

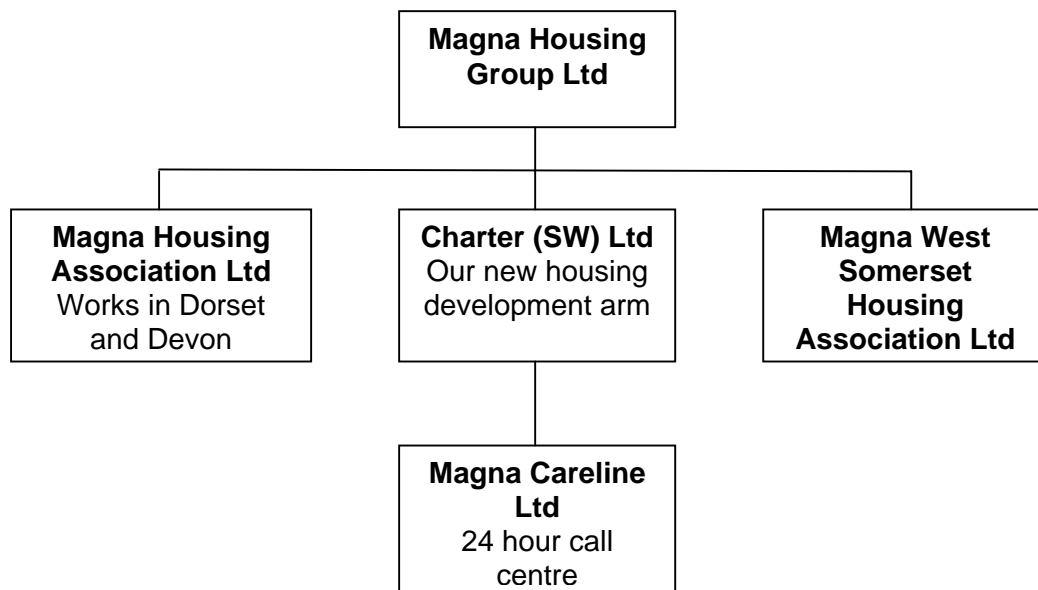
ANNUAL MAGNA WEST SOMERSET REPORT TO DUNSTER PANEL

OCTOBER 2012

What is Magna West Somerset (MWS) and what is its role?

1. MWS owns and manages 2300 homes, 88% of which are located in West Somerset. MWS is a charitable independent not-for-profit Industrial and Provident Society. It has its own 30 year Business Plan and annual budgets to deliver this plan. MWS is governed by a board of 12 voluntary members, 2 of whom are tenants. The role of the Board is to set the direction for the association, to agree its Strategy and policies, to agree the Business Plan and annual budgets as well as monitoring its performance and the quality of services provided to its residents. Directed by the Board, MWS operates with a high degree of local autonomy, while being more cost effective using the central services of the parent company, Magna Housing Group.

The structure of Magna Housing Group:



2. The Board delegates the operational management of MWS to a Director and 90 staff.
3. As a housing association, MWS is regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), a government body. The HCA is responsible for monitoring the governance and viability of MWS. MWS's Purpose is "To help people meet their housing needs and aspirations".

MWS's Finances

4. MWS's main source of income comes from tenant rents and service charges of £10.6m for 2011/12. It also runs a number of privately funded services in West Somerset; a lifeline service for 600 private customers, a community meals on wheels service within a 10 mile radius of Watchet, a handyman gardening service for the elderly and disabled, and a home help service.
5. MWS's expenditure for 2011/12 was as follows:

Housing Management and office costs	£3,600,000.00
Repairs and maintenance	£3,700,000.00
Loan interest payments	£2,100,000.00
	<hr/>
	£9,400,000.00
	<hr/>

Any surplus is used to reduce MWS's overall debt of £60m.

6. In the main, the only government grants MWS receives are there to fund new housing developments from the Homes and Communities Agency. On average, this has previously funded up to 50% of the cost of building, with the remaining 50% being funded by private finance, serviced by rent payments. From 2011, the level of grant available has dramatically reduced to about 20% of the cost of building a new home.

MWS's Housing Stock in the Area covered by the Dunster Panel Area

7. Of the 1901 homes in West Somerset, 296 (15.6%) are located within the Dunster Panel area:

	Numbers of Homes
Brompton Ralph	5
Carhampton (including 37 Sheltered Housing bungalows)	104
Clatworthy	6
Dunster (including 20 Sheltered Housing bungalows)	56
Old Cleeve/Washford (including 29 Sheltered Housing bungalows)	78
Huish Champflower	2
Luxborough	3
Monksilver	4
Skilgate	4
Withycombe	11
Roadwater	23
	<hr/>
Total	296
	<hr/>

What has happened in the Dunster Area

8. We carry out an annual planned maintenance programme and during 2012/13, the following works will be carried out in the Dunster Area Panel area:

<u>Work Type</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>
Kitchens	1	Huish Champflower
Bathrooms	1 7 5 2	Carhampton Dunster Washford Roadwater
New heating/boilers	2 3 1 1	Carhampton Clatworthy Washford Luxborough
New roofs	1 3	Washford Withycombe

How properties are let?

9. MWS on average lets about 170 properties a year, with 21 in the Dunster Panel area in 2011/12. All lettings take place using the Somerset-wide Homefinder Choice Based Lettings Scheme. We work very closely with the Housing Options team in West Somerset Council on choice based lettings and house a significant number of priority homeless households each year. In West Somerset, MWS gives preference to local people when it advertises homes in rural villages in Exmoor and all other West Somerset villages.

Delivery of New Affordable Homes

10. Between 2006 - 2012, MWS has built over 300 affordable homes for rent or low cost sale. MWS has worked to maximise its Business Plan capacity to fund new homes. MWS has been successful in obtaining funding from government bodies over the past 5 years. Grant levels and the total amount of grant has reduced significantly from 2011 - 2015, as part of planned cuts in government spending. In the Dunster Panel area, we have no affordable rented homes currently on site. We have 15 new affordable rented homes recently completed at Churchill Way in Watchet and we have planning permission for a number of properties that will be sited on MWS garage sites in Watchet, Williton and Washford. There is one small site next to garages in Quarry Road in Washford and the current design is for one bungalow. We have HCA grant to build 33 houses and bungalows in Alcombe.

Some Achievements

11. **Key Performance Indicators at 30 August 2012**
 - 11.1 Average relet time for all properties was 21.9 days (3.1 weeks), which puts us in the top quartile.
 - 11.2 99% of response repairs were completed within their target date with 96% of those completed “right first time”.
 - 11.3 Overall, rent arrears stand at 2.8%, which is median quartile.
 - 11.4 In our last big tenant survey in 2010, 89% of MWS tenants were satisfied with MWS as a landlord. 90% of tenants were satisfied with their accommodation and 85% were satisfied with repairs and maintenance services. 84% of tenants thought their rent was value for money. We currently have another big survey of our tenants underway.
 - 11.5 On 31 March 2011, 100% of MWS homes met the Government’s Decent Homes Standard. However, we still need to continue to carry out a large planned maintenance programme to keep our homes decent and to meet the superior “Magna Repairs Standard”.
 - 11.6 MWS spent £1.9m on major repairs and planned maintenance in the 12 months ending 31 March 2012. One of the priorities for MWS is to improve the energy efficiency of residents’ homes and we have installed new heating systems with air source heat pumps at the 30 properties in Timberscombe and we are fitting 30 new systems in Dulverton in 2012. This will replace the inefficient electric storage heaters and will reduce residents energy bills.
12. MWS carries out a widely publicised annual programme of neighbourhood walkabouts covering all areas in West Somerset. These are attended by housing officers and surveyors, local police, community support officers and tenant representatives. The aim of these it to proactively deal with local issues of concern, such as outstanding repairs, neighbour or estate management issues. We would welcome local County District and Parish Councillors who may want to join us on these walkabouts. Attached to this report is a list of MWS walkabouts for the remainder of 2012 and if any councillor is interested in attending a walkabout or would like to raise an issue, they should contact Lee Ellis, Senior Housing Officer, on 01984 635120 or by e-mail: lee.ellis@magna.org.uk
13. Are there any questions Dunster Panel members would like to ask?

Tony Murray, MWS Director
Tele: 01984 635102

E-mail: tony.murray@magna.org.uk