



Oadby & Wigston
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Tenant and Leaseholders Annual Report 2022-23

We are pleased to share with you our 2022-23 annual report.

The Council manages 1,184 properties within the borough and this report aims to let tenants and leaseholders know how we have performed in the financial year, from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

We continue to work hard to ensure you get the excellent service you deserve from the Council. And we remain committed to providing good, affordable, and efficient housing for everyone.

We are dedicated to putting our tenants and leaseholders at the heart of everything we do. This annual review highlights how you, our tenants can get involved to let us know what we have done right, and where we can improve our services.

The past 12 months has been another period of challenge and significant improvement. We have been investing to make sure your homes are safe, energy efficient, and your communities are attractive places in which to live.

Looking ahead some of our housing priorities include:

- Being more community focused and responsive to local needs
- Putting out tenants at the heart of everything we do
- Increase the supply of housing
- Focussing on prevention and support for customers facing homelessness
- Improve communication with customers and encourage tenant participation
- Reduce the void times (the time properties are empty between each letting).

Once again, we look forward to the year ahead with optimism for the future of the Borough. And we know that our Housing Service will work hard to support our corporate vision 'Our Borough – The Place to Be'.

We hope like us that you find this report interesting and informative.



Anne Court – Chief Executive



Cllr. Samia Haq – Leader of the Council

Tenant and Leaseholders Annual Report

This report will tell you what we have achieved and how we have performed in the five consumer standards set out by the Regulator of Social Housing that we as a housing provider must comply with. These five consumer standards are:



- **Tenancy Standard**

How we allocate our properties and support our tenants



- **Home Standard**

How we maintain your home



- **Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard**

How we should communicate with and involve tenants in developing and delivering services



- **Neighbourhood and Community Standard**

How we should work with other agencies to manage estates and tackle anti-social behaviour

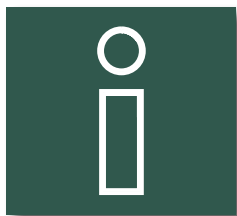


- **Value for Money Standard**

How we spend your rent money

The report deals with the 12 months between the beginning of April 2022 and the end of March 2023. We hope that you find this report informative and that it gives you a greater insight into the work that we do for the benefit of all our tenants.

Council home information



Oadby & Wigston Borough Council provides homes and services to **1,184** tenants. Our housing stock consists of:

Housing Stock

Older People Housing (Sheltered Accommodation)	320
General Needs Housing	864
Stock Total	1,184

General Needs Housing Stock Profile

Bedsit	24
1 Bed Bungalow	4
2 Bed Bungalow	1
1 Bed Flat	102
2 Bed Flat	149
3 Bed Flat	7
3 Bed Maisonette	105
2 Bed House	110
3 Bed House	346
4 Bed House	7
4+ Bed House	9
Total	864

Older People Housing (Sheltered Housing)

1 Bed Flat	80
1 Bed Bungalow	129
2 Bed Flat	41
2 Bed Bungalow	50
Bedsit	20
Total	320

The Council had acquired properties last year however there is a slight reduction in our stock profile due to some of our tenants taking advantage of the Right to Buy scheme.

Managing the waiting list



The demand for social housing continues to significantly outstrip supply, and homelessness continues to rise.

Last year **284** households joined the Housing Register, and as of March 2023 there were a total of **850** households on the Housing Register. Out of these **850** households:

- **367 require 1-bedroom accommodation**
- **287 require 2-bedroom accommodation**
- **137 require 3-bedroom accommodation**
- **59 require larger than 3-bedroom accommodation.**

Over the course of the year, we let homes to **109** of households from the Housing Register within the borough through a combination of Council and Registered Provider accommodation that became available.

Voids



As part of the Tenancy Standard we are required to minimise the time that properties are empty between each letting.

Properties are advertised at the earliest opportunity to enable us to start the allocation process without delay. In the last year **64** Council properties became available for re-letting. Below is a breakdown of the bedroom size of these **64** properties:

- **30 x one-bedroom accommodation**
- **18 x two-bedroom accommodation**
- **16 x three-bedroom accommodation.**

Our average void time for all properties was **43** days.

The average cost to prepare a property for re-letting was approximately **£2,300** per property. This does not include major works to void properties.

Our Letting Officer's Experience of Working within her Role

"I have worked as a Lettings Officer at Oadby and Wigston Borough council for just over two years. I thoroughly enjoy my job role within lettings where I provide support to customers when they have been successful for one of our properties through our choice-based lettings adverts page."

"For many customers this can be a very daunting and stressful time and I am here to help and guide you through the offer process with the end result of you starting your journey of moving into your new home. I have always found happiness in helping people and find my job role extremely rewarding because of this."

Tenant Involvement and Empowerment



Tenant and Leaseholder Forum

An area we wanted to focus on over the previous year was around setting up a Tenant and Leaseholder forum. We are pleased to confirm that we have now set up a Tenant and Leaseholder forum, and we look to meet with tenants and leaseholders quarterly.

The forum enables our tenants and leaseholders to monitor our performance, helps us to improve our landlord services and gives us the confidence that we are shaping our services to what our tenants and leaseholders need.

Some benefits of participating in the Tenant and Leaseholder forum are to:

- Inform us of what your needs and views are
- Highlight whether changes need to be made on how we deliver a service
- Obtain your views on any significant changes to the landlord services that you receive
- Provide you with feedback
- Participate in events we organise throughout the year within your local area to enable you to make your views known
- Participate in any relevant training that may be available.

If you would like to more information or are interested in joining the Tenant and Leaseholder forum please email: tenantspanel@oadby-wigston.gov.uk



A Tenant's View of the Tenant and Leaseholder Forum

Below is one of our tenants, Joanne McClenaghan's experience of being involved in the Tenant and Leaseholder's forum:

"I became a part of the tenant's forum to take the opportunity to build a better understanding and therefore service between tenant and landlord. The tenant's forum helps ensure that we as a community have our voice heard to help contribute to improving the services provided.

As a group we give feedback to get as much support and all the useful information to the community in our local areas. We will be increasing community projects to help everyone find it easier to get involved, to build better relationships with other tenants to work with the council. To help me and my community feel safer and happier."

Tenant Email Subscription Service

Our new email subscription service also has a tenant-specific topic that our tenants can sign up to. This allows us to get news and information to you quickly and effectively.

You can sign up to email updates at: www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/subscribe

Tenant Participation Advisory Service (Tpas)

We are pleased to announce that we have re-joined the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (Tpas) for 2023-24. You can register for a Tpas account and learn about the benefits for membership by visiting:

www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/tpasregister



Complaints



We want to provide you with an excellent service however we know on occasions we don't get things right first time or you think we could have done things differently. It is really important you inform us if you are unhappy with a service, you have received so that we can learn and take steps to put things right.

If you are unhappy with a service, you have received it is always best to put your complaint in writing as it helps us understand exactly what the problem is. We will listen and be responsive to your feedback.

When you raise a complaint, we will ensure we respond to you within 10 working days. If you have access to the internet, you may find it easiest to complete the complaints form on our website.

Last year, the total number of Housing complaints received was **43** and referred to the following services:

- Repairs & Maintenance Service: **17**
- Housing Options Service: **3**
- Housing 'Other': **23**

Of these **43** complaints, **13** were dealt with by third-party contractors in line with their own complaints policy and procedure.

Compliments



We welcome feedback in all forms, and we are happy to say that last year we received **10** compliments which referred to the following services:

- Repairs & Maintenance Service: **6**
- Housing Options Service: **4**

Some of the words our tenants described our services within these compliments were:

- Being quick and efficient
- Being helpful, polite and professional
- Rapidly responding to the reported issue
- Being understanding.

Decent Neighbourhoods



The Council is committed to improving estates and neighbourhoods across the borough. We work with local residents, tenants and councillors to create a better environment in our neighbourhoods for tenants, residents and local communities.

Our caretakers work hard to maintain communal areas, provide support in maintaining back gardens and report any health & safety concerns you raise through our block inspections.

We spent approximately **£117K** in 2022-23 in cleaning and maintaining communal areas and blocks. This cost was apportioned to salaries for the cleaning service, plus the cost of materials, cleaning equipment and specialist services.

Fly Tipping

Over the last year we have removed 124 loads of fly tipping from our housing estates. Boulter Crescent has seen the highest number of fly tipping, followed by Elizabeth Court and Bennett Way.

If you have any information on fly tipping occurring in your area, please contact us as estates@oadby-wigston.gov.uk detailing 'fly tipping' in the title.

If you have any re-useable items, please consider donating these to a local charity or contact us for further advice. You can arrange to have any broken or un-useable items to be collected by calling Customer Services on 0116 288 8961.



Our Caretaker's Experience of Working within your Neighbourhoods & Estates

"As Caretakers we perform many task in our roles, the one that really stands out is engaging with our tenants, it is so enjoyable to help with their concerns, give advice, reassurance and then to collate and relay them to the relevant departments. It gives us a great sense of fulfilment to know we are making a difference helping people and the positive feedback we get from this.



One of the other tasks we undertake is minor repairs to external and internal communal areas. These include many varied and challenging repairs, but we thrive on a good challenge and it is great to receive nice comments once we have completed these repairs.

Recycling is a great task, it gives us a chance to increase the recycling rate by sorting the recycling at source reducing contamination. It also gives us a presence out on the estates and a chance to engage.

We support tenants by removing the fly tipping that has selfishly been dumped. This is often reported to us as caretakers directly and our quick response is often appreciated. "

Stuart Fry - Caretaker

Boulter Community Garden Club

The garden outside the Boulter Community Hub was unused and overgrown. In May last year our caretakers worked with volunteers to form the Boulter Community Garden Club.

The focus was to provide new gardening skills for others to learn, to socialise, fill the garden with colour through flowers and displays throughout the summer and winter months. Making the garden something bright and beautiful to look at when passing the hub, as well as growing produce to help with the cost-of-living crisis for the community.

Initially a hanging basket was put up and planted up with a range of colourful trailing plants along with a row of sunflowers to show our support for Ukraine by the volunteers in the club.

Following a waste enquiry, four square stone planters were discovered which were upcycled and planted with strawberry plants. A very large unwanted planter at the Councils Depot was used to plant a range of flowers to create a feature at the front of the garden.

The three wooden planters were then painted to make them more colourful and then planted with carrots, onions and tomatoes.

In the winter the club decided to plant up the garden planters with some colourful bedding plants to bring some vibrant, colourful winter cheer to the estate. These flowered bringing much needed colours, brightness and beauty to the garden and the estate throughout the winter months. It was great to get some lovely comments and feedback from passers-by on how colourful and beautiful the garden looked.

The garden has provided a focal point for the community and the club volunteers are very proud of the tremendous amount of work and dedication they have put into the garden to create a fantastic community spirit.



Before



After

Council's Recycling Roadshow

In July, we held our first Recycling Roadshow to promote recycling on the estate and in the borough. The event was supported by Cllr Bill Boulter who is dedicated to increasing the recycling rate across the borough.

At this event a pumpkin competition was held where the children were helped to plant pumpkin seeds in one of the planters and each pumpkin planted marked with their names on.

Tenants all thoroughly enjoyed this experience and visited the garden regularly to check on their pumpkins progress! Towards the end of the summer the produce was harvested with the tomatoes, carrots, onions and strawberries being distributed throughout the community to help with the cost-of-living crisis.

In addition to this event, we are now also recycling bikes by donating these to a local cycle shop that uses all parts including worn tyres.

Our recycling support will eventually be extended to all blocks of flats over the next year.



Responsive repairs



In total, we completed approximately **3,006** responsive repairs to our properties in the last 12 months. A responsive repair is any work required to something that is already present within or around the property, for example the replacement of a tap or a faulty lock.

Our target times to respond to repairs are:

- Emergency - to attend and make safe within four hours
- Urgent – five working days
- Routine – 25 working days

Over the last year, we spent approximately:

- **£62K** on plumbing repairs
- **£99K** on electrical repairs
- **£54K** on miscellaneous repairs
- **£54K** on joinery repairs

Improving your homes

The Council is committed to maintaining and improving our housing stock through planned maintenance and improvement programmes.

Over the last 12 months we have upgraded:

62 boilers **2** bathrooms **7** wet rooms **8** kitchens

The average costs for the upgrades were:

£2,075 for a boiler **£3,466** for a bathroom **£7,530** for a wet room **£6,628** for a kitchen





Stock Condition Survey

A 'Stock Condition Survey' is an inspection of the inside and outside of your home. These help us to assess the age and condition of each building element, so we can plan future improvements. We last completed a comprehensive survey in 2011 as part of the drive to meet 'Decent Home Standard'.

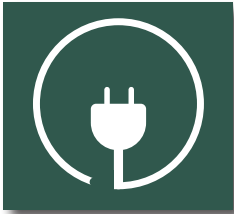
In the next year we will commission a full stock condition survey to be carried out on our housing stock. We will look at things such as:

- the roof
- rainwater goods
- walls, windows, doors
- fences and paths
- kitchen
- bathroom
- heating system
- electrics and insulation

We will also inspect the general structure of the property (both internal and external) and any communal areas.

When the survey has been completed, we will put in place a 20-30 year stock improvement plan.

Building Safety



We have **1,085** properties with gas appliances, and we service all gas appliances within a 10 monthly cycle to ensure the safety of our gas installations. In addition to this, we also pay for a breakdown and repair service.

The annual spend on gas servicing, repairs and breakdown cover is approximately **£164K**.

We completed **321** Electrical Upgrades at a cost of approximately **£141K**.

We spent approximately **£23K** on Legionella Control and Asbestos Safety Work.

Our Void & Repairs Officer's Experience of Working within his Role



Hi, my name is Brian Shaw, I'm your Voids & Repairs Officer. I have been with OWBC since June 2016, and in my current role since April 2021. Prior to that I worked as a Maintenance Operative within the housing repairs department. During that time I have come to know many of our residents and leaseholders very well and have built a rapport with them.

I enjoy my work and especially enjoy working alongside all of our residents and leaseholders to resolve all of their concerns and repair needs.



Tackling ASB



We are committed to tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) on our estates. We have developed a number of relationships with external partners in areas where we have higher levels of ASB. We accept that there are things that we can improve on, and we are providing specialist ASB training to help coach and develop our tenancy and estate team to ensure serious cases are managed swiftly and effectively. In the last year we have

had:

- **62** cases of ASB reported

The following is a breakdown of the nature of the 62 cases of anti-social behaviour we dealt with:

- **13** – Abusive language behaviour
- **7** - Drugs related
- **17** - Noise nuisance
- **4** - Environmental nuisance
- **21** – Nuisance and harassment.

If you feel that a crime has been committed, we encourage you to report it to the police and obtain a reference number before reporting it to us as anti-social behaviour. We will ask you for this reference number when you complete the form. We are not an emergency service so if you or someone else is at risk, you should always call the police. You can contact Leicestershire Police on 101 for non-emergencies and 999 in an emergency.

Our Tenancy Officer's Experience of Working within his Role



I have worked for Oadby and Wigston Borough Council for nearly ten years now and I have seen many changes but in the right direction. It has been a great place to work with colleagues who have been friendly, supportive, and willing to share their knowledge and experience. I have enjoyed the interaction of meeting our tenants' and listening to their unique and interesting stories coming from different walks of life.

In my job, I find there are no two days the same with different challenges to test your abilities and skills. One day you could be supporting a vulnerable resident cope with a major repair disruption and another day you're helping a nervous resident moving into their very first home and see them taking on this responsibility –
Faruk Bhayat

Rents



Your rent charges cover the cost of providing you with:

- a home
- a tenancy
- property management services
- performing any repairs that the property requires.

It is important that we collect all the rent that's owed so that we can continue to maintain your homes to a good standard, provide important services for those who are in need and to plan for future improvements.

We expected to collect approximately a total amount of **£5.1 million** in 2022-23 for housing rent. At the end of the year, we were managing an arrears balance of over **£201K**.

Rent arrears can occur for a number of reasons. We work closely with tenants who fall into rent arrears and work towards finding a joint solution to clear the arrears as soon as possible. Rent arrears can often indicate that a tenant is needing help in other areas too.

We focus on reducing individual arrears with the long-term objective being to sustain tenancies. Actions can include:

- **Payment Plans** - These are regular, affordable payments agreed following discussions about income, affordability and duration of the payment plan
- **Early Intervention** - We will undertake home visits to have conversations with tenants falling into rent arrears at the earliest stages, so support can be provided quickly, and action taken to prevent arrears increasing
- **Direct Payments** - We can request for the housing element of Universal Credit to be paid directly to us. This can help to prevent a further increase in arrears
- **Signposting for Financial Support** - We will ensure information is provided regarding a number of specialist services who can provide specific financial support and advice.

If a tenant doesn't pay their rent, then we will seek a legal remedy to recover the rent arrears.

Our Senior Income Officer's Experience of Working within her Role



My name is Adrienne Morley and I am the Senior Income Officer. I joined Oadby and Wigston Borough Council in July 2015. I have a really good working relationship with our tenants.

We offer a lot of tenancy support and our key priority is to sustain everyone's tenancy. There are times, when some tenants will fall into rent arrears, and when this happens, we work hard to find solutions that removes the need to pursue a rental eviction.

Over the last couple of years, times have been very difficult financially for everyone, but by talking and working together, we can get through the hard times. We are a Council who believe in our tenants.



Leaseholders

TO LET

We currently have **80** leaseholders, this includes **3** properties that were sold to tenants during 2022-23.

Our leaseholder service charges include - contribution towards repairs, upgrades, cleaning & maintaining communal areas and grounds maintenance. These services charges are paid in arrears.

The Council are responsible for keeping parts of leasehold properties in a good state of repair. This includes the structure of properties such as:

- Roofs, drains, gutters and pipes on the outside of the home
- Outside main entrance doors (but not the front doors of individual flats)
- Window frames and sills (not including glass).



Aids and Adaptations



Housing adaptations play an important role in enabling our residents to remain in the comfort and safety of their own homes, by restoring or promoting independent living and helping tenants to use homes more effectively.

We received **23** recommendations for major adaptations to our properties. These recommendations were for three toilets (including a specialist toilet), 12 level access showers, one bath, one fencing, two ramps, three doors widening, seven stair lifts, one step lift and one vertical lift. Out of these recommendations:

- **10** were completed at an average cost of **£7,859**
- **4** have work commissioned to commence in July/August
- **5** recommendations were cancelled by the tenant
- **4** recommendations are being assessed and considered.

Over the last year we have also installed:

- **7** level access showers at an average cost of **£6,049**
- **2** stair lifts at an average cost of **£2,273**
- **1** vertical lift at a cost of **£10,409**
- **1** specialist toilet at a cost of **£4,528**
- **1** specialist toilet with additional alterations at a cost of **£19,446**
- **1** fencing at a cost of **£2,495**
- **1** bath at a cost of **£2,470.**

We have also completed 60 minor adaptations to homes in the borough in 2022/23 at an average cost of **£124 each**. These have included:

- key safes
- half steps
- handrails.

Right to Buy



The Right to Buy scheme is available to secure tenants of Oadby & Wigston Borough Council. Under the scheme, you can buy your council home at a price lower than the full market value. This is because the length of time you have spent as a tenant entitles you to a discount. Buying your home gives you an investment for your future and you will be building your own asset if the value of the property increases.

In 2022/23, we received **16** right to buy applications, **8** of our tenants took advantage of the Right to Buy scheme and bought their homes. The average value of these properties was **£155,625.00**, and our tenants received on average a discount of **£74,919.00**. From 1st April 2023 the maximum discount available to our tenants through the Right to Buy scheme has increased to **£96,000.00**.

If you purchase your home, you will become responsible for any repairs and maintenance, insurance and service charges (where applicable). You will have control of any improvements and upgrades to your home. More information can be found at www.gov.uk/right-to-buy-buying-your-council-home.

Our Housing Officer (Adaptations, Leaseholders & Right to Buy) Experience of Working within her Role

"I have worked in the Council's Housing Team for 10 years, over that time my role has developed into one that I am responsible for Right to Buy, Aids & Adaptations and Leaseholder Management. I thoroughly enjoy helping people, the things that give me satisfaction are:

- helping people remain in their home by providing aids & adaptations*
- helping people with aspirations to buy their own home under the Right to Buy Scheme*
- providing advice and support to leaseholders.*

I find that within the community there is a wide range of very different needs, but usually find that 'every day is a school day' in that there are always new challenges to expand my knowledge."

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)

In April 2023, the Regulator of Social Housing introduced a new set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures which we are required to report on a yearly basis.

The majority of tenant satisfaction measures will be captured through a new tenant survey which will be undertaken throughout 2023-24. The purpose of the survey is to assess how well we are performing at providing good quality homes and housing services to our tenants.

By taking part in this survey, you will help to shape how we improve our services.

If you would like to take part in this survey, you can do so by visiting:
www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/consultations



Photo caption – OWBC Mayor Rosemarie Adams joined residents at our sheltered accommodation sites for pre-Christmas pantomimes

What we are planning to do next year

We have highlighted some of our plans for the upcoming year below:

Lettings

- Improve description on our choice based letting website by including more information; council tax band, EPC rating, if there is lift access, and better images of the property.

Day to Day Repairs

- Improve the efficiency of our repair process by undertaking procurement of a repairs contractor service
- Work and support tenants to maintain their homes.

Capital Works

- Carry out a full stock condition survey
- Improve the energy efficiency in our homes.

Tenancy

- Continue to maintain regular contact with our tenants
- Supporting vulnerable tenants to maintain their tenancies.

Estates

- To agree service level agreements with our tenants for block and grounds maintenance services
- To develop further our caretaking and cleaning services.

Adaptations

- Continue to manage the waiting list for major adaptations
- Continue to inform residents of the adaptations process and provide regular updates.

Leaseholder Management

- Further engage with our leaseholders through the Tenant and Leaseholder Forum and consultations.

Useful Contact Information

Customer Services

Tel: 0116 288 8961

Email: csc@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Housing Options Service

Email: housingoptions@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Repairs & Maintenance Service

Housing Repairs Out of Hours Emergency: 0800 083 96 95

Email: repairsadmin@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Caretaking & Cleaning Team

Email: estates@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Income Management Team

Email: income.team@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Tenancy & Estate Management Team

Email: tenancy@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

If you would like information about or how to join our tenants panel please email:
tenantspanel@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

For our Cost of Living Support please visit: www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/costofliving

Proud members of



TENANT ENGAGEMENT EXPERTS

tpas

member 2023-2024