

Westlea Housing

Annual Report

2010-2011

Richard and Louise, shared owners at Braydon Court



Welcome to our annual report for 2010/11. This is where we tell you a bit about what we did during the year, and how we met the promises that we set out in last year's report, including our local offers.

We will set out what we intend to do next year in our corporate plan and residents business plan, which will be published in April 2012.

Local offers

When you see this symbol in the annual report it shows that part is about a 'local offer'. This just means something that we agree with our residents because it is important to them. It may be something that other landlords don't do, and that's what makes it 'local' to us. It also means not taking a one size fits all approach to what we do. We might have different local offers for people who live in a particular area, or for people who have disabilities, or for families, because they need and want different things.



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Your help with this report

We have worked with a group of residents to agree how this report should look. They looked at last year's reports and similar documents from other housing associations to help decide what they did and didn't like. Residents have chosen the style of headlines and text on the pages, what the tables of information look like, and what symbols are used.

Welcome to the 2010/11 Westlea annual report! Last year's report set out what our 'local offers' were going to be, and here, Westlea is reporting back to us on whether it has delivered against these promises or not (things that it has done, is doing, or is still to do). At the moment, Westlea is talking to lots of residents about their priorities for next year, to make sure that it continues to focus on the things that are most important to us as residents.

This report is for us: Westlea talked to residents about how the annual report should look, and while everyone has their own opinion on what they like and don't like, generally the feeling was that it should be bright, with lots of photos and just enough words to get the message across. Hopefully you will agree that this has been achieved! However, if you've got any thoughts or suggestions, please send back the enclosed feedback card.

As Chair of the Resident Scrutiny Panel I am generally pleased with the progress that Westlea is making, and although there are some things that have not been delivered, I am confident that there are action plans in place to address this.

As a scrutiny panel, we feel that our work is going from strength to strength, as we work alongside the Board and management of Westlea, and we are looking forward to another successful year.

Kerry Law, Chair of the Resident Scrutiny Panel

Our customers remain firmly at the heart of what we do and we continue to concentrate on the priorities that you set us through our focus on 'local offers'.

This has built on the vision set out for us by you in your Residents' Business Plan.

We are working in unprecedented times with Government presenting many challenges for both you as our customers and for us as a housing provider. With changes proposed to the benefits system it has never been more important that we continue to listen to your views and concerns and shape services and support that continue to best meet your needs.

Ann Cornelius, Managing Director (Westlea)

Kerry Law



Ann Cornelius



Customer care

Good information, more choice, high standards and tackling things well if they go wrong. And most importantly – giving you a say in decision making.

DOING

We collect a lot of information about you as residents, and use this to help us deliver the services that you really need.



DOING

We made promises last year to:

- communicate better with you, in the way that you want, and send fewer letters;
- get back to you when we say we will; and
- develop clear service standards.

All of these things will be key parts of a complete overhaul of how we deliver customer services and our new customer service training programme. This will take slightly longer to deliver: training will start in October 2011, and we will be re-organising how we deliver customer services from Autumn 2012.

DOING

We keep making our website better and more informative, and you can make rent payments online, if you have an Allpay card. However, as we said last year, offering fully online services for ordering repairs is likely to be some time away yet (within the next three years).

DOING

We have set up a resident communication group to help us improve our information, and will be expanding and improving this during 2012

Complaints

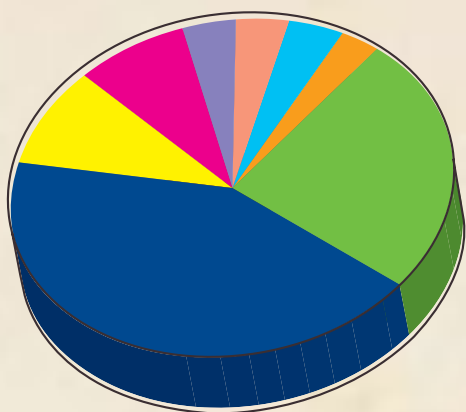
There were 78 formal complaints in 2010/11, 13 less than in 2009/10. We recorded 212 informal complaints. There are four stages to our formal complaints process, which customers can move through if they are not happy with our response. 93% of complaints were resolved informally or at stage one; and only three went to the Independent Housing Ombudsman, the final stage for any complaint. Of these, two were not upheld, and we are waiting for a response on the final one.

72% of complaints were dealt with within target time, which is well below our target. We have improved our processes since then and this has improved to 88% in the first quarter of 2011/12, although there is still some way to go to hit our 99% target. 73% of people were happy with how we handled their complaint: up 2% from last year, and better than our target of 60%. 52% of complaints were upheld (we agreed that the complaint was justified), and a further 16% were partly upheld.

Resident involvement
and empowerment



What do residents complain about?



■ Neighbourhood services	25%
■ Asset management	43%
■ Customer accounts	9%
■ Lettings	8%
■ Customer service / staff	4%
■ Supported housing	4%
■ Development / commercial	4%
■ Other	3%

Lessons learnt from these complaints include:

- We need to keep residents informed at every stage of the aids and adaptations process.
- Staff need to communicate with each other better.
- Our letters need to be written in plainer English.
- We need to give more advice about heating, mould and damp (which we are doing through our energy advisors).

Accreditation

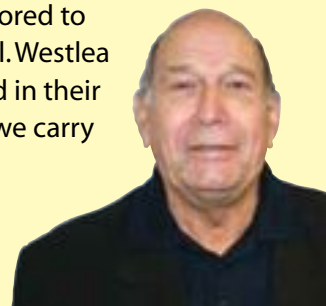
We are accredited under the Quality Housing Standard for our housing services, and by Housemark for our complaints service. We are also members of the Independent Housing Ombudsman service, so that you can take complaints to an independent party if you are not happy with how we resolve them.



Resident Scrutiny Panel inquiry Customer satisfaction

The Scrutiny Panel looked at customer satisfaction levels, because they were concerned that GreenSquare weren't talking to enough residents to get a clear picture of how they felt. We were worried that lots of people might have problems with Westlea which they weren't telling them about. We worked with Westlea to look at the number of people who respond to different satisfaction surveys, and asked them to run a two week test to telephone people who had had repairs done, on the same day or the next day, to see how they felt, instead of relying on feedback cards. It was encouraging to see that there was generally little difference in satisfaction between this exercise and the results of the feedback cards. However, we still felt that response rates could be better, and particularly recommended that Westlea do their complaints, antisocial behaviour and new homes surveys by phone to get a better response. We also recommended that Westlea ask questions more tailored to residents at a local level. Westlea are taking this on board in their current review of how we carry out surveys.

**Nick Fry, Scrutiny
Panel member**



Customer service training

Residents have helped us select a training provider to deliver customer service training to all staff between October 2011 and February 2012. After that, staff 'champions' will train other staff and new starters. Residents are also going to take part in making our training DVD, starring in clips talking about what good customer service means to them.

CONTINUED

Resident Pierrette Firmin-Didot (also known as Rainbow) published her own book this year

Wiltshire contact centre

We want to be able to answer at least 80% of your queries the first time that you phone us. This works really well at our Oxford office for OCHA residents, and we are going to launch a similar contact centre in our Chippenham office for Westlea residents from Autumn 2012. Between now and then we will also be consulting residents about service standards, which will be launched at the same time, as will our customer access strategy, which will mean that we contact you in the way you want us to, and that you can contact us more easily. We will use training, plus new and existing technology to make sure that this works as well as it possibly can.

Resident involvement and empowerment

Giving you the chance to get involved in what we do, right up to the highest level of how we run the business. Giving you your say about how we can make things better, and how you can check that we are doing what we say we will.

TO DO

Your third priority was to have resident champions in key neighbourhoods, who can act as a link between us and other residents. Following feedback from resident inspectors and the Residents Forum, we are working closely with partners on the Neighbourhood Action Pilots and evaluating two methods to gain more feedback from residents to set neighbourhood priorities.



DOING

We continue to focus on your number one priority: meeting the needs of families. We are running more family-friendly consultations; have launched the Families at Westlea facebook page; are working with partners such as Children's Centres; and have just published our Family Involvement Strategy.

DONE

We continue to run a lot of specialist groups, such as the Disability Forum, and Older Person's Forum, so that people can get together, share information and ideas and tell us what they think about what we can offer them. This was your number two priority.



DONE

We have neighbourhood workers, and run a range of community events on key estates, where we have identified a need for them.

DOING

We are working towards running a Residents Academy to offer a whole range of training opportunities to residents by the end of 2011. This is a bit later than planned because we want to recruit residents to our Community Boards first so that they can be involved in the training from the outset. Residents have already been involved in selecting a training provider.

DONE

Each year, residents are involved in our business planning process, so that you can tell us what your priorities are, and check how we are delivering against them.



Members of the Residents' Business Plan working group

TO DO

We haven't yet made the Westlea Involvement Guidelines clearer about how much time getting involved will take up, which we promised by April 2011. However, we will be reviewing our involvement methods so we link better to the new Communities Boards, neighbourhood teams and priorities for residents in their communities; and will publish new Guidelines in early 2012.

DOING

We try to tell you more about what we have changed as a result of what you have told us, for example through the impact statement in this report, and regular articles in our magazines.

DOING

We have increased the percentage of younger people who attend involvement events – from 2% in April 2010 to over 6% in Autumn 2010. We also doubled the percentage of people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds who attended during 2010/11.

Who's getting involved?

We could still improve the range of people who take part in our resident involvement activities, particularly involving younger people. 3.7% of people involved during 2010/11 were under 25, although we had set a target of 8%. We have lots of older (57%) people and people with disabilities (49%) involved, and are about on target for people from a black or minority ethnic background (3.2%), based on the profile of people who live in our area.

How to get involved

There are a whole range of ways to get involved in what we do, some which take up more time than others.

SHORT TERM

You can fill in surveys, join us for estate walkabouts, attend one-off focus groups or just read our magazines.

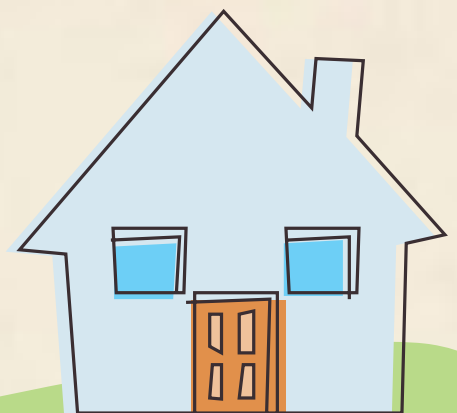
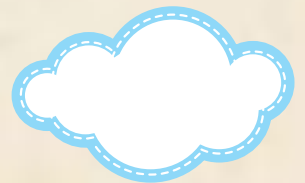
MEDIUM TERM

If you have a bit more time, you could be part of ongoing working groups; come along to a specialist forum (for example, we run forums for older people and people with disabilities); or get involved in setting up an estate agreement in your area.

LONG TERM

For people who really want to get stuck in, you could become a resident inspector, join our Resident Scrutiny Panel, or even become a Board member.

For more information on any of these, please please phone 01249 466167. We can offer lots of support and training, including covering reasonable transport and childcare costs.



Resident Scrutiny Panel

Our Resident Scrutiny Panel has now been running for two and a half years. They play an active role in reviewing decision-making within the organisation, and this year have completed inquiries into:

Resident satisfaction (see page 5)
Antisocial behaviour (see page 14)
Governance (see page 19)

For more information on the work visit
www.greensquaregroup.com/scrutinypanel

Diversity

Treating you fairly and with respect, and making sure that we understand what you need.

DOING

Getting a wider range of people involved with us – more families, more younger people, more people from ethnic minority backgrounds – and giving them extra help and support to do this. There's still some way to go, but we are doing a lot more to engage with families (see page 6).



DOING

We are recruiting more staff across the Group to provide extra help and support for vulnerable people both before and after they move in. This could be people with disabilities, mental health issues, problematic family situations or other difficulties). This is already successful in Oxford, and after piloting the service in Wiltshire during 2011, we will have a dedicated team in place from late 2011.



OUR RESIDENT PROFILE

Age	%
16 – 24 years	6
25 – 44 years	34
45 – 64 years	30
65 – 84 years	23
85+	6
Gender	
Male	39
Female	61
Disability	
Has a disability or long term illness	45
Ethnicity	
White British	96
Black or minority ethnic	4
Sexuality	
Heterosexual	99
Religion	
Christian	59
No religion	38
Other religion	3


This is the percentage of people who have given us this information, not all of our residents.

Equality Act 2010

We are committed to implementing the Equality Act 2010, and welcome the extra protection it gives to different groups of people within our communities. We will continue to respond to the requirements of the Act as they are clarified from central Government, and make sure that equality and diversity are central to our decision-making process.

Kevin, Alabaré homeless hostel resident





Your home

Making sure that your home is a safe and comfortable place to live, and offering an excellent repairs and maintenance service to keep it that way.

TO DO

Your third priority was to have specific times for repairs appointments, where people need this. We will review this by March 2012.



DOING

Your second priority, was to have more choice over how we spend the money to improve your home further, and possibly add some money to it yourself to get a better product (although this was a lower priority).

We already offer choice where possible. At the moment, our spending is focused on bathrooms, which residents have previously said is the top priority. We will be talking to residents in Autumn 2011 about how practical and cost-effective it is to offer more choice. We will put forward options by March 2012 (a year later than promised), and set aside budget in 2012/13.

DONE

We respond to people's individual needs when we do repairs – for example quicker response times for elderly and disabled people, or people with small children if they have heating or hot water problems. This was your top priority.

TO DO

We said we would get our repairs service online, so that you can report a repair over the internet within the next year, and be able to track its progress within three years. You can email us about repairs at the moment, but we would hope to improve this in line with our new computer systems in late 2012.

DOING

We have been trialling offering repairs appointments in the evenings and at weekends for six months, as last year, 40% of you said this would be useful. We are going to analyse the results of this in Autumn 2011 and consult with residents about offering this on a permanent basis across the Group.

DONE

Repairs staff have been involved in estate walkabouts, however, this is being reviewed in line with the changes to walkabouts mentioned in the Your Neighbourhood section. We have also introduced a more focussed joint estate inspection prior to starting planned maintenance work.

DONE

We are booking over 70% of repairs appointments the first time you call us, as promised.



CONTINUED



REPAIRS PERFORMANCE

On 20,000 repair jobs in 2010/11	March 2011 (%)	How do we compare?
Emergency repairs completed on time (in 24 hrs)	99.1	●
Urgent repairs completed on time (in 7 days)	97.1	✗
Routine repairs completed on time (in 28 days)	98.6	✓
Repairs completed "right first time"	90	✗
Satisfaction with last repair job	98	●
Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance generally	83	●

■ = top 25% ■ = above average ■ = below average for other landlords across country

✓ = improved ● = stayed the same ✗ = declined

Source: Housemark benchmarking 2010/11

OUR HOMES

At 31 March 2011, we owned or managed:

General needs	6,000
For older people	312
Supported housing	214
Low cost home ownership	198
Housing association or short term lease properties	1
Leasehold	261
Total social rent	6,986
Market rent / intermediate rent	30
Student rent	34
Total homes	7,050

Developing new homes

During 2010/11, Westlea built 101 new affordable homes, with a further 310 on site at the end of the year. These included homes at The Triangle in Swindon, a high-quality sustainable 42-home development from Hab Oakus, our partnership with Kevin McCloud's company Hab. These homes are designed to be super insulated – naturally warm in winter and cool in summer. An 18-year-old apprentice laid a specially-prepared 'golden brick' at the start of our scheme to develop 70 new homes on the site of the old police station in west Swindon. Two new homes built in the village of Sherston were in the spotlight during the year when Westlea celebrated reaching 7000 homes in ownership and management. We started work on 12 new homes for affordable rent at Frome Road in Southwick and teamed up with the local school to raise awareness of sustainable design and development. And

construction work moved forward on a brand new 30-bed hostel in Salisbury; we are working in partnership with the Alabaré charity to replace their former homeless hostel with high-quality accommodation and a range of purpose-built training facilities in an environmentally-friendly building.

The Triangle, Swindon

Kevin McCloud



Your tenancy

We must follow the rules, and act fairly when we let homes, charge rent and manage your tenancy.

TO DO

We hoped we would be able to give you better information about the local area when you move in, by April 2011, but unfortunately our computer system hasn't been able to deliver this. This will be a requirement for our new computer system. We do give information about the area, such as local doctors' surgeries.

DOING

We have local lettings plans (a way to make sure that communities have a good mix of people and are likely to be nice places to live) in place in some of our existing neighbourhoods.

TO DO

We are applying for funding to turn 3-bed homes into 4-beds for people who need more space. However, we have put work on incentives to encourage people who live in homes that are too big for them to move into smaller homes on the back burner for the moment because we don't have enough money. We asked you if this was acceptable and you agreed that it was.

DOING

We have piloted having tenancy sustainment officers to give people more help to settle into a new home. This worked well, and didn't mean that it took us any longer to let our empty homes. We have therefore decided to recruit people to these jobs permanently. We also have more freedom to set a target for how quickly we let our homes which allows us time to give proper support.

Cllr Howard Greenman, Easton Square resident Natasha Sherman and family at Westlea's 7,000 home celebration



Lettings

Homes empty and **AVAILABLE** for people to move in at March 2011 22

Homes empty and **NOT AVAILABLE** for people to move in at March 2011 14

During 2010/11, we let 434 general needs homes, and 258 supported/older persons homes (692 altogether).

Rents in 2010/11

- We were paid £26,600,000 in rent and service charges.
- Rent we were owed at the end of the year: £677,847. This is 2.4% of the rent we should have collected (beating our own target; above average compared to other landlords; and our lowest level in 10 years).
- Rent lost because homes were empty: £139,532 or 0.57% (general needs) and £60,270 or 4.8% (older people).
- We evicted 19 people for not paying their rent.

Your neighbourhood

TO DO

Your top priority was for us to look at how we can offer rewards and incentives for residents who pay their rent, don't cause antisocial behaviour problems, and "go the extra mile" by October 2011. We have delayed this to 2012, so that we can offer something that's fair to residents across the whole Group and that is affordable.



DONE

We offer a subsidised 'handy-gardener' service, to provide affordable help for people who struggle with gardening. During 2010/11, 63 people used the service.

DONE

We agreed, with residents, estate standards for our neighbourhoods, to help make them cleaner, safer and greener. We have published these in our magazine. This was your second priority.



DOING

We said we would improve estate walkabouts in terms of resident involvement, giving you feedback and tackling problems quickly, by March 2011. We are about to pilot a new approach to walkabouts in North Chippenham and Calne.

DONE

We have extended our local newsletters to the following areas: Calne and Lyneham; Chippenham; Corsham; Malmesbury; Swindon and Cricklade; Trowbridge; and Wootton Bassett.

DOING

Through our new neighbourhood action planning approach, we can identify which neighbourhoods need extra help and resources, and what matters to the people who live there. We have started this in Calne and North Chippenham.

DOING

In terms of getting the best value out of our current partnerships, we have improved how we work with Barnardo's to support families.

We are in the process of setting up four neighbourhood teams across your area, to focus really closely on what matters to you in your local area. We are doing this because we know it matters to you that you can see us "on the ground" in your neighbourhood, that we tackle problems quickly and you get a local service.

Whatever! and What Now?

We won the National Housing Federation South West award for our Whatever! and What Now? work experience projects for young people. Our work in this area has gone from strength to strength, helping young people find work placements with local employers and build their confidence to move on to further employment or training. During 2010/11, 52 young people participated in the two schemes, of which 30 have gone on to get jobs or start training.



Antisocial behaviour

DOING

We have local and sensitive lettings plans in place in key neighbourhoods where housing officers have identified ASB hotspots. We are also working in partnership with Cardiff university to deal with issues raised by residents in a survey of local issues.



DONE

We tell you about what we are doing to tackle antisocial behaviour in your area in our 'Down Your Way' newsletters.

DONE

We ran a variety of ASB training for housing officers during 2011, including how to nip low level antisocial behaviour in the bud, before it gets more serious.

DOING

We have upgraded our computer system for ASB to work better for us, and are about to upgrade it again.

DOING

We awarded the 'good neighbour' award to Giorgio and Joyce Maccariello of Saxon Close, Cricklade in March 2011.

Tackling antisocial behaviour

Last year Westlea housing staff made 19 referrals to mediation, undertook 9 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, Issued 15 Notices of Seeking Possession, obtained 10 injunctions and carried out 4 evictions. This is in addition to all the other early intervention work undertaken by housing staff on a daily basis.



Kicks football tournament



Witness Support Volunteer

We now have a trained Witness Support Volunteer, to work with witnesses who are nervous about going to court, and attend with them if necessary. She has been involved as a witness in a successful Westlea antisocial behaviour case.

Resident Scrutiny Panel inquiry Antisocial behaviour

The Residents Scrutiny Panel looked at how antisocial behaviour is dealt with across GreenSquare. Generally, we felt that the service was being delivered well, but our main concern was around whether persistent antisocial behaviour was being dealt with effectively. We made a variety of recommendations about having standard policies and procedures across the Group and providing more information and support for residents, which GreenSquare are taking on board in their review of this service.



**Ian Wilmer,
Scrutiny Panel
member**

Young people
taking part in
'Project Inspire'



Value for money and
financial viability

How do we compare on cost?

Recent Housemark benchmarking shows that we compare well to other housing associations in terms of what it costs us per home to deliver our planned maintenance and estate services (we are in the top 25% for this). The cost per home for responsive maintenance and our level of overheads is a little under average, and the cost per home for housing management services is well below average. We need to do some work to understand why this is, and how we might improve this.

TO DO

For local offers to work, we need to manage our money differently. As part of creating Communities Boards, we will be giving them more control over how money is spent in their local area, and to review how we spend our money overall.



DOING

We are continually making sure that we don't waste time or money. We saved £809,364 in 2010/11, with notable savings including in-house construction; recycling building materials from demolished properties; reduced telephone and insurance costs; and savings on VAT made by directly employing the staff made redundant by a planned maintenance contractor.

DONE

We are getting residents more involved in looking at how we spend money, with events such as our Visioning Evening. Residents also attended our budget setting meetings last year, after a Scrutiny Panel inquiry into resident involvement in this area.

TO DO

Knowing what different services cost, and whether that is good value for money. We plan to have better cost measures in place by 1 April 2012

DOING

We are making sure that we can still get money in, even if housing benefits payments are reduced, which is demonstrated by our excellent rent arrears results (see page 11).

TO DO

We are starting to review whether it will cost more than it is worth to achieve some of our targets, when we could be spending it on something that matters more to you.

For the year ended 31 March 2011

SUMMARY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT	2011 £'000	2010 £'000
Turnover	29,096	29,406
Operating costs	(21,931)	(22,717)
Operating surplus	7,165	6,689
Deficit on sale of fixed assets	(2)	-
Interest receivable and other income	24	19
Interest payable and similar charges	(6,465)	(6,072)
Taxation	-	-
Surplus for the financial year	722	636

TURNOVER

This is the money that you pay us in rent, and any other income that we receive (for example if we sell a shared ownership home).

OPERATING COSTS

This is what it costs us to manage and repair your homes, and to pay our staff and run our offices.

INTEREST PAYABLE

This is the interest that we have to pay on our loans.

SURPLUS

This means that we have received more income than we have spent this financial year. As a not-for-profit organisation we call it a surplus because we put the money back into the business for next year. We must use it for something consistent with our charitable purpose or activities beneficial to the community, rather than using it to benefit any individual.

Terms explained

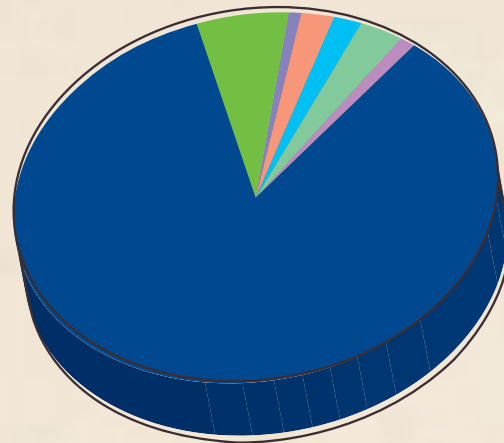
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For the year ended 31 March 2011

SUMMARY BALANCE SHEET	2011 £'000	2010 £'000
Tangible fixed assets		
Housing properties at valuation	258,694	247,547
Other tangible fixed assets	3,662	3,647
Fixed asset investments	3,315	3,315
Current assets		
Stock	388	792
Debtors	1,990	4,694
Investments	875	3,932
Cash at bank	85	17
Creditors – amounts falling within one year	(7,861)	(5,475)
Total assets less current liabilities	261,148	258,469
Creditors – amounts falling due after more than one year	151,405	149,701
Provisions for liabilities and charges	31	–
Net Pension liability	4,892	10,135
Capital and reserves		
Revaluation reserve	96,816	97,882
Revenue reserves	8,004	751
	261,148	258,469

Where the money comes from



■ General Needs	85%
■ Supported and housing for older people	6%
■ Temporary housing	0%
■ Care homes	0%
■ Low cost home ownership	1%
■ Garages	2%
■ Supporting people contracts	2%
■ First tranche shared ownership sales	3%
■ Interest receivable	0%
■ Other services	1%

FIXED ASSETS

This is the value of actual things that we own, for example homes and garages, offices and computers.

CURRENT ASSETS

This is the value of cash and money that we have in the bank, have invested or are owed by other people.

CURRENT LIABILITIES

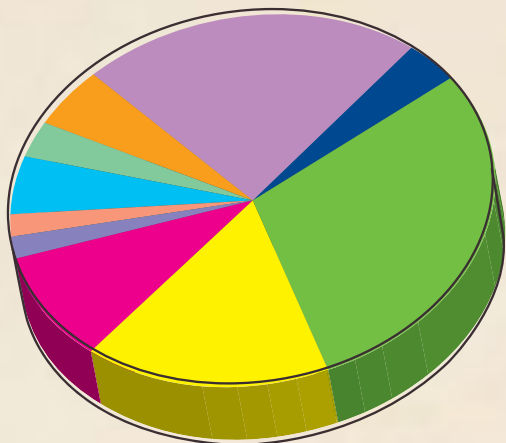
This is the money that we owe to other people within the next year.

When you subtract all our liabilities from our assets, we are left with more money in the bank, or owed to us, than we owe to other people, which means that we are in a strong position.

Terms explained



Where the money is spent



Housing services	4%
Housing and estate management	29%
Routine maintenance	17%
Planned maintenance	10%
Major repairs	2%
VOIDS AND BAD DEBTS	2%
DEPRECIATION AND IMPAIRMENT	5%
First tranche shared ownership sales	3%
Other services	5%
Interest payable and other finance charges	23%

HOW DOES RENTING A 2 BED HOME FROM US COMPARE? COST PER WEEK (£)

Rented from Westlea March 2011	74.50
Rented from another housing association (average) March 2011	79.12
Westlea low cost home ownership (a £140,000 home, 50% owned and 50% rented)	135.00
Rented from a private landlord	168.00
Bought on the open market (average sale price of £183,000 with a 4.5% mortgage rate)	257.00

CREDITORS (AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR)

This is money we owe long term back to our funders who have provided loans to help build our properties. We must also show any potential pension fund balances.

RESERVES

Are surplus funds built up over a number of years when an organisation's income is greater than its expenditure. These funds cannot be used for day-to-day operations – instead they give us a stronger negotiating position with funders (people who lend us money).

VOIDS AND BAD DEBTS

VOIDS are empty properties. We lose rent because there is no one living there. BAD DEBTS are money that we are owed and haven't been paid.

DEPRECIATION AND IMPAIRMENT

DEPRECIATION is where something loses value through normal wear and tear (for example, computers as they get older). IMPAIRMENT is a sustained decline in value over time (for example, a long-term drop in house values).

FIRST TRANCHE SHARED OWNERSHIP SALES

This is the money we receive when we sell the first share of a shared ownership property. It also appears as a cost because as it is sold, that portion of the property is no longer a part of our assets. The two should balance out if we sell at the right price!

Terms explained



Governance

TO DO

We planned to make information more easily accessible for Board members and other interested residents by improving our eGovernance system by September 2011. We have had some issues selecting a supplier, but should be able to move forward with this by the end of 2011.

DOING

We said we would look at how the different Boards work, to check that we have the right number, that they are making decisions at the right level and that they can “move with the times” and are doing this as part of our Governance Review.

DONE

We promised to consult you every three years about how residents are involved in governance and scrutiny. We have done this through the consultation on our Governance Review (see right).

TO DO

We have not increased the number of young people on our Board. This is difficult to do until existing Board members decide to leave. However, it will be a focus when we recruit to our new Communities Boards in Autumn 2011.

DOING

We said we would look at how long Board and Scrutiny Panel members serve, to make sure that we have the right balance of continuity and fresh ideas. This has been done for the Scrutiny Panel and will be part of the Governance Review for the Boards.

DOING

We are publishing more Resident Scrutiny Panel information on our website, and working on making more Board information available.

Code of Governance

We are signed up to the National Housing Federation’s Code of Governance. Last year, we identified our major area for improvement as getting stakeholders (residents, local authorities, investors and other interested parties) more involved in our governance arrangements. We are doing this through our major governance review. We also said that we needed to make our information easier to access, which is happening, and will be improved through re-designing our eGovernance system.

Governance review

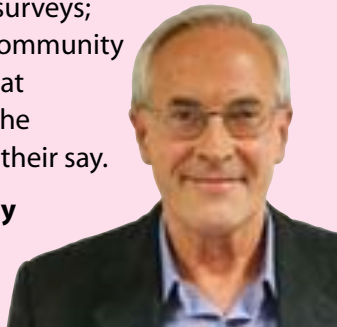
We are currently consulting residents and other stakeholders on our governance arrangements (how we run the organisation) for the future. We are looking at combining OCHA and Westlea into one organisation, with one overall Management Board, and three Communities Boards, who can focus on local issues that are important to residents, with support from neighbourhood teams who are working in those areas. There would be five residents on each Communities Board. The benefits of doing this are to give residents much more say about how things are run in their local area; and that we can save nearly half a million pounds across the organisation, which we can spend on improving our services.



Resident Scrutiny Panel inquiry Governance Review

The Residents' Scrutiny Panel have been looking at GreenSquare's proposals, and how they have involved residents in putting them together, and are happy to say that creating Communities Boards will strengthen residents' influence and control over how GreenSquare runs its business, and get directly involved with issues which are important to them in their local area. GreenSquare have used telephone and online surveys; drop in sessions; and community events to make sure that residents understand the changes and can have their say.

**Keith Fellows, Scrutiny
Panel member**



The Board

(1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011)

GreenSquare is run by a Board of Management of 10 members, including two residents. They have ultimate responsibility for all decisions about the future direction of the Group. They met 10 times during 2010/11, as well as attending a variety of training events on subjects from equality and diversity to treasury management.

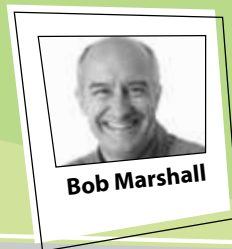
Below that, Westlea's work is overseen by a Board of up to 12 members (four residents, seven independents and the Managing Director of Westlea). The Board is responsible for generally managing our affairs and for setting policy and strategy. They met nine times during 2010/11.

Board members must uphold our values and objectives; support our policies; take responsibility for their decisions; and respect confidentiality, as set out in the Group Board Membership policy.

Pupils from Southwick Primary School with artwork they created for the Frome Road development



CONTINUED



Our shareholders

Admissions to shareholding membership (other than for Board members) are still suspended pending the results of our governance review.

Committees

There are three committees that look at specialist areas across the Group:

The **Group Audit Committee** provides advice on the effectiveness of the internal control system, including how we manage risk.

Membership as at 31 March 2011: David Line (Chair); Derek Day; Muir Laurie; Philippa Lowe.

The **Group Membership Committee** establishes and reviews the criteria for Board membership; reviews Board members' service agreements; recruits and selects Board and Scrutiny Panel members and shareholders; and manages Board members' performance.

Membership as at 31 March 2011: Hilary Gardner (Chair); Allison Bucknell; Derek Day; Helena Taylor-Knox.

The **Remuneration Committee** reviews the salaries and contracts of the Board members and Executive Directors. They also agree the annual pay review for staff and board members.

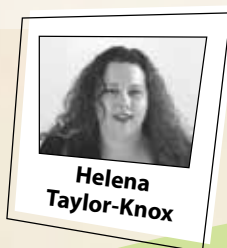
Membership as at 31 March 2011: Wendy Hall (Chair); Derek Cash; Alice Copping; Hilary Gardner.

WESTLEA BOARD

From 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011

Name	Attendance (%)	Remuneration (£)	Expenses (£)
Rosalind Brooke	78	3,499.92	412.00
Allison Bucknell	89	3,499.92	261.60
David Line	89	4,749.96	884.60
Stuart McGregor (joined 14/09/2010)	57	1,905.51	68.80
Ian Tomlinson	89	3,499.92	442.00
Melanie Reilly	44	3,499.92	178.08
Derek Cash (joined 13/05/2010)	100	4,355.51	504.80
Tom Pearce*	44	0.00	0.00
Roger Harvey*	44	3,499.92	0.00
Pearl Peckham*	89	3,624.96	317.28
Alison Cross-Jones (joined 14/09/2010)*	78	3,499.92	58.00
Angie Clapp (joined 14/09/2010)**	86	0.00	292.55
Bob Marshall (left 14/09/2010)	100	3,644.41	52.00
Ivor Williams (left 14/09/2010)*	100	0.00	140.80
Helena Taylor-Knox (left 20/07/2010)	50	917.32	247.60

*resident **resident co-optee



Making an impact

Every year Westlea publishes an Impact Assessment Review covering resident involvement, community development and your views on service delivery. The latest Review, which covers the year ending 31 March 2011, provides details of the projects that residents have got involved in and their impact on the people we house and the communities we work in. Here's a summary of some of the key projects:

WHATEVER!

41 young people took part in our Whatever! job experience placements and life skill sessions for 16-24 year olds, with 20 getting jobs or going on to education or training.

WHAT NOW!

11 people over the age of 25 took part in our What Now! employment and training scheme. Seven have found employment, one is in further training and three are receiving employment support from an external partner.

BUSINESS SUPPORT

In 2011 we will be expanding employment and training opportunities for residents keen to set up their own local business. Four residents are already taking part in the pilot scheme.

BARNARDO'S JIGSAW PROJECT

27 residents received one-to-one support, 119 children and adults took part in structured activities and projects and 142 children and adults took part in one-off holiday activities. In 2011 we plan to focus on the most vulnerable families, who risk losing their tenancies because of complex, multiple problems.

YOUNG CARERS

Young carers enjoyed 69 respite group activities, compared with 27 the previous year, and 40 received one-to-one support. Three consultation events helped us to improve the service, we ran two family healthy living projects and 14 hard-to-reach families with specific health problems were identified.

ADULT CARERS

The support worker provided advice, information and support to 115 Westlea residents and 78 residents attended activities and training. 18 residents volunteered for the project.

LINK

Local community groups involved in LINK provide transport and good neighbour support. Westlea residents in north Wiltshire received help on 3,160 occasions, 760 higher than last year.

FINANCIAL ADVICE

694 residents used the service, receiving an extra £177,500 in benefits and advice on £361,056 of debt. £12,858 of debts were written off.



CONTINUED

Children enjoying a trip organised through our partnership with Barnardo's

ESTATE WALKABOUTS REVIEW

Estate newsletters are now being produced showing what we've done as a result of residents' comments. We've introduced a tidy garden standard, launched a Handy Gardener service and looked at an alternative to estate inspections (Neighbourhood Action Planning) in two areas.

THE TRIANGLE, SWINDON

We are working with TV designer Kevin McCloud's company Hab on a new approach to development. Initiatives at The Triangle include developing a Good Neighbour Agreement, training residents in organic gardening techniques, a Neighbourhood Watch Group and activities to increase engagement, good will and a sense of community.

INTERNET SKILLS

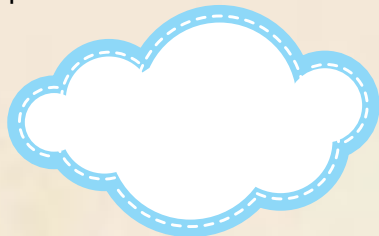
56 residents increased their computer skills and can now access the internet and 12 residents were helped to use the internet at home. Four sheltered schemes now have internet access and one has Skype. 380 people benefited from easy access to the internet in the community and 79% of learners said that gaining new skills increased their self confidence.

12-16 YEAR OLDS

Our Community Investment Fund continues to sponsor social events where young people aged 12-16 can get together in a safe environment, supported by local police. This helps reduce antisocial behaviour. Examples include Bluez 'n' Zuz and Battle of the Bands. The police have worked incredibly hard to pull in extra resources and funding to sustain these events and Westlea has been able to reduce its sponsorship.

DOG DAY EVENT

A family day and dog competition was organised. 50% of residents who have complained about dog fouling in the past reported improvements.



KICKS FOOTBALL

This project, funded by Wiltshire Council and the FA outreach sports programme and managed by Kandu Arts for Sustainable Development, will continue. Westlea can refer young people to the project.

HEALTHY LIVING PROJECTS

These deliver positive activities for young people and actively work to improve neighbourhood issues like antisocial behaviour. Partners include Wiltshire Council 3 C's (Chippenham, Corsham and Calne) team, Kandu and Wiltshire Council Sports Department Team.

RESIDENTS BUSINESS PLAN

The Plan included increased investment to existing and new services, in particular better estate maintenance, the new Handy Gardener Service and the estate walkabouts review.

RESIDENTS FORUM

The Residents Forum looked at proposed Community Investment Fund projects to decide which ones should go ahead and managed the Residents Business Plan 2011 – 2012. The Forum also met the Westlea Board to look at ways to improve communication. As a result, the Residents Forum now has an agenda slot at Board meetings, where members provide feedback, comments and suggestions on non-confidential board papers.

PLANNED MAINTENANCE CONSULTATIONS

The number of residents consulted about planned work has increased and resident satisfaction remains high. Access problems for our contractors have fallen and the area asbestos surveyor now visits properties to carry out checks before any work is carried out.

RESIDENTS SCRUTINY PANEL

The Panel is growing in strength and getting more involved in how the Group delivers services. Made up of five OCHA residents, five Westlea residents and an independent chair, it looks closely at the Group's performance, monitors complaints and decides if any service areas need investigating. The Panel has kept residents updated with regular reports on the Westlea website and in HOME magazine and Down Your Way newsletters.

DISABILITY FORUM

The Disability Steering Group has increased in confidence, is giving presentations to groups and encouraging residents to take part.

VISIONING EVENING

Our recent visioning evening gave residents the chance to tell us about key local priorities. These will be incorporated into local offers, which detail the things Westlea will do for a specific area.

RESIDENT INSPECTORS

This group still needs more clarity about where it fits within the structure of the organisation; they could work more closely with the Scrutiny Panel and have started to discuss how this might work. Their inspection of estate walkabouts including surveys, observations and report writing – led to the process changing to more intensive targeted work (neighbourhood action plans) for some areas and more of a 'light touch' in others.



Dog day event in Chippenham



Residents' Forum

Residents caught on camera at various events during 2010-2011.



Good neighbour award winner 2011



Nathan Lewis - who completed a Whatever! placement - at the NHF awards show



Residents' ideas captured at our 'Visioning evening'



Residents of The Triangle get gardening tips before moving in

Snapshot

Driving simulator brought in to show residents and staff how to cut fuel costs





WestleaHousing

PART OF
GreenSquare

housing people, building communities

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Email enquiries@westlea.co.uk
www.westlea.co.uk

Westlea Housing Association Limited is registered as an Industrial & Provident Society with charitable status, number 28095R. Part of GreenSquare Group Limited.

This is our Annual Report to residents.

If you would like to have any part of this explained or translated, or in a different format such as in larger print, or on audio tape, please contact us on 0800 980 9272 to discuss your needs.

বাসিন্দাদের জন্য ইহা আমাদের বাৎসরিক রিপোর্ট।

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這是我們致住戶的年度報告。

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Jeśli wymagają Państwo wyjaśnienia jakiegoś fragmentu albo jego tłumaczenia, albo w innym formacie, takim jak duży druk, albo na kasecie audio, proszę się z nami skontaktować pod numerem telefonu 01249 465465, aby przedyskutować Państwa potrzeby.

Bu, mukmlere sunulan Yıllık Rapor'dur.

Herhangi bir kısmının izah edilmesini veya tercüme edilmesini, ya da iri harfler veya ses bantı gibi başka bir formatta verilmesini isterseniz, lütfen ihtiyaçlarınızı konuşmak için bu numaraya telefon edin: 01249 465465.

