



WESTMORELAND
SUPPORTED HOUSING



Annual Customer Report

2023



A note from the Chair of the Board

As the Chair of the Westmoreland Board, I am absolutely delighted to be writing this introduction to Westmoreland's first customer annual report.

When I joined the board of Westmoreland in 2019, it was an organisation with significant problems and in need of major change and re energising. It had just received a very poor rating from the Regulator for Social Housing alongside a Regulatory Judgement and Notice.

In 2023 I am pleased to say that the organisation is in a very different place. The whole board and executive have been replaced, there are new faces in the wider team and an energy and positivity about the future in all the staff.

I'm especially pleased to report that in the last few months we have appointed a board member to specifically represent the views of our customers to the board. Susie Smyth is the mother of one of our customers and has an excellent understanding of the issues our customers face daily.

Whilst we have made good progress in all areas so far, Susie is supporting the board and executive in producing a new customer strategy to take us forward. This work will help ensure that Westmoreland provides the best possible service to our customers.

You, our customers, are at the heart of everything we do. That has always been the case and will always be the case. There have been times, in the past, when we have not always achieved the standards we aim for

but the Board, the executive and the entire staff will continue to work to ensure that in the future that is not the case.

We have revised our website and I urge you to look at it. On the website you will find our purpose and values. There is also a section for our customers which contains useful guidance, explains how to complain or compliment us and the polices by which we operate.

The revised website and its contents are one of the many improvements that we have made at Westmoreland. It was an enormous achievement for us when in July this year the Regulator lifted our non-compliance status in respect of the consumer standards. This is a huge step forward for us and I have on behalf of the Board, thanked each and every member of staff for their hard work in getting us to this point.

There is more work to be done whilst we continue to grow as an organisation and our reputation continues to improve. We are now the provider of choice for several investors and commissioners. One thing will always remain constant - Westmoreland will always have you, our customers, as our primary focus.

I hope you find this report interesting. Be assured that I, the Board, the executive and the staff team will keep going to ensure Westmoreland continues to improve and become a fully compliant provider of the best specialist supported housing services available.



A note from Susie Smyth

**Customer Representative
on the Board**

I was delighted to be welcomed onto the Board of Westmoreland in May to represent the customer voice. As a parent and appointee of a young person with complex needs who has lived in Westmoreland shared housing since June 2021, I am looking forward to supporting Westmoreland in developing a stronger interface with the customer and working more closely with other services to complement and enhance the overall service. The role brings together my skills and experience and I welcome the opportunity to help to make a difference for Westmoreland customers and their families.

I'm enjoying getting to know my fellow Board members and the Executive team and am enthused by the level of dedication and commitment. It is clear that the customer is at the heart of decision making and that there is a sincere desire to provide safe, decent and financially viable homes for some of the most vulnerable in our society. The breadth of expertise and experience across the Board and Executive is impressive and gives me confidence that the future of Westmoreland is in good hands as the sector, like many others, navigates through challenging times.

Increasing our knowledge and understanding of our residents' needs through improved communication and relationships with individuals, families, care providers and the services that support them will help us to build a stronger sense of community. Giving residents and supporters regular opportunities to participate and have their say will be key to this, and I look forward to helping Westmoreland to progress its plans to provide plenty of ways for customers and their families to feel more connected and engaged. As the voice of the customer, I am looking forward to working with the Board and Executive team to develop the opportunities identified to strengthen and improve what we do, and to look at ways in which we can enhance our offering to ensure the best outcomes for every person we support.

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About Us

Westmoreland was established in 2002 by the parents of an autistic child who wanted to find a way to provide a route to independent living. Over time we have grown and now manage 133 buildings, providing 626 homes.

We provide Specialised Supported Housing and advice for vulnerable adults in our society with Learning Disabilities, Mental Health Disabilities, Autism or Physical and Sensory Disabilities who need long term care and support. We aim to create better life outcomes for our customers through the homes and services we provide and through our partnerships with Local Authorities, NHS, Care Providers, customers and their families. As a national provider, working across 60 Local Authorities we provide homes by arrangement with Local Authority or NHS commissioners.

Westmoreland is a not-for-profit organisation, regulated by the Finance Conduct Authority and the Regulator of Social Housing. Any financial surplus that we make cannot be removed from the organisation; it must be retained to further our purpose of providing homes for vulnerable adults.



Westmoreland property locations across England and Wales

Our Values

In 2022 we launched our first set of Values as an organisation. This was an important step for Westmoreland to provide focus on our future direction to continue improving and making us a success. Our staff worked together with members of the Board to develop Values to reflect Westmoreland's culture and approach to working with customers, partners and each other. We have since worked together to embed these values in how we go about our business. By working to our Values, we aim to deliver excellent services for our customers, be great partners to work with and continue to improve what we do through innovation and learning.

Value	Key Words	Description
We do the right thing	Honesty and Integrity	We are honest and transparent with ourselves, our colleagues, our beneficiaries, partners and other stakeholders. We choose to act with a consistent and uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles.
We deliver	Professionalism and Accountability	We consider that we have an obligation to our beneficiaries to act in their best interests at all times. We make decisions and complete activities for the benefit of our beneficiaries before any other stakeholders. We hold ourselves and each other responsible for our decisions, actions, or lack of actions. We continuously apply and seek to improve our technical and professional skill sets to maximise the benefits and value for money we can deliver.
We use New Thinking	Innovation and Problem Solving	We challenge ourselves to introduce new ideas or technologies to provide better ways of delivering a service that benefits our service users. We operate in a sector that requires broad-based improvement to improve value for money and customer outcomes; we actively seek to contribute to development of the sector overall.
We are one team	Collaboration and Inclusivity	We share knowledge and information and work together within and across organisational boundaries to deliver improved outcomes for our beneficiaries and to develop a stronger, more united voice. We have respect for the individual and aim to provide equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised. All of our interactions are undertaken with due regard for the dignity, feelings, wishes, or rights of others irrespective of age, disability, gender, racial origin, religion, belief, sexual orientation, language, perspectives or opinions.
We are a learning organisation	Understanding and Curiosity	We use our interest in and empathy with those around us, our beneficiaries and other stakeholders to improve our understanding and learn better ways of meeting changing needs. We always seek to do better.

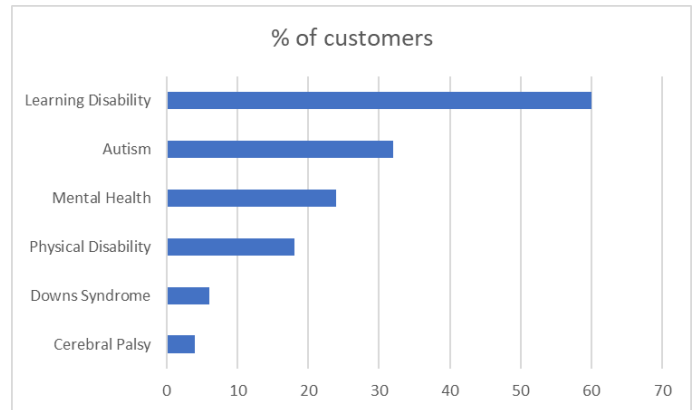
Our Customers

At the end of the year Westmoreland had 508 customers which is an increase of 25 over the last 12 months – this included new customers transferring to us in June 2022 from another Housing Association across Devon and Portsmouth.

Our properties are designated for adults with significant and ongoing care needs. Provided that the potential customer can sustain a tenancy and engage well with the care and support provided, our tenancies are open to anyone aged over 16. As a result, we have a range of ages, genders and ethnicities across our customers.

Our homes and services are provided for the most vulnerable people in society. As an organisation, Westmoreland are proud that we deliver our services with equality, diversity and inclusion at the forefront of what we do. Each customer has personal care needs and receives daily and overnight care from our Care Provider partners. The chart below shows the breakdown of disabilities across our customers – some have multiple diagnoses.

Age	
Average age of our customers	40
Age range	17-73



Gender	
Male	63%
Female	36%
Not Specified	1%

All of our customers receive significant levels of personal care, both 1-1 and shared with others if they live in a mixed household. Below is a summary of the care hours our customers receive.

Ethnicity	
White British	89%
White European	2%
Black Caribbean	2%
Other White	2%
Asian Pakistani	1%
Other Asian	1%
Mixed	1%
South American	1%
Black African	1%

Care Hours per week	
Average 1-1 hours	36
Average shared hours	88
Total care hours average	47

We review the care provided with the Care Providers and Commissioners periodically to ensure that our customers continue to receive the right level of care and that the home they live in remains appropriate for them. We work with all the parties involved to ensure that if the property is no longer suitable that a move to a new home is done as easily as possible.



Services for our Customers

At Westmoreland we provide local face to face and personalised services through our Housing Officers and Surveyors as well as managing other services to you from our office in Nottingham. Our Housing Officers aim to visit you at home once a month - we know that you are not always available, but we will always make time to see you to discuss any issues that you have, answer any queries and work with other partners such as the Care Provider and Local Authority to make sure that you have everything that you need to be happy in your home.

The Housing Officers' role is to be the point of contact for any queries around the tenancy and living in the home and to resolve your queries. Customers do not have to wait for a monthly visit and can contact us at any time via phone, email or our website and you can make an appointment to see us at any time. Our approach is to be responsive to you and be there for you as much or as little as you need – we want to develop and improve the range of services we provide in the coming years and will work with our customers and partners to do that so you can access the services you need easily.

Our Housing Officers also make sure that your property is safe when they visit – they work with the Care Providers to make sure that there are no fire risks, that fire alarms and water tanks are tested regularly and that any recommendations are implemented. They also make sure that any repairs

that have not been reported are dealt with, so that they are repaired as soon as possible.

Our Surveyors carry out a full property condition survey at each property every 5 years – this is to make sure that repairs have been reported and completed and so that we can plan when to make investments to ensure that the property remains a safe and comfortable home in the long term. We know that we will have to replace items in our homes periodically and the Surveyor visits ensure that we can plan what work needs doing - and that we budget for it correctly.

Our Surveyors also visit properties to resolve any complex or technical issues, including resolving any damp and mould issues that may need more analysis and thought – they will work with our contractors to develop a solution and will work with customers, their representatives and the Care Provider to make sure that any work is done in consultation, to minimise the impact it may have on everyone living in the property.

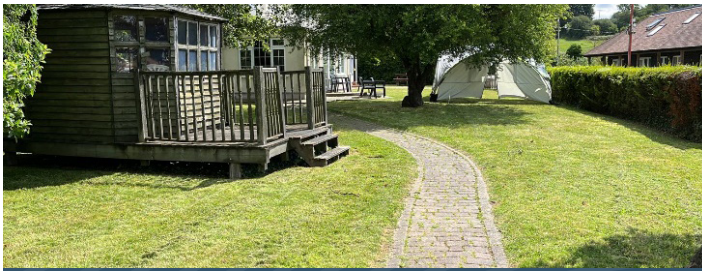
We provide a range of other services to our customers that are managed centrally – this is bespoke to each property, depending on the layout and the services required such as gardening, cleaning and utility management.

Gardening

We have turned our gardening service around because last year we received lots of feedback from customers and Care Providers that our gardening service was not good enough – the gardeners did not attend site when you expected for almost 9% of their scheduled visits. In some cases, they were not thorough enough in their work. Overall, you were not receiving a good enough service. We were using a national contractor and many of you suggested that, if we used local contractors, we are likely to achieve better value for money and a better service as they would know the area and would be proud to provide a great service.

In response to this, we terminated our supplier relationship and brought the gardening, cleaning and window cleaning services back in house at the start of 2023 with the aim of improving the quality of the service and getting better value. In many cases, we have been able to increase the frequency of the gardening through the summer. So far, the feedback from you and our Care Providers on this improvement has been strongly positive - both about the quality of the work and the professionalism of the gardeners who have attended.

Since we changed the service, 97% of our homes have said that they are happy with the gardening service – a huge improvement on last year. This is a great example of where our customers have influenced the services that we provide for the better.



Our customers say:

123 Grand Drive – He was excellent with everyone – The Garden hasn't looked as good in years.

48 Spinney Close - Looks neat, he has done a good job. He is friendly and just gets on with the job.

119 Oxford Road - Massive improvement from the last guys. He does such a good job, really puts a lot of care and attention into the gardens.

107 Denmark Road - Residents and staff said he has done a brilliant job and is really lovely.



Utilities

A service we provide to all of our properties with shared meters is the management of the gas, water and electricity contracts and billing on your behalf. As you will know, this has been a particularly challenging year for utility costs, and we have not been exempt from that. The utility charges to Westmoreland rose by an average of 99% over the last 18 months. This impacted you directly as the prices charged to us are passed on to customers exactly as they are charged to us.

For some of our properties, we have received the £400 government energy support grant offered last year. Where we have, we have applied this to the appropriate accounts already. For some other properties, the government required customers to apply themselves and receive the money directly. We wrote directly to all affected customers to explain how to make a claim.

The situation is improving for next year – energy prices are starting to reduce and we have been able to secure new contracts at better rates for the majority of properties. Savings will be reflected in future charges.

Housing Benefit

We employ staff with Housing Benefit expertise to carry out all of the liaison with Local Authority Housing Benefit departments on behalf of our customers to ensure that their claims are processed and paid appropriately. Housing Benefit regulations in specialised supported housing are complex and require expertise and knowledge to navigate.

Partners

Westmoreland works with 60 Local Authority and 3 NHS commissioners to provide our homes and services in the right locations – all of our properties are in place by agreement or arrangement with a commissioning authority with the joint aim of providing homes for the long term for our customers.

We own one property. The remainder are leased either from specialist real estate trusts on long term leases, or from private landlords. For the long-term leases, we have the property for a fixed period of time (usually between 20-40 years) and are responsible for internal and external repairs. We have five landlords who lease properties of this type to us and 576 of our homes are of this nature. We work closely with

our landlords to make sure that our properties remain in good condition for the long term and are benefitting from any available funding for energy improvement works. We also work with this group of landlords to source new properties to meet demand that the commissioners have identified.

We also have a number of private landlords where we have shorter-term - usually annual – leases. The arrangement for repairs for these properties differ but the responsibility for ensuring they are safe and the right type of accommodation remains with us. We have 60 homes of this nature.



Customer Story - Reece



Westmoreland provides two properties as part of Aspens Charities campus site in Penbury Kent. Reece, age 28, lives at one of Westmoreland and Aspens' Positive Behaviour Support Supported Living homes. He describes how his life has changed since living in a hospital to live in his own home supported by Aspens and the opportunities it has opened up to him. Reece's mum Alison explains why it is the "perfect place" for her son.

"Before I came to live at Aspens I was in hospital because things got unsettling in my life. I went through a stressful time. The primary care team and social worker thought Aspens would be a good place for me to live. I visited the house I'd be living in and I liked what I saw. I loved the environment, the animals, the café and the view of the fields from my window.

When I first moved into my house at Aspens I met with the team and we discussed my support levels and how we could look at ways for me to become more independent.

My life has changed a lot. I feel good living here. The support is great and the communication when I speak to someone about a problem is good, it's always passed on and dealt with.

A normal day for me is getting up around 6am, having a shower and getting dressed, I make a cup of tea, listen to music and watch some TV. The morning staff come in around 7.30am and we make a plan for the day. We do lots of different things like going out for a walk, going into town to the shops or playing sport. I play badminton every Tuesday evening and football every Friday with the Aspens FC team.

I'm very active. I like to play football, cycle, play badminton, play FIFA, play the guitar, listen to and create music. I write my feelings down on paper and then put this to music. I enjoy going cycling with staff members or on my own.

I have a nice, comfortable, modern home with lots of space. I have a bedroom, living room, kitchen and bathroom and we have a communal garden where we can socialise with the other people who live here. I've made good friendships with them.

The best thing about living here is the opportunities you get and what you can achieve. I work with the animals, cook and I'm taking a City and Guilds Skills for Working Life course and hope to apply for a job working in the Café at Aspens. I'm also going to put myself forward to be a Safeguarding Champion for Aspens.

I feel very proud of all I've achieved since moving.



“The difference in Reece since he’s been supported by Aspens has been amazing. It has made him so independent. He’s making more decisions and is so much more sociable than I’ve ever known him to be. He is trying so many new things – he went to the Chelsea Flower Show to volunteer on the Aspens garden in May and he tried something called ‘sofa-surfing’ on his recent holiday – where he went on an inflatable pulled by a boat!

Reece is doing things I never imagined he’d do! He’s struck up friendships with the people that live in the other flats and they’ve all been on holiday together. It is the happiest I’ve seen him in a long time.

There is always someone there from the Aspens team if I need to call and they are so supportive with home visits. I really like the weekly reports I get so I can hear about all the things he’s done.

The supported living house at Aspens is the ideal place for Reece. It’s so important to get the right level of support and the right environment. At Aspens we have found this, it’s just perfect for him.”

Alison,
Reece’s mum

New Property Growth

Over the last 18 months we have added new properties for the first time since 2019 – these have been a mix of new properties that have been developed in conjunction with Local Authority and NHS commissioners, customers, their families and Care Providers as well as a portfolio of 85 homes that have been transferred to us from another Housing Provider.

For the new-to-market properties, we have worked with NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board, Hampshire County Council, NHS South West London Integrated Care Board, Kent County Council and Worcestershire County Council to source and commission properties for specific customers. The designs for the properties are agreed together with the Care Providers, rent levels agreed with Housing Benefit and work done with our development partners to create homes that meet their long-term needs. To date our properties have been created with Purpose Social Homes and Warwick Investments, and we have built up long-term relationships with them to provide future properties. Our ambition is to provide 100 new properties every year to continue to meet future demand.





Customer Story Project Ascot

Project Ascot was commissioned by NHS Southwest London Integrated Care Board and aimed to provide a bespoke environment for the unique needs of the resident. The property was designed and refurbished to provide a safe and secure home that would enhance their quality of life and independence and was carefully planned with family, Purpose Social Homes and care professionals to ensure accessibility using supportive technology and bespoke components. The engagement of the family for what would be the resident's first independent home was vital in making this such a success.

The family have been involved throughout the design process and now that Cathy is living in the property are pleased with the outcome for her.

“Westmoreland Supported Housing have been essential in securing a smooth transition to specialist supported housing for our severely autistic daughter. Cathy has severe learning difficulties, challenging behaviours and is very sensitive to the noise and ordinary comings and goings of everyday life. She requires 2:1 support all day and night, yet she loves to be in the community, to be active and to be around people - albeit often on her own terms.

After 11 years in an excellent special school and college Cathy needed to move on to a new setting due to her age. As parents we looked all over the country to find a setting that would give her autonomy over her life and allow her to have choices over how she lived throughout every day (from big life choices to the small everyday choices that we often take for granted), would support inclusion in her local community and develop her independence skills. Working closely with a large range of partners over a 2-year period (the ICB, her previous school and college, a specialist housing provider, occupational therapists, a specialist care agency and Westmoreland) as a team we devised a truly personalised and bespoke housing and care package that has given Cathy more independence and community access than we ever thought possible.

It was complex to arrange with often 25 people attending meetings and at one stage for a period of about 6 months meetings taking place weekly; but everyone worked tirelessly to make things happen and to ensure that all details were covered so that Cathy could move into her new house on schedule.



Westmoreland have shown their expertise in the area of specialist supported housing both prior to completion and now that Cathy is in her own house - they have been responsive to all agencies when questions were raised; they have navigated hurdles along the way professionally and with skill so any issues have been swiftly resolved and they are at the end of the phone to fix any daily problems that arise.

We are now in a situation we never thought possible - Cathy is in her own home that is bespoke to her needs with control over her own life. Friends and family love to visit her in her new home. There is nothing 'institutional' about where or how she lives - the house is decorated to suit a 26-year-old young lady. She helps clean and care for her house, goes to the supermarket to choose her food and helps cook it and can make all those everyday small decisions about how she lives her life that give her control. She

is out in the community every day and is supported to make choices about where to go and what to do. The neighbours are supportive of her inclusion in their Close and we hope that she will give back to her community by running errands for some of her elderly neighbours when they need this.

Without Westmoreland Cathy would not have this life. When we knew she would have to leave her excellent school we were filled with dread and never thought that living in the community would work for a young lady with such complex needs. However, what is now in place exceeds all our dreams and we look forward to working with Westmoreland for many years to come to ensure that Cathy has as independent a life as possible and remains safe and happy in her local community.



Eryl Balazs

Commissioning Manager Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board

I have worked with Westmoreland to provide four new sites for five individuals in the last year. Each nomination for these schemes has highly complex needs and situations relating to learning disability, autism, trauma and mental health; four out of five were discharged from very long periods spent in hospital assessment and inpatient treatment units. Together with the highly specialised and wrap around care, the bespoke housing has enabled these individuals to return to build a life in the community and make fantastic progress.

In all these situations it seemed almost impossible that this could happen, and it is only with the kind of offer that Westmoreland make with the provision of SSH accommodation that this could happen. The flexibility and co working leading up to discharge of each person has been important in these intensive scenarios with many stakeholders involved and Westmoreland's team has worked really well within this set up as needed.

The design and adjustments in the environment required for our individual tenants is not based on traditional equipment and adaptations and therefore not recognised in standard budgets. This includes consideration of sensory needs related to noise, smell, visual as well as suicide prevention and anti ligature as well as lockable drawers where knives are kept. The management of potentially assaultive and absconding behaviour when feeling restricted and the need for discreet security considerations such as key codes and high hedges has been well managed.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB have worked with the Housing LIN and the NHS England Housing Lead to produce a housing strategy for this area and based on this work we estimate that across our geography we need circa 250 more units over the next five years to support discharge and admission avoidance for this cohort. We look forward to continued partnership with Westmoreland Supported Housing Association well into the future.



Bryant Close

The properties that were transferred to us were in Devon and Portsmouth and had not received a good quality service during the previous year. We spent time with customers, families, Care Providers and the Local Authorities finding out what was not working well and what needed to be done – both in the near-term and long-term - to put things right. This included tenancy agreements, Housing Benefit payments, repairs, long standing property issues and gardening services. Over the following 12 months, we worked with all the parties involved to successfully resolve the problems with Housing Benefit, catch up on overdue repairs, put in effective repairs, cleaning and gardening services, and start to fill the unoccupied rooms. Our customers there tell us they are a lot happier and are pleased that we took the properties on for them.

Care Providers

We work with 40 Care Providers ranging from large national organisations to small family run companies. They are commissioned to provide the care for our customers, and we work with them closely to ensure that the care customers receive and their home remains appropriate, and that the property remains safe and fit for purpose over the long-term. Our relationship with Care Providers is key to improve our respective services to you - and for developing new homes with the Local Authority or NHS.

Customer Service

We always try to provide an excellent service and improve things where we can – occasionally we do not get things right. When that happens, we will apologise, seek to put things right and ensure that we learn any lessons and make necessary changes to our policies or procedures.

In the last 18 months we have received four complaints that were upheld about our services – this equates to 0.67% of our customers. Following the resolution of the complaints, we have made changes to procedures to ensure that the issues did not reoccur and that the service is improved.

Next year we will be collecting data from our customers for the first time to comply with a new regulatory requirement – the ‘Tenant Satisfaction Measures’. Every Registered Provider is required to ask all of its customers about their thoughts and experiences across a range of topics – the results will then be collated and published on our website, along with a plan of where we are taking action to resolve any areas of underperformance. We will be contacting our customers and their representatives to complete the survey either online or in person and will publish the results in summer 2024. This is an important step for us as it will allow us to build a more comprehensive understanding of our customer’s experience of the services we provide and whether they are happy with us as a landlord. We plan to work with our customers and their representatives to design and implement any improvements as a result.

Rehability UK are one of 3 Care Providers who provide care in our Devon properties – here they give an insight into the average day days of two customers at West Fishleigh Farm



This year we were privileged to welcome back a previous resident. T is a lady who lived here a few years ago and, after trying out a different setting, she felt that West Fishleigh Farm was where she should be. T has moved in to one of the stunning rooms in Caterpillar Barn. She lives upstairs and has had the room furnished to her tastes. It is lovely. T already went to Madewell Farm as a day centre three times a

week, but since moving in again, she has joined a local Gym and pool and has applied for a CEA card so we can help her visit the local cinema. T loves going about by bus, using the excuse of infrequent buses, to arrive very early for appointments and stopping for lunch out. She loves physical activity and is exploring the possibility of joining a local lady's football team.

We said "Hello" to another new occupant of Caterpillar Barn, J, who has moved into the large, sunny link room. J and her family have really made this space her own. J needs a walker to get out and about but has managed trips to the shops and to a nearby coffee shop for cake. J's physical frailty makes getting out difficult for her, but she is keen to help in the office and has already proved herself useful planning menus and shopping lists and the site car is a boon that she likes to take advantage of. We look forward to exploring new places with J, who has very different interests to most people on site. It is also nice for staff to sit and chat about things J has seen on the news or National Geographic.

Customer Story - Tess



Tess has lived in her home for a few years – and despite some changes to her care provider, she is very happy at home and the environment at home.

I am very happy with my room – I like how my shower is nice and big and I like the size of my room. Some people think it could be too big but I like it. I like the rest of the house too, but my room is my favourite bit. We have had a new kitchen and it is really good. I go to the day centre three times a week and it is right next door which is great because I can walk there from my home.

Property Management

For the majority of our properties, we have responsibility for all areas of day-to-day repairs, planned maintenance and health and safety compliance. Our responsibility is to meet both the needs of our current and future customers, and to meet all legal and regulatory requirements. We focus our limited financial resources - which all come from the rent that is paid - in ensuring that our properties are safe, warm and kept to a good standard of repair. We use the information we gather from 5-yearly stock condition surveys and regular site visits to make sure we prioritise the right work.

Over the last 18 months we have carried out nearly 4500 repair jobs at a cost of £1.7 million, have remained at 100% Health and Safety compliance, spent £1 million on legacy works to fix historic property issues and a further £0.5 million on planned maintenance programmes. This is a significant increase in the number of jobs completed and money invested in the properties to ensure that our properties are safe, secure and modern and are a good quality home for our customers. We have a planned programme of investment for our properties that is updated as stock condition surveys are refreshed and we have a commitment to keep our homes to the highest possible standard within the constraints of the money available. Below is a summary of the work carried out:

Statistics Oct 2021 to March 2023

Number of Repairs Carried Out	4474
Cost of Repairs	£7.1m
Legacy Work Cost	£1m
Planned Maintenance	£0.5m
Planned Maintenance due in 2023/24	£0.3m

Mount Ephraim Road Refurbishment

Mount Ephraim Road is a large Victorian house in south London with 18 self-contained flats, and communal areas such as a lounge, extra kitchens and a laundry room. Early in 2021 Westmoreland carried out a full survey of the property which outlined the poor condition of the building and how it had become tired over time and would no longer meet the standards required. We consulted with our landlord who agreed to invest £250K to refurbish the kitchens and bathrooms, redecorate and make significant repairs to the roof.



The Works

Work commenced with the roof as it was letting water in, with missing tiles, damaged felt and mortar falling out of joints in several areas. In addition, there were very tall trees in the front garden that were touching the roof. The trees were removed, roof tiles and lead flashing replaced, felt relaid, the mortar was repointed and Velux windows were replaced. The roof is now fully watertight and has a much longer life left.

Kitchens, Bathrooms and Decoration

All 18 self-contained flats were in need of updating – the decoration was tired, the kitchens and bathrooms were over 15 years old, the flooring needed replacing and all walls redecorating.

The communal areas, such as the lounge, hallways stairs and landing were also very tired and in need of redecoration and new flooring – We also carried out work in the office to give the Care Provider, Certitude a better working environment.

Refurbishing kitchens and bathrooms is disruptive, so to ensure that no one had to move out, we kept three flats vacant for customers to use as temporary homes whilst works in their flat were carried out – Certitude worked closely with us to help customers plan for the temporary move which meant disruption was kept to a minimum and each customer could be back in the refurbished home within two weeks.



A Huge Success

The project was a huge success – the customers are very happy with the end result and the Care Provider feels that the atmosphere and mood within the building has improved. It was completed on time and to budget and with all the flats having a new kitchen, bathroom, flooring and decoration throughout, the quality of homes has significantly improved.

We have a varied range of property types – from individual apartments, single person bungalows and shared houses to blocks of flats and former farm buildings. To ensure that we can effectively repair and maintain our homes, we work with our repair partner Renov8 to develop and maintain a network of specialist contractors who can respond to repair requests as well as carry out planned improvements.

When our customers call Renov8, the call centre ask detailed questions to ensure that they fully understand the requirements of the repair and assess the urgency of it. The repair is then allocated to a contractor to attend, and an appointment time agreed that is convenient for you and takes into account any individual requirements. Our service performance is measured using time taken for different classifications of repairs and by how effectively we resolve the problem. Below are the performance statistics for the 18 months September 2021 to March 2023.

Performance Measure	Target	Actual
Priority Response completion on time	95%	97.5%
First Time Fix	60%	98.1%
Average Repair Time	8.7 days	7.5 days

Health and Safety Compliance

We are responsible for compliance with eleven areas of property related health and safety. As with repairs performance, we track and report this to Westmoreland's Board monthly.

We manage progress very closely with our repairs contractor to ensure that not only is any servicing and certification work carried out on time, but that any remedial work identified is carried out promptly – in the last 18 months we have completed 216 remedial repairs. Below is a table that shows the areas of health and safety compliance we are responsible for and how many of the properties had the correct certification in place in March 2023.

Compliance activity	Frequency	% Compliance at March 2023
Gas / Oil / LPG	Annual	100%
Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)	5 years	100%
Fire Risk Assessment (FRA)	1, 2, 3 years (depending on property type and risks)	100% - with 18 remedial actions to complete by June 2023
Asbestos Survey	Between 1 -5 years depending on the property	100%
Legionella Risk Assessment (LRA)	2 years (In properties with stored cold water)	100% - with 59 remedial actions to complete by June 2023
Fire Alarm	Between 6 monthly and yearly depending on the alarm	100%
Sprinkler System Service	Annual	100%
Emergency Lighting	Annual	100%
Fire Fighting Equipment	Annual	100%
Lifts (through floor passenger lifts)	Quarterly inspection & Annual certification	100%
Portable appliance testing (PAT)	2 years	100%
EPC	10 years	100%

Procuring Repair Services

Westmoreland has a regulatory responsibility to ensure value for money. To help with this, we periodically undertake tests to ensure we are paying fairly for services we receive. In early 2023, we carried out a full tender exercise for a repairs and maintenance partner. The contract is to be for a three-year period, with a two-year option to extend. This is the first time that Westmoreland has offered and secured a long-term contract. The tender has allowed us to secure both a better financial deal - which means we will have more resources to put towards maintaining your homes – and an improved focus upon quality of work done. The new contract will use fewer subcontractors and more directly employed staff, which allows Westmoreland to gain more control over the appointments made with our customers and the quality of the work carried out – this will have a direct positive impact on our customers.

ECO Projects

We know how important having warm, energy efficient and affordable homes are for our customers. During the last year we have worked with our landlords to access grant funding to fit solar panels at three sites in addition to replacing electric boilers at two sites with more modern, efficient, cheaper and environmentally friendly systems. This has improved the comfort of the customer's home and reduced utility costs to both customers and Housing Benefit.

Improving the overall energy rating of our properties is a key priority. We are currently planning energy improvement works for other properties in our portfolio alongside our landlords – this will include looking at energy sources, modern technology and better insulation of the properties. Our aim is that all properties managed by Westmoreland are EPC 'C' rated, or better, within the next 10 years.



You Said We Did Grove Park Road, Weston-Super-Mare

Grove Park Road is a building of nine self-contained flats that was originally built with electric storage heaters – these were inefficient, expensive to run and were not good enough to provide sufficient warmth in each flat. Our customers came to us to ask if there was anything we could do to make their homes warmer and less expensive to heat.

We worked with an energy consultant to access government grant funding to provide gas central heating into each flat – we worked with each customer to have a new gas supply and meter installed and as each flat is small, agreed on the most convenient place to fit the boiler. Each flat's EPC rating has improved from an E to a C and the expected annual cost to heat each flat has reduced from £1200 to £700 a year.

Energy efficiency is also a key consideration within our new developments – we work with our development partners to make sure that our new properties have an EPC rating of at least a C and where possible have modern technology and/or alternative heating and energy systems.

Looking Forward

In our 2023-24 financial year, we aim to continue improving our service offering and delivery. Specifically this year, we will be developing and commencing Westmoreland's new Customer Strategy, which will provide more detail about how we want to develop our services further in the coming years. In parallel with the strategy, we will develop a Customer Charter and a Customer Handbook to provide you with more detail on the services we provide, how to access them and how to easily give us feedback where we do well or poorly – this will include the development of a customer panel to have greater influence over decision making and priorities.

We will be undertaking more projects specifically aimed at improving property energy efficiency and, of course, we will be looking to provide more homes for vulnerable adults.

Feedback?

Thank you for taking the time to read this, our first annual customer report. I hope that it has given you a flavour of us, our customers, who we work with, the things we have achieved and our plans for the future.



If you have any thoughts or comments to share, we would love to hear from you.

Please contact us by:

Speaking with your nominated Housing Officer

Emailing us at Feedback@Westmorelandsha.co.uk

Completing a 'Contact Us' form on our website – www.westmorelandsha.co.uk

Calling us on **0330 333 7321**

Writing to us at Compliments and Complaints, Westmoreland Supported Housing Limited,
First Floor, 56 Radcliffe Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham. NG2 5HH