

	Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 4 March 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director of Residents and Housing Services
	Lead Cabinet Member for Housing - Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson
Housing Management: Tenant Satisfaction Measures and Brent Housing Management (BHM) Performance	
Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-key decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
List of Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Tenant Satisfaction Measures
Background Papers:	None
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1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides an overview and update on the performance of Brent Housing Management against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, the improvements being planned for and delivered to rectify underperformance, as well as:

- Our current position for major and minor voids and loss of rent income due to void properties;
- Compliance workstreams, including fire, water (legionella), asbestos, gas, electrical and lifts;
- Repairs and Disrepair performance.
- Rent collection and arrears, including projections for the end of the financial year;
- Complaints (Stage 1 and Stage 2) performance and outcomes;

- Progress of major planned works underway and in the planning stages and;
- The impact of the current financial position and budget proposals on Housing Management.

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 performance update against core areas of Brent Housing Management.

3.0 Detail and Background

Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

3.1 The work detailed in this report and that of the housing management service more generally supports the Council's wider borough plan to Move Brent Forward Together. In particular, the work presented with this report supports the borough plan priority to provide prosperity and stability in Brent through helping to deliver the desired outcome for safe, secure and decent housing across the borough.

3.2 This report to the Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee provides a comprehensive and transparent update on Housing Management performance and Tenant Satisfaction Measures across Brent's council homes.

3.3 Tenant Satisfaction Measures offer a clear and important insight into residents' lived experience of our housing services. The results set out in this report show that, while progress has been made in some areas, we are not yet delivering the consistently high standard of service that our residents rightly expect. The department and Lead Member want to be clear that this position is not acceptable, and the Council is committed to sustained and meaningful improvement.

3.4 This report sets out the significant challenges facing the service, including the legacy of historic underinvestment, increased regulatory expectations following the Social Housing (Regulation) Act, the impact of new build delivery and regeneration activity, and the pressures created by rising demand for repairs, compliance and customer contact. It also outlines the practical actions already underway to address underperformance, strengthen compliance, improve data quality and rebuild resident confidence.

3.5 We are particularly encouraged by the establishment of the Housing and Tenant Satisfaction Improvement Programme, which provides clear governance, senior oversight and accountability for change. Alongside this, we are seeing early signs of improvement in key areas such as void turnaround times, disrepair case closures, rent collection performance and customer contact

handling. These improvements demonstrate that focused leadership, stronger performance management and investment in the right areas can deliver results.

- 3.6 However, improvement will not happen overnight. Rebuilding trust with residents requires sustained effort, honest communication and consistent delivery. This is why resident engagement sits at the heart of our approach, ensuring that residents' voices continue to shape how services are designed and delivered.

4.0 Tenant Satisfaction Measures

- 4.1 We are currently underway with the third full year of data collection for the Tenant Satisfaction Measure regime.
- 4.2 Our satisfaction data is detailed in appendix 1, which shows performance over two and a half years and benchmarking against our peers where available. There is a lot of work that needs to be done to improve tenant satisfaction, and work has begun. Tenants experiences and perception of Brent Council, the Housing Management service delivery and staff is not where it needs to be.
- 4.3 We have set improvement plans looking at the key services where residents have expressed concerns, such as Repairs, Anti-Social Behaviour and Estate Cleaning. This involves residents in designing with us service improvements and we are using our Tenant Satisfaction results as the driving force to work with others across the Council to get this moving in the right direction.
- 4.4 Following a review of the consumer standards we must comply with, we have a plan for each standard as part of our journey of continually developing our service. Out of the 61 consumers standards that apply to the Council we feel we can definitely enhance the delivery of 45 of them. There is a plan and work is underway to do this. This should have the impact of improving our services and following through into improvements in our TSM score.

5.0 Housing and Tenant Satisfaction Improvement Programme

- 5.1 The Housing & Tenant Satisfaction Improvement Programme (HTSIP) Board met for its initial meeting in September. This Board, chaired by the Chief Executive, will oversee and drive initiatives aimed at improving the quality of housing services and increasing tenant satisfaction. The Board will provide governance and oversight by monitoring the progress of improvement initiatives and ensuring compliance with housing standards.
- 5.2 The HTSIP Board oversees three Project Boards, which are focussed on the following:
- Lynton Close Project Board – driving and coordinating immediate and longer term interventions to improve the quality of life and alleviate overcrowding at the Lynton Close Gypsy & Traveller site

- Building Safety Compliance Project Board – remedial action to improve the council's 'C3' rating, given by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) in spring 2025
- Housing Improvement Project Board – delivering improvements across the domains of regulatory compliance, systems and data and the employee lifecycle

5.3 In addition, the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) ensures there is sufficient resident and independent scrutiny and challenge on our compliance and improvement activities. The areas of performance outlined in this report will feature regularly in the HMAB forward plan to ensure resident-led strategic scrutiny.

6.0 Voids

6.1 Overview of the voids process:

	Lead(s)	Description
Stage 1 void	Housing Mgmt General Needs	Identifying and setting up the void (property without active tenancy)
Stage 2 void	Housing Mgmt Voids Team (Repairs)	Minor or major works in progress
Stage 3 void	Housing Mgmt General Needs <u>and</u> Housing Needs Social Housing Allocations and Lettings Team (SHALT)	Allocation and letting the void

6.2 **Voids – Current Position and Performance** - The proportion of General Needs stock that is void has increased to 2.93%, up from 1.04% in January 2025. Since October 2025, a further 175 voids have been recorded. This increase is largely attributable to improved data quality following a data-cleansing exercise, which identified previously unrecorded historic voids, alongside a rise in tenancy terminations, particularly those relating to death-of-tenant cases.

6.3 Additional pressures have arisen from tenant transfers into new-build homes, creating relet voids, and from the scale and pace of new-build handovers. Approximately 450 new homes have been handed over to date, with a further 900 expected by 2026/27, placing significant strain on lettings capacity. New-build activity remains the largest driver of volatility within the voids system, leading to short-term increases in void numbers, extended turnaround times, and increased rent loss and council tax costs. A temporary lettings team and enhanced weekly monitoring arrangements are in place to mitigate these pressures, although challenges remain.

6.4 A subset of voids relates to pre-decommissioning properties within regeneration areas that are not intended for re-letting. Volumes of these voids have increased as tenant decanting activity has accelerated. These properties generate ongoing council tax liabilities and present additional risks, including

antisocial behaviour. To mitigate these impacts, guardianship arrangements are currently in place for 106 properties in South Kilburn.

- 6.5 **Stage 1** of the voids process, which covers the identification and set-up of a void property prior to handover to Property Services, has seen significant improvement over the past year. This stage is predominantly desktop-based and is required to be completed within one week. Performance has improved markedly, with the number of voids at Stage 1 reducing from a peak of 32 in January 2025 to a peak of 6 in January 2026.
- 6.6 Current performance aligns with historic norms, when between 1–5% of stock was void, supported by a dedicated lettings team. Remaining challenges at this stage include delays caused by the availability of communal keys in properties where the Council is not the freeholder, and variable staff confidence in termination and handover processes. These issues are being addressed through targeted training for Area Tenancy Managers and closer coordination between teams responsible for Stages 1 and 2, enabling quicker handover and earlier commencement of void works.
- 6.7 **Stage 2** of the voids process relates to works in progress to bring properties up to a lettable standard following handover to Property Services. In August 2025, a new Voids Manager was appointed, supported by a dedicated Voids Team comprising two Voids Co-ordinators and two Voids Surveyors, providing increased focus and capacity. There are currently 152 properties at Stage 2, with an average turnaround time of 92 days. This figure is distorted by a historic backlog of legacy voids. When pre-August 2025 cases are excluded, the average turnaround time reduces to approximately 40 days, demonstrating a marked improvement in current operational performance.
- 6.8 Turnaround times from April to December 2025, have reduced significantly:

	April 2025	November 2025
Major voids	196 days	74 days
Minor voids	187 days	25 days

- 6.9 Costs and Spend - Increased spend reflects higher throughput, resolution of legacy cases, and backlog clearance while maintaining current delivery

	2025/26 projected spend to April 2026
WPS (West)	£3.95m
Greyline (East)	£1.38m

- 6.10 While operational performance within the voids service has improved, a number of challenges continue to impact overall efficiency and assurance. A small number of complex and long-standing void cases continue to distort average performance measures and extend turnaround times. These cases are often affected by compliance requirements, access issues and changes to scope, all of which prolong delivery and increase costs. At the same time, rising void volumes have placed additional pressure on both contractor capacity and client-side resources, creating ongoing delivery and oversight challenges.

- 6.11 Although progress has been made in stabilising performance, assurance remains weakened by continued reliance on manual trackers and spreadsheets. This limits confidence in cost control, value for money, accurate capitalisation of works, and the timeliness and reliability of performance reporting. As void volumes increase, this reliance on manual processes presents a growing governance risk that will require further system and data improvements to address.
- 6.12 A significant operational risk to void turnaround times relates to asbestos survey capacity. Recent suspensions of the asbestos contractor, arising from payment disputes, halted survey activity for several weeks. This delay prevented works from commencing on affected properties, extended void durations and increased associated costs. Resolving this issue is critical to preventing further service disruption and to maintaining momentum in reducing void turnaround times.
- 6.13 **Stage 3** of the void process covers the period from the date a property is handed over to the Social Housing Allocations and Lettings Team (SHALT) for advertising through the Choice Based Lettings system, or allocation via a Direct Offer, through to the start date of the new tenancy. This stage includes property viewings, offer acceptance and tenancy sign-up.
- 6.14 Effective delivery at Stage 3 requires close joint working between the General Needs Service and SHALT within Housing Needs. The allocation route selected, which is dependent on property type and demand pressures, can have a material impact on the speed at which a letting is completed.
- 6.15 The number of voids at Stage 3 has increased from 28 in January 2025 to 48 in January 2026. This increase has been driven primarily by higher overall void volumes rather than a deterioration in Stage 3 performance.
- 6.16 A number of challenges continue to impact assurance and efficiency at Stage 3 of the void process. Current reporting arrangements do not provide sufficient end-to-end visibility of the void journey or the number of days a property spends at each stage. In particular, reporting is unable to clearly identify which team a void is sitting with during Stage 3 and does not currently include Void Rent Loss, which represents sector best practice and is a key measure of overall efficiency and value for money.
- 6.17 Delays also continue to arise within the shortlisting and allocation process. The provision of shortlists and verification information to Housing Management can be slow, which in turn delays the scheduling of viewings. These delays are often exacerbated where properties are refused by applicants, requiring the advertising or direct offer process to recommence and extending overall turnaround times.
- 6.18 Further verification delays are experienced where prospective tenants have rent arrears linked to Temporary Accommodation, frequently associated with backdated Housing Benefit. Additional work is required in these cases to resolve outstanding issues prior to allocation. While this can extend letting

times, it remains important that verification criteria are applied consistently in order to promote rent payment compliance and support longer-term tenancy sustainment.

- 6.19 A number of actions are in place to address these challenges and strengthen performance and assurance at Stage 3 of the void process. Consistent service-wide messaging has been introduced alongside enhanced weekly monitoring arrangements to reinforce Stage 3 voids as a priority area and to maintain senior oversight of progress and emerging blockages.
- 6.20 The temporary lettings team originally established to support new build allocations is also being deployed to assist with relet voids, maximising available capacity and providing additional resilience during periods of increased demand. In parallel, work is underway to improve data quality and align reporting with sector best practice, including the introduction of an additional stage within the void process to more clearly distinguish team responsibilities and improve end-to-end visibility.
- 6.21 To further reduce overall turnaround times, a proposal is being developed to commence advertising and allocation activity at the end of Stage 2, enabling earlier engagement with prospective tenants and reducing delays between works completion and letting. This approach will be formally considered and agreed through appropriate governance arrangements.
- 6.22 In addition, a joint Housing Management and Housing Needs board is being established to strengthen shared ownership of the end-to-end void process, resolve operational blockages more quickly and improve overall performance and assurance. The first meeting of this board is expected imminently

7.0 Health and Safety Compliance

- 7.1 The summary table below sets out the compliance performance to date against each area of compliance.

		Jan 2026
Gas Safety	Domestic Gas (LGSR)	98.43%
	Communal Gas (LGSR)	99.89%
Electrical Safety	Domestic properties on 5 year EICR	96%
	Communal EICRs	93%
Fire Safety	Fire Risk Assessments in high risk buildings	83%
	Fire Risk Assessments in non-high risk buildings	69%
Water Safety	Legionella risk assessments	78%
Asbestos Safety	Asbestos re-inspections	6.87%
Lift Safety	Passenger lifts (LOLER) servicing	83.33%

7.2 Overall performance continues to improve but is heavily linked to the work on reconfiguring True Compliance and the NEC Housing System. It needs to be noted that concerns around the progress of the NEC upgrade project are rising. Mitigations are in place to address any delays with the NEC project, these being that True Compliance will become the master system for property compliance until the NEC project is completed.

8.0 Repairs and Maintenance

8.1 Property Services continues to deliver responsive and remedial works across all key mechanical and electrical compliance areas, including gas, electrical, water, lifts, asbestos and fire safety. Significant volumes of work have been delivered during the reporting period, with some spend outside of core contracts reflecting demand pressures and contractual limitations.

8.2 All mechanical and electrical contracts are due for re-procurement within the next twelve months, with future arrangements intended to integrate responsive repairs and compliance activity more effectively.

Compliance Area	Activity / Volume	Spend	Average Cost / Notes
Gas	Domestic gas under a 3-star contract. 164 exclusion repairs and 894 communal/commercial repairs completed	£414k spend outside contract	Average £391 per job
Electrical	664 communal repairs completed	£175k total spend	Average £263 per job
Water	All communal water repairs attended within 24 hours	£70k spend to date	Responsive performance within target
Lifts	154 standard lift repairs completed	£49k	Average £318 per repair
Mobility Lifts	99 mobility lift repairs completed	£96k	Average £969 per repair
Asbestos	Planned visits only	N/A	No responsive repairs
Fire Safety	No responsive repairs	N/A	Remedial works only

Responsive Repairs – Health & Safety (M&E) Compliance data

9.0 Disrepair

9.1 The disrepair service has seen notable improvement since September 2025 following strengthened management arrangements. While overall work in progress remains high due to historic backlog, closure rates and throughput have improved significantly.

	Jan – Aug 2025 <i>8 months</i>	Sept 2025 – Jan 2026 <i>5 months</i>
Cases raised	172	105
Cases closed	47	79
Closure rate	27.3%	75.2%

9.2 The disrepair service continues to face a number of structural and capacity-related challenges. There remains a limited availability of suitably experienced disrepair surveyors, which has constrained throughput and slowed progress in reducing the overall work in progress.

9.3 This pressure has been further compounded by the implementation of Awaab's Law, which has reduced shared surveyor capacity as greater resource is diverted to urgent compliance activity.

9.4 Engagement from Tier 1 contractors has also been inconsistent, with limited appetite to undertake disrepair work due to the complexity, disruption and risk associated with these cases. As a result, the service has been heavily reliant on a single SME contractor, creating a bottleneck that restricts overall delivery.

9.5 In addition, poor historic data quality has necessitated manual and time-intensive tracking, reducing confidence in performance reporting and increasing operational risk.

9.6 In response, a range of new ways of working have been introduced to stabilise and improve the disrepair service. Contract and performance management arrangements have been strengthened, supported by the reintroduction of weekly contractor disrepair meetings to drive accountability and throughput.

9.7 Weekly system cleansing is now undertaken to actively manage work in progress and improve data accuracy. Contractor-led post-inspections have been introduced, underpinned by quality assurance controls, to improve consistency and reduce rework. Collaboration with Legal Services has been strengthened to support earlier intervention and more effective case management, while the introduction of Technical Officers has helped to bolster surveying capacity.

9.8 Complaints processes have also been revised to reduce escalation into formal disrepair claims, supported by clearer performance reporting and improved engagement with staff. Tier 1 contractors have now been formally instructed to

engage in the disrepair workstream and are actively exploring subcontracting arrangements to increase capacity and resilience.

- 9.9 Looking ahead, further structural changes will be required to sustainably address the scale and complexity of disrepair cases being submitted. The volume and nature of cases now coming into the service indicate the need to explore the establishment of a dedicated specialist disrepair team, with the sole focus of managing both historic and new cases more effectively. This would provide greater capacity, consistency and expertise, reducing reliance on ad-hoc arrangements and improving overall throughput.
- 9.10 To support this approach, there is a clear requirement for dedicated legal expertise embedded within the disrepair function. Having a specialist legal resource aligned to the team would strengthen early intervention, improve case handling, and support more timely resolution, reducing escalation, risk and associated costs.
- 9.11 In addition, a longer-term financial commitment will be required to address the backlog of aged cases while maintaining effective management of new disrepair claims. This will require ring-fenced funding over a multi-year period, building on the approach successfully taken within the voids workstream, to allow for planned and sustained backlog reduction rather than reactive case management.
- 9.12 Finally, the current contractor model will need to be reviewed to improve resilience and capacity. Given the limited appetite from Tier 1 contractors to undertake disrepair work due to the level of disruption and complexity involved, the service will need to consider engaging a small number of dedicated SME contractors. Establishing a pool of specialist SMEs focused solely on disrepair work would increase capacity, reduce bottlenecks, and provide greater flexibility in managing this high-risk and resource-intensive workstream.

10.0 Rent collection

10.1 The service's cumulative collection rate for 2025/26 YTD is 96.71%. The cumulative collection rate for the same period during 2024/25 was 96.16%.

10.2 The target for rent collection is 98%

Council rent collection rate			
	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24
Weeks 1-13 (Q1)	95.42%	96.28%	95.18%
Weeks 14–26 (Q2)	95.50%	96.05%	95.82%
Weeks 27-39 (Q3)	98.39%	94.60%	97.28%
Weeks 40-52/53 (Q4)	98.68%*	99.01%	99.16%
Year end total	98%	96.54%	96.87%
Council rent arrears and debt			
Arrears as % of rent roll	11.24% (YTD)	10.63%	Data not available

Debt	£7,643,576.12	£6,911,183.04	Data not available
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*YTD position

- 10.3 The service's YTD debt position is a % of overall yearly rent collected, and cumulative collection rate. Q1 and Q2 represented poor income collection performance, with a low collection rate and debt increasing across the board. During this time the team was asked to prioritise the letting of new build properties to reduce void costs, and staff were not fully trained, with limited to no reporting to aid performance management.
- 10.4 This has led to an intensive effort to minimise debt and performance manage staff with support and the use of manual data and reporting. A temporary specialised lettings team were brought in to let new builds to ensure staff could focus on income collection more intensively in Q3 and Q4.
- 10.5 There have been improvements in the service's overall collection rate, and a slowdown and reduction in the service's debt position. This is a more accurate reflection of current performance now that the pressure of letting hundreds of additional properties has been alleviated, officers are fully trained, data is being collected and used and income is being focused on as BAU.
- 10.6 The team is working hard to chase arrears, maximise tenants' income and provide tenants with support to claim Discretionary Housing Payments and access the Council's Resident and Household support fund.

11.0 Complaints

- 11.1 Case volumes across Stage 1 and Stage 2, despite not yet being at the end of the year, have increased significantly putting immense pressure on the Housing Management Service. This reflects what is happening across the sector, as tenants and leaseholders are receiving more support and information (both from the service itself and external agencies) in how to make a complaint and their rights.

Stage 1

	2025/26 YTD		2024/25	
	Received	Complaints closed and upheld*	Received	Complaints closed and upheld*
Housing and Neighbourhoods	335	155/315 49%	184	110/214 51%
Housing Management Property	690	439/674 65%	433	367/529 69%
Total	1,025	60%	628	64%

**upheld – including fully and partially upheld Note: The cases reported as received and closed within the year are different datasets, so the data above looks at both of those individually as opposed to closed case outcomes of those received within the year.*

11.2 Service failure continues to be the main driver of complaints in 2025/26, representing 80% of cases and reflecting delayed service delivery, an increase from 77% last year. This trend is most pronounced in Housing Management Property and mirrors the pattern seen in 2024/25.

Stage 2

	2025/26 YTD		2024/25	
	Received	Complaints closed and upheld*	Received	Complaints closed and upheld*
Housing and Neighbourhoods	57	37/57 65%	32	46/64 71%
Housing Management Property	104	68/101 67%	84	155/176 88%
Total	161	66%	116	84%

**upheld – including fully and partially upheld*

11.3 In 2025 to 2026 to date, the main reason for complaint escalation to Stage 2 has been disagreement with the Stage 1 decision, accounting for 60 per cent of all escalations. This represents a significant increase compared with 39 per cent in the previous year. Follow up actions not being carried out remains the second most common reason, making up 22 per cent of Stage 2 escalations so far in 2025 to 2026, compared with 31 per cent last year.

11.4 This indicates rising resident expectation of the complaints process. The service needs to respond with clearer expectation setting, improved communication of service standards and strengthened policy guidance. Of the 95 escalations to Stage 2 in 2025 to 2026 to date, 40 cases, or 42 per cent, have been withdrawn, rejected or not upheld

11.5 Housing Managements performance reporting does not currently cover the full landlord service, including areas such as estate services, the housing contact centre and pest control. Work is underway to develop a system that will improve reporting across the wider landlord function.

12.0 Housing Contact Centre

12.1 Between April 2025 and December 2025, Housing Customer Service answered 58,783 calls, achieving an answer rate of 84 per cent, which is 1 per cent below the 85 per cent KPI. The target average wait time is no more than five minutes, with the longest individual wait not exceeding 30 minutes. Over the nine month period, the average wait target was achieved on three occasions, with wait times on other occasions ranging between six and ten minutes. The longest

recorded wait ranged from 35 minutes to 1 hour and 4 minutes. This has improved since June as a result of increased staffing levels.

- 12.2 Overall call volumes have not reduced. A significant proportion of calls relate to follow up enquiries concerning Wates, Mears and subcontractors, including reports of missed contractor appointments. While chase up calls relating to Wates have reduced considerably, failure demand linked to Mears has increased sharply since October, resulting in longer and more complex calls. This has contributed to extended wait times.
- 12.3 As with any contact centre, staff turnover remains a challenge, with considerable management time dedicated to recruitment and training. Between January 2025 and December 2025, turnover was 14 per cent. Most leavers progressed to other roles within the Council. New recruits require a minimum of five days of initial training and up to three months to develop the necessary knowledge and skills. Periods of turnover therefore have an inevitable impact on service performance.
- 12.4 In addition to telephone enquiries, the service processed 28,962 emails, bringing the total number of customer contacts to 87,745.
- 12.5 The Corporate Contact Centre has introduced a range of service improvements which have had a positive impact on the customer journey and first point of contact resolution.
- 12.6 Dynamics Email Workflow Enhancements - In September 2025, Housing Customer Service emails were migrated from the legacy Housing Management Module to the Contact Centre Module. The two systems operate differently, which initially impacted officer training and knowledge and created challenges in mailbox management and oversight. Since the migration, incoming email volumes have reduced as officers are now able to triage enquiries more effectively and improve first contact resolution. Responsiveness has improved significantly and processing times have reduced. A pre existing backlog was cleared within a matter of weeks following implementation.
- 12.7 Improving access to the Leaseholder Team - Work has been undertaken with the Leaseholder Team to restructure the IVR system, providing a direct route to the team rather than routing calls through the Corporate Contact Centre. This removes an unnecessary step and enables residents to make contact more quickly. Enquiry forms have also been introduced on the Contact Us page for leaseholders. Submissions are routed directly to the Leaseholder Team, further reducing avoidable contact through the Contact Centre.
- 12.8 Collectively, these improvements have reduced telephone and email demand into the Corporate Contact Centre and streamlined the customer journey by enabling faster and more direct resolution.
- 12.9 The service is exploring how Copilot AI can support new recruits as they build knowledge and confidence. A bespoke e learning platform is also being

considered to reduce management time spent on routine learning support, enabling greater focus on shadowing and side by side coaching.

13.0 Planned works

- 13.1 The Major Repairs Programme Budget has been reallocated to prioritise some tower block refurbishment but to also invest in external fabric works and other improvements to our stock such as kitchens, bathrooms roofs and heating works.
- 13.2 The revised budget includes the remediation of Granville Homes at circa £25M spend between 2026/27 to 2029/30, the completion of the refurbishment of Kilburn Square in 2026/27, and the refurbishment of Windmill Court at circa £6M spend between 2026/27 and 2028/29.
- 13.3 A 5-year external fabric works programme is currently being developed.
- 13.4 Kilburn Square Tower Refurbishment - Currently in progress and due to complete in June 2026 due to contractor delays. The scope of works is the complete refurbishment of the block.
- 13.5 Windmill Court Refurbishment - The project has been descoped and will likely proceed late 2026. The scope of works will focus on works that will extend the building lifecycle such as structural and window repairs.
- 13.6 Granville Homes Remediation - The project is due to commence Autumn 2026. The works focus on the remediation of faulty roofing, windows and external wall insulation. The heating system will also be optimised in preparation for connection to the South Kilburn Heat Network.

Funding includes a contribution from the original constructor and a successful bid to the Cladding Safety Scheme. £1.6M has currently been awarded and it is likely to be a total of at least circa £4M.

- 13.7 The Oaks and Pharamond - Energy efficiency works consisting of ground source heat pumps and wall insulation. Funded from the Council's carbon offset fund and Warm Homes funding.
- 13.8 Lodge Court and Manor Court - Scoped and partially designed but will not be delivered for several years.

14.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 14.1 Effective communication and engagement with residents and key stakeholders are central to the overall approach to improving our TSMs and making sure that we recover our position following our referral to the Regulator of Social Housing. A multi-channel engagement strategy has been developed in partnership with the councils Communications Team which prioritises transparency, trust and keeping all key parties informed of progress and upcoming changes.

14.2 Recent engagement and communication activities include:

- Special print edition of The Noticeboard (council tenant and leaseholder newsletter), providing an update on building safety, re-iterating how to contact the service about building safety concerns and an overview of the new repairs contract set up.
- E-newsletter version of The Noticeboard to include video message from Cllr Donnelly-Jackson outlining the Regulator judgement, what it means, what action has been taken so far and our commitment to rapid and lasting improvements. This newsletter reaches over 7000 tenants and leaseholders
- Update to the existing web page and FAQs.
- Members bulletin update and self-referral update report to PCG.

15.0 Financial considerations

15.1 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.

15.2 Rental income is the main source of funding in HRA totalling £58.9m in 2024/25 and projected to be £62.4m in 2025/26. Between 2016/17 and 2019/20, four consecutive years of rent reductions resulted in a cumulative £23m loss of rental income compared to the level that would otherwise have been achieved. From April 2020, Government policy permitted annual rent increases of CPI plus 1% for five years, however, in 2023/24 this was capped at 7% rather than the 11.1% implied by the formula, reducing income by a further £2m. As rent reductions and lower uplifts permanently reduce the base on which future increases are calculated, these measures have had an ongoing and compounding impact on rental income.

15.3 Rent collection rates have a significant impact on budgets. Therefore, effective management of rent debt levels is crucial to maintaining the HRA's overall financial health. Rising rent arrears increase the risk of bad debt provisions, which directly impact revenue streams and the Council's ability to fund essential services and maintenance. Persistent or growing rent debt strains financial planning and necessitate higher bad debt write-offs, thereby affecting the HRA's budgetary position. As of January 2026, the tenants debt balance, excluding credits, is £13.5m, of which £4.6m relates to former tenants and £8.9m to current tenants. The debt is increasing by approximately £176k per month and is forecast to increase the total outstanding balance by £2.1m by the financial year end. In 2024/25, the amount of total debt has increased by 21%. For Brent, total cumulative arrears as a percentage of the rent roll represent 22% against the London average of 9.9%. The collection rate currently stands at 94.91% against the current year's debt and 10.19% against prior years' debt. The 30-year HRA Business Plan currently assumes a 98% collection rate. It is estimated that for every 1% reduction in rent collection, there is a corresponding

income loss of approximately £0.6m. For 2025/26, the required allowance for non-collection is estimate to be £2.3m.

- 15.4 Effective voids management is also crucial for maintaining the financial health of the HRA. Minimising the length of time properties remain vacant directly impacts rental income, helping to reduce revenue losses and ensuring a steady cash flow. Additionally, efficient voids management supports the timely re-letting of homes, which not only meets housing demand but also optimises asset utilisation. By carefully managing voids, the Council can control associated costs such as repairs and maintenance, ultimately ensuring that resources are maximised to support ongoing housing services and investment in stock quality. Void turnaround times have an impact on rental income while the property remains unoccupied. The HRA Business Plan assumes a 3.5% rent loss through voids. In 2025/26 the voids loss is estimated to be circa 5.07%, or £3.5m. A 1% reduction in void losses could generate approximately £0.6m in additional rental income.
- 15.5 The HRA is facing heightened demand for repairs and maintenance services. A substantial volume of complex repairs, alongside an increase in issues such as damp and mould, is placing considerable strain on existing budgets. Appropriate and accurate management of repairs and maintenance expenditure is vital to safeguarding the financial integrity of the Council’s HRA. The Repairs and Management spend in 2025/26 is forecast to be £23m, 31% of the fund’s total income.
- 15.6 As a result of ongoing uncertainties, risks and sustained financial pressures, there is a continuous requirement for the fund to make savings in order to deliver a balanced financial position. Over the last five years, the HRA achieved £5.6m in recurring savings.

Year	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Savings	£0.7m	£0.8m	£3.1m	£0.5m	£0.5m

- 15.7 The HRA continues to face a range of financial risks and uncertainties that may affect its long-term stability. Ongoing volatility in inflation and interest rates presents particular challenges for business planning, impacting borrowing costs, contract pricing and the affordability of the capital programme. At the same time, the cost of delivering major works is increasing, driven by construction market pressures, supply chain constraints and higher labour and materials costs.
- 15.8 In addition, the regulatory environment is becoming more demanding and complex. Enhanced requirements relating to building safety, fire compliance, energy efficiency standards and decarbonisation targets are increasing both immediate and long-term investment obligations. These statutory and policy expectations place further strain on the HRA’s limited resources.
- 15.9 In this context, it is essential that investment plans are developed and delivered prudently. Financial planning assumptions must be regularly reviewed and stress-tested to ensure resilience under adverse scenarios. Capital

programmes should retain sufficient flexibility to enable reprioritisation, deferral, scaling back or redesign where required, ensuring that the HRA remains financially sustainable while continuing to meet its statutory responsibilities and strategic objectives.

16.0 Legal considerations

16.1 This report ensures compliance with the regulatory standards for housing, in particular ensuring we comply with the requirements of the Social Housing (Regulations) Act 2023 (the “Act”).

16.2 The Act received royal assent on 20 July 2023. It makes provision for the regulation of social housing landlords, particularly with regard to issues such as safety, transparency, standards and conduct of staff and tenant engagement. The Act also strengthens the powers of the Housing Ombudsman and enables requirements to be set for social landlords to address hazards such as damp and mould within a fixed time period.

16.3 As a result of the amendments made by this Act, safety and transparency will become explicit parts of the objectives of the Regulator of Social Housing (“the Regulator”) and the Regulator will have greater powers in relation to the competency and conduct of staff and the provision of information. The Regulator will also be given strengthened economic powers to ensure they can effectively intervene when required to enable them to assess landlords failing to meet standards more routinely and proactively, as well as taking action in a wider range of circumstances. Changes are also made to the economic regulatory regime to ensure that providers of social housing are well governed and financially viable.

- The Act has three core objectives as follows:
- To facilitate a new, proactive consumer regulation regime
- To refine the existing economic regulatory regime
- To strengthen the Regulator’s powers to enforce the consumer and economic regimes.

16.4 On 29 February the Regulator set out the revised consumer standards that apply to all registered housing providers from 1 April 2024. The new standards are:

- The Safety and Quality Standard
- The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- The Tenancy Standard

16.5 The introduction of the revised consumer standards also included information on the Regulator’s Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) referred to above, that all social housing landlords must report on. The TSMs will help the Council to see how well it is doing in areas such as keeping properties in good repair, maintaining building safety, and effectively handling tenant complaints. The Regulator required all landlords who own more than 1,000 homes to submit

their first TSM data return by 30th June 2024 to enable the Regulator to publish the first year of data by autumn 2024.

- 16.6 Awaab's law, this was enshrined in the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. Earlier this year the secondary legislation to enable the Act came into force. This stipulates that from October 2025, the duties around the investigation of and to address dangerous damp and mould within a set amount of time, as well as repair all emergency hazards within 24 hours. Landlords who fail to comply face legal and financial penalties.

17.0 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) considerations

- 17.1 The public sector equality duty set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share that protected characteristic. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

18.0 Climate change and environmental considerations

- 18.1 Housing is a key stakeholder in delivering the Councils 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; and Support the implementation of Green Neighbourhoods by engaging Housing Associations and Private Landlords operating in the areas.

19.0 Human resources considerations

- 19.1 Any HR implications contained in this report are managed and implemented alongside HR policy or procedure, in conjunction with the HR service.

20.0 Communication considerations

20.1 The housing management service works closely with the corporate communications team to ensure effective engagement and communication is in place with all key stakeholders.

Report sign-off:

Thomas Cattermole

Corporate Director, Residents and Housing Services