



# GSA

PARTNER NEWS

AUTUMN 2023





# REPORTING BACK

## Welcome to the Autumn edition of our GreenSquareAccord partner update.

We want to continue to share news of our progress, challenges and opportunities with our most important partners. In this edition you can get an insight into:

- ◆ Our Customer Roadshows which have taken place in our communities over the last few months giving customers the opportunity to meet colleagues and discuss matters relating to their homes and community with us
- ◆ What we have achieved alongside our Customer Panel a year on since it was formed
- ◆ Our 2022-23 annual report which provides clear information about how we run our business and the services we offer
- ◆ How we're performing through our monthly *how we're doing* performance infographic which shows our performance for the three most important areas of customer service for our landlord service, based on what our customers have told us
- ◆ How we're investing in new, high quality and affordable homes across the South West and Midlands.

We want this update to be useful for you and reflect what you want to know, so please take a few minutes to fill out the short survey at the end.

Thank you for being a valued partner of GSA.

Kind regards,



**Ruth Cooke** Chief Executive





# MEASURING

# SUCCESS

**We report on key aspects of our performance each month which we share with colleagues, customers and stakeholders.**

Our *how we're doing* monthly performance infographic shows our performance for the three most important areas of customer service for our landlord service, based on what our customers have told us:

- ◆ Contact centre
- ◆ Repairs
- ◆ Complaints resolution

It includes customer satisfaction and our performance against aspects of our service customers have said make a difference to whether they have a good or poor experience.

Following feedback from our customers, we've also created our [performance web pages](#) which together with our performance infographic now include our key performance indicators (KPI's) and trends for:

## Contact centre

- ◆ Customer satisfaction
- ◆ Average call waiting time
- ◆ Average speed of answer to an email

## Repairs

- ◆ Customer satisfaction
- ◆ Fixed right first time
- ◆ Routine repairs completed within 28 days

## Complaints resolution

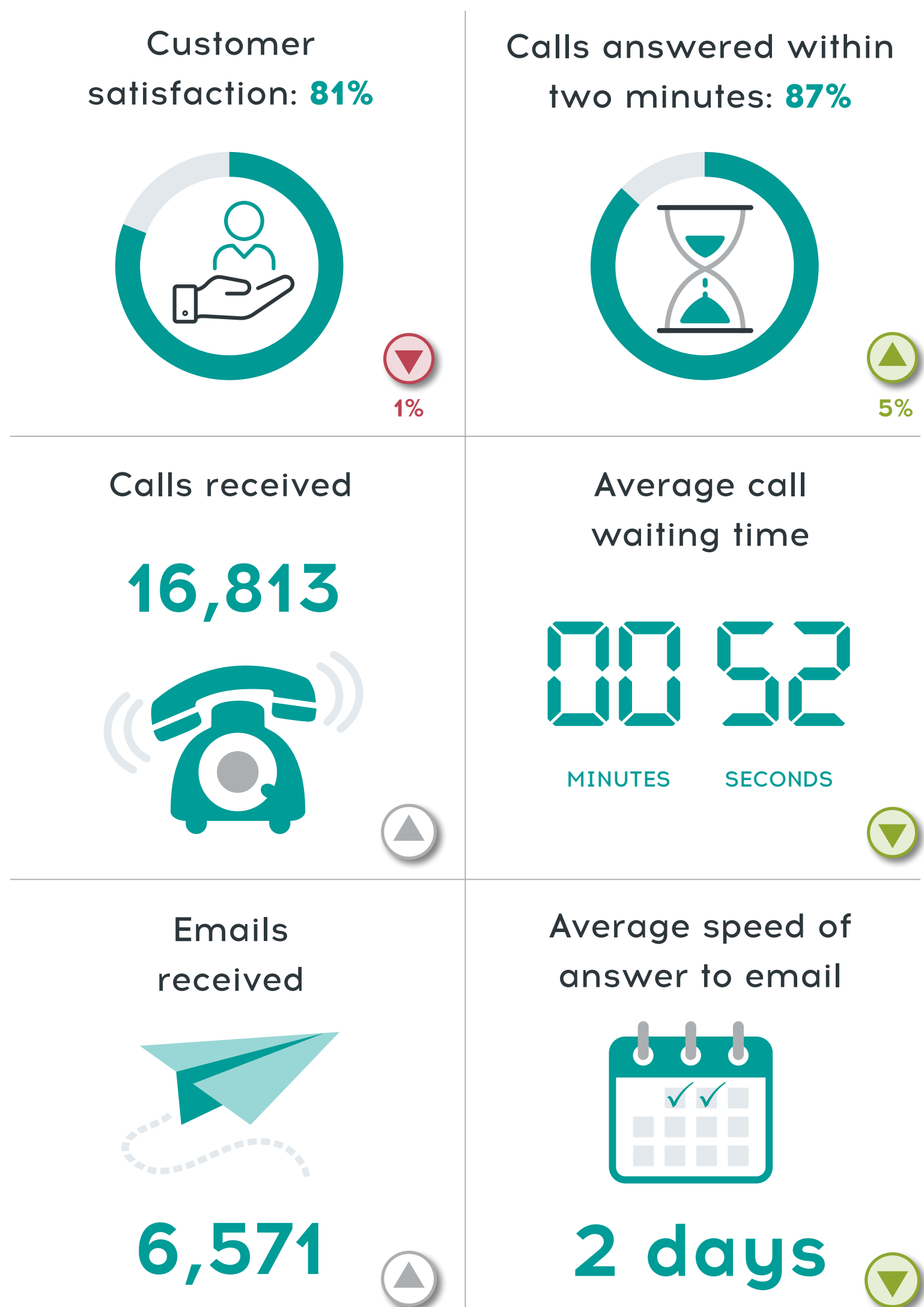
- ◆ Customer satisfaction
- ◆ Responded to within 10 days

See our latest performance infographic on the next page





## Customer Contact Centre



## Repairs



## Complaints







# LISTENING TO OUR CUSTOMERS

## Looking back at our Customer Roadshows 2023

On Tuesday 19 September our Customer Roadshow, a three-month long series of engagement events, drew to a close.

Between July and September, GSA colleagues held ten roadshow events in Cradley Heath, Corsham, Oxford, Coventry, Calne, Wolverhampton, Bilston, Chippenham, Purton and Brierley Hill. The final stop was at Round Oak Court in Brierley Hill giving customers the opportunity to meet our colleagues and discuss matters relating to their homes and community with us.

Hundreds of customers gave their feedback during the roadshow events and some common themes emerged from the consultations revealing that customers are concerned about the maintenance of their homes and want to know what is happening with outstanding repairs. These roadshows provided an important opportunity to listen to customers, and to follow-up action based on their feedback. The roadshows were also attended and supported by members of our Customer Panel who helped us explain our new customer involvement offer and promoted opportunities to join our customer panel and focus groups.

We now plan to hold the roadshows annually, visiting different areas each time.

[> Read more](#)



# PANEL

# PROGRESS



We represent **54,000** GSA customers across **25,000** households



We are **16** panel members who **meet every month**. We are here to help. Talk to us.



We have a **close working relationship with GSA** who we **hold to account**. We feedback concerns and suggest improvements

Our Customer Panel works with teams at GSA to influence, drive performance and service improvements as well as give assurance that we are working in an open, transparent, and accountable way.

The panel was formed in November 2022 and we've created an infographic which highlights the great work that they've accomplished in this time.

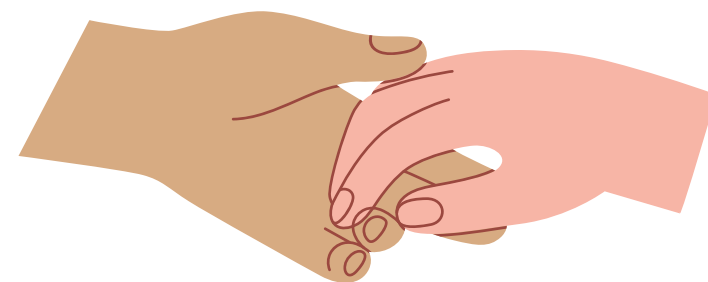
[> Find out more](#)



We have developed **four customer working groups**. These are **Repairs & Maintenance, Customer Complaints and Experience, Building Safety (Damp, Mould and Condensation)** and **Communication**



We have launched our **Customer Involvement and Empowerment Strategy**



We have co-developed a **vulnerable customer policy**



We have helped to improve GSA's **damp and mould process** following customer feedback

We have improved how GSA **shares performance data** with customers



We have awarded a total of **£3,760** to **eight community projects**. Three projects delivered to-date involving **29 volunteers** and **supporting 85 people**.



CEO > NHF



AWARD

RECOGNITION



### Our Chief Executive Officer Ruth Cooke was recently appointed to the Board of the National Housing Federation (NHF).

The NHF is the trade body for housing associations in England whose members provide homes for more than six million people.

Kate Henderson, Chief Executive of the NHF said: “I’m delighted that Ruth has joined the board and will be sharing her perspective with us.

“The NHF Board seeks to represent the full breadth of its membership and as such it’s great to have a perspective from such a diverse organisations as GSA.”

Ruth will now serve an initial three-year term on the board alongside other housing associations, consultants and health professionals.

Commenting on her appointment Ruth said: “I applied to be on the NHF Board because I wanted to get involved in some of the great work the NHF is doing to raise the profile of our sector and shout about what housing providers are doing to help deal with the effects of the housing crisis.

“I was fortunate enough to be selected after a rigorous interview process. I know the NHF were keen to have representatives from across the country on their Board and given our geography, we’re in a good position to be able to share insights from some very different housing markets.

“I am looking forward to commencing my role as a board member. A strong NHF is good for the sector and good for our customers, and I want to contribute to that.”

[> Find out more about the NHF board](#)

### LoCaL Homes and partners recognised at the Structural Timber Frame Awards 2023

LoCaL Homes, Longhurst Group and Burmor Construction’s California Road development was recognised at the Structural Timber Frame Awards 2023 coming away with the top prizes in the ‘Social Housing Project of the Year’ and the ‘Timber Frame Project of the Year’ category.

The homes at California Road in Huntington, Cambridgeshire, were built using the LoCaL Homes Eco-200 panelised timber frame system, factory fitted with a cement board cladding and feature brickwork panels.

The development meets a variety of local housing need in Huntington as it comprises a combination of 36 affordable rent, 10 shared ownership, and 10 rent to buy homes: a split of 1-, 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom flats and houses.

Chris Hagan, Director of LoCaL Homes said: “We are delighted to have been recognised twice at a UK-wide construction awards. Its clear that LoCaL Homes are a supplier of

choice for developers using modern methods of construction.

“We’re really proud to have worked with Burmor Construction to deliver 56 new affordable homes, transforming the site of a former car park, office, and nursery for Longhurst Group. The icing on the cake is definitely winning both the Social Housing Project of the Year and the Timber Frame Project of the Year award at the Structural Timber Frame Awards. Thank you to everyone involved and well done!”

This year’s Structural Timber Frame Awards took place at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham on Wednesday 4 October where LoCaL Homes and their partners on the California Road scheme faced stiff competition from across the UK in their award categories.

[> Find out more about the development](#)





# WALSALL HOMELESSNESS CONVENTION 2023

In September, we hosted the Walsall Homelessness Prevention Conference 2023 on behalf of Walsall Homelessness and Housing Steering Group.

This half day event was held at Walsall Arena and Arts Centre and focussed on supporting tenancy sustainment in the current challenging economic climate and finding practical solutions to prevent homelessness.

Over 100 housing, health and local government professionals gathered to hear expert panellists and share insights over the course of two themed sessions.

The first session was entitled 'How is the cost of living impacting on Walsall residents' which explored what can be done to reduce the risk of homelessness in the borough, particularly for individuals and families on low incomes who are being squeezed by inflation.

Following a short break for refreshments, the second session commenced and focussed on the links between the cost-of-living crisis and increased domestic abuse cases.

This session looked at the housing sector in Walsall, who alongside other key agencies, has a significant role to play in supporting people to manage tenancies, access funds and put plans in place to help the most vulnerable live a life free from abuse.

[> Read more](#)



# INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP

The Health and Housing Forum, which is convened by fellow social landlord whg in partnership with the Black Country Integrated Care Board (ICB), held its inaugural meeting this month.

GSA is one of five housing associations involved in the forum alongside three-stockholding local authorities: Sandwell Council, Dudley Council, the City of Wolverhampton Council and Black Country ICB.

An ICB is a statutory NHS organisation that is responsible for developing a plan for meeting the health needs of a local area, managing the NHS budget and

arranging for the provision of health services in a geographical area.

The Forum will bring together Black Country social landlords, our local Integrated Care Board and the NHS to help deliver more for the communities we all operate in.

The Health and Housing Forum includes whg, GSA, Bromford, Churches Housing Association of Dudley & District, Nehemiah Housing, Black Country Housing Group, Wolverhampton Homes, City of Wolverhampton Council, Sandwell Council and Dudley Council.

[> Read more](#)





# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

**Last month we published our 2023 annual report. The interactive flipbook showcases our performance for the 2022-23 financial year.**

It also highlights our achievements and changes we have made to improve our services. This year we worked closely with members of our Customer Panel to shape the content and style of the report. It is now live on our website and will be emailed to customers this week.

[> Read our annual report here](#)

We publish other reports that provide clear information about how we run our business and the services we offer.

[> Read other reports here](#)





# BUILDING NEWS



Photo L-R Cllr. John O'Neill, Cabinet Member for Housing (South Gloucestershire Council), Denise Woolford, Development Officer (GSA), Gracie and Gavin Saunders (GSA Customer and daughter), Samantha Cowlin, Housing Officer (GSA) and Ben Tottle Estates Completion Manager (Barratt Homes Bristol)

## First customers move into our new affordable homes in Charfield, South Gloucestershire.

Working in partnership with Barratt Homes, we are providing 42 affordable new homes, 31 of them reserved for a social rent and another 11 available under a low-cost home ownership scheme. The new affordable homes are part of the larger Charfield Gardens development.

Our new homes are situated in the charming South Gloucestershire village of Charfield which boasts two pubs, an independent café, post office, cricket ground and village hall. All of the homes come with their own parking space.

Gavin Saunders, a GSA customer who has recently moved into a home on Poskett Way, Charfield Gardens said: "I am grateful for the opportunity to have a fresh start in a new home in Charfield. I feel like I'm settling in really well and thoroughly enjoying making my new place feel like home."

[> Read more](#)



L-R: Nick Kemmett, Housing Strategy & Development Manager (Swindon Borough Council), Cllr. Janine Howarth, Cabinet Member for Housing (Swindon Borough Council), Becky Cole (GSA customer), Corrina Johnson, New Business Manager, (GSA) Calum Davies, External Affairs Manager (Persimmon Homes), Steve Hudd, Site Manager (Persimmon Homes)

## We have provided 48 new affordable homes in Badbury Wick, Swindon

We have delivered 48 new affordable homes in an attractive new development less than four miles away from Swindon town centre.

The new homes are located in the Badbury Park development built by Persimmon Homes and we are providing 29 homes for affordable rent and a further 19 homes through a shared ownership scheme.

Our new homes at Badbury Park cater to a variety of local housing need by providing one bed apartments alongside two, three and four-bedroom houses. The development also contains a sports pitch, an equipped play area in addition to providing an ideal place for families to make their home.

Badbury Park also features lush landscaping, maintained perimeter foot paths and space for allotments.

[> Read more](#)



L-R: Les Harborne, Chair (Winyates Housing Cooperative), Shelley Millward, Business Owner (MAGcakes), Liz Williams, Volunteer (Redditch East Aspiring Community Hub), Karen Martin, Director (Courtyard Eatery CIC), Laura Rollins, Community Campaigner, Cllr. Bill Hartnett, Church Hill Ward (Redditch Borough Council), Carl Taylor, Assistant Director of New Business (GSA), Cllr. Matthew Dormer, Council Leader (Redditch Borough Council), Lee Cox, Technical Manager (LoCaL Homes)

## Work to build 25 new, energy-efficient, affordable homes has commenced in Redditch

Construction works to build 25 new, energy-efficient, and affordable homes on the site of a disused Redditch church have now commenced. Our new housing scheme in Winyates will see a total of 12 homes reserved for social rent while 13 units will be available under a shared ownership scheme. Once complete, the homes will be transferred to Winyates Cooperative Homes to manage.

The new homes in Winyates will be built using pre-fabricated timber panels supplied by LoCaL Homes- our award winning, low carbon manufacturing facility based in Walsall.

[> Read more](#)



### New Director of Property Appointed

We're delighted to announce that Jason Holder has been appointed as our Director of Property.

Our Director of Property is a new role within our Operations Directorate, which will combine Repairs and Maintenance and Strategic Assets and Investment.

Jason is currently Executive Director of Asset Management and Regeneration at WATMOS Community Homes where he leads the asset investment, repairs, compliance, and development teams.

Prior to this, Jason worked at Bromford Group for over 11 years as their Associate Director of Service Delivery and their Head of Home Maintenance. Throughout his time at Bromford Group Jason managed the portfolio management team, the investment planning and delivery team, and the repairs and maintenance team delivering services to their 45,000+ homes across 50 local authorities.

Jason will be joining us in a few months' time. We'll announce his official start date soon.

[> Read more](#)

### Bowbrook achieves Gold status in building audit

In August, Bowbrook, one of our dementia centres of excellence, was visited by auditors from The University of Stirling's Dementia Services Development Centre. The Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC) is recognised worldwide as leaders in the field of dementia design with a strong reputation for supporting society to meet the changing needs of an ageing population. The DSDC was appointed to carry out a formal audit appraisal under the new Environments for Ageing and Dementia Design Assessment Tool (EADDAT) Tier 2.

The scheme was formally assessed via a detailed on-site appraisal on 3rd August 2023, attended by two DSDC auditors who scored the following features: entrances, vertical circulation, toilets, contrast, patterns and colour, fixtures, fittings and finishes, light levels, acoustics, signage and wayfinding, technology and interfaces, heating and small power, outdoor spaces and walking routes, balconies and roof terraces and parking. Auditors were particularly impressed with the fittings and finishes, toilets, entrances, outdoor spaces and walking routes at Bowbrook marking each of these categories at over 90 per cent, with a combined score of 80 per cent or more needed to achieve gold status.

Overall, the building achieved a total score of 85 per cent and was awarded a Gold EADDAT Tier 2 accreditation.

[> Read more](#)

### West Midlands Combined Authority delegation visits LoCaL Homes factory

A team of representatives from the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), including Councillor Cathy Bayton, Councillor Andrew Burrow, Councillor Vera Waters, Lyndsey Roberts and Rachel-Ann Atterbury joined Mike Doolan Sales & Partnership Manager at LoCaL Homes for a factory tour to learn more about its offsite manufacture capabilities.

The WMCA is a public body that works with local councils and other partners to make their region a better place to live.

Mike chaired a discussion with the group around the future of closed panel timber frames and the opportunities and barriers in housebuilding using modern methods of construction (MMC).

The visit comes ahead of the introduction of the Future Homes Standard – a set of rules which will ensure that new homes built from 2025 produce 75-80% less carbon emissions. LoCaL Homes is already manufacturing its Eco-200 timber frame panels for a number of developments, helping GSA, other housing associations and contractors across the country achieve the standard ahead of time.

[> Read more](#)





# OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

**We strive to provide the best service we can, but we recognise sometimes things go wrong. When this happens, we will do everything we can to resolve the issue.**

We have a dedicated customer contact centre and complaints team. If a constituent or member of your community contacts you about issues with our services, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us:

**Call** 0300 111 7000

**Email** [info@greensquareaccord.co.uk](mailto:info@greensquareaccord.co.uk)

**Visit** [greensquareaccord.co.uk](http://greensquareaccord.co.uk)

**Connect** [linkedin.com/company/greensquareaccord](https://www.linkedin.com/company/greensquareaccord)

**Like** [facebook.com/greensquareaccord](https://www.facebook.com/greensquareaccord)

**Follow** [twitter.com/greensqaccord](https://twitter.com/greensqaccord)

**Tag** [instagram.com/greensqaccord](https://www.instagram.com/greensqaccord)

## TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

We want future editions of this update to reflect what you would like to see. Please take this **short survey** to help us make sure they do.

