



Home News

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Sharon Carter,
Chief
Executive.

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Welcome to the winter edition of Homes News. It is packed with updates on the services we deliver to you and the support we can offer. I hope there will be something in this edition that you will find insightful and helpful.

We have done a lot of work to improve the systems, processes, and staff structures. In the year ahead I am asking our teams to focus on you. To make further service improvements we need to better understand residents and act on the things you are telling us.

Building trust that we will do what we say is important. This means not promising what we can't deliver but delivering what we can. This requires honest and open communication about Hexagon's obligations and residents' responsibilities.

When things go wrong, we need to fix them quickly. We are getting better at handling complaints. We have speeded up escalations to senior managers, and we are holding cross department meetings to better coordinate our responses.

I am pleased the economic environment has stabilized, resulting in reduced inflation. This sees a return to moderate rent increases. At the Board meeting held on 28 January 2025, the Board agreed this year's rent increase of 2.7% for tenants and 3.2% for shared owners. The difference comes from low-cost rental accommodation being based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and low-cost shared ownership accommodation being based on the Retail Price Index (RPI). We are currently calculating service charges for shared owners and leaseholders. We envisage that any service charge increases will be below 4% depending on the services and communal maintenance at each scheme.

Lastly, I appreciate the work resident volunteers have put into reshaping resident engagement to ensure your voices make a difference. If you would like to get involved, please get in touch.

Knowing Our Residents

We believe that having good knowledge of our residents allows us to provide effective and robust services to you.

By understanding if you need any additional support when receiving our services, we can make appropriate adjustments to enable you to access these. At the moment, we know that the quality of information we hold on our residents is not as good as we need it to be, and we have been working towards launching our 'Knowing Our Residents' project.

This will shortly see us asking you a few questions when we have contact with you, either during a telephone call or when we carry out a tenancy review appointment to your home. These questions will allow us to understand if you need any additional support to use our services. This might be due to ill health, disability, communication needs, or a temporary change in your personal situation.

We recognise that you may be reluctant to share this information, particularly if you don't know why you're being asked it, but by letting us know about your circumstances, we may be able to offer you one or all of the following: –

- Letters in large print, braille, audio recording, or another language
- Explaining a letter over the phone
- Contacting a nominated representative or point of contact such as a carer, friend, or family member
- Waiting longer at the door when we visit
- Calling ahead before a visit
- Visiting in person where we would normally call you by phone
- Providing an induction loop or assistance from a sign language interpreter during meetings at the Hexagon office
- Allowing more time to explain repairs or installations
- Extra tenancy support

We will make any adjustment we can reasonably deliver so please let us know if it's anything different from the ideas shared. Likewise, if you have any concern about how we will manage and process your personal data, please let us know and we will talk you through this too.



Raleigh House
Neighbourhood
Action Day

Hearing the Customer Voice

At Hexagon, we are committed to embedding a 'Hearing the Customer Voice' culture which will see us actively listen to our residents and to use themes from your contact to shape positive improvements in the services we deliver to you.

- Hearing the voice of our customers isn't just about making change to our services but also about communicating with you that through active listening to your feedback, are making made positive change. Going forward, Home News will highlight how we are listening, learning and acting on what you have told us about the services you are receiving and how, with the support of Hexagon's Board, we are continually striving to improve your experience of contact with us. In this edition of Home News, we have a 'Hearing the Customer Voice' theme running through our news articles and to highlight this, we will be introducing a symbol to show that residents have or will be used to influence the outcome.

Every day we have numerous points of contact with our residents and each one of these contacts is an opportunity for us to understand from you where we can improve and where we need to do more of the things we're getting right. Our recent service developments have seen us use information from the following sources:

- **Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) surveys** – these are surveys introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing to assess how well landlords are doing in providing good quality homes and services.
- **Stage 1 complaints** from residents.
- **Day to day contact** with residents. We aim to record each point of contact on our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.

When we looked at these sources of information for the period between June and September of last year, we identified the following key themes:

Day to day repairs

- 1656 residents contacted Hexagon about repair related issues.
- 63 complaints regarding repairs were received.
- 47.10% of residents that completed a TSM survey included day to day repairs as a cause of their dissatisfaction

Of those residents stating dissatisfaction with the repairs service, 17% referred to 'forgotten repairs'.

Quote: *I have repairs outstanding from when I moved in last year. They need to get the jobs done.*

Customer Service

- 19 complaints regarding customer service were received.
- 35.5% of residents included customer services and contact with Hexagon as a cause of their dissatisfaction.

11.59% of TSM respondents referred to not being heard, respected or treated fairly. There were others who stated there was no understanding of their vulnerability.

Quote: *Listening and getting back to us, when we make complaints. I feel that they are not good at getting back to us.*

7.24% referred to a lack of visibility and/or proactive communication from Hexagon.

Quote: *They need to have community or residents' meetings, these used to happen but nothing for over 20 years. They do send newsletters round, but they are full of things that I am not interested in.*



Cobbs Court
Neighbourhood
Action Day

Estate Services

- 16.66% of residents included estate services and condition of external areas as a cause of their dissatisfaction.

12.31% referred to poorly maintained communal areas.

Quote: *The communal garden needs to be improved. The grass could do with some trimming. Even though, they do come out and collect the rubbish, quite a lot of it is still left behind.*

As a direct result of this information, we are currently doing the following:

- Gilmartins have been tasked with delivering a Satisfaction Improvement Plan. Hexagon will work with Gilmartins to make sure this is delivered and progress on this will be fed back to you.
 - Carrying out more analysis of the data related to 'forgotten' repairs to understand which contractors this relates to other than Gilmartins. We closely track works carried out by Gilmartins to make sure they deliver them within our service standards, but we know we need to do more to be assured of the work delivered by others too.
 - Implementing more stringent monitoring of CRM use across the business seeing managers making sure their team members are always recording their contact with residents allowing us to deliver an improved customer service to everyone.
- Working towards delivering our 'Know our Residents' project. More information about this is available on page 3
 - Planning and delivering a series of Action Days which sees us meeting residents on site and working with them to devise an action plan towards improving the common parts of their homes and sending regular newsletters to inform them of progress.
 - Equipping our customer facing team members with Hexagon logo fluorescent vests allowing them to be more visible to you when they are out and about. We are also providing them with technology, allowing them to work within your communities, spending more face to face time with you for more of the time.
 - Increasing the level of information being given to you about when estate inspections are scheduled. This includes SMS messages being sent to invite residents to join estate inspections if they wish.
 - Reviewing the Estate Champion role which, once completed, will see us running a recruitment campaign to have, at the very least, Estate Champions for each major scheme.

Analysing the feedback from you is an ongoing activity, with findings and identified actions from this being reported to Board each quarter.

Repairs Service – How We Are Performing?

We strive to deliver a quality repairs service. One of the tools we use in managing the performance of our repairs service is Key Performance Indicators (KPI).

Our repairs service KPIs measure different aspects of the repairs service and review our performance. They can also help us highlight inefficiencies and areas of concern.

The KPI for the 2024 performance period reveal a largely positive trend with several areas exceeding targets, though some fall short of expectations. Here's a summary of the performance:

Resident Satisfaction:

Performance remains a key concern, consistently falling below the target of 95%. The year-to-date (YTD) figure of 61.85% is significantly lower than the target, though there has been some fluctuation, with minor improvements in several months. There was a drop in satisfaction for August and September 2024. This coincided with the new approach within Hexagon to responsive repairs which may have had an impact.



Recalls:

The recall rate is consistently well below the target of 2.5%, showing the service provider's strong performance in minimising follow-up work and achieving high-quality initial repairs.



Right First Time:

The performance has consistently exceeded the 90% target, reaching an impressive 92.80% in September, highlighting a high level of accuracy and quality in repairs from the service provider.



Post Inspection Quality:

While the target is >98%, performance in this area has been variable. Several months exceed the target, but the YTD figure of 80.84% is significantly below the goal, indicating a need for improvement in quality of work standards.



Number of Repairs

Completed in Target:

The service provider is consistently achieving close to the target of 99%, with a high level of performance seen in each month, ensuring timely completion of repairs.



Emergency Repairs:

The average time to complete emergency repairs is consistently well within the 4-hour target, demonstrating efficiency in responding to emergency needs.



Routine Repairs:

While there has been a slight variation, the average time to complete routine repairs has improved significantly from 10.62 days in April to 6.75 days in September, showing effective and timely handling of non-emergency repairs.



Appointments Made and Kept:

The service provider has maintained a high percentage (98.92% in September) of appointments made and kept, ensuring reliability and trust with residents.



Repair Orders Raised and Overdue:

The overdue repair orders are consistently low and within target, with the service provider ensuring minimal delays.



Reporting Repairs

We are committed to providing a timely and reliable repairs and maintenance service to our residents.

This article explains how to report a repair, our appointment slots, and our target timeframe to complete the repair.

How to report a repair

Call Gilmartins by freephone: **0808 178 6785**

All emergency repairs can be reported directly to our 'Out of Hours' Service on **0808 178 6785** when the main Hexagon office is closed.

For Gas and Heating Repairs please call: Freephone **0800 088 4433** or **020 8722 3434**, available 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.

In the future you will be able to use the MyHexagon to log some repair requests and make non-emergency appointments.

Appointments

When you make an appointment for a non-emergency repair, you will be offered a morning or afternoon appointment slot within the following appointment times:

8:00am – 12pm	Monday to Friday
12:00pm – 8:00pm	Monday to Friday
9:00am – 1:00pm	Saturday

At all other times, including statutory holidays, there will be an out of hours' service for emergency repairs only.

A reminder of all appointments will be sent to you by text message, phone call, or email the day before the appointment date. We will telephone and/or text you when we are on route to advise of our estimated time of arrival. If we receive no reply we will still attend the appointment.

We will notify you at least 24 hours in advance when an appointment cannot be honoured, by telephone call in the first instance, followed by a text message and email. We will arrange an alternative appointment with you.

Timescales

Your repair will be assigned one of the following priority timescales:

Repair Priority	Description	Timescale
Emergency	An issue which puts the health, safety, or security of the resident or a third party at immediate risk or which affects the structure of the building adversely.	To be made safe within 4 hours and completed within 24 hours.
Health and Safety	All category 1 Housing Health and Safety Rating System Hazards, including Damp and Mould	Completed within 21 days.
Routine	All other repairs	Completed within 28 calendar days.

We aim to complete all repairs within these timescales and we focus on delivering quick, high-quality repairs for our residents. Where a complex repair requires more time we will keep you informed and updated about the progress.

Complaints – We Are Improving

At the start of 2024, Hexagon was not handling complaints well. We knew we needed to make changes to deliver the service our residents expect, so we developed a Service Improvement Plan. One year later, at the start of 2025, our complaint service has improved dramatically.

Our Starting Point

Hexagon receives about 40 complaints each month. For most complaints, we aim to respond within two weeks, but some cases may take longer, so we normally expect to have between 40 and 80 complaints open at any one time. At the start of 2024 we had more than three times that amount, over 250 open complaints, with more coming in all the time. This meant that, in some cases, residents had to wait for months to get a response.

What We Did About It

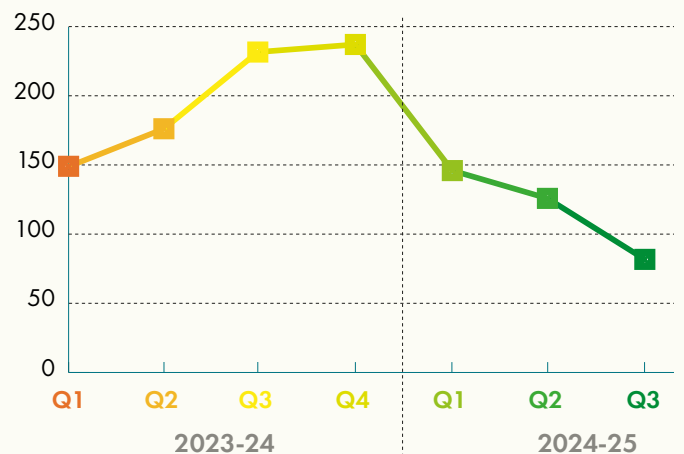
The first thing we did was overhaul our policies and procedures, to make sure we had the right process in place to handle all of the complaints we received fairly. Then we developed a new module in our IT system, to allow us to properly log all complaints as they arrived, and to better monitor them until they were resolved. Once we had these basic structures in place, we increased the size of the Complaints Team, which now includes five full-time members of staff.

With the right foundations in place, and an experienced and well-trained team, we began to make rapid progress. Soon we were responding to more complaints than we received, which meant that the total number of open complaints was going down. We also began to respond to complaints more quickly. Instead of waiting weeks, or months, many residents were now getting a response within days.

Where We Are Now

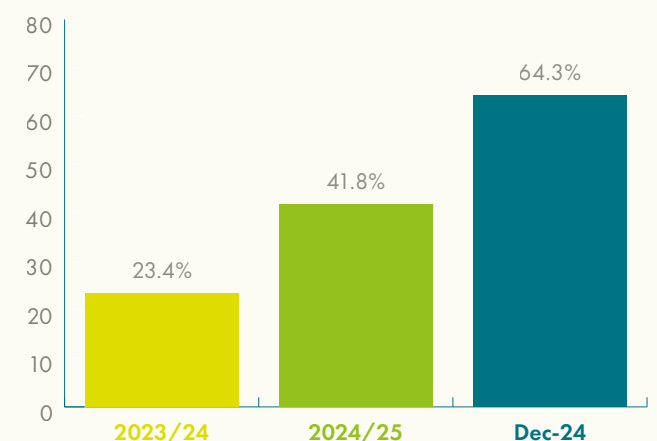
As of the 1st of January 2025, we have 81 open complaints – a huge reduction compared to the 250 we had 12 months ago.

Stage 1 Cases Pending Response



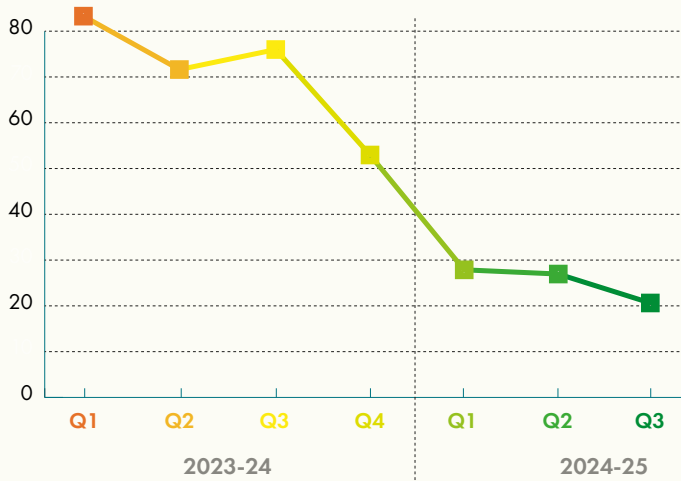
Last financial year we responded to just 23.4% of complaints within our target timelines. Since April 2024, our year-to-date response within target is 41.8%, and in December alone we responded to 64.3% within target.

Complaints Responded To Within Target



Last year, it took us 54 days to respond to a complaint, but this year, its taken just 21 days.

Stage 1 Average Response time



What Next

During the year we have rapidly improved, but we know there are things we still need to get better at. We have introduced a satisfaction survey to understand how residents feel about our complaints process, and too many residents feel they are still not getting the resolution they need from our service. In 2025, we will continue to focus on making sure we are responding to all complaints quickly and fairly. We will also dig deeper, to understand the causes of the complaints, and how we can make sure that they are fully resolved, and do not happen again. We will play our part in helping Hexagon deliver great services to all of our residents this year, and every year.

An Apology

In our Residents Annual Report 2023/24, we reported a number Tenant Satisfaction Measures incorrectly. We apologise for this error on our part and have put additional checks in place to ensure such an error does not reoccur. The correct figures are reported below.

- Number of stage 1 complaints received per 1000 properties **111.9**
- Number of stage 2 complaints received per 1000 properties **20.6**
- % of properties with a valid gas safety certificate **98.9%**
- % of homes for which all required fire safety risk assessments have been carried out **87.6%**
- % satisfied with overall service received **53%**
- % satisfied that Hexagon listens to the tenants views and acts upon them **45%**

MyHexagon

MyHexagon, our new online residents portal, launched in November 2024. Nearly 800 residents have now registered to use MyHexagon, with more residents registering daily.

This is just the first stage in our journey to develop the online portal, and over the coming weeks and months we will be introducing new features.

Are You Interested in the Development of MyHexagon?

We would love to hear from you on how you would like to see MyHexagon develop and hear your ideas on the features you would like to see, what you would like to be able to use MyHexagon for. Interested? Want to know more?

We will be sharing more information and inviting you to share your thoughts via MyHexagon. You can also contact us by calling Nicky Hazelwood tel **020 8778 6699** email **nhazelwood@hexagon.org.uk**

Coming Soon – Reporting Repairs using MyHexagon

At the moment, you can view your 5 most recent repairs using MyHexagon.

In the Spring you will also be able to report repairs and book appointments on MyHexagon.

You will also be able to report communal repairs on MyHexagon, and we will be able to message residents in your block to say a communal repair has been reported and when it is expected to be completed by.



Feel
'AT HOME'
with
TECHNOLOGY

The MyHexagon Portal is now live, allowing you to access and manage your Hexagon home.

From making quick and easy payments, to viewing recent repairs, or just getting in contact with us, handle it all via the MyHexagon portal.

Sound like a plan?




SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT MYHEXAGON.ORG.UK TO REGISTER TODAY

myhexagon.org.uk

Estate Services – How are we performing?

We are committed to keeping your Estate a clean, safe and pleasant place to live. To achieve this, we work closely with our contractor Just Ask, who deliver Grounds Maintenance and communal Cleaning services. Our Neighbourhood Officers also conduct regular estate inspections to ensure the standards you expect are consistently met. Here's how we performed during the last three months.

Cleaning & Grounds Maintenance

Scheduled Visits:

96% of all scheduled visits were completed on time.

Deep Cleans:

100% of planned deep cleans were successfully carried out.

Service Improvements:

61 rectification notices were issued for service failures. Of these 67% were addressed within 5 working days.

Estate Inspections

Neighbourhood Officers conduct inspections at intervals of either monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly, depending on the contractor's performance. These frequencies are reviewed quarterly and adjusted as necessary.

Recent inspections revealed significant improvements in service delivery.

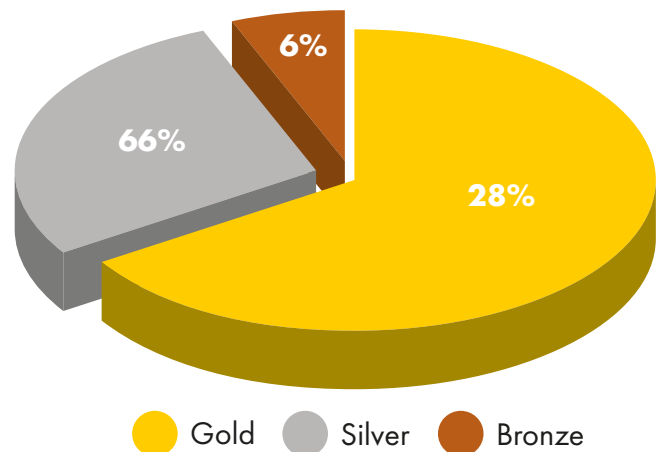
66% of sites achieved a Gold rating, 28% of sites achieved Silver, 6% achieved Bronze.

Your Feedback Matters

To ensure we're delivering the best possible services, we're introducing a new resident satisfaction survey. This is your opportunity to share your thoughts on cleaning, grounds maintenance and other communal services. Your feedback will help us identify areas for improvement and celebrate what's working well.

The survey will be shared at the end of each month via text and email to all residents that receive cleaning and or grounds maintenance services.

Thank you for your continued support as we strive to maintain the highest standards for our estates. If you have any immediate concerns, or question, please contact the Customer Desk on **020 8778 6699** or via email **Customer_Desk@hexagon.org.uk**



Tenancy Reviews

Since April 24, the Neighbourhoods team has conducted an impressive 293 tenancy reviews, playing a vital role in ensuring Hexagon's homes are occupied by the right people and meeting the needs of our residents.

These reviews are a cornerstone of our commitment to building strong, supportive communities and maintaining fair housing practices.

Tenancy Reviews help us to identify any cases of tenancy fraud, ensuring that our homes are available to those who truly need them. By verifying that the correct people are living in each property, we can better address housing shortages and support families and individuals who rely on Hexagon for secure and affordable housing.

The reviews go far beyond just fraud prevention. They also provide an opportunity for us to gather up-to-date information about our residents' circumstances. This includes understanding vulnerabilities, support needs, and household composition. With this information, we can work collaboratively with residents to ensure they receive the assistance they require, whether that involves making reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities, connecting individuals with local support services, or addressing specific concerns about their living situations.

The feedback we've received from residents so far has been overwhelmingly positive. Many have appreciated the opportunity to share their experiences and needs and our team is proud to offer personalised support wherever possible.



If you haven't yet participated in a tenancy review, rest assured our team will be in touch when it's your turn. In the meantime, if your circumstances have changed or you require support, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

Thank you to all residents who have participated in tenancy reviews so far.

Rent Increases and Service Charge Changes

With the start of the year comes the work to prepare the letters we send to Hexagon residents about their rent increases and notifications of service charge changes.

Letters advising residents of these will be sent by the beginning of March to our homeowners and all other letters will be sent by the beginning of June.

It is important that Hexagon maximises its income from the rent and service charges we collect from residents as this enables us to deliver quality services to our residents. As a not-for-profit organisation, Hexagon does not make any profit from its income but instead utilises any surplus funds into improving your homes or providing much needed new accommodation.

In the past year (April to December), rent paid to Hexagon enabled us to carry out 10,300 repairs to your homes and, moving into 2025/26, maintenance of your homes will continue to be our priority, addressing damp and mould where this is identified, and reducing the number of complaints we receive about their condition.

The amount by which your rent will be increased by is set out within your tenancy or lease whilst service charges are set based on the costs that were incurred to deliver them last year. We work to keep the cost of delivering services to a minimum through robust procurement and effective contract management including close monitoring of the services but despite this, we are aware that the costs passed on to you have significantly increased in recent years and for many, meeting these costs has become a challenge. If this applies to you, our Money and Employment Support Teams are here to help.



Cobbs Court

Money Support

We can work with you to establish how you may be able to maximise your income email moneysupport@hexagon.org.uk or tel **020 8778 6699**

Employment and Training Support

Our dedicated Employment and Training Support Team offer bespoke one to one support to help improve your employment opportunities, whether you are in work and seeking a new or additional job, or seeking employment

Email et@hexagon.org.uk
tel **020 8778 6699**

Gareth Plunkett

I am Gareth Plunkett, Hexagon's new Electrical & Lift Compliance Manager. I have worked in Housing for the last 15 years, for some of the largest Housing Associations in the country. Prior to that, I worked on some exciting large scale construction projects, always within the electrical field; for example, Gatwick Airport/Network Rail/London Underground/Crossrail/highways/tunnelling.

Within Hexagon, the two main areas I look after are electrical safety and lifts. Safety is ensuring all your homes have had their electrical 5-year safety check and are safe for you to live in.

With regards to lifts, I oversee passenger lifts in bigger blocks and home lifts and hoists. The latter require two service and two insurance inspections every year.

I am kept very busy in my role, but if you want me to visit, and I have the time, I will gladly come along to your home and discuss any electrical or lift issues with you.



Are you interested in Switchee?

Switchee can optimize your energy use and lower heating bills by up to 17%

In the spring we intend to purchase devices to install within some of our homes to remotely monitor moisture levels and heating usage. We intend to use the majority of these devices in properties that have previously suffered from damp and mould to enable us to take proactive action to address issues before they become more serious.

A small number – up to 30 – we intend to install in other homes enable us to compare moisture levels and heating usage in different property types.

If you are happy to allow us to install a device in your home, or want to know more – please contact moneysupport@hexagon.org.uk tel **020 8778 6699**

We are happy to share the information the device provides with each resident – this may help you understand how your home could be heated differently to reduce moisture levels and heating costs.

About Switchee

Switchee devices are designed to offer us real-time data on whether the boiler is performing efficiently, as well as help us identify if your home could be at risk of condensation or damp and mould. The data also helps us identify homes that are susceptible to excessive heat loss, and where residents might be experiencing difficulties heating your home and keeping your home at a comfortable temperature. This allows us to offer assistance before the issue gets out of control.

Switchee Fact:
Lower heating bills
by up to 17%

Upgrading a manual thermostat to Switchee device enables you to optimise your energy use, lower heating bills by upto 17%, and reduce energy consumption.



Recent Scrutiny and Actions

Through Spring and Summer last year, our Resident Inspection Team which is made up of 3 residents: Sarah, Joy and Sharon, reviewed the work of our Community Investment Service (CIT): Money and Employment Support.

The Inspection Team undertook a review to assess whether the service was working effectively from a resident's perspective. It also looked at whether Hexagon are delivering the service in accordance with service standards and service agreements.

After undertaking a desk-top review of 16 documents, the Team interviewed 6 Hexagon staff and designed 2 resident surveys and 1 staff survey all aimed at gathering evidence to support their review.

Our inspectors reached the following conclusions:

Positives:

- The services offered appear to reflect the main areas of resident interest and need.
- Proactive Universal Credit transition support.
- Service users receive a personalised service which can make a real difference to residents' lives.
- Impacts are clearly demonstrated.
- A positive link between the work of CIT and rent arrears reduction.
- The introduction of a New Tenancy Support process is strongly welcomed by the inspection team as it is a crucial aspect to early-intervention and raising awareness.
- The CIT team has made efforts to increase internal awareness and referrals, although the impact appears limited.

Challenges:

- The service is often reactive rather than proactive – capacity and data insights are key limiting factors.
- There is a limited awareness of the CIT service amongst Hexagon residents and indicated uncertainty on what it provides. Home News and through Hexagon staff appear to have been most effective communication methods to date, online is a missed opportunity.

- The service is valued at a senior level, and there is a degree of internal awareness and referrals – but this is far from consistent – missed opportunities for earlier interventions to help prevent tenancy sustainment issues before they 'snowball'.
- In the current economic context, there is an increasing demand for the service and limited team capacity.
- There appears to be little information on CIT clearly shared at the point of new tenancy or in the Residents' Handbook.

And recommended:

Communication & Raising Awareness

- Clear information to support improved internal awareness and referrals.
- Communications campaign to increase resident awareness and understanding.
- Clear New Tenancy Information on CIT and referrals monitoring of the new Tenancy Support process.

Process & Data Quality

- Earlier identification for Money Support.
- Incorporate CIT needs onto our internal systems to improve data quality, efficiency and joined-up information.
- Improved baseline data.

Future proofing

- Creative future planning to allow for service demand increase.

Since our Inspectors review report was approved our CIT colleagues have been working hard to deliver the actions required to address the recommendations.

Most of the work is on track and once the actions have been delivered, we will report back again later in 2025 with a review of the whole project. We'd like to thank Sarah, Joy and Sharon for their superb work to make this review happen.

Staying Warm This Winter

As temperatures drop, staying warm while managing energy costs becomes a priority.

Here's some tips to stay warm and save money this winter. Also, see information on the support services available.

- 1. Block Draughts:** Use draught excluders or rolled-up towels to block cold air coming through doors and windows. Close curtains at night but let sunlight in during the day to warm your home naturally.
- 2. Layer Up:** Wear thermal layers and warm clothing indoors to reduce the need to turn up the heating.
- 3. Maximise Heating Efficiency:** Set your thermostat to the lowest comfortable temperature – typically around 18-21°C. If possible, heat only the rooms you use.
- 4. Hot Water Bottles:** A hot water bottle is a cost-effective way to keep warm. But remember:
 - avoid boiling temperatures
 - always use a cover to avoid burns and it should be only two-thirds full
 - remove all air above the water level before sealing to prevent injuries
 - ensure the stopper is tightly secured
 - regularly inspect for wear and tear
 - replace every 2 years

Support Available

- **Groundwork's Green Doctor Service:** Free home energy advice e.g., managing energy bills, switching suppliers, and improving home insulation. www.groundwork.org.uk/greendoctor/
- **SELCE (South East London Community Energy):** Workshops and one-to-one advice to understand energy tariffs, tackle fuel debt, and improve energy efficiency at home. They sometimes provide grants or access to energy-saving devices.
- **Warm Hubs:** often found at local libraries, community centres, and churches are free, welcoming, heated spaces where you can stay warm and connect with others. They offer Wi-Fi, activities and sometimes hot drinks. You can find your nearest **Warm Welcome Space** by searching the online map. www.warmwelcome.uk/find-a-space
- **Grant Support:** If you're in debt to your energy supplier, you might be able to get a grant to help pay it off. You will need to get debt advice before applying. You can contact the Money Support Team for a referral to Money Advisor Plus Services or Find your local Citizens Advice www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/nearby/
- **Cold Weather Payments:** Extra support is available for eligible residents during periods of very cold weather. Check your eligibility. www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment

For more information on staying warm you can contact the Money Support Team on **020 8778 6699** or email moneysupport@hexagon.org.uk



Supporting Older Residents Through a Challenging Winter

This winter, Hexagon's older residents faced mounting challenges due to rising energy costs and reductions in Winter Fuel Payments.

Recognising the need for extra support, **The Money Support Team** took action to ensure pensioners could stay warm by accessing financial guidance and the **Keep Me Cosy** initiative.

Keep Me Cosy: Practical Help to Stay Warm

The **Keep Me Cosy** scheme focused on providing essential items to help pensioners stay warm during the colder months. Tailored care packages included:

- Warm clothing and slippers
- Blankets
- Jumpers
- Hot water bottles
- Energy-efficient electric blankets

Sixty residents were contacted, eighteen residents participated. These energy-efficient blankets offered a cost-effective way to stay warm, reducing the need to rely on costly central heating.

Personalised Support and Connection

The Money Support Team personally delivered the Keep Me Cosy packages, going above and beyond to ensure residents felt supported. These visits were more than just deliveries, they were an opportunity to connect with residents, discuss additional support options, and address any concerns. **The Money Support Team** proved the power of partnership working, community engagement, compassion, and practical support in making a real difference.

Understanding and Claiming Pension Credit

The team also worked to raise awareness of **Pension Credit**, a vital benefit that can boost income for those on a low state pension. Many pensioners miss out on this support, but it can make a significant difference, opening the door to additional benefits such as:

- Free TV licenses for residents over 75
- Council tax reductions
- The £150 Warm Home Discount
- Free dental treatments and eye tests

If your weekly income is less than £220 (single person) or £330 (couple), you may qualify. By claiming Pension Credit, you can also secure your Winter Fuel Allowance worth £200 to £300 this winter.

Don't Miss Out

Applying for Pension Credit is simple. Visit www.gov.uk/pensioncredit or call **0800 99 1234** (textphone: 0800 169 0133).

Money Support Team

Our dedicated Money Support Team can guide you through the process and ensure you receive the help you're entitled to. Tel **020 8778 6699** email moneysupport@hexagon.org.uk



What should you do if you receive a Universal Credit managed migration notice?

The Migration to Universal Credit (UC) is not automatic! You must actively claim UC within the three-month deadline set out in your letter. If you do not make a claim in time, your benefits will stop.

If you are currently receiving legacy benefits including Tax Credits, Housing Benefit, and Income Support, you will soon receive a letter from the Government to migrate onto Universal Credit.

This process is called 'managed migration'. If you have already received your letter and moved over to UC, there is no need to do anything else.

However, if you are still receiving certain legacy benefits, The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) will formally be sending a letter asking you to migrate from your existing benefit(s) to UC. This is called a 'migration notice'.

The letter will have the following features:

- A headline to let you know this is a 'Universal Credit Migration Notice'.
- The benefits you currently claim that will be replaced by Universal Credit.
- A deadline for applying for Universal Credit – this will be three months from when the letter was sent.
- An address for the website you'll need to use to make your claim.
- The migration notice helpline.
- A statement at the bottom which says: 'This is a migration notice issued under regulation 44 of the Universal Credit (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2014.'

You will also get a reminder in the post (and by SMS text) if you have not applied within 10 weeks of receiving the letter.

Support available to customers when moving to UC:

- A dedicated move to UC helpline which you can call on **0800 169 0328**.
- Comprehensive guidance on gov.uk and – Move to Universal Credit (ucmove.campaign.gov.uk)
- Support through Help to Claim helpline **0800 144 8 444** – provides tailored support to make a new claim to Universal Credit for those that need it and it's delivered by Citizens Advice in partnership with DWP.
- Face to face support in local jobcentres for people who are unable to use the telephone, webchat and online advice content.
- The Government runs a free guidance and information service called **MoneyHelper**, which offers the option to chat (online or by phone) with an adviser – make use of it.

If you are not sure, call the DWP on **0800 169 0328** or the Citizens Advice Help to Claim service.

Universal Credit Hub – We Can Help

Hexagon has set up a Universal Credit Hub as part of our dedicated Money Support Team. The UCHub is able to offer support on all things Universal Credit. You can reach us by telephoning **020 8778 6699** and asking for Money Support Team, or email us at uchub@hexagon.org.uk

Tax credits are ending – don't miss out

Tax credits are ending in April 2025 – anyone in receipt of tax credits will see their payments end in April 2025.

If you receive tax credits, don't miss out, read on.

There are two types of tax credit: child tax credit (CTC) for people with children and working tax credit (WTC) for people in work. You may get either or both.

Universal credit (UC) is a means-tested benefit for people of working age in or out of work, with or without children and includes amounts for housing costs.

You cannot get tax credits and UC at the same time. If you are currently getting tax credits, you can continue to get them unless you make a claim for UC, or you are notified that your tax credits are ending, and you need to claim UC by a specified date. This process is known as **'Managed Migration'**.

If you get a letter telling you to claim Universal Credit by a certain deadline, this is a **'Migration Notice.'** If you get a letter telling you to claim Pension Credit by a certain deadline, this is a **'Tax Credit Closure Notice' (TCCN).**

You will individually be notified that your tax credits are ending, and you need to claim UC. You must be given at least three months to claim UC, and you can request an extension with good reason. Your tax credits will be terminated as soon as you claim UC. If you do not claim UC by the deadline, your tax credits will be terminated.

If you claim UC by the deadline, or within one month of the deadline, you may receive extra amount known as the **Transitional Element**. This is to ensure that you are not worse off on UC compared to tax credits. This amount depends on your current tax credits award.

There is also protection for people with capital over £16,000 and for students who would not be entitled to UC under the usual rules. Tax credit claimants under managed migration are protected from the upper capital limit in universal credit for up to 12 assessment periods from the date of their universal credit claim.

Money Support Team are Happy to Help

Our dedicated Money Support Team are here to help. You can call us on **020 8778 6699** and ask for Money Support or email us at moneysupport@hexagon.org.uk

IF YOU CLAIM
TAX CREDITS

THE DWP & HMRC WILL
NOTIFY YOU THAT TAX
CREDITS ARE ENDING

YOU HAVE
THREE MONTHS

TO CLAIM UNIVERSAL
CREDIT TO ENSURE YOU
AREN'T WORSE OFF

MOST TAX CREDIT
CLAIMANTS WILL
QUALIFY

IF YOU DON'T
APPLY FOR
UNIVERSAL CREDIT

THEN YOUR TAX
CREDITS WILL END

Hexagon's Work Experience Scheme

Did you know that Hexagon can currently provide work experience for up to 12 residents per year?

We offer part-time placements ranging in duration from 6 to 12 weeks. Of the 10 residents that completed work experience last year, 5 progressed into work.

If you're out of work and want to gain recent experience or you're working part time but interested in gaining skills in a new sector, why not consider completing a work placement with us.

Residents required by their school to complete work experience can do so with Hexagon. We offer 1-week placements, Monday to Friday, to residents from the age of 14.

What's in it for me?

You'll get a full induction, a supervisor, regular progress reviews, skills development support, a handbook with tasks to work through and a certificate. You can also use your supervisor as a reference if you successfully complete your placement.

Help with travel expenses and lunch vouchers are provided each day for residents whose placements are more than 5 hours per day excluding lunch.

Tristan's story

Tristan recently completed 6 weeks of work experience within our Neighbourhood Team.

Staff that met him were impressed by his smart appearance, skills and willingness to learn. During the last week of his placement an administrative temporary role became available within another department, which his employment advisor forwarded him for. Tristan was successful at interview and has been offered the role.

Tristan says, 'I recently completed my work experience placement which was an invaluable opportunity to develop my skills and understanding of the sector. I gained hands-on experience in property inspections, fire risk assessments and customer service. I would highly recommend this experience to anyone interested in housing, as it provides practical insights and enhances key skills.'



Vacancies

Support Worker

- Permanent
- Training provided
- Various Locations in London

**Salary: £26,054 per annum
Full time (£13.15 per hour)**

Full-time or part-time – Involves working some evenings, weekends and bank holidays.

Experience of providing sensitive, person-centred support to vulnerable adults, teamwork, good IT skills, patient, understanding and caring. Energetic, flexible and have a positive “can do” attitude, able to actively support involvement in a wide range of community and social activities. Able to communicate with different people using a variety of approaches. Able to follow guidelines to help achieve a consistent approach.

Duty Managers

- Permanent
- Training provided
- Full time/Shift work involves some evenings and weekends.

Wage for non-experienced applicants is £11.75, goes up to £12.33 on completion of training.

Wage for applicants with betting industry experience is £13.10 per hour.

Good at math, fluent in written and verbal English, good IT skills, excellent communication and interpersonal skills, able to work independently, assertive and able to use initiative.

Please email your CV to et@hexagon.org.uk specifying which role you're interested in.

New Board Members

Exciting New Additions to Our Board

We are delighted to announce the appointment of three new members, **Sophie Tookey**, **Mark Wells**, and **Sonji Nurse**, to our Board.

Sophie joined the Board in June 2024 and sits on the Customer Services and the People Committees. She has worked in asset management in social housing for over 12 years and is currently working as a consultant and career coach in the sector. Sophie specialises in asset data with knowledge across repairs, compliance, and investment.



Mark joined the Board in August 2024 and serves on the Investment and Audit & Risk Committees. As a seasoned Fund Manager specialising in investments in real assets, Mark brings a unique perspective and expertise to the housing sector. Mark is also a member of the Horniman Housing Board.



Sonji joined the Board in October 2024 and brings a wealth of experience to her roles on the Customer Service and Investment Committees. A Hexagon resident for over 15 years, Sonji is an experienced operations professional with a proven record in strategic planning, and quality assurance.



The Board has also been busy recruiting two co-optees to the Board to specifically sit on the Customer Service Committee. Look out for an announcement of the successful candidates in the next issue of Home News.

Employment Support offer for residents in 2025

Look out in future editions of Home News about what will be of offer. In the meantime, the list below gives you an idea of what's ahead:

- Weekly Employability Club: book in to access careers advice, support to apply for jobs and meet new people.
- Access to Better Off Calculation Tool to help you check what you need to earn to be better off in work.
- Monthly workshops: CVs, application forms, interview skills, progressing your career, online networking and using AI.
- Monthly information sessions: Health and Social Care, Security, Housing/Construction, Green Jobs, Retail, Customer Service, Public Sector Jobs/Civil Service Jobs, Education, Recruitment, Content Creation, Apprenticeships, Business Start Up.
- Employability Day: meet employers, submit your CV for live vacancies and attend different workshops.
- Mock interviews: practice your interview technique during an online interview with Gilmartin's HR Manager.
- Career Mentoring access up to 6 weeks of one-to-one mentoring to help you move your career to the next level.
- Expansion of our work experience scheme to include local employers and our contractors.
- Support residents aged 50 and over through partnership working with specialist organisations supporting older people to access careers advice, training and employment.
- More out of hours support for residents that are working including, webinars and workshops.
- Access to free online training in a range of subjects and in person training with local training providers.
- Continued one-to-one advisor support and financial assistance when you find work e.g., help with travel and/or childcare costs.

Support for Young People

If you're aged 16 – 24, we can offer:

- one-to-one support with your CV
- work experience
- money management
- training
- health information
- access to specialist schemes e.g., Tik Tok Academy, Princes Trust, Green Jobs Careers Accelerator, access to vacancies and apprenticeships.

Please email et@hexagon.org.uk or call 020 8778 6699 if you're interested in any of the support on offer and would like more information.

Hexagon

Community Investment Team

Hexagon offers **FREE** advice, guidance and practical support in:

- Finding work including CV help
- Access to vacancies
- Training
- Job application support
- Work experience
- Interview coaching
- Help with expenses when in work




et@hexagon.org.uk
020 8778 6699





Hexagon provides **FREE** money support including:

- 1-2-1 advisor support
- Benefit applications
- Budgeting plan
- Access to grants



Resident Engagement 360

Resident engagement at Hexagon is about working in partnership with residents to ensure that the work we do can be influenced and wherever possible impacted by our resident's insight and ideas.

We are reviewing how our resident led group's work can become more efficient and effective, with the aim of becoming more impactful and making more of a measurable and positive difference to the way our services are delivered.

The 360 Review Project has seen a group of highly engaged residents work alongside staff to re-design our engagement structures and activities, with proposals coming forward for a new way of working from April 2025.

We are committed to hearing the voice of as many residents as possible in a variety of different ways and to learn about the impact of Hexagon's services that are most important to you.

Through surveys, focus groups, resident-led scrutiny reviews, Neighbourhood Action Days, working groups, our established Repairs Group and other activities we want to gather your feedback in order to deliver meaningful improvements to the way we work and then evaluate what difference these processes have made to our residents' experience and our businesses performance.

The main change we're aiming to deliver in 2025 is to create a new culture at Hexagon where residents are given the opportunity to review services, resident feedback information and data from across Hexagon in order to commission and deliver improved resident engagement activities themselves. We hope this approach will lead to higher levels of resident influence and impact as we shine a light on areas of our services that cause our residents most concern.



Pete Davies
Resident
Voice and
Engagement
Facilitator

Once our new structures have been put in place and as our new culture begins to get established, we'll report back on how it's going later in the year.

If you'd like to get involved in our resident engagement work, please email us at getinvolved@hexagon.org.uk – we'd be delighted to work alongside you.



Richard Bradshaw
Resident Chair

Richard Bradshaw, resident Chair of our Performance Review Group says about the 360 Review Project:

"I'm pleased to have been a part of this review of Hexagon's current engagement activity and have been impressed with how seriously the Hexagon Board and staff take our involvement. The new plans under consideration will give a stronger voice to residents about the services they receive and enable residents to shape the way engagement activities and the scrutiny of Hexagon's services are delivered in the future".

By Telephone

To provide the best possible service, we encourage all residents to speak to us on the phone in the first instance especially if it involves an emergency. If it relates to a repair, Gilmartin's can be contacted on **0808 178 6785**.

MyHexagon

Our newly launched MyHexagon app, currently allows you to check your account balance and make payments, add and update your tenancy information, view tenancy documents and manage your settings. It will soon be developed to allow you to self-serve even more services such as reporting repairs.

By email

If there is a need to contact us by email (such as sending through images or copies of documents) or to contact another department or person etc, you can email customer_desk@hexagon.org.uk. It's important to remember the below points:

Please state your full name, address, the best phone number to contact you on and the nature of your enquiry.

The size of any attachments may mean you can only attach two or three images at a time.

We work as closely as we can to a 5 working day response time therefore do not use this method for any emergencies – please call instead.

Often, we are asked to provide individual email addresses – something we don't do. The reason for this is because if an individual is off, we can't access the information sent whereas if its sent or recorded centrally on our Customer Relationship Management system (CRM), it can be monitored and recorded for full visibility – reducing potential delays, overlooking, or missing vital information.

How our CRM works

The CRM allows all enquiries to be logged, tracked, and assigned to the appropriate teams seamlessly. The CRM allows us:

Efficient Case Management: Enquiries logged through the CRM system are immediately assigned to the correct team, ensuring timely action.

- **Improved Tracking:** The CRM system enables managers to monitor progress, ensuring no enquiry is overlooked.
- **Service Continuity:** If a responsible officer is unavailable, cases logged in the CRM system can be reallocated to another team member without delays.
- **Consistency:** Using the Customer Desk ensures all enquiries follow a standardized process, providing transparency and fairness.

WAYS YOU CAN CONTACT US

Freephone **0800 393 338**

Landline **020 8778 6699**

Option 1 for all gas related queries

Option 2 to report or follow up on a repair that is not related to damp and mould

Option 3 for all tenancy or rent related queries

Option 4 for damp and mould and any other general queries

Hexagon

customer_desk@hexagon.org.uk

for all general enquiries

www.hexagon.org.uk

Text 07537 400 527

130-136 Sydenham Road,

London SE26 5JY

Gilmartins

To report a repair call Gilmartins on 0808 178 6785 24 hours a day 365 days of the year

Gas and Heating Repairs

Please call: 0800 088 4433

ALWAYS HAPPY TO TRANSLATE!

Chinese
永遠樂於翻譯！

Eritrean
"ንክብርታዎታልኩም ከሉግዜ ሕገላት እና!"

French
Toujours heureux de traduire!

Portuguese
Sempre feliz a traduzir!

Vietnamese
Luôn luôn vui lòng phiên dịch!

Urdu

ترجمے کے لیے ہر دم تیار

LARGE PRINT

If you would like this edition of Home News in large print or Braille, please contact Hexagon.

Hexagon



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