



**BRENTWOOD  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

# Housing Services

End of year annual report  
**1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024**



# Welcome and introduction

Councillor Dr Tim Barrett, Chair of Housing, Health & Community Committee.



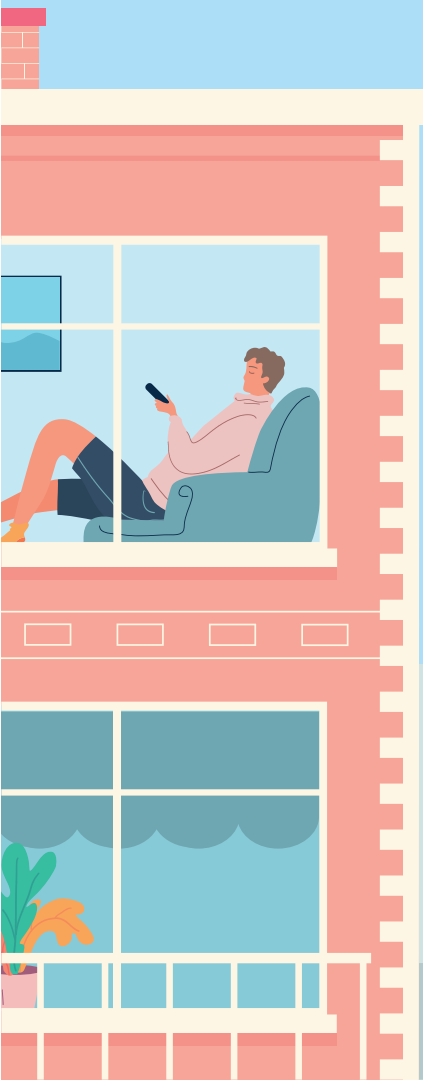
## **Welcome to our annual review and report to Brentwood's Housing Residents, for the year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.**

It's been a year of significant progress. We have not only rescoped and replanned our entire estates management process, but also achieved remarkable milestones in delivering high standards and improving the environment for our residents. The support and cooperation of residents, the council's housing team and our fantastic officers have been instrumental in these achievements, and we are proud to share these with you.

We've laid the groundwork for our Strategic Housing Development Programme, initiated the first construction work, and witnessed the start of demolition at Brookfield Close. The upcoming development will mark a milestone as the first council 'zero carbon' scheme, with construction set to commence this summer on 62 new homes, alongside a new play area and outdoor gym. The Harewood Close development will be delivered in turn.

Alongside these major developments, our smaller site programme to create over 50 new homes has seen planning permission approved at various sites around the borough. We are particularly thrilled to share the highly successful engagement with Ingatestone residents around Ingleton House, which has been a testament to our commitment to resident involvement and feedback.

We have set new ambitions and expectations for the quality of our housing stock, setting programmes that will tackle the areas of most significant concern and investing in measures to make our homes more sustainable while helping to reduce the cost of living challenges our residents face.



We have also worked to ensure that the voice of residents, including our leaseholders, is heard and new engagement plans are initiated.

However, we are still seeing the impacts of the longer term cost of living crisis, with more homelessness cases and increasing need for temporary accommodation challenging all of us.

In a challenging time, with limited finances and residents in need, we remain resolute in our commitment to improving the lives of our local residents, learning from our successes and mistakes, focused not just on the strategic projects but also on the small details that look to make sure every Brentwood Borough Council property is a home we are proud to have as part of our housing stock.

**Best regards**  
**Cllr Dr Tim Barrett**



# Our vision and priorities

In Brentwood we have just under 2,500 council owned homes and 454 leasehold homes. Of our 2,500 homes, 414 of these are dedicated to older persons independent living. Managing these properties is no mean feat and in 2023/2024 we saw over 9,500 general repairs and 2,800 specialist works pass through our partnering contractors for repairs and maintenance, Axis Europe.

All properties with a gas appliance had an annual service throughout the year and in working closely with our contractors, we identified 5 severely vulnerable residents who required additional support from the Housing Department. Officers successfully engaged with these residents and I am pleased to say that each one is now living in either independent living properties for additional support or has relevant support packages in place.

While we continue to strive to improve our services to residents, we have also focussed on delivering our strategic vision and priorities as a council. Our aim is to:




Support our tenants through a high quality, well managed services



Support responsible development in the borough.



Provide decent, safe and affordable homes for local people



We are particularly proud that during this year and through challenging financial times for everyone, the team has delivered a number of priorities. These include;

- ✓ 25% representative stock condition surveys of dwellings.
- ✓ 100% stock condition survey of blocks.
- ✓ Delivered a £6million capital investment programme to existing homes.
- ✓ Reviewed our offer to older persons in our independent living schemes (formerly known as sheltered).
- ✓ Delivered 3 engagement events for residents including a Christmas drop in session at our newly renovated resident living room in Warley.
- ✓ Launched a new resident engagement strategy and continued to issue our quarterly Housing Bulletin
- ✓ Conducted 2 estate improvement pilots on blocks in Pilgrims Hatch and Hutton
- ✓ Improved our Homeless prevention which has reduced our Temporary accommodation placements.



# Lettings and Housing Register

## Lettings

The number of social housing lettings in 2023/24 was 158. (90 were in our general needs accommodation, 42 in sheltered housing and 26 Temporary Accommodation properties)

158

## Housing Register

Total of 443 live applications, of which 240 are new applicants to the housing register and 243 are existing tenants on the transfer register.

443

## Losing your home (Eviction)

7

While it is always our aim to keep people in their homes and eviction is a last resort, we have carried out 7 evictions for rent arrears.



# Re-Letting

The average time taken to re-let homes is 48 days.

12

## Mutual Exchanges

12 mutual exchanges completed in year.

# Complaints

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stage 1 received	69	Percentage of repairs completed within target  <b>92%</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stage 2 received	30	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complaints escalated to the Ombudsman	10	

# Temporary Accommodation

The number of households in Temporary accommodation at year end 25.

# Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Section	TSM Code	TSM Measure	Overall
Overall satisfaction	TP01	Overall satisfaction.	56.9%
Keeping properties in good repair	TP02	Satisfaction with repairs.	63.3%
	TP03	Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair.	61.5%
	TP04	Satisfaction that the home is well maintained.	53.5%
Maintaining building safety	TP05	Satisfaction that the home is safe.	65.8%
Respectful and helpful engagement	TP06	Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them.	45.6%
	TP07	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them.	52.0%
	TP08	Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect.	62.3%
Effective handling of complaints	TP09	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints.	24.9%
Responsible neighbourhood management	TP10	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained.	53.5%
	TP11	Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods.	48.5%
	TP12	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour.	50.3%

In response to the outcome of the Tenant Satisfaction surveys, we have reviewed all comments and responses and 2 clear themes emerged.

## Damp and Mould

To address the identified concerns and have an understanding of the types and levels of damp and mould within our properties, a damp and mould taskforce was launched.

The taskforce contacted a total of 564 residents who had historically reported damp and mould or who currently had an open repair job for damp and mould.

Of these cases, all cases received a visit from a member of the taskforce to complete property inspection and/or remedial repairs including an anti-fungal mould wash. 2 properties were listed as requiring more in depth retrofit works to the fabric of the building to alleviate the concerns which are being managed through the planned works programme. As of the 31st July, there were no open cases which is a significant improvement following the proactive work of officers.

## Complaint Handling

To have a better understanding of complaint handling, the Housing department has worked closely with colleagues in customer service to look at themes from the formal complaints process in more depth.

Where a key theme is identified, officers have trained staff and looked at additional measures to improve them specific areas of the service. This is still a working progress and will continue to be monitored through our internal performance meetings.





# Maintaining our homes

A callback option is offered to the residents when they have been waiting in the call queue for a specific period of time. This is currently set at 4 minutes and this time is taken from the moment your call is transferred to the Axis call centre so includes the time of selecting the appropriate options. The caller does not lose their place in the queue when they hang up and the system automatically calls them back with no manual intervention needed.

Residents have advised that they were so pleased with call backs and were not expecting the call back to be so fast. The service is very efficient and has been a great addition to the Repairs service, especially on busy days such as post storm or following a bank holiday weekend.

**9,975 repairs were completed  
(7497 repairs plus 2478 gas)**

**994**

**Between 1 January and 31 March  
2024, 994 people selected the  
call back option. With an 87.32%  
success rate.**

## What have we done?

Fire safety in our high-rise blocks and independent living schemes has been our focus. We have completed fire safety works including the installation of fire doors to individual flats and communal areas, redecoration of communal areas with a fire rated paint.



202 energy efficient boilers installed

99 kitchens fitted

62 bathrooms completed

139 street doors replaced

3 roof replacements

2 communal heating system replacements

46 properties received aids and adaptations

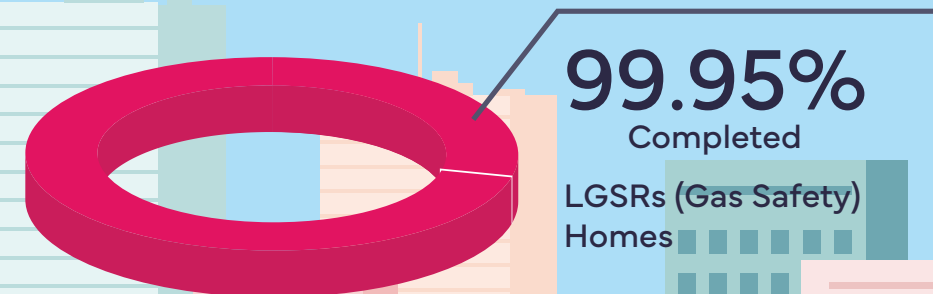
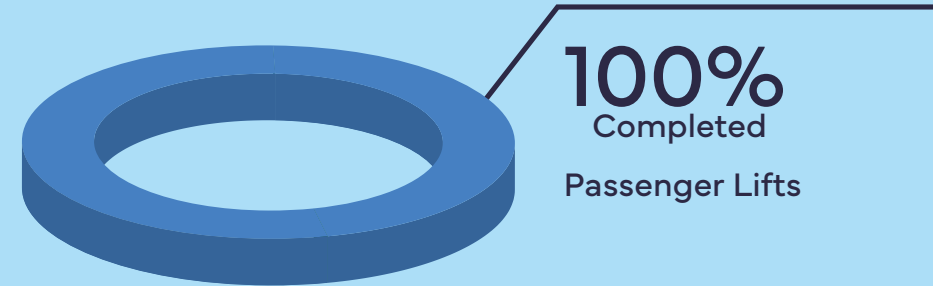
79 energy efficiency improvements

120 properties externally refurbished

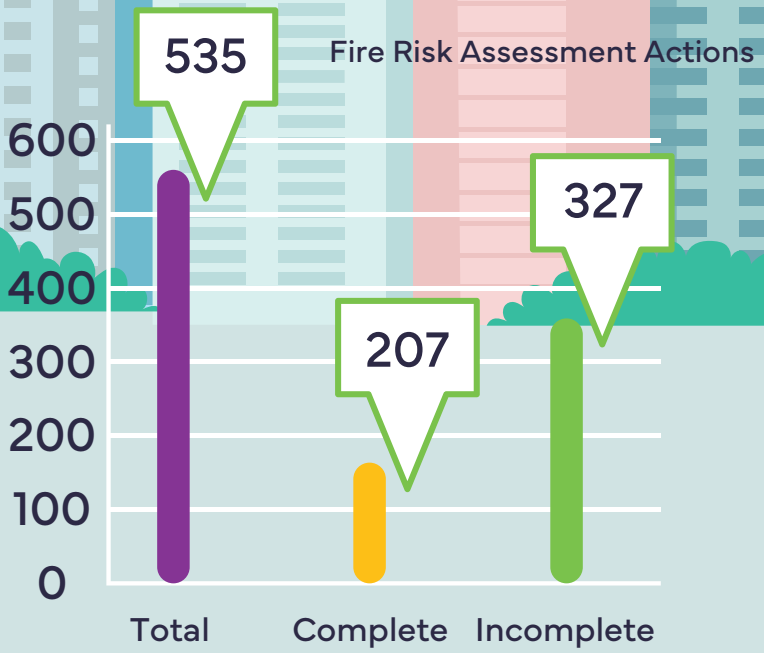
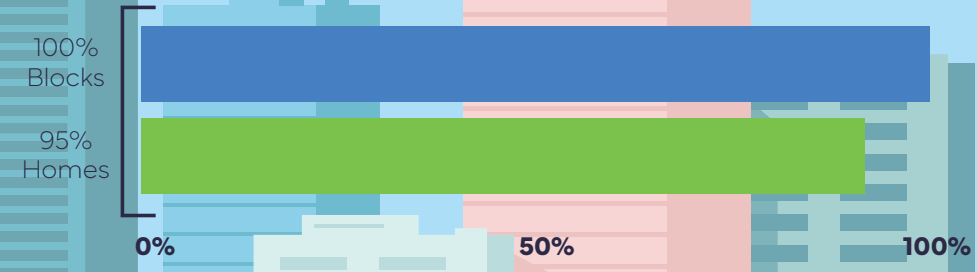


# Compliance Dashboard

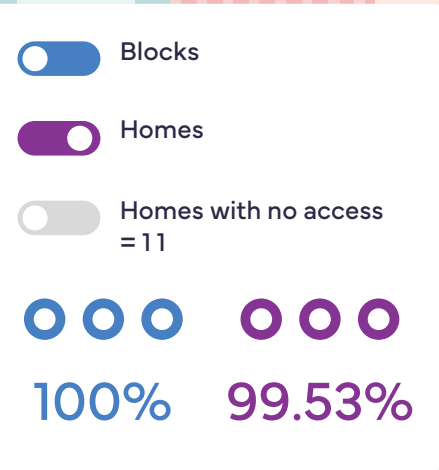
## Performance from 2023/2024



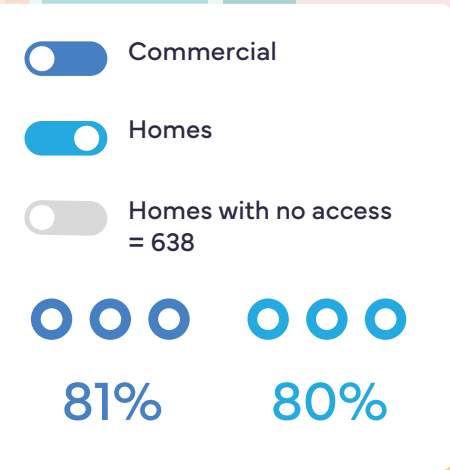
### Water Hygiene



### EICR - Electricity Safety



### Asbestos Management



Blocks  
 Homes  
 Homes with no access = 11

Commercial  
 Homes  
 Homes with no access = 638

# What does each compliance area mean?

## Water Hygiene

**Blocks** - We must ensure a risk assessment is completed where there is shared cold water supply that serves multiple properties. This is generally flats within a block. This applies to 108 blocks across the borough.

**Homes** - It is best practice to complete a risk assessment of hot and cold water supply that serves individual homes within these blocks. This affects 988 homes.

## Gas Safety

Our legal responsibility as your landlord is to ensure an annual landlord gas safety record (LGSR) is completed in each property where there is a gas supply.

You will receive a copy of the Landlord Gas Safety Record in the post 28 calendar days after it has been completed, subject to postal schedules.

## Fire Risk Assessments

We completed Fire Risk Assessments on a rolling programme, either annually or every 2 years, dependant upon the size of the building. From these risk assessments, recommendations are assigned to different teams within Housing. Most of the incomplete actions are work that is due to be completed as part of our planned works investment programme.

## Asbestos Management

Once a year, we must undertake an asbestos management survey in the communal of each residential block of flats to identify if there is any asbestos containing materials and the condition of this. For homes it is best practice to complete an asbestos management survey to identify if there is any asbestos containing material in case of any disturbance in these areas from DIY. There is a high of number of homes where we have not been able to gain access to complete this survey.

## Electrical Safety

Our duty as your landlord, is to assess the condition of the electrical supply from the consumer unit across all our housing portfolio every 5 years to ensure the installation meets current electrical regulations and is compliant.

## Passenger Lifts

We have 12 passenger lifts serving 9 blocks across the borough. We inspect these monthly to assess the condition of the lift components.

# Resident Engagement

## Railway Square

In September, the Community Safety Team in conjunction with Housing and youth services colleagues, held their first day of action on a lovely Saturday afternoon.

The dedicated teams ran a stall and went door-to-door engaging with residents. We met the lovely Namita, a resident in Railway square, who along with her friends, Sahitya, Babitha, Dhanya, Lini and Pavidhra, were practicing their cultural dance for a celebration event in Mountnessing.



**"A Square to be Proud of!"**

Officers joined in the dancing practice and its safe to say they will not be entering any competitions soon!



May 2023 saw the first Repairs panel meeting with officers and residents. This panel gives residents the opportunity to constructively scrutinise our repairs service and performance.

The panel has identified some key areas of improvement which have been included on our 2024/25 service plan. These include looking at the lettable standard, online reporting of repairs and general communication.

Our wider Tenant Talkback is always looking for new members. To see the full menu details, you can visit our website <https://www.brentwood.gov.uk/get-involved> or to speak with our resident engagement officers, please contact us via email.

**Don't have access to email or internet? No problem.** Give us a call on **01277 312500** and ask to speak to a Housing Officer.



### TAKE AWAY

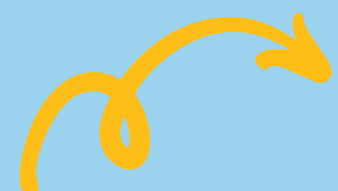
- For all residents
- Feedback via digital platforms
- A copy of 'The Housing Bulletin'

### LITE BITES

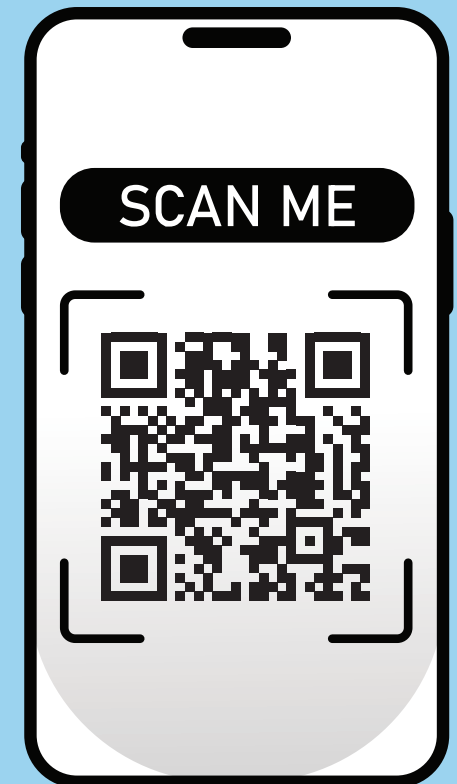
- For those who have very little time to spare.
- Short Surveys and one off focus groups, choose the ones you want to attend.
- Estate Inspections.

### ALL YOU CAN EAT

- Influence key decisions
- Scrutinise performance and service outcomes.
- Take part in larger projects, be part of our resident consultation panels.



**To see the full menu,  
scan the QR Code.**



# Partnership Working

## What a difference a day makes

Due to living alone with ill health, and no family support, the resident had not been able to maintain their garden for some time. This meant that the front and rear gardens were hugely overgrown (weeds grew higher than ground floor windows!) and the much-valued outdoor space was consequently unusable.

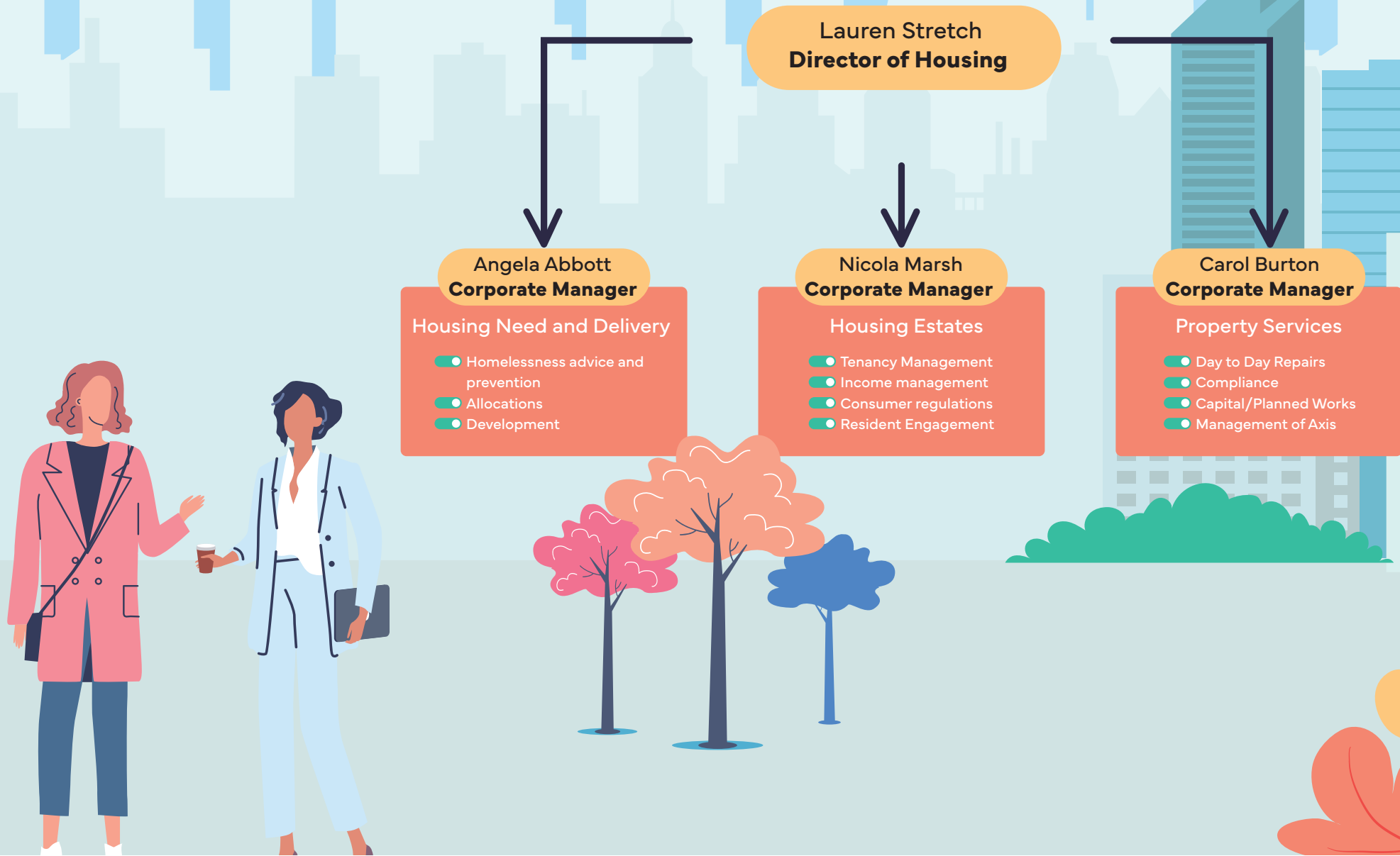
And so, as part of Axis' community investment programme, a group of volunteers from both organisations worked hard to clear the gardens to help improve the residents' quality of life and make it a suitable and manageable space for them to enjoy again.

And what a difference it has made! The resident is now able to access their garden via their bedroom door and is no longer house bound.



# Housing Department Structure

## Housing Management





# Housing Officers

Introducing your housing officers and the areas they cover. Contact details are provided for ease, your housing officer should be your initial go to person if you are unable to seek or find answers to your queries online, you have a concern over a tenancy/income issue or require a visit from an officer regarding your tenancy.

If you wish to contact your housing officer please email [estates.management@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:estates.management@brentwood.gov.uk)

Please note we have used the old wards below as we have not changed the patches since the boundary commission change and this means some officers now cover the same ward. For the purposes of clarity, the old wards will identify your housing officer as these are more likely to be familiar to you.

## Claire Forsyth

- Warley
- Ingatestone
- West Horndon

## Alex Temple

- Pilgrims Hatch
- Bishops Hall
- Copperfield and Mayfield

## Dilwar Hussain

- Hutton – South of the  
Rayleigh Road
- Costead Manner
- Brentwood Town Centre

## Kayode Dunmoye

- Hutton – North of the  
Rayleigh Road
- Kelvedon Hatch
- Blackmore
- Doddinghurst
- Mounnessing
- Navestock

## Louise Cole

- Brentwood Station
- Ingrave and Herongate
- Three Arch Bridge
- Stondon Massey  
Wyatts Green



# Useful Contacts:

Resident Involvement, Brentwood Council Email: **Housing@brentwood.gov.uk**

Brentwood Borough Council **01277 312 500** or online **www.brentwood.gov.uk**

If you are unable to find an email address for a particular service or department, or if you are unsure to whom your email should be addressed to, then please send your email to our enquiries team at the following address: **enquiries@brentwood.gov.uk**

To log general enquiries, use the above contact details. Please ensure you note down your reference number for each enquiry, if they are ongoing cases ensure you quote your reference when contacting customer services.

Tenancy & Estate Management  
Email: **estates.management@brentwood.gov.uk**

Repairs Axis Europe - **01277 312 500** Option 2 > Option 2 > Option 1  
or Email: **brentwoodrepairs@axiseurope.com**

Essex Country Council **www.essex.gov.uk**

Essex Police **https://www.essex.police.uk/Non-Emergency 101**

Mental health crisis team NHS Tel: 111, option 2.



**Get involved!  
Have your say!**



**Compliment, Comment  
or Complain**



**Report ASB in a Council  
property**



# Thanks for reading!

For further information on housing  
speak to the relevant officers or visit

**[www.brentwood.gov.uk](http://www.brentwood.gov.uk)**



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BOROUGH COUNCIL**