

	<p align="center"><b>Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee</b></p> <p align="center">20 November 2024</p>
	<p align="center"><b>Report from the Corporate Director of Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services</b></p>
	<p align="center"><b>Lead Member for Housing</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Housing Management Performance Update</b></p>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Non-Key
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
<b>List of Appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 – TSM results 2023-24 Appendix 2 – Housing Improvement Plan
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
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## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update to the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on the Housing Management Service’s performance over the last year, including our 2023-24 Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) results.
- 1.2 This report covers Council homes only, performance relating to Investment for Brent and First Wave Housing homes are being reported on separately.

## 2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the committee note the contents of this report.

2.2 That the committee view the noted Cabinet report provided as a background paper for the Housing Management Service's performance on complaints.

### **3.0 Detail**

#### **Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context**

3.1 The Housing Management Service supports the Council's wider Borough Plan to *Move Brent Forward Together*. In particular, the areas detailed in this report support the strategic priority to provide *prosperity and stability* in Brent through helping to deliver the desired outcome for safe, secure and decent housing throughout the borough.

#### **Background**

3.2 The Housing Management service provides landlord services to tenants and leaseholders across the London Borough of Brent. The landlord function is carried out by two services: Housing and Neighbourhoods who manage the 'people' side i.e. tenancy management, managing rent collection and arrears, Right to Buys etc. and Property Services who manage the 'property' side i.e. day-to-day repairs, building safety and compliance, planned work programmes etc. The two services work together closely to provide a joined-up landlord service to our Council tenant and leaseholders.

3.3 As a registered social housing landlord, Brent Council falls under the regulation of the Regulator of Social Housing (The Regulator). Following the royal assent of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, The Regulator is taking a strengthened and more pro-active approach to regulation, primarily through:

- A new programme of 'Ofsted style' inspections; and
- The introduction of a mandatory annual data submission for all social landlords (Tenant Satisfaction Measures – TSM's).

3.4 The TSM's are made up of 22 key performance indicators spanning both internal business metrics and results from a tenant satisfaction survey. They provide a consistent high-level indication of how we are performing as a landlord.

### **4.0 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)**

4.1 In June 2024 we submitted our first year of TSM data to The Regulator. Our results, alongside the national average and London quartile figures (as published by housing sector benchmarking organisation, Housemark) can be seen in Appendix 1.

4.2 Brent is sitting in the London lower-quartile across all satisfaction-based measures and in some cases this is juxtaposed with the internal business measure, where across most of these Brent is falling in line with, or above, the London average.

- 4.3 For example, our TSM results in Appendix 1 show that we are receiving significantly less complaints than our London peers (35 Stage 1's per 1000 homes vs. the London average of 73). However, only 17% of tenants said they were satisfied with how we handle complaints, significantly lower than the London average of 26%. Similarly, we're out-performing our London peers when it comes to repair completion timescales (85% non-emergency repairs completed on time compared to London average of 78%), but tenant satisfaction across all of our repairs related metrics sits below the London average.
- 4.4 In response to our TSM results and in reflection of the work needed to ensure we're ready for a regulatory inspection, the Service has developed a Housing Improvement Plan (Appendix 2). The Improvement Plan sets out the vision and priority areas for the Service over the next few years with the aim of ensuring we are effectively meeting regulatory requirements, delivering efficient services and improving tenant satisfaction.
- 4.5 As required by The Regulator, our TSM results have been published on our website and shared with our tenants via our newly launched 'The Noticeboard' e-newsletter. Collection for our 2024-25 TSM's has already started and the satisfaction survey this year includes additional qualitative questions which will provide more detailed insight into what is causing dissatisfaction across the areas covered under the TSM's.
- 4.6 The rest of this report provides a summary for performance across some key areas not covered in the TSM's.

## 5.0 Voids

- 5.1 Processing void properties efficiently is important as the Council loses rental income every week that a property is not let. Having properties void for extended periods of time leads to longer wait times for residents on the social housing waiting list. It is therefore key that void properties are processed as quickly as possible for the benefit of residents and the Council.
- 5.2 As of 5 November, there are 88 empty Council homes in the void process.

	Major	Minor	Out of management	Void being used for TA	Unspecified void type	Total
Snapshot Nov 2024	36	17	8	3	24	88

Note: unspecified void types are where a property is still under investigation re. works required or where the system has not yet been updated with an agreed void type category.

- 5.3 Average turnaround time for council homes let since 1 April 2024 is 309 days for major voids and 170 days for minor voids. Overall void turnaround time is reported from tenancy termination to the date at which a new tenancy begins. We break this down into Stage 1 (time between the end of the tenancy and when the contractor starts their work), Stage 2 (time that the property is with the contractors for void works) and Stage 3 (time between contractor finishing works and a new tenancy starting).

5.4 The average time a property is spending with contractors (i.e. in Stage 2) is 8.6 days for minor voids and 18.6 days for major voids. A common reason for delays before Stage 2 begins is the required clearance of a property when exiting tenants have left items and rubbish etc. behind. Property Services and Tenancy Services are working together to introduce new ways of working to ensure properties are left clean and empty by outgoing tenants e.g. by embedding pre-termination checks to be carried out by the new Area Tenancy Manager roles.

## 6.0 Income collection

6.1 The Service's cumulative collection rate for 2024-25 YTD is 96.38%. The cumulative collection rate for the same period during 2023-24 was 96.10%.

Scheme	Weeks 1-31 Cumulative collection for 24/25	Weeks 1-31 Cumulative collection for 23/24	Diff (+/-) of weeks cumulative collection for 24/25 to 23/24
Council	96.38%	96.10%	0.28%

6.2 Over the course of the last year a large-scale restructure has been developed and is now being embedded. Front line Housing Officer, Income Recovery Officer and Lettings Officer roles have been deleted and new roles of Area Tenancy Managers created. Area Tenancy Managers are generic officers who will manage a patch of homes and tenancies from 'Let to Re-Let', inclusive of income collection.

6.3 The prior Income Recovery service has now been deleted but the new Area Tenancy Managers are yet to be fully recruited. The current year to date income collection is better than at the same point last year in week 31 by 0.28%. This is an exceptional achievement considering the very minimal resource currently allocated to recovering rent, and the diminished amount allocated to rent accounts from Discretionary Housing Payments and Resident Support Fund payments, which in previous years have bolstered collection.

## 7.0 Tenancy sustainment - evictions

7.1 The Service takes a sustainment first approach to preventing evictions, prioritising holistic support, signposting to relevant services, the utilisation of the resident support fund and other financial benefits where applicable to keep people in their homes. The service will only take enforcement action to evict where tenants are not engaging and are refusing to pay their rent. At this point Housing Needs and Adult Social Care are engaged with to ensure residents have all support necessary to prevent homelessness.

7.2 Between the period of November 2023 – November 2024 there have been six Council tenants evicted because of rent arrears. The last 3 years data on this is shown below:

Year	Number of Tenants Evicted due to Rent Arrears
2024	6

2023	2
2022	2

7.3 It is anticipated that the new generic model with Area Tenancy Managers will be a holistic approach that will see improvements in visibility on estates and direct support to tenants who need it. Improving accessibility is a key priority which will in turn improve collection rates, as intervention will be early and meaningful, with the same person administering the rent account as dealing with any tenancy management issues.

## 8.0 Corporate Contact Centre – Housing

8.1 The Corporate Contact Centre (CCC) is responsible for handling all initial contacts from residents by phone and email, acting as the ‘front door’ for the housing management service. Their performance is set out below.

	No. Calls answered	% Calls accepted	% Calls abandoned	Average wait time for calls answered	Longest wait	No. Emails Processed
<b>2024-25 YTD</b>	28,750	78%	22%	12min	51min	19,435
<b>2023-24</b>	44,768	77%	23%	10min	1hr30min	31,212
<b>2022-23</b>	50,825	79%	21%	8min	54min	33,041

8.2 The YTD calls answered per month for 2024-25 is currently averaging at 4,107. In 2023-24 the average was 3730. The CCC is expecting an increase of 5000 calls for 2024-25.

8.3 The longest wait time for answered calls has improved from last year, however there are several factors still impacting performance, including high staff turnover both in housing and the CCC with new starters needing to build knowledge and experience, difficult to navigate processes across multiple systems making it time-consuming for handlers to log and chase repair cases, as well as the increasing number of calls and emails coming in. The CCC and housing management services are working closely to improve processes and systems to tackle these issues.

## 9.0 Planned Works

### Kilburn Square

9.1 Works are ongoing. Scaffolding has been erected to main block and maisonettes. Internally, Life Safety Systems and sprinklers have been installed and lift replacement works are currently happening. Expected completion date of July 2025 with an estimated cost of £13M. This project has been delayed by 2 months and is currently overspending by £0.5m.

### Windmill Court

- 9.2 Design and specification is progressing. An issue with Vodaphone telecommunications persists but is now being dealt with legally. Works are likely to start in February 2025. Resident consultation has taken place. The full planning application has now been submitted. The works are expected to be completed by August 2026 with an estimated cost of £15M.

### Lodge Court and Manor Court

- 9.3 Design and specification is progressing. The freeholder's solicitor has requested detailed design information and is insisting on this before a request to refurbish the blocks is considered. It is likely that works to Manor Court will be postponed due to imminent cladding remediation in the shopping centre. Works to Manor Court are expected to commence March 2025 and to be completed in October 2026 with an estimated cost of £7.5M.

### Granville homes

- 9.4 Design and specification is progressing. The Council has contacted the original constructor Higgins with a view to them remediating the blocks. In addition, the officers are applying to the Cladding Safety Fund. Procurement of the remediation contractor (if not Higgins) will commence in December 2024. Works could commence June 2025 and will take at least 2 – 2.5 years to complete. The project has an estimated cost of £25M.

### Other – energy efficiency

- 9.5 Officers are exploring possible partial energy efficiency grant funding for The Oaks and Pharamond. Officers are also working on submitting grant applications for lower energy efficiency homes. Applications for this are going across to London Councils week commencing 11 November and if successful we will look to start design stage next financial year.

## **10.0 Additional updates**

### Re-organisation of housing management services

- 10.1 The Service has recently completed a re-organisation with the biggest change being the combining of the Housing Officer, Income Officer and Lettings Officer roles into 25 Area Tenancy Manager positions. This change means that instead of different teams and officers being responsible for different elements of tenancy management, Area Tenancy Managers are responsible for all areas of tenancy management across their patch. The role of the new Area Tenancy Managers includes:
- Helping new tenants to start their tenancy (previously managed by a Lettings Officer);
  - Helping to manage anti-social behaviour (previously managed by a Housing Officer);

- Handling applications for transfers and successions (previously managed by Housing Officers and Income Officers jointly);
  - Supporting people who are having trouble paying their rent (previously managed by Income Officers); and
  - Working with other areas of the Council to fix repairs and solve issues on estates (previously managed by Housing Officers).
- 10.2 Recruitment is still underway for several roles across Housing and Neighbourhoods and Property Services as part of the re-organisation and it is expected that all positions will be filled before the end of the financial year.
- 10.3 The aspiration is that the service provided going forwards will be localised, visible, accessible and efficient. However, the restructure has seen a significant reduction in overall posts in the Housing Management establishment for savings to be made to the Housing Revenue Account of £0.67m. Improvements to service delivery will therefore be gradual and require bedding in, with staff support, training and retention a key priority.
- 10.4 The estate caretaking team moved out of the housing management service at the start of this financial year. Cleaning of communal areas, management of fly tipping etc. is now overseen by Environmental Services under the Public Realm Directorate. The Service will be developing an SLA with Environmental Services to ensure effective oversight is in place moving forward. This is an action included in the Improvement Plan (appendix 2).

#### Repairs and maintenance contract re-procurement

- 10.5 The current contract we have with Wates, to deliver the integrated asset management, planned and cyclical maintenance and responsive repairs maintenance works comes to an end 31 March 2024.
- 10.6 The Housing Management Service worked with members to agree on the new Hybrid delivery model which will consist of at least two contractors delivering voids, planned and responsive repairs.
- 10.7 Engagement with tenants has been a key element of the re-procurement process with a varied programme of engagement activity taking place, including:
- Online briefings and Q&A via Microsoft Teams;
  - Opportunity to provide feedback and comment on performance measures for the new contractor(s) through the 'Have Your Say' website; and
  - Face-to-face workshops to discuss the re-procurement and collect tenant feedback.

- 10.8 Tenants will also be involved in the evaluation of contractor bids, providing scoring against key tenant satisfaction response areas. Following evaluation, which is currently underway, expected go live for new contract(s) is April 2025.

#### Lynton Close Travellers Site

- 10.9 Lynton Close Gypsy and Traveller site is designed to hold 31 pitches which each contain a kitchen unit and shower unit, and a static home. It is currently chronically overcrowded with additional vehicles- touring vans, mobile homes and some static homes. Lynton Close is the largest known Gypsy and Traveller Site in London. Each pitch is overcrowded with an additional 1-3 vehicles.
- 10.10 Following annual audits there is a need for a minimum of 61 pitches to adequately accommodate the families on Lynton Close, and ideally 80+ to comfortably accommodate young families, single adults and the anticipated near future growth of the community
- 10.11 The current overcrowding is due almost entirely to generational growth over the last three decades since Travellers and Gypsies originally settled there and gained the right to remain. The sites overcrowding has direct impacts on poor quality of life for residents, poor educational attainment and health and welfare, increases ASB and reduces the ability to effectively manage the site.
- 10.12 The overcrowding gives rise to a more immediate and chronic risk which relates to fire safety. The sites most recent fire risk assessment found the site to be at intolerable risk of fire, largely due to the intensity and volume of homes, which leave no gap between them due to lack of space and would allow a fire to 'jump' from one vehicle to another should one break out. It is widely recognised that large sites are very difficult to manage, and sites should be no larger than 8 pitches ideally.
- 10.13 A borough wide search was undertaken to identify alternative potential sites for additional pitches. However, this has been unsuccessful and the risks at the current site remain. To mitigate the risks in the interim while a longer-term solution was found, Waking Watch were hired to patrol the site in the evenings throughout the night to ensure that should a fire break out everyone on site would be alerted and evacuated safely.
- 10.14 Waking Watch were installed following consultation with the Travellers who did not want the wardens on site but were advised that the measure was one that would be taken for bricks and mortar tenants and was for their own safety. On the first night Waking Watch began working they were violently attacked and chased from site, following which the welfare unit provided for them was vandalised.
- 10.15 As a result the fire risks remain unmitigated and staff and contractor visits to site are being carefully risk assessed and managed to ensure safety of all. Work is currently ongoing with legal services to determine next steps for the site to make it safe as soon as possible.

#### Engagement



10.16 The new Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy 2024-2028 was approved by Cabinet in June 2024. The strategy sets out the approach for how the Housing Management Service will:

- Embed a culture that respects engagement;
- Be transparent and provide information to enable challenge;
- Listen, learn and embed improvements from feedback;
- Raise awareness of and challenge stigma;
- Provide opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to influence decision-making; and
- Work with tenants and leaseholders to make a positive impact in their local area.

10.17 Several engagement activities have taken place since the launch of the strategy including tenant-led complaints scrutiny, online consultation of policy development, a repairs workshop and a programme of summer roadshows across estates. Work is currently underway to engage with tenants around our approach to managing anti-social behaviour and experiences of being decanted (temporary move from their home because of significant repairs works being required).

10.18 The Service is also in the process of setting up a new Housing Management Advisory Panel. The Panel membership will include Councillors, staff, external independent members and council tenants. It will be an important forum moving forward for holding The Service accountable to regulatory requirements, monitoring progress and providing constructive challenge on the Improvement Plan and become a key governance step in the development of new policies, strategies and initiatives that will impact council tenants. Recruitment is underway now for Independent Members and Tenant Members. Following appointment and training, it is expected that the Board will be up and running by March 2025.

## **11.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

11.1 The Lead Member has been regularly briefed on the ongoing work undertaken by the Housing Management service.

## **12.0 Financial Considerations**

12.1 The landlord function undertaken by Brent Housing Management (BHM) is funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Budgets are ringfenced where income from rents and service charges are matched by expenditure on repairs and management.

12.2 Rental income is the main source of funding in HRA totalling £66m in 2024/25. The rent rise limitation of 7% in 2023/24 imposed by the government, along with

other budgetary pressures, resulted in a need to incorporate £3m worth of challenging cost reductions in 2023/24 and £0.8m in 2024/25 to deliver a balanced budget.

- 12.3 Rent collection rates have a significant impact on future budgets. Collection rents currently stand at circa 97% and for every 1% drop in collection, the loss of income is estimated to be £0.6m.
- 12.4 The repairs contract for planned and responsive repairs is currently outsourced to one contractor and is due for re-procurement. Repairs contract costs can be expected to increase upon renewal. Inflation on re-tendered contracts is estimated to range between 5% to 10%. The contract was originally due to expire in September 2024 and a budget allowance has already been made in the 2024/25 budget, however there is a risk that the cost of the new delivery model could be higher than anticipated, which could create a further budget requirements ranging between £0.5m to £2m in 2025/26.
- 12.5 Property Services are experiencing continued increase in cost associated with expenditure on void properties in order to bring them to lettable standards. The service is required to balance competing demands, there is a need to recruit to vacant positions and at the same time achieve saving targets. Budgetary pressures identified for void and responsive works require additional funding estimated at £0.5m - £1m in 2025/26.
- 12.6 Void turnaround times have an impact on rental income while the property remains unoccupied. Void rent loss is at £0.9m year to date, based on this run rate the projected rent loss for the year is £1.64m, making up 2.85% of budgeted rental income.
- 12.7 Council tower blocks refurbishment programme is estimated to cost in the region of £42m, pending detailed costing information per block. The current estimated investment is anticipated to be part funded through borrowing. Funding profile for debt repayment and interest involves mitigating cost reduction of £0.7m in revenue budget between 2023 and 2025. Saving targets have been identified in void repairs, disrepair works and staff vacancies. In addition to revenue savings in the short term, budget reductions to long-term capital programme totalling £33.5m have been profiled between 2026 to 2048, to provide for debt repayment.
- 12.8 Pressures associated with the cost of materials and repairs, the cost of new build contracts, an increase in service requests relating to damp and mould, environmental priorities and requirements such as carbon reduction works to homes, as well as rental income increasing at a lower rate than the cost of service pose significant financial pressures for the HRA. Any additional requirements and increased costs experienced by the HRA would have to be met by rent inflation and modifying service delivery, in addition to the annual saving targets which are incorporated into the medium term financial strategy.

## 13.0 Legal Considerations

- 13.1 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, which received Royal Assent on 20th July 2023 is intended to be the catalyst for a new proactive approach to regulating social housing, ensuring standards are met and taking action against failing landlords. The Act itself describes its purpose as being to “reform the regulatory regime to drive significant change in landlord behaviour.
- 13.2 The Act provides the Regulator with a power to give directions to Registered Providers (RPs) to collect, process and publish information about their performance in relation to the regulatory standards. The Regulator has already consulted on and published the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) in April 2023, the Regulator introduced 22 mandatory TSMs creating a new system for assessing how well social housing landlords are doing at providing good quality homes and services, this includes those applicable directly to building safety as well as those based on tenant perception. The requirement on RPs to start collecting data also started from 1st April 2023 and it is anticipated that the first year of data from RPs will be published in Autumn 2024.
- 13.3 **Electrical Safety:** The Act extends the power for the Secretary of State (under the Housing and Planning Act 2016) to impose duties on landlords for the purpose of ensuring that electrical standards are met during any period whilst a premises is occupied under tenancy to cover all RPs, rather than just private landlords.
- 13.4 **Gas Safety:** The Council already utilises paragraph Schedule 3, paragraph 2 Environmental Protection Act 1990 to obtain warrants for entry in the Magistrates Court for access to properties which deny assess for gas safety inspections to ensure the safety of the Council’s housing stock.
- 13.5 **Rent Collection:** The Council needs to comply with the Pre-Action Protocol for Possession Claims by Social Landlords before initiating possession proceedings. The protocol requires that the landlord should take reasonable steps to make pre-action contact and exchange information, to enable the landlords and tenants to avoid litigation and settle disputes out of court. Court proceedings should be a last resort. If the landlord does not comply with the protocol the court can consider compliance when making any order for costs and where the claim is brought on discretionary grounds, adjourn or strike out the claim
- 13.6 **Maintenance of Housing Stock:** The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, section 11, the Council as the landlord has a duty to keep in repair and proper working order the structure and the exterior of the residential properties it owns as well as certain installations for the supply of water, gas and electricity. This obligation is from the commencement of the tenancy therefore voids property should be in a good state of repair. Failure to comply with this duty leaves the Council liable to legal action from its tenants.
- 13.7 **Planned Works:** Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 imposes a requirement on landlords to consult with Leaseholders (as opposed to secure tenants) in respect of qualifying works (e.g. where leaseholder’s contribution is

in excess of £250 p.a.) or a qualifying long term agreements (ones entered into by the landlord for a period in excess of 12 months which result in a contribution of a leaseholder in a year is in excess of £100). Failure to comply with the consultation requirements will mean that only £250 per leaseholder per financial year can be recovered by the freehold owner in respect of qualifying works and only £100 per leaseholder per financial year can be recovered by the freehold owner in respect of qualifying long term agreements during the duration of those agreements. These various consultation requirements are set out in the Service Charges (Consultation Requirements) (England) Regulations 2003.

- 13.8 In some circumstances, it will not be possible to meet all the necessary consultation requirements (for example, very urgent works on the grounds of safety) and in those circumstances, the landlord can apply to the First Tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) to apply for dispensation from complying with the consultation requirements pursuant to section 20. The Tribunal has discretion to grant dispensation if it takes the view that it is reasonable to do so.

#### **14.0 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

- 14.1 The Council must, in the making of decisions in exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, pursuant to s149 (1) Equality Act 2010. This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
  - remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
  - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
  - encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

- 14.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- 14.3 Housing is currently carrying out an exercise to improve diversity data held on system to ensure that any equality impact assessments carried out are informed and fully understand the impact to residents who have protected characteristics.

## 15.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

15.1 Housing is a key stakeholder in delivering the Council's Climate Action Strategy. The actions Housing is responsible for are as follows:

- Retrofit work to three tower blocks
- We will deliver further retrofitting projects via the Council's Carbon offset fund
- We will develop and implement employer requirements for energy efficiency standards within all new Council housing
- We will explore and identify an opportunity for an exemplar net zero new build within the NCHP
- We will review developments within our NCHP pipeline to ensure that all aspects of sustainability are holistically addressed, with a special focus on the proposed development plans for St Raphael's Estate
- We will explore funding for a dedicated energy efficiency works programme within the Housing Asset Management Strategy
- Support the implementation of Green Neighbourhoods by engaging Housing Associations and Private Landlords operating in the areas.

15.2 The financial position of the HRA will determine Housing's capacity to deliver the actions outlined above.

## 16.0 Communications Considerations

16.1 The Housing Management Service is working closely with the Corporate Communications Team to develop an annual communications plan for the Service. This plan includes the production of a quarterly e-newsletter, refreshed information in noticeboards across estates and more regular operational communications re. key messages. We are also currently exploring the set-up of patch level WhatsApp Channels for use by the new Area Tenancy Managers to encourage more regular, local level communication.

### Related documents:

[Housing Management Complaints Annual Report 2023/24](#)

**Report sign off:**

**Peter Gadsdon**

Corporate Director of Resident Services