

WHAt'sUp!



Welcome to the winter 2024 edition of WHAt'sUp

This time of year is often a time of reflection. In the office, we've been looking back on our anniversary and how far we've come, not just in 50 years but over the last 12 months.

In 2024, we made it quicker and easier for you to access our services and get the information you need. We were proud to launch the new rent payment line, the MyWHA app and our new and improved website. I hope you've found this new technology helpful. If you have any feedback on it, please do let us know.

We also visited as many of you as possible during our tenancy audit. The audit was a success, and your feedback tells us it was well received. We gave help to those in need, took care of repairs and maintenance issues and saw how you care for your homes and communities. On page 3 you can

see behind the scenes of the audit in action.

We completed several property improvements this year, including new heating systems, windows, and major fire safety and electrical compliance works. On pages 6 and 7, you can see our annual report, which shows how we've performed in key areas, where our money comes from and how we spend it.

Looking to the future, next year will see the launch of our 25 for 25 project, where, with your help, we plan to complete 25 estate improvements during 2025. We'll also launch a new residents involvement scheme so you can influence how we provide our services. We'll share more information on these plans early in the new year.

Finally, on behalf of the whole WHA

IN THIS ISSUE

PAGE
02

Our new technology: quick and easy ways to manage your tenancy

PAGE
03

Behind the scenes at our latest tenancy audit

PAGE
04

Grants you may be eligible for, to help you stay warm this winter

PAGE
05

Lithium-ion batteries: safety advice

PAGE
06

Annual report: find out how we're doing

PAGE
08

Christmas food quiz and Christmas opening hours

team, I wish you and your family a happy and healthy Christmas holiday.

Best wishes,

Adrian Trigg



New service improvements

In the summer, we introduced some new services that make it easier for you to do things like pay your rent and report a repair. If you haven't tried them yet, find out more about them here.

New website

The new WHA website has a fresh look and feel. The address is www.wydean.org.

It has all the information and functions you need to understand and manage your tenancy.

You can also use it to stay up to date with our latest news to give us your feedback on how we're doing.

Automated payment line

You can now pay your rent and service charges over the phone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

To use the service call:

- 0330 0082 203 or
- 01594 838 000 and press 1

TOP TIP: When entering the amount to pay, include all the numbers with no decimal point. For example, for £550.00, type in 55000. The message will confirm the amount you entered so don't worry if you don't get it right first time.

You can also ask for a receipt, which will be sent to you via text message.

IMPORTANT: We are no longer able to take payments manually over the telephone or in the office. If you come to the office to make a payment, we'll help you use the automated line.



MyWHA app

The app is free to download from Google Play and the App Store.



You can use the new app to:

- manage your account
- pay your rent and service charges
- report repairs
- report problems such as anti-social behaviour.

MyWHA self-service portal

The MyWHA self-service portal (SSP) is part of the new website.

You can use it to manage your account in the same way as the app.

How to use the new services

You'll need your **postcode and tenancy reference number** to sign up for the automated payment line, app and self-service portal (SSP).

For the app and SSP, you'll also need to set up a password.

We're here to help

If you need any help using the new services, please call us on 01594 838 000. We can also let you know what your tenancy reference number is if you don't have it to hand.



Behind the scenes at this year's tenancy audits



What you told us

"It's lovely to meet you and put a face to a name."

What you told us

"Thank you for taking the time to come out and meet us."



What you told us

"It was lovely to meet you."

What you told us

"Wyedean have always been amazing and any time we have needed anything they have always stepped up."





Help to stay warm this winter

With high energy prices and the rising cost of living, it can be hard to keep your home warm in the winter. However, there is help you may be able to get.

Warm Home Discount Scheme

The Warm Home Discount Scheme helps people who get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit or are on a low income and have high energy costs. If you qualify, you'll get a discount of £150 on your energy bill before 31 March 2025.

If you think you're eligible and by early January 2025 have not received a letter or the discount, contact the Warm Home Discount Scheme by calling 0800 030 9322 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or writing to them at Warm Home Discount Scheme, PO Box 14127, Selkirk, TD7 9AH. You must do this before 28 February 2025.

Winter Fuel Payment

The Winter Fuel Payment is a tax-free

payment of £200 or £300. You'll get it automatically if you were born before 23 September 1958 and you or your partner get certain benefits.

If you think you're eligible for the payment and haven't received it, you can find out more on the government's website. Click the link or type <https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment> into your browser.

Cold Weather Payment

You may get Cold Weather Payments if you get certain benefits or Support for Mortgage Interest. If you're eligible you'll get the payments automatically, but you may need to tell Jobcentre Plus if you have a baby or if a child under 5 comes to live with you.

You'll get £25 each time the average temperature in your area is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees Celsius or below over seven consecutive days between 1 November 2024 and 31 March

We want you to enjoy a warm, dry and healthy home. If you have problems with damp, mould or condensation, please let us know as soon as you spot it.

2025. You can find out more on the government's website. Click the link or type <https://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment> into your browser.

Energy Advice for Households

Energy companies have so many tariffs it can be confusing to find the best one. Ofgem is the UK's energy regulator. They have helpful guides on how to understand your bills and switch supplier. To see all their guides, click the link or type <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households> into your browser.





Did you know? Lithium-ion batteries can cause fires

Lithium-ion batteries are used in things like e-cigarettes, mobile phones, laptops, power banks, mobility scooters and electric bikes. They contain flammable materials and are known to cause fire and even explode if they overcharge, overheat or short-circuit, particularly when the battery is damaged.

How to cut your risk

- Only use electrical products that have the UKCA or CE mark
- Only use a charger designed for the device or battery
- Never expose batteries to high temperatures or a direct heat source
- Always charge batteries and devices in a well-ventilated area that has a smoke alarm
- Never charge batteries or devices on soft furnishings such as beds or sofas
- Never charge batteries and devices overnight
- Never use temporary extension leads or adaptors
- Move a battery that is starting to overheat to a safe place outside
- Extinguish a smoking battery by dropping it into a bowl or sink of water
- Regularly check chargers and dispose of them if they have any signs of damage. Contact your local authority for advice on how to do this: never put batteries in your general waste bin.

Five top tips to help you spend less this Christmas

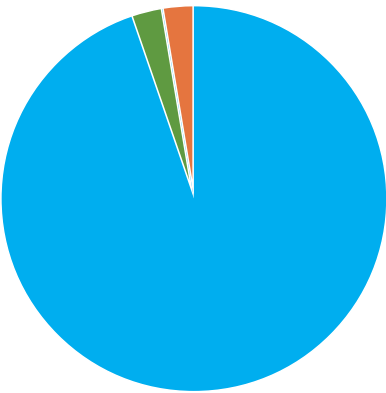
Christmas is a lovely time of year to enjoy. However, the enjoyment can quickly turn into stress if when January comes you're struggling to make ends meet. If you'd like to spend less this year, try our five top tips.

1. Make a list before you go Christmas shopping – and stick to it!
2. Set a cap on how much you're allowed to spend on presents. You may not want to do this for the kids, but if you do it for everyone else it can help you spend a lot less.
3. If you have things at home you don't use why not sell them on sites like eBay, Vinted or Facebook Marketplace to raise some extra Christmas cash?
4. Sites like eBay, Vinted and Facebook Marketplace are also great for presents that cost less than buying new. Or you could try to buy your presents from charity shops.
5. Instead of a present give the gift of time and promise to do things like clean someone's car, help with their decorating or cook for them once a month.

For more inspiration visit the Money Saving Expert website and check out their 48 Christmas Money Saving Tips.

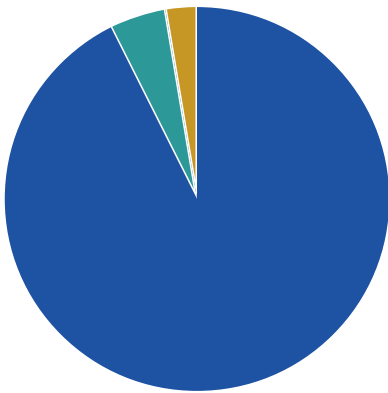
Wydean Housing Association Annual Report 2023-24

Total housing stock: 472



- General needs: 447
- Sheltered housing: 12
- Shared ownership: 13

Total properties let: 42



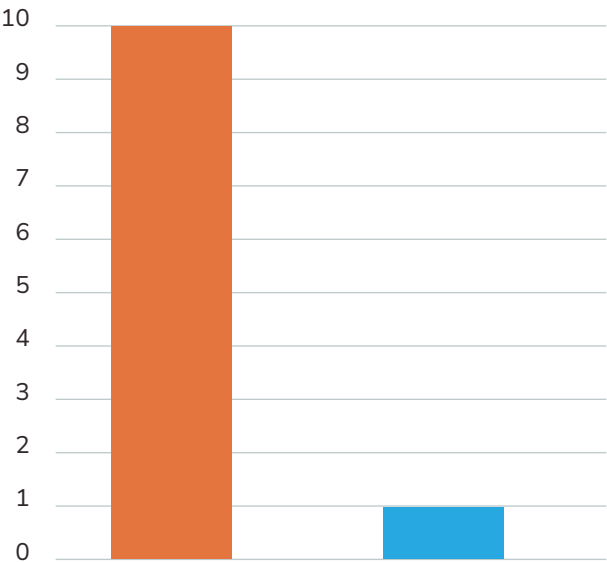
- General: 36
- Mutual exchange: 4
- Fleeing domestic abuse: 2



- New homes built: 15**
- Old Elm Rise, Longhope: 3
 - Severn Bore Close, Newnham: 12

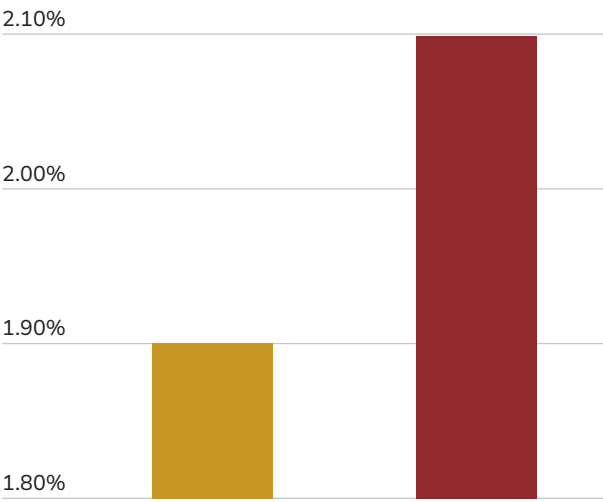
Total tenancies: 464

Anti-social behaviour



Formal cases logged and investigated 10
Property recovered through legal intervention 1

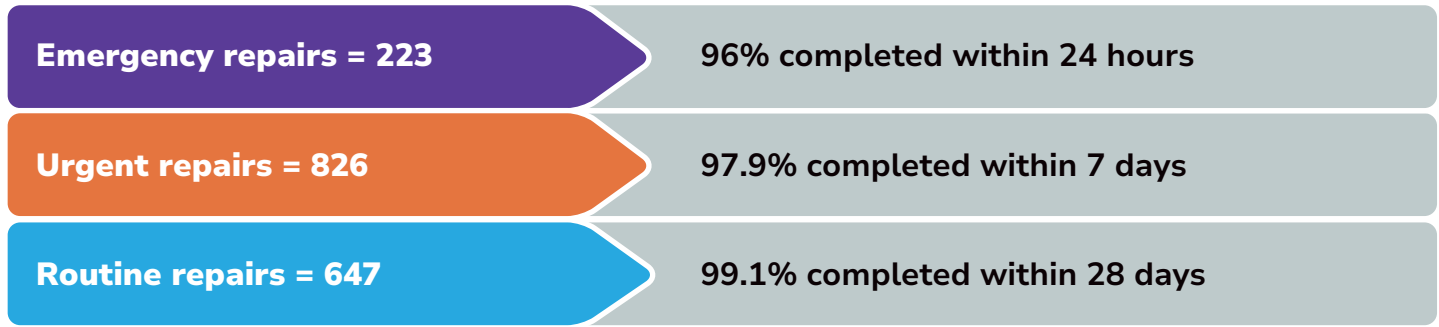
Total average number of voids (empty properties): 9.38



Void loss as a % of annual rent due: 1.90%
Voids as a % of total stock: 2.10%

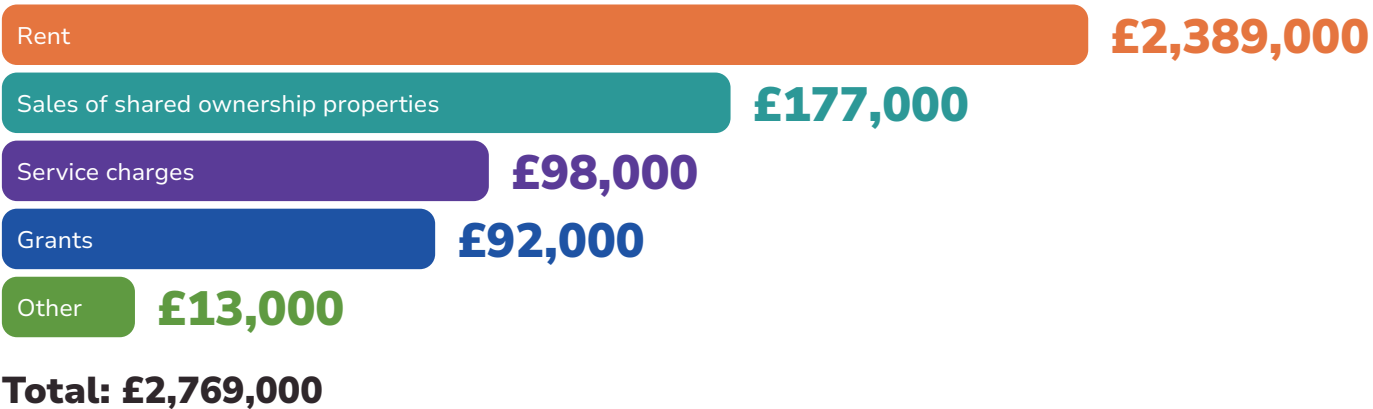


Repairs and maintenance

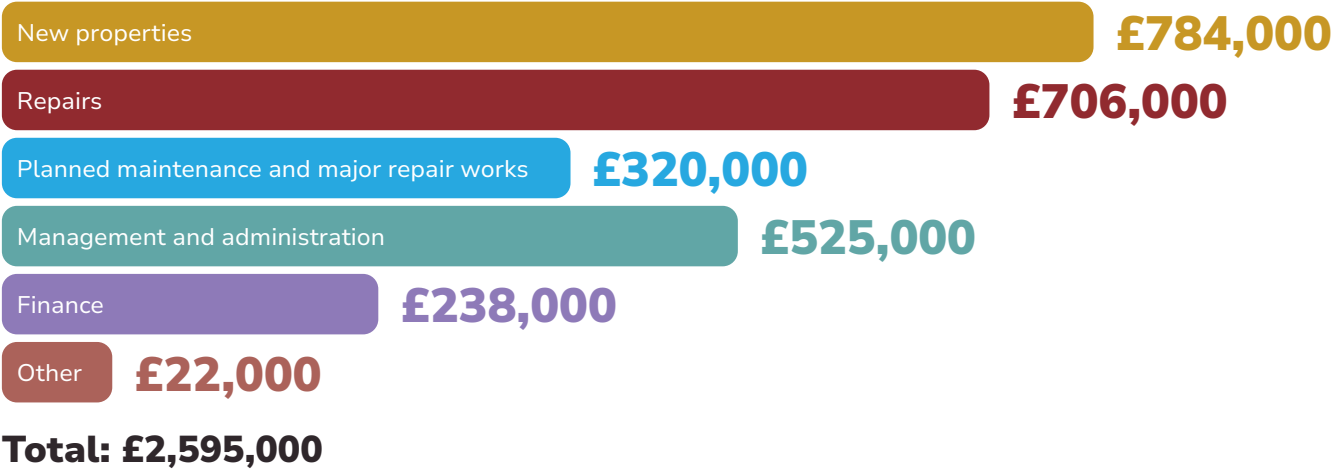


Financial Management

Where our money came from



How we spent our money



Rent and services charges collected as % of rent due:

100.47%

Tenant arrears as % of annual due:

6.59%

Christmas Food quiz

1

The most popular Christmas dinner is turkey, but what is the most popular vegetarian alternative?

2

In the Christmas song, what was "roasting on an open fire"?

3

Which way do you stir a Christmas pudding mixture for good luck?

4

In Tudor times, they roasted a bird before putting it back together (including the feathers) and served it to impress guests at a Christmas banquet. Which bird was it?

5

In Japan, which famous fast food restaurant brand is a traditional Christmas treat?

6

What is the meal consisting of left over vegetables served on 26 December?

7

Which fruit was often found in children's Christmas stockings in the UK and considered to be a luxury?

8

What should be eaten on each of the 12 days of Christmas to ensure good luck for the year ahead?

Christmas opening hours

Monday 23 December:

Normal hours (9am-5pm)

Tuesday 24 December:

9am – 12:30pm

Wednesday 25 December to Wednesday 1st January:

Closed

Thursday 2 January:

Normal hours (9am-5pm)



Struggling to pay your rent? We're here to help.

If you're having financial difficulties and finding it hard to pay your rent, please call **01594 838 000** or email **office@wyedean.org.uk**. We'll do all we can to help you.

You can also get free, independent help from Citizens Advice. Call them on **0300 330 9006**.

Unhappy with our service?

Please let us know if you have a complaint. We'll listen to you and do our best to resolve the problem quickly.

If you're not happy with our response, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman:

Call **0300 111 3000**

Email **info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk**

Website **www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk**



Out-of-hours emergency repairs

Call **01594 838 000** and follow the out-of-hours instructions
For all other emergencies, call **999**

