

Wulvern's

Annual Report 2010- 2011



Wulvern's Annual Report

Our promise to you

WELCOME • RISE • HOME • ALLOCATIONS • ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR • NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT • CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT & EMPOWERMENT
• CUSTOMER SERVICE CHOICE & COMPLAINTS • LOCAL AREA CO-OPERATION • GOVERNANCE • EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY • VALUE FOR MONEY • WULVERN IN NUMBERS

Welcome to your annual report

In this report we outline our key achievements and let you know how Wulvern is performing. You will also get the chance to read some inspiring stories.

In spite of difficult economic circumstances we have made great progress this year from developing our Promises, to creating award winning projects which have made a real difference to the wider community.

The regeneration of the Sherborne Estate in Crewe, is a fantastic example of what can be achieved through partnership working and our approach has been recognised as best practice, winning both national and regional awards!

We are delighted that we have successfully secured new funding. This means that we are in a strong financial position and can continue to develop new homes and services to meet the growing demand.

We are really proud of our achievements and remain committed to improving our services. If you have an idea of how we can do this, we would love to hear from you!

We continue to involve customers in reviewing our performance; we also benchmark our results against other housing associations and seek external accreditation to ensure we are a top performing organisation.

We would like to thank our Board, staff, partners and most importantly, YOU our customers, for your continuing support.



Sue Lock
Chief Executive



Barbara Shaw
Chair

Tenants RISE to the challenge

The RISE (Reviewing and Improving Services for Everyone) Group has had a busy year. We have worked with Wulvern on your behalf to ensure that the organisation meets the Tenant Services Authority's six National Standards and continues to improve its services.



The National Standards

Tenant involvement - customer service, choice and involvement

Home - the quality of your home and our repairs and maintenance service

Tenancy - how we let homes and support you to maintain your tenancy

Neighbourhood and community - how we create sustainable neighbourhoods

Value for money - the quality and price of the services you receive

Governance and financial viability - how well we run the organisation

We have worked with our customers to understand what matters most to you and this has resulted in the creation of our Wulvern Promises.

This report has been produced with customers and sets out what we have achieved against each of our Promises this year. We hope you enjoy reading it!

Chris Cull
Chair of RISE

Celebrating success!

- Investors in Excellence Accreditation.
- Regeneration Scheme of the Year - Housing Excellence Awards 2011.
- Highly commended for Lean Efficiency - Midlands Business Excellence Awards 2011.
- Partnership project of the year - The National Housing Federation's regional What We Are Proud Of Awards.

- Community Impact Award - North West Prince's Trust Celebrate Success Awards.
- Finalist Large Business of the Year – South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce Awards.
- Finalist – Regeneration and Renewal Awards (awaiting results).
- Finalist – Chartered Institute of Housing Awards 2011 (awaiting results).

The performance data in this report has been taken from verified internal sources and our annual external STATUS survey, of which 997 customers were interviewed.

Home Promise

Our Home Promise sets out what customers can expect from us, ensuring we deliver high quality accommodation, repairs and maintenance.

It includes our approach to dealing with repairs and improvements and explains how we maintain the Decent Homes Standard for our properties.

Our achievements this year

- Pickmere, our second Extra Care development, opened its doors providing specialist homes to promote independent living for the over 55's.
- We have invested over £5.2 million in our homes, improving kitchens, bathrooms, doors, heating, wiring, soffits and fascias, driveways and fencing.
- The latest green technology has been installed in a number of suitable homes, reducing our carbon footprint and energy bills for residents.
- We continue to improve the sustainability of our homes and achieved the Decent Homes Standard ahead of the Government's deadline of December 2010.
- We have improved our repairs service offering greater flexibility and choice, whilst increasing the number of repairs fixed on the first visit.
- We spent £350,000 on aids and adaptations for customers, ensuring they can remain independent in their homes.
- In partnership with Chester & District Housing Trust and Cosmopolitan Housing, we have secured £20 million grant funding to deliver 1058 new homes across Cheshire.
- We have secured £290,000 from the European Regional Development Fund to carry out energy efficiency work on hard to treat properties.
- We have received £100,000 from Cheshire East Highways Department to jointly fund environmental improvement works in Crewe.

Going forward We will review the repairs service with our RISE group to ensure we continue to do what matters to customers.

Allocations Promise

Our Allocations Promise details what customers can expect from Wulvern when moving into one of our homes.

It explains that we allocate our properties to suit the needs of individual customers and their families. It also sets out how we support their move.

It ensures flexibility and looks to minimise under-occupation and over-occupation of our homes.

Our achievements this year

- We have improved our lettings process enabling customers to move into their new homes quickly.
- Our focus is on prevention. We offer new tenants a package of support to help them pay and stay. This includes starter tenancy reviews and financial information.
- We have worked with customers living in homes which have become too large for them, explaining the support we can offer to help them move into properties more suitable for their needs. This frees up much needed larger homes.
- Working with Adullam Housing we provide homes for young mums and babies, supporting them to live independently.
- Following extensive marketing and open days at our Sheltered Courts, we have raised awareness of the benefits of sheltered housing and have seen an increase in people moving in.
- We agree with the customer at the viewing what we will do to make the property work for them.
- We have promoted the Homewapper scheme and have seen an increase in customers using it to swap homes as their housing needs change.
- As a member of Cheshire Home Choice, the Choice Based Lettings scheme for Cheshire East, we give customers greater choice and empower them to make decisions about their new home.

Going forward Working with customers we will continue to ensure our homes meet their needs.

Sherborne Reborn



The Sherborne Reborn regeneration project has transformed the Sherborne housing estate in Crewe.

residents. This inspirational project has been recognised as best practice winning both national and regional awards.

Working in partnership with residents and local agencies we have built new homes and improved existing ones. We have also created employment and training opportunities, promoted financial awareness and supported the education, health and wellbeing of

"Since the redevelopment of the estate my home has been made a lot better, its virtually a new home and a new estate. It has made a big difference to my family and a big difference to my life."

Gill - Sherborne Resident

How are we doing?

Measure	This year	Last year	Performance	Progress
Number of home improvements made	1765	1650	Good	Getting better
Number of days it takes to complete non emergency repairs from when they are reported	10.8	17.6	Good	Getting better
Number of repairs fixed first time	633	472	Good	Getting better
% of repairs which stay fixed	98%	98%	Good	Staying the same
% of emergency repairs completed	100%	100%	Good	Staying the same
Customer satisfaction with repairs and maintenance	97%	89%	Good	Getting better
Customer satisfaction with the quality of our homes	87%	83%	Good	Getting better

Fresh Start

Working in partnership with the Cheshire Probation Trust we have created Fresh Start, a project designed to support people with offending backgrounds set up home and resettle back into society.

Each person who reoffends costs the taxpayer more than £110,000. Fresh Start saves the public purse at least £1.4 million per year!

Due to this success we have been awarded a three year £100,000 contract to continue with the project which has demonstrated that it is possible to make a real difference to the lives of people with complex needs.

Fresh Start has also been commended by the Ministry of Justice National Offender Management Service at their Annual Probation Awards. We are now assisting Cheshire West and Chester Community Safety Partnership Team replicate the success in their community.



How are we doing?

Measure	This year	Last year	Performance	Progress
% of empty homes which are available to let	1.1%	1%	Good	Staying the same
Number of days it takes to let an empty home from when we get the keys from the person moving out, to the new person moving in	32	41	Good	Getting better
Customer satisfaction with the lettings process	96%	N/A	Good	Not previously measured

Anti Social Behaviour Promise

Wulvern's Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) Promise explains our approach to preventing and dealing with ASB.

It lets you know how we work in partnership with other agencies, including the Police and the Local Authority to help maintain safe and peaceful neighbourhoods.

It sets out how you can report neighbourhood issues and ASB.

Our achievements this year

- We have worked with partners including the Police, Social Services and the Local Authority to deliver prevention activities.
- Our Safer Neighbourhoods Team participate in multi- agency groups such as the Prevention of Offending Panel, to reduce ASB in the community.
- We have taken enforcement action where necessary to ensure peaceful neighbourhoods.
- Working with the Police, we have trained staff to collate evidence and draft witness statements.
- We have encouraged mediation between the victims and perpetrators of ASB to resolve the issues early and stop the problems from escalating.
- Our Safer Neighbourhoods Team ensure that our ASB policy is implemented, they deal with complex cases and prepare for legal action.
- We have agreed an Information Sharing Protocol (ISP) with Cheshire Constabulary allowing us to exchange information to prevent or detect anti social or criminal behaviour.
- Working with customers and Wulvern's Board we have reviewed our ASB Policy.
- We have worked with local schools to promote the dangers of ASB.
- We encourage residents to be good neighbours and engage in community activities.

Going forward We will continue to work with other agencies and our customers to prevent ASB.



Wulvern is highly commended for its approach to dealing with ASB

The Midlands Excellence Awards recognised that our new and improved approach delivers quicker and sustainable solutions to anti-social behaviour.

Chief Executive of Midlands Excellence Ian Nield said: "This is a fantastic achievement for Wulvern and I congratulate them wholeheartedly. We received our highest number of entries this year in the Specialist Category Awards and the standard has been nothing short of exceptional."

Our customers have told us that they are delighted with this new effective approach.

How are we doing?

Measure	This year	Last year	Performance	Progress
Customer satisfaction with the resolution of ASB cases *	56%	50%	Room for improvement	Getting better
The number of days it takes to resolve an ASB case	2.5	16	Good	Getting better
Number of ASB cases which reoccur each month	2	4	Good	Getting better

*997 customers were surveyed and 17% had reported ASB to Wulvern.

Neighbourhood Management Promise

Our Neighbourhood Management Promise details how we improve our neighbourhoods.

It lets customers know the range of support we offer to help them live in their homes and explains how we work with other organisations to improve the sustainability of the area.

Our achievements this year

- Working with customers we have responded to neighbourhood 'grot spots' and graffiti.
- Customers have influenced our investment plans which set out how we will improve the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of our neighbourhoods.
- We have launched a Garden Maintenance Service in partnership with Christian Concern Crewe. The new social enterprise provides a better, more affordable service, as well as training and employment for vulnerable adults.
- Working with residents and partners we have carried out neighbourhood clean-up days to ensure our neighbourhoods are safe and clean places to live.
- We have launched a new home contents insurance scheme that offers better cover, for a cheaper price.
- Working with Greenfingers Landscaping Contractors and our customers we have ensured our communal gardens and green spaces are clean and tidy.

Kids go green to improve their neighbourhoods

When residents in the Selworthy area of Crewe told us that the large open spaces were unwelcoming and unsafe, our Neighbourhood Investment Team joined forces with environmental group Greenspaces CIC and two local primary schools.

The partnership has transformed the area, made bird boxes, planted wild flower meadows and created a woodland coppice.

It's not just the flowers that have grown. Those involved have acquired skills and formed new friendships. There are now over 50 active members all eager to help improve their neighbourhoods.

"Working together we have created stunning wildlife areas for local residents to enjoy. This would not have been possible without Wulvern or the support of local schools and residents."
James Thompson - Greenspaces CIC



Going forward We will continue to work with customers to help them pay and stay.

How are we doing?

Measure	This year	Last year	Performance	Progress
Number of customers moving out of our homes each month	15	15	Good	Staying the same
Customer satisfaction with the neighbourhood	84%	85%	Good	Staying the same

Customer Involvement & Empowerment Promise

Our Customer Involvement and Empowerment Promise explains how we involve and empower customers to help improve our services.

Our achievements this year

- Over 600 customers enjoyed a fantastic free fun day out at our Big Summer Fun Day!
- We have provided over 100 opportunities for customers to get involved and have their say.
- Customers attended our Promises Road Show and told us what matters to them in relation to our key service areas.
- We launched the Leaseholder forum and worked with leaseholders to produce a newsletter and handbook.
- Our customers have helped us to recruit 12 people into jobs at Wulvern.
- We have recruited tenants into paid employment and supported them back into the workplace.
- We have launched our customer grounds maintenance inspections and successfully completed a peer review on green spaces with Aspire Housing.
- Customers have received training to help them get involved.
- We have increased the opportunities for customers living in rural areas to get involved, including helping us to develop a Rural Promise.
- Customers reviewed our Involvement Policy to ensure it reflected their needs.
- Customers have told us that we are responding to their diverse needs and are ensuring opportunities for everyone to get involved.

RISE have risen to the challenge

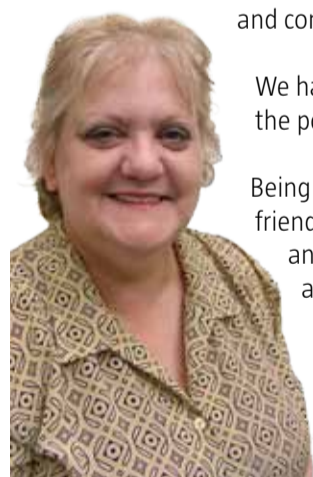
This year RISE really have Risen to the challenge to Improve Wulvern's Services for Everyone!

By reviewing services and making recommendations, we ensure Wulvern does what matters to customers.

This year we have reviewed the Repairs Service which is something I am especially proud of. We looked at how the service was performing, compared it to other organisations, spent time shadowing the Repairs Team and listened to what customers told us mattered to them.

Following every review we present our recommendations for improvement to Wulvern's Board.

We take our roles as customer champions seriously and have attended training and conferences to ensure we are well equipped to do the best job.



We have successfully recruited new members and continue to promote the positive work we are doing.

Being Chair of RISE has really boosted my confidence; I've made new friends, learnt new skills and had fun along the way! I would encourage anyone who is interested in getting involved to get in touch and make a difference.

Call Wulvern's Customer Involvement Team on 01270 503621 or email involveme@wulvernhousing.org.uk

Chris Cull – Chair of RISE

Going forward Our new customer involvement newsletter will feature opportunities and stories of how you have helped us improve.

How are we doing?

Measure	This year	Last year	Performance	Progress
% of customers who are satisfied that we keep them informed	86%	87%	Good	Staying the same
% of customers who are satisfied that their views are taken into account	76.6%	77.4%	Good	Staying the same

Customer Service Choice & Complaints Promise

Our Customer Service Choice and Complaints Promise sets out the standard of service that you expect from us.

It includes how we will provide excellent customer service and choice, ensuring equality for all, and how we measure our performance.

Our achievements this year

- We have installed a new IT system and provided extensive training for customer service staff to help them to resolve enquiries first time.
- Customers recommend how we should resolve complaints.
- We have continued to improve our website and use social media to provide more opportunities for you to contact us.
- Our customer satisfaction surveys by telephone and text messaging help us to ensure we are doing what matters to you.
- Winning a Midlands Excellence Award.

ExcITing times!



Our new IT system helps us to provide a better service. It will allow you to view your rent account, request repairs and take part in customer surveys on-line.

Julie Poste, Housing Assistant explains how the new system is helping her provide an improved service to customers.

"Working within Wulvern's Neighbourhood Services Team I deal with a wide range of housing and neighbourhood queries from customers every day. The new system is fantastic as it allows me to provide more up to date information and track the progress of a query to ensure we keep the customer informed.

It also makes it easier for us to communicate with the customer in a way they prefer. For example where a customer has told us they require large print for written communication, the new system allows us to do this automatically.

Customers definitely appreciate the benefits the new system offers!"

Going forward We will carry out extensive training and monitoring to improve how our staff handle your queries.

How are we doing?

Measure	This year	Last year	Performance	Progress
% of customers who feel that our staff are helpful	86%	86%	Good	Staying the same
Average number of formal complaints per month	8.75	8	Good	Staying the same
% of customers who feel they can speak to the right person at Wulvern	79%	79%	Good	Staying the same
Customer satisfaction with our overall service	86.4%	84.3%	Good	Getting better
% of customers who are satisfied with how our staff deal with their problems	74%	79%	Room for improvement	Getting worse

Local Area Co-operation Promise

Our Local Area Co-operation Promise lets you know how we agree priorities with customers and partners to improve the sustainability of neighbourhoods.

Our partnerships principles are

- To build effective partnerships that deliver benefits for our customers and the wider community.
- Focus on the full range of benefits beyond time and cost including a social return on investment.
- We do business in a fair and open way.
- We will invest to save.
- If asked our partners would say that we make things happen.

To discuss partnership or new business opportunities contact:

Rob Allen, Director of Partnerships on rob.allen@wulvernhousing.org.uk
or call 01270 503614 / 07985 776563

Our achievements this year

- In partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau, we have helped customers to maximise their income and reclaim benefits they are entitled to. So far we have reclaimed over £3.5 million pounds.
- Our DIY and home maintenance training courses at Sir William Stanier School, Crewe have helped customers learn new skills, carry out repairs to their homes and gain employment.
- We have developed new products and services such as a consultancy package to improve the sustainability of neighbourhoods.
- Crewe experiences greater levels of vulnerability and significant issues including health inequalities, and crime and disorder. We are a key partner in the Total Community Improvement Project encouraging local agencies to work together to improve the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of the St. Barnabas area. This project has attracted £45,000 funding from The Cheshire and Warrington Improvement and Efficiency Commission.
- We are partners of the 'All Change for Crewe' project to unlock the huge economic potential of Crewe and the surrounding area.
- Working with partners we have provided a full programme of activities for those over 55, improving their social, physical and mental wellbeing.
- 5,439 local people received 3,554 items of furniture, bedding, utensils and home starter packs from the Christian Concern community re-use centre in Crewe, worth £60,850. Tenants have also accessed volunteering, training and employment opportunities via this partnership.
- Our Knowledge Transfer Partnerships with Manchester Metropolitan University have attracted £93,000 of external funding.
- We have supported social enterprise initiatives, training and coaching, giving customers the opportunity to explore their business ideas.
- Our Fresh Start project has provided support for people with offending backgrounds to maintain their tenancies, and help them to resettle into society. Only one person has reoffended during their time on Fresh Start and this occurred after they had left their accommodation. This equates to a 10% reoffending rate compared to 60% and 72% for younger people nationally and means a saving to the public purse of £1.4 million per year.
- In partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University and the Mayors Charity, our education Bursary scheme has enabled six local people to undertake postgraduate studies.
- Other companies are now buying our expertise.

Going forward Following the successful completion of the first phase of the regeneration of the Sherborne estate, we will continue to work with our partners to complete phases two and three. Improving our homes and the neighbourhood for customers and the wider community.

Celebrating success with The Prince's Trust



We are committed to ensuring young people have opportunities to develop and gain employment. That's why we work with the Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service to invest in the Prince's Trust Crewe Team providing personal development opportunities for unemployed young people aged 16-25.

Working with the Trust we offer work experience placements, a business mentor, and the opportunity of an apprenticeship. We also encourage our partners and contractors to support the Trust.

55 young people have undertaken four community projects and successfully completed the 12 week programme. 11 young people secured work experience with us and one has progressed to a partnership apprenticeship role with Wulvern and Cheshire East.

One of our projects won a regional prize at the Prince's Trust Celebrate Success Awards, recognising it as best in the North West for its impact on the local community. Rob Allen Director, of Partnerships and Jan Melia, Regeneration Officer were awarded Prince's Trust Champions status and Wulvern featured in the North West promotional film.

[Kai Brereton \(A Team Apprentice of the year\) a Wulvern Tenant shares his experience of the Prince's Trust Development Programme](#)



"Before joining the Prince's Trust I had been unemployed for two years. I had no confidence, hated being around people and was unable to find work. I signed up to take part in the programme unsure what to expect. I was taken out of my comfort zone, experienced responsibility and given leadership roles. This experience boosted my confidence, helped me to make friends and develop skills for the workplace. I have since secured a modern apprenticeship with Cheshire East and Wulvern working on the Total Community Improvement project based in the West End of Crewe, which I am really enjoying. I would advise any young person to get involved with the Trust it can really change your life for the better".

Our partners include

Beech Drive Project
Christian Concern, Crewe
Cheshire East Council
Cheshire Constabulary
Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service
Cheshire Probation Trust
Crewe Alexandra Football Club
Gresty Community Group
Health and Well Being Board
Homestart
Manchester Metropolitan University
The Prince's Trust

Pathways Community Interest Company
Sir William Stanier School, Crewe
South Cheshire Chamber
South Cheshire GP Commissioning Consortia
Kings Grove High School, Crewe
Underwood West School, Crewe
Wishing Well
CLASP
Greenspaces CIC
The Citizens Advice Bureau
Girls Out Loud
Red Shift Community Radio

Governance

Wulvern's Board has adopted and complies with the revised National Housing Federation's Excellence in Governance Code which ensures highest standards of corporate governance.

All Board members are required to declare any interests that could potentially conflict with their role on the Board and Members are not allowed to discuss or vote on any matters in which they have an interest.

Members are chosen to bring together professional, commercial and local experience to the Board.

Leaving the Board this year

10th September 2010 - Dave Williams and Ray Westwood resign

29th June 2011 - Jacquie Weatherill, Terry Beard and Brian Dykes resign

Joining the Board this year

10th September 2010 - Jacquie Weatherill and Phil Morgan appointed

10th September 2010 - Helen Biddle was co-opted

29th June 2011 - Les Gilbert, Peter Groves and Maureen Grant appointed

Equality and diversity

We are committed to ensuring equality for everyone, enabling us to improve services, and attract and retain a talented workforce.

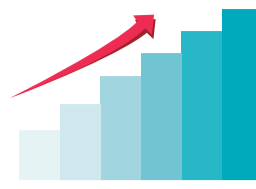
We recognise that people have different needs, circumstances and aspirations and that is why we collect information about our customers and staff so that we can design our services around them.

This year we developed our single equality scheme and action plan with customers, to protect people from discrimination and ensure we continue to improve. This builds on the firm foundations of equality, service improvement and employment that Wulvern has successfully implemented.

Our achievements this year

- We have gathered up-to-date information about our customers and their needs.
- With customers we have Equality Impact Assessed every new policy to ensure that we do not discriminate.
- Customer information has been used to ensure good service, such as alerts on our system when a customer has a specific support need.
- We have marketed our aids and adaptations service making it more accessible.
- Our contractors have had to demonstrate how they meet their own equality and diversity policy.
- We have worked with specialist organisations to share knowledge and expertise.
- We have delivered a programme of equality and diversity training for our staff, Board, contractors and residents.

Value for Money



Value for Money (VfM) is a key priority for Wulvern and we are committed to ensuring that all customers receive the best value from us.

VfM is about spending less, spending well and spending wisely. It is not just about cost cutting.

To ensure we do this we focus on doing what matters to customers in the most cost effective way, delivering the best service using the resources we have.

We have made over £300,000 in VfM savings across the business which is fantastic news!

If you have any ideas or suggestions for how we can improve please contact us.

Our achievements this year

- Our value for money strategy has been developed by our customers.
- All service improvements have delivered value for money.
- Our staff VfM champions ensure that we deliver value for money in every department across the business.
- We have set up a panel with customers, staff and Board members to ensure customers have the opportunity to discuss value for money at the highest level of the business, make recommendations and review our performance.
- We encourage staff to record their efficiency savings and suggestions, helping to promote a culture of value for money.

Wulvern in numbers

Where did the money come from?

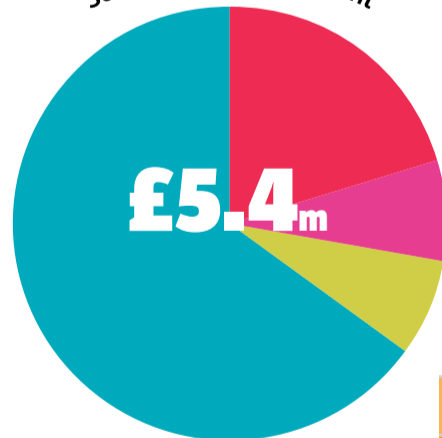
Income from rents, service charges and property sales	£20 m
Housing grants to help develop new properties	£1.9 m
Loans from the bank	£11 m
In total we raised funds of	£32.9 m



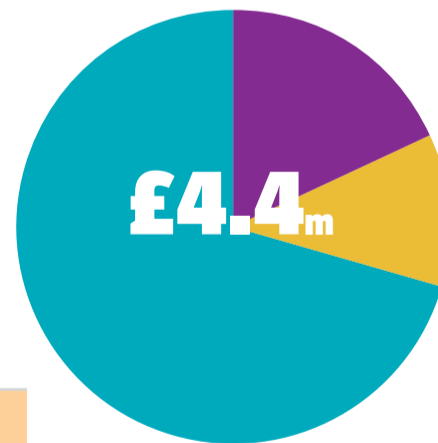
How much did we spend this year?

On our properties and services	£28.6 m
Interest on loans	£3.5 m
Cash balance at year end	£0.8 m
In total we spent	£32.9 m

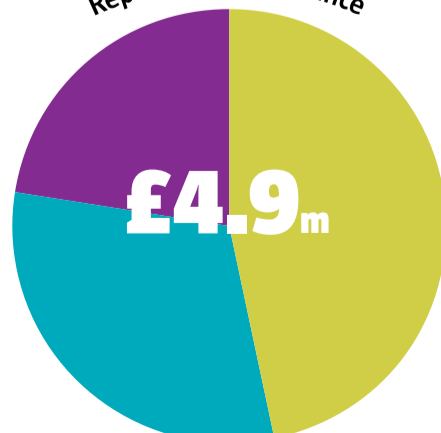
Services & Management



Estates



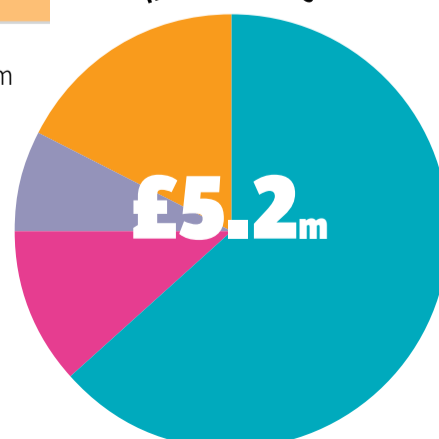
Repairs & Maintenance



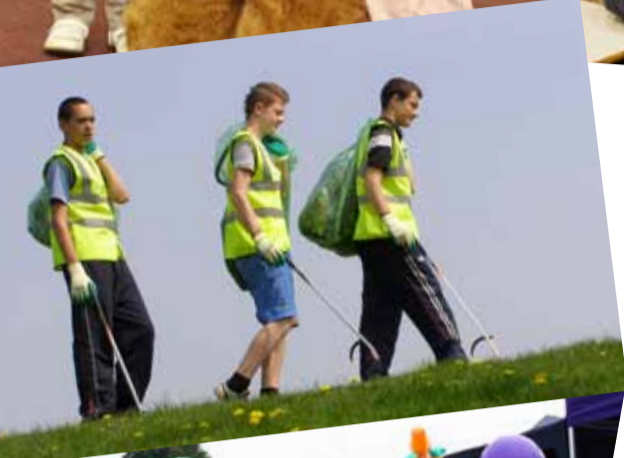
Development



Improvements



m - millions



If you would like this document in your language, on tape, in large print or in Braille, please ring us on **01270 506200** or ask at one of our offices

Arabic

لتلقي معلومات في لغتك الرجاء أطلبها منا على الرقم 01270 506200

Chinese

如欲索取閣下語言的資料，請致電 01270 506200 向我們查詢

Gujarati

આપની ભાષામાં માહિતી મેળવવા માટે કૃપા કરી, 01270 506200 નંબર પર ફોન કરીને અમને પૂછો.

Italian

Per informazioni nella vostra lingua siete pregati di contattare il seguente no.01270 506200

Kurdish

بۆ زانیاری به زمانه که ی خۆت تکایه په یوه ند یمان بۆ بکه به 01270 506200

Polish

Po informację w języku polskim prosimy dzwonić pod numer 01270 506200

Portuguese

Para informação na sua linguagem, por favor fale com nos, 01270 506200

Turkish

Kendi dilinizde bilgi almak için lütfen bize sorunuz, 01270 506200

Urdu

اپنی زبان میں مزید معلومات کیلئے براہ مہربانی 01270 506200 پر رابطہ کریں۔

Bengali

যদি এই ডকুমেন্ট আপনার ভাষায়, টেপে, বড় আকারে বা ব্রেইলে পেতে চান তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে 01270 506200 নম্বরে ফোন করুন অথবা আমাদের কোন একটি অফিসে বলুন।



www.wulvern.org.uk

01270 506200

Wulvern Housing Limited is an Industrial and Provident Society operating under charitable rules

