

Residents' Annual Rep**o**rt

2022 - 2023

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IMPROVING OUR PERFORMANCE WITH THE HELP OF RESIDENTS

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Sheron Carter

CEO

No-one could predict the turbulence we would face in 2022. We expected adjustments post lockdown but were blind-sided by the impact of the Ukraine war and the acceleration in inflation.



Both have affected the cost and quality of services. It's been an interesting time to take on the mantle at Hexagon and to develop a strategy for its future.

It was clear we needed to go back to basics. Advancing our systems, services, data, contract management, staff skills and finances. We recognised the need for improvement when we made a self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing which resulted in a downgrade for governance to G2. We accept this is a fair reflection of where we are currently, and we are working to make things better.

Ensuring core services are delivered well is our number one priority. It may take a bit of time to get there but our commitment to do so is firm. The Corporate Plan, approved by the Board in March 2023, is based on five themes:

- Good landlord services that meet our customers' needs
- Safe, decent, and efficient homes
- Residents supported and making a positive difference
- A dynamic workforce that delivers our goals
- A growing, sustainable, efficient, and viable business

We are making changes which creates turbulence. We expect this will settle. There are green shoots as we roll out the customer relationships management system, pilot mobile working devices, automate rent and service charge setting, review and strengthen our partnership with our responsive repairs contractor, refine our complaints process, and start the contract with a new grounds maintenance contractor. We are working to ensure you see the benefits of these changes in the months to come.



About Hexagon

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55%

with overall

residents satisfied

service received

Hexagon maintains and manages 4,500 homes, we build new homes for people who need affordable housing and offer a range of housing and support services – investing in individuals and the neighbourhoods where they live.

We are a charitable, not for profit housing association. This means every penny goes back into homes and services.

> This report shares some key performance and other information that we think is of particular interest to our customers.



50% satisfied that Hexagon listens to residents views and acts upon them



residents satisfied that Hexagon provides a home that is safe



23.72 Anti-social behaviour (ASB) cases per 1000 homes **52%**

satisfied that Hexagon provides a home that is well maintained



114.30 stage 1 complaints received per 1000 homes



9156 repairs completed Average of **106.4** days to relet a property

Investing and maintaining your homes

We were supported by members of the Residents Repairs Group during the rigorous selection process for a new repairs contractor.

Gilmartins were appointed as our new responsive repairs and void repairs contractor with effect 1st July 2022.

Since the launch of the new contract, we have been working collaboratively with Gilmartins to improve the repairs service. We had a bit of a bumpy start, facing challenges like other businesses across the country in recruiting for key trades. We also experienced problems with the new repairs telephone system. We continue to work closely with Gilmartins and the Residents Repairs Group to further improve the service.

New energy efficient air source heat pumps installed to 10 homes

Reporting Repairs Telephone Service

Following feedback from customers that the telephone system was too complicated resulting in calls being lost, we have worked to improve the service and now test it regularly to ensure accuracy. The number of calls abandoned was 3.8% (data captured from January 2023)

We apologise for the inconvenience this may have caused you.

Getting it right first time (RFT)

We have been working to improve the percentage of jobs that are completed RFT, this means the job is done correctly first time, not wasting time and money correcting errors and importantly, to ensure less inconvenience to you.

Appointments

We improved the appointments service to help this fit around you. Customers now know when to expect the operative, can track the operative and rearrange appointments (please give us as much notice as you can if you need to rearrange and at least 24 hours notice.)

53% satisfied that Hexagon provides a home that is well maintained

62.7% residents satisfied with last repair

9156 repairs completed

Damp and Mould

We have taken actions to improve the way we manage damp and mould to ensure we deal with cases pro actively. We have also appointed specialist damp and mould consultants to help us with this. We are working to make it easier for you to report damp and mould concerns.

Green boost for heritage homes

We worked in close consultation with residents living in Canal Grove in Southwark (17 homes) to make their homes more energy efficient, reducing carbon emissions. Funding was secured from the Carbon Offset Fund for this work known as retrofitting. The Canal Grove Cottages form an important part of Old Kent Road's heritage.

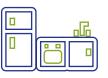
Investing in your homes

We know that its extremely important to our residents that we're actively investing in their homes. In the last year, we carried out improvement projects to 959 homes, the improvements included new kitchens, bathrooms, boilers and energy efficient heating systems. Rumana Khair Stock Improvement Manager

Heritage home

2022/23

Summary of the Investment Works Completed in 2022/23



49 kitchens replaced

and improving existing homes

We have invested £1.3m into maintaining



new door entry systems fitted



homes fitted with new windows and doors





areas decorated

roof replacements



69 aids and

new boilers

installed

bathrooms

replaced

aids and adaptations installed 60 fences replaced

> 23 energy efficiency improvement works carried out

10 homes installed with air source heat pumps

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Keeping you safe

Michael Galt, Head of Property Safety. Keeping you safe in your home is a big priority for Hexagon. Our dedicated Property Safety Team has been working to ensure that Hexagon is in line and compliant with the upcoming significant changes to regulation and enforcement in relation to fire / building safety.

> While the key focus of this is on 'high rise' buildings (7 floors or more) the team is applying the same broad principles across all of the properties managed by Hexagon.



A total of **2940**

inspections have been completed within the year.



66% residents satisfied that

Hexagon provides a home that is safe



98.5% of homes have a valid gas safety certificate



97.10% of buildings have a valid fire risk assessment (FRA)



100% of relevant blocks have a valid asbestos survey. We undertake Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) for all our buildings with communal areas. This looks at how the building is constructed, what fire safety measures are already in place, and what (if any) improvements could be made to ensure you are safe in your homes. These are reviewed either annually or bi-annually depending on the construction of the building.

The volume of fire safety related work over the past year was a significant increase from 21/22, this included:

- 1,930 fire risk assessment recommendations completed
- 107 communal fire doors replaced
- 351 full front entrance fire door sets replaced
- £4.3m spent on fire safety related works
- An additional Fire Safety Project Manager recruited

In addition to the above, we have put in place detailed procurement has been completed to put in place new/replacement contracts for fire alarm installations, fire risk assessments are as well as asbestos surveys and asbestos removals.

The push on fire safety related works has been accompanied by a big programme of inspections to check that mains electrical wiring in properties is in good condition and free from faults.

Inspections have been undertaken for both individual homes and on 'communal' systems where these are in place with a total of 2940 completed within the year. The work carried out in relation to this was reviewed by the Regulator for Social Housing who found that very significant progress has been made and were approving of the ongoing work.

Works were progressed on both our Higher Risk Residential Buildings (those 18m or taller) during the year. We have secured funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) Building Safety Fund to assist with the leaseholder costs.

Due to the complex nature of these projects and the strong demand for suitable replacement materials and expert skills and labour, both projects have suffered delays and setbacks.

We recognise the concern this has caused to affected residents, and we have worked hard to keep them informed by producing a monthly newsletter which is distributed in person and by email. Each of the contractors have a Resident Liaison Officer who is the key point of contact as the works progress.

100% of relevant blocks with valid water risk assessment



85.3% of dwellings with valid electrical safety documentation



We want to say a big thank-you to all affected residents for their co-operation and patience as we work towards completing these works.



23.72 Anti-social behaviour (ASB) cases per 1000 homes

51% satisfied with Hexagons approach to tackling ASB

Anti Social Behaviour

We work hard to keep where you live safe. When antisocial behaviour is reported, and there is clear evidence is presented to us, we'll act as quickly as we can for the benefit of the neighbourhood.

With our dedicated team reporting all cases of ASB and reports of Domestic Violence, we have seen the number of anti social behaviour cases reported increase in the last 12 months to 126 cases. We have recently recruited an additional specialist Anti Social Behaviour Officer to ensure we are able to respond effectively.

The level of satisfaction is much lower than we would like. We are conducting follow up calls to all residents who expressed dissatisfaction to help us better understand the cause of the dissatisfaction. We will use the findings of this to inform our actions to improve our performance. Early analysis suggests that managing expectation may be a key issue, helping residents understand what is realistic, feasible and what we can legally expect as an outcome. For example in extreme cases understanding the impact of long delays in court timetables.

Domestic Abuse

Of the 126 ASB cases, 21 were related to Domestic Abuse. We work closely with our partner agencies which includes the Police and Domestic Abuse charities to help support our residents who are victims and survivors of Domestic Abuse.

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Letting Homes

At an average of 106.4 days, it has been taking us much longer than we would like to re-let a home once it becomes empty.

The longer it takes, the more rent we lose and the longer a property stays empty when it could be someone's home. The delays have been hit by a number of reasons including repairs and major works or delays in nominations. Our Asset Management Group is working hard to reduce these delays.

Carly Foley Neighbourhood Services Lead

We have completed a LEAN Review, where we mapped out the process from receiving notice from the outgoing resident to issuing keys to a new one. We have now set a new target of 20 days, shaving more than 80 days off the process and have in place an action plan to help us achieve this target. Responsive Repairs have also appointed a new Voids Surveyor, to help improve the process. Our Housing Team have also reviewed our Lettings and Allocations policy to reflect these changes.

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I just wanted to say a massive thank you to Hexagon for giving me and my children my new home. We are completely in love with the property. My son who is 7 said he can't believe it's our home and said we are so lucky and it's not even decorated yet so it's going to get even better. Thank you so much from bottom our hearts this means the world to us."

Quote from new resident.

Average 106.4 days to re-let a property Average 63.74 days to complete void repairs

Your Neighbourhood Services Team

Collecting Rent

The end of the Pandemic dovetailed with the cost of living crisis creating continued financial pressures on many households.

Arrears levels in general needs housing increased to 6.9% over the last year, with Supported housing increasing to 9.4% and our leasehold and shared ownership at 1.4%. Arrears can lead to evictions and added court costs. Hexagon will continue to pursue collection of arrears even once a tenant is evicted. Money lost through rent arrears is money that we can not invest in our homes and communities.

It is our priority to support residents to sustain their tenancy, 7 households were evicted from their home for non payment of rent. The total arrears of the 7 households was £51,471.50.

On a positive note, we were able to stop two evictions at the last minute due to the arrears being cleared in full. This was only possible due to the residents' continuing to work with the Customer Accounts Team during the whole arrears collection process.

If you are having difficulties in paying your rent – please get in touch with our Revenue Team. We are able to provide help and assistance in trying to get you back on track either through the Customer Accounts Team, or potential support from our specialist Money Support Team (see below) to accessing benefits, employment and other practical means of support.

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453 residents accessed money support, this equates to 10% of Hexagon residents.

Income coming into Hexagon and to residents directly, that they may have not received without our intervention

£238,931.80 (£192,966.60 in 2021/22)

Rent arrears reduced by an average of **15.35%** for residents accessing money support.

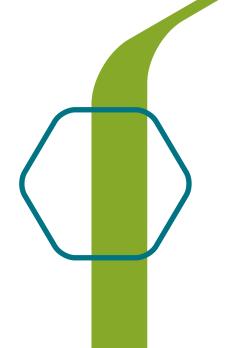
Supporting Residents to Deal with The Cost of Living Crisis

Our specialist Money Support Team continues to provide specialist guidance and support to residents who may need financial support or help managing their money.

The team work hard to help residents with their income, reduce debt and remove financial barriers to make sure they can retain their tenancy. This is a vital service and one that is going to continue to help residents through this difficult time.

Over the last year, our Money Support Team were contacted by 253 residents experiencing money worries and struggling to pay their rent. The Team also reached out to residents and a further 200 benefited from money support advice.

We also helped with energy saving advice, benefit and budgeting support; referrals to local food banks, assisted with Discretionary Housing Payments for those who met the criteria; referrals to independent debt advice; budgeting; applications for grants and funds.



Listening to our Customers

We monitor our performance across all areas of our business to ensure that we're running efficiently and that you are receiving the best possible service from us.

Your views and experience are important to us, and we gather your feedback in a range of different ways.

Our overall customer satisfaction score remains far lower than it should be. We're confident that the changes we are making are going to help us to turn this around.

We listen to our residents and we are using it to improve our services and to empower residents involvement, knowledge and experience in achieving this. Hexagon has a number of resident involvement groups and residents are also key members of the Board of Trustees.



residents satisfied with overall service received



54% of residents satisfied that we listen to your views and act upon them

Having listened to all our residents, We have taken feedback on board and have identified a number of areas for improvement:

- We are introducing a comprehensive customer relationship management system (CRM). This will ensure that all contact you have with us is logged and progress to resolution of the query is tracked.
- Upgraded the telephone systems and linked them to the new CRM to improve efficiency.
- We have introduced a new values and behaviours framework called CARE. This is the acronym for our values of:

Customers at the heart Appreciating difference **R**esponsible and accountable Empowering People

These values and behaviours are an integral part of our workplace culture. They help to create a positive work environment, improve communication, productivity, and morale. All colleagues are expected to demonstrate our Values and display our CARE behaviours.

We introduced transactional surveys for many service areas, so every time you use a service, we ask you to feedback on your experience. We analyse these closely and work to take action to improve how we work.

Calls to our **Customer Contact Centre**

Calls Received 2021/22 2022/23 58.067 39,777

- **Calls Answered** 2021/22 2022/23 35,654 51,732
- **Service Level**

<u>2021</u>	/22	2022/23
68%		75%

Abandoned Call

2021/22 2022/23 10.9% 10%

Complaints

Over the last year, we acknowledge that the way we managed complaints and the time it has taken for us to resolve your complaints has taken longer than we would like.

We recognise our service has fallen short of where we would like it to be, and we apologise to anyone who has been impacted by this.

We are on a journey to transform the way we engage with our residents and handle complaints. We initially recruited an interim Complaints Team to pilot centrally managing complaints. Building on the lessons learned from this, and noting the increased volume of complaints, we have now invested increased resources in complaints. We now have a dedicated centralised Complaints Management Team, the size of the team has increased to 4 dedicated Complaints Handlers and a dedicated Manager.

We have worked to embed a new systematic structure, including reporting on our performance in responding to complaints, demonstrating the learning of lessons and service improvements/ changes, and taking time to talk to the residents raising complaints to ensure the concern is fully understood and responded to.

Looking forward to the year ahead, we aim to share more information with you on our complaints performance, lessons we learn and the actions we take.

114.3 complaints per 1000

We received 506

complaints in 2022/2023



35.8% complaints were dealt with within HOS time-scales

22.4% residents satisfied with how we handle complaints. Elaine Adlington Customer Services Manager

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The Performance Review Group is a group of committed residents who regularly scrutinise the performance of Hexagon. This includes a suite of resident focused measures including complaints handling, repairs response times and fire safety amongst others. By probing and asking questions and making suggestions for improvements to resident services the PRG are proud of their work in refining and improving data reporting to its group, its tracker which holds Hexagon to account on key suggestions and its collaborations with other resident groups to question and support improvements in Hexagon's performance to all its residents."

Richard Bradshaw Chair of the Performance Review Group.

Resident Involvement

We employ a dedicated team to support residents to make a positive difference.

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In the past year, the Resident Voice & Engagement Strategy has been reviewed and renewed in partnership with involved residents to create a strategy that reflects resident priorities and demonstrably improves services.

We have incorporated a sharper focus on equality and diversity; supported joined-up working between the different resident-led groups and the Resident Engagement Team and feedback is now a standing item with the new Board Customer Services Committee.

In Summer/Autumn 2022, we spoke with 544 Hexagon residents on their doorstep at the 'Big Conversation' where we visited estates to discuss resident priorities and offer support. We continue to offer a range of ways for residents to collaborate with Hexagon and we have now also embedded resident involvement in recruitment for key staff and contractor appointments.

Just some of the achievements of involved residents in the past year include:

Resident Advisory Group: reviewed nine policies and made 30 changes to them including improving the damp and mould policy and the complaints policy

Performance Preview Group: Ensured that they received factual information on how Hexagon performed as a landlord and highlighted complaints as a top priority. They also oversaw some IT system implementation.

Repairs Group: Attended contractor meetings, questioning poor performance, held Gilmartins and other contractors to account



It is a honour for me to be recently elected as a tenant Chairperson of Hexagon's Repairs Group. It comes at a time of renewed focus by our landlord to make improvements to its repairs service. So I see my role as helping to drive through these changes so that our residents have a better experience when things go wrong inside and outside their homes."

Barry Hargrove

Resident Inspectors: Scrutinised Estate Inspections by the Neighbourhoods Team and made 10 recommendations to improve all of which were accepted by Hexagon. Recommendations included increasing staffing to monitor cleaning and grounds maintenance contractors and ensuring that residents know about inspections and are invited to join.

Estate Graders: 20 estates were graded in the London Boroughs of Croydon and Southwark during July 2022 by a team of residents. Of the 20 estates graded, the results were 4 Gold, 12 Silver and 4 Bronze. These include three estates downgraded from silver to bronze, and two downgraded from gold to silver, due to health and safety issues highlighted. As a result Hexagon carried out 63 actions such as repairs, health and safety or housing management actions.

Estate Champions: reported 89 issues on the estates that they check on behalf of all residents.

The Disability Inclusion Group: reviewed parking for those registered disabled

We involved **126** residents in improving services within meetings, focus groups and seminars in addition to the 544 above

In total, residents volunteered

958 hours of their time sharing their views and improving services

570 repair or estate services orders were made as a result of all of these activities

We made **32** changes to our services as a result

Would you like to volunteer and make a difference?

There are many ways to get involved - from recruitment, to in-depth scrutiny of our services, inspecting our estates, being a member of a one-off or regular group and much more. We'll provide training and development opportunities tailored to you, keep you up to date with news and we have days out and recognition events to thank you for your involvement. For more information call us on 0203 892 4751, email getinvolved@hexagon.org.uk or visit www.hexagon.org.uk/ residents/get-involved

I have been a volunteer for around 8 years. I've had some really good experiences and met some wonderful, knowledgeable and supportive Hexagon employees and other volunteers.

Sonji Nurse, Resident Volunteer

One of the best experiences that I have had recently has been being part of the stakeholder panel which was involved in the recruitment of new and vacant posts. This process has enabled me to bring my work and interviewing experience and listen to what Hexagon employees ask candidates about their experience and how they can enrich the staff complement at Hexagon and bring their skills and experience to be part of Hexagon's onward journey. I would recommend the experience as it gives a good insight into Hexagon from a different perspective."

Building for the Future

DEVELOPMENT & SALES

At the end of the year, there were 20 new rented homes completed and handed over at Pond House in Thornton Heath.

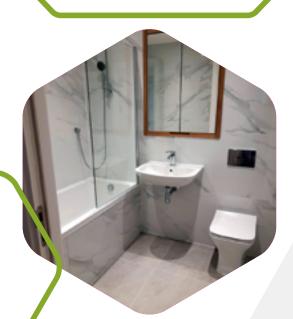
We had planned for an additional 35 shared ownership homes to reach completion but delivery of our new homes programme has been affected by the impact of market changes caused by Brexit, the pandemic and the war in Ukraine, and the consequences of the September Government announcements. Labour and materials costs and availability have all been affected.

We have 227 homes currently under construction including 196 affordable homes across all of our 5 Local Authority areas. In addition to the affordable homes, we continue to build two outright sale projects (21 homes). Both are now expected to be completed at the end of next year.

Some of these projects will incorporate hot water and heating installations which do not rely on fossil fuels. This is ahead of the Government's 2025 plan to phase out gas boilers to new-build homes by 2025 which is in line with the Future Homes Standard. 28 Russell Hill, Purley

Flats 1-13, John Russell House, 28 Russell Hill, Purley A mix of 5x1bed, 5x2bed and 3x3 bed apartments

Boulevard Point, 15 Scarbrook Road, Croydon A mix of 3x1bed, 3x2bed and 4x3 bed apartments





Helping Residents into Employment and Better Employment -

We continue to provide free employment and training support for residents through the Love London Working Partnership.

Through this partnership, 50% of the costs of this programme were funded through the European Social Fund.

We recognise that employment does not always pay, so we also support residents already in employment to secure better paid employment and opportunities.





26 secured employment



28 employed residents accessed support to further their employment



residents were successful in securing employment progression



European Union European Social Fund



Martyne Callender, Senior Employment Advisor

Case Study: Khadija -

Khadija is a Hexagon resident and had been out of work for over a year.

Khadija responded to an email sent to Hexagon residents regarding a job vacancy, and we arranged to meet the following week to discuss her employment needs.

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At our meeting Khadija shared that for the past year she had been focusing on caring for her two children. Khadjia knew she was ready to return to employment but was only able to work part-time and wondered if there were employers that could be flexible and mindful of her circumstances.

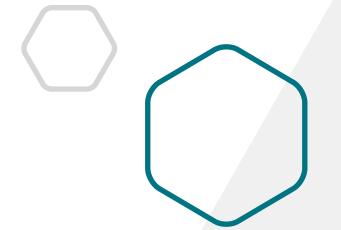
Khadija had made several applications over the year but felt that she was being overlooked by employers due to her qualifications making her seem overqualified.

This began to impact Khadija's confidence and she was beginning to lose faith in ever finding the right job.

With the help of the Hexagon's Senior Employment Adviser, Khadija completed an action plan and set goals that she wanted to achieve. Her CV was revised and as a result she received two interviews.

Prior to the interviews, Khadija and the adviser met to rehearse interview techniques.

The feedback from the first interview boosted her confidence and the next day she had an interview a construction company. She was offered the job straight after the interview! Khadija pictured with Cindy Coetzee, Director of Lantana Estates.



Khadija said,

This opportunity makes me feel I can achieve as a parent. I am optimistic about the future and feel my confidence has really improved. I feel a sense of security in my new workplace. I love it here!"

The Board

There were a few changes to the Board in 2022/23.

Firstly, after 22 years as Chief Executive, Tom McCormack retired in June 2022. In the same month, we welcomed Sheron Carter as our new Chief Executive, a well-known name in the housing sector.

In September 2022, the Board said goodbye and thank you to Board Members, Jeanette Kenyon and Louise Richardson. Jeanette had served the maximum term of nine years on the Board and was the Lead Board Member for Development. Louise left the Board after serving a three-year term many of those as a member of the Performance Management Committee.

In March 2023, the Board also said farewell to Ian Watts. Ian had also served the maximum term of nine years and had agreed to stay on the Board until a new board member had been recruited. For most of his years on the Board, Ian served as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee. He also sat on the Performance Management and Remuneration Committees.

In February 2023, we welcomed Gursh Baines, who replaced Ian on the Board. Gursh chairs the Audit & Risk Committee.

Following the Resident Board Member election held in the summer of 2022, Members welcomed Tom Heys onto the Board.

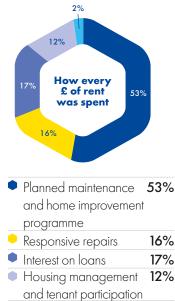
During the year we revised our board member policies to comply with our Code of Governance. In future Board members will be selected following an open application process. They will serve a maximum of two terms (6 years), with the third term used to manage a one-in and one-out board succession policy.



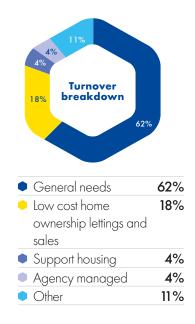
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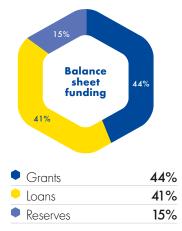
Financial Highlights 2022-23

	2023		2022	
	£′000		£,000	
Rent and Reserves funding*	31,866	100%	27,631	100%
Planned maintenance & improvement	13,556	43%	14,399	52%
Responsive	5,563	17%	4,562	17%
Interest	10,080	32%	4,954	18%
Housing Management & Tenant participation	2,666	8%	3,056	11%
Community development	-	0%	659	2%
	31,866		27,631	
	(O)		0.01	



Community development 2%





Turnover Breakdown	2023		2022	
General needs	26,396	80%	25,365	62%
Low Costs	2,756	8%	7,325	18%
Support Housing	1,838	6%	1,797	4%
Agency	1,625	5%	1,513	4%
Other	282	1%	4,591	11%
	32,897	100%	40,591	100%

	2023		2022	
Grants	219,208	37%	220,540	44%
Loans	307,133	52%	207,402	41%
Reserves	65,946	11 %	70,559	15%
	592,287	100%	498,501	100%

*Due to the delays with our development pipeline for sales and units in management, reserves funding of £3.4m was utilised in 2023.

Getting in touch

Don't forget, there are lots of ways you can contact us. These include by telephone, email, letter, coming into the office, direct messaging on Facebook, text, or via the website.

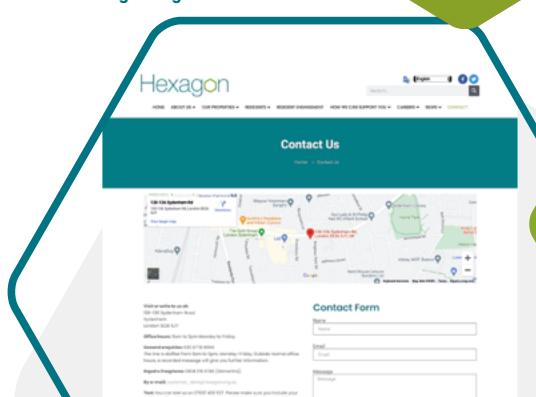
Our website offers translation software. Click the drop down box option at the top of the page and select from the list of languages.

We're also making increasing use of email and SMS messaging to contact customers quickly and easily. Have you changed your email or telephone number recently? If so please let us know. This is the quickest and most efficient way of keeping in touch with you.

We are excited to be introducing a customer self-service portal over the next year. This will be your online home for everything to do with your Hexagon Account. Once you register, you can check your rent account, make a payment, update your contact details, view your estate services schedules, gain decisions instantly on queries like Can I have a pet? In the future, you will also be able to track your repair, book and change an appointment.

Customers are, of course, welcome to make an appointment to visit us at our offices to discuss any issues.

Telephone: **020 8778 6699** Website: **www.hexagon.org.uk**



There are many ways to contact us



Hexagon Housing Association Limited 130-136 Sydenham Road Sydenham London SE26 5JY

Telephone: **020 8778 6699** Website: **www.hexagon.org.uk**

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