

# MAGNA HOUSING UPDATE TO EXMOOR AREA PANEL

JUNE 2022

## What is Magna Housing and its role?

1. Magna owns and manages around 8,770 homes in Dorset and Somerset. Some 2,153 homes are located in the Somerset West and Taunton area. Magna is an independent and charitable housing association.
2. As a housing association, Magna is regulated by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH). The RSH is responsible for monitoring the governance and financial viability and ensuring we meet the consumer standards it sets for housing and repair services. Magna has its top rating for governance and financial viability.
3. Magna has 99% of its homes in 4 core local authority areas of Somerset West and Taunton, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Dorset.

## Changes at Magna Housing

4. In July 2018, Selina White was appointed as Chief Executive of Magna Housing, following the retirement of Graham Colls. There have been a number of interim appointments and changes to the executive team since 2018, but from April 2022, we now have 4 new directors in place.

[Our leadership team | Magna](#)

**Selina White**  
Chief Executive



**Paul Satchwell**  
Finance Director  
and Deputy CEO



**Ami Davis**  
Strategic  
Organisational  
Capability Director



**Joanne Martin**  
Director of  
Customer  
Operations



**Paul Read**  
Director of  
Sustainability and New  
Supply

## **Our Vision, Mission and Values**

5. In April 2021 we launched our three-year brilliant basics strategy. Our strategy sets out our plans for the next three years and, as the name suggests, it's about doing the basics, brilliantly.  
[Our three-year brilliant basics strategy | Strategy \(magna.org.uk\)](https://magna.org.uk/strategy)
6. This new strategy signals a real change for Magna, working towards our 10-year vision of creating great homes together. Our strategy encompasses everything that we are about - from our vision and mission, though to our values and objectives.
7. Our first three years will see our ongoing focus on our customers, making sure that their experience is memorable and exceptional. To support this, we will make sure that we all understand our customers and know what it is to deliver a brilliant customer experience. I have included a summary of our Strategy at Appendix 1.

## **Magna's Finances**

8. Magna's main source of income comes from customer rents and service charges of some £48 million in 2022/23. It also runs some privately funded services in West Somerset: a lifeline service for around 350 private customers, and a home help service and handyman/gardening service for the elderly and disabled.
5. The average Magna rent over 52 weeks (excluding service charges), is about £99.52 for a general family home and £108.37 for a sheltered home which is approximately 60% of a rent in the private sector. 65% of Magna's tenants are in receipt of full or partial housing benefit or universal credit. Many Magna tenants are affected and will continue to be affected by the roll out of universal credit and other welfare reforms, however the biggest impact on income and debts over the past 2 years has been the effect of the coronavirus pandemic and the current cost of living crisis.

## **Providing Local Services**

9. Magna is embedded in communities right across Somerset and our whole strategy is by its nature locally focused given the history and links we have back to the Councils. We pride ourselves on being large enough to influence, small enough to care in our local communities and to partner with others to create great places where people choose to live.
10. In December 2020, we centralised all customer contact into one single point, our new customer contact centre, in order to simplify and improve customer experience. Service delivery (post COVID 19) remains local and face to face in our customers' homes, on our sheltered housing schemes and in our communities in and around Somerset. We have around 200 colleagues - trades operatives, housing officers, sheltered housing teams, support

advisers, surveyors, development managers, caretakers, and our newly formed building safety team all working in local communities every day.

11. With the exception of our trade’s operatives, the majority of our teams have remained working remotely from home since the first ‘lockdown’ in March 2020. In Somerset, we have refurbished one of our Williton offices (Roughmoor) to better facilitate agile and collaborative team working. We are currently carrying out an options appraisal on our St Peter’s House site and consulting widely on its future use now that it is surplus to our requirements as a workspace.

### **Magna’s Housing Stock in the Area covered by the Exmoor National Park Area**

12. Magna owns 379 homes in the following parishes. Turnover is shown in the final column:

<b>PARISH</b>	<b>FREEHOLD ONLY – NON-SOCIAL</b>	<b>GENERAL FAMILY HOMES</b>	<b>SHELTERED HOUSING</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>NUMBER OF LETTINGS IN 2021/22</b>
<b>BROMPTON REGIS</b>		15		15	2
<b>BRUSHFORD</b>		12		12	0
<b>CUTCOMBE</b>		18		18	2
<b>DULVERTON</b>		96	38	134	10
<b>DUNSTER</b>	6	15		21	1
<b>EXFORD</b>	4	9		13	2
<b>EXTON</b>		4		4	0
<b>LUCCOMBE</b>		1		1	1
<b>LUXBOROUGH</b>		3		3	0
<b>MONKSILVER</b>		4		4	2
<b>OLD CLEEVE</b>		19		19	1
<b>PORLOCK</b>		31	33	64	5
<b>SELWORTHY</b>		14	11	25	2
<b>TIMBERSCOMBE</b>		9	30	39	6
<b>WINSFORD</b>		5		5	0
<b>WITHYPOOL AND HAWKRIDGE</b>		2		2	1
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>35</b>

### **How homes are let**

13. All lettings take place using the Somerset-wide Homefinder Choice Based Lettings Scheme. We work very closely with the Housing Options team in Somerset West and Taunton Council on choice-based lettings and house a number of priority need households each year. Where there is a section 106 planning agreement in place for a particular housing scheme, preference will always be given to applicants with the appropriate local connection.

## Building New Affordable Homes

14. Magna is committing to deliver 2,000 homes over the 10-year period of its Plan, and we are one year into this in the period we call our brilliant basics. New homes will be delivered against our commitments to 'Right homes, right quality, right place.' In 21/22 we delivered 25 rented homes in the Somerset West and Taunton area – 19 of which are in Williton. The Board has contracted or committed funds to deliver a further 22 homes in Williton (10 rented and 12 shared ownership) in 22/23.
15. Magna's preferred approach is to commission the building of homes ourselves rather than procure them via the s.106 route. However, in certain circumstances, for example, where the product is of a particularly high quality, or we are working with developers with whom it is in our interests to have a long-term relationship, we will consider the s.106 route.
16. **Right Homes:** Investments we make now are based on our Portfolio of Homes which are designed for manufacture and with layouts that reflect over 10 years of engagement with customers on designing the homes they want to live in. The first scheme of precision engineered factory homes, manufactured in the Rollalong factory in Dorset, were delivered to site and completed in March 2022.
17. **Right Quality:** Our 22/23 Portfolio of Homes is compliant with the Nationally Described Space Standards and Approved document M Vol 1 – M42 for accessibility and adaptability. They are all electric and have a fabric first approach which exceeds current building regulations by at least 20% as standard. Waste water heat recovery is standard, and all homes have provision to specify the installation of a PV system. All homes in the range also have provision built in for the installation if of Electric Vehicle Charging.
18. **Right Place** – Somerset is a significant part of our investment plans, and we work with the local authority housing team and data and insights from our letting and sales teams as well a demographic trend to ensure we build homes in the right place in a strategic and planned way looking both in the short and longer term.

[1,000 Homes for the future will benefit Southwest residents | Magna](#)

## Impact of the pandemic on operational performance

13. The impact of the coronavirus pandemic in terms of sickness, restrictions to ensure safe working practice and supply chain delays were the main driver of a large backlog of responsive repairs, delays with new build handovers on some schemes and longer re-let times. Although we had cleared all covid related repairs by the end of 2021, we continued to experience a significant increase in demand for the services when we returned to full operation in November 2021. This in turn resulted in the delayed delivery of the repairs service.

19. In line with national and industry specific trends, we continue to experience colleague shortages due to covid sickness, linked to labour market shortages internally and through our supply chains. We have, where possible, mitigated this using external contractors and changes to our recruitment and retention arrangements.
20. There is a strong correlation between customer satisfaction, customer expectations and protracted pandemic recovery. Across the sector, Providers have seen a decline in recent months on many satisfaction measures. We are seeing positive “green shoots” of recovery on satisfaction, with clear improvements on transactional surveys.
21. In April 2022, we resourced and launched a 3-month Repairs Turnaround Project to make rapid inroads to improve customer and colleague experience and satisfaction. In June, we will run a similar Empty Homes turnaround project aimed at improving efficiency in preparing empty homes for re-letting. These are business-wide collaborations, and we expect to see improved customer and colleague satisfaction and efficiencies in 2022/23. Both projects are key corporate priorities.

#### **Key performance indicators 2021/22**

- Overall customer satisfaction – 70.56%
- Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance – 71.5%
- Satisfaction that home is safe and secure – 86.5%
- Satisfaction with your neighbourhood as a place to live – 86.3%
- Satisfaction with quality of home at the time of letting – 91.9%
  
- Number of gas safety checks overdue – 0
  
- Average time to let an empty home 93.32 days
  
- Current tenant rent and service charge arrears as a percentage of annual rental – 2.3%

#### **Support for older and vulnerable customers**

22. We provide services to older and vulnerable customers in 420 sheltered and or supported homes in Somerset West and Taunton. We have a team of sheltered housing advisers whose role it is to provide intensive housing management services including ‘out of hours and weekends’ for customers in these homes. We have lease agreements with the Council for properties let as temporary accommodation for homeless households.
23. Our housing management teams are supported by a team of specialist money matters and tenancy support advisers – all entirely funded through rental income.

24. Over the past 4-6 months our money matters team have seen a marked increase in referrals as our customers come under increasing financial pressure as a result of the economic downturn and rising inflation. In the first 6 months of 2022/23, we will be reviewing how we can best support our customers to cope with the financial squeeze and to continue to live well in their homes.
25. I am happy to answer questions about any aspect of Magna's work or what we are doing in the Exmoor panel area at the panel meeting.

**Christine Boland**  
**Interim Director of Housing Services**

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# Creating great homes together

## Mission



**For our customers**

We offer homes to be proud of with a choice of facilities and customer services that are tailored to individuals as their lives change



**For our local communities**

We're large enough to influence, small enough to care. We partner with others to create great places where people chose to live



**For our people**

We are the place where talented and ambitious people enjoy rewarding and fulfilling careers in an inspirational environment



**For our partners**

We seek to continually develop professional business partnerships, creating long-term mutual success which will help us provide quality homes and associated services

## Values

**One team** – coming together as #teammagna, embracing our diversity and recognising that together we can achieve outstanding results

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**Always safe** – the safety of our colleagues and our customers is always our main priority

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**Be kind** – how we treat each other and how we go about our business

**All about customers** – our mindset and our team approach to putting customers at the heart of everything we do

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**Be curious** – how we learn about each other, our customers and our business to make sure we all do the right thing

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**Own it** – we all need to take responsibility for all our actions every day

## Strategic priorities



**Customer experience**  
Right service, right time, first time



**Supply & investment**  
Right homes, right quality, right place



**Organisational capability**  
Right people, right processes, right technology



**Performance & results**  
Right focus, right controls, right results

## Brilliant basics objectives

- ❖ Customers at the heart
- ❖ Keeping everyone safe and secure
- ❖ Great place to work
- ❖ Working across boundaries
- ❖ Easy to deal with

- ❖ Delivering value for money
- ❖ Data driven decisions
- ❖ Creating great places to live
- ❖ Large enough to influence, small enough to care
- ❖ Robust systems and processes