

Annual Report 2017

Housing you can build your life around

We are here to make sure that people with a learning disability can live their lives as they choose, are valued equally and listened to.



Golden Lane Housing

working in partnership with 

Helping people to live the life they choose

Welcome

I'm delighted as the newly elected chair of Golden Lane Housing (GLH) to present this Annual Report for the 2016/17 year. As in previous years, it's in the form of a booklet for 2018 so that each month you can see some of the ways in which GLH has been able to make a real impact on the lives of people with a learning disability and their families. I'd like to say a huge thank you to my predecessor as chair, Neil McCall, under whose stewardship many of the achievements outlined in this calendar took place.

Last year we created 194 new tenancies so that by the end of March 2017 we had a total of 1,645 tenants across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This is a huge achievement given the challenging operating environment and means we are able to make an increasing impact on the lives of people with a learning disability and their families. We showcase in this calendar just a few examples of the difference our housing is making in terms of things like independence, health, involvement in the community and learning new skills.

I am proud to chair an organisation which has the top rating of V1 G1 following an In-Depth Assessment from our regulator, the Homes and Communities Agency, and which the Sunday Times says is in the Top 20 Best Not-For-Profit Companies to Work For in the country. Most of all, I'm pleased to be helping to make our country a better and more inclusive place for people with a learning disability and their families.

Louise Li

Chair, Golden Lane Housing



GLH starts with the person, and their families and carers. We sit down with them and try to understand exactly what they need and their aspirations before finding the right housing.

We can't house everyone but through our advice we help thousands more. We've extended our reach this year, by becoming a housing expert on Mencap's FamilyHub, their online community network.

Our work doesn't stop there, there's a wider challenge. We want to help all people with a learning disability and change attitudes. Through our campaigning work with Mencap we continually work towards making this a reality.



Bryan and Warren's story

"It's just marvellous it's the answer to our prayers." This is how Isobel and Bob Henry, who are in their 70's, describe their sons' new home.

Bryan and Warren have recently moved into a new bungalow near Omagh supported by Mencap after 23 years apart as no housing solution was available before to allow them to live together. They share the property with two other adults with a learning disability and have carers to look after them at all times - they have settled in well, the atmosphere in their home is both calm and welcoming.

Read more about their story at www.glh.org.uk/bryan-warren



"We cannot express what this means for us as a family. We can call and see our sons whenever we want," says Isobel, Bryan and Warren's Mother.

About GLH

Golden Lane Housing was set up by Mencap in 1998. We provide housing for some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

Finding suitable housing can be hard enough for anybody, but for people with a learning disability it can be almost impossible. Only 16% of people with a learning disability live in their own accommodation – most live in institutions or with parents who are often finding it difficult to cope and worry about the future.

For nineteen years, we've continuously found new ways to provide quality homes for people with a learning disability in their community that are just right. Some of these include specialist adaptations, assistive technology and personalised fittings and decorations.

Meet the Trustees



Louise Li, chair



Manny Lewis



Stuart Kelly



Simon Beddow



Chris Barrett



Janet Brown



Stephen Jack

Company Secretary



Janine Tregelles

Delivering new services and solutions

New development

Since GLH was established, it has invested over £98 million in transforming the lives of people with a wider range of needs in more than 800 properties across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

GLH's housing options include:

Purchased – properties built or bought and adapted by GLH

Leased – properties leased by GLH from social, private or family landlords

Managed – properties managed on behalf of local authorities or support providers

During the year April 2016 to March 2017 GLH:

Completed 93 properties providing 194 tenancies

Purchased 14 properties providing housing for 35 people including our first purchase in Northern Ireland

Leased 61 properties providing housing for 92 people

Managed 18 properties for 67 new tenants which is managed for support providers

Locations of new tenancies

This year GLH has worked across 45 local authorities with 28 national and local support providers including Mencap:

London	- Ilford, Haringey, Enfield and Southwark
South East	- Surrey, Hampshire, Berkshire, West Sussex and Buckinghamshire
East of England	- Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk
South West	- Bristol, Wiltshire, Dorset, Devon and Gloucestershire
West Midlands	- Worcestershire, Staffordshire and Solihull
East Midlands	- Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire
Yorkshire and Humber	- East Riding, North Lincolnshire and Sheffield
North West	- Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cumbria
North East	- Northumberland
North Ireland	- Bangor and Derry

Impact of the Golden Lane Housing Bond

This year we have housed 27 people using funds from our £11 million 2014 Retail Charity Bond. Overall 112 people with a learning disability and their family members will benefit from the 2014 investment.

The majority of our new tenants have moderate to severe learning disabilities and have substantial support needs. Tenants benefit from having security of tenure, safe and appropriately adapted accommodation. We continue to assess the impact of this investment and our findings shows how the move to a GLH property continues to enable people to lead significantly enriched lives. They are achieving outcomes which they themselves have set in relation to choice, rights, safety, relationships, emotional, physical and material wellbeing, personal development and community inclusion. You can find out more in our [Social Impact Report](#).

Leanne's story

"I've supported her over many years and seen the impact living independently has had on her, and in her life. When they were told Golden Lane Housing could buy them a bungalow using the bond monies, they couldn't wait. GLH made quite a few changes, now it's perfect for them. I can't believe how far she has come and her confidence is still growing, it's fabulous."

Read more about this story at www.glh.org.uk/leanne

"This move has really helped her, she's more relaxed and happier in herself." Nancy Bracken, support worker."



People living in their homes

Specialist housing advice

GLH has a long track record of providing advice and support to people with a learning disability, families, trusts, commissioners and providers on a wide range of housing and support matters. This year GLH has been supporting NHS England and a number of local authorities with their housing plans.

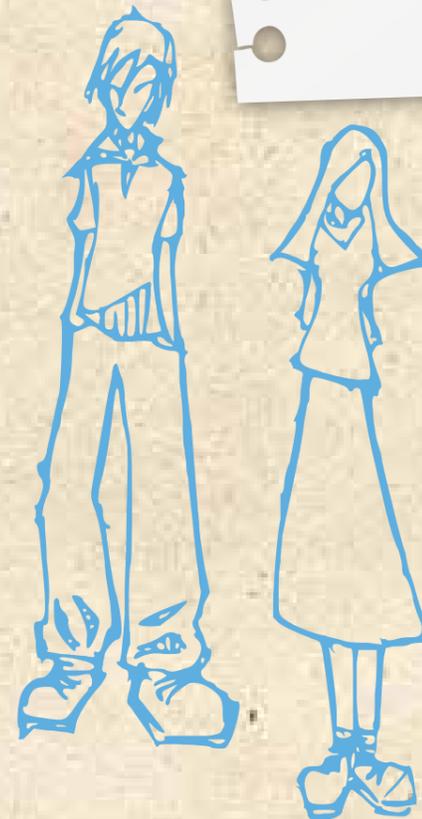
We are very happy to have been working with Royal Borough of Greenwich to co-produce their learning disability housing strategy and deliver the plan up to 2021. We have a new project team engaging with people with a learning disability, families and key organisations to support the development of a plan. This housing strategy will be published at the end of 2017 with key recommendations to increase housing choice and quality in Royal Greenwich.

Helping tenants

At Golden Lane Housing we want all our tenants to be happy and safe in their homes and to flourish in their lives.

The services we provide are there to support our tenants to manage, sustain and thrive in their tenancies. We work with a range of people including families, advocates, social services and care providers to help us achieve positive outcomes.

- Our housing officers spend time with people at the start of their tenancy to help them understand their rights and responsibilities of living in the community
- We have developed our landlord services by introducing a GLH wide approach, so every member of our teams who visits a service for whatever reason is able to consider the wider wellbeing of our tenants
- This means we have increased the number of visits undertaken to 1,055 last year to check on homes and the wellbeing of tenants using mobile technology to record outcomes
- We dealt with 83 safeguarding alerts and concerns raised by our teams by working with social care and support providers to achieve positive outcomes for tenants



Reducing empty homes

As well as developing new housing we are able to offer housing to people nominated by their local authority as a result of someone moving on from their existing home.

- Last year we successfully provided a new home to 127 people through filling empty bed spaces after someone had move out
- We have worked to reduce the number of empty bed spaces we have by talking to local authorities to see how we can improve identifying people who need our housing
- The money we lost through having empty bed spaces last year was 4.9% of our income. This was better than our target of 6%
- We've improved our recording systems and introduced new ways of working to raise awareness of our housing vacancies, such as holding open days and advertising vacancies
- We disposed of 2 properties in 2016/17 where there was no longer demand and used this money to buy and develop new services in other areas.

Gudrun and Fred's story

Gudrun and Fred are the first people Golden Lane Housing (GLH) helped in 1998 to find a place to call home. Gudrun part bought her home with Mencap through a shared ownership approach and GLH has helped manage the property since.

By providing supported landlord services, GLH makes sure they are happy in their home year on year, supports with tenancy matters and carries out repairs.

To help us celebrate Mencap's 70th birthday, they share their story.

Read more about it www.glh.org.uk/gudrun-fred

"GLH visit us every year, they're very helpful. We know that we can pick up the phone if we've got any problems with our house." **Gudrun and Fred, GLH tenants**



Rents and service charges

Making sure we receive rent on time is important and means we can fund the services we provide to all tenants.

- We understand changes under the welfare reforms have made it harder for our tenants to budget, and there has been uncertainty about the future funding of supported housing. We have worked hard to help when difficulties with payments arise and to support our tenants with their entitlement to housing and council tax benefit
- The housing income team increased the amount of rent we collected to 96.74% of rent due and we met our performance target for tenant arrears
- 88% of tenants said they were satisfied their rent provided good value for money and 92% were satisfied their service charge provided good value for money
- Last year we reviewed the agreement GLH has with the partners we work with to ensure we had the best interests of our tenants at the centre of our joint working arrangements
- We achieved a review of services charges that resulted in improvements in how we accurately record information
- Following a review of our council tax process an additional member of staff was recruited which resulted in increasing the number of exemptions by local authorities
- We've also produced new council tax information for tenants to help them apply for exemptions where they are liable for payment

Repairs and maintenance

We always strive to improve the service we give to our tenants and invest in their homes so they continue being a great place to live.

Maintenance works

£2,613,081 was the total spent on maintenance work in tenant's homes across the country.

Planned maintenance work

The planned maintenance budget was apportioned across the regions in line with the asset management information obtained from the conditions surveys completed.

How was the money spent?

- £162,446 - bathrooms in 40 properties
 - £66,806 - doors and windows in 26 properties
 - £94,625 - electrical decorations in 19 properties
 - £44,755 - external decorations in 24 properties
 - £149,689 - external works in 46 properties
 - £147,623 - heating in 39 properties
 - £97,326 - internal decorations in 51 properties
 - £99,512 - kitchens in 16 properties
 - £44,805 - roofing in 8 properties
- Total **£907,588**

Aids and adaptations

Supporting people to maintain their independence.

Environmental works

Supporting the housing team with items normally covered within reactive, voids and compliance of planned budgets.

How was the money spent?

- £307 - spent on doors and windows in 2 properties
 - £824 - spent on electrical works in 1 property
 - £16,104 - spent on external work in 10 properties
 - £1,362 - spent on low level bath in 1 property
 - £3,960 - spent on rubbish removal in 5 properties
 - £12,034 - spent on tree and vegetation removal in 14 properties
 - £1,765 - spent on heating in 1 property
 - £1,609 - spent on safety and security in 4 properties
- Total **£37,965**

How was the money spent?

- £326 - spent on a canopy in 1 property
 - £2524 - spent on doors and windows in 3 properties
 - £1233 - spent on electrical in 6 properties
 - £3438 - spent on grab rails in 17 properties
 - £2258 - spent on ramps in 4 properties
 - £438 - spent on security in 1 property
 - £1373 - spent on safety and security in 9 properties
 - £2,067 - spent on plumbing works in 6 properties
- Total **£13,657**



Tenant survey

100% of tenants were satisfied with the planned maintenance service they received.

Property services

- £1,181,792 was invested in repair work, including £684,876 on reactive repairs, £351,866 to make homes safe and meet statutory or legal requirements and £145,050 spent on vacant properties or vacant rooms
- We made a saving of £48,000 from our reactive repairs budget by collaborating with contractors and suppliers on the delivery of the service which was reinvested into other works
- We carried out 5,740 reactive repairs. Of these, 29% were emergency repairs, 35.5% urgent repairs and 35.5% routine repairs
- Our aim is to complete work within or ahead of its target. Overall, 90% of repairs were completed within target; 92.9% were emergencies, 88.20% urgent repairs and 90.6% routine works
- Every repair receives a customer satisfaction survey. Out of the 5,740 repairs raised we received 1,136 surveys back, and 94.6% of tenants that responded were satisfied with the work
- Quality checks were carried out on 191 properties to make sure tenants were happy with the repair work in their homes, this was 5% of the total jobs raised

Compliance

- We have continued to work and improve our compliance making our homes safe. 773 properties received a gas safety check, 135 properties had their 5 yearly electrical safety check, 25 properties had new fire risk assessments and 62 homes had a re-inspection for asbestos
- We have recruited an additional 2 staff within the repairs team to support the growth of the business

In-house repairs team

Our award winning in-house repairs team provides a personalised general repairs service to tenants across the North and Central England.

- 1,050 repair jobs were issued with 954 jobs completed ahead or within time
- 854 jobs were completed within one visit, equating to 82% of the jobs received
- 99.8% of customers were satisfied or extremely satisfied with this service

The in-house team made a surplus of £33,000, this money was spent on other essential repairs. The service has delivered and exceeded expectations, watch this space we will be expanding further!

Angela and Sarah's story

Sarah and Angela have lived together in Warminster for many years. They wanted to update their home and look at ways to improve the bathroom due to their mobility.

Sarah and Angela explain, "The occupational therapist did an assessment of our bathroom but were unable to fund a wet room as they felt that we could still get in and out of the shower without assistance. We were really happy when we found out that Golden Lane Housing were going to change it into a wet room.

Read more about it www.glh.org.uk/angela-sarah



It's made a big difference. There are no steps, and it's a big area. We're really pleased." Angela and Sarah, GLH tenants

Getting involved

From recruiting new staff to our wider campaign work, we involve tenants and other people important in their lives. That's how we continue to develop and grow.

Tenant survey

Every year we ask tenants what they think about our services. Some of the questions are solely about our services, and others are benchmarked against industry standard questions. We are part of a benchmarking club for supported housing providers and are able to compare our results and performance against other similar housing associations.

We received 312 completed tenant surveys. We've compared the results from the previous year to show the improvements:

	2015/16	2016/17
Neighbourhood	94%	94%
Service charges provide good value for money	90%	92%
Rent provides good value	88%	88%
Overall service we provide	85%	91%
Overall quality of a person's home	87%	89%
GLH listens and acts on tenants' views	86%	89%
Quality of repair work	82%	86%
GLH deals with tenants repairs	74%	79%

Tessa's story

On 7 March 2017, Tessa Bolt made history as the first known person with Down's syndrome to give oral evidence to a parliamentary committee.

GLH tenant, Tessa gave evidence about supported housing to the Joint Select Committee who were assessing the government's plans to overhaul the supported housing sector. "I love my home, I have really lovely housemates and have learnt so many new skills since moving. Supported housing gives me security and it lets me be independent, something everyone with a learning disability should have."

Read more about Tessa's story at www.glh.org.uk/tessa

"I am really happy that the committee will get to hear about it from someone who has a learning disability and uses supported housing." **Tessa Bolt, GLH tenant**



With the help of our tenants

This year tenants have been involved in a wide range of activities:

- The recruitment of our income team manager and income team assistants included at least one person with a learning disability
- Tenants have been learning more about what we do by spending time with the income team and shadowing a housing officer for a day
- Our tenants Alex and Paul took to the road with operatives from our in-house repairs team to gain a basic knowledge and find out more about their work
- Social isolation is a huge issue for people with a learning disability. Our tenants took part in meetings around the country to discuss friendships during Mencap's Learning Disability Week, and 8 people were involved in telling their stories through published case studies
- 24 tenants from across the country shared their stories about their lives and important matters
- At our staff day, a tenant came to share his joyful story about living independently and the positive impact it has had on his life
- Together with GLH, Maria and Rachael designed their garden. With the help of volunteers and the generous donations from Forrest Recruitment, J.Tomlinson, Jewson and Dog and Bone pub we transformed it into a place they could relax and enjoy
- On #HousingDay, four tenants worked with members across the teams at our Manchester Office. Together we supported Gas Safety Week as tenants designed an easy-read leaflet that was sent to people's homes, and gave their ideas for other information we publish
- During national Housing Week we promoted tenants enjoying life, doing the things they want to do here and now. Some of these included turning healthy eating into a lifestyle, why friendships are important and how a new accessible shiny kitchen has become the hub of their home and changed everyone's lives
- A tenant gave an inspiring presentation to GLH's board of trustees about living with friends and the work she's been doing as a GLH/Mencap campaigner
- Tenants from across the country supported our campaigning work alongside Mencap on the future funding of supported housing



Customer services

We retained our Customer Service Excellence Standard and gained a further Compliance Plus for *“There is a corporate commitment to putting the customer at the heart of service delivery and leaders in our organisation actively support this and advocate for the customer”*. This brings the total of Compliance Plus to 8 and gained full compliance in Customer Service.

Complaints

We received 32 complaints during the year, this has been an increase by 6 compared to the previous year.

Maintenance received 17 complaints compared to 22 the previous year.

Planned maintenance received 4 complaints relating to outstanding works and timescales.

Housing management received 5 complaints, 3 of these related to tenancy management where tenants raised concerns about people who they shared their home with.

Development received 2 complaints, 1 was regarding the enquiry process and the time scales, and the second was a border issue with a neighbour.

Neighbour issues. We received 4 complaints, 2 were noise related, 1 was about parking and 1 was about ASB.

88% of complaints were investigated and responded to within 10 working days and no further action was required. The remaining 12% were responded to and follow up action was agreed with the complainant.

72% of all complaint satisfaction surveys said they were satisfied with the complaint process. The remaining 28% said they were dissatisfied with the length of time it took to resolve their complaint.

Lessons learnt

We were experiencing difficulties with external contractors, and a change in their personnel has improved the relationship between us. Recruiting two new members within the repairs team has supported with the delivery of the service, and two new operatives in our in-house repairs team covering more areas has resulted in a better rate of satisfaction. Recruiting a leasehold officer to work with head landlords has also provided a better service. By continually reviewing our contractors we make sure they align to our values.

In addition, our housing team have been working with our tenants to resolve neighbour issues and help build good relationships through understanding and mediation.

Telephone calls

GLH's head office is based at the Centre of Engagement in the North in Manchester. The main telephone system offers customers the option to speak to teams directly:

- The customer service team received 7,286 calls and made 3,758 calls. 97% were answered within 7 seconds
- The repairs team made and received 13,455 calls and made 14,524 calls. 96% were answered within 7 seconds
- The housing team answered 1,170 calls and made 955 calls. 87% were answered within 7 seconds
- The housing finance team answered 1,850 calls and made 2,171 calls. 87% were answered within 7 seconds
- The housing income team option is new and the team are able to discuss things like rent, service charge, housing benefit and council tax with our tenants and customers.

Jamie, Chris, Alex and Michael's garden makeover

Together with tenants, GLH's in-house repairs team, J Tomlinson Ltd, Jewson, Barlows and Mencap we completed a garden makeover in Stockport. Jamie, Chris, Alex and Michael garden surrounds their home. It had become badly overgrown with areas they couldn't access. The team worked tirelessly on the front garden, side and back garden. Throughout the day, GLH tenant Jamie, had a good chat with the team. Now Chris, Jamie, Alex and Michael can enjoy and relax in their garden.

Read more about their story at www.glh.org.uk/garden



“The garden looks brilliant! We can also use the area by the side of the bungalow to relax as the trees have gone.”
Chris, GLH tenant

Making the most out of money



We are committed to managing our resources to provide cost effective, quality services to tenants and to invest in new homes and services for future tenants

Money

We aim to pay the right price for the goods and services we buy whilst understanding that the right price is not always the cheapest. This focus on delivering Value for Money and continuous improvement has enabled us to invest in keeping Golden Lane Housing strong.

We also aim to get the best financial returns from the homes we own by planning and reviewing how much we spend on those homes and what we spend that money on.

The Value for Money standard says that we should:

- Provide value for money in everything we do, via effective, efficient, high quality services and homes that meet your needs.

Repairs and maintenance

We continue to monitor costs to provide good value for money without affecting the standard of work, including the average reactive repair cost. By investing in our properties we are able to reduce the demand for reactive repairs, along with improving the quality of our homes. We have improved some of our product lists for planned maintenance to use modern and longer lasting products.

Energy saving

Our aim is for all of our properties to have a minimum Energy Performance Certificate rating of Level D. We support tenants to claim for grants to make improvements which reduce the cost of energy bills and minimises impact on the environment. So far, we have secured funding for cavity wall insulation and loft insulation upgrades in a number of our properties. As part of GLH planned works we have a programme of investment that improves our tenants' lives as well as maintaining our assets. Some examples of these works include: fitting high performance double glazed window units to reduce heat loss and replacing boilers with 'A rated' energy efficient appliances.

Income and expenditure

All financial surpluses are used to buy adapt and undertake work on more homes for people with a learning disability.

Actual (£)	2016/17	2015/16
Total income	14,580,762	13,314,622
Expenditure	12,024,596	11,565,608
Net surplus	2,556,166	1,749,015

How we spent each £1 we received in rent

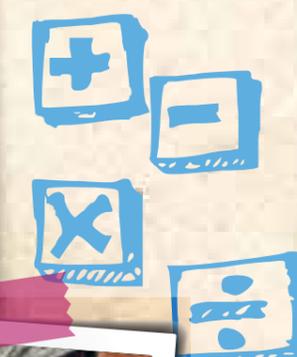
- £0.28 Rent to other landlords for leased properties
- £0.21 Property maintenance including major repairs and compliance work
- £0.20 Staffing costs
- £0.16 Interest charges on mortgages
- £0.07 Depreciation on the property costs
- £0.07 Services costs, such as office costs, IT, insurance
- £0.01 Bad debt/rent owed

We have calculated our headline social housing cost per unit based on our costs defined in the same way as used by the HCA. It gives a headline social housing cost per unit for GLH of £5,463.

These figures are represented in the table below:

Headline social housing costs per unit based on HCA research

Baseline 2014/15 (including 100%)	14,100
GLH 2015/16	5,420
GLH 2016/17	5,463



Campaigning for change

YES! ☆ ☆

GLH has continued to campaign for the rights of people with a learning disability and their families.

One of our tenants, Tessa, gave evidence in person to the Joint Select Committee looking at the future funding of supported housing, which is believed to be the first time someone with a learning disability has given evidence to this type of committee. She explained to the committee how important her tenancy was and described the threat to her security caused by the government's proposals on the future funding of supported housing.

Our director has met with Ministers on this issue and some of our tenants have shown MPs and senior government officials around their home and talked about why it is important to them. We also submitted detailed responses to the government's consultation paper on capping housing benefits.

At the time of publication, the government announced that the proposed local housing allowance (LHA) cap for social housing will not now take place in April 2019. The government have confirmed that long-term supported housing will continue to be paid through the welfare system past 2020. There is an opportunity for organisations like GLH to work with them to ensure people with a learning disability continue to have a legal right to have their reasonable housing cost met. We will continue to work with Mencap and supported housing organisations on this important issue.

We are pleased that the government has responded to evidence from GLH and other organisations in dropping the proposed LHA cap. This follows our representation on the government's Task and Finish Group on this matter, our submissions to the Consultation Paper and the Joint Select Committee, and the visits of many MPs to see our properties. We are also indebted to our tenants including Tessa (see above) for their involvement on this issue.



Looking ahead

It looks like 2018 will be an exciting year for GLH. We will be using our new capital resources to invest in buying and adapting housing across the country for people with a learning disability. In those homes we will be providing bespoke adaptations and assistive technology designed around the needs and preferences of our tenants so that they can live truly fulfilling and connected lives. We will also be expanding our Great Tenants scheme where we lease housing from other landlords and sub-let it to our tenants. We'll be further developing our successful in-house repairs team so that it will cover most parts of the country.

We'll visit every one of our properties in the coming year and talk with our tenants and their carers about the service. We'll continue to make improvements to what we do based on these conversations and to offer as much choice as possible. We have a substantial investment programme in our housing which will enable us to make sure we continue to provide high quality homes that meet the needs and preferences of our tenants.

We are keen to work with a range of partner organisations and individuals to make all this happen. If you'd like to talk to us about joining in that journey, or if what you have seen and read in this booklet has touched you in any way, please do feel free to get in touch.

Best wishes for 2018.

Alastair Graham

Director, Golden Lane Housing



Get in touch

Golden Lane Housing
1st Floor
Lowry House
550 Mauldeth Road
Manchester
M21 7AA

0300 003 7007
enquiries@glh.org.uk
www.glh.org.uk
@GoldenLaneHouse



Golden Lane Housing

working in partnership with  mencap