

Public Document Pack



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

Bill Cullen MBA (ISM), BA(Hons) MRTPI
Chief Executive

Date: **14 May 2024**

To: Members of the Executive

Cllr SL Bray (Chair)
Cllr MC Bools (Vice-Chair)
Cllr MB Cartwright
Cllr WJ Crooks

Cllr L Hodgkins
Cllr KWP Lynch
Cllr MT Mullaney

Copy to all other Members of the Council

(other recipients for information)

Dear member,

There will be a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** in the De Montfort Suite, Hinckley Hub on **WEDNESDAY, 22 MAY 2024 at 6.30 pm** and your attendance is required.

The agenda for the meeting is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Owen'.

Rebecca Owen
Democratic Services Manager

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- *There are two escape routes from the Council Chamber – at the side and rear. Leave via the door closest to you.*
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- **Do not** use the lifts.
- **Do not** stop to collect belongings.

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Thank you

EXECUTIVE - 22 MAY 2024

A G E N D A

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **MINUTES (Pages 1 - 2)**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2023.

3. **ADDITIONAL URGENT BUSINESS BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

To be advised of any additional items of business which the Chair decides by reason of special circumstances shall be taken as matters of urgency at this meeting.

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive verbally from Members any disclosures which they are required to make in accordance with the Council's code of conduct or in pursuance of Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. **This is in addition to the need for such disclosure to be also given when the relevant matter is reached on the agenda.**

5. **QUESTIONS**

To hear any questions in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.

6. **SOCIAL HOUSING REGULATION UPDATE - HOUSING SERVICE COMPLIANCE & PERFORMANCE (Pages 3 - 50)**

To advise members of changes to legislation following the implementation of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023

7. **ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY**

(If any)

8. **ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DECIDES HAVE TO BE DEALT WITH AS MATTERS OF URGENCY**

As announced under item 3.

9. **MATTER FROM WHICH THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED**

To consider the passing of a resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 excluding the public from the undermentioned item of business on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 10 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

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HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE

13 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr MC Bools – Vice-Chair in the chair

Cllr MB Cartwright, Cllr WJ Crooks, Cllr L Hodgkins and Cllr MT Mullaney

Officers in attendance: Caroline Roffey and Rebecca Valentine-Wilkinson

118. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Bray and Councillor Lynch.

119. Minutes

It was moved by Councillor MT Mullaney, seconded by Councillor Crooks and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2023 be confirmed and signed by the chairman.

120. Declarations of interest

No interests were declared at this stage.

121. Carbon emissions reduction from light fleet (HVO)

Members received a report advising of the opportunity to expand hydrogenated vegetable oil (HVO) use across the light fleet and adoption of this fuel as a cost-effective way to reduce the councils carbon emissions.

Current excise rules classify HVO the same as fossil road diesel with 20% fuel duty, despite the fact that it had lower carbon emissions. Members requested that a letter be sent to government raising their concerns requesting a review of the fuel duty level on HVO.

Members welcomed the change for the fleet from diesel to a responsibly sourced bio diesel and the 90% reduction in emissions this achieved.

It was moved by Councillor Hodgkins, seconded by Councillor Cartwright and

RESOLVED –

- (i) Members endorsed and agreed the use of HVO in the light fleet (vans and cars) to reduce carbon emissions;
- (ii) Approved the supplementary budget set out in 5.1 of the report for the current financial year and future years; and

- (iii) Requested that the chief executive wrote to government ministers requesting a review of the fuel duty level on HVO to incentivise its use given the important role that this fuel had in reducing vehicle emissions in the short term, particularly from HGV's where battery and hydrogen technology was still developing.

(The Meeting closed at 6.40 pm)

CHAIR



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Executive 22 May 2024

Wards affected: All wards

Social Housing Regulation Update- Housing Service Compliance and Performance

Report of Director (Community Services)

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To advise members of changes to legislation following the implementation of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023.
- 1.2 To advise members of the council's progress with compliance in relation to key areas mandated by the Act.
- 2.2 To advise members of the new inspection routine set out by the Regulator of Social Housing.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That members note the new requirements of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023.
- 2.2 That members note and approve progress by the council's housing service in meeting new legislative requirements.
- 2.3 That members support and agree the revised Damp and Mould policy.
- 2.4 That members confirm publication of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures.
- 2.4 That members note the new inspection regime introduced from the 1 April 2024 and the expectation that the council house service will be inspected every four years.

3. Background to the report

3.1 Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy in June 2017, after a period of engagement and consultation with social housing residents across the country, the Government published a social housing green paper. The green paper aimed to redress the relationship between residents and landlords. In November 2020 the Government published the Social Housing white paper which provided a charter for social housing residents. The charter laid out measures to deliver on the Government's commitment to balance the relationship between residents and landlords, empowering residents to have their voices heard whilst requiring greater transparency, particularly around safety, from landlords.

3.1.2 The Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 came into effect in July 2023. The Act aims to improve the lives of social housing tenants by strengthening regulations and the power of the Regulator of Social Housing. The Act has three core elements which are:

- to facilitate a new, proactive consumer regulation regime;
- to refine the existing economic regulatory regime; and
- to strengthen the Regulator of Social Housing's (Regulator) powers to enforce the consumer and economic regimes.

3.3 Social Housing Standards

Regulatory Standards set the outcomes that social landlords in England must deliver for tenants.

3.4 Existing Economic Standards

3.4.1 These standards are already in place. The Rent Standard applies to all landlords registered with the regulator, including local authorities. The Governance and Financial Viability Standard, and the Value for Money standard do not apply to local authorities but apply to other registered providers and housing associations.

- **Governance and Financial Viability Standard** – outcomes about how landlords are run and their finances.
- **Value for Money Standard** – outcomes about landlords making the best use of their resources to deliver their purpose.
- **Rent Standard** – outcomes about rents, as set out in government policy.

3.5 Consumer Standards

Whilst Housing Consumer Standards were already in existence under previous regulation, they have been amended as follows into 4 key areas.

- **The Safety and Quality Standard** – outcomes about the safety and quality of tenants' homes.

- **The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard** – outcomes about how landlords provide information, listen to tenants, and act on their views.
- **The Neighbourhood and Community Standard** – outcomes about how landlords work with other organisations to help ensure tenants live in safe neighbourhoods.
- **The Tenancy Standard** – outcomes about how landlords allocate and let homes and manage tenancies.

3.6 Meeting the new Standards

- 3.6.1 The Act introduces over 80 specific requirements outlined within the consumer standards. As such, the housing service has been working towards ensuring compliance with the revised standards. A self-assessment exercise has been undertaken and can be found in Appendix A. The self-assessment also identifies areas of development.

4 Other key requirements of the Act

4.1 New Tenant Satisfaction Measures

The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard requires all registered providers of social housing to collect and report annually on their performance using a core set of defined measures; Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). From 1 April 2023 all registered providers were required to generate and report tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs).

- 4.1.2 The council's housing service commissioned Housemark to undertake its TSMs to ensure impartiality and compliance with regulation. The council is required to collect TSMs on an annual basis going forward. The TSMs are a set of 12 tenant perception measures, with a further 10 management measures. To ensure compliance, the survey must be representative and at least 15% of the overall tenant base. The TSM survey undertaken by Housemark equates to a survey size of 17%, which equates to 550 tenants.
- 4.1.3 Overall 82.5% of tenants reported satisfaction with the housing service. Benchmarking information suggests that service is in a good position regarding tenant satisfaction. Appendix B provides further summary of the council's TSM results. Landlord performance measures are also included. The council is required to publish these measures by 30 June 2024.

4.2 Tenant Safety: Awaab's Law

- 4.2.1 A key inclusion and amendment to the Social Housing Regulation Act is Awaab's Law which compels landlords to address issues in relation to damp and mould in set time limits. Revisions to processes in relation to damp and mould have recently been implemented and Appendix C provides a more detailed overview, including the revised damp and mould policy which has been coproduced with tenants.

- 4.2.3 The council is currently leading a project on behalf of the district and borough councils in Leicestershire. The project aims to provide a consistent approach to the identification and subsequent response to damp and mould concerns, identified across all tenures, by upskilling both housing and health frontline officers.

4.5 A Designated Person

- 4.5.1 The Act requires registered providers to nominate a designated person for health and safety issues. The Housing Assets and Support Teams Manager has been assigned this role. Quarterly performance meetings are held where all compliance and health and safety information collected by the service is reviewed.

4.6 Professionalism

- 4.6.1 The Social Housing Regulation Act introduces a requirement for social housing managers and executives to hold a professional qualification, equivalent to Ofqual Level 4 or 5 Certificate or Diploma in Housing, or a foundation degree from the Chartered Institute of Housing. Identified managers must evidence that they are working towards the qualification by March 2026.
- 4.6.2 Approximately 6 managers have been identified as needing this qualification which is likely to cost approximately £18,000. There is further requirement to evidence relevant training and professional development across the wider service, to ensure that all officers across both the service and housing sector more generally act in a professional manner and uphold the principles that have informed this legislation.

4.7 Resident Engagement and the Consumer Standards

- 4.7.1 The Consumer Standards require social landlords to move beyond limited resident involvement and establish a more comprehensive strategy. This means ongoing and integrated customer involvement. Over the last 12 months, the housing service has been working to improve opportunities for tenants' involvement. A number of key roles have been developed and recruited to, which will ensure that tenants have the opportunity to inform and shape service delivery. Appendix F provides an overview of tenant engagement over the last 12 months which has been led by our Service Development Team. A Tenant Influence and Scrutiny panel is also being finalised which is intended to empower tenants to hold the council accountable for the quality and delivery of its housing services and to give tenants a voice in the management and maintenance of the council's homes.

4.8 Complaint handling

- 4.8.1 Resident satisfaction with the delivery of services, and the way complaints are handled are a key focus area for both the Regulator and Housing Ombudsman. The Act places the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling

Code on a statutory basis from April 2024, along with giving them the ability to intervene in delivery, with annual reports to be published on landlords' performance. An initial review of the housing service's approach to complaint handling is found in Appendix D. The council is soon to implement a corporate complaints policy which will also apply to complaints from council tenants. Appendix E provides an outline of the way complaints from tenants must be dealt with.

4.9 Enhanced powers for the Housing Ombudsman

- 4.9.1 Under the Social Housing Regulation Act, the Housing Ombudsman is now able to look at wider issues of fairness by investigating beyond an individual complaint, for example by looking to a specific policy area or practice. The Act provides the Housing Ombudsman with powers to publish statutory best practice guidance to landlords following investigations into tenant complaints and require a landlord to self-assess. The Complaint Handling Code is now on a statutory footing and introduces a new legal duty on landlords to comply with the Code.

4.10 Proactive enforcement powers

- 4.10.1 The Act removes the serious detriment test from the consumer standards for social homes. Previously the Regulator has been required to have reasonable grounds to suspect that a breach of the consumer standards has caused, or could cause, serious detriment to a social landlord tenant before it could exercise its intervention powers. By removing the serious detriment test, the Act places the consumer standards on an equal footing with the economic standards by allowing the Regulator to exercise its enforcement powers for any breach, or potential breach, of the consumer standards. This will also allow the Regulator to be more proactive in its regulation of the consumer standards.
- 4.10.2 The Act introduces new powers for the Regulator to authorise persons to enter premises to take emergency remedial action to remedy failures by a social landlord. The authorised person may enter the premises without a warrant at a reasonable time provided that a pre-entry notice has been given on at least 24 hours' notice. Should the authorised person not be able to access the premises then they may seek to obtain a warrant to allow them entry to carry out the emergency remedial action.

4.11 Inspection regime

- 4.11.1 From 1 April 2024 the Regulator commenced its inspection regime to ensure compliance with both the existing economic standard (where relevant), and increased regulations set out by the consumer standard. The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 has put consumer standards on the same footing as economic standards and has given the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) new powers to regulate and enforce them. The council's housing service can expect to be inspected every four years.

- 4.11.2 The Act introduces a range of interventions for the Regulator, including the introduction of unlimited fines, the power to work collaboratively with landlords to make improvements via Performance Plans and the ability to remove senior managers and replace them with the Regulator's nominee.

5 Key risks/areas for improvement for the council's housing service

- 5.1 Following a self-assessment exercise the housing service can demonstrate full or partial compliance with most aspects of the new regulation. Information collated by the recent Tenant Satisfaction Measures shows that the service must work towards improving its processes around tenant complaints. The response rate showed a 46.5% satisfaction rate with complaint handling currently. As such the initial review of complaint handling will help inform areas of development.
- 5.1.2 Another area of challenge for the housing service relates to diverse needs information, which is set out within the Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard. The consumer standards introduce specific expectations about having robust information about tenants, so that landlords can deliver fair and equitable outcomes. The housing service currently uses MRI Housing as its housing management system. The system does not currently provide a sufficient method of ensuring that tenants' and household needs information is updated in a continuous way, across the service. The consumer standards mandate that providers should have a range of methods for collecting this information from tenants to encourage a good response rate. At the moment, the system only allows for back-office staff to update records via a lengthy process. To address this issue the service is exploring a system upgrade which will provide housing officers with the ability to update records whilst not in the office. Any upgrade is likely to require a capital investment and will need commitment from IT services to ensure provision for accessing our MRI database whilst outside of the office.

6 Monitoring

- 6.1 To ensure compliance quarterly performance information regarding key aspects of Social Housing Regulation will be provided to the Senior Leadership Team, the Executive and Scrutiny going forward.

7. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules

- 7.1 Open

8. Financial implications (IB)

- 8.1 Any implications arising from the Regulation will need approval in accordance with financial procedure rules.

9 Legal implications (ST)

- 9.1 None

10. Corporate Plan implications

- 10.1 The objectives of this report align with the following aims of the corporate plan:

People: Help people to stay healthy, happy and active and continue to provide initiatives that support children and young people, older people and our vulnerable residents

11. Consultation

- 11.1 None

12. Risk implications

- 12.1 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) risks

Risk description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Failure to comply with regulatory requirements	Self-assessment against objectives completed, action plan devised to develop all areas of regulation	Head of Housing
Failure to meet requirements due to limited resource	Resource needs to be mapped out	Head of Housing
Additional financial burden on housing repairs budgets to meet regulation	Increased costs regarding damp and mould work under review	Gary Upton

13. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 13.1 The objectives of this report relate to council tenants. Council housing is spread across the borough.

14. Climate implications

- 14.1 Regulatory reform imposed by the Social Housing Regulation Act will support the reduction of the council's carbon footprint.

15. Corporate implications

- 15.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset management implications

- Procurement implications
 - Human resources implications
 - Planning implications
 - Data protection implications
 - Voluntary sector
-

Background papers: Report entitled- Social Housing Regulation Bill

Contact officer: [Maddy Shellard 5746]

Executive member: [Cllr M Mullaney]

Standard	Proposed	Details	Evidence of how standard is met/action required	Progress
Safety and Quality Standard	Stock quality	Registered providers must have an accurate record at an individual property level of the condition of their stock, based on a physical assessment of all homes and keep this up to date.	Properties inspected prior & on completion of planned improvement works. Asset management software updated accordingly	In Place
		Registered providers must use data from across their records on stock condition to inform their provision of good quality, well-maintained and safe homes for tenants including: a) Compliance with health and safety legal requirements;	Statutory Compliance Group set up to meet QTRLY to review stock and compliance data	In Place
		b) Compliance with the Decent Homes Standard;	Quarterly Report submitted to SLT on compliance	In Place
		c) Delivery of repairs, maintenance and planned improvements to stock;	Planned programmes of work carried out based on 30 year business plan refreshed yearly. In-House repairs team in place with support from external contractors	In Place
		d) Allocating homes with adaptations appropriately	Allocation of property through the Allocations Policy, working with repairs and occupational health teams to ensure the property is suitable for adaptation and will meet the needs of the individual	In Place
	Decency	Registered providers must ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the government's Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard unless exempted by the regulator	Quarterly Report submitted to SLT on compliance	In Place
	Health and Safety	Registered providers must identify and meet all legal requirements that relate to the health and safety of tenants in their homes and communal areas.	Compliance Group Set Up. Hsg Repairs carry out monthly Pre Planned Maintenance checks of all communal areas. These are complimented by monthly building checks carried out by on site support staff in sheltered buildings and our Estate Improvement Officer in general needs blocks of flats	In Place
		Registered providers must ensure that all required actions arising from legally required health and safety	All H&S and FRA are monitored and actions delegated by the Housing Assets & Support Teams Manager	In Place

		assessments are carried out within appropriate timescales.		
		Registered providers must ensure that the safety of tenants is considered in the design and delivery of landlord services and take reasonable steps to mitigate any identified risks to tenants.	Risk assessment processes in place in sheltered housing and Homeless Hostel, Ongoing work to develop a consistent approach across other service areas	In Progress
	Repairs, maintenance and planned improvements	Registered providers must enable repairs and maintenance issues to be reported easily.	Various reporting formats in place - Telephone, email, web page	In Place
		Registered providers must set timescales for the completion of repairs, maintenance and planned improvements, clearly communicate them to tenants and take appropriate steps to deliver to them.	Timescales for completion of repairs in place & detailed on website	In Place
		Registered providers must keep tenants informed about repairs, maintenance and planned improvements to their homes with clear and timely communication.	Notification by letter given for planned improvements. Appointments made by telephone / email in advance for repairs & maintenance	In Place
		Registered providers must understand and fulfil their maintenance responsibilities in respect of communal areas.	Monthly inspections taking place	In Place
		Registered providers must ensure that the delivery of repairs, maintenance and planned improvements to homes and communal areas is informed by the needs of tenants and provides value for money, in addition to Stock quality requirement SE2.	Full procurement exercise is carried out when appointing contractors to carry out planned improvements	In Place
	Adaptations	Registered providers must clearly communicate to tenants and relevant organisations how they will assist tenants seeking housing adaptations services.	Communicating the process to tenants to be reviewed	In Progress
		Registered providers must co-operate with tenants, appropriate local authority departments and other relevant organisations so that a housing adaptations service is provided to tenants.	Adaptations carried out based on receipt of recommendation from Social Services	In Place

Transparency, Influence & Accountability Standard	Fairness and respect	Registered providers must treat all tenants with fairness and respect.	Collect tenant insight data to identify if there are any needs that we are not meeting	In Progress
	Diverse needs	Registered providers must use relevant information and data to: a) understand the diverse needs of tenants, including those arising from protected characteristics, language barriers, and additional support needs; and	Analyse insight data to understand the specific diverse needs of our tenants	In Progress
		b) assess whether all tenants have fair access to, and equitable outcomes of, housing and landlord services.	Analyse insight data to understand the specific diverse needs of our tenants	In Progress
		Registered providers must ensure that communication with and information for tenants is clear, accessible, relevant, timely and appropriate to the diverse needs of tenants.	Ongoing across service/managers to ensure oversight	In Progress
		Registered providers must ensure that landlord services are accessible, and that the accessibility is publicised to tenants. This includes supporting tenants and prospective tenants to use online landlord services if required.	Ongoing review	In Progress

Engagement with tenants	Registered providers must allow tenants and prospective tenants to be supported by a representative or advocate in interactions about landlord services.	Consider something on key comm/website	Not Started
	Registered providers must give tenants a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise their landlord's strategies, policies and services. This includes in relation to the neighbourhood where applicable.	The wider service to include scrutiny opportunities and proactive tenant engagement	In Progress
	Registered providers must assist tenants who wish to implement tenant-led activities to influence and scrutinise their landlord's strategies, policies and services. This includes in relation to the neighbourhood where applicable.	Each service area should identify and support tenants	In Place
	Registered provider must provide accessible support that meets the diverse needs of tenants so they can engage with the opportunities in 1 and 2 (2.2.1 and 2.2.2 in the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard).	Accessibility information to be collated and promoted	In Progress
	Registered providers must support tenants to exercise their Right to Manage, Right to Transfer or otherwise exercise housing management functions, where appropriate.	Established process/signposting	In Place
	Registered providers, working with tenants, must regularly consider ways to improve and tailor their approach to delivering landlord services including tenant engagement. They must implement changes as appropriate to ensure services deliver the intended aims.	Ongoing across service/managers to ensure oversight	In Progress
	Where a registered provider is considering a change in landlord for one or more tenants, or a significant change in management arrangements, it must consult affected tenants on its proposals at a formative stage and take those views into account in reaching a decision. The consultation must: a) be fair and accessible;		Not Started
	b) provide tenants with adequate time, information and opportunities to consider and respond;	To review	In Progress
	c) set out actual or potential advantages and disadvantages (including costs) to tenants in the immediate and longer term;	To review	In Progress

		d) demonstrate to affected tenants how the consultation responses have been taken into account in reaching a decision.	website/keys comms	In Place
Information about landlord services		Registered providers must provide tenants with information about the: a) available landlord services, how to access those services, and the standards of service tenants can expect;	Website review currently in place with Lois which will serve as the initial platform for this information.	In Progress
		b) standards of safety and quality tenants can expect homes and communal areas to meet;	Service standards in place in sheltered properties, which were developed and agreed by residents working group. Need to develop standards for wider general needs tenants	In Progress
		c) rents and service charges that are payable by tenants;	Tenancy signups, rent increases and increases re service charges communicated annually	In Place
		d) responsibilities of the registered provider and the tenant for maintaining homes, communal areas, shared spaces and neighbourhoods.	Service standards in place in sheltered properties, which were developed and agreed by residents working group. Need to develop standards for wider general needs tenants	In Progress
		Registered providers must communicate with affected tenants on progress, next steps and outcomes when delivering landlord services.	To explore ways to develop	In Place
		Registered providers' housing and neighbourhood policies must be fair, reasonable, accessible and transparent. Where relevant, policies should set out decision-making criteria and appeals processes.	Review of all policies and accessibility underway/scrutiny from tenants	In Progress
		Registered providers must make information available to tenants about the relevant roles and responsibilities of senior level employees or officers, including who has	To review	In Progress

	responsibility for compliance with the consumer standards.		
Performance information	Registered providers must meet the regulator's requirements in relation to the tenant satisfaction measures set by the regulator as set out in Tenant Satisfaction Measures: Technical requirements and Tenant Satisfaction Measures: Tenant survey requirements.	Implemented April 2023	In Place
	Registered providers must: a) collect and process information specified by the regulator relating to their performance against the tenant satisfaction measures. The information must be collected within a timeframe set by the regulator and must meet the regulator's requirements in Tenant Satisfaction Measures: Technical requirements and Tenant Satisfaction Measures: Tenant survey requirements	Tenant perception survey in place. Landlord measures to be collected.	In Place
	b) annually publish their performance against the tenant satisfaction measures. This should include information about how they have met the regulator's requirements set out in Tenant Satisfaction Measures: Technical requirements and Tenant Satisfaction Measures: Tenant survey requirements. This information must be published in a manner that is timely, clear, and easily accessed by tenants; and	To be published on our website and tenant newsletter.	In Place
	c) annually submit to the regulator information specified by the regulator relating to their performance against those measures. The information must be submitted within a timeframe and in a form determined by the regulator.	Implemented April 2023	In Place
	In meeting specific expectation 1 and specific expectation 2 above, registered providers must ensure that the information is an accurate, reliable, valid, and transparent reflection of their performance against the tenant satisfaction measures	Implemented April 2023	In Place

		Registered providers must provide tenants with information about: a) how they are performing in delivering landlord services and what actions they will take to improve performance where required;	Tenant communications	In Progress
		b) how they have taken tenants' views into account to improve landlord services, information and communication;	To develop	In Progress
		c) how income is being spent;	To develop	In Progress
		d) their directors' remuneration and management costs.	To develop	In Progress
	Complaints	Registered providers must ensure their approach to handling complaints is simple and accessible.	To develop	In Progress
		Registered providers must publicise their complaints process and what tenants can do if they are dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint or how a complaint was handled.	Explore opportunities to develop	In Progress
		Registered providers must provide tenants with information about the type of complaints received and how they have learnt from complaints to continuously improve services.	Explore opportunities to develop	In Progress
	Self-referral	Registered providers must communicate in a timely manner with the regulator on all material issues that relate to non-compliance or potential non-compliance with the consumer standards.	To promote with managers re good practice	In Place

	Maintenance of shared spaces	Registered providers must work co-operatively to assist in resolving issues affecting the upkeep and safety of the shared spaces associated with their homes.	Working with other council services when issues arise. Regular inspections carried out; PPM's, H&S Inspections, Estate Improvement Officer inspections	In Place
	Local Cooperation	Registered providers, having taken account of their strategic objectives, the views of tenants and their presence within the areas where they provide social housing, must: a) identify and communicate to tenants the roles registered providers play in promoting social, environmental and economic wellbeing and how they will achieve them; and	Corporate Plan, Community Houses, Cost of living events initiatives held. Local Plan.	In Place
		b) co-operate with local partnership arrangements and the strategic housing function of local authorities where they are able to assist them in achieving their objectives.	Housing Development, S106, Planning Policy work closely with registered providers. Local Plan - meeting housing needs.	In Place
	Safer Neighbourhoods	Registered providers must have a policy on how they work with relevant organisations to deter and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.	Endeavour	In Place
		Registered providers must clearly set out their approach for how they tackle and deter hate incidents in neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.	Endeavour	In Place
		Registered providers must enable ASB to be reported easily and keep tenants informed about the progress of their case.	Endeavour	In Place
		Registered providers must provide prompt and appropriate action in response to ASB, having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available to them.	Endeavour	In Place
		Registered providers must support tenants who are affected by ASB, including by signposting them to agencies who can give them appropriate support and assistance.	Endeavour	In Place
	Domestic abuse	Registered providers must have a policy for how they respond to cases of domestic abuse.	To add to Tenancy Management policy	In Place
		Registered providers must co-operate with appropriate local authority departments to support the local authority in meeting its duty to develop a strategy and commission services for victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation.	Ongoing through wider DA workstreams/CSP	In Place

	Allocations and lettings	Registered providers must co-operate with local authorities' strategic housing functions and assist local authorities to fulfil their duties to meet identified local housing need. This includes assistance with local authorities' homelessness duties, and through meeting obligations in nominations agreements.	Housing Options service	In Place
		Registered providers must seek to allocate homes that are designated, designed, or adapted to meet specific needs in a way that is compatible with the purpose of the housing.	Allocations process	In Place
		Registered providers must develop and deliver services to address underoccupation and overcrowding in their homes. These services should be focused on the needs of tenants.	Covered in the allocations policy, and service is delivered via TMOs	In Place
		Registered providers must take action to prevent and tackle tenancy fraud.	Verification / ID checks in place. Experian checks in place, TMO's will respond to cases of tenancy fraud and take action to tackle.	In Place
		Registered providers must have a fair, reasonable, simple and accessible appeals process for allocation decisions.	Communication on this could be improved	In Place
		Registered providers must record all lettings and sales as required by the Continuous Recording of Lettings (CORE) system.	Evidenced via Core returns	In Place
	Tenancy sustainment and evictions	Registered providers must provide services that support tenants to maintain their tenancy or licence and prevent unnecessary evictions.	Introductory Tenancy Officer, Welfare Support Officer - Tenancy Support Officer	In Place
		Registered providers must provide tenants required to move with timely advice and assistance about housing options before the tenancy or licence ends.	Working with other departments within the council	In Place
	Tenure	Registered providers shall publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions, and tackling tenancy fraud, and set out: a) The type of tenancies they will grant;	Policy / outline approach to tenancy management	In Progress
		b) Where they grant tenancies for a fixed term, the length of those terms;	Policy / outline approach to tenancy management	In Place
		c) The circumstances in which they will grant tenancies of a particular type;	Policy / outline approach to tenancy management	In Place

d) Any exceptional circumstances in which they will grant fixed term tenancies for a term of less than five years in general needs housing following any probationary period;	Policy/ outline approach to tenancy management	In Place
e) The circumstances in which they may or may not grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term, in the same property or in a different property	Policy / outline approach to tenancy management	In Place
Registered providers must grant general needs tenants a periodic secure or assured (excluding periodic assured shorthold) tenancy, or a tenancy for a minimum fixed term of five years, or exceptionally, a tenancy for a minimum fixed term of no less than two years, in addition to any probationary tenancy period	Explore policy to define this	In Place
Before a fixed term tenancy ends, registered providers shall provide notice in writing to the tenant stating either that they propose to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the existing fixed term or that they propose to end the tenancy.	Explore policy to define this	In Place
Where registered providers use probationary tenancies, these must be for a maximum of 12 months, or a maximum of 18 months where reasons for extending the probationary period have been given and where the tenant has the opportunity to request a review	Develop Tenancy Management Policy	In Place
Registered providers shall grant those who were social housing tenants on the day on which section 154 of the Localism Act 2011 comes into force, and have remained social housing tenants since that date, a tenancy with no less security where they choose to move to another social rented home, whether with the same or another landlord. (This requirement does not apply where tenants choose to move to accommodation let on Affordable Rent terms).	Explore policy to define this	In Place
Registered providers shall grant tenants who have been moved into alternative accommodation during any redevelopment or other works a tenancy with no less security of tenure on their return to settled accommodation.	Explore policy to define this	In Place

	Mutual exchange	Registered providers must offer a mutual exchange service which allows relevant tenants potentially eligible for mutual exchange, whether pursuant to a statutory right or a policy of the registered provider, to easily access details of all (or the greatest practicable number of) available matches without payment of a fee.	Ensure adequate comms/promotion	In Place
		Registered providers must publicise the availability of any mutual exchange service(s) it offers to its relevant tenants.	Advertised through Homeswapper. To explore further opportunities	In Place
		Registered providers must provide support for accessing mutual exchange services to relevant tenants who might otherwise be unable to use them.	Accessible formats available	In Place
		Registered providers must offer tenants seeking to mutually exchange with information about the implications for tenure, rent and service charges.	Updates needed to mutual exchange procedures / policies. They are in place but not reviewed recently.	In Place

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Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)

In addition to the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, Social Housing Providers are now required to collect and publish performance information in the form of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

TSMs are designed to see how well landlords are doing at:

- keeping properties in good repair
- maintaining building safety
- respectful and helpful engagement
- effective handling of complaints
- responsible neighbourhood management

There are 22 satisfaction measures, including 12 tenant perception measures (TPMs) and 10 management information measures (MI).

From April 2024 the Regulator of Social Housing will commence its inspection regime. The Regulator has indicated that TSM results will form part of the evidence base to establish how well landlords are doing, across the 5 areas. Housing providers with over 1000 properties are required to collect and publish TSMs on annual basis going forward.

HBBC are required to produce a proportion of 15% of its stock size.

HBBC's housing service- TSM results

The housing service commissioned Housemark to carry out its TSMs in relation to tenant perception, to ensure compliance and impartiality. In doing so, Housemark carried out 550 telephone surveys with council tenants (17%). The housing service asked for two further questions to be asked in relation to cost of living impacts and tenant involvement. The full results are set out in Appendix A.

Management performance information is informed directly by the service.

Summary of key findings

The highest scoring TSMs were:

89.4%- Residents who are satisfied that their home is safe

87.5%- Residents who agree that they are treated fairly and with respect.

82.5%- Residents who are satisfied with the overall service.

The lowest scoring TSMs was:

46.5%-Satisfaction with complaints handling presented relatively low levels of satisfaction

Benchmarking

Benchmarking data suggests good performance from the council when compared to other housing providers as detailed below.

Question	Satisfaction %	Housemark - Mid Year TSM
Overall Satisfaction	82.5%	+10.2%
Satisfaction With The Repairs Service Received In The Last 12 Months	79.9%	+5.4%
Satisfaction With Time Taken To Complete Repair	80.7%	+10.7%
Satisfaction Home Is Well Maintained	81.5%	+9.3%
Satisfaction Home Is Safe	89.4%	+10.7%
Satisfaction Landlord Listens And Acts	72.9%	+11.9%
Satisfaction Landlord Keeps Tenants Informed	78.9%	+7.5%
Satisfaction Landlord Treats Tenants Fairly And With Respect	87.5%	+9.3%
Satisfaction With Complaint Handling	46.5%	+12.5%
Satisfaction With Communal Space	73.6%	+7.6%
Satisfaction With Contribution To Neighbourhood	76.1%	+12.1%
Satisfaction With Anti-Social Behaviour Handling	73.6%	+16.0%

Supplementary questions

The council asked two supplementary questions in relation to the cost-of-living crisis and tenant engagement. The results were as follows:

81.1% of tenants agreed that the cost-of-living crisis was impacting on them. This supports work underway by the Welfare Support team who assisted 375 tenants with welfare support last year.

22.1 % of tenants stated that they would be interested in getting involved in opportunities around tenant engagement. Tenant involvement continues to be a challenging area for the housing service, as tenants no longer wish to engage in traditional methods, such as standing panels or meetings. The Service Development team is leading on developing tenant engagement and scrutiny, to ensure that the council continues to be able to demonstrate compliance in relation to this area which is mandated within the consumer standard regulations.

Next steps

The housing service has established an action plan to continue to develop and improve satisfaction across all areas. A review of our complaints handling process is underway. It should be recognised that complaint handling does not wholly refer to the corporate process but applies to all concerns raised by tenants. This is an area of focus the service is keen to improve.

Publication

The council is required to submit its TSM results by 30 June 2024. The council is also required to make its results available to tenants and other stakeholders. As such, the housing service will be publishing its results on the website and in direct tenant communications. Those tenants who participated in the survey and have provided contact details will be contacted to thank them for their participation.

Landlord Measures

RP01: Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	0%
RP02: Repairs completed within target timescale	
Non-emergency repairs	79.77%
RP02: Repairs completed within target timescale	
Emergency repairs	79.81%
BS01: Gas safety checks	100%
BS02: Fire safety checks	100%
BS03: Asbestos safety checks	99.97%
BS04: Water safety checks	100%
BS05: Lift safety checks	78.57%
CH01: Complaints relative to the size of the landlord	
Stage one complaints	18.39
CH01: Complaints relative to the size of the landlord	
Stage two complaints	3.74
CH02: Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales	
Stage one complaints response time	86.44
CH02: Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales	
Stage two complaints response time	91.66
NM01: Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord:	
ASB Cases including hate incidents	127
NM01: Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord:	
ASB Cases hate incidents only	2

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Appendix C

An Approach to Damp and Mould within Council Housing Properties

Background

The tragic death of Awaab Ishak in November 2022, who died from exposure to damp and mould, brought to the fore the risk and consequences of the effects of damp and mould within the home. Requirements imposed by the Social Housing Regulation Act that came into force into July 2023 now compel registered social landlords to:

- Manage their data well, have access to up to date information about tenants' homes, resolve problems proactively.
- That homes are free from serious hazards, including damp and mould, and that homes are fit for habitation.
- That there is strong oversight from boards and councillors, to ensure that concerns are well managed at the earliest point.

Appendix 1 provides the proposed revised Damp and Mould policy. The policy has been drafted in consultation with tenants as co-production principles are encouraged by the Regulator of Social Housing. The policy aims to reflect both the responsibilities of the council as the landlord and those of the tenant. The policy reflects revisions to working practices, which are reflected below.

Process Review

Following a review of the housing service's approach to managing damp and mould, the following processes and practices are now in place:

- Prioritised inspections to undertake survey of concerns reported
- Assessment of household vulnerabilities to ensure our response is adequate to the risks identified.
- Assessment of the cause of the issue
- Remedial action such as mould treatment, repairs, or renewed ventilation systems
- A robust process to ensure that non access cases are revisited
- Advice and guidance on how to reduce damp and mould within the home
- Damp and Mould and Repairs advice events.
- Tenant Newsletter – Housing Hub includes regular featured articles on damp and mould, practical advice, and tips.
- Focus on encouraging tenants to report issues
- Referral/signposting to welfare services to assist with cost-of-living concerns and impacts
- Introduced trigger points for front line staff to escalate to a housing officer or manager, in cases of persistent mould problems.
- Escalation processes for risky cases
- Reduced over-reliance on tenant ventilating the property, considering the cost-of-living concerns and mitigating circumstances. Additional installation of ventilation systems where needed.
- Training for all frontline housing officers on the impacts of damp and mould
- Maintenance of data base to ensure concerns are recorded

- Revisit to all damp and mould cases a year after the report.
- Work to decarbonise all council homes to ensure efficacy of energy efficiency within our housing stock.

Proactive approach

The housing service actively encourages reporting. Following a report of damp and mould a response will be actioned within 24 hours. Mould treatments have been reclassified as an urgent repair and are now inspected within a 7-day period. Any resulting works are prioritised and carried out within 7 days of an order being raised, wherever possible. Appendix 2 provides flow chart, which is included in the policy, setting out the process.

Responding to reports of damp and mould

Over the last 12 months the housing service have received 422 reports of damp and mould across our housing stock. Further analysis of the data is also included in Appendix 3 including an overview of the types of damp and mould repairs completed.

The data allows the service to determine where preventive measures are most needed to reduce the number of repairs required. By focusing on proactive measures, we can effectively prevent these problems from arising in the first place.

In September 2023 processes in relation to non-access jobs were revised. Adapting existing non access processes for jobs relating to damp and mould has helped to ensure that case notes reflect the attempts and methods of contact progressed including letters, text messaging and phone calls.

Tenancy Support and Access

To effectively overcome access obstacles, that could obstruct critical repairs, the repairs service is actively collaborating with tenancy management officers from an early stage. Tenancy Management Officers will closely work with the repairs team to secure access while prioritising the needs of tenants and maintaining the safety and security of their homes.

Communication

The service have instigated a follow up scheme, which creates more dialogue between the tenant and us as their landlord. From 1 January 2024 processes were again revised so that tenants are sent a letter, 3 months after the completion of a repair concerning damp or mould. This encourages tenants to let us know if they are struggling to manage condensation or experiencing any recurring issues.

On a 12-month rolling period letters are also sent to tenants where works were carried out between the 1 January 2023 and 31 December 2023. This approach encourages communication from tenants to establish whether they have had any further issues with damp and mould prior to the implementation of the current follow up scheme. So far 99 letters have been issued.

Following Up with Tenants

Three months after a repair relating to mould issues has been completed, tenants receive a follow up call to ascertain whether any problems have resurfaced, to order any remedial work or further inspections, and to provide advice and encouragement for further reporting if they do experience any issues.

Investing in Housing Stock

The service has 3200 dwellings and following a recent Energy Performance review, it was identified that a third of our stock is below the required standard, EPC C. Properties below EPC C are more at risk of excess cold as they are less efficient. Excess cold can lead to damp and mould. As part of the review the worst performing architypes have been identified and include solid walled properties built pre-1945. These properties are predominantly located within the main areas of Hinckley, Burbage, Earl Shilton and Barwell. To achieve a minimum band C rating, external wall insulation has been identified as the solution to achieving this rating for these properties. In addition, improving ventilation will help reduce and minimise condensation that can lead to damp and mould concerns.

Funding via the Local Authority Delivery 2 scheme (LAD2) and the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) has enabled works to be progresses that has reduced heat loss, benefiting tenants with lower energy bills, at a time when the cost of gas and electricity is significant. Damp and mould issues arising from excess cold have also been reduced in these properties.

In addition to the capital budgets required to maintain the decency of our properties, funds are included within the 30-year business plan to improve ventilation, energy efficiency and decarbonisation. This is investment above the requirement needed to meet the decent homes standard.

Housing and Health pilot project

The council is currently leading a project on behalf of the district and borough councils in Leicestershire. The project aims to provide a consistent approach to the identification and subsequent response to damp and mould concerns, identified across all tenures, by upskilling both housing and health frontline officers.



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

DRAFT

Condensation, Damp and Mould Policy in Council Owned Properties

Version	Reviewed By	Date
1	Lois Hodgkins and Madeline Shellard	
2	Tenant Involvement Review	24.08.2023

Background

This Policy sets out the activities and responsibilities involved in the management of, and response to reports of Damp and Mould within Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's Housing Service. The Council aims to provide a consistently high-quality repair and maintenance service for all our customers and to maintain our properties to provide a well-functioning and safe environment.

Sufficient evidence has been found to link exposure to indoor mould with upper respiratory tract symptoms, coughing, and wheezing in otherwise healthy people. Numbers of dust mites are elevated by damp indoor environments; dust mites affect allergies and asthma. Studies have shown that dampness and mould are associated with approximately 30-50% increases in respiratory and asthma related health outcomes. People living in homes with damp and mould may also experience depression and anxiety due to the conditions.

Key Principles

- To provide dry, well-functioning, energy efficient homes that are well maintained and safe for tenants to live in.
- To ensure that the fabric of council owned properties is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from damp and mould.
- To ensure the Council achieve high standards of workmanship and customer satisfaction.
- The council recognises the Homes (fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 and Free from Hazards (HHSRS) legislation.
- To consult with tenants on this policy and any associated documents, to gather insight, feedback, and scrutiny.

Our Objectives

- Invest in proactive and reactive measures to tackling condensation, damp, and mould.
- Maintain a minimum standard by meeting the Decent Homes Standard (2005)

- Maximise intervention including void standards, communication with residents and reducing over-reliance on residents to report.
- Train staff and operatives to spot signs of condensation, damp and mould and carry out maintenance to reduce its occurrence.
- Working collaboratively with residents and any relevant departments within the Council to manage the immediate issue and the ongoing management of condensation and mould.

Responsibility and Legislation

- We will take a joint approach with residents, led by the Housing Service.
- The Council is responsible for maintaining the property to avoid penetrating and rising damp.
- The Council is responsible for carrying out remedial action if these do occur.
- The Council is responsible for insulating the property in accordance with the Decent Homes Standard.
- A list of the current legislation that is applicable to this policy is available in appendix A.

Damp and Mould Responsive Repair Works

A request may be received from a customer or employee to inspect issues experienced with excessive or unmanageable amounts of condensation, or instances of damp or mould inside a property.

The Officer from the Housing Service will take pictures of any effected area in your home, or if you are reporting an issue to us, we will ask if you can send photographs to us. This helps us risk assess the prevalence of the issue in your home and we will prioritise on a case by case basis.

The Officer will ask if any member(s) of the household are vulnerable, such as elderly, young children or has a health condition. This also forms part of our triage of requests to prioritise accordingly.

We will arrange for a property survey to assess and identify any possible causes of mould or damp.

During the visit our inspector will look at all rooms where damp and mould has been identified. They will look at causes which could be a range of structural, leaks or condensation. They will also ask the tenant for information about any existing actions in place to reduce moisture within the property.

Depending on the cause of the mould, our inspector will review existing methods of managing condensation and order any remedial works that the Council are responsible for.

The inspector will also, depending on the cause of the mould, give advice to the tenant on managing condensation and provide guidance based on industry standards and best practices.

The inspector will also give the tenant a booklet with practical and helpful tips and demonstrations on how to work together in the management of condensation, damp, and mould.

The inspection will be evaluated to identify factors leading to the growth of damp or mould to establish the cause of the problem.

If damp is found to be present, we will carry out repair works to areas that are the responsibility of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council.

Tenants are responsible for any redecoration following repair works carried out for damp and mould issues.

If the outcome of the inspection shows that condensation is causing the problem, we will liaise with the tenant and evaluate what mitigations we can put in place to support tenants. This could include support from Repairs, Tenancy Support Officers, and Welfare Support Officers.

Damp and Mould Preventative Action

The council will take steps to intervene in the prevalence of damp and mould in its homes by:

- Carrying out ventilation works to void properties, so that newly let properties are in a good state of repair and any potential causes of damp and mould are rectified prior to being let.
- We will continue to invest in our Council homes and direct spending to maintain our existing high level of homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard.
- Our Asset Management Strategy is aligned with our objectives in reducing occurrences of excess cold in homes and obtaining up to date EPC certificates for all council owned properties. This will help us identify planned work to improve the energy efficiency of our homes.
- Produce and regularly review literature (both printed and online) of the management of condensation, damp and mould in council owned properties. Including advice and guidance from current best practice standards and what tenants need to do, in line with their responsibilities to properly ventilate and heat their home.
- We understand that tenants may have circumstances which makes it difficult for them financially to heat and ventilate their home. Where this is identified, we will engage with Tenancy Support Services.
- Maintain a log of all reported damp & mould issues along with actions taken and advice given that is accessible to all officers.
- Each year, the council will assess cases reported the previous winter and arrange follow up action where necessary ahead of the incoming colder months.
- The council will carry out awareness training to enable officers to spot signs of condensation, damp, and mould, and give advice or request an inspection.

Customer Experiences

We regularly review our process and practices to ensure that we are not just meeting our obligations as a Social Landlord but are striving to provide an excellent service that our customers are satisfied with.

We will manage assessments of cases by utilising other services, contractors, private sector housing and using data loggers and diaries.

Where there are persistent issues or concerns, we will escalate cases to managers.

The tenant can request that their case is escalated to a senior officer if they are not satisfied with how their case is being dealt with. A senior officer within the Housing team will review the case and discuss the experience directly with the tenant.

If the tenant is not satisfied with how their report is being dealt with, there are several routes to escalation that can be easily accessed. We encourage our tenants to let us know at any stage of the process if they are dissatisfied. If a concern, complaint, or even formal complaint is raised, the council will continue to carry out necessary inspections and work to remedy the issue. Letting us know about dissatisfaction will not stop progress on remedying the issue and we would encourage tenants with any concerns to get in touch with us.

The councils' formal complaints process can be accessed at any stage, using any of the below points of contact:

[<friendly URL to be added here>](#)

Contact Committee Services

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Hinckley Hub

Rugby Road

Hinckley LE10 0FR

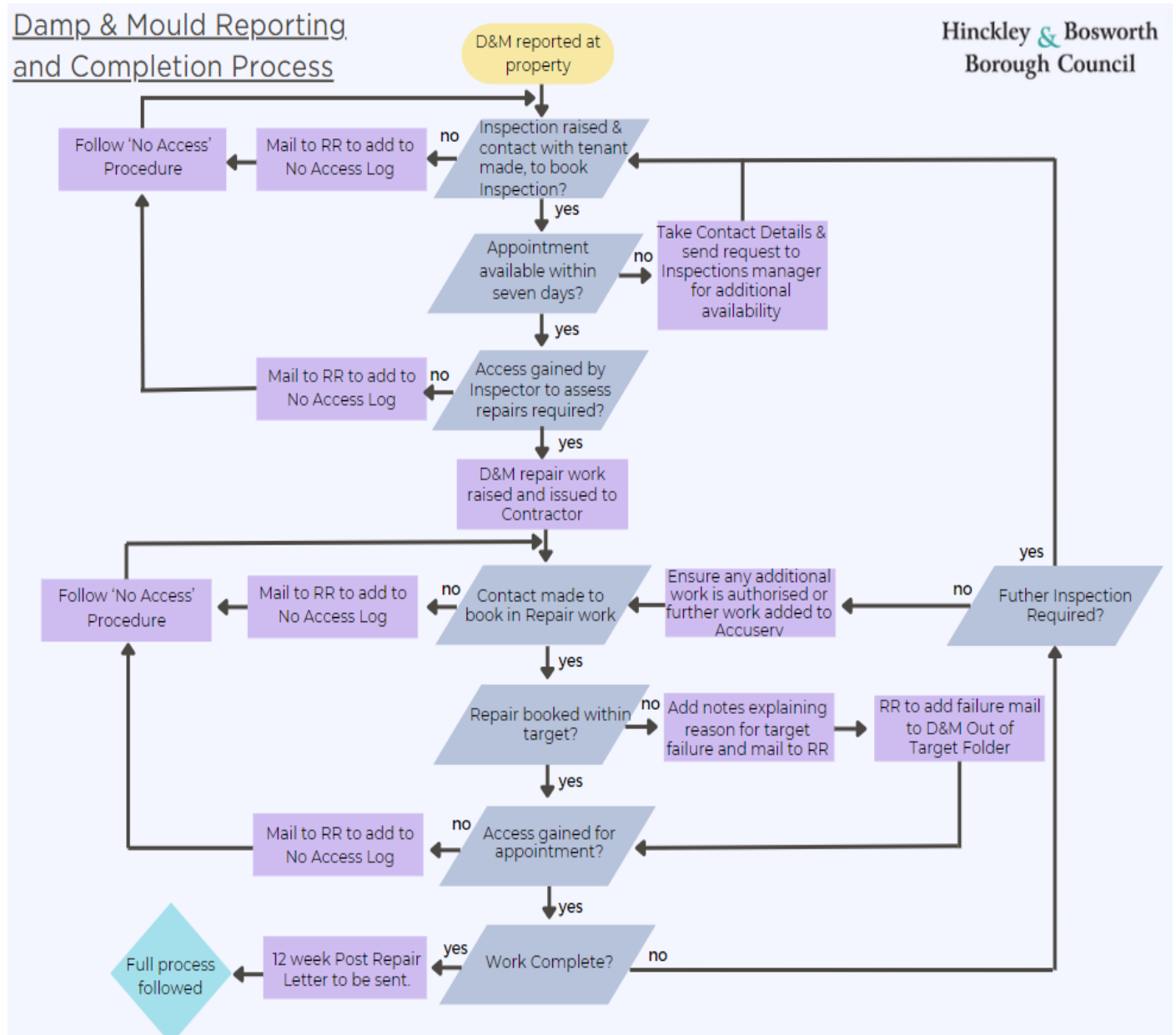
Telephone: 01455 238141

The following is a list of the current legislation that is applicable to this policy:

- Landlord & Tenant Act 1985
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Right to Repair Regulations 1994
- Building Regulations
- The Housing Acts 1985 & 1996
- Housing Act 2004 – Housing Health and Safety Rating System

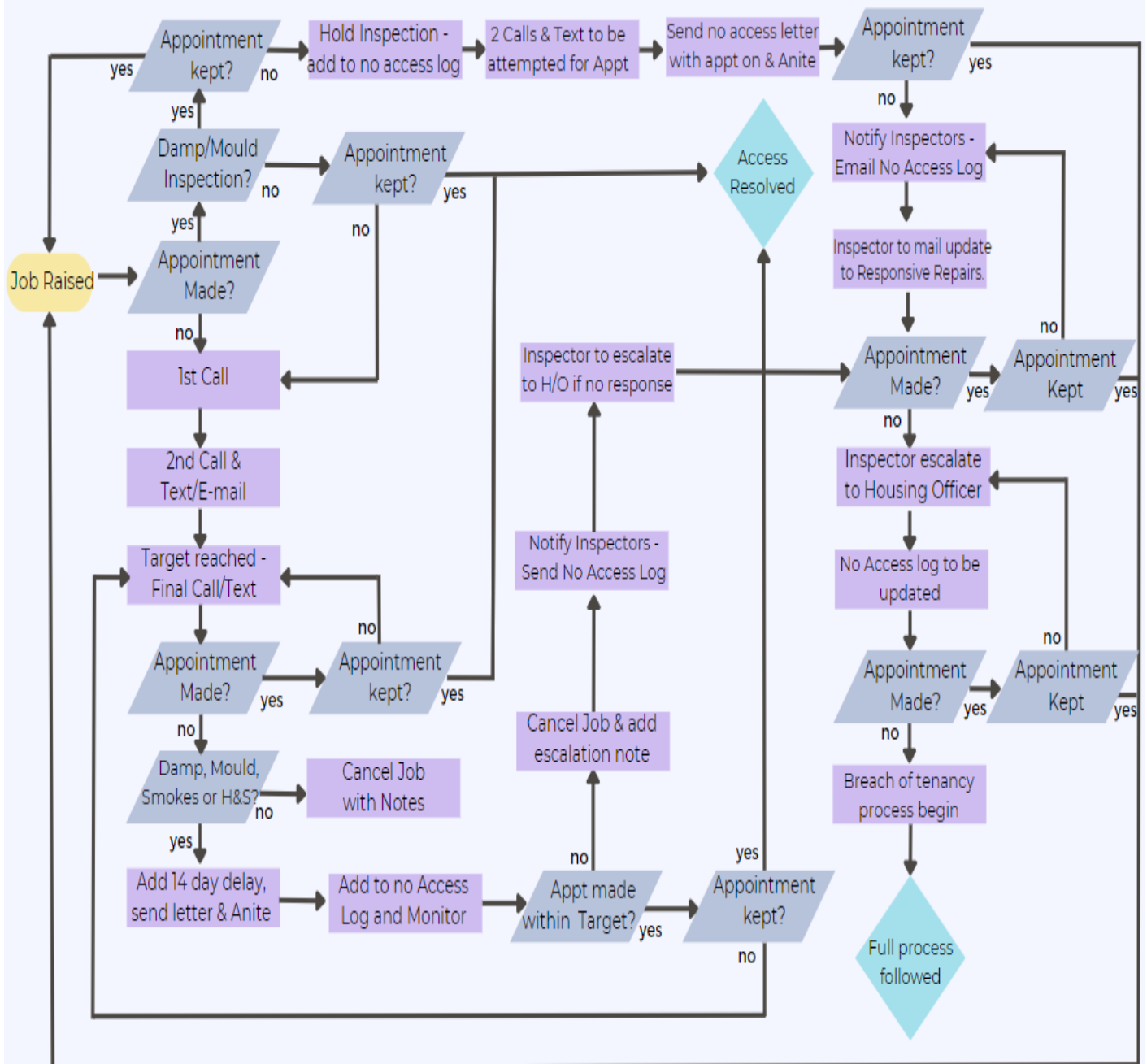
Appendix B

Damp and Mould reporting and completion process (to be included)



Damp & Mould No Access Process

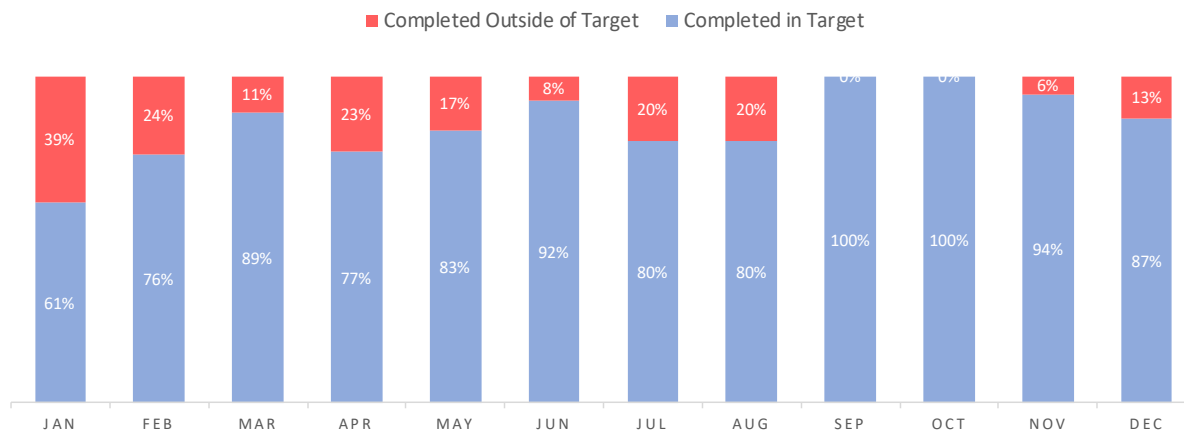
Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council



Damp and Mould Data for Council Housing Service

The following graph shows performance in relation to the completion of works in relation to damp and mould. Following revision to practises most jobs are now on target, and those that are outside of target are likely to be due to lack of access.

Graph A - Mould Treatments in Target



The next chart illustrates the type of damp and mould repairs progressed.

Chart B Types of Damp and Mould Repairs being completed

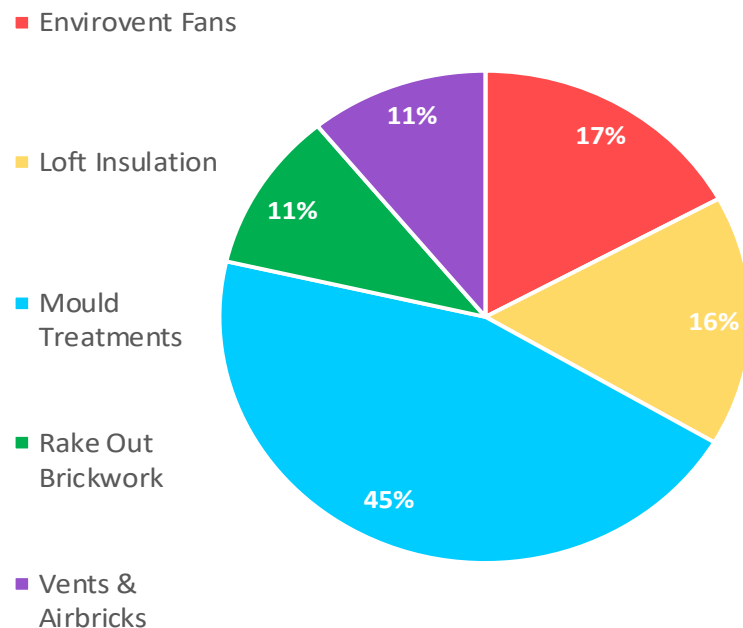


Table 3 provides an insight into seasonal trends. Damp and mould concerns are more prevalent in the colder months into the early spring. Analysis of seasonal trends and specific numbers allows us to target resources to carry out treatment and remedial actions.

Table 3 Identifying Seasonal Trends - Completed Damp and Mould Repairs 2023

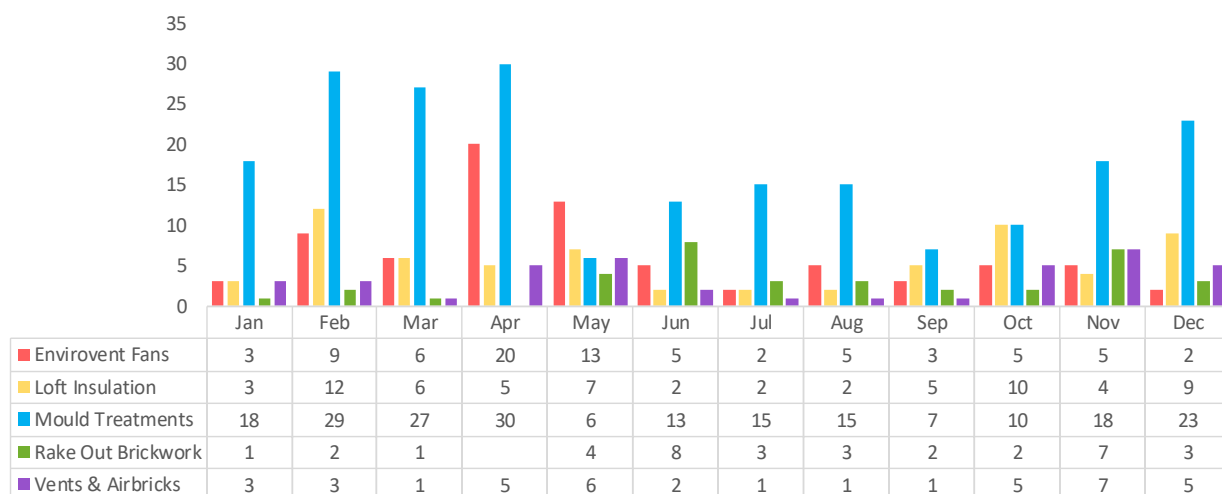
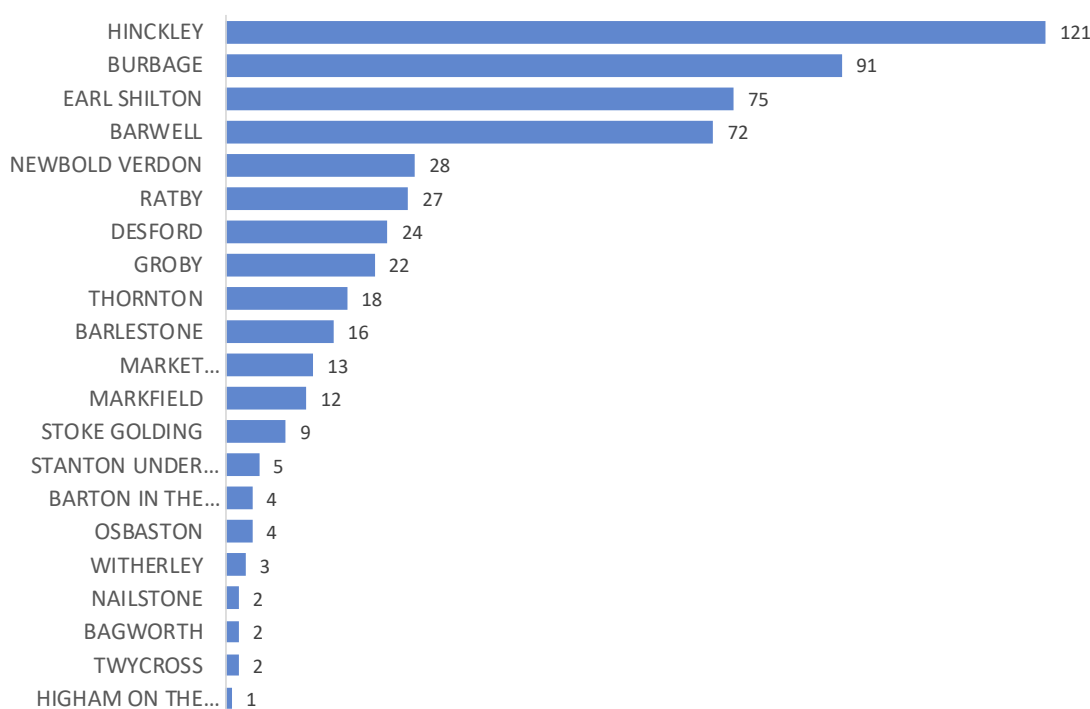


Table 4 identifies the number of reports in relation to damp and mould by location.



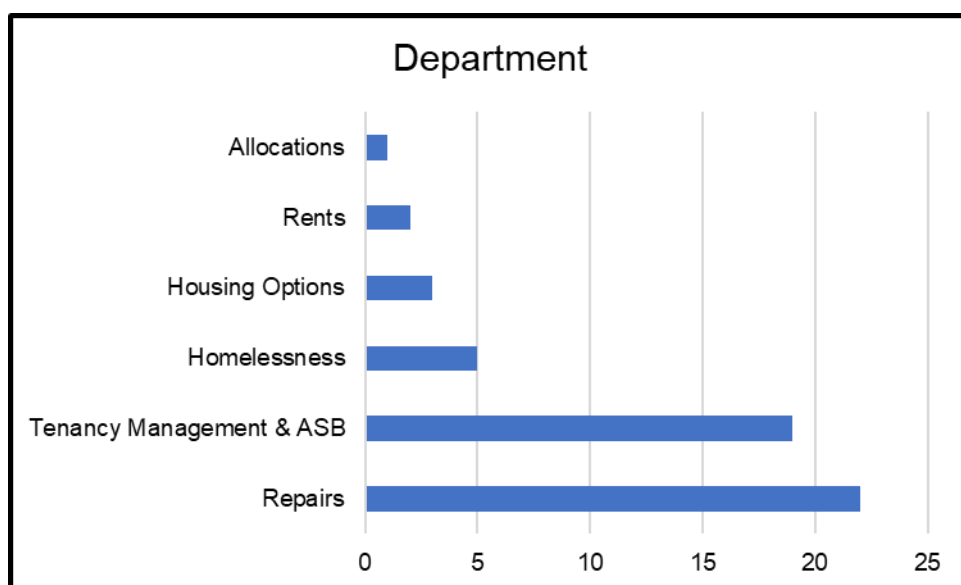
This data enables the service to proactively target campaigns to assist tenants in relation to damp and mould. As such, damp and mould events have been held in key locations across the borough.

Appendix D - Housing Complaints 2022 -2023

During the year 2022 -2023 the Housing service received 52 Stage 1 formal complaints and 9 Stage 2 complaints. Informal complaints are not considered for the purpose of this review.

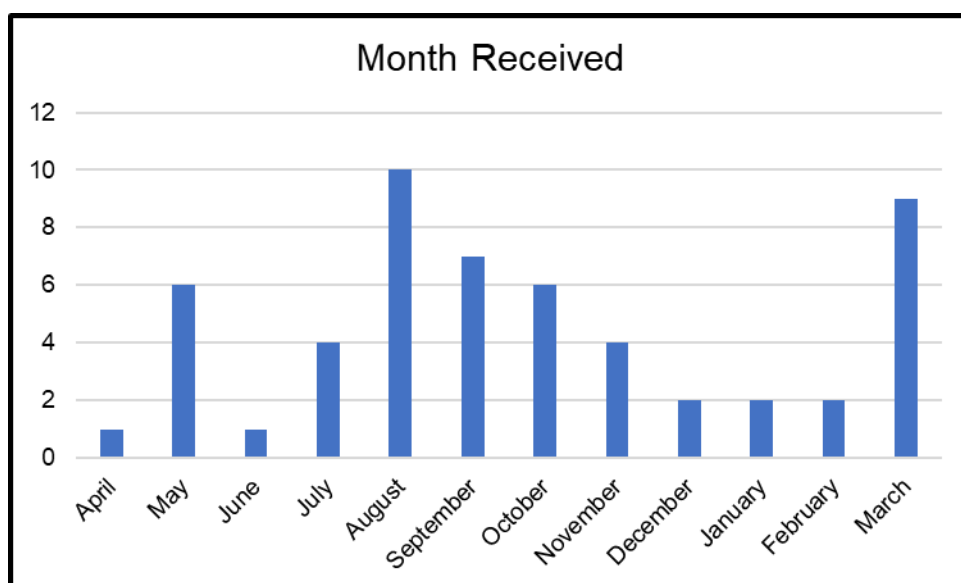
Complaints received by housing team

Housing Repairs and Tenancy Management/ASB received the highest number of complaints by service area.



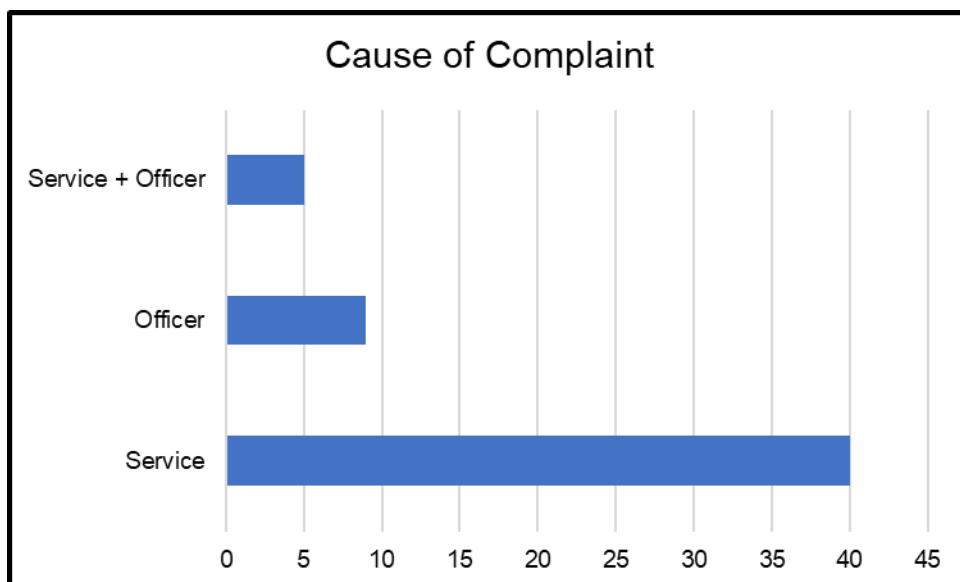
Frequency of complaints

The Housing Service received most complaints in the months of August and March. April and June had the lowest number of complaints reported.



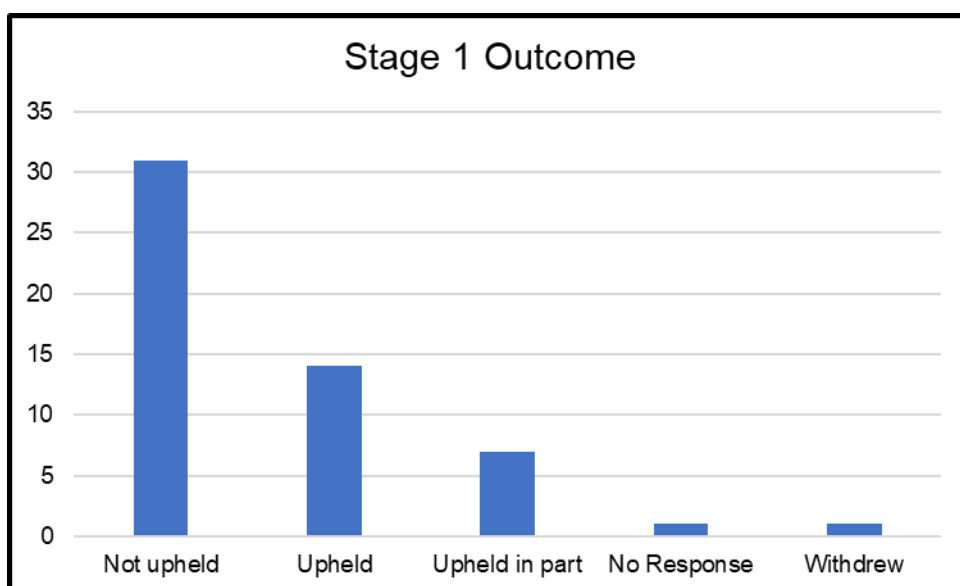
Nature of complaints

Service level was the highest reason for a complaint, with almost 75% of complaints being based solely on services received from the council. 16% of complaints focussed on individual officers, with the remaining having issues with both the service and the officer involved.



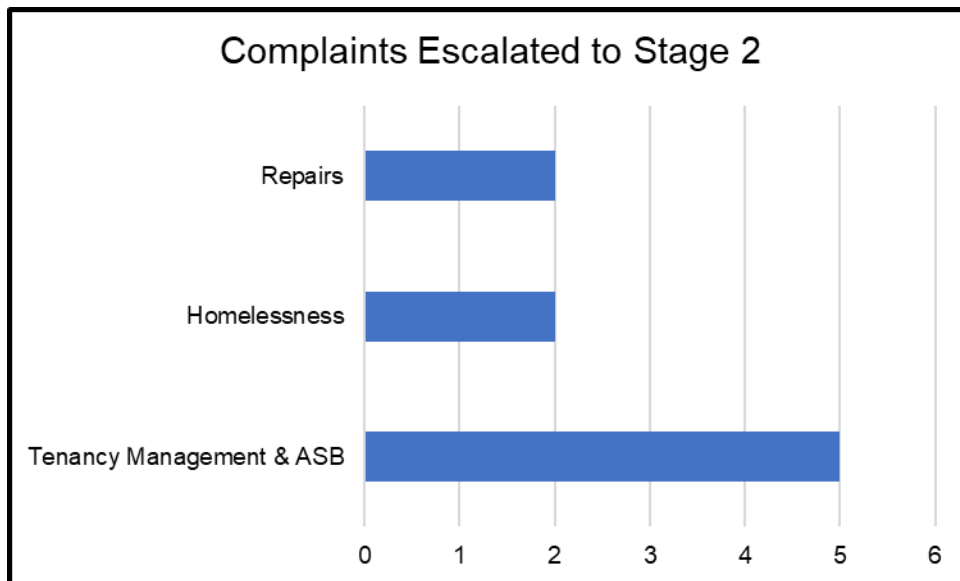
Outcomes of Stage 1 complaints

Over 57% of formal complaints were not upheld and did not show a shortfall in service or officer performance. Only 14 complaints were fully upheld during the year. Only 14 complaints were fully upheld during the year.



Stage 2 Complaints

There were 9 complaints that were escalated to Stage 2 throughout 2022 – 2023, with the highest proportion coming from Tenancy management and ASB.



Key comments from complaints

The following are key broad topics complained about:

- Officer attitude
- Repair time/quality of repair
- Informal complaints/ Queries not being acted on by Tenancy Management/ASB
- Appointments being cancelled/rearranged – Repairs
- Poor communication
- Unhappy with decisions

Complaint handling process

Improvements regarding the general management and standardisation of all complaints is a priority for the housing service. The service will also be looking to implement processes in relation to continuous learning, to ensure that any areas of improvement are considered by each service area. Further work is under way to develop process into the management and recording of informal complaints.

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Landlord complaints – briefing note

Changes we will implement from 1 April (in advance of new policy being agreed)

General

- An individual doesn't have to use the word "complaint" for it to be treated as such
- Whenever an individual expresses dissatisfaction, even if it is in relation to a service request which is ongoing, we must ask them whether they wish to make a complaint
- When issuing a survey, we should include information on how to complain
- Complaints must be able to be raised by any means, and with any member of staff (which means if a caller wishes to make a complaint, the member of staff taking the call must take the complaint at that point)
- We must not refuse to accept a complaint or escalate a complaint unless we have valid reason. Currently this relates to those reasons set out in the current complaints process, however the new policy will be in line with the code
- We must give a complainant the opportunity to have a representative or be accompanied at any meeting (I have included something in the policy reserving the right to refuse to deal with a representative who has restrictions placed on them through the persistent & unreasonable complainant policy or other restrictions)
- We must not have 'informal complaints' as that adds an extra stage – if someone wishes to complain, it must be handled at stage 1
- If we use a third party / contractor to provide a service, any complaints they deal with on our behalf must comply with the code and must form part of the two-stage process
- We must make reasonable adjustments and keep a record of them, as well as any disabilities disclosed, and we must keep them under review. The complaints team will need to work with you to ensure we record this information if you have it on file already
- A record of all correspondence with the complainant or with other parties about the complaint must be kept. We will do this by using sharepoint so you can add any correspondence you have that we have not been included in to the complaint file
- Responses to complaints about us as landlord must be in writing, even if the complainant has asked to be informed by telephone etc, the HOS will need to see something documented – we can discuss how to do this if the occasion arises
- Landlords should handle enquiries from MPs or councillors in the same way it would handle contact made by a resident. If an MP or councillor enquiry is

received and the file shows a previous contact or complaint from the resident about the matter, it should be taken as an indication they remain dissatisfied and we should contact the complainant to explore the reason they remain dissatisfied and ask whether they would like it to be investigated as a complaint / escalated to stage 2. We can still respond to the MP/councillor to explain what action has been taken

- If the responding officer speaks to the complainant during the course of the investigation and the complainant decides they do not wish to pursue the complaint, the complaints team will require evidence of this.

Stage 1 complaints

- The complaints team must set out their understanding of the complaint and agree this “complaint definition” and the outcomes they are seeking with the complainant at the outset – this definition must then be included in the complaint response at both stages
- If the officer responding to a complaint is not going to be able to respond by the deadline, we must inform the complainant as early as possible, providing reasons for needing an extension (annual leave, illness and workload are not acceptable reasons as the HOS expects complaint handling to be sufficiently resourced to prevent this from being an issue), agreeing timescales for keeping them informed and giving them details of the HOS at that point
- Extensions to the deadline for a response cannot be longer than ten working days
- Until the new policy is approved, the deadline for a response will remain at ten working days from receipt of the complaint (in the new policy, this will be extended to ten working days from the date of acknowledgement, and we will have five working days to acknowledge)
- We must provide a response when the outcome to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions are complete
- Additional complaints raised during the investigation must be incorporated into the stage 1 if they are related
- The stage 1 response must include:
 - The complaint stage
 - The “definition” of the complaint
 - The decision
 - Reasons for the decision
 - Details of the remedy
 - Any outstanding actions
 - How to escalate to stage 2

Stage 2 complaints

- The complainant doesn’t have to explain why they are requesting escalation to stage 2, but we will make reasonable efforts to understand why they remain unhappy

- If the officer responding to a complaint is not going to be able to respond by the deadline, we must inform the complainant as early as possible, providing reasons for needing an extension (annual leave, illness and workload are not acceptable reasons as the HOS expects complaint handling to be sufficiently resourced to prevent this from being an issue), agreeing timescales for keeping them informed and giving them details of the HOS at that point
- Extensions to the deadline for a response cannot be longer than ten working days
- Until the new policy is approved, the deadline for a stage 2 response will remain at ten working days from receipt of the complaint (in the new policy, this will be extended to ten or twenty working days from the date of acknowledgement, and we will have five working days to acknowledge)
- The stage 2 response must include:
 - The complaint stage
 - The “definition” of the complaint
 - The decision
 - Reasons for the decision
 - Details of the remedy
 - Any outstanding actions
 - How to complain to the HOS

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BRIEFING NOTE

Housing Service- Tenant Involvement Update

The Service Development Team have worked to establish tenant involvement after the pandemic diminished most existing methods of engagement. In the last 12 months, the team along with the support of housing colleagues has:

- Launched a new tenant newsletter, 'housing hub' which is sent every 6 months. 3 issues have been sent in the new format.
- Launched a tenants newsletter, 'Chatter' for those tenants in residence across our sheltered housing schemes.
- Hosted a meet and greet for tenants to meet the team and chat about tenant involvement in an informal setting.
- Developed a new tenant portal called 'MyHousing' for tenants to view their rent and manage their personal data online.
- Hosted 4 drop in events for tenants, with a primary focus on dealing with damp and mould. Other opportunities to speak to tenancy management, private sector housing, housing repairs and tenant involvement were available.
- Assisted with 2 consultations, hosting information events for tenants to 'drop in'.
- Consulted with tenants on one revised policy and one revised specification of work which are now in place.
- Supported 2 cost of living events and donated a raffle prize to older persons day.
- Created 6 roles for tenant involvement opportunities and recruited to those posts.
- Recruitment of 172 tenants into tenant involvement opportunities. Our involved tenants will respond to opportunities as they arise and take part in what interests them.
- Hosted a pop up event for Housing colleagues to learn about the new Consumer Standards from the Social Housing Regulator.

Tenant Scrutiny

Having built a strong foundation for tenant involvement to grow further, we have successfully recruited new members to our Tenant Influence and Scrutiny Panel. Plans to refresh our Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Strategy will take place later this year as a co-creation exercise with the panel.

Appendix 1

Tenant Involvement Roles:

Reading Panel - receive policies, documents, letters, and early access to web pages to provide feedback on the content. These are communications that will be used by officers to speak to our tenants, so you will be helping us to make sure that the language used, and the tone is appropriate and helpful, whilst delivering our services. This role is carried out in your own time, from home.

Editorial Panel – Housing Hub - be part of a team who choose topics or provide images and content for our 6 monthly Housing Hub Tenants Newsletter. This role is carried out in your own time, from home.

Neighbourhood Champions - someone who can help promote tenant involvement activities in their neighbourhood. This can be a range of activities from assisting with events we hold, and encouraging others such as your neighbours, to join in. This role will vary depending on your neighbourhood, some aspects may be online, and some may be in community centres or local meet ups.

Customer Experience Champion - A really important role where you will receive training and support to advocate for tenants who need help to provide feedback or raise concerns with the council. You could be helping with awareness of all the different ways someone can make a compliment or complaint to us, you may also get more involved by supporting another tenant directly with their complaint or concern. There will be a meeting twice a year, to review housing complaints, and what was done about them. This is a key role in scrutinising how we handle complaints, to ensure that we are fair in our response and that we are doing everything we can to put things right. This role will vary as some aspects may be by phone, in person, or online.

Tenant Influence and Scrutiny Panel - Become a member of our new Scrutiny Panel, where you'll get involved in inspecting and giving feedback on the housing service. The Scrutiny Panel will meet every 3 months, it will either be online or in person - depending on the consensus of the group. You'll have the opportunity to receive training and have plenty of support from our team.

Void Property Inspector - Visit void (empty) properties with staff to inspect and ensure they meet the standards and provide feedback. This will take place in the daytime, for approximately 2 hours per month, we can provide transport to and from the empty property and we will meet you there to inspect the property with you.