

# Annual Report

2015/16

10 years of better  
homes, better  
communities and  
better business.



# Who are we...

At B3Living we believe safe, warm and affordable housing is essential for us all.

Since 2006 we have been delivering better homes, communities and business through our 4,500 homes and 180 employees.

Although we work hard as a team to maintain our existing homes, we want to make a difference to people's lives by building new ones.

To achieve this, we are dramatically increasing the number of new homes and making sure the homes we do have are used in the best way. We have spent the last few years expanding into new areas in Hertfordshire and Essex.

2016 was a big year for us, marking our 10th year as the largest housing provider in the Borough of Broxbourne. We celebrated our journey over the past 10 years from our early years as Broxbourne Housing Association and growing to become B3Living.

## Our Purpose

To provide a range of sustainable places to live to those who cannot afford the market, ensuring that we help to create cohesive communities through supporting our residents.

To achieve our purpose we focus on three areas: creating better homes, better communities and better business.

Resident satisfaction with B3Living services overall



Resident satisfaction with B3Living repairs and maintenance service



Resident satisfaction of their home



# Welcome

Joe Chambers, Chief Executive



We are planning to build over 700 new homes in the next six years.

It has been my privilege to become CEO of B3Living in May 2016 and as such I cannot take credit for the great performance of B3Living in the year to which this report refers.

I am pleased and proud to be the Chief Executive of such a high performing and well respected housing association, in a year which saw B3Living come 3rd in the Sunday Times Top 100 not-for-profit companies to work for and 4th in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index. We also saw the completion of the award winning housing development scheme Bridgewater Gardens which provided 52 much needed new homes for the community.

The new year has brought with it new challenges. The rents for social housing have been cut by 1% each year for the next four years, which is good news for our tenants but makes affording to build new homes even more tricky. There are no government grants to subsidise affordable rented homes and a limited supply to help pay for shared ownership homes.

We are facing the greatest housing crisis the country has ever seen. The average house price is eight times greater than the average income in Broxbourne. Young people cannot afford to rent or buy within the borough. There are

precious few smaller homes suitable for older people to downsize into, which would help to free up some larger homes for families. There are simply not enough homes for the people who need them, and that drives prices upwards.

B3Living is focusing on doing all we can to help out in this crisis. We are planning to build over 700 new homes in the next six years. These homes will include affordable rent for those who cannot afford the market, shared ownership properties for those working but still cannot afford to buy on the market, market rented homes for those who cannot access a mortgage and homes specifically designed to provide older people with high quality alternatives to oversized family homes.

We value our relationship with the community we serve and will still be working with our tenants to help them into employment and support them in their tenancies.

I look forward to moving B3Living on to the next stage of its journey and thank all those who have worked so hard to deliver its current strong position.

# Better Homes

Quality homes are at the heart of our business.

We pride ourselves on the quality of our homes and believe that all residents deserve a safe, warm space to call their own.

We provide homes for over 9,000 people across South Hertfordshire and Essex, ensuring our homes meet the decent homes standard.

Maintaining our homes is extremely important – each year we invest in the region of £4million on major works. We install new bathrooms and kitchens and renew boiler systems, windows and doors as well as installing solar panels to make sure our homes are running efficiently. Our in house repairs team have invested £2million in making sure our properties are up to the standard our residents expect.

We continue to build and acquire properties to help with the local housing shortage. In 2015/16 we built 82 new homes.

We launched our award winning housing development Bridgewater Gardens in January 2016. The newly regenerated industrial site is comprised of 52 shared ownership and rental properties. We also branched out into neighbouring Hatfield and across into wider Hertfordshire, with new properties built in Hertsmere.

During the year we launched a dedicated service for our shared ownership customers, B3@Home. The sales website helps promote our shared ownership properties and guide first time buyers.

We want our residents to feel comfortable living independently for longer. We run nine schemes for older residents across Broxbourne and offer varied levels of care and support.

2015/16 New homes built

 82

Photograph Opposite

Samantha Baker and David Brown (Toby the dog).

For the last four years Samantha has organised a family fun day on her estate in Ogard Road.



# Better Communities

Creating better communities for our residents is vital to us.

To help residents reach their full potential, we work with over 50 partners.

The Holdbrook Hub in Waltham Cross celebrated its first year in December, giving residents the opportunity to use the internet and computer programmes for free, and get help with money advice and employment guidance. We had 2,500 visits since December 2014.

We re-launched our employability service this year and helped over 75 people into local jobs, and to gain key skills through our IT courses and driving academy. We continued to roll out our 'UP – Unlimited Potential' project to residents, helping with the costs of university, finding suitable work placements and funding college courses.

Our 2015 residents' day at Paradise Wildlife Park was our largest on record with over 400 residents participating with our local partners and stakeholders. We also engaged over 500 residents in tenant involvement initiatives like our scrutiny panel and youth panel for young people aged between 13 and 25.

We ran 92 different community development projects from cookery lessons, where we teach residents how to cook healthy meals on a budget, to our Olympic legacy white water rafting events at the Lea Valley White Water Centre, on our doorstep in Waltham Cross, securing free activities for young people for 10 times the amount we invested.

We want our residents to feel safe where they live and tackle anti-social behaviour firmly and fairly. During the past year we received 369 new anti-social behaviour cases which are managed through our safer communities team.

Diversity and inclusion is very important to us and how we operate as a landlord, an employer and within the local community. We work with staff, residents and partners to create a diversity strategy which outlines what we already do, and how we can improve our services. Since it was launched in 2013, our LGBT allies programme now has 17 resident members and 34 staff.

Helped with jobs and skills

 **75+**

Photograph Opposite

Michelle lives in Cheshunt and volunteers her time to help at The Hub



Michelle has been volunteering at the Holdbrook Hub in Waltham Cross for the past year.

# Better Business

Making a successful business for residents and staff.

Our business continues to grow year on year, however the emergency summer budget in July 2015 meant that we needed to look at our business and work out where savings could be made without affecting the service that our residents and partners expect of us.

2016 was a big year for B3Living and marked 10 years of providing better homes and better communities for our residents. We were 3rd in the Sunday Times Best Companies Top 100 not-for-profit awards and received a lifetime achievement award for being in the top 10 for five consecutive years. We also came 4th in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, in our second year within the top 100, for our work with our LGBT employees and residents.

John Giesen retired in March 2016 after 10 years as B3Living Chief Executive. Joe Chambers, who previously was CEO at Soho Housing, took over as the new Chief Executive in April 2016.

## Apprentices with B3Living



Our 180 staff are a dedicated and hardworking team. Staff regularly donate to local and national charities through our dress down Friday initiative and work with the local foodbank to arrange food collections or money donations.

Helping young people into employment is important to our business. Last year we employed 11 apprentices in a variety of roles across the business.

### Photograph Opposite

Paul, Leslie, Sakhara, Jade and Leah (Poppy the dog) – The Dixon girls are part of the B3Living Youth Panel and work with our Community Development team.

“B3Living are the best landlord I’ve ever had”  
Paul Dixon



# The Board

**Sandra Royer**  
Chair of the Board



2015/16 has been a great year for B3Living with big changes and achievements across the business.

Notably we celebrated our 10th anniversary in January and in March, said goodbye to John Giesen, who retired as B3Living Chief Executive after 10 years.

I'd like to thank our residents and partners who got involved this year, whether it was through meetings or committees, events or sharing feedback to staff, this all contributes to making B3Living a better business.

**Karen Forbes-Jackson**  
Vice chair

**Chris Fawcett**  
Chair of Audit and Risk Committee

**Stewart Heath**  
Chair of the Operations Committee

**Camelia Borg**

**Tony Infantino**

**Chris Herbert**

**Pat Milner** (left 15/02/16)

**Anne Shearman**

**Valerie Vellani** (left 21/09/15)

**Jackie Phipps** (left 16/11/15)

## The Executive

**Joe Chambers**  
Chief Executive

**Simon Walton**  
Director of Housing Services

**Steven Tarry**  
Director of Asset Management and Development

**Paul Williams**  
Director of Finance

**John Giesen**  
Chief Executive (retired March 2016)

**Sue Scanlan**  
Company Secretary

# Value For Money

## Our value for money targets are to:

- Maintain our focused community investment at around 2% of turnover, working in partnership to improve the life opportunities and wellbeing of our residents.

2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
2% of income	2% of income	1.7% of income

- Improve our operating surplus year on year to provide more cash for investment in new homes.

2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Delivered	Delivered	Delivered

- Meet or better our annual value for money savings targets each year to maximise our growth potential.

2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Target £253k Delivered £1,202k	Target £454k Delivered £980k	Target £134k Delivered £1,169k

- Contain year on year costs per home as a driver for value for money efficiencies. Value For Money is central in supporting our corporate themes of better homes, better communities, better business, as set out in our 2020 Vision.

2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Met £3.2K cost per home	Met £3.2K cost per home	Met £3.2K cost per home

## Our value for money priorities are:

- Understanding our assets and managing them effectively
- Generating additional income when we can
- Collecting as much rent as we can and helping residents affected by welfare reform
- Identifying areas where we can reduce costs and become more efficient
- Demonstrating the social return of our investment

The full VFM self assessment can be found on the B3Living website, [www.b3living.org.uk](http://www.b3living.org.uk)

# Figures and performance

## Income and expenditure

Income	£'000	%	£
Rental	23,446	80.00%	£0.80
Service charges	946	3.00%	£0.03
Property sales	211	1.00%	£0.01
Other income	648	2.00%	£0.02
Investment income	250	1.00%	£0.01
Shared ownership sales	3,853	13.00%	£0.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,354</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>£1.00</b>

Expenditure	£'000	%	£
Management services (inc staff)	5,373	23.00%	£ 0.23
Interest on loans	5,312	22.00%	£0.22
Shared ownership costs of sales	3,256	14.00%	£0.14
Services	2,845	12.00%	£ 0.12
Maintenance	3,748	16.00%	£0.16
Depreciation	3,012	13.00%	£0.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,546</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>£1.00</b>

## Housing stock

	March 2016	March 2015
<b>Social housing owned and managed by Association:</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>No.</b>
General needs housing	2,937	2,879
Housing for older people	691	724
Shared Ownership	183	151
Leaseholders	673	662
Intermediate rented	4	4
Rent to HomeBuy	4	5
<b>Total social housing owned and managed</b>	<b>4,492</b>	<b>4,425</b>
<b>Social housing owned but managed by others</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Total social housing owned</b>	<b>4,540</b>	<b>4,473</b>
<b>Non-social housing owned:</b>		
Market rented	2	3
Leased to other associations	103	104
<b>Total non-social housing owned</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Total housing owned</b>	<b>4,645</b>	<b>4,580</b>
Social housing not owned but managed on behalf of others	-	-

## Performance

Repairs and maintenance	2015/16	2014/15
Satisfaction with a recent repair	98.80%	98.99%
Repairs completed on time (routine)	95.4%	95.1%
Repairs completed on time (emergency)	99.73%	98.92%
Number of kitchens installed	122	124
Number of bathrooms installed	120	128
Lettings	2015/16	2014/15
Current and former rent arrears as a % of the total current rent debit	2.53%	2.31%
Average calendar days to re-let (general needs)	18.63 days	31.69 days
Average calendar days to re-let all empty homes including major works	17.68 days	31.5 days
Number of general needs properties re-let during last year whilst empty	4	13
Number of housing for older people properties re-let (not requiring major works)	166	159
Number of housing for older people properties re-let (including major works whilst empty)	1	1
Number of housing for older people properties let (no major works )	65	52
Complaints	2015/16	2014/15
Stage 1	38	41
Stage 2	5	1
Stage 3	1	0
Housing Standards	2015/16	2014/15
Number of homes that fail to meet decent homes standard	0	0
Number of homes with overdue gas certificate	0	1
New properties (built and acquired)	2015/16	
Number of home built or acquired	82	
Number of shared ownership properties	35	
Number of affordable rent properties	47	



Thank you to all the residents who featured in this report.

## Address:

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## Social Media:

**Twitter:** @B3Living  
**LinkedIn:** B3Living



B3Living is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act (29876R).  
We comply fully with the National Housing Federation Code of Governance.