents and for us, we hope to adopt the new standard across general needs properties.

We are currently recruiting a resident liaison officer to support the pilot, recognising how important the first letting experience is to residents and how disruptive moving home can be. We want to ensure the resident voice is heard in this important work.

# Resident support

Our resident support programme helps to sustain tenancies and increase the wellbeing of our residents through creating partnerships and projects that build financial resilience, reduce social isolation and help residents to better access the internet.

The programme is split into three teams: welfare benefits, partnerships and volunteering. Here are some highlights, achievements and projects from the last financial year.

## Partnerships team

Our partnership officers have been working with housing teams to help connect residents with debt, budgeting and employment support, which includes the hardship fund, grants programme and fundraising. The team also helped distribute food and clothing vouchers in the aftermath of the summer floods in west London, when 100 of the worst affected tenants were each given £400 of hardship funds.

**465**  
referrals to external partners

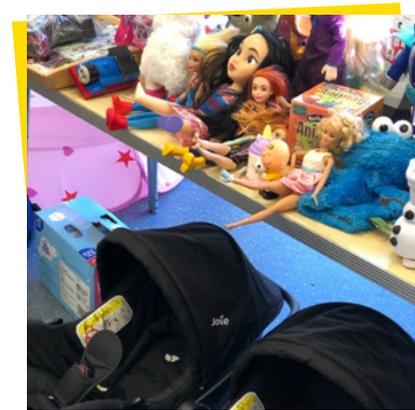
**Top themes** were budgeting, debt and energy support

With the London Plus Credit Union, we have delivered **three financial education sessions** to residents over the year, promoting responsible borrowing and helping residents build financial resilience

**£45,000**  
worth of supermarket vouchers secured for Tower Hamlets residents

**£1,500**  
awarded to Westminster tenants to help off-set energy costs

**363**  
hardship awards made to tenants totalling around £160,000



We funded Money A&E budgeting project and The SPACE baby bank, supporting expectant mothers and young families with second-hand baby essentials in Brent, Hammersmith and Fulham and Kensington and Chelsea. To date, the Brent project has benefited 83 low-income families.



## Involvement

Our residents are at the heart of all that we do. We want them to be involved in shaping our services and telling us where we need to change. Our in-house resident involvement team exists to facilitate and strengthen the link between our residents and the wider business, ensuring that residents' voices are heard and improving service delivery.

*\*This includes two surveys that received a very high response rate. Over the past year we have engaged approximately 130 residents who were not previously involved.*

Notting Hill Genesis		Resident Involvement KPIs			
	2021/22 target	2021/22 actual	2020/21 target	2020/21 actual	
Number of activities	70	54	60	63	
Number of attendees	400	4,255*	300	407	
Overall completed recommendations	120	164	70	93	

## Volunteering

Our volunteer programme leads on wellbeing partnerships and creative resident involvement projects. The emphasis remains to support older residents living in general needs properties and across care and support.

### Key achievements during 2021/22 include:

An IT mentoring scheme completed by **57 residents**, with eight tablets donated

**Practical support and befriending** for residents aged 50+

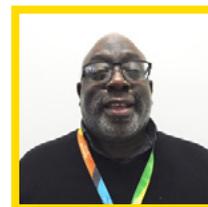
Vouchers for Christmas gifts for their children provided to **150 residents**

**Twelve residents** trained on sound recording and interview techniques, used for our resident podcast: [Every.. Kinda People | Mixcloud](#)

## Welfare benefits team

We have a team of eight specialist welfare benefits advisers who support residents to challenge and appeal decisions and claim their full entitlement. The team has received more than **800 referrals** and recovered more than **£2 million in benefit payments** for our residents in the past year.

### Donald's case study



Donald supported a tenant in temporary accommodation, a mother with five children. She had amassed a huge £32,000 of rent arrears due to a long history of issues with her tax credit and housing benefit claims. As a part-time worker her hours were reduced further during lockdown, causing even more hardship. By the time the case got to Donald, the tenant was disengaged and had lost all faith in the system. Donald worked really hard to successfully rebuild rapport and trust, and re-engaged the tenant. Amazingly, Donald managed to secure a £32,000 backdate from the local council, which cleared all the tenant's arrears.

Donald says: "When I picked up the case there had been no payments at all onto her rent account. After submitting all evidence to the council and challenging incorrect information, they agreed to backdate her claim from the start of her tenancy."

The tenant was overjoyed and said: "I can now get on with my life and move on and eventually get permanent housing after being homeless for eighteen years."

# Complaints and compliments

We aim to always give excellent customer service and welcome compliments when we do. However, we also know that we don't always get things right. When things go wrong we aim to make things right as quickly as we can, as set out in our complaints and compliments policy.

## Yearly figures

Top complaint themes:

Repairs (48%)

Housing management (17%)

Heating and hot water (9%)

All other complaints (26%)

**7,265** complaints received in 2021/22, of which 62% were raised directly by residents using My Account, an increase from 38% in 2020/21.

**4,359 (58%)** of the cases received were resolved as quick fixes without needing a formal response

**2,906** were resolved at stage 1. **72%** of stage 1 complaints were responded to within the 10 day timescale.

**342 (12%)** were escalated to stage 2. **70%** of stage 2 complaints were responded to within the 20 day timescale

We received **891** MP and councillor enquiries, **42%** of which were responded to within our timescale.

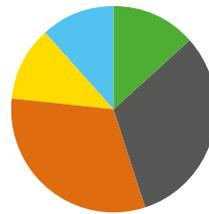
## Housing Ombudsman service

If residents are still dissatisfied after going through our two-stage complaints procedure they can approach the Housing Ombudsman Service for help. In 2021/22 we had:

### 60 complaints

determined by the Housing Ombudsman service, compared to 64 in 2020/21.

The findings of these 60 were:



**8** maladministration

**19** service failure

**19** reasonable redress (a ruling that we had done the right thing to resolve the complaint)

**7** no maladministration

**7** withdrawn/outside of jurisdiction

A new code of complaint handling was published in April 2022 and our self-assessment against this can be viewed on our website.

Residents can submit a complaint here: [Make a complaint | Notting Hill Genesis \(nhg.org.uk\)](https://www.nhg.org.uk)

Residents can submit compliments via My Account, or by emailing their local officer or their manager.

I'd just like to say how grateful I am to have such a brilliant housing officer... I first met her properly during lockdown as she'd come to check on everyone which I thought was lovely.

My housing officer Lisa has been extremely helpful and supportive in my dealings with her. She gets back to me in a timely manner, is professional, honest and takes time to explain things to me.

# Home ownership

Leasehold services within home ownership are made up of several teams specialising in providing a service to our homeowners and managing their buildings. Most of our homeowners are leaseholders: they have bought a long lease on their property. Leaseholders may have bought their home from us via a shared ownership scheme or through our private sale programme.

We have over **18,000 leaseholders** across our business, including:



**9,176** 100% leaseholders; **8,847** shared ownership leaseholders and **572** leaseholders in housing for older people.

Property management officers handle day-to-day services and work with leaseholders to maintain their properties and look after communal areas.

Staircasing is the process by which shared owners purchase more shares in their home. This means they will pay less rent to us, because the amount of rent they pay is based on the landlord's share of the property. (They will still have to pay a mortgage on the shares they own.)



In 2021/22, **385 of our shared owners purchased additional shares** in their homes,



with **542 of our shared owners staircasing up to 100% ownership** of their home.

The home ownership team have enjoyed getting back out into the community, engaging with residents across our sites to build communities and ensure key priorities are being met. We have used our 'Creating Thriving Communities' fund to support neighbourhood events and local improvements, from planting projects to book swaps and summer parties.

We want all our residents to enjoy a safe, comfortable home where they can thrive and enjoy life. We want to be sector leading, achieve more for our residents and create great places to live. We will deliver a better repairs service to our residents and improve the quality of our existing homes through a programme of planned investment. In line with legislation, we will ensure we keep our residents safe in their homes.

## Responsive repairs

We know the quality of your home and the speed we complete repairs are really important to you. We are diversifying our contractor base to give us more options to solve issues quickly and cost effectively.

In response to the Housing Ombudsman Service report *Spotlight on: damp and mould – it's not lifestyle*, we are working with a group of residents who have experienced these issues to review and improve the way we handle these repairs.

April 2021 to March 2022 (Plentific and Wates)

Total number of repairs carried out	Number of repairs completed within timescale	Total spend on responsive repairs
<b>121,090</b>	<b>100,430 (83%)</b>	<b>£32,010,104</b>



Repairs satisfaction in the same period has dipped slightly to **84.7%** compared to 84.9% last year, but has remained consistently above our target of 83%.

The repair was straightforward and I am happy with the quality of the job. The contractors were polite and respectful. It took them less than an hour to complete the repair.

Everything was fine. He was very professional, he maintained social distancing, and he was wearing a mask.

The job was done efficiently, contractor cleaned up after himself, was very polite and the lady who booked my repair in over the phone was lovely. Everybody was very helpful.

## Planned works

Covid-19 meant the 2021/22 programme started late, and along with subsequent delays (such as planning applications for window replacements) caused a large proportion of the programme to either be deferred or carried over into 2022/23.

We have started planning for this year's programme early and are now in a good place to deliver the 2022/23 programme within the financial year. We have also made some significant changes to the resourcing of both the internal planned investment team and our external delivery contractors, allowing us to deliver a better service going forward.

**Overall spend 2021/22, across general needs and care and support:**

**£8,744,000** Total amount spent on planned investment.

**£2,719,000** Total amount spent on kitchens and bathrooms.



**294** replacements



**157** replacements



**298** replacements



**252** replacements\*

*\*Number of units or buildings with window renewals, rather than actual number of windows renewed*

I do not think Notting Hill Genesis could have done any better. Every concern I had, the young man I spoke to, listened, took it in and dealt with it.

The window fitters were excellent. No mess everything on time. Must say the best workers we've ever had.



## Building safety

Throughout the last year, we concentrated on progressing the remediation of buildings identified as having safety issues. This is particularly poignant this year as we marked the fifth anniversary of the Grenfell tragedy. Our focus has been to continue to understand our buildings in more detail so we can determine whether any works need to be carried out to ensure that a fire will not spread across the external wall or through the cavity.

### In 2021/22 we:

- Paid **£5.7m** for 24-hour waking watch on 15 blocks
- Completed remediation works on eight buildings
- Undertook **428** visual/intrusive surveys
- Published **256** favourable External Wall System 1 (EWS1) forms, confirming the external wall has been assessed as safe by a qualified professional, all of which can be accessed on our website
- Held more than **100** resident meetings to keep those living in our homes up to date with our progress

In 2022/23, our focus will be to continue remediation works on another 35 sites. We will respond to resident requests for EWS1s as they arise. We aim to complete around 600 visual surveys and 100 intrusive surveys. We are committed to meeting with residents in any blocks where safety issues have been identified, or where remediation work is being undertaken, on a regular basis to share information and listen to concerns.

## Compliance

Our compliance teams work to improve and assure the safety of our buildings, ensuring we conform to legal standards in heating and water safety, fire safety and mechanical and electrical safety – for example, lifts and door entry systems.

### Key performance indicators for 31 March 2022



**99.91%**

Gas servicing compliance  
(99.93% on 31 March 2021)



**80.51%**

Fire risk assessment (FRA) compliance\*  
(74.2% on 31 March 2021)



**99.98%**

Communal electrical safety compliance  
(99.8% on 31 March 2021)

**98.63%**

Domestic electrical safety compliance  
(94.3% on 31 March 2021)



**98.93%**

Water safety risk assessment compliance  
(100% on 31 March 2021)



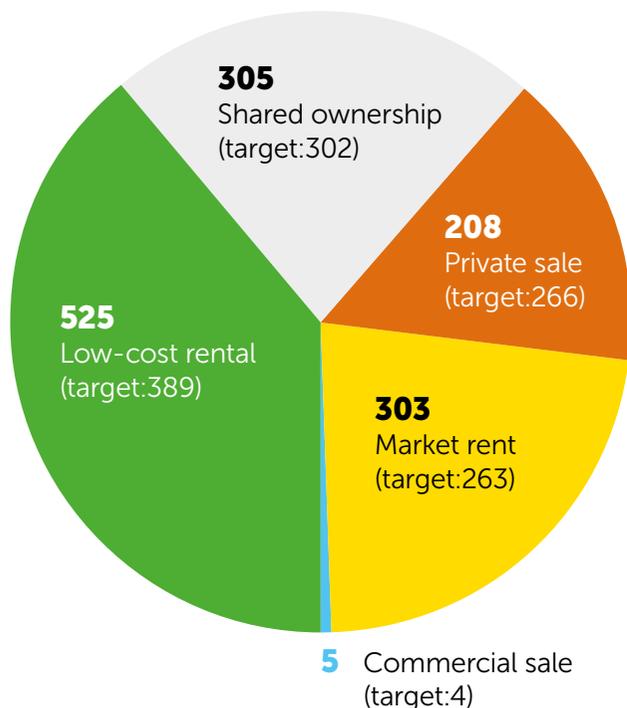
**100%**

Asbestos survey compliance  
(100% on 31 March 2021)

*\*FRA compliance shows properties with an in-date FRA and no overdue actions. Performance for March 2022 is below target, but significantly improved in the past year. This trend is expected to continue as the local teams focus on closing outstanding actions.*

# New homes

In the last financial year, we have delivered **1,346 new homes**, against a target of 1,224. We also started work on 1,385 new homes during the year. The quality of new homes remains good, with an average of 1.9 defects per new property.



## Regeneration projects

# Woodberry Down

LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY

Woodberry Down is one of Europe's biggest single-site estate regeneration projects, and is led by a partnership of Hackney Council, Berkeley Homes, Notting Hill Genesis, Woodberry Down Community Organisation and the Manor House Development Trust.

Over 20 years, the estate will be completely redeveloped to provide more than 5,500 new homes, community facilities and better public spaces.

### Highlights of the socio-economic initiatives are:

- 28** residents into employment
- 136** residents in training
- 17** apprenticeships

**148**

financial resilience referrals

### Community engagement

We have engaged **700 residents** across the last 12 months. Highlights of our events include a football tournament, community planting day and a winter lights festival.

These initiatives were delivered in partnership with key stakeholders such as Berkeley Homes, Arsenal in the Community and our contractors Mears.

### Community Foundation Grants awarded:

**£198,000**

across Woodberry Down and Grahame Park

**£92,000**

was allocated to eight projects on the Aylesbury Estate

# Grahame Park

## LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET

Grahame Park is Barnet's largest housing estate and a significant part of the Colindale Area Action Plan. During the regeneration project, 1,777 deteriorated homes will be replaced with more than 3,000 new homes for a full range of affordability needs.

Work started on the first plot of 209 affordable homes – 149 shared ownership and 60 social/London Affordable Rent – on 10 March 2022 and completion is expected in early 2024. This plot will deliver all the decant requirements for this stage of the regeneration and we are in the process of signing up residents, allocating homes and going through residents' choices with those whose homes are expected to be demolished later in the regeneration.



### Highlights of the socio-economic initiatives are:

- 49** residents into employment
- 165** residents in training
- 6** new businesses
- 19** work experience placements
- 4** apprenticeships

### Community engagement

We have engaged **2,267 residents** across the last 12 months through the delivery of several events including launching a community garden, opening the newly refurbished library and creating a new outdoor gym. We also launched Make it Happen, a multi-agency partnership delivering employment and training. We hosted Winter Fest, an evening of fun, food and activities in celebration of the festive season, where residents were able to find out more about the next phase of the project and provide feedback on the designs.

These initiatives were delivered in partnership with key stakeholders such as the Greater London Authority, Barnet Council, Barnet Homes and contractors such as Wates and ABCA.

# Aylesbury Estate

LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK

We are working in partnership with Southwark Council on the regeneration of the Aylesbury Estate in south-east London. We are delivering new homes, a library, a GP surgery and health centre, community and retail facilities and a public square. We have also recently submitted planning applications for two other sites, which will provide more than 1,000 new homes.

The regeneration is about more than new homes, community facilities and improved open spaces. The partnership is committed to ensuring that local people experience the social and economic benefits of regeneration, such as employment, education and training and improvements in health and wellbeing. We have a dedicated team in place to help ensure that residents can take advantage of the opportunities that come along and are supported through the regeneration.



## Highlights of the socio-economic initiatives are:

**13**  
residents into employment

**54**  
residents in training

**8**  
apprenticeships

**20**  
young people receiving one-to-one support

**93**  
working communities bursaries awarded to combat digital exclusion and food insecurity

**3**  
community grants awarded to local community groups, a total of £15,000

**1**  
interim use project sustained



## Community engagement

We have engaged **3,067 residents** across the last 12 months through the delivery of several events including a community picnic as we emerged from Covid-19 restrictions, an Africa Day festival, intergenerational summer programme and Christmas Wonderland, which featured a festive market with 21 community-based stallholders. The team also donated more than 400 healthy meals to children and families.

# Annual standards report 2021 - 2022



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