

Annual report 2018

Housing you
can build your
life around



Golden Lane Housing

working in partnership with  mencap



Welcome to our Annual report

This year we celebrate our 20th birthday and it fills us with enormous pride what Golden Lane Housing (GLH) has achieved over this time. We have helped over 3,500 people into new homes and now have over 1,850 tenants across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Last year we created 163 new tenancies and provided housing advice to over 600 people. We are proud of an organisation that has the top rating of V1 G1 from our regulator, the Regulator of Social Housing, and awarded a 3 star rating by Best Companies and listed number 8 in 'The Sunday Times Top 100 Best Not-For-Profit Organisations to Work For' in the UK.

Nationally, we have continued to campaign on the proposed changes to the funding of supported housing. We are delighted that the government announced in August 2018 that supported housing would continue to be funded through the welfare system. This ends three years

of uncertainty for the sector. We will continue to raise awareness on the impact of specialist supported housing to ensure the new funding scheme meets the needs of our tenants.

We would like to thank our tenants, our GLH staff team, our Mencap colleagues, our trustees and our many partners and supporters. We look forward to working with everyone to continue to provide new housing solutions, continue to improve the quality of our services, and support our tenants to continue to build their lives in their communities.

We hope you find our annual report informative and demonstrates the real impact that we make to the lives of people with a learning disability and their families.

Louise Li
Chair

John Verge
Director

About GLH

For twenty years, we've been here to make sure that people with a learning disability can live their lives as they choose, are valued equally and listened to.

From day one, we've sat down with people with a learning disability, families and carers to find out the person's wants and needs before finding the right home. During our 20th birthday celebrations

we're using the sofa conversation to share the experiences of our tenants living independently and others who we work with.

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.

Meet the trustees



Louise Li, chair

Simon Beddow

Chris Barrett

Stephen Jack

Ralph Middlemore



Neil Hadden

Charles Cleal

Brendan Whitworth

Lorraine Ford

Janine Tregelles,
Company secretary

We would like to say a special thank you to Stuart Kelly and Manny Lewis who stepped down from their role as trustees in late 2018. They have given their expertise and dedication over many years and have helped us to develop and provide more housing for people with a learning disability.



“It’s been the best 20 years of my life, it’s just heaven!” says June.

June’s story

GLH’s first tenant, June has lived in her flat for 20 years and explains what it means to her.

“I’d never lived on my own before,” says June. “One of the best things is having a front door and what that represents. Everything in the flat is mine, and I decide who comes in and when. I’ve learnt how to do things for myself. Having your independence is important, and that’s what I’ve got, I’m very happy.”

Read more about June’s story at: www.glh.org.uk/june

About GLH

Meet the leadership team



John Verge,
Director

Rod Dugher,
Head of housing

Melissa O'Donnell,
Head of operations

Adele Currie,
Business people partner

Marilynne Davis,
Head of finance



AWARDS

Listed number 8 in The Sunday Times Top 100 Best Not-For-Profit Organisations to Work For

Rated G1/V1 by the Regulator of Social Housing 2018

The Supported Housing Award 2018 at the National Learning Disability & Autism Awards

Most Inspiring Contractor Award 2018 at the Inspire Awards UK

Best Maintenance and Service Award 2018 at the Northern Housing Awards

Project of the Year 2017 at the Building Communities Awards

Customer Service Excellent Standard



“We wanted an organisation who was trusted and knowledgeable and could engage local people and politicians,” says Simon Pearce, the Royal Borough of Greenwich

The Royal Borough of Greenwich’s story

Simon Pearce, director of health and adult services from the Royal Borough of Greenwich talks about our partnership work.

“GLH were commissioned to produce a report that led to the production of our housing strategy that was launched earlier this year. We needed some help and support on how to engage with people with a learning disability and families to support our housing priorities for the next five years. We have many young people transitioning and an older population and we wanted to know how to make best use of our resources and offer people better options. GLH were the organisation that we wanted to do work with.”

Delivering new services and solutions

New development

Since its inception, GLH has invested over £102.6 million in providing specialist housing to adults with a learning disability 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 2017 to March 2018 GLH:

completed	104 properties providing 163 tenancies
purchased	8 properties providing housing for 21 people including 8 new tenancies in Northern Ireland
leased	63 properties providing housing for 101 people
managed	33 properties for 41 new tenants which are managed for support providers. Through our campaigning work with Mencap we continually work towards making this a reality.

Locations of new tenancies

This year GLH has worked across 43 local authorities with 30 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, Coventry, Birmingham and Solihull
East Midlands	- Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire
Yorks and Humber	- East Riding, Lincolnshire and Sheffield
North West	- Greater Manchester, Merseyside and the Wirral
North East	- Northumberland
Northern Ireland	- Bangor and Derry.

Delivering new services and solutions

Impact of the Golden Lane Housing capital raise

This year we have housed 14 people from our capital funding and bond monies, and created 7 new tenancies by adapting properties already owned by GLH. Many more properties are in the process of being purchased or sought ready for the coming financial year.

The majority of tenants in our purchased properties tend to have moderate to high needs including some with significant physical needs. Properties are tailored to meet people's varying needs to ensure maximum independence for people in their new homes.

Tenants benefit from having security of tenure, safe and appropriately adapted accommodation. As an organisation we are committed to the ongoing assessment of how housing impacts on the lives of our tenants and their families following a move.

Donation

Surrey County Council made a grant of £15,000 through their Transforming Care Programme to enable GLH to adapt a property to make it just right for a person moving out of hospital into supported housing.

Specialist housing advice

We are very happy to have been working with the Royal Borough of Greenwich to produce a report that helped to develop their learning disability housing strategy and deliver the plan up to 2022. The project team now includes a housing broker providing support to access suitable accommodation across the Royal Borough of Greenwich.



People living in their homes

Housing tenancy – how we performed

	2017/18	2016/17
Number of voids filled	138	135
Void % rates	4.8%	4.9%
% current & past rent collected	97.8%	96.7%
% rent lost through Empty properties	4.8%	4.7%
% debt from income	4.1%	5.7%
Number of tenants contributing to their rent	206	182
% tenants satisfied their rent charges provided value for money	87%	88%
% tenants satisfied their service charges provided value for money	90%	92%

Tenant wellbeing

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 tenancy. We do this by visiting our tenants in their homes to review their individual circumstances and property, so we can offer a housing service tailored to our tenants needs.

During 2017/18, we visited 1,046 tenant's homes; this is on average 20 visits a week or almost 3 visits a day from GLH staff.

In our 2017/18 Tenant satisfaction survey 97% of our tenants said they were happy with their neighbourhood.





***“GLH are extremely good and positive,”
says Trish, Kirsty’s Mum.***

Kirsty’s story

Kirsty lives with friends in Derbyshire. Her Mum, Trish explains how GLH has supported her daughter.

“Kirsty has lived in two houses, which have been overseen by Emily and Joe from GLH, who are just lovely people and are always there when you have a problem. I would definitely recommend GLH, we have been with another company before but there is just no comparison. The treatment you get from GLH is great, the people are so nice when you ring up they are just very supportive.”

People living in their homes

Safeguarding

Following the introduction of the Care Act 2014, housing providers are recognised as one of the lead organisations to play a fundamental role in safeguarding vulnerable adults from abuse. The Act acknowledges that frontline staff within housing associations have more face-to-face contact with vulnerable adults than many in adult social care.

What we did

Golden Lane Housing works closely with safeguarding adult boards, community police officers and key members of adult social care.

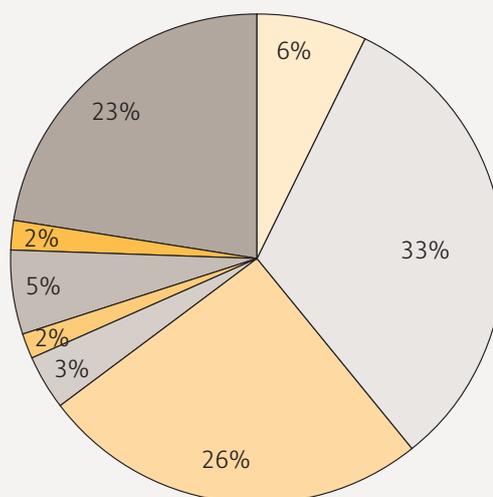
During the year 2017/18:

- We have worked alongside Royal Mencap Society's Safeguarding Panel and other key housing providers, to continue to develop a best practice approach.
 - We have developed a range of tools for staff to assist them in supporting our vulnerable tenants, through the complex safeguarding proceedings that local authority safeguarding adult boards adhere to.
 - We have implemented robust new policies and procedures.
 - Staff completed an e-learning training module on safeguarding adults and Capsticks legal firm delivered bespoke training specifically to meet the needs of our organisation.
 - Developed our safeguarding approach, 'It matters'.
- Held 4 engagement events attended by over 30 tenants.
 - Our safeguarding work was audited in July 2017 by Beever and Struthers with substantial assurance.

The difference this has made during 2017/18

During 2017/18, we raised 27 alerts to local authorities compared to 23 in the previous year.

Number of alerts raised to the local authority



- Emotional/psychological
- Self neglect
- Physical
- Sexual
- Discriminatory
- Financial
- Environmental
- Notice of intention to seek possession served to GLH

People living in their homes

Reducing empty homes

We disposed of 5 properties in 2017/18 where there was no longer demand and used this money to buy and develop new services in other areas.

Rents and service charges

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

- We have supported all new tenants to claim housing benefit to ensure they received maximum benefit entitlement to meet their rent.
- We produced new council tax information for tenants, to help them apply for exemptions where they are liable for payment. To continue our efforts in ensuring affordability of tenancies we have supported 298 of our tenants in successfully claiming council tax exemptions on their homes.
- We 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.
- A service charge standards review is underway and through tenant involvement, we are reviewing our approach and agreeing the service standards that are important to them.

- Following Beever and Struthers audit in March 2018, we have developed an improvement plan for service charge delivery, produced a new policy and improved the information in our rent statements and tenancy agreements.

Looking to the future

Improvement plans and objectives

To ensure we continue to provide value for money we have plans to review each of our services to make sure they are sustainable. This means for example if we have an empty property where there is no demand identified, we quickly look at options including disposal. Where we sell a property, we can reinvest the money in new homes. We have also identified we can help more of our tenants obtain discount with their council tax and at the same time reduce the liability for GLH.

We want to ensure we continue to provide a high quality, caring and efficient housing service. Our service plans for the year ahead include launching our 'It matters' approach to ensure that our tenants understand the role that we play as landlord in helping to keep them safe. In addition, we are in the process of reviewing how people access our housing to ensure we are fair and open to applicants and work with local authorities to make sure the housing we provide is what's needed locally. Our board of trustees have challenged us to make sure tenants have an active role in looking at the services we provide and making sure they meet agreed expectations. We have already started looking at how we improve our engagement approach, working alongside tenants with the aim of improving their skills and knowledge to be able to scrutinise our work.

Repairs and maintenance

We are always working towards an improved service delivery, ensuring we provide value for money investing funds into properties so they continue being great places for people to live.

Planned maintenance work

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

How was the money spent?

Planned maintenance	Number of properties	Total inc. VAT
Bathroom renewal	36	£254,561
Doors and windows renewal	12	£61,355
Electric renewal	2	£4,926
External decorations renewal	8	£51,790
External works renewal	16	£91,347
Heating renewal	15	£85,847
Internal decorations renewal	31	£142,436
Kitchen renewal	26	£307,491
Roofing renewal	3	£5,594
Grand total including VAT	149	£1,005,347

Aids and adaptations

Supporting people to maintain their independence.

Adaptation	Number of properties	Total inc. VAT
Kitchen modification	1	£168
Joinery	5	£1,218
Electrical	6	£972
Grab rails	14	£3,307
Equipment	3	£2,901
Flooring	1	£240
Gas work	3	£599
Plumbing works	11	£7,894
Grand total including VAT	44	£17,299





*“I feel I am creating a home for life,”
says Suzannah Tynan, private landlord*

Private landlord’s story

Private landlord, Suzannah Tynan works with GLH to provide the right housing for our tenants in Nottingham.

“I was introduced to GLH by a colleague who provides support and staff for supported living services. When I knew what GLH did and heard of all the successful stories, I loved it and I was excited to learn more. I feel I am creating a home for life, which is very different to a six-month’s private tenancy, and I enjoy that. It is more involving but the harder work is definitely worth it.”

Repairs and maintenance

Environmental works

Supporting tenants with requests to improve the environment in which they live.

Description of work	Number of properties	Total inc. VAT
Joinery work	2	£622
Electrical works	8	£2,450
External works	7	£6,085
Flooring	4	£915
Gardens	4	£2,191
Trees	8	£5,641
Heating	1	£200
Internal work	4	£1,045
Grand total including VAT	38	£19,149



Tenant survey

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

Property services

- £1,042,414 was invested in repair work, including £740,737 on reactive repairs, £301,677 to make homes safe and meet statutory or legal requirements and £165,801 spent on vacant properties or vacant rooms
- We made a saving of £83,000 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 6,516 reactive repairs. Of these, 17% were emergency repairs, 22% urgent repairs and 61% routine repairs
- Our aim is to complete work within or ahead of its target. Overall, 94% of repairs were completed within target; 94.3% were emergencies, 90.3% urgent repairs and 95.5% routine works
- Every repair receives a customer satisfaction survey. Out of the 6,516 repairs raised we received 2,108 surveys back, and 97% of tenants that responded were satisfied with the work
- Quality checks were carried out on 890 properties to make sure tenants were happy with the repair work in their homes, this was 14% of the total jobs raised.

Repairs and maintenance

Compliance

- We have continued to work and improve our compliance making our homes safe. 799 properties received a gas safety check, 93 properties had their 5 yearly electrical safety check, 25 properties had new fire risk assessments.
- 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.

- 1,387 repairs were issued with a 99.20% of day-to-day jobs completed ahead or within time.
- 77% of jobs were completed within one visit.
- 99.5% of customers were satisfied or extremely satisfied with this service

The in-house team made a surplus of £27,850; this money was spent on other essential repairs. The service has delivered and exceeded expectations, watch this space we will be expanding further!



Getting involved

With the help of our tenants

At GLH we recognise the key role our customers make in delivering our services. We have completed a project with tenants to seek their opinions on areas of work and different activities GLH is involved in, to establish what and how they would like to be involved going forward.

This project group have provided their report that outlines their findings and recommendations. This is an information report to update the board of trustees on the proposals to continue to develop our engagement approach. Housing officers working with tenants will follow up the recommended actions to improve our engagement.

The board of trustees agreed to receive regular updates on engagement activities and progress on how we could involve more tenants in activities.

Tenant engagement activities

- Tenants have supported with 2 interview and recruitment activities in Manchester.
- We held a tenant engagement event in Warminster regarding the rehousing of tenants as part of an ongoing project of work.
- One of our tenants took part in 'A tenant on the road day' by travelling in the van with an operative from our in-house repairs team to experience what it is like to deliver our repairs services directly to our tenants in their homes.

- In Truro we held a meeting for a local group to support and advise on Mencap's 'Treat me well' campaign. This is an ongoing activity and project work continues.
- 30 tenants took part in 'It matters' focus groups to help us agree our service standards and understand what they needed from our safeguarding approach to keep them safe in their homes. We facilitated these events across the country including Bedfordshire, Middlesbrough, Grimsby, Shropshire and Penzance.
- Tessa Bolt, GLH tenant helped to launch Mencap's housing report 'Funding supported housing for all: Specialised Supported Housing for people with a learning disability'.





“I make my own choices and I get to live the life I want, something everyone has the right to,” says Tessa Bolt, GLH tenant

Tessa’s story

Tessa, who lives in specialised supported housing spoke in Parliament last year against cuts to Housing Benefit for people with a learning disability living in supported housing.

“I have Down’s syndrome and live in supported housing. Before then I lived with my parents. I couldn’t live on my own without support, but I don’t want full time care. After a lot of talking, my parents agreed and I now live in a house run by Golden Lane Housing, with Elizabeth and Katie, two other girls who have a learning disability. Supported housing means I can be independent but have day to day support from Mencap. That’s why I want the government to listen to Mencap and make sure that homes like mine are available to more people with a learning disability.”

Customer services

We are here to listen

We received 19 complaints during the year, this is a decrease of 13 complaints from the previous year.

Maintenance received 9 complaints compared to 17 in the previous year, 2 of these complaints were regarding issues with the contractors we used, 4 were related to the time it took to resolve a repair.

Planned maintenance received 4 complaints relating to outstanding works and timescales, they received 4 complaints the previous year.

Housing management received 5 complaints compared to 9 in the previous year, these concerned 2 anti-social behaviour issues, 2 rent payment and service charge queries, and a car parking dispute.

Development received 1 complaint compared to 2 complaints last year, this was related to a neighbour concern.

17 complaints were investigated and responded back to within 10 working days with no further action required.

The remaining 2 complaints were extended by a further 10 days to be investigated further and responded back to with follow up actions agreed with the complainant.

16 complainants indicated that they were satisfied with the complaint process and their complaint was dealt with satisfactory.

3 complainants said they were unhappy with the initial response but these were resolved after further investigation.

Lessons learnt

Feedback from our tenants has shown that now more repairs are being completed by our own in-house repairs team these are more successful than our previous contractors. As a result of this improvement we are planning to further expand our in-house repairs team to provide coverage over a great part of the country next year.

An additional assistant surveyor has been recruited to assist in the delivery of works across the central region to supporting with the delivery of major works in that area.

Telephone calls

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

- The customer services team received 6,550 calls and made 3,382 calls. 98% were answered within 7 seconds.
- The repairs team made 15,618 calls and received 123,699 calls. 99% were answered within 7 seconds.
- The housing team answered 1,289 calls and made 1,370 calls. 91% were answered within 7 seconds.
- The housing income team answered 1,423 calls and made 2,528 calls. 89% were answered within 7 seconds.

This does not include any telephone calls from 27 November 2017-19 January 2018 as we were in temporary office space due to an office move.



***“GLH were the housing association that came forward and said they wanted to work with us to develop the project and it has been fantastic.”
Rhiannon Miller, Nottinghamshire County Council.***

Nottinghamshire County Council’s story

GLH has worked with Nottinghamshire County Council for over 15 years. Rhiannon Miller from the younger adults project team talks about helping our tenants to live independently.

“Community living network was developed as we recognised there was a need for ‘what next’ for people living in supported housing, who had achieved a lot and needed to move on, but needed something before going on to live completely independently. We developed a network of housing close to each other that relies on some paid support and peer support.”

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 GLH 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. Our in-house repairs team undertake repair days to ensure our properties are kept up to standard in a cost efficient way reducing the number of reactive repairs calls. 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 that 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 (£)	2017/18	2016/17
Total income	£15,604,102	£14,580,762
Expenditure	£13,519,575	£12,024,596
Net surplus	£2,084,527	£2,556,166

Making the most out of money

How we spent each £1 we received in rent

£0.28 Rent to other landlords for leased properties

£0.24 Property maintenance including major repairs and compliance work

£0.20 Staffing costs

£0.14 Interest charges on mortgages

£0.06 Depreciation on the property costs

£0.08 Services costs, such as office costs, IT, insurance

£0.00 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 Regulator of Social Housing. It gives a headline social housing cost per unit for GLH of £6,098 as shown in the table below.

Headline social housing costs per unit based on Regulator of Social Housing research

Baseline 2014/15 (including 100% supported housing)	£14,100
GLH 2015/16	£5,420
GLH 2016/17	£5,463
GLH 2017/18	£6,098

Campaigning for change

Golden Lane Housing has continued its working partnership with Mencap, campaigning and seeking to influence the proposed changes to funding for housing, welfare reform and housing related benefits. Our aim has been to combine the housing expertise of GLH with the profile connections and influence of Mencap to create a voice on housing issues for people with a learning disability.

We participated in the research for Mencap's important report in partnership with Housing LIN "Funding supported housing for all: Specialised Supported Housing for people with a learning disability" published in April 2018. This highlighted the vital role specialised supported housing plays in ensuring people with a learning disability and complex needs have a home they can call their own. We want to see a future funding system for supported housing that is fair and enables providers to deliver quality housing that provides value for money. GLH tenant, Tessa Bolt launched the report to MPs, civil servants and sector organisations.

Later in August 2018, the government announced for all those living in supported housing that housing benefit would be kept in place, which was positive news for the sector. We welcomed this news and will continue to work with Mencap, national bodies, and supported housing organisations on this important issue.

You can read the report at:
www.glh.org.uk/housing-report

Looking ahead

Our 21st year looks like it will be our most exciting one ever. I am thrilled to be leading GLH following seven fantastic years of leadership by my predecessor Alastair Graham. We will continue to innovate in housing solutions for people with a learning disability - building, purchasing, adapting, leasing and managing housing across the country. We are continuing to find new ways to engage with our tenants and improve our services. We know that the responsiveness, reliability and quality of our repairs service is so important to our tenants. So that's why by the end of 2018 our in-house repairs team will cover the whole of England.

We have five new trustees who have joined our board of trustees, all of whom have immense experience in the housing sector and a real passion for what we do. I look forward to working with the board of trustees and the leadership team to develop our future plans for growth to have an even greater impact, and provide quality services that meet the increasing expectations of our

tenants. We wouldn't be able to do any of this without a caring, committed, passionate and skilled team who work for GLH who help develop new housing, visit our tenants, and ensure people are safe in their homes every day.

We will continue to raise awareness of the extent, cost, and impact of the specialist supported housing sector following Mencap and Housing LIN's major 2018 research project. We remain committed to building new partnerships with new organisations, and further develop our working arrangements with longstanding, valued partners. If you would like to talk to us about how we can work together to change the lives of people with a learning disability, please do get in touch with us.

Best wishes for 2019

John Verge
Director, Golden Lane Housing



Get in touch

Golden Lane Housing
Parkway Four
Parkway Business Centre
Princess Road
Manchester
M14 7HR

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



Golden Lane Housing

working in partnership with men-cap