

GreenSquare Group  
2020/21

# Annual review for customers

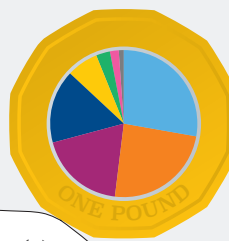
This annual review features headline facts and figures for GreenSquare in the year April 2020 – March 2021 (before the merger to create GreenSquareAccord).

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What was our income – and what did we spend it on?  
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.....  
How satisfied were customers with us – and their home?  
.....

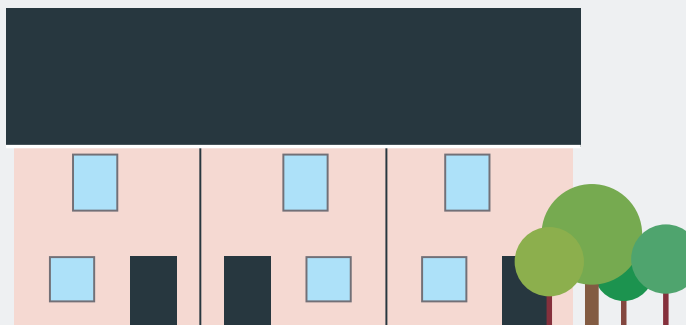
.....  
What types of repair jobs did we do – and how many?  
.....

.....  
How many new homes have we built this year?  
.....



PLUS  
What's planned  
for the future?

**Find out more:** this review gives a summary round-up of facts and figures and other information from the year 2020/21. If you would like more detailed information please see our website; or contact us using the details on the back page.

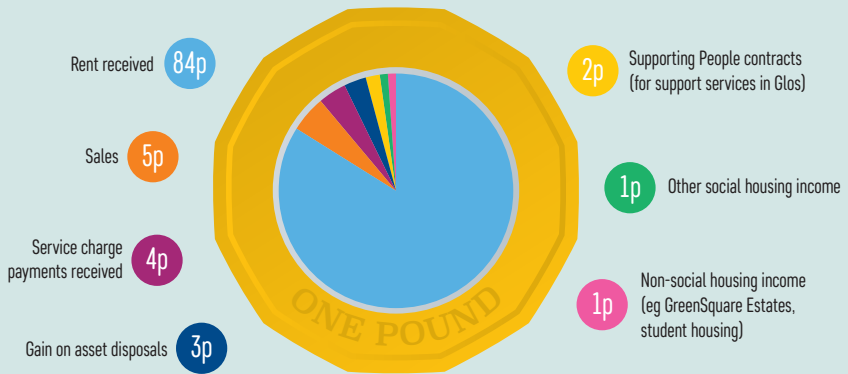


Our total income was **£91.2m** with a net surplus of **£7.1m\***

Every pound of our surplus\* is invested to benefit our current and future customers

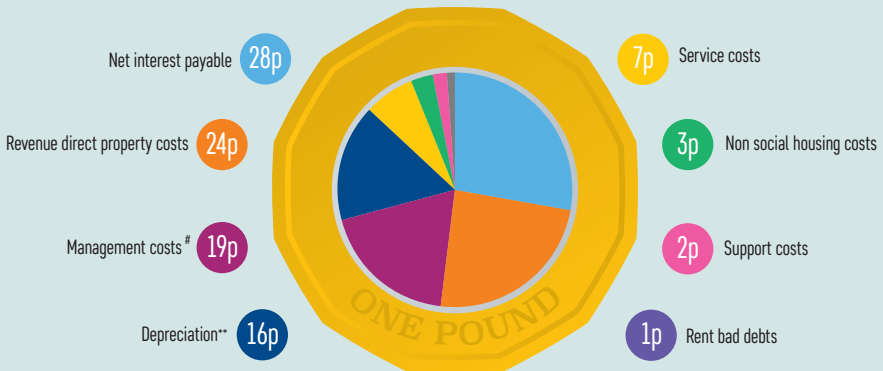
## Income

Where each £1 of our income came from



## Expenditure

How each £1 of our income was spent



\* Before one-off refinancing costs

# **Management costs** This is the cost of the management of our properties and business (inc staff costs, IT, insurance, premises and utilities).

\*\* **Depreciation** This is the reduction in value of an asset over time. For GreenSquare our 'assets' are the properties we own, and because they are lived in, they lose their value over time due to wear and tear, and age.

**2020/21 was an incredibly challenging year for everybody during which home became more important than ever.**

At GreenSquare, like most organisations, we had to navigate the challenges of Covid, and make sure we kept our customers, and our employees, as safe as possible.

**Supporting communities**



The pandemic meant we had to change our approach to delivering community activities and support. During the school holidays we delivered hundreds of activity packs to families across Wiltshire, Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire. We had an overwhelming demand as parents were at home with their children with limited access to resources.

We relaunched our Community Fund which offers grants of up to **£500** to local groups and organisations, with priority given to those

**Responding to the pandemic**

- ✓ During lockdown, we had to limit our repairs and maintenance service to emergency-only requests.
- ✓ We introduced a 'contact free' lettings process so customers could continue to move into homes safely - and offered property surveys carried out remotely.
- ✓ All our trade operatives and frontline staff wore full protective personal equipment to carry out repairs and visit customers.
- ✓ We prioritised the delivery of landlord compliance services (eg gas safety checks), while respecting the wishes of customers who were anxious about us visiting their homes.
- ✓ We continued to run essential support services such as our domestic abuse service in Gloucestershire (GDASS) as well as services for our most vulnerable customers, eg in our supported housing schemes.
- ✓ Our 55+ teams regularly called every customer living in 55+ housing to check on their wellbeing.

supporting communities through the pandemic. The grants were reviewed by a panel of customers and they awarded a total of **£10,906**.

We spent **£10,293** on neighbourhood priorities and improvements. This includes clean ups, litter picks and community gardens. We spent a further **£19,350** on youth groups and support.

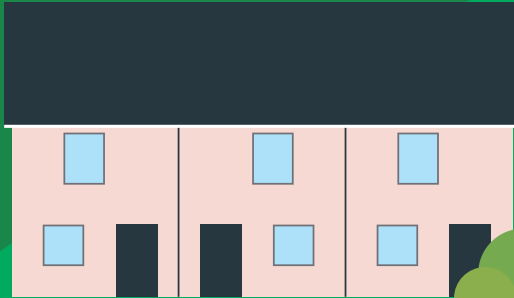
We carry out surveys and consultations in neighbourhoods and using 'mySurvey' to find out what customers think and their priorities for improvements, services and activities. **3,619** customers took part in surveys or consultations.

# We built or acquired

**245** new homes for sale, rent and shared ownership and have a further **589** in development



*We continue to be committed to providing new affordable rented and low-cost home ownership properties and through the combined strength of the merger with Accord, and our Strategic Partner status with Homes England, we have plans to increase new supply to c1,000 new homes every year.*



## We employ

**540\***   
members of staff

\* Monthly average full time equivalent

## Rent arrears

**2.3%**

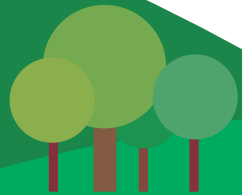
\*at 31 March 2021

This is approx. £1.4m in missing or overdue rent payments\*

# We sold **129** new homes

(34 outright sale and 95 shared ownership)

Our commercial subsidiary, GreenSquare Homes, saw a significant delay in operations due to the pandemic.



The average management cost per property was

**£1054**

(target £973)

## Number of houses that we own and manage

Wiltshire	7,877
Oxfordshire	3,470
Gloucestershire	871
Other areas	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,255</b>



## More new affordable homes built in a challenging year

We delivered a total of **245** new homes in 2020/2021 – a real achievement considering sites had to close due to lockdown, and additional delays due to illness and self-isolation which also impacted on the supply chain.

Of the 245, **166** were part of the Homes England 2016-2021 programme. During this year **£1.6m** in Homes England grant supported our development of new homes, including at Briar Leaze in Compton Bassett; Middlefields in Chippenham; and Culverhay in Cricklade.

The development at Middlefields, of 34 new homes for social rent and shared ownership, was designed by GreenSquare's in-house architects, and



built by our development arm GreenSquare Homes. As part of this development, we built a fully adapted bungalow to provide move-on accommodation for people recovering from head and spinal injury, to be managed by our partner Aspire Care Services.

Meanwhile, **11** prefabricated reinforced concrete (PRC) properties demolished as part of the final phase of Culverhay regeneration programme (pictured above) were replaced with **15** new-build 2 and 3 bedroom houses for social rent and shared ownership.

### Five star rating

Our development company GreenSquare Homes achieved five stars for customer satisfaction in the Home Builders Federation's (HBF) national new homes customer satisfaction survey of house builders. Five stars is the highest possible rating that the HBF can grant, and means that more than 90% of customers in a recent survey 'would recommend their builder to a friend'.

Residents completed

**72** mutual exchanges in 2020/21



We investigated

**17**  
cases

of suspected tenancy fraud

**6**

were confirmed

We investigated

190



cases of antisocial behaviour

like **Noise** 74

**Drugs** 63

**Verbal/harassment** 49

Nuisance from vehicles 10

Hate-related incidents 10

Pets and animal nuisance 7

Criminal behaviour/crime 7

Alcohol related 7

Physical violence 5

Misuse of communal area or loitering 5

Litter/rubbish/fly-tipping 3

Domestic abuse 3

Vandalism and damage to property 2

Prostitution/sexual acts/  
kerb crawling 1

...and took action with

22

Injunctions

13

Acceptable  
behaviour  
contracts

17

Notices

9

Possession  
orders

0

Evictions

8

Mediation

Note: the number of cases investigated does not equal the total number of types of ASB dealt with, because one case can include several different types of ASB.

Covid-19 government legislation meant we were not able to carry out any evictions.



Number of compliments

196

Formal complaints received

Number of complaints resolved was 126

139



Resolved at Stage 1  
93.6%

Responded on time  
99.2%



We received  
74,051

calls

Average wait time:

125 seconds

50%

of you called us about **repairs**

16%

of you called us about your **account**

8%

of you called us about **tenancy** related issues

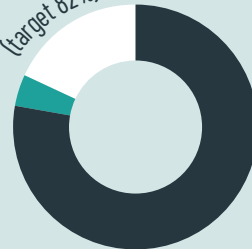
49% of you got in touch on the phone



(37% used myGreenSquare, 12% by email, 1% by letter and 1% on social media)

Customer satisfaction

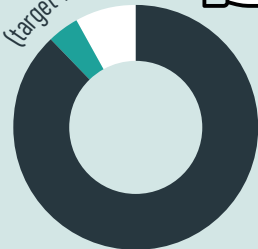
(target 82%)



76% of you were satisfied

with the quality of your home

(target 92%)



87% of you were satisfied

with GreenSquare as your landlord





## Repairs

We carried out  
**39,778**

 **repair jobs**

**28%**  
in response to  
an emergency




**72%**  
routine repairs  
(eg leaking tap or wall  
that needs plastering)

Our trades team  
carried out work at

**9465**  
homes



### Top 3 repairs

-  Plumbing & heating  
**17%**
-  Gas breakdown  
**16%**
-  Electrical  
**15%**

**77%** of  
repairs were  
completed  
in-house

The rest were outsourced  
to external contractors

We spent

**£9.6m**

on routine repairs

We spent

**£10m**

on planned and major  
repairs (incl capital works)

(target 92%)



**93%** of you were  
**satisfied**  
with last repair job



## Complaints policy updated

GreenSquare confirmed its compliance with the new Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) complaint handling code, published during the year. This sets out “good practice that will allow landlords to respond to complaints effectively and fairly”. We have worked to simplify our complaints policy and procedure to make them more accessible.

## Extra support for Rose Hill residents



Our Rose Hill Regeneration project in Oxford was awarded an additional **£25,860** from the National Lottery Community

Fund, to provide extra support in response to the coronavirus crisis. Fran Gardner, GreenSquare’s community worker for Rose Hill, explained: “There were many families already struggling at Rose Hill before the pandemic, with 52% of children living in poverty. Unfortunately, Covid-19 has only seen an increase in the numbers of people struggling to cope financially and emotionally in the current climate. This extra grant is wonderful news!”

Fran and her project team also worked closely with a number of local partner agencies on a community food distribution service. Meanwhile, the Rose Hill Junior Youth Club celebrated its 10th birthday during the year. It began in 2011 and has offered inclusive after-school youth club sessions – a communal and fun space for children and young people, aged between 5-16 to play, explore, run, dance, jump and just have a lots of fun – and to have a healthy cooked meal.

## GDASS success

GreenSquare was this year successful in a bid to continue to provide domestic abuse support for healthcare providers in Gloucestershire.

Delivered by our Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS), this provides domestic abuse support to patients in hospitals and GP surgeries across Gloucestershire, and provides training to healthcare providers to improve early identification of domestic abuse.

The team supports GP surgeries to identify a domestic abuse champion, who receives specialist training to support their surgery.

## Community designs inspirational banners

The Venture: White City ran a community art project, asking local people living in the White City area of Gloucester to design a banner to be displayed in the community. They asked for the designs to be uplifting and inspiring and encouraged families and people of all ages to take part.

GreenSquare worked with The Venture to fund the creation of the banners, which are now proudly displayed in the area. Community Involvement Officer Amber Giles explained: “The purpose of the banners is to spread some cheer at a tough time for so many.”





# Looking to the future as GreenSquareAccord



In April 2021 GreenSquare Group merged with Accord Housing Association and we changed our name to GreenSquareAccord, meaning this is the last annual review for customers to be produced for GreenSquare.

We chose to merge with Accord because both organisations share the same values and ambitions for expanding and enhancing locally-focused services to customers.

This merger will mean we can improve services for existing customers; invest more in local communities; extend our care and support services; and build more affordable homes. Together GreenSquareAccord will be a stronger and more resilient organisation that's more 'future-

proof' and ready to deal with future challenges. Put simply, we believe we can do more together across a larger operating area – and do it better – than we could on our own.

GreenSquareAccord was created for the purpose of 'building better lives'. This means that we exist to provide the homes and the related care services that can help enable people to achieve their full potential.

During the coming years, we will continue to invest in and build new housing developments, creating quality new homes and sustainable communities where people can enjoy happiness, health, and prosperity – because we know that these are the vital foundations for successful and fulfilling lives.



# Customer Panel

The Customer Panel has members from across all the regions GreenSquare works in, who live in all types of housing, because we're keen to make sure we have a variety of views represented.

The Customer Panel was set up in April 2020 and all meetings have taken place virtually. There are 12 on the panel in total and we have had around 10 attend each meeting, which is a really good turnout. There are residents from Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire on the panel.

"If people can see how things go in the background at GreenSquare, then actually I think they might appreciate a bit more just how much the organisation does!"



**Louise Pettinger**  
Customer Panel Chair

The Customer Panel has been set up to scrutinise the services that GreenSquare offers. At the moment, we are working in sub groups. We are looking at the complaints policy, because the complaints process has recently been changed; and also the repairs transformation. The sub groups are then going back and asking their own

questions, to really look at how things are working and to make sure that everything is as transparent as possible.

We want to let residents know that people can contact us directly to raise issues that we can signpost them for help. We'd like to have a hand in boosting GreenSquare's reputation a bit among customers – particularly those living in Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire, who don't necessarily have as much confidence in GreenSquare as customers in Wiltshire do. We hope that as part of the panel we can start to have an impact on that and change people's views.

**Louise Pettinger is the Panel's chair:**

"I think that being on the panel is going to be challenging but we have all had a very challenging year. But, as I've said, I think if you want to do something about your housing association then you should do something about it. If people can see how things go in the background at GreenSquare, then actually I think they might appreciate a bit more just how much the organisation does. I just don't think that GreenSquare gets the recognition for some of the stuff that you do well – for instance the trades teams and the contact centre staff are absolutely wonderful! It's about time that everyone hears about all the great things GreenSquare does!"

# What we've been up to so far

The Customer Panel met for the first time in May 2020. In their first year, enquiries from the Panel have covered many parts of GreenSquare's services including:

- **Services during lockdown**
- **The repair service: how GreenSquare are managing the backlog following lockdown; keeping customers updated; getting repairs right first time.**
- **Customer satisfaction and how we get feedback**
- **The complaints process from a customer perspective**
- **Making sure we include all customers in our communications and adapt to different needs**

The Panel has encouraged GreenSquare to keep in contact with customers waiting for postponed repairs. From a customer point of view they want openness and transparency and not knowing what is happening increases dissatisfaction.

The Panel recommended that GreenSquare review its policy and procedure for supporting people with vulnerabilities – and we agree.

They have advised GreenSquare on our communication about the merger and requested we make our policies easy to understand and accessible to customers.



## Would you like to join the panel? Get in touch!

We'd really appreciate your input on any of the above, or any other issues.

You can contact us by email [customer.panel@greensquareaccord.co.uk](mailto:customer.panel@greensquareaccord.co.uk) or phone **0300 111 7000** and ask to leave a message for the Customer Panel.

More details about the board members and executive directors, including their names, job titles and what they were paid in 2020/21 can be found on our website in the Annual Report and Financial Statements.



## Contact us

We're always here to help.

**Online self service:** [my.greensquaregroup.com](https://my.greensquaregroup.com)

**Website:** [greensquareaccord.co.uk](https://greensquareaccord.co.uk)

**Phone:** 0300 111 7000

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

Please always phone us if you want to report an emergency. Our contact centre is open from Monday to Friday 8am to 7pm. Outside of these hours your calls will be answered by our emergency service.



If you would like to have any part of this explained or in a different format please contact us to discuss your needs.