

Cheltenham Borough Council Cabinet Housing Committee

Meeting date: 16 July 2025

Meeting time: 6.00 pm

Meeting venue: Council Chamber - Municipal Offices

Membership:

Councillor Glenn Andrews, Councillor Flo Clucas, Councillor Jan Foster, Councillor Julian Tooke (Chair) and Councillor Suzanne Williams (Vice-Chair)

Ian Mason (Tenant Representative), Bozena Tarnawska (Leaseholder Representative) and Agnieszka Wisniewska (Tenant Representative)

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- 1 Apologies**
- 2 Declarations of interest**
- 3 Public and Member Questions**
- 4 Minutes of the last meeting (Pages 3 - 12)**
- 5 CEO/Director Briefing (Verbal)**
- 6 Tenant and Leaseholder Voice Plan (Pages 13 - 38)**
- 7 Tenancy Policy and Decant (required move) Policy (Pages 39 - 84)**
- 8 Tenant Satisfaction Measures 2024/25 Submission (Pages 85 - 130)**
- 9 End of Year 2024-2025 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Monitoring Report and Rent Collection Update (Pages 131 - 156)**
- 10 Updates from the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels (Pages 157 - 158)**
- 11 Review of the Housing Committee Forward Plan (Pages 159 - 162)**
- 12 Items to be referred to Cabinet**
- 13 Briefing Note - Housing Sector Insight (Pages 163 - 170)**

Cabinet Housing Committee Minutes

Meeting date: 11 June 2025

In attendance:

Councillors:

Flo Clucas, Jan Foster, Julian Tooke and Suzanne Williams

Also in attendance:

Gareth Edmundson (Chief Executive), Claire Hughes (Director of Governance, Housing and Communities), Nick Such (Tenancy Services Manager), David Thomas (Interim Services Improvement Lead), Olivia Underhill (Customer Services Manager) and Matt Ward (Head of Housing Services)

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Agnieszka Wisniewska

2 Appointment of Vice Chair

Councillor Suzanne Williams was unanimously appointed as Vice Chair of the Committee.

3 Declarations of interest

There were none.

4 Public and Member Questions

There were none.

5 Minutes of the last meeting

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2025.

RESOLVED THAT The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2025 were signed as a correct record.

6 CEO Briefing (Verbal)

Objective: An update from the Chief Executive on key issues which may be of interest to the Cabinet Housing Committee.

The Chief Executive addressed the Committee and highlighted that:

- All local authorities (LA) with retained housing stock are adjusting to the new regulatory environment and particularly the key difference between activity and evidence. Without evidence it is not possible to provide the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) with assurance.
- The Committee has set a clear focus on ensuring the safety and compliance of our homes. Work has been continuing in earnest on both ensuring that we have a clear plan and timescale to complete the outstanding legacy fire actions, and to ensure that the data we hold accurately reflects the situation on the ground. In recent months, some discrepancies have been identified and reconciled through a bottom-up reconstruction by colleagues to ensure that the granularity of the data is accurate. Work is also being carried out to ensure that as fire risk assessments take place the resource is available to manage actions as they emerge to prevent a new legacy situation emerging. Progress is being made that is beginning to deliver dividends and will place the council in a much stronger position with our assurance on safety and compliance.
- As we grow more comfortable with our position in relation to safety and compliance we are also carrying out a reassessment internally on the rest of the Consumer Standards with a fresh set of eyes. The same approach of being extremely self-critical about the evidence we hold will be followed to ensure we can provide critical data and assurance to the RSH. Once the internal process has been completed an external assurance exercise by experts will be carried out to ensure we have a clear road map for what improvements are needed, how they will be delivered and the timescales involved. It is vital that the cultural shift in evidencing our actions is embedded in every level of the housing organisation.
- Stock condition surveys remain a critical piece of work to ensure that we understand our homes. 59% have now been completed which is roughly 200 properties behind the expected timeline. Measures are in place to improve progress and we are continuing to work closely with the contractor. As we reach the higher percentage points progress may slow due to difficulty with gaining access to properties. This is expected but work is beginning to ensure that we can gain access and we are working on communication with those tenants. Once stock condition surveys have been completed we will move to an internal rolling survey approach. We will also be using the data to inform future investment plans.
- The Director of Governance, Housing and Communities has been working closely with the Interim Service Improvement Lead to gain a good understanding of the repairs and technical and investment teams. Aiming to carry out good recruitment in those areas in the next few months.
- The deadline for final business case submissions on local government reorganisation and devolution is in November. We are working through three

options for Gloucestershire. The government has acknowledged that this is a significant piece of work but are clear that they do not want other programmes of work to halt. This will in no way detract from our focus on safety, compliance, and our assurance journey with the RSH.

- Acknowledge that we are not in the position we would want with voids. There have been a number of reasons but largely due to issues identified with ensuring that contractors are appointed safely and compliantly. It is imperative as a local authority that we appoint contractors in the correct way to ensure that they undertake the works in an effective, speedy, and efficient manner. Grateful to colleagues that the number of voids is starting to move in the right direction.
- It has been a challenging few months in our improvement journey with a lot of work carried out behind the scenes. Hopeful that in the coming weeks and months we will see the dividends of this work, particularly in regards to the Consumer Standards. This will be reported transparently to the Committee to ensure that the improvement journey is monitored and demonstrate to the RSH that the Committee is driving this work.

The Committee's discussion raised the following points

- There has been a significant change in the culture and the attitude of staff in the last 9 – 10 months. They now recognise that it is important to be truthful and transparent to customers, rather than telling them what they want to hear. This is building from tenants, trust from councillors, and trust between officers.
- A tenant representative confirmed that the person carrying out their stock condition survey was very professional and personable. It was very convenient that they could attend on a Saturday morning. The surveyor also confirmed that the council was acting very promptly on issues coming out of the surveys.
- It was very positive to see work being done on social housing properties in the councillor's ward.

7 Compliance Strategy and Policies

Objective: To provide Committee with an opportunity to review and feedback on the Compliance Strategy and associated policies before they are submitted to Cabinet.

The Director of Governance, Housing and Communities, introduced the report and explained that this was the first time that a Compliance Strategy was being recommended for adoption. The Compliance Strategy seeks to set out the three lines of defence on how the compliance programme will be managed to ensure we are getting the right data, that the data is validated and, in some cases, external assurance is provided. The Compliance Strategy has been developed with Pennington Choices and includes an action plan on how our position can continue to be improved. Progress will be monitored through the monthly Compliance Group, which the Chair attends. It will also be reported to the Cabinet Housing Committee in 6-months' time. The Compliance Strategy is supported by six policies developed by

Pennington Choices in line with industry best practice. These documents are legislative and quite technical to ensure that they are legally compliant. As these are not tenant friendly work is also being carried out to review the processes to create internal procedure documents and an annual tenant communication plan is being created to provide key information to tenants. The Tenant Panel were consulted on the policies but no feedback was received.

The Committee's discussion raised the following points:

- To ensure our approach is people based tenancy audits are being undertaken to provide a better understanding of our tenants. Arrangements will be changed to tailor services to tenants' needs better, for example, to provide information in different languages or communicate verbally. Consideration will also be given on how to communicate with tenants who may benefit from more traditional methods, such as noticeboards.
- These policies do not relate to leaseholders, as they have different requirements, liabilities, and obligations. A separate piece of work will consider the needs of leaseholders.
- It was agreed that detailed questions would be shared outside of the meeting.
- Currently data is still stored in a number of systems – primarily QL, Excel and on contractors' portals. We are in the process of moving everything to QL to provide assurance that we have a single source of the truth. Excel provides opportunities for mistakes to be introduced through hidden columns and accidental changes. As this work is completed all data should be stored on either QL or via contractors. Currently a piece of work is also being carried out to understand the capabilities of the QL housing management system, which should be completed in the next few weeks.
- Documotive is a bolt-on system for QL used to store documents, such as communication with tenants.
- Risk management is currently being migrated to Verto. This does not connect directly to QL and we are not aware of whether it may be able to.
- It was suggested that Tenant Voice be used to highlight that new systems and people are in place to encourage tenants who may have had bad experiences in the past and lost faith in the service, to report issues again.
- Privately owned properties and leasehold properties are not required to have valid gas certificates. An encouragement programme is in place to encourage leaseholders to carry out annual checks and provide the certificates to the council. Colleagues are working with the legal team to consider whether terms could be introduced to make this a requirement for new leaseholders. Awareness raising of gas safety checks are being included in the annual service charge paperwork which will be issued in the next few weeks. This will include directions to our gas contractor who would provide discounts to leaseholders.

The Cabinet Housing Committee unanimously recommended that Cabinet:

- a) adopt the Compliance Strategy (Appendix 2); and**
- b) adopt the following Compliance Policies**

- i. **Gas and Heating Safety (Appendix 3)**
- ii. **Electrical Safety (Appendix 4)**
- iii. **Fire Safety (Appendix 5)**
- iv. **Asbestos (Appendix 6)**
- v. **Water Safety (Appendix 7)**
- vi. **Lift Safety (Appendix 8)**

8 Property Compliance Performance

Objective: To provide the Committee with an understanding of our property compliance status and the planned improvements needed to address areas of non-compliance.

The Director of Governance, Housing and Communities addressed the Committee and explained that the data covered the period to the end of May 2025. She highlighted that significant progress had been made and validation was now occurring at the same time as the report is generated, rather than taking hours of officer intervention. She provided an update on developments over the last week:

- 6 of the 33 outstanding asbestos surveys have been completed and all others are scheduled to be completed by the 14 June.
- Legacy fire risk actions have reduced from 93 to 62. Of the remaining actions:
 - o 20 relate to new windows. A manufacturer has been appointed with a 12-week lead time and an existing contractor identified for installation once they are received. A letter has been drafted to tenants to update them on what is happening.
 - o The remaining actions relate to compartmentation and fire stopping. This work has begun and, where required, contractors are being resourced appropriately.
 - o Hopefully, all legacy actions will be completed by the end of October.

The Committee's discussion raised the following points:

- Fire risk actions remain the Committee's upmost priority. It is reassuring that we are now getting accurate and transparent data, with nothing hidden. It is also important whilst actions are resolved that mitigations are in place and are clearly communicated to tenants.
- All fire risk actions were originally assessed as being high risk as they had passed their completion target. Each fire risk action has now been investigated and been reassessed alongside the mitigations in place, and all are now assessed as medium or low risk. It was agreed that an update with these new assessments would be issued following the meeting.
- Smoke and CO2 alarms are described as components within the report. All are currently up-to-date and are either wired or battery operated.
- Hopefully by the next meeting an updated performance report will be provided based on a new dashboard produced automatically by the system. This should be much easier to read and understand. This report should be created at the touch of a button to ensure we have accessible, up-to-date information.

9 Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

Objective: To provide Committee with an opportunity to review and feedback on the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy before it is submitted to Cabinet.

The Tenancy Services Manager presented the Housing Service Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) policy to the Committee and explained that it had been substantially revised as part of a programme of work reviewing the ASB service. The objectives of this review had been to ensure that the policy talks to tenants, provides clear information about what constitutes ASB, explain how agencies work together, and what service and outcomes customers can expect when they report ASB. This policy will form the basis of increased communication with tenants so a summary document has been provided alongside the policy to provide a more accessible document with a younger reading age and clearer language.

The Committee's discussion raised the following points:

- It is very positive to see coercive control contained within the policy as an example of ASB, but it would be beneficial to see this included within the tenant communication document as well.
- The policy is for council tenants. It is hoped that a more tenure neutral approach will develop over time by bringing all services together and through the benefit of having teams working together more closely.
- There is a very fine line between ASB and criminality and the policy tries to differentiate between the two but there are areas where behaviour may fall under both. The ASB service will always support tenants to report incidents to the police where they wish to do so. We are lucky that we have a strong relationship with the local police and can follow a joint working approach. Where criminality occurs we always want to ensure the police have primacy on investigating, but there are also actions the council can take through ASB powers and tools.
- A tenant representative raised concerns that the police are less responsive to reports of criminality within areas with a high density of social housing. It was noted that this was a matter for discussion with the police and that it would be inappropriate for the Committee to comment upon.
- Constituents often speak to councillors about ASB and a common concern is that they wish to maintain their confidentiality. It is important to provide platforms where people can easily provide information with this layer of protection. When this is communicated it is important that tenants are assured that it is easy to report and their anonymity will be protected.
- The Cabinet could choose to include information on ASB within the annual letter to all residents about council tax, if they feel it would be beneficial.

The Cabinet Housing Committee unanimously recommended that Cabinet adopt the Housing Service Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

10 Housing Complaints and Compliments Report - Quarter 4

Objective: To provide an overview of housing related complaints and compliments, identifying key areas of dissatisfaction and areas for learning and service improvement.

The Customer Services Manager introduced the quarter 4 and annual housing complaints and compliments report. She highlighted that the report showed improvements in complaints regarding staff attitudes, which shows the effectiveness of previous learning from complaints. The Complaints Officer is currently working with investigating officers on improving response times. Feedback sessions are also being carried out to identify any learning points and changes that can be made to reduce the number of complaints received and the numbers of escalations to stage 2.

The Committee's discussion raised the following points:

- Leaseholders are able to use the complaints process and communication is carried out with them individually about their complaint. The Tenant Voice also includes an annual report on complaints and what has been learnt from them.
- The figures in the report do not neatly align due to the 10-day response time and potential extensions. Complaints reported in one month, may not be actioned until the following month.
- A response is defined as a formal written response provided after they have met with the investigating officer, discussed their complaint, and investigated the issue. An initial acknowledgement is received before the formal response which informs them of the investigating officer and confirms the 10-day response time. If an extension is required due to complexity this is also communicated with tenants and confirmed in writing.

11 Updates from the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels

Objective: To highlight the ongoing activities of the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels and provide an additional opportunity for tenant and leaseholder voices to be heard.

The leaseholder representative updated the Committee on the most recent meeting of the Leaseholder Panel on 3 June. She explained that they had:

- Met with the new Resident Engagement Officer who will support both the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels.
- Discussed the new fire safety S20 notice with the Asset & Investment Management, which leaseholders had many questions about. They had clarified that charges will only apply where remedial work is necessary.
- Reviewed stock condition survey progress which will inform the development of the 10-year maintenance programme, and will help leaseholders forecast potential future costs.
- Agreed a membership cap for the Panel of 10 members.
- Been introduced to the action tracker to monitor follow-ups and commitments.
- Expressed the training needs to be delivered to the Panel.

- Expressed the need for leaseholders to be more involved in the cost discussion for future planned works. Particularly in planned works and S20 where leaseholders can inspect contracts and submit observation during consultation. They recognise that contractor selection remains outside leaseholder control due to legal requirements and protocols. However, they would like to be able to inspect work once finished.

The Committee's discussion raised the following points:

- Communication could be generally improved with leaseholders, but specific concerns were raised around lack of consultation, specifically in relation to contractors and how the building is looked after.
- Dealing with major works is a challenging and costly process and we have to strictly adhere to the S20 consultation process. Currently the council is looking at improving the legal documents wording to provide a clearer version with better rationale behind it to show the cost benefits. The leasehold team are working with colleagues in technical and investment to ensure that this is considered from leaseholders' perspectives. This will include consulting with the Leaseholder Panel at the start of significant works on communication to ensure it is clear and provides information that is needed. Whilst this will not be possible at all times, we want to ensure that we are continuing to improve the service for leaseholders.
- We will consider how leaseholders can be involved in assessing work once completed, depending on the safety of the situation. Feedback is provided as part of the final part of the S20 process which is often where enquiries are received on what work was carried out. It is important to ensure that leaseholders are involved in the feedback loop to maintain quality and ensure issues that may have emerged are factored into which contractors are used.
- The tenant representative raised issues that tenants are experiencing when they request that Universal Credit (UC) payments are made directly to the landlords. There is often a delay in this process which means that tenants receive the first 5-6 weeks of rent payment themselves, and due to communication issues they are not always aware that this money is for rent and they need to pay it to their landlords. Despite trying to do the right thing tenants can unknowingly end up with £500-600 of rent arrears which it is difficult for them to repay. As UC migration continues this is likely to become a growing issue if the council do not take mitigating actions. Tenants are also being expected to inform the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) of rent increases, even if they have informed them that they will be unable to manage this, and will be liable for the shortfall themselves. This will create additional issues. Tenants will continue to be supported proactively by the council through their income officers, the benefit and money advice team, and the training and employment service. The Committee agreed that as a national issue this should be discussed with local MPs to ensure that this matter can be addressed with central government. An update on the rent collection will be provided to the Committee later in the year.

12 Review of the Housing Committee Forward Plan

The Committee's discussion raised the following points:

- A full mock In Depth Assessment is being commissioned which will prepare the council and the Committee for the RSH's inspection. This will also identify any training needs that are required.
- The HRA budget monitoring report at the 16 July meeting will also include a rent collection report.
- The 16 July meeting will also include the annual tenant satisfaction measures (TSM) submission. In future years this will be brought to the Committee in June to allow scrutiny before submission.

13 Items to be referred to Cabinet

The Committee recommended that Cabinet:

- a) adopt the Compliance Strategy (Appendix 2); and
- b) adopt the following Compliance Policies
 - i. Gas and Heating Safety (Appendix 3)
 - ii. Electrical Safety (Appendix 4)
 - iii. Fire Safety (Appendix 5)
 - iv. Asbestos (Appendix 6)
 - v. Water Safety (Appendix 7)
 - vi. Lift Safety (Appendix 8)
- c) adopt the Housing Service Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

14 Briefing Note - Housing Sector Insight

Objective: To provide the Committee with an overview of recent developments in the housing sector and provide opportunities for horizon scanning.

The briefing note was noted

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Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet Housing Committee – 16th July 2025

Tenant and Leaseholder Voice Plan

Accountable member:

Cllr Flo Clucas, Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services

Accountable officer:

Caroline Walker, Director of Housing, Customer Services and Communities

Executive summary:

The Tenant and Leaseholder Voice Plan 2025–2028 outlines Cheltenham Borough Council's renewed commitment to placing tenant and leaseholder voices at the heart of housing services. Recognising the vital role that resident feedback plays in improving service delivery, this plan introduces a comprehensive and inclusive approach to engagement.

Recommendations:

1. That the report and next steps are noted by Cabinet Housing Committee
-

1. Background

The plan aims to empower residents by creating more opportunities for participation, ensuring inclusivity, and demonstrating how resident input directly influences decisions.

The plan is shaped by

- New **Regulator of Social Housing** standards (April 2024) emphasising safety, quality, and transparency.
- Revised **Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)** focusing on repairs, safety, engagement, and complaints.
- Updated **Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code**, ensuring quicker and fairer resolutions.

2. Main content

Approach to Engagement

Residents will be able to get involved at three levels:

- **Shape:** Help influence day-to-day decisions and service design.
- **Engage:** Take part in activities, surveys, and community discussions.
- **Scrutiny:** Join formal panels that review services and shape strategies.

Key Priorities

1. **Empowerment** – Enabling residents to lead and have real influence.
2. **Inclusion** – Making it easy for everyone to take part.
3. **Communities** – Strengthening on-the-ground relationships.
4. **Improvement** – Using feedback to enhance services continuously.

2.1. Planned Actions (2025–2028)

The plan includes:

- Involving residents in strategy development and service reviews.
- Expanding youth and older residents' forums.
- Developing leaseholder engagement and improving handbooks.
- Launching a new Social Responsibility Panel to guide community investment.
- Strengthening ties with organisations that support underrepresented groups.

Measuring Success

Progress will be assessed by:

- The number and diversity of residents taking part.
- Satisfaction scores and reduced complaints.
- Tangible changes to policy and services driven by resident input.
- Clear, consistent communication and transparency around decisions.

Governance

A clear structure includes tenant and leaseholder panels, scrutiny committees, and community involvement officers, ensuring resident voices are heard at all levels of decision-making.

3. Key risks

3.1. Failure to comply with this plan could lead to several failings by the housing service, including regulatory non-compliance, poor tenant satisfaction, increased complaints and service failings, and inequality in our engagement structure, and missed opportunities for service improvement.

Report author:

Caroline Walker, Director of Housing, Customer Services and Communities, caroline.walker@cbh.org

Appendices:

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Tenant and leaseholder voice Plan 2025-2028
- iii. Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
	Regulatory non-compliance	Caroline Walker, Director of Housing, Customer Service and Communities	4	2	12	Reduce the risk	New resident engagement officer in post to deliver against the plan Monthly updates of progress to housing committee Annual reports on progress	Ellen Pollicott, Community Investment Manager	Monthly
	Poor tenant satisfaction	Caroline Walker, Director of Housing, Customer Service and Communities	3	1	5	Reduce the risk	Engage tenants and leaseholders in shaping services that meet their need Strengthening relationships and communication with tenants and leaseholders	Ellen Pollicott, Community Investment Manager	Monthly updates and ongoing development

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
	Increase in complaints and service failings	Caroline Walker, Director of Housing, Customer Service and Communities	3	1	5	Reduce the risks	Engage tenants and leaseholders in shaping services that meet their need Strengthening relationships and communication with tenants and leaseholders	Ellen Pollicott, Community Investment Manager Natasha Dhillon, Complaints Officer	Ongoing
	Inequality in engagement structure	Caroline Walker, Director of Housing, Customer Service and Communities	2	1	5	Reduce the risk	Pro-active engagement with seldom heard voices to encourage engagement Introduction of youth and older adult forums	Ellen Pollicott, Community Investment Manager	3 months

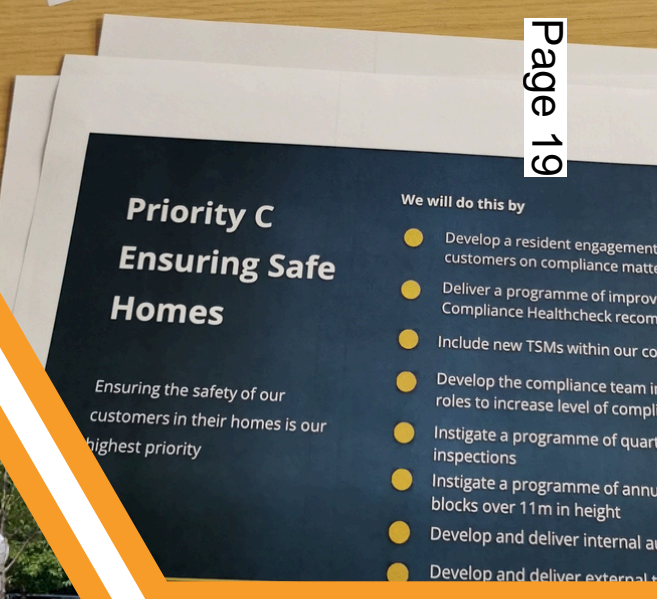
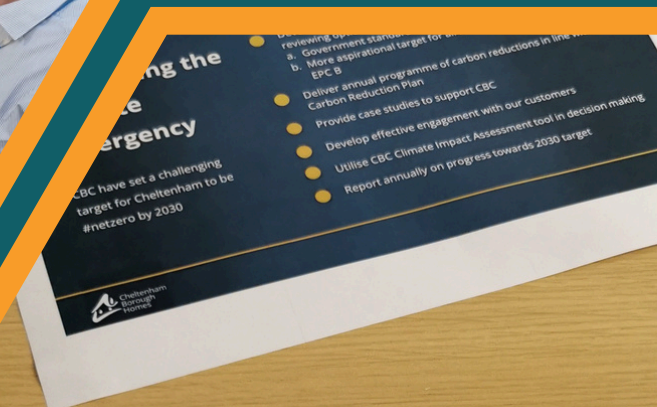
Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
	Missed opportunities for service improvements	Caroline Walker, Director of Housing, Customer Service and Communities	1	2	5	Reduce risk	<p>New documents/strategies to go through tenant and leaseholder panels</p> <p>Service improvement plans developed with our tenants and leaseholders.</p> <p>Promotion of plan to all housing service teams to ensure customers voices are heard across the board.</p>		



CHEL TENHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Listening and acting

Tenant and Leaseholder Voice Plan 2025-2028



Foreword



An introduction from Flo Clucas, cabinet member for housing and customer services

We're excited to tell you about our new plan to make your voice a big part of what we do. It's not just about listening — we want to work with you to make our services better, so they match what you really need and care about.

What you think is important. Your ideas help us make homes better and spend money in smart ways. That's why we're making it easier than ever for you to join in.

We've always listened to tenants, but now we're going even further. We are offering more ways to get involved. You can join in often or just now and then — whatever works best for you.

And when you speak up, we'll show you how your ideas are making a difference. Working together, we can make real and lasting change.

Best wishes,
Flo

Page 20

**Our
ambition**

"To create a structure where everyone can engage, and where tenants and leaseholders can understand the impact their feedback has had."

What has shaped this plan?

1. Consumer Standards

Starting on 1 April 2024, new rules were introduced to help protect social housing tenants and make services better.

These rules focus on four main areas:

- **Safety and quality** – Ensures homes are safe and well-maintained
- **Transparency and accountability** – Holds landlords responsible and promotes tenant involvement
- **Neighbourhood and community** – Supports community well-being and resident needs
- **Tenancy** – Focuses on tenant satisfaction and effective information management

2. Tenant Satisfaction Measures

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) introduced 22 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) to assess social housing providers.

Key areas include:

- **Repairs** – Keeping homes well-maintained
- **Safety** – Ensuring buildings are secure
- **Engagement** – Listening to tenant feedback
- **Complaints** – Handling concerns effectively
- **Neighbourhood** – Maintaining shared spaces

3. Complaint handling code

The Housing Ombudsman Service has updated rules to improve how landlords handle complaints.

Key changes include:

- **Clear definition** – Everyone understands what a complaint is
- **Simple process** – Two-step system with set response times
- **Fairness** – Quick, fair resolutions for tenants
- **Fixing issues** – Landlords must resolve problems properly
- **Continuous improvement** – Regular self-assessment and learning

Our commitment



Why does this matter?

We are committed to working with you, our tenants and leaseholders, to be a better landlord. The goal is to support you to take the lead, listen more to your views, and take action based on what you say.

Your involvement lets us know our services meet your needs and helps us to build an offer we can be proud of. Together, we can create a lively and connected community where everyone has a voice and can see the real impact of their ideas.

We have four main priorities:

1. Empowerment

- Giving you a greater role in making decisions about how we run our housing and deliver our services.
- Supporting you to access training so you can progress and develop your skills with us

2. Inclusion

- We want every tenant and leaseholder to feel truly welcome and valued when sharing their thoughts. That's why we're committed to breaking down barriers and ensuring everyone has the opportunity to get involved.
- We'll take a proactive approach, reaching out to seldom heard voices and making it easier for all communities to engage and shape our services.

Page 22

3. Communities

- We want to be more than just a voice on the phone—we want to be a visible, active presence in your community. As your landlord, we're committed to being on the ground, connecting with you more often and making it easier to have real conversations.
- We're also here to support you in taking the lead—whether that's running local groups, starting resident associations, or hosting community events

4. Improvement

- We're committed to understanding your experience. We will seek your feedback so we can understand your experience of our services
- Your feedback matters—we'll listen, learn, and take action to make our services better for everyone.

Get involved!



We want to hear from you!

Your ideas and opinions matter. We’re giving you new ways to share what you think, so you can help make decisions about the services you use. Our goal is to make sure everyone gets a chance to join in—no matter who they are or where they come from. Together, we can make things better for everyone.

We engage with our customers in three ways:

Shape

We actively seek input from tenants and leaseholders to ensure our decisions meet your needs. We want to understand what’s important to you and your community and make sure our services reflect that.

Engage

There are many ways we engage and collaborate with you in your communities. We want to give you the tools for lasting change.

Scrutiny

This is our most formal way of involving you in key decisions and service improvements. It gives you a direct influence on major decisions, service development, and how resources are allocated.

Supporting you to shape the delivery of our services

Tenant and leaseholder input for policies and strategies Working with you when designing or updating services, we try to work with those with lived experiences of the topic

Keeping you safe: Working with you to identify ways to keep your buildings secure and safe.

Community surveys: Identifying community-wide priorities on a large scale to help inform our community investment projects

Customer satisfaction surveys: Independent surveys on service experiences, with follow-ups phone-calls to gain a deeper understanding

Service experience surveys and lived experience panels: In-depth exploration to understand your experiences of our services.

Tender reviews: Tenant and leaseholder representatives can be involved when we select contractors to carry out work

Input on developments and neighbourhood works: We seek customer input on neighbourhood improvements and new developments

Customer promise: CBC customers have shaped and can see what quality of service to expect

Working with you in your communities

Estate walkabouts: Inspections and discussions with the tenancy management team.

Engaging with minority groups: Partnering with county-wide organisations to break down barriers to engagement for our harder-to-reach tenants

Social responsibility: Collaborating with tenants to invest in projects that have real impact for our communities

Community groups: Supporting local action groups and resident associations, offering assistance, funding, and partnerships.

ASB advice sessions: Offering face to face drop-in support on tackling anti-social behaviour.

Training and employment support: Help with job searching, training and employment opportunities.

Online engagement: Keeping tenants informed through social media, websites, newsletters, and portals, and working with tenants to identify the best ways in which to do this.

Working with you to review and improve our services

Service improvement plans: where your feedback indicates a problem, we engage with you to improve the quality of the services we deliver.

Mystery shopping: Anonymous testing of services for quality control.

Tenant panel: Independent monthly scrutiny meeting to conduct and oversee our reviews of services and offer suggestions for improvements.

Housing committee: Tenant and leaseholder representation at a high level to shape strategic decisions with the opportunity for wider public to ask questions as part of the public questions agenda item.

Leaseholder panel: Review and scrutiny of services for leaseholders.

Youth voice and senior forums: Ensuring representation from all generations when designing and reviewing services.

Complaints and compliments: Continuously learning from your feedback to improve service delivery, held accountable through our complaints panel.

How we will support you to get involved



Ward councillors

- They work together with you, helping to address your community issues
- They will ensure your voices are heard and considered in decision-making
- They will resolve problems and address community needs by collaborating with residents and community groups

Staff responsibility

- Engagement and scrutiny will be built into service delivery and be the responsibility of every member of staff across all departments of housing

Resident engagement officer

- They facilitate customer involvement within housing services and lead on tenant and leaseholder panels
- They support other housing teams by ensuring customer feedback and involvement is central to developing and improving services

Community investment officers

- Building on the skills present within your communities, officers will collaborate with local groups to understand and support you to address your needs
- They will assist groups in setting goals and applying for funding for community projects
- They will lead community meetings and consultations to gather input from everyone in the area, regardless of whether you're a tenant of ours
- They will work closely with the equality, diversity, and inclusion lead to ensure inclusive participation, and are proactive in engaging our seldom heard voices



I went to a few meetings and it seemed a worthwhile use of my time. I was voted in as a full member shortly afterwards. The scrutiny work gives us an insight into how the housing service works and how it achieves its goals as a housing provider. Membership of the tenant panel is an opportunity to influence this.

Ed Trevena, Tenant Panel Member



How we will get there

Priorities	Action	Year one	Year two	Year three
1, 2	Share the draft tenant and leaseholder engagement strategy with tenants and leaseholders to ensure that they have the opportunity to further shape the strategy.	Action to take place ✓		
1, 2, 3	Work with tenants and leaseholders to review and develop the website, ensuring it is up to date with policies and scrutiny reviews, and adheres to CBC's high expectations around accessibility	Action to take place ✓		
1, 2, 3, 4	Expand our opportunities for engagement, by formalising our approach to capturing the views of older adults living in our homes and supporting the development of a borough wide Youth Voice Panel.	Action to take place ✓		
1, 2, 4	Develop the newly formed leaseholder forum, creating an annual work plan	Action to take place ✓		
1, 2, 4	Review and update our tenant and leaseholder handbooks, ensuring they are tailored to their needs and accessible to all	Action to take place ✓		

How we will get there

Priorities	Action	Year one	Year two	Year three
1, 2, 4	Use data from independent external surveys and text satisfaction surveys to monitor feedback around complaints, ASB, and repairs, hosting quarterly lived experience panels to gain a deeper understanding of our tenants' and leaseholders' user experience.		Action to take place ✓	
1, 2, 4	Enhance our understanding of who lives in our properties by reviewing existing data and identifying opportunities to gather more. By using this insight, we can refine our services to better meet residents' needs.		Action to take place ✓	
1, 2, 3	Support and develop residents' associations and community groups, giving them a greater voice in how we serve our communities	Action to take place ✓		
1, 2, 3, 4	Establish a new Social Responsibility Panel to oversee the allocation of funds received through social value contracts, ensuring they are invested for the maximum benefit of our communities.		Action to take place ✓	
1, 2	Strengthen our partnerships with organisations like GARAS and Alliance for Equality to better understand our under-represented customers and collaborate on reducing barriers to engagement.	Action to take place ✓		

How will we know we are getting it right?

Participation and involvement

- **Attendance and survey response numbers:** Track how many tenants engage with events, activities and surveys
- **Tenant groups:** An increase in tenant led activities
- **Diversity:** Ensure representation from diverse groups
- **Online engagement:** Monitor interactions on websites, social media, and portals

Empowerment and representation

- **Tenant involvement in decision-making:** How many tenants are involved in decision-making roles (panels, committees)?
- **Engagement with marginalised groups:** Champion the participation of underrepresented groups to ensure inclusivity

Feedback and satisfaction

- **Customer satisfaction Surveys:** Analyse survey feedback to identify trends and areas for service improvement
- **Complaints resolution:** Measure how quickly complaints are resolved and track reductions in recurring complaints over time
- **Qualitative feedback:** Collect in-depth feedback from consultations and lived experience panels to evaluate service delivery quality

Communication and transparency

- **Communication effectiveness:** Find out how well tenants feel informed through newsletters, social media, and tenant portals
- **Feedback loops:** Ensure that tenants receive regular updates about the outcomes of their input, showing them the real impact of their contributions

Action

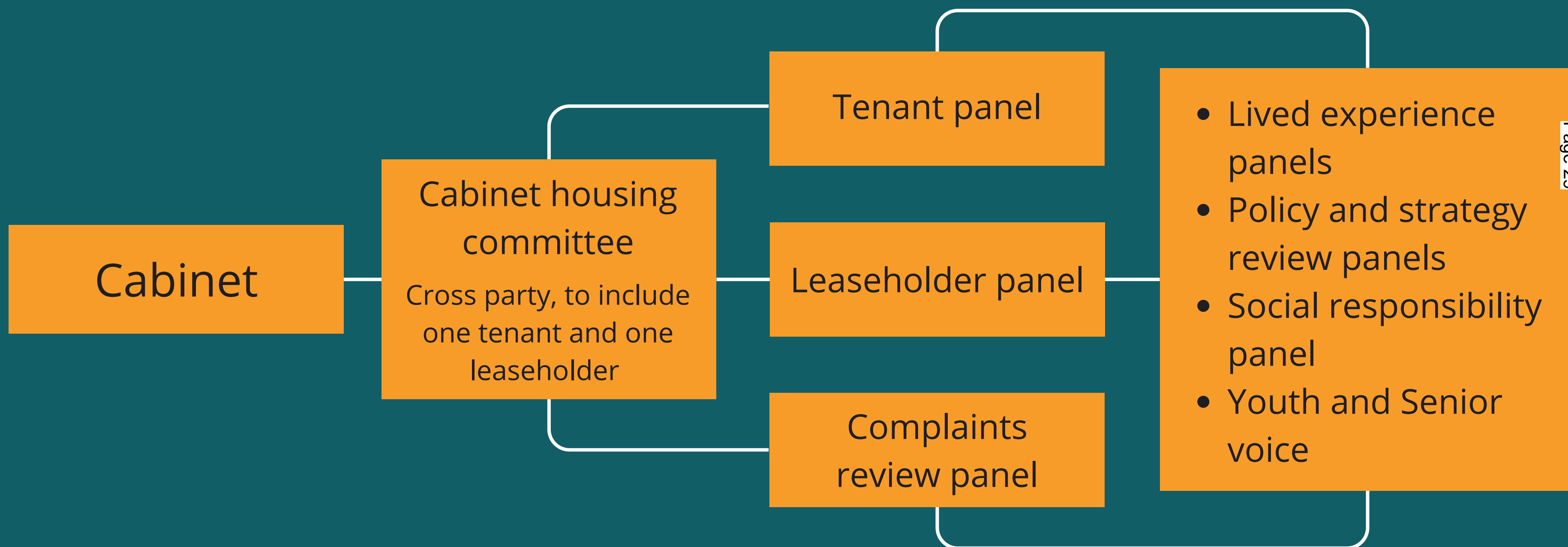
- **Policy changes and improvements:** Demonstrate how often tenant input leads to updates in housing policies and services
- **Service improvement plans:** Monitor the implementation of tenant-driven plans and their impact on service quality
- **Funding and projects:** look at the number of community projects initiated or funded through tenant input

Reviewing regularly

- **Periodic reviews:** Conduct independent reviews of tenant engagement initiatives to evaluate their effectiveness
- **Flexibility and responsiveness:** How well does the engagement plan adapts to changing needs and tenant feedback?

Our governance structure

This governance structure was approved in June 2024 as part of Cheltenham Borough Council's decision to take housing back in house.



Keep in touch

If you have ideas to share, need help starting something in your community, or want to know how you can get involved, you can reach out to us using the details below.

We look forward to hearing from you soon!



Page 30



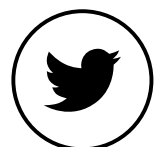
0800 408 0000



Contact us on the My CBH Portal or
visit our website at www.cbh.org



liam.pem@cheltenham.gov.uk



Follow us on our
social media channels



Equality Impact Assessment

Introduction

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a method for assessing the effects or impacts of a council policy or function on removing barriers to equality.

The Equality Act 2010 includes a public sector equality duty which requires public authorities to try and eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it and promote equality and good relations across a range of protected characteristics.

The protected characteristics are:

Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment
Marriage and civil partnership	Pregnancy and maternity	Race
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)	Sex	Sexual orientation

An EqIA should be completed with the full range of protected characteristics considered during the initial stages of developing new strategies, policies, functions or services, prior to starting a procurement exercise and before decisions are made.

Examples of when an EqIA should be completed are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any proposals to introduce or add to a service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any proposals to adopt policy priorities, strategies and plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any proposals to remove, reduce or alter a service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to staffing structure where groups of employees are likely to be negatively affected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any new policies or changes to policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any proposals in relation to procured or commissioned services

Stage 1 - Equality Screening

Whenever a policy/service or function is reviewed, changed, developed or removed an initial equality impact assessment stage 1 will need to be undertaken. This is a screening template and will help establish whether a full assessment is needed. This should be done at an early stage of the process so that it is part of policy development.

Stage 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

This is the full EqIA and seeks to identify the equality considerations that have been taken into account including any mitigating actions proposed and ensures decisions are based on evidence. The EqIA will need to be agreed with the appropriate Head of Service or Director and should be included on the decision making report, along with commentary on the assessment in the main body of the report.

STAGE 1 – Equality Screening

1. Identify the policy, project, function or service change

a. Person responsible for this EqlA

Officer responsible: Ellen Pollicott	Service Area: Community Services- Housing
Title: Community Investment Manager	Date of assessment: 24.06.2025
Signature: Ellen Pollicott	

b. Is this a policy, function, strategy, service change or project?

Choose an item. Strategy

If other, please specify:

c. Name of the policy, function, strategy, service change or project

Tenant and Leaseholder Voice Plan

Is this new or existing? New

Choose an item.

Please specify reason for change or development of policy, function, strategy, service change or project

Development of plan for tenant and leaseholder engagement, meeting regulatory requirements

d. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes and who is likely to benefit from it?

Aims: To outline our plans for tenant and leaseholder engagement over the next 3 years.

Objectives:

- Increase engagement
- Meet regulatory requirements
- Empower tenants and leaseholders in shaping the delivery of our services

Outcomes:

- Engagement is increase and diversified
- Everyone has an opportunity to engage in a way to suit them

Benefits: All tenants and leaseholders of Cheltenham Borough Council housing service

e. What are the expected impacts?

Are there any aspects, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could have an impact on the lives of people, including employees and customers.

Choose an item. **Proactive engagement of seldom heard voices**

Do you expect the impacts to be positive or negative?

Choose an item. **Positive**

Please provide an explanation for your answer:

The plan outlines how the housing service will be proactive in it's approach to tenant and leaseholder engagement

If your answer to question e identified potential positive or negative impacts, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

f. Identify next steps as appropriate

Stage Two required

yes

Owner of Stage Two assessment

Ellen Pollicott

Completion date for Stage Two assessment

24.06.2025

Please forward this completed form to [add email address] and move on to Stage 2 if required.

STAGE 2 – Full Equality Impact Assessment**2. Engagement and consultation**

The best approach to find out if a policy etc, is likely to impact positively or negatively on equality groups is to look at existing research, previous consultation recommendations, studies or consult with representatives of those equality groups.

a. Research and evidence

List below any data, consultations (previous, relevant, or future planned), or any relevant research, studies or analysis that you have considered to assess the policy, function, strategy, service change or project for its relevance to equality.

n/a

b. Consultation

Has any consultation be conducted?

Yes

Describe the consultation or engagement you have conducted or are intending to conduct. Describe who was consulted, what the outcome of the activity was and how these results have influenced the development of the strategy, policy, project, service change or budget option.

If no consultation or engagement is planned, please explain why.

The plan was developed with support of the tenant panel. The leaseholder and tenant panel were consulted with the finished document and given the opportunity to feedback any changes.

We worked with Campbell Tickell, an independent partner, to ensure the plan meets the needs of our tenants and leaseholders.

Feedback from tenant panel suggested the plan needed to be as short as possible and designed to be visually engaging. We made changes in line with this feedback.

3. Assessment**a. Assessment of impacts**

For each characteristic, please indicate the type of impact (positive – contributes to promoting equality or improving relations within an equality group, neutral – no impact, negative – could disadvantage them).

Please use the description of impact box to explain how you justify the impact and include any data and evidence that you have collected from surveys, performance data or complaints to support your proposed changes

Protected Characteristic	Specific Characteristic	Impact	Description of impact	Mitigating Action
AGE	Older people (60+)	Positive	Introduction of older adults voice	
	Younger People (16-25)	Positive	Introduction of young people's voice	
	Children (0-16)	Neutral		
DISABILITY A definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 is available here . <i>See also carer responsibilities under other considerations.</i>	Physical disability	Positive	Proactive engagement with people who have a disability to ensure their views are considered.	
	Sensory Impairment (sight, hearing)	Positive	As above	
	Mental health	Positive	As above	
	Learning Disability	Positive	As above	
GENDER REASSIGNMENT		Neutral	The plan does not specifically mention this.	
MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	Women	Neutral	No specific mention	
	Men	Neutral	No specific mention	
	Lesbians	Neutral	No specific mention	
	Gay Men	Neutral	No specific mention	
PREGNANCY & MATERNITY	Women	Neutral	No specific mention	
RACE* Further information on the breakdown below each of	White	Neutral		
	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	Neutral		

these headings, is available here . For example Asian, includes Chinese, Pakistani and Indian etc	Asian	Neutral		
	African	Neutral		
	Caribbean or Black	Neutral		
		Choose an item.		
RELIGION & BELIEF** A list of religions used in the census is available here	See note	Neutral		
SEX (GENDER)	Men	Neutral		
	Women	Neutral		
	Trans Men	Neutral		
	Trans Women			
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Heterosexual	Neutral		
	Lesbian	Neutral		
	Gay	Neutral		
	Bisexual/Pansexual	Neutral		
Other considerations				
Socio-economic factors (income, education, employment, community safety & social support)		Positive	Giving people a bigger say in our services relating to these.	
Rurality		Neutral		

i.e. access to services; transport; education; employment; broadband				
Other (e.g. caring responsibilities)		Neutral		

* To keep the form concise, race has not been included as an exhaustive list, please augment the list above where appropriate to reflect the complexity of other racial identities.

** There are too many faith groups to provide a list, therefore, please input the faith group e.g. Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Hindus, etc. Consider the different faith groups individually when considering positive or negative impacts. A list of religions in the census is available [here](#)

4. Outcomes, Action and Public Reporting

a. Please list the actions identified through the evidence and the mitigating action to be taken.

Action	Target completion date	Lead Officer

b. Public reporting

All completed EqIA's are required to be publicly available on the Council's website once they have been signed off. EqIA's are also published with the papers for committee and full council decisions.

Please send completed EqIA's to [email address]

5. Monitoring outcomes, evaluation and review

The Equalities Impact Assessment is not an end in itself but the start of a continuous monitoring and review process. The relevant Service or Lead Officer responsible for the delivery of the policy, function or service change is also responsible for monitoring and reviewing the EqIA and any actions that may be taken to mitigate impacts.

Individual services are responsible for conducting the impact assessment for their area, staff from Corporate Policy and Governance will be available to provide support and guidance, please email xxxx if you have any questions.

6. Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet Housing Committee – 16 July 2025

Tenancy Policy & Decant (required move) Policy

Accountable member:

Cllr Flo Clucas, Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services

Accountable officer:

Caroline Walker, Director of Housing, Customer Services and Communities

Executive summary:

The purpose of the Tenancy policy is to set out the council's approach to managing council tenancies and includes:

- Types of tenancies offered by CBC
- Tenancy Changes & Assignments
- Mutual Exchanges
- Succession
- Lodgers and Subletting

The purpose of the Decant (required move) policy is to communicate the circumstances in which a tenant may be required to temporarily or permanently move out of their home and set out the support provided.

The policies are a regulatory requirement (consumer standards) and will be supported by operating procedures.

Recommendations:

1. That the policies are noted by Cabinet Housing Committee.
-

1 Background

1. See attached Tenancy Policy & Decant (required move) Policy

2. The reading age of the revised policy has been as 'mid-teens', predominantly due to the inclusion of legislation and legal terminology. As it is essential to include the relevant legislation within the policy, a proposed summary document has been drafted and included with this report (Appendix 2 & 3) with the intention of providing an overview of the key aspects of the policy that is accessible to a person with a lower reading age.

Report author:

Caroline Walker, Director of Housing, Customer Services and Communities
caroline.walker@cheltenham.gov.uk

Appendices:

- i. Tenancy Policy
- ii. Tenancy Policy Equality Impact Assessment
- iii. Decant (required move) Policy
- iv. Summary of Decant (required move) Policy
- v. Decant (required move) Policy Equality Impact Assessment

Cheltenham Borough Council policy

Tenancy Policy

Version control

Document name: Tenancy Policy

Version: 1.0

Responsible officer

- Justine Skitt, Tenancy Management Team Leader

Approved by: Housing Committee

Next review date: July 2028 (or change to relevant legislation)

Retention period:

Revision history

Revision date	Version	Description
date		

Consultees

Internal

- Caroline Walker, Director of Housing, Customer Services & Communities

External

- Tenants

Distribution

Contents

1. Introduction and purpose of the policy.....	2
2. Aims and scope of the policy.....	2-3
3. Tenancy Tenures	
• Non-secure tenancies	
• Introductory tenancies	
• Secure tenancies	
• Assured Shorthold & Assured tenancies	
• Fixed Term tenancies	
• Review of Fixed Term tenancies	
4. Ending tenancies.....	7-10
• By the tenant	
• By CBC	
• Ending a non-secure tenancy	
• Ending an Introductory tenancy	
• Ending an Assured shorthold tenancy	
• Ending an Assured tenancy	
• Ending of Fixed Term	
5. Tenancy changes and assignments.....	11-12
6. Mutual Exchanges.....	12-13
7. Successions.....	13-14
8. Lodgers & sub-letting.....	14-18
9. Complaints & Appeals.....	18
10. Monitoring & Review.....	18

Introduction and purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy set out how Cheltenham Borough Council manages council tenancies. It ensures fairness, consistency and transparency in the management of the council-owned homes while safeguarding the rights of tenants.

This policy applies to all council tenancies owned and managed by Cheltenham Borough Council Housing Services.

Aims and scope of the policy

Aim of this policy is to:

- Provide responsive tenancy management services.

- Ensure tenants are aware of their rights and responsibilities in accordance with their tenancy conditions, legislation and regulatory guidance.
- Support and sustain tenancies.
- Make the best use of the available social housing stock, including reducing overcrowding, tackling under-occupation, and adapted housing for those with disabilities.

It also sets out CBC's approach to:

- The types of tenancy granted
- Security of tenure
- How a tenancy can be ended and advice and support when tenancies end
- Needs of those households vulnerable by reason of age, disability or illness and households with children
- Assignments and mutual exchanges
- Succession rights
- Lodgers and subletting, and
- Complaints and appeals process

Tenancy Tenures

Non-Secure tenancies

This type of tenancy is issued under the Homelessness legislation, when a homeless household is placed in temporary accommodation owned by the Council. If the household are found to qualify for permanent housing, the relevant tenancy will be issued by the landlord once permanent housing is secured.

Non-Secure tenants do not have the same statutory rights as secure tenants. They do not have the right to:

- buy their home
- assign or transfer the tenancy (some exceptions may apply)
- take in lodgers
- carry out improvements
- mutual exchange with another tenant
- the same protection from eviction for any breach of the agreement.

Introductory Tenancies

Introductory tenancies are used for all new tenants and last for a 12-month period. An Introductory tenancy can be extended for a further six-month period if necessary. Provided the introductory tenancy is completed with no tenancy breaches of tenancy conditions, a secure tenancy will be created at the 12-month anniversary. However, if a tenant is in breach of the tenancy terms, we will serve a notice before the expiry of the first 12 months. The tenant will have the right to an internal review of the notice.

Introductory tenancies will not be issued to:

- CBC tenants transferring to another CBC property.
- Tenants undertaking a mutual exchange whether they are existing CBC tenants or tenants with another Registered Provider or Local Authority.

Secure tenancies

Secure tenancies are used for all lettings where a tenant already has a security of tenure; ie they already have a secure tenancy. For example, a tenant who is moving from one CBC property to another, whether via a Choice Based Letting Scheme or mutual exchange.

Assured Shorthold & Assured Tenancies

Homes which were built by Cheltenham Borough Homes (CBH) as a registered provider are let on an Assured Tenancies. CBC will grant Assured Shorthold Tenancies to new tenants, for an initial twelve-month period. Should there be no breach within the first twelve months of this tenancy, it will automatically convert into an Assured Tenancy.

CBC will grant Assured Tenancies to existing secure tenants transferring from another CBC property, and to transferring tenants from other social landlords who had an Assured or Secure Tenancy previously.

Fixed Term Tenancies

Fixed term tenancies will be given to tenants who occupy properties that are leased by CBC from a third party who own the freehold of the building.

Fixed term tenancies are granted by CBC for a period of five years.

New tenants will be granted an Assured Shorthold Tenancy for one-year, if no action is taken for breach of tenancy during this period the tenancy will convert to an Assured Tenancy for the remainder of the five-year term.

There are certain circumstances, in which a tenancy of less than five years will be granted, these are as follows:

- At the date of tenancy commencement there is a period of less than five years before a break point in the lease agreement between CBH and the owner of the freehold is reached.
- At the date of tenancy commencement there is a period of less than five years before the expiry of the lease agreement between CBH and the owner of the freehold.
- In the case of mutual exchange, succession and a tenancy changing from joint to sole, where a tenancy for the remainder of the current five-year term will be granted.

Review of a fixed term tenancy

All fixed-term tenancies will be formally reviewed by CBC during the final year of the term, to consider whether a new tenancy should be offered at the same or another property.

It is expected that most tenancies will be renewed following a review, so tenants may have a succession of fixed terms. However, some tenants' needs may change over time, and the review will take these changes into account, the flexible nature of fixed-term tenancies will allow us to work with and support the tenant to move to more suitable accommodation.

CBC will contact tenants no later than 7 months prior to the end of the fixed term to arrange a review meeting.

The review will focus on the housing needs of the household, the way the tenancy has been conducted, any proven breaches of the tenancy agreement, and agreements to remedy those breaches, along with an inspection of the property.

CBC will provide appropriate housing advice and assistance to address these needs and, where relevant help tenants to understand the reasons why, in certain cases a new tenancy may not be offered.

The review meeting will be organised by the tenant's Tenancy Management Officer. The tenant(s) will be encouraged to invite a support worker, friend, or other representative.

Tenants are expected to participate in the review, and in the case of joint tenancies both parties must attend the review meeting.

In some circumstances, the review meeting can be held without the tenant being present. In these cases, the tenant must be living at the property and be unable to participate in the review meeting due for example due to a disability or vulnerability. A support worker or advocate, approved by the tenant, can attend the review meeting in his or her absence or written submissions can be accepted. CBC must be advised in advance of the review meeting if the above circumstances apply, and wherever possible will be flexible around rescheduling to allow the tenant to be present.

The review is intended to be a positive experience for tenants, so every effort will be made to ensure that reviews are held in a way that is sensitive to the needs of the tenant and in particular those that are disabled or vulnerable. This may involve ensuring access to additional support to help with understanding of their tenancy and the review process.

The meeting is an opportunity for the tenant to discuss any difficulties they are having in managing their tenancy or to report any nuisance or support issues. Advice may be given on a range of matters, including signposting to other services, such as employment and training and benefit and money advice.

If a tenant refuses to cooperate with invitations to arrange a review meeting, after attempts to contact them using all options available (Telephone, Email, Post, in person visits, next of kin, third party professional providing support), CBC will attempt to verify whether the tenant is still living at the address and investigate any information, which suggests that additional support is needed.

If no vulnerability is detected, the Tenancy Management Officer will discuss the case with the Tenancy Management Team Leader. If it is agreed that all avenues to contact the tenant have been exhausted, and that vulnerability is not a factor, CBC will carry out a review in the tenant's absence.

following the review, the following outcomes are possible:

- The tenant is offered a new fixed-term tenancy of up to five years at the same address. This will apply to most tenants, and notification of this will be provided in writing to the tenant(s).
- The Tenant is offered a new tenancy at an alternative address. This will apply where the home no longer meets the needs of the tenant.
- The tenancy is ended this will apply where the tenant refuses to engage in the review, where the tenant is no longer resident at the address; where there have

been serious and persistent breaches of the tenancy agreement and legal action is already being pursued against the tenant.

The final decision not to offer a new fixed term tenancy at the same or another property will be made by the Director of Housing, Customer Services and Communities following review.

Ending Tenancies

By the Tenant

If the tenant wishes to bring a tenancy to an end, they may do so by issuing a termination of tenancy form (Notice to Quit), ensuring that this form reaches CBC at least four weeks before the Monday that the tenant intends to leave.

Alternatively, notice to terminate can be given in writing, which must include the names of each tenant, address, and the date of leaving. The letter must be dated and signed by all tenants, but a valid termination of tenancy form signed by one joint tenant is sufficient to terminate a joint tenancy.

If notice is received from one tenant in a joint tenancy, CBC will communicate with the other tenant so that the implications of the termination are understood and appropriate housing advice is provided.

By Cheltenham Borough Council

CBC may take steps to terminate a tenancy where there have been serious and/or persistent breaches of tenancy, including but not limited to serious acts of anti-social behaviour, criminality, or accumulation of rent arrears.

Ending a Non-secure tenancy.

CBC will take steps to terminate a non-secure tenancy where it is found that a household do not qualify for permanent housing. CBC may also take steps to terminate a non-secure tenancy where there have been serious and/or persistent breaches of a tenancy.

To terminate, and gain possession of, a non-secure tenancy, CBC are not required to prove any statutory ground. All that is required is for CBC to serve on the tenant a valid Notice to Quit. Following which, a claim for possession may be brought in the County Court.

Ending an Introductory Tenancy

If CBC decides to take action to end an introductory tenancy, then we will serve the tenant with a Notice of Possession Proceedings (NOPP). **The notice, also known as a 'section 128 notice', gives the tenant the opportunity to seek an internal review of the decision to commence possession proceedings.**

Any application for a review of a decision to seek possession must be:

- Made in writing.
- Made within 14 days of service of the Notice of Possession Proceedings
- Clear about whether an oral hearing is sought.
- Clear about the reason(s) for dissatisfaction with the decision to seek possession and set out matters that the tenant wishes the reviewing manager to consider in reviewing the decision.

All reviews are carried out by a member of CBC Manager level or above who was not involved in the original decision.

If the decision to seek possession is upheld, CBC can apply to the County Court for a possession order.

Ending a Secure Tenancy – Discretionary Grounds

To end the tenancy and gain possession of a property let on a Secure tenancy, CBH must obtain a court order. To begin the process CBH must serve the required Notice of Seeking Possession (NSP) specifying the ground(s) on which possession of the property is being sought.

Discretionary grounds mean that it must be reasonable for the court to grant possession. The eight grounds for discretionary possession are:

- Ground 1 - Rent arrears or breach of the tenancy agreement
- Ground 2 - Nuisance or annoyance/illegal or immoral use of the property
- Ground 2A - Domestic violence

- Ground 2ZA - Offence during a riot
- Ground 3 - Deterioration in the condition of the property
- Ground 4 - Deterioration in furniture provided.
- Ground 5 - The tenant obtained the tenancy by knowingly or recklessly making a false statement to the landlord.
- Ground 6 - Premium paid in connection with mutual exchange
- Ground 7 - Non-housing accommodation
- Ground 8 - The property was made available during works to former. accommodation

Ending a Secure Tenancy – Mandatory Grounds

Where antisocial behaviour has already been proved in another court a mandatory ground for seeking possession of a secure tenancy is available to CBC.

Mandatory grounds mean that the court must award possession if any one of five specified conditions is met, the landlord has served a Notice of Seeking Possession (NSP) and complied with its obligations in respect of the tenant's right of review.

The five specified grounds are:

- Conviction of serious offence
- Breach of an Injunction to Prevent Nuisance and Annoyance
- Breach of a criminal behaviour order
- Closure order
- Noise nuisance

If CBC serve an NSP relying on a mandatory ground for possession, we must inform the tenant of their right to request a statutory review of our decision to seek possession. The tenant must request a review within seven days of service of the NSP, and the request must:

- Be made in writing.
- set out the grounds on which the review is sought.
- state whether an oral hearing is sought.

CBC must give the tenant five days' notice of the hearing date and/or the requirement to make written representations where the tenant has not requested a hearing. The review must be carried out before the date after which court proceedings can start as specified in the Notice of Seeking Possession.

All reviews must be carried out by a member of CBC staff senior to the person who made the original decision to seek possession.

CBC must notify the tenant of the outcome of the review in writing, and clearly set out its reasons if the original decision is upheld.

Ending an Assured Shorthold Tenancy

To end the tenancy and regain possession of a property let on an Assured Shorthold tenancy, CBC must obtain a court order. To begin the process CBC must serve the required Notice of Seeking Possession (NSP) specifying the ground(s) on which possession of the property is being sought.

With Assured Shorthold tenancies, CBC can also obtain possession under section 21 of the Housing Act 1988, without having to prove any grounds for possession.

Ending an Assured Tenancy

To end the tenancy and regain possession of a property let on an assured tenancy, CBC must obtain a court order. To begin this process CBC must serve a notice of intention to bring proceedings on the tenant. This notice is commonly called a notice of seeking possession (NSP) or 'section 8' notice.

Ending a tenancy at the end of a fixed term

Where the fixed-term tenancy was offered on the basis that a further tenancy might be offered at the end of the term, the decision not to offer a new fixed term tenancy at the same or another property will be made by the Head of Community Services following review.

A Notice of Non-Renewal will be served at least six months before the tenancy term is due to end setting out:

- That CBC does not propose to grant a further tenancy on expiry of the term.
- Specifically, why no further tenancy is being granted. That the tenant has a right to appeal, how they can do this and the timescales for appealing.
- A Notice Requiring Possession will then be served on the tenant giving at least two months' notice that possession is required. This can be served at any time until the last day of the tenancy. If the tenant does not move out on the last day of the tenancy, a court order will be applied for to end the tenancy.

Tenancy changes and assignments

CBC will not normally change the named tenants on a tenancy unless it is on the best interests of the tenants and CBC or there is a relevant court order.

CBC will only change a single tenancy to a joint tenancy :

- Married couples
- Civil partners
- To sole tenants upon marriage, and
- To established co-habiting couples

A certificate proving marriage or civil partnership will be needed to be provided to CBC prior to a joint tenancy being approved. For established partners, evidence that the partner has lived in the property for a minimum of 12 months will be required. No other applications for a joint tenancy will be granted (for example intergenerational or sibling).

CBC will only remove a tenant's name from a joint tenancy in the following two circumstances:

- By agreement of both parties in writing, or
- As part of a court order.

In addition, CBC may remove a tenant from a joint tenancy where both parties are in agreement and all relevant paperwork is completed. Any tenant taking on a tenancy in their own right must be aware that they agree to take sole responsibility for any outstanding arrears, debts or anti-social behaviour contracts instigated during the joint tenancy.

CBC will refuse a request to change the names on a tenancy when:

- The current tenant(s) or persons applying to become a joint tenant owes money to the council for rent or former tenancy charges.
- The person applying to become a joint tenant or the person applying to have the tenancy in their own name would not qualify to join the housing register. For example, they already own a property elsewhere or do not meet the set financial criteria.
- The current tenant is not a secure tenant.
- The person applying to join the tenancy has no recourse to public funds or no right to remain in the country.

- There is a valid County Court Order for possession for existing tenant's home or elsewhere.
- Legal proceedings of any kind have been initiated against the current tenant or there is a breach of the tenancy ie any tenancy arrears.
- The current tenant is already a successor and creating a new joint tenancy would create new succession rights. If there had been a succession (including succession by surviving joint tenant) then we will not allow another change unless there is a court order directing us to do so.
- The person applying to become a joint tenant is already a secure tenant of another property.
- One of the parties does not intend to live in the property or the person applying to have the tenancy in their own name does not intend to live in the property.

Mutual Exchanges

CBC aims to reduce housing need and make the most effective use of its housing stock by encouraging appropriate mutual exchanges to help increase tenant's choice and mobility options. CBC is therefore a member of Homeswapper, a national mutual exchange organisation to enable its tenants to advertise their interest in finding a mutual exchange.

CBC encourages mutual exchanges between two or more tenants of CBC, or between two or more tenants of CBC, another Registered Provider or a Local Authority.

CBC will approve mutual exchange applications provided none of the grounds for refusing such applications in the Housing Act 1985 and the Localism Act 2011 apply.

CBC tenants who are on an Introductory or a non-secure tenancy are not able to apply for a mutual exchange until they have been a tenant for a year and their tenancies have been converted to a secure tenancy.

CBC will not withhold permission for a mutual exchange to take place unless it has good reason to do so. It may impose conditions on its permission concerning the payment of outstanding rent, the remedying of any breach or the performing of any obligation of a tenancy. Some of the reasons that CBC would not give permission are as follows.

- If a Court Order for possession has been granted to the Assignee.
- The accommodation is substantially more extensive than is reasonably required by the proposed assignee. i.e. under occupation of the property
- The accommodation is not reasonably suitable to the needs of the proposed assignee. i.e. over occupation of the property.

- The accommodation is designed to make it suitable for occupation by a disabled person.
- If the assignment were made and there would no longer be such a person residing in the accommodation.
- Where a Section 106 Agreement is in place.
- Where there are rent arrears or other CBC debt.

CBC's tenants will be informed of the decision concerning their application within forty-two days of the application being made. If the application is refused, reasons for the refusal will be provided.

Due to the changes brought about the Localism Act 2011, the type of tenancy given to tenants carrying out a mutual exchange may be different depending on the type of tenancy the applicant currently holds. The date on which their current tenancy commenced will also have an impact.

Successions

CBC acknowledges the right to succession on the death of a tenant. The tenancy may be passed on to a partner who lived with the tenant at the time of their death, whether or not they were married. This right is also granted to same sex partners. This is provided:

- The deceased tenant did not succeed to the tenancy;
- The partner lived in the tenant's home as their only or main home at the time of the tenant's death; and
- The deceased tenant held a sole tenancy.

This right applies to all tenants who hold either an Assured tenancy or a 5-year Fixed Term Tenancy.

An application to succeed to a tenancy must be made within a reasonable period from the date of the tenant's death. However, if there has been a previous succession, including succession by a surviving joint tenant, no further succession will be granted unless there is a court order directing CBC to do so.

As per the Localism Act 2011, any tenancy granted after 1st April 2012 "vests" in the person who qualifies. This means that the tenancy automatically passes by law to the qualifying person with no requirement for a new tenancy agreement to be signed. This also means any rent arrears or debt owed to CBC by the deceased tenant automatically passes to the qualifying person.

If the tenant does not have a partner, the tenancy may be passed to a member of their family as long as the property is their main/only home and they lived at the property with the tenant for at least twelve months prior to the tenant's death. The tenancy can only be passed on once. It should be noted that if the deceased tenant succeeded to their tenancy, no further succession right will be granted.

Members of a family include parents, grandparents (including those by marriage), children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, half-brothers or half-sisters, adopted children and stepbrothers or stepsisters. If more than one family member qualifies to succeed the tenancy, the family should agree who will take over the tenancy. If they cannot agree they must apply to the Court to decide who the tenancy will pass to.

If the tenancy does pass to someone under point and the family member is under-occupying the property at the date of the tenant's death, they will not be entitled to take

over the tenancy of the property. In these circumstances, CBC will make a maximum of two formal offers of alternative suitable accommodation.

Where there are no rights to succession, due to a previous succession being granted or no-one meeting the criteria outlined above, CBC will issue the relevant notice to gain vacant possession of the property.

Lodgers and Sub-letting

CBC understands that there may be occasions when a tenant wishes to take in a lodger or sub-tenant whether because of personal, financial or health reasons. By allowing all tenancy types the option of taking in a lodger/sub-tenant, CBC is encouraging tenants to make informed choices about managing their own tenancies in a way that can meet their own needs and aspirations.

However, CBC recognises having a sub-tenant or a lodger may not always be in the best interests of a tenant and CBC will provide information on an individual basis on how lodgers and sub-tenants may impact on tenancy agreements and affect Benefit entitlements, as appropriate.

In addition, CBC will encourage tenants to explore a range of options before making an informed decision about the type of arrangement that best suits their lifestyle and needs. Appendix 3 provides further guidance.

Tenants can take in any persons as lodgers and sub-tenants as long as they do not sublet the whole property or exceed the permitted number of people allowed to live in the home. If the tenant lives in a scheme designed for a specific purpose (e.g. sheltered housing for tenants over 60 years old) CBC will not permit the tenant to take in a lodger who themselves does not qualify for the scheme.

In relation to lodgers and sub-letting, CBC's aims are to:

- Ensure all enquiries and requests by tenants to take in a lodger or sublet part of their property are dealt with consistently and fairly;
- Prevent overcrowding;
- Ensure tenants remain responsible for all obligations under their tenancy agreement;
- Prevent properties being unlawfully sublet, illegal assignment and the creation of unintended tenancies and rights of occupation;
- Minimise the risk of unauthorised mutual exchanges;
- Ensure CBC properties are not used as commercial ventures where rooms are rented out by tenants as a business;
- Ensure CBC has a proactive approach to identifying unauthorised occupation;
- Ensure swift and effective action is taken to regain possession of properties occupied by unauthorised occupants;
- Set out the circumstances where permission to sublet will be refused;
- Alert staff and tenants/residents to the possibility of the exploitation of vulnerable tenants by lodgers or the issues for tenants of taking in vulnerable lodgers; and
- Maintain up to date records of household composition.

For clarity, CBC uses the following definitions:

- A tenant is someone who has a Tenancy agreement with CBC as the landlord in relation to a specific property. They are responsible for the whole property and all the obligations, responsibilities and rights outlined in the agreement. They have a legal relationship with CBC.
- A lodger is a person who shares the facilities of a dwelling and does not have exclusive possession of any part of the property. A lodger may also receive services such as a laundry cleaning or meals. They can be asked to go within a reasonable period of notice from the tenant. Family members are not normally treated as lodgers.
- A sub-tenant pays a charge to the tenant for exclusive rights to part of the property and will have a tenancy granted by the tenant. A tenant cannot enter a

- sub-tenant's designated space without permission from the sub-tenant. It is a breach of CBCs tenancy agreement for a tenant to sublet the whole property.
- An unauthorised occupant is someone who has no contractual right to occupy the property or whose continued occupation is unlawful because it is in breach of the express terms of the tenancy or lease.

Under the 1985 & 1996 Housing Acts, secure tenants have a statutory right to be able to take in a lodger without seeking permission. CBH grants the same right to assured and assured shorthold fixed term tenants under the terms of the tenancy agreement. Tenants on an assured shorthold starter tenancy or assured shorthold fixed term starter tenancy, however, do not have this right. Although permission is not required, CBC requests that tenants inform us if they take in a lodger and provide the following information: • Name, age & gender of the lodger(s); • The intended length of time they will be staying; • How much they will be charging (weekly, fortnightly or monthly); • Which part of the property they will be occupying; and • Confirmation that the Housing Benefit department has been advised (where appropriate).

In addition, secure tenants are also granted statutory rights under the 1985 & 1996 Housing Acts to take in a sub-tenant with the written permission of their housing association. CBH grants the same rights to assured and assured shorthold tenants under the terms of the tenancy agreement. Tenants on an assured shorthold starter tenancy or assured shorthold fixed term starter tenancy, however, do not have this right.

When a tenant wishes to sublet part of their property they must apply in writing before allowing the sub-tenant to move in and provide the following information:

- Name, age & gender of the sub-tenant(s);
- The intended length of time they will be staying;
- How much they will be charging (weekly, fortnightly or monthly);
- Which part of the property they will be occupying;
- Type of agreement that will be in place between the tenant and sub-tenant, i.e. a contractual tenancy or licence; and
- Confirmation that the Housing Benefit department has been advised (where appropriate).

CBC will not refuse permission for a tenant to have a sub-tenant without good reason. Reasonable grounds for refusal include where:

- Taking in a sub-tenant would lead to the tenant's home becoming statutorily overcrowded.
- The level of payment to be made by the sub-tenant is regarded as excessive.

- Planned repair or improvement works will affect the accommodation likely to be used by the proposed sub-tenant.
- The proposed sub-tenant is subject to action for antisocial behaviour.
- The tenant is subject to a possession order.
- It would not be appropriate for the proposed sub-tenant to live with the tenant if they live in a specific housing scheme (e.g. Housing Support) which the sub-tenant would not qualify for.
- There was substantiated evidence that a vulnerable adult or a child might be at risk if the sub tenancy was granted.

Where permission is given, an assured sub tenancy must not be used. CBC refutes any claims of a sub-tenant to security of tenure if a tenant leaves the property. Where permission is refused, the tenant will be given the reasons in writing within 10 days of the written request. If a tenant wishes to appeal against this decision they can.

Tenants are responsible for the behaviour of their lodgers and sub-tenants. If they cause nuisance, damage property or harass neighbours, CBC will investigate and may take action against the tenant for breach of tenancy.

In addition, the tenant is responsible for ensuring the lodger/sub-tenant vacates on termination of their tenancy. They are also responsible for ensuring that lodgers and sub-tenants are given a reasonable period of notice or in the case of a sub-tenant, pursuing legal action to force vacation of the property. Lodgers or sub-tenants left in occupation once the tenancy is terminated will be deemed to be unauthorised occupiers in line with this policy and as such CBC reserves the right to take action to regain vacant possession of the property. The terminating tenant will be subject to any incurred costs as a result of action taken.

Where CBC discovers that a tenant has taken in a sub-tenant without first getting permission, it will liaise with the tenant and decide whether to give retrospective permission. If retrospective permission is denied, the sub-tenant will be expected to leave the property. If it is suspected that the tenant has sublet the whole of the property or are in breach of their tenancy agreement, CBC will investigate further and where necessary take legal action.

If a tenant is in receipt of benefits it is their responsibility to declare the rent payments received from any lodgers/sub-tenants as income to any relevant organisation, such as Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) or local authority.

As part of the conditions of their tenancy with CBC, the tenant is still responsible for the obligations as defined in the Tenancy Agreement, such as monthly rent due or

rechargeable repairs and any breaches will be enforced against the tenant, whether they are as a result of actions by the lodger/sub-tenant.

Complaint and Appeals

If a tenant/applicant is not happy with any element of CBC's service received they will be able to make a formal complaint. The complaint will be dealt with in line with CBC's Complaints and Compliments policy.

If a tenant/applicant is not happy with the type of tenancy they have been offered, had their tenancy extended or been refused a property due to its tenancy type option they can, if they wish, appeal against the decision. Tenants should notify CBC within 10 working days of receipt of the refusal letter stating their reasons for an appeal.

Equality and Diversity

CBC is committed to the principle of equality of opportunity in the delivery of its services. CBC aims to ensure all its tenants are dealt with fairly and equitably and, where possible, taking into account the diverse nature of cultures and backgrounds.

An Equality Analysis Form has been completed in the production/review of this policy.

Monitoring and Review

The Tenancy Services Team Leader is responsible for monitoring this policy ensuring it is being correctly applied, and is also responsible for ensuring reviews of this policy are carried out.

CBC will undertake regular reviews of this policy, any procedures related to it and staff training needs, ensuring service improvements are made and implemented.

There will be an automatic review of this policy whenever there is a change of policy from the government, or change to legislation. In the absence of any other trigger, the policy will be reviewed at intervals of no more than three years.

Equality Impact Assessment

Introduction

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a method for assessing the effects or impacts of a council policy or function on removing barriers to equality.

The Equality Act 2010 includes a public sector equality duty which requires public authorities to try and eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it and promote equality and good relations across a range of protected characteristics.

The protected characteristics are:

Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment
Marriage and civil partnership	Pregnancy and maternity	Race
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)	Sex	Sexual orientation

An EqIA should be completed with the full range of protected characteristics considered during the initial stages of developing new strategies, policies, functions or services, prior to starting a procurement exercise and before decisions are made.

Examples of when an EqIA should be completed are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any proposals to introduce or add to a service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any proposals to adopt policy priorities, strategies and plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any proposals to remove, reduce or alter a service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to staffing structure where groups of employees are likely to be negatively affected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any new policies or changes to policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any proposals in relation to procured or commissioned services

Stage 1 - Equality Screening

Whenever a policy/service or function is reviewed, changed, developed or removed an initial equality impact assessment stage 1 will need to be undertaken. This is a screening template and will help establish whether a full assessment is needed. This should be done at an early stage of the process so that it is part of policy development.

Stage 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

This is the full EqIA and seeks to identify the equality considerations that have been taken into account including any mitigating actions proposed and ensures decisions are based on evidence. The EqIA will need to be agreed with the appropriate Head of Service or Director and should be included on the decision making report, along with commentary on the assessment in the main body of the report.

STAGE 1 – Equality Screening

1. Identify the policy, project, function or service change

a. Person responsible for this EqlA

Officer responsible: Justine Skitt

Service Area: Housing Services

Title: Tenancy Management Team Leader

Date of assessment: 26th June 2025

Signature: *Justine Skitt*

b. Is this a policy, function, strategy, service change or project?

Policy

If other, please specify:

c. Name of the policy, function, strategy, service change or project

Tenancy Policy

Is this new or existing?

New or proposed

Please specify reason for change or development of policy, function, strategy, service change or project

Policy has been developed enable tenants to know their legal rights with regards to their tenancy.

d. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes and who is likely to benefit from it?

Aims:

- Provide responsive tenancy management services.
- Ensure tenants are aware of their rights and responsibilities in accordance with their tenancy conditions, legislation and regulatory guidance.
- Support and sustain tenancies.
- Make the best use of the available social housing stock, including reducing overcrowding, tackling under-occupation, and adapted housing for those with disabilities.

Objectives:

- The types of tenancy granted
- Security of tenure
- How a tenancy can be ended and advice and support when tenancies end
- Needs of those households vulnerable by reason of age, disability or illness and households with children
- Assignments and mutual exchanges
- Succession rights
- Lodgers and subletting, and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints and appeals process
Outcomes:	Cheltenham Borough Council tenants to understand their rights as a tenant.
Benefits:	Identify rights of the tenants with respect to their tenancy ie succession, deed of assignment, mutual exchange

e. What are the expected impacts?

Are there any aspects, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could have an impact on the lives of people, including employees and customers.

No

Do you expect the impacts to be positive or negative?

No impact expected

Please provide an explanation for your answer:

Policy with ensure clear understanding and fairness to all tenants.

If your answer to question e identified potential positive or negative impacts, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

f. Identify next steps as appropriate

Stage Two required	Yes
Owner of Stage Two assessment	Justine Skitt
Completion date for Stage Two assessment	26th June 2025

Please forward this completed form to [add email address] and move on to Stage 2 if required.

STAGE 2 – Full Equality Impact Assessment

2. Engagement and consultation

The best approach to find out if a policy etc, is likely to impact positively or negatively on equality groups is to look at existing research, previous consultation recommendations, studies or consult with representatives of those equality groups.

a. Research and evidence

List below any data, consultations (previous, relevant, or future planned), or any relevant research, studies or analysis that you have considered to assess the policy, function, strategy, service change or project for its relevance to equality.

Best Practice

Strategy

b. Consultation

Has any consultation be conducted?

Yes

Describe the consultation or engagement you have conducted or are intending to conduct. Describe who was consulted, what the outcome of the activity was and how these results have influenced the development of the strategy, policy, project, service change or budget option.

If no consultation or engagement is planned, please explain why.

Policy seen and reviewed by a group of Cheltenham Borough Council tenants.

3. Assessment

a. Assessment of impacts

For each characteristic, please indicate the type of impact (positive – contributes to promoting equality or improving relations within an equality group, neutral – no impact, negative – could disadvantage them).

Please use the description of impact box to explain how you justify the impact and include any data and evidence that you have collected from surveys, performance data or complaints to support your proposed changes

DRAFT

Protected Characteristic	Specific Characteristic	Impact	Description of impact	Mitigating Action
AGE	Older people (60+)	Neutral		
	Younger People (16-25)	Neutral		
	Children (0-16)	Neutral		
DISABILITY A definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 is available here . <i>See also carer responsibilities under other considerations.</i>	Physical disability	Neutral		
	Sensory Impairment (sight, hearing)	Neutral		
	Mental health	Neutral		
	Learning Disability	Neutral		
GENDER REASSIGNMENT		Neutral		
MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	Women	Neutral		
	Men	Neutral		
	Lesbians	Neutral		
	Gay Men	Neutral		
PREGNANCY & MATERNITY	Women	Neutral		
RACE* Further information on the breakdown below each of	White	Neutral		
	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	Neutral		

these headings, is available here . For example Asian, includes Chinese, Pakistani and Indian etc	Asian	Neutral		
	African	Neutral		
	Caribbean or Black	Neutral		
		Neutral		
RELIGION & BELIEF** A list of religions used in the census is available here	See note	Neutral		
SEX (GENDER)	Men	Neutral		
	Women	Neutral		
	Trans Men	Neutral		
	Trans Women	Neutral		
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Heterosexual	Neutral		
	Lesbian	Neutral		
	Gay	Neutral		
	Bisexual/Pansexual	Neutral		
Other considerations				
Socio-economic factors (income, education, employment, community safety & social support)		Neutral		
Rurality		Neutral		

i.e. access to services; transport; education; employment; broadband				
Other (e.g. caring responsibilities)		Neutral		

* To keep the form concise, race has not been included as an exhaustive list, please augment the list above where appropriate to reflect the complexity of other racial identities.

** There are too many faith groups to provide a list, therefore, please input the faith group e.g. Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Hindus, etc. Consider the different faith groups individually when considering positive or negative impacts. A list of religions in the census is available [here](#)

4. Outcomes, Action and Public Reporting

a. Please list the actions identified through the evidence and the mitigating action to be taken.

Action	Target completion date	Lead Officer

b. Public reporting

All completed EqIA's are required to be publicly available on the Council's website once they have been signed off. EqIA's are also published with the papers for committee and full council decisions.

Please send completed EqIA's to [email address]

5. Monitoring outcomes, evaluation and review

The Equalities Impact Assessment is not an end in itself but the start of a continuous monitoring and review process. The relevant Service or Lead Officer responsible for the delivery of the policy, function or service change is also responsible for monitoring and reviewing the EqIA and any actions that may be taken to mitigate impacts.

Individual services are responsible for conducting the impact assessment for their area, staff from Corporate Policy and Governance will be available to provide support and guidance, please email xxxx if you have any questions.

6. Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change

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Cheltenham Borough Council

Decant (required move) Policy

Version control

Document name: Decant (required move) Policy

Version: 1.0

Responsible officer

- Justine Skitt, Tenancy Management Team Leader

Approved by: Housing Committee

Next review date: July 2027

Retention period:

Revision history

Revision date	Version	Description
date		

Consultees

Internal

- Caroline Walker, Director of Housing, Customer Services & Communities

External

- Tenant consultation

Distribution

Text

Contents

1. Introduction and purpose of the policy.....	2
2. Aims and scope of the policy.....	2
3. What is a required move (Decant)?.....	2-3
4. Equality & Diversity.....	3
5. Implementation.....	4

Introduction and purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to communicate to tenants what Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) will do when it is necessary to move tenants from their homes.

Aims and scope of the policy

CBC aims to ensure that where the tenant is required to move from their homes either temporarily or permanently, we will provide a high quality, effective, efficient service, and maintain a positive relationship with our tenants. To help achieve this we will ensure that accurate information, good communication and dedicated support are provided to make the move and re-settlement process go as smoothly as possible.

CBC recognises that moving home can often be a difficult and stressful experience, especially when the person being required to move may not want to do so. The need for us to move tenants can also put considerable pressure on our relationship with them as understandably, we are disrupting their home, lifestyle and upsetting their day-to-day routines.

CBC will ensure that offer of rehousing meet the needs of the individual and are suitable for the displaced household. We will aim to ensure that reasonable preferences for accommodation and support services are taken into account when making an offer for re-housing

What is a required move (Decant)?

CBC aims to ensure that where the tenant is required to move from their homes either temporarily or permanently, we will provide a high quality, effective, efficient service, and maintain a positive relationship with our tenants. To help achieve this we will ensure that accurate information, good communication and dedicated support are provided to make the move and re-settlement process go as smoothly as possible.

CBC recognises that moving home can often be a difficult and stressful experience, especially when the person being required to move may not want to do so. The need for us to move tenants can also put considerable pressure on our relationship with them as

understandably, we are disrupting their home, lifestyle and upsetting their day-to-day routines.

CBC will ensure that offer of rehousing meet the needs of the individual and are suitable for the displaced household. We will aim to ensure that reasonable preferences for accommodation and support services are taken into account when making an offer for rehousing

Equality and Diversity

CBC is committed to the principles of equality of opportunity in the delivery of its services. CBC aims to ensure that all of its customers are dealt with fairly and equitably and where possible it takes into account the diverse nature of their cultures and backgrounds.

CBC will actively work towards promoting good relations, eliminating discrimination and addressing existing disadvantage in relation to different groups on the basis of race, colour, ethnic **and** national origin, nationality, gender, disability either mental or physical, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, HIV/AIDS, responsibility for dependants, trade union activity and age.

Implementation

It is the responsibility of the relevant CBC employees to ensure that their work is carried out in line with this policy and any related procedures.

CBC will ensure that this policy and the relevant procedures attached to it are implemented by experienced and qualified employees.

Monitoring

CBC will actively monitor its compliance and performance in relation to the delivery of this policy. This will be achieved by means of customer satisfaction surveys and quality assurance checks.

The Tenancy Management Team Leader will be responsible for ensuring that reviews of this policy are carried out.

CBC will undertake regular reviews of this policy, procedures related to it and staff training needs, to ensure that it continues to operate in line with best practice and that service improvements are made and implemented.

In the absence of any other triggers for a review, the policy will be reviewed at two yearly intervals, or such other period as may be determined by the Housing Cabinet Committee.

Cheltenham Borough Council

Moving Home (Decant) – What You Need to Know

A simple guide for tenants

What is a “Decant”?

Sometimes, we may ask you to move out of your home for a short time—or permanently—because:

- Emergency or major repairs are needed
- Improvement works are planned
- The home is being redeveloped or demolished

This is called a required move, or decant.

How We’ll Support You

We know moving can be stressful. That’s why we’ll:

- ✓ Treat you fairly and with respect
- ✓ Explain what’s happening and why
- ✓ Give you a named contact person
- ✓ Offer you suitable alternative housing
- ✓ Cover moving costs
- ✓ Keep you updated throughout
- ✓ Tell you about any compensation you may get

Your New Home

We’ll aim to offer a home that:

- Matches your needs
- Considers your preferred areas
- Takes into account your personal or support requirements

☐ If you’re moving back to your home, you may get a say in how it looks after work is done (e.g. colours and layout).

Your Voice Matters

We'll:

- Talk to you as early as possible
- Ask for your views and preferences
- Involve family or support workers if needed
- Keep you informed every step of the way

What if I Don't Want to Move?

We'll always try to reach an agreement.

But in rare cases, we may have to take legal action if a tenant refuses to:

- Move out of a property we need access to, or
- Return to their permanent home after temporary relocation

Fairness for Everyone

We are committed to treating everyone equally, whatever your:

- Background
- Culture
- Gender
- Disability
- Age
- Family or caring responsibilities

Need More Info?

Talk to your Tenancy Management Officer

We're here to help and guide you through the process.

Equality Impact Assessment

Introduction

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a method for assessing the effects or impacts of a council policy or function on removing barriers to equality.

The Equality Act 2010 includes a public sector equality duty which requires public authorities to try and eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it and promote equality and good relations across a range of protected characteristics.

The protected characteristics are:

Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment
Marriage and civil partnership	Pregnancy and maternity	Race
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)	Sex	Sexual orientation

An EqIA should be completed with the full range of protected characteristics considered during the initial stages of developing new strategies, policies, functions or services, prior to starting a procurement exercise and before decisions are made.

Examples of when an EqIA should be completed are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any proposals to introduce or add to a service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any proposals to adopt policy priorities, strategies and plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any proposals to remove, reduce or alter a service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to staffing structure where groups of employees are likely to be negatively affected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any new policies or changes to policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any proposals in relation to procured or commissioned services

Stage 1 - Equality Screening

Whenever a policy/service or function is reviewed, changed, developed or removed an initial equality impact assessment stage 1 will need to be undertaken. This is a screening template and will help establish whether a full assessment is needed. This should be done at an early stage of the process so that it is part of policy development.

Stage 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

This is the full EqIA and seeks to identify the equality considerations that have been taken into account including any mitigating actions proposed and ensures decisions are based on evidence. The EqIA will need to be agreed with the appropriate Head of Service or Director and should be included on the decision making report, along with commentary on the assessment in the main body of the report.

STAGE 1 – Equality Screening

1. Identify the policy, project, function or service change

a. Person responsible for this EqlA

Officer responsible: Justine Skitt

Service Area: Housing Services

Title: Tenancy Management Team Leader

Date of assessment: 26th June 2025

Signature: *Justine Skitt*

b. Is this a policy, function, strategy, service change or project?

Policy

If other, please specify:

c. Name of the policy, function, strategy, service change or project

Decant (required move)

Is this new or existing?

New or proposed

Please specify reason for change or development of policy, function, strategy, service change or project

Policy has been developed enable tenants to know their legal rights with regards to their tenancy.

d. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes and who is likely to benefit from it?

Aims:

CBC aims to ensure that where the tenant is required to move from their homes either temporarily or permanently, we will provide a high quality, effective, efficient service, and maintain a positive relationship with our tenants. To help achieve this we will ensure that accurate information, good communication and dedicated support are provided to make the move and re-settlement process go as smoothly as possible.

Objectives:

CBC recognises that moving home can often be a difficult and stressful experience, especially when the person being required to move may not want to do so. The need for us to move tenants can also put considerable pressure on our relationship with them as understandably, we are disrupting their home, lifestyle and upsetting their day-to-day routines.

	CBC will ensure that offer of rehousing meet the needs of the individual and are suitable for the displaced household. We will aim to ensure that reasonable preferences for accommodation and support services are taken into account when making an offer for re-housing
Outcomes:	Cheltenham Borough Council tenants are aware of the reason when we can move someone on a Decant (required move).
Benefits:	To ensure that all individuals are treated equally and fairly.

e. What are the expected impacts?

Are there any aspects, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could have an impact on the lives of people, including employees and customers.

No

Do you expect the impacts to be positive or negative?

No impact expected

Please provide an explanation for your answer:

Policy with ensure clear understanding and fairness to all tenants.

If your answer to question e identified potential positive or negative impacts, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

f. Identify next steps as appropriate

Stage Two required	Yes
Owner of Stage Two assessment	Justine Skitt
Completion date for Stage Two assessment	26th June 2025

Please forward this completed form to [add email address] and move on to Stage 2 if required.

STAGE 2 – Full Equality Impact Assessment

2. Engagement and consultation

The best approach to find out if a policy etc, is likely to impact positively or negatively on equality groups is to look at existing research, previous consultation recommendations, studies or consult with representatives of those equality groups.

a. Research and evidence

List below any data, consultations (previous, relevant, or future planned), or any relevant research, studies or analysis that you have considered to assess the policy, function, strategy, service change or project for its relevance to equality.

Best Practice

Strategy

b. Consultation

Has any consultation be conducted?

Yes

Describe the consultation or engagement you have conducted or are intending to conduct. Describe who was consulted, what the outcome of the activity was and how these results have influenced the development of the strategy, policy, project, service change or budget option.

If no consultation or engagement is planned, please explain why.

Policy seen and reviewed by a group of Cheltenham Borough Council tenants.

3. Assessment

a. Assessment of impacts

For each characteristic, please indicate the type of impact (positive – contributes to promoting equality or improving relations within an equality group, neutral – no impact, negative – could disadvantage them).

Please use the description of impact box to explain how you justify the impact and include any data and evidence that you have collected from surveys, performance data or complaints to support your proposed changes

DRAFT

Protected Characteristic	Specific Characteristic	Impact	Description of impact	Mitigating Action
AGE	Older people (60+)	Neutral		
	Younger People (16-25)	Neutral		
	Children (0-16)	Neutral		
DISABILITY A definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 is available here . <i>See also carer responsibilities under other considerations.</i>	Physical disability	Neutral		
	Sensory Impairment (sight, hearing)	Neutral		
	Mental health	Neutral		
	Learning Disability	Neutral		
GENDER REASSIGNMENT		Neutral		
MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	Women	Neutral		
	Men	Neutral		
	Lesbians	Neutral		
	Gay Men	Neutral		
PREGNANCY & MATERNITY	Women	Neutral		
RACE*	White	Neutral		

Further information on the breakdown below each of these headings, is available here . For example Asian, includes Chinese, Pakistani and Indian etc	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	Neutral		
	Asian	Neutral		
	African	Neutral		
	Caribbean or Black	Neutral		
		Neutral		
RELIGION & BELIEF** A list of religions used in the census is available here	See note	Neutral		
SEX (GENDER)	Men	Neutral		
	Women	Neutral		
	Trans Men	Neutral		
	Trans Women	Neutral		
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Heterosexual	Neutral		
	Lesbian	Neutral		
	Gay	Neutral		
	Bisexual/Pansexual	Neutral		
Other considerations				
Socio-economic factors (income, education, employment, community safety & social support)		Neutral		

Rurality i.e. access to services; transport; education; employment; broadband		Neutral		
Other (e.g. caring responsibilities)		Neutral		

* To keep the form concise, race has not been included as an exhaustive list, please augment the list above where appropriate to reflect the complexity of other racial identities.

** There are too many faith groups to provide a list, therefore, please input the faith group e.g. Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Hindus, etc. Consider the different faith groups individually when considering positive or negative impacts. A list of religions in the census is available [here](#)

4. Outcomes, Action and Public Reporting

a. Please list the actions identified through the evidence and the mitigating action to be taken.

Action	Target completion date	Lead Officer

b. Public reporting

All completed EqIA's are required to be publicly available on the Council's website once they have been signed off. EqIA's are also published with the papers for committee and full council decisions.

Please send completed EqIA's to [email address]

5. Monitoring outcomes, evaluation and review

The Equalities Impact Assessment is not an end in itself but the start of a continuous monitoring and review process. The relevant Service or Lead Officer responsible for the delivery of the policy, function or service change is also responsible for monitoring and reviewing the EqIA and any actions that may be taken to mitigate impacts.

Individual services are responsible for conducting the impact assessment for their area, staff from Corporate Policy and Governance will be available to provide support and guidance, please email xxxx if you have any questions.

6. Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change

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Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet Housing Committee – 16 July 2025

2024/25 Annual Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM)

Accountable member:

Cllr Flo Clucas, Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services

Accountable officer:

Claire Hughes, Director of Governance, Housing and Communities

Executive summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Cabinet Housing Committee with a copy of the Tenant Satisfaction Measure submission for 2024/25 and the annual Tenant Satisfaction Measure survey results for 2024/25 and to outline activities being developed to address areas of dissatisfaction. Members are reminded that tenant satisfaction surveys are carried out independently on the council's behalf. 250 tenants are contacted each quarter (1000 tenants per annum) so that a representative sample of tenant perceptions and opinions is obtained. Most tenants (94%) give permission for the council to contact them to discuss areas of dissatisfaction further. These customers are contacted to better understand areas of concern and feedback used for learning and improvement.

Recommendations:

1. That Cabinet Housing Committee notes the 2024/25 Tenants Satisfaction Submission and the annual Tenant Satisfaction Measure survey results.
-

1. Main content

Key messages from the annual report:

- 80% tenants are satisfied with the overall housing service provided by the council

Several measures achieved satisfaction above 80%, these included:

- How the council treats its tenants fairly and with respect (85%)
- Satisfaction with the repairs in the last 12 months (82%)

- Time taken to complete repairs (82%)
- How the council keeps tenants informed (82%)

In contrast, tenants were less satisfied with:

- How the council listen to tenant's views and acts upon them (67%)
- Maintenance of communal areas (66%)
- The council's approach to dealing with ASB (63%)
- Satisfaction with the handling of complaints (43%)

Follow up calls were made to 425 dissatisfied tenants, with 171 responding (40%), the key areas for dissatisfaction were repairs, ASB, Estate Services and complaint handling. Where possible individual tenant concerns have been resolved. With regards to complaint handling, none of the customers contacted had raised a formal stage 1 complaint, as a result of the follow up calls, three stage 1 complaints have now been raised

Any tenant that advised they haven't reported their damp and mould concerns (36%) have had their concerns raised as part of the DMC process.

The Council compares very well with other social landlords who have submitted their 2023/24 TSM results to The Regulator, with ten out of 12 results in the top quartile and two in the second quartile.

A Resident Engagement Officer has recently been recruited to work closely with staff and residents to increase our work on listening and acting to tenant feedback and developing our approach to the tenant voice.

A revised ASB Policy has now been approved and a communications plan is being developed to ensure tenants better understand the ASB team response, the actions available to the council as landlord and the evidence required to achieve outcomes. Staff are also reviewing best practice in ASB response to ensure we are meeting these standards

The Cleansing Team have purchased new equipment for improving their ability to clean the communal areas, ongoing work is being undertaken to improve communal recycling in blocks.

Report author:

Caroline Walker, Director of Housing, Customer Services and Communities,
caroline.walker@cheltenham.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Appendix 2: Accuity TSM Annual Report 2024/25

Appendix 3: Full TSM Results for 2024/25

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
	Intervention from the Regulator for Social Housing	Caroline Walker, Director of Housing, Customer Service and Communities	4	2	8	Avoid the risk	Ensure TSM's are completed	Olivia Underhill, Community and Support Services Manager	TSM's to be completed on a quarterly basis

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Cheltenham Borough Council (LCRA)

TSM Annual Report 2024/25

Prepared by: Acuity Research & Practice



Key TSM Metrics

Annual Summary

NPS

Wellbeing

Further Insight

Trends

Summary

Annual Demographics

Introduction

Cheltenham Borough Council owns or manages around 4,500 properties in the southwest of England. Acuity has been undertaking independent satisfaction surveys of the tenants of the Council quarterly throughout 2024/25, and as all surveys have been completed for the year, this report pulls these together to show the combined annual results. The surveys were designed using the Tenant Satisfaction Measures from the Regulator of Social Housing, which became mandatory to collect from April 2023 and were reported for the first time in June of this year and are required annually from now on.

Each quarter, the aim is to complete 221 surveys using Acuity's in-house telephone team. Quotas are used based on tenure, area and age to ensure the resulting responses are representative of the tenant population as a whole, and a report is then produced for each quarter. This report presents an analysis of the results based on the 884 completed interviews for 2024/25, alongside a further 47 incomplete interviews, which are required to be included by the Regulator. These are split between General Needs properties (826) and Housing for Older People (105); no LCHO residents or leaseholders are included in the report.

The telephone survey is confidential, and the results are sent back to the Council anonymised unless tenants give their permission to be identified – 79% of tenants did permit their details to be shared, and 94% of these tenants are happy for the Council to contact them to discuss any issues they raised.

This survey aims to provide data on tenants' satisfaction, which will allow Cheltenham Borough Council to:

- Provide information on tenants' perceptions of current services
- Compare the results against the previous year's results
- Compare the results with other landlords submitting results to the Regulator
- Report to the Regulator annually from now on.

For the overall results, Acuity and the Regulator of Social Housing recommend that landlords with over 2,500 and under 10,000 properties achieve an annual sampling error of at least $\pm 4\%$ at the 95% confidence level. For the Cheltenham Borough Council, 884 completed responses were received throughout the year, and this response is high enough to conclude that the findings are accurate to within $\pm 3.0\%$, so well within the required margin of error.

Note: The majority of figures throughout the report show the results as percentages. The percentages are rounded up or down from two decimal places in the results file to the nearest whole number, and for this reason, may not, in all cases, add up to 100%. Rounding can also cause percentages described in the supporting text to differ from the percentages in the charts by 1% when two percentages are added together.

Overall Service Provision

80%



As the fourth and final survey of the 2024/25 year has been completed, it is possible to combine the responses to give annual results; these are shown here for the TSMs.

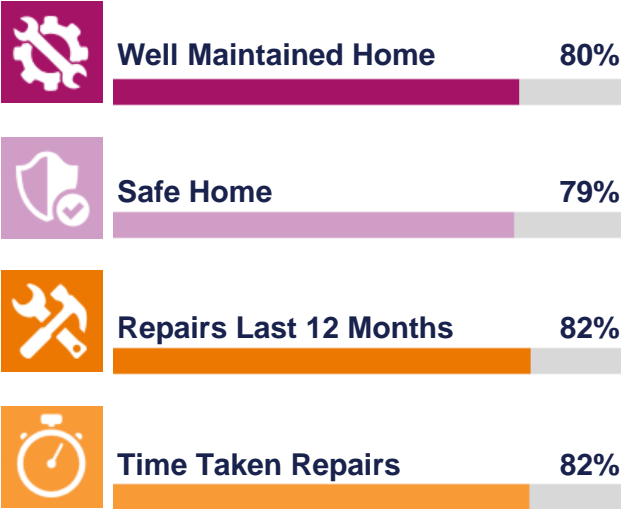
For the whole year, 80% of tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided by the Council; below in the report is the comparison with 2023/24.

Many of the measures have satisfaction above 80%, with the highest ratings for how the Council treats its tenants fairly and with respect (85%), followed by the repairs service in the last 12 months, the time to complete repairs and how the Council keeps tenants informed (all 82%).

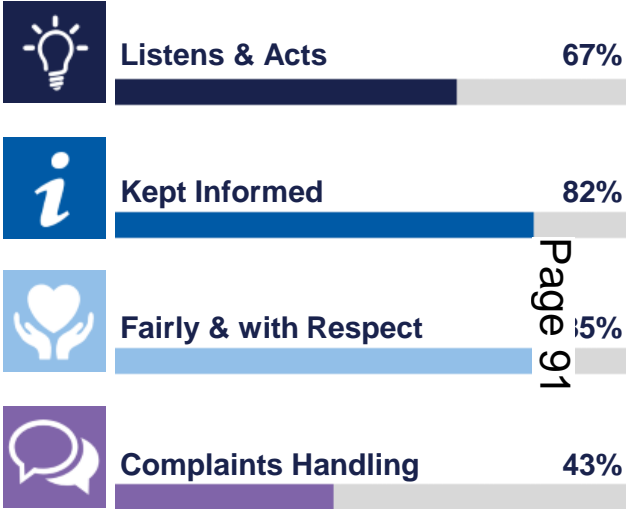
However, four of the measures fall below 60% satisfaction; the way views are listened to and acted upon (67%), the upkeep of the communal areas (66%), the approach to handling ASB (63%) and the way complaints are handled (43%).

2024/25 TSM Key Metrics (LCRA)

Keeping Properties in Good Repair



Respectful & Helpful Engagement



Page 91

Responsible Neighbourhood Management





Annual Summary



Annual Satisfaction & Dissatisfaction

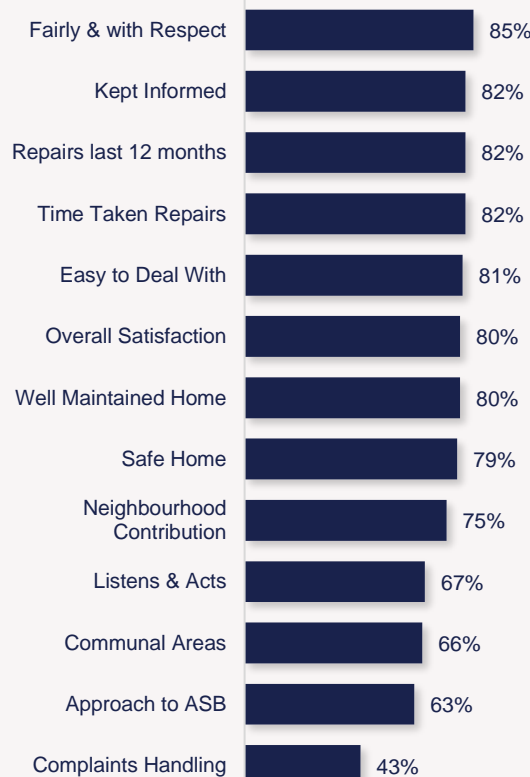
At the end of the financial year, it is possible to look at the annual results to help understand what is driving satisfaction at the Cheltenham Borough Council. The charts summarise the key results from 2024/25 for both satisfaction and dissatisfaction. This section, therefore, combines the results from the four surveys carried out during the year.

Sometimes, where satisfaction is low, the remaining tenants can be split between those who fall into the neutral middle ground and those who are actually dissatisfied. This difference can signal areas where tenants do not have strong opinions or areas where a high percentage of tenants are truly dissatisfied.

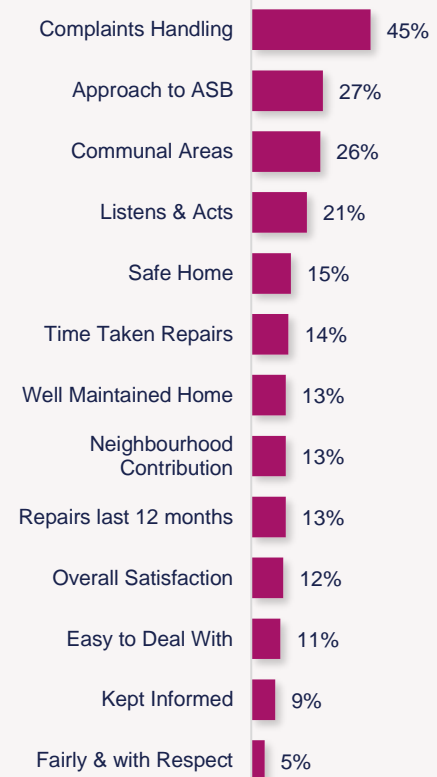
For the Council, it generally follows that measures with high satisfaction also have low dissatisfaction and vice versa.

In terms of dissatisfaction, this is generally below a fifth of tenants being dissatisfied with the range of service offered, with the exception of listening to views, communal maintenance, handling complaints, and ASB, although it is only on complaints where there are more dissatisfied than satisfied.

Satisfaction with Measures 2024/25



Dissatisfaction with Measures 2024/25



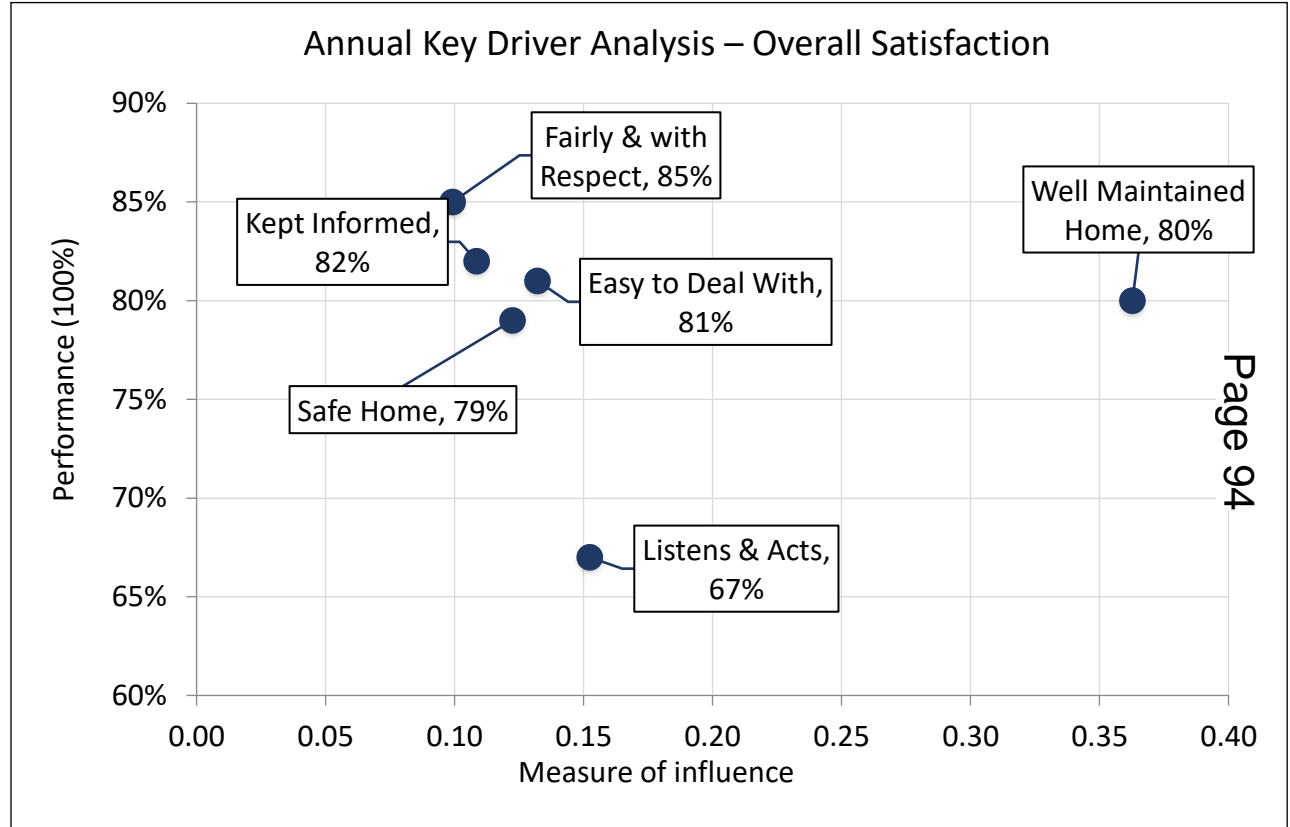


Key Driver Analysis

Key driver analysis is used to examine the relationship between the different variables (the questions asked in the survey) and determine which elements of the service are the key drivers for tenants' overall satisfaction. Each landlord has its own unique pattern of influence.

When combining all the results for 2024/25, the most important driver for tenants' satisfaction with the overall services is that they have a well-maintained home. Listening to tenants' views, being easy to deal with, having a safe home, being kept informed and being treated with respect are also important but not as influential.

This analysis implies that if improvements around the most influential measures can be achieved, it is more likely to lead to increased satisfaction with the overall services provided.



Benchmarking – TSM results 2023/24 (LCRA)



All registered providers over 1,000 units were required to submit their TSM results for 2023/24 to the Regulator of Social Housing by the end of June 2024. The full set of results was then released late in the year, so it is possible to compare the results from Cheltenham Borough Council against these.

The Council compares very well against this group, with all measures above the group medians. There are eight measures in the top quartile, including the overall service and the repairs measures. The remaining four are all in the second quartile, including the upkeep of the communal areas and the handling of ASB.

The Council should be very pleased with this and shows how hard it has worked to make the service as effective as possible, although there are still areas which could improve further.





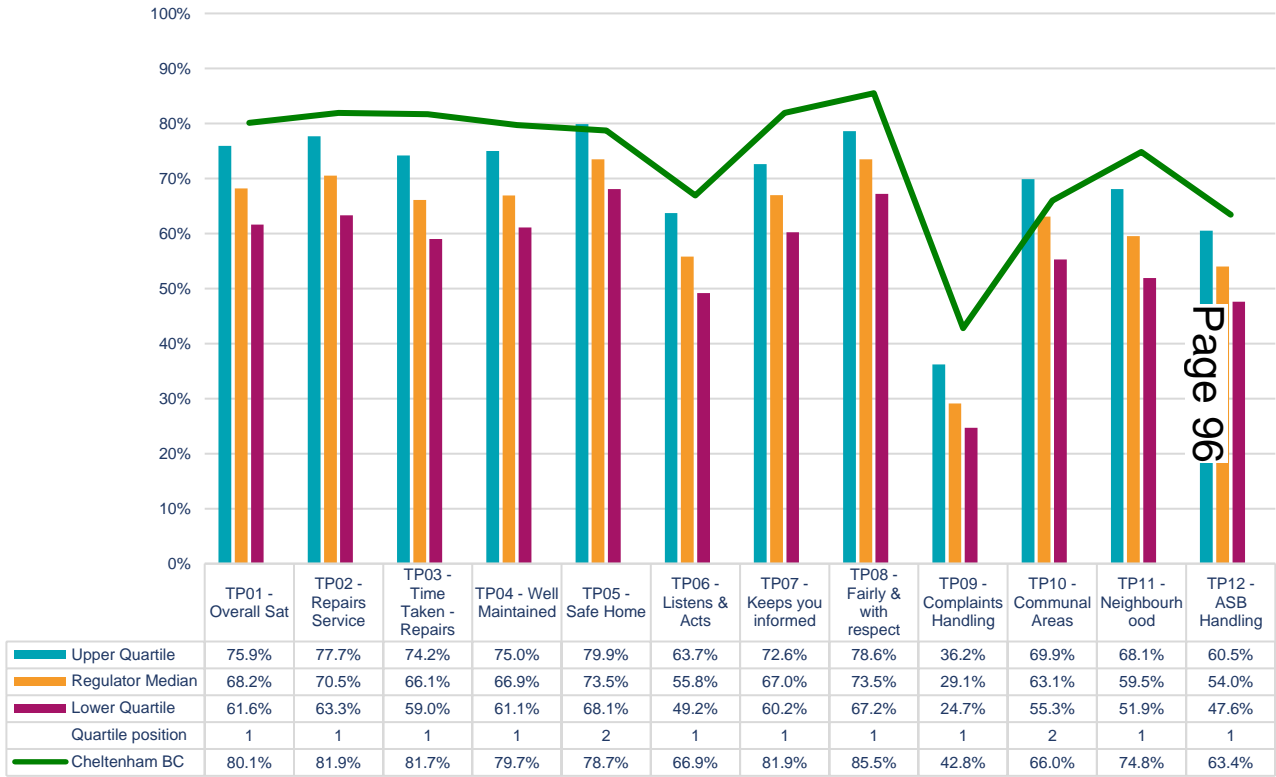
Benchmarking – TSM results 2023/24 (Councils)

Given that this is a council landlord, it is appropriate to compare the results against other local authorities only, and the chart shows the differences against the quartile positions.

The Council compares even better against this group than against the wider group of all landlords. Again, all measures are above the medians, but all but two are in the top quartile, these being having a safe home and the maintenance of the communal areas.

Overall satisfaction is 11.9p.p above the group median and 4.2p.p above the top quartile mark.

This is an excellent set of results, and whilst there is always room for improvement, it shows how well the Council are performing.





National Context

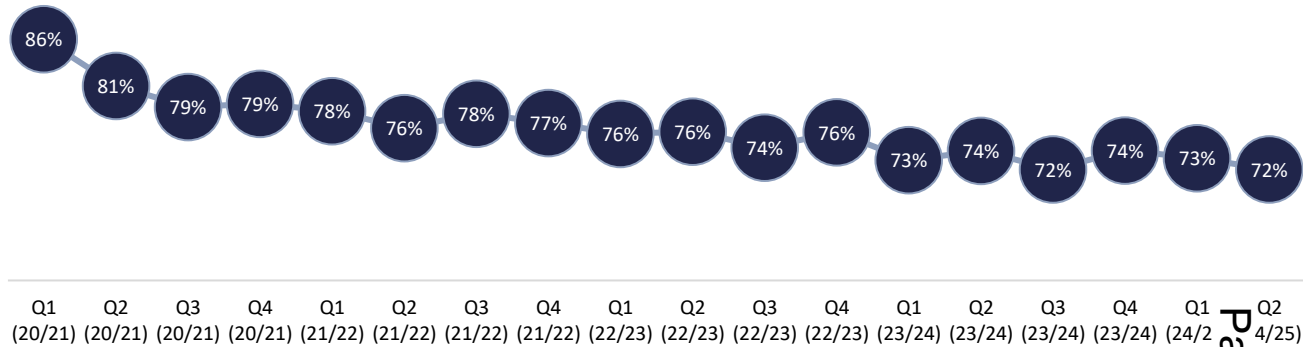
When considering the results, the national context and external factors must also be taken into account.

- For example:
- Ongoing cost of living crisis
 - New government, political changes, and changing legislative landscape
 - Uncertainty about the future
 - Wider economic challenges

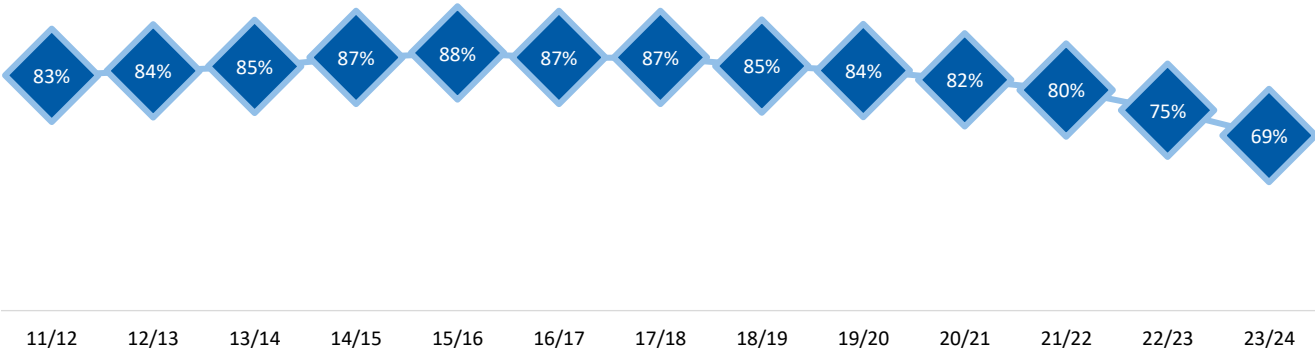
Satisfaction is based on perception rather than specific values, so it can be affected by these factors and how positive people feel about their lives. Factors such as the pandemic also altered the way social landlords operate, perhaps making them less accessible and responsive.

The top graph demonstrates how overall satisfaction has changed over time for Acuity's clients (tracker only). The trendline is downward over the last few years. The lower chart shows the results from Housemark members with a peak in 2015/16 and a slow decline since; this started even before the disruption caused by the pandemic.

Overall Services (Acuity Clients - LCRA)



Satisfaction with services provided (Housemark median - general needs)





Wellbeing



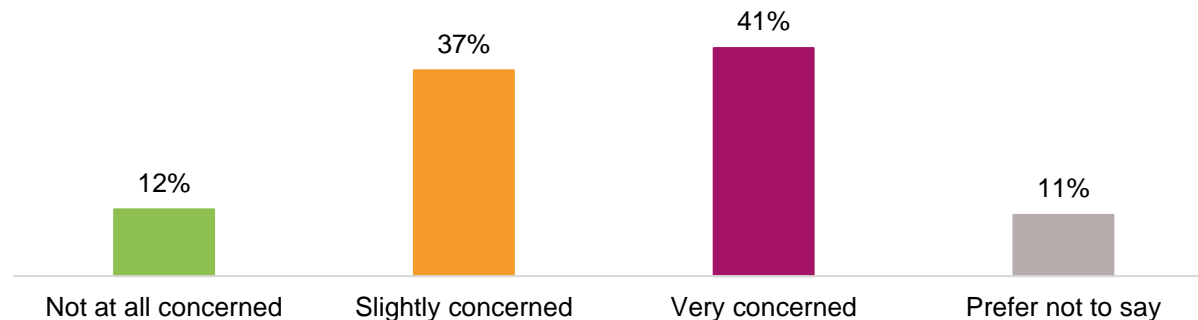
Cost of Living

More than three-quarters of tenants (77%) are at least slightly concerned about the cost-of-living crisis; 41% are very concerned, and 37% are slightly concerned. Just 12% are not concerned at all, and 11% preferred not to say.

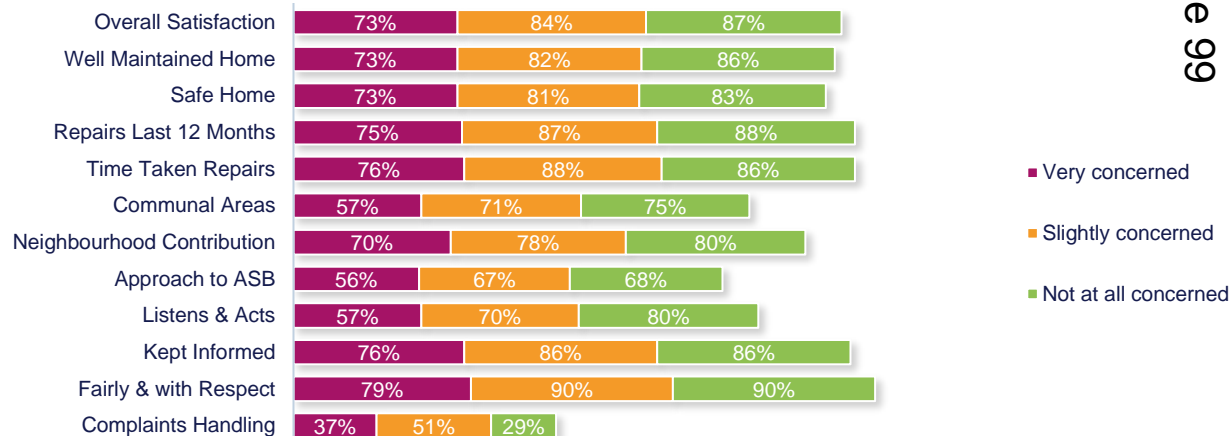
In surveys similar to this, it is often shown that those struggling financially are less satisfied with the range of services provided by their landlord. This does appear to be the case with the Council, for example, 73% of those very concerned about the cost of living are satisfied with the overall service compared with 87% of those not concerned.

There is a difference in satisfaction on all the survey measures, on average tenants who are very concerned awarded ratings 11.3p.p lower than tenants who are not concerned at all.

This does suggest that if the Council can relieve some of this concern by helping with budgeting or with benefits, it could lead to higher satisfaction.



Cost of Living Concern & Satisfaction





Damp and Mould

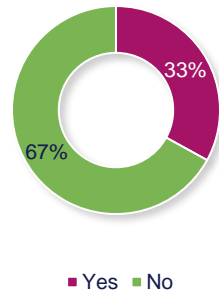
It is of some concern that a third of tenants say they have problems with damp and mould in the homes.

Just 64% of these have reported the problem to the Council, but 36% haven't.

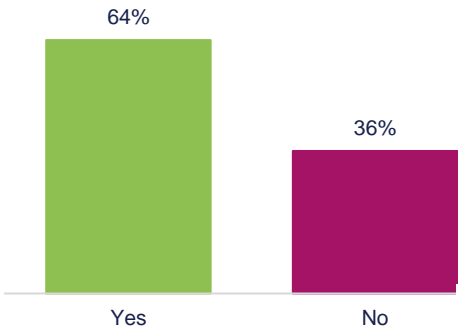
With the onset of Awaab's Law, the Council will need to investigate these as a matter of urgency and arrange whatever action is necessary. However, it is not clear how serious these issues are.

To help the process, Acuity has passed on the names and addresses of all those affected.

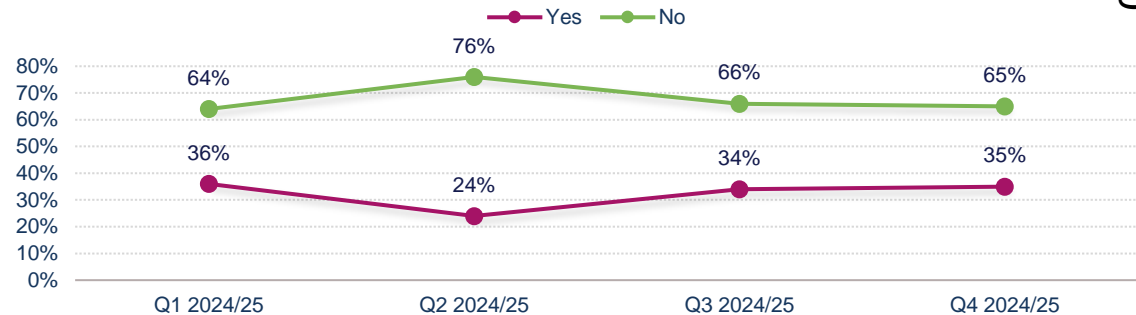
Currently Suffer from Damp & Mould



Reported Damp & Mould



Suffering from Damp & Mould Over Time





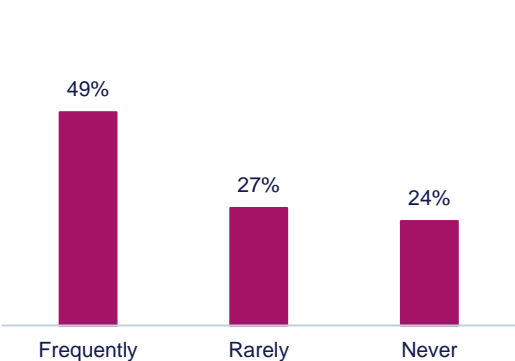
Newspaper

Around half the tenants say they read the newsletter frequently, although 27% say they read it rarely and 24% say they never read it.

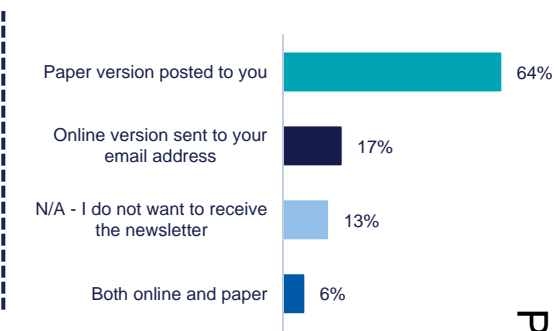
Some of the reasons for not reading the newsletter are given opposite, including not being interested, some say they don't receive it, and others say they don't have the time.

Two-thirds prefer the newsletter to be posted to them, although 17% would prefer an email with a link to read it online, but 13% say they don't want to receive it.

Frequency of reading Newsletter



Newsletter Preference



Reason for not reading newsletter

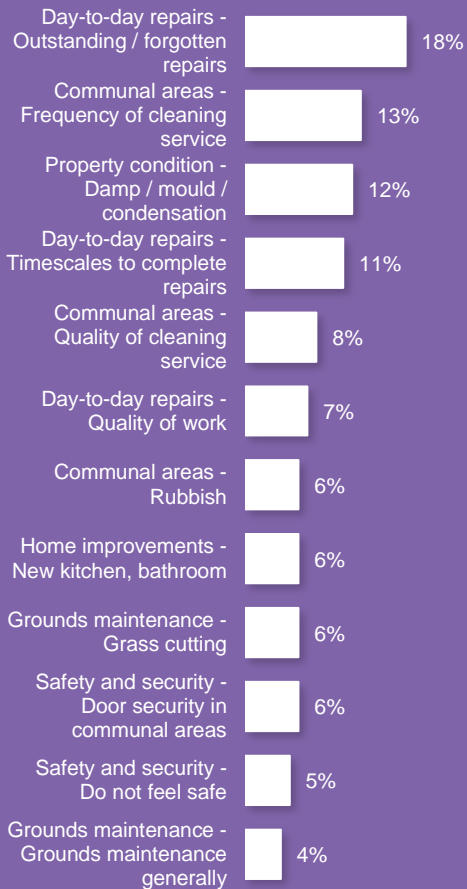
- I never receive it.
- i dont read
- just not interested
- I don't have a reason, I just don't read it.
- Don't see the point in reading it when they don't do what they should in my property?
- Doesn't interest me
- I don't know, if something is to do wit my neighbourhood, I would know about it, the councilor Wendy Williams lives on my street so I would just talk to her.
- It is full of rubbish and full of their promises which never get done.
- I don't have time.
- I can't read
- I don't normally read general correspondence unless it is extremely urgent.
- No reason.
- Not interested



Further Insight



Comments - Home or communal areas safe or well-maintained



Number of Responses: 295



Summary

When asked about their home and communal areas, 295 tenants left comments throughout the year. Key concerns include inadequate cleaning frequency, with many tenants reporting that communal areas are not cleaned regularly, leading to unsightly conditions and safety hazards. The grass and gardens are often overgrown, with residents expressing frustration over the lack of timely maintenance, which has resulted in dangerous debris and unsanitary conditions.

Tenants also highlighted persistent issues with damp and mould in their properties, with many waiting extended periods for repairs that have not been addressed adequately. Complaints about broken doors and security issues are prevalent, indicating a need for improved safety measures, particularly in communal areas where anti-social behaviour is reported.

Communication from the Council is another area of concern, with residents feeling neglected and frustrated by long wait times for responses and repairs. Many expressed a desire for more proactive engagement and transparency regarding maintenance schedules and repair timelines.

Recommendations for improvement include increasing the frequency of cleaning services, implementing more robust grounds maintenance schedule for gardens and communal areas and enhancing communication strategies to keep residents informed about ongoing issues and resolutions. Additionally, prioritising safety measures, such as secure entry points and better monitoring of communal spaces, could significantly improve residents' sense of security and satisfaction.

Addressing these concerns could lead to a more positive living environment, fostering community trust and satisfaction, ultimately enhancing the reputation and effectiveness of the Council.





Comments - Repairs



Summary

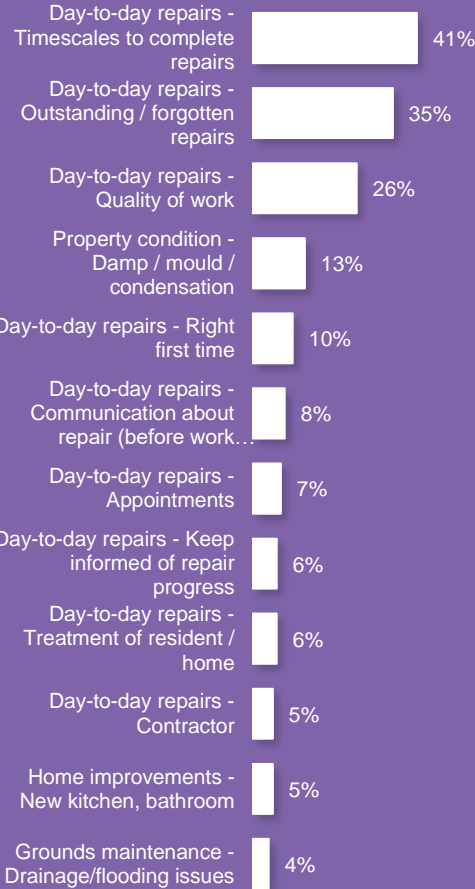
Fewer tenants commented about the repairs service, perhaps a reflection of the generally higher satisfaction shown for this service. Key issues identified include prolonged wait times for repairs, inadequate communication, and poor quality of workmanship. Many respondents reported waiting months or even years for essential repairs, such as leaks, mould issues, and broken fixtures, leading to further complications like health concerns and property damage.

A recurring theme is the lack of follow-up and accountability from the repair teams. Tenants expressed frustration over having to repeatedly report the same issues without resolution, with some stating that repairs were either incomplete or poorly executed. The sentiment that subcontractors do not care, contrasted with in-house teams who are perceived to be more reliable, highlights a potential area for improvement in contractor management.

Communication emerged as a critical issue, with many tenants feeling uninformed about the status of their repairs. Suggestions for improvement include establishing clearer communication channels, providing regular updates on repair progress, and ensuring that appointments are kept or rescheduled with adequate notice.

To enhance service delivery, CBH should consider implementing a more robust tracking system for repair requests, ensuring that tenants receive timely feedback. Additionally, investing in training for repair personnel to improve the quality of work and customer service could significantly enhance resident satisfaction.

Page 104





Comments - Listens & Acts



Number of Responses: 212

Summary

This is one of the lowest scoring measures, and the comments reflect this. Particular issue are communication, responsiveness, and the handling of repairs and antisocial behaviour (ASB). A recurring theme is the perception that CBC does not adequately listen to tenant concerns or act upon them promptly. Many respondents expressed frustration over long wait times for repairs, with some citing delays of several months or even years. This has led to feelings of neglect and a lack of accountability from the housing authority.

Tenants highlighted specific issues, such as poor communication, with many stating that they struggle to reach the right personnel or receive timely callbacks. There is a strong desire for more proactive engagement, including face-to-face meetings and better follow-up on reported issues. The need for improv maintenance of communal areas and properties was also emphasized, with calls for more competent contractors and quicker resolution of maintenance requests.

Additionally, the impact of ASB on community safety and tenant well-being was a significant concern. Many respondents reported feeling unsafe due to ongoing issues with neighbours, with calls for more effective intervention from CBC.

Page 105





Comments - Fairly and with Respect



Page 106



Number of Responses: 112

Summary

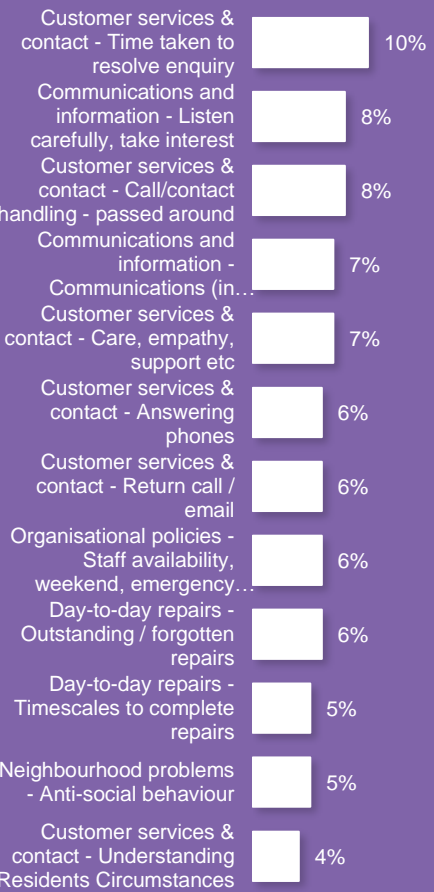
When asked to comment on how they are treated, 112 tenants left comments. The survey responses reveal some dissatisfaction with the organisation's communication, responsiveness, and overall treatment of tenants. A recurring theme among these comments is the perception of being undervalued and disrespected, with many respondents feeling that their concerns are not taken seriously. Tenants report a lack of empathy from staff, particularly regarding maintenance and repair issues, which often require persistent follow-up to resolve.

Key issues highlighted include inadequate communication, delays in repairs, and perceived double standards in service delivery. Many respondents expressed frustration over the inconsistency in how tenants are treated, with some feeling that their needs are overlooked compared to others. Specific complaints about anti-social behaviour (ASB) indicate a lack of effective action from CBH, leaving residents feeling unsafe and unsupported.

Recommendations for improvement include enhancing communication strategies to ensure tenants feel heard and valued. Implementing a more transparent and efficient repair process could significantly improve tenant satisfaction. Additionally, training staff to foster empathy and understanding towards residents, particularly those with complex backgrounds or needs, is crucial.



Comments - Easy to Deal With



Number of Responses: 156

Summary

In terms of the ease of dealing with the Council, some have difficulty in reaching the appropriate staff, with many respondents expressing frustration over being passed between departments without resolution. Tenants frequently reported long wait times for phone calls, lack of follow-up on issues raised, and inadequate communication regarding repairs and maintenance.

Many respondents highlighted that the quality of service varied significantly depending on the staff member they interacted with, leading to inconsistent experiences. Complaints about repairs often went unresolved for extended periods, with some tenants waiting months for action. The shift to online services was also met with resistance, particularly from those who prefer direct communication, indicating a need for a more balanced approach that accommodates different preferences.

Recommendations for improvement include enhancing communication protocols to ensure timely follow-up and clearer information dissemination. Implementing a dedicated point of contact for tenants could streamline interactions and reduce frustration. Additionally, investing in staff training to improve customer service skills and responsiveness is crucial.





Comments - One Thing Improve



Summary

From the 825 tenants responding to this question, the comments reveal a diverse range of sentiments regarding the services provided by the Council. It is encouraging that a fifth of the comments are positive about the current service. However, some respondents again expressed dissatisfaction with the speed and efficiency of repairs, with some highlighting delays in addressing urgent issues such as mould, plumbing, and heating. Tenants frequently mentioned the need for improved communication, both in terms of responsiveness to queries and clarity regarding repair timelines.

Many respondents called for better internal coordination within the Council, suggesting that a lack of communication between departments often leads to unresolved issues. Additionally, there are requests for more proactive maintenance of communal areas, including gardens and parking facilities, as well as enhanced security measures to address concerns about anti-social behaviour.

Tenants also expressed a desire for improvement of their living spaces, particularly kitchens and bathroom which are perceived as outdated. There are also calls for more accessible housing options for vulnerable residents, including those with disabilities or specific family needs.

To improve tenant satisfaction, it is recommended that the Council prioritises the following actions: streamline the repair process to ensure timely responses, enhance communication strategies to keep tenants informed, and invest in property upgrades to meet modern standards. Furthermore, fostering a more empathetic approach towards tenant concerns, particularly regarding anti-social behaviour, could significantly enhance community relations.

By addressing these key areas, the Council can improve tenant satisfaction, reduce complaints, and foster a more positive living environment, ultimately leading to stronger community ties and a better reputation for the organisation.

Page 108





Trends



Year-on-Year Change

The table shows the annual results for 2024/25 against those for 2023/24. Those in green show where the results have increased, and those in purple where they have decreased.

It should be noted, however, that with an annual margin of error of around $\pm 3.0\%$, a change of more than 6 percentage points would be needed to be statistically significant, although any change can show a direction of travel; none of the changes are more than this.

The changes between years have been very small; in fact, five of the measures have stayed the same over that time. No change exceeds 4p.p.

Just two measures have increased in satisfaction: the time taken to complete repairs (up 2p.p) and how tenants are kept informed about things that matter to them (up 1p.p).

The remaining six measures show small decreases in satisfaction, including the repairs service in the last 12 months and how tenants' views are listened to and acted upon.

	2023/24	2024/25	Change (rounded)
Overall Satisfaction	80%	80%	=
Well Maintained Home	80%	80%	=
Safe Home	83%	79%	-4%
Communal Areas	66%	66%	=
Repairs last 12 months	84%	82%	-2%
Time Taken Repairs	80%	82%	+2%
Neighbourhood Contribution	78%	75%	-3%
Approach to ASB	66%	63%	-3%
Listens & Acts	70%	67%	-3%
Fairly & with Respect	85%	85%	=
Kept Informed	81%	82%	+1%
Easy to Deal With	82%	81%	-1%
Complaints Handling	43%	43%	=



Quarterly Change 2024/25

This table shows the satisfaction levels against each measure for each of the four quarterly surveys throughout the year.

There has been some fluctuation of results throughout the year, although most of the changes have been small. Overall satisfaction has ended the year at a higher level than at Q1, and that is also true of the maintenance of the home, the approach to handling ASB, and treating tenants fairly.

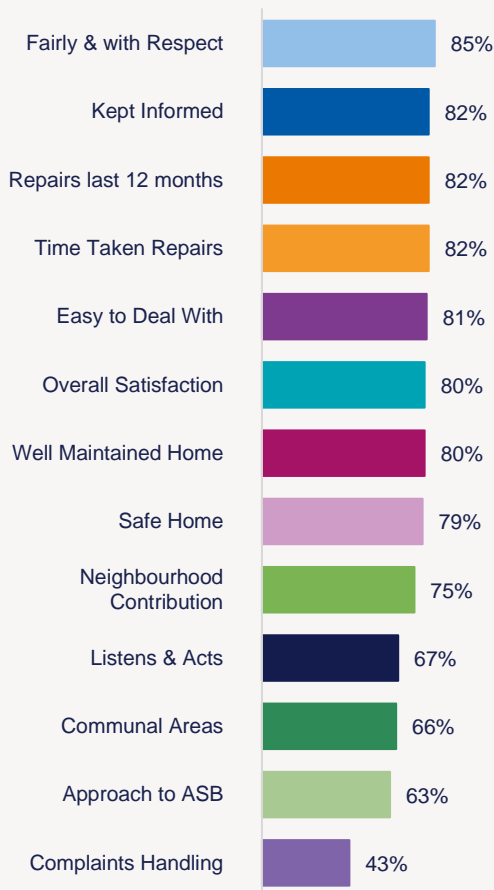
However, the remaining measures end the year at a lower level, including the safety of the home, the repairs service and time to complete repairs.

	Q1 2024/25	Q2 2024/25	Q3 2024/25	Q4 2024/25
Overall Satisfaction	78%	82%	78%	82%
Well Maintained Home	77%	83%	81%	78%
Safe Home	79%	82%	81%	72%
Communal Areas	71%	63%	65%	65%
Repairs last 12 months	82%	87%	82%	76%
Time Taken Repairs	83%	83%	82%	78%
Neighbourhood Contribution	75%	79%	78%	68%
Approach to ASB	63%	63%	63%	65%
Listens & Acts	69%	66%	71%	62%
Fairly & with Respect	83%	86%	88%	84%
Kept Informed	83%	83%	82%	79%
Easy to Deal With	84%	82%	83%	76%
Complaints Handling	43%	46%	45%	37%



Summary

Satisfaction with Measures



Conclusion

Now that all four quarterly surveys have been completed for the year, it is possible to combine the results to give an annual perspective. This report looks at the annual results, how they compare with other social housing providers and what is driving satisfaction at Cheltenham Borough Council.

Satisfaction is high with 80% of tenants satisfied with the overall service they receive from the Council and half the measures receiving satisfaction levels at 80% and above. The highest satisfaction is for the way the Council keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them (82%) and treats tenants fairly and with respect (85%). Just four measures fall below 70% satisfaction; including the approach taken to handle ASB at 63%; and only 43% of tenants are satisfied with the handling of their complaints – with a similar number dissatisfied (45%).

The key driver for overall satisfaction is that the Council provides a well-maintained home, although how it listens to views, is easy to deal with and treats tenants fairly are also important. The Council compares very well with other social landlords who have submitted their 2023/24 TSM results to the Regulator, particularly against other councils, with all measures above the group medians, ten in the top quartile and the remaining two in the second.

Three-quarters of tenants continue to be concerned about the cost of living, and this is shown to be linked to satisfaction, suggesting that anything the Council can do to help with things like budgeting and benefits could help improve satisfaction levels. It is of some concern that a third of tenants say they have problems with damp and mould in their home, issues which will need to be addressed. A quarter of tenants say they never read the newsletter, with some saying they don't receive it.

Several open-ended questions were included in the survey to allow tenants to expand on their reasons for dissatisfaction and suggest improvements. The repairs service again features as the top theme in tenant comments, broken-down timescales to complete repairs, outstanding/forgotten repairs and the quality of repairs made. The condition of properties, including the presence of damp and mould, and the need for home improvements such as new kitchens or bathrooms, were also highlighted by some tenants. However, tenants also want the staff to listen to them more carefully and keep them up to date with the progress of queries.

This report has also broken down satisfaction scores by different demographics and subgroups and this confirms the common theory that satisfaction tends to increase with age, this affecting the responses from the different tenures and property type.



Cheltenham Borough Council has commissioned Acuity to complete compliant surveys based on the TMS questions from the Regulator of Social Housing.

Four quarterly surveys for 2024/25 were completed, which show high performance in some areas but have also highlighted areas where improvements could be made.

In addition to the TSM questions, the comments made by tenants provide more insight into the issues that concern them the most. These can help the Council target services for improvement as a priority.

Shown opposite are some recommendations, building on the results of previous surveys, that the Council may wish to follow up on to help improve satisfaction in the future.

Recommendations

Property Condition

Having a well-maintained home is the key driver for overall satisfaction in 2024/25, and the repairs service receives good levels of satisfaction. However, it is of some concern that a third of tenants say they have problems with damp and mould in their homes. These issues will need to be addressed as a matter of urgency, particularly in light of the upcoming introduction of Awaab's Law. Despite the good satisfaction with the repairs service, some still report problems with delays and work not completed, while some also feel their homes need improvement, particularly updated kitchens and bathrooms. Reporting a repair continues to be the main reason for contacting the Council, and the response is often used to judge the effectiveness of the housing service as a whole. It will not be possible to complete all repairs on time, but tenants need to be kept informed of progress and updated if there are changes to plans.

Communication and Customer Contact

Good communication and customer care is important to tenant satisfaction across many service areas, and as such, improvements in these aspects have the potential to positively influence satisfaction in these areas and with the Council generally. While most tenants feel that they are treated fairly and with respect by the Council, satisfaction that their views are properly listened to and acted upon, is much lower. Perhaps the Council could address this by expanding opportunities for tenant involvement, more face-to-face contact and open meetings to discuss tackling problems and provide feedback to tenants. In addition, when asked about reasons for dissatisfaction with customer service some tenants commented that they had difficulty getting through to the Council on the phone, that phone calls or emails were not returned and that they did not receive the care or support from staff that they had expected. Increased pressure on customer service staff during busy periods is likely to have an impact, however, additional staff training as well as ensuring that there are enough staff available, would help improve the service.

Communal areas

The maintenance of the communal areas is a source of frustration for some, with some tenants wanting the cleaning to be of a better quality and delivered more frequently. In addition, the maintenance of the grounds, including the grass cutting, receives some criticism; this is likely to become more evident as we approach the growing season. The common areas also appear to be a source of safety concerns and ASB around the security of the communal doors and spaces, such as car parks and communal hallways. Tenants pay a service charge towards these services and are looking to get good value for money, using these results can help the Council pinpoint areas where the standards are not as they should be so improvements could be made.



Annual Demographics



Age Group

The results here confirm the theory that age is a major factor in determining satisfaction, with satisfaction tending to rise with the age of the tenants.

For the Council, the most satisfied are those aged 75 to 84 and 85 and over, this group having 94% with the overall service, this compares with just 69% of those aged 25 to 34.

In contrast, those aged 25 to 34 are generally the least satisfied.

It is not entirely clear why this difference occurs, perhaps it is linked to different levels of expectation based on age and life experience. However, this is nearly always a factor and should be borne in mind when comparing with other landlords; it is always worth checking if the age profile is similar.

	All Residents	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+
Overall Satisfaction	80%	81%	69%	76%	75%	86%	89%	92%	94%
Well Maintained Home	80%	74%	67%	70%	76%	86%	91%	97%	94%
Safe Home	79%	59%	66%	69%	74%	86%	92%	96%	88%
Repairs Last 12 Months	83%	89%	70%	82%	81%	88%	86%	90%	100%
Time Taken Repairs	82%	89%	74%	84%	82%	79%	83%	92%	100%
Communal Areas	66%	58%	55%	58%	56%	76%	79%	78%	88% *
Neighbourhood Contribution	75%	86%	63%	75%	64%	76%	80%	92%	100% *
Approach to ASB	63%	67%	49%	56%	63%	65%	70%	94%	100% *
Listens & Acts	67%	73%	61%	56%	60%	71%	73%	87%	83%
Kept Informed	82%	90%	79%	75%	77%	82%	88%	94%	93%
Fairly & with Respect	86%	80%	83%	84%	74%	88%	93%	97%	93%
Easy to Deal With	81%	89%	75%	79%	74%	84%	85%	92%	100%
Complaints Handling	43%	50% *	34%	46%	44%	45%	32%	50%	100% *

*Base below 10



Length of Tenancy

Looking at satisfaction rates overall, the highest rate is for those tenants with tenancies of under a year (88%), together with those of over 20 years. The lowest rate is for those with tenancies of between 6 and 10 years (74%).

New tenants tend to have higher satisfaction rates in surveys of this kind, and this does seem to be the case here, perhaps because they are initially happy to receive an offer of accommodation. This initial enthusiasm often wears off over time, but the longest-serving tenants are also often very satisfied; these are likely to be among the older tenants.

Least satisfaction is generally seen for those in the middle years of their tenancies, 4 to 5 and 6 to 10 years.

	All Residents	A. < 1 year	B. 1 - 3 years	C. 4 - 5 years	D. 6 - 10 years	E. 11 - 20 years	F. Over 20 years
Overall Satisfaction	80%	86%	82%	77%	74%	79%	86%
Well Maintained Home	80%	90%	83%	75%	70%	76%	91%
Safe Home	79%	85%	78%	73%	75%	74%	90%
Repairs Last 12 Months	82%	83%	83%	82%	79%	78%	89%
Time Taken Repairs	82%	83%	85%	84%	80%	78%	82%
Communal Areas	66%	66%	69%	58%	68%	68%	5
Neighbourhood Contribution	75%	93%	84%	67%	72%	69%	7
Approach to ASB	63%	87%	70%	55%	57%	58%	6
Listens & Acts	67%	71%	73%	55%	64%	65%	70%
Kept Informed	82%	90%	85%	75%	74%	79%	91%
Fairly & with Respect	85%	93%	88%	82%	81%	82%	91%
Easy to Deal With	81%	92%	83%	77%	75%	81%	85%
Complaints Handling	43%	25% *	49%	47%	43%	36%	40%

*Base below 10



Property Type

It is common to see those in bungalows the most satisfied as these are more likely to be occupied by older tenants.

This is the case here, although those in bedsits are also very satisfied. There are relatively few of these, and again, it is likely that this satisfaction is linked to the age profile of the tenants rather than to the property type itself.

The least satisfaction is generally found in those living in flats, although it is those in houses who are the least satisfied overall.

	All Residents	BEDSIT	BUNGAL	FLAT	HOUSE
Overall Satisfaction	80%	91%	89%	80%	79%
Well Maintained Home	80%	100%	89%	82%	75%
Safe Home	79%	91%	95%	76%	80%
Repairs Last 12 Months	82%	100% *	88%	85%	76%
Time Taken Repairs	82%	75% *	82%	83%	80%
Communal Areas	66%	91%	100% *	65%	68%
Neighbourhood Contribution	75%	100% *	79%	75%	73%
Approach to ASB	63%	80% *	85%	60%	67%
Listens & Acts	67%	100% *	83%	64%	68%
Kept Informed	82%	91%	92%	81%	82%
Fairly & with Respect	85%	100%	93%	84%	87%
Easy to Deal With	81%	100%	88%	79%	83%
Complaints Handling	43%	50% *	0% *	41%	48%

*Base below 10



Gender

Commonly, male tenants are more satisfied than their female counterparts, and this is the case here.

However, the differences between the groups are small, and on three of the measures, satisfaction is the same.

On the overall service, 81% of male tenants are satisfied compared with 80% of females.

This suggests that gender is not a major factor in determining satisfaction.

	All Residents	Male	Female	Transgender
Overall Satisfaction	80%	81%	80%	50% *
Well Maintained Home	80%	84%	78%	50% *
Safe Home	79%	82%	77%	100% *
Repairs Last 12 Months	83%	84%	82%	100% *
Time Taken Repairs	82%	82%	82%	100% *
Communal Areas	66%	76%	59%	0% *
Neighbourhood Contribution	75%	76%	74%	100% *
Approach to ASB	63%	69%	60%	0% *
Listens & Acts	67%	67%	67%	50% *
Kept Informed	82%	82%	82%	100% *
Fairly & with Respect	86%	86%	85%	50% *
Easy to Deal With	81%	81%	82%	50% *
Complaints Handling	43%	46%	41%	- *

*Base below 10



Housing Needs

Given that the age factor affects satisfaction, as shown above, it is no surprise that those in sheltered housing are consistently more satisfied than those in general needs accommodation.

Some of the differences between the groups are quite large, with 90% of sheltered tenants being satisfied overall compared with 79% of general needs. There is a 27p.p difference with the upkeep of the communal areas.

Sheltered accommodation will have extra services and support and is generally seen to be a desirable form of living for those of a certain age; the age factor could explain the differences between the two groups.

	All Residents	General	Sheltered
Overall Satisfaction	80%	79%	90%
Well Maintained Home	80%	78%	92%
Safe Home	79%	77%	91%
Repairs Last 12 Months	82%	81%	87%
Time Taken Repairs	82%	82%	82%
Communal Areas	66%	61%	88%
Neighbourhood Contribution	75%	73%	92%
Approach to ASB	63%	62%	76%
Listens & Acts	67%	65%	81%
Kept Informed	82%	82%	84%
Fairly & with Respect	85%	84%	93%
Easy to Deal With	81%	80%	89%
Complaints Handling	43%	42%	50%



This research project was carried out to conform with ISO20252:2019 and the MRS Code of Conduct.

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Tenant satisfaction measures for Cheltenham Borough Council owned properties 2024-25

Introduction

Since 1 April 2023 all providers of social housing are required by law to monitor and collect certain information relating to their properties to keep tenants safe. As part of this we have to ask our tenants questions to help monitor and understand their opinion of the services provided.

The results for Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) properties for 2024-25 are recorded below.

Tenant satisfaction measures survey approach

As part of the publication of our tenant satisfaction measures, we have to publish how we conducted our surveys.

For the CBC surveys for 2024-25 we commissioned Acuity Research and Practice Ltd, an independent data research company with expertise in the social housing field, to carry out our surveys.

The surveys were carried out four times a year (quarterly). Not all tenants were questioned, but a sample of tenants was used. The tenants questioned were chosen as far as possible to be representative of the tenants as a whole.

Each quarter Acuity initially called tenants with the option to complete the survey online. In total during the year, 947 surveys were completed fully or partially by tenants. A separate one-off survey not included here was carried out for all shared owners. These surveys were completed between 29 April 2024 and 3 February 2025.

TSM results

For each of the tenant satisfaction measures, the regulator requires social landlords to include:

- shared owners only
- tenants only
- or include both

Shared owners are referred to as Low-Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) and tenanted properties as Low-Cost Rental Accommodation (LCRA).

For this survey only Low-Cost Rental Accommodation (LCRA) tenants were surveyed according to the regulator requirements.

Performance Measures

Building safety performance measures data

Performance measure	Percentage of homes
Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out	99.98%
Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out	100%
Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out	96.47%
Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out	100%
Proportion of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out	100%

Anti-social behaviour performance measures data

Performance measure	Number of cases
Number of anti-social behaviour cases, opened per 1,000 homes	14
Number of anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate incidents opened per 1,000 homes	0.7

Decent homes standard performance measures data

Performance measure	Percentage of homes
Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	100% – please see note below
Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale	94.6%
Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale	97.4%

Note: We're currently in the process of assessing the condition of all of our homes and have so far successfully completed surveys on over half of our properties. Once we have completed the remaining homes, we will then be in a position to provide an accurate figure on how we meet the Decent Homes Standard.

Complaints performance measures data

Performance measure	Result
Number of stage one complaints received per 1,000 homes.	49.2
Number of stage two complaints received per 1,000 homes.	3.5
Proportion of stage one complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales.	95.5%
Proportion of stage two complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales.	93.8%

Tenant perception measures data

Tenant perception measure	Percentage of respondents
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with the overall service from their landlord.	80.2%
Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the overall repairs service.	81.8%
Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair.	81.9%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is well maintained.	79.9%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is safe.	78.8%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them.	67.1%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps them informed about things that matter to them.	82%
Proportion of respondents who report that they agree their landlord treats them fairly and with respect.	85.7%
Proportion of respondents who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are satisfied with their landlord's approach to complaints handling.	43.8%

Tenant perception measures data

Tenant perception measure	Percentage of respondents
Proportion of respondents with communal areas who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained.	66.3%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood.	74.5%
Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with their landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour.	63.1%

Tenant Perception Measure questions

Acuity contacted all tenants by phone. The tenant had the option to receive a link to the survey online if they wished, but the default was responding directly to the interviewer on the call. The interviewer introduced themselves and went through data protection information with tenants or shared owners.

All questions requiring a rating were measured on a 5-point scale between "very satisfied" and "very dissatisfied":

- very satisfied
- fairly satisfied
- neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- fairly dissatisfied
- very dissatisfied

Where a tenant or shared owner didn't feel able to provide a response to a specific question this was also recorded.

Three questions – 4, 9 and 20 – had a yes or no response. It was only when a tenant or shared owned responded yes to these questions that the follow up question or questions were asked. The questions that were only asked to those responding yes to the previous question are questions 5, 6, 10, 11, 12 and 21. All other questions were put to everyone who responded to the survey.

The survey questions

For some questions we asked a follow up question to try and help us understand better why someone was dissatisfied with the service and so that we could make improvements in future.

Question 1 – Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Cheltenham Borough Council housing services?

Question 2 – How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Cheltenham Borough Council provides a home that is well maintained?

Question 3 – Thinking about the condition of the property or building you live in, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Cheltenham Borough Council provides a home that is safe?

Question 4 – Do you live in a building with communal areas, either inside or outside, that Cheltenham Borough Council is responsible for maintaining? (Yes/No)

Question 5 – How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Cheltenham Borough Council keeps these communal areas clean and well maintained?

Question 6 – If you do not feel that your home is either well maintained or safe (and / or communal areas are clean and well maintained), please can you explain why and suggest what could be improved? (Free text)

Question 7 – How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Cheltenham Borough Council makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood?

Question 8 – How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Cheltenham Borough Council's approach to handling anti-social behaviour?

Question 9 – Has Cheltenham Borough Council carried out a repair to your home in the last 12 months? (Yes/No)

Question 10 – How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall repairs service from Cheltenham Borough Council over the last 12 months?

Question 11 – How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the time taken to complete your most recent repair after you reported it?

Question 12 – If you are not satisfied with how Cheltenham Borough Council deals with repairs and maintenance, please could you explain the reason why? (Free text)

Question 13 – How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Cheltenham Borough Council listens to your views and acts upon them?

Question 14 – If you are not satisfied with the way Cheltenham Borough Council listens to your views and acts upon them, how could Cheltenham Borough Council housing services improve? (Free text)

Question 15 – How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Cheltenham Borough Council keeps you informed about things that matter to you?

Question 16 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following `Cheltenham Borough Council treats me fairly and with respect`?

Question 17 – If you do not feel that Cheltenham Borough Council treats you fairly and with respect, please can you explain why? (Free text)

Question 18 – How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Cheltenham Borough Council is easy to deal with?

Question 19 – If not satisfied with Cheltenham Borough Council housing services being easy to deal with could you tell me why and what could be improved? (Free text)

Question 20 – Have you made a complaint to Cheltenham Borough Council in the last 12 months? (Yes/No)

Question 21 – How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Cheltenham Borough Council's approach to complaints handling?

Question 22 – If Cheltenham Borough Council could do ONE thing to improve its services, what would you like it to be? (Free text)

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Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet Housing Committee

Housing Revenue Account & Capital Outturn 2024/25

Accountable member:

Councillor Peter Jeffries, Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets

Accountable officer:

Gemma Bell, Director of Finance & Assets (Deputy s151 Officer)

Ward(s) affected:

All

Key Decision: No

Executive summary:

In accordance with financial rule A11.3, the Section 151 Officer is responsible for providing regular reports to the Cabinet on the Council's finances and financial performance. This report highlights the Council's financial performance and sets out the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue and capital outturn position for 2024/25. The information contained within this report has been used to prepare the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2024/25.

Recommendations:

1. That Committee receives the financial outturn performance position for the Housing Revenue Account for 2024/25 against the 2024/25 revised budget approved by Council on 21 February 2025, as set out in Appendix 2.
 2. That Committee receives the outturn performance position for the Housing Revenue Account capital budget for 2024/25 against the 2024/25 revised budget approved by Council on 21 February 2025, as set out in Appendix 3.
-

1. Implications**1.1. Financial, Property and Asset implications**

As detailed throughout this report.

Signed off by: Gemma Bell, gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264124

1.2. Legal implications

As detailed in the body of the report, the Council has adopted and complied with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services. This provides assurance that investments are, and will continue to be, within its legal powers.

Signed off by: One Legal, legalservices@onelegal.org.uk, 01684 272012

1.3. Environmental and climate change implications

Key elements of the budget are aimed at delivering the corporate objectives in the Corporate Plan, including the climate change and net zero carbon priorities. The sustainability of general balances and earmarked reserves is vital to continue to work towards this objective.

Signed off by: Maizy McCann, Climate Change Officer

1.4. Corporate Plan Priorities

The actions outlined in this outturn report to support general balances, implement savings and grow commercial income will help ensure that the Council can continue to deliver its corporate objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan for 2023- 2027 and refreshed Corporate Plan 2025 - 2028.

Signed off by: Ann Wolstencroft, Head of Performance, Projects and Risk

2. Background

- 2.1. On 23 February 2024, Council approved the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2024/25, including setting of rent increases.
- 2.2. These are unprecedented times for local government. Over the past few years, the Council has faced financial pressures in almost all areas. Like many residents and businesses in our town, we have diverted significant resources and lost substantial income while responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was followed by a new crisis—rising service delivery costs and the challenge of supporting a growing number of residents affected by the cost-of-living crisis. These pressures come on top of nearly a decade of year-on-year cuts to the Council's government funding.
- 2.3. This report draws together the financial outturn position for 2024/25 for the Housing Revenue Account against the Revised 2024/25 budget presented in February 2025 following the transfer of all housing staff back to the Council in July 2024.

3. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

HRA Income and Expenditure

- 1.1 The HRA revised forecast for 2024/25 financial year, based on performance to December 2024, anticipated an operating surplus of £88,740 and it was expected that there would be a remaining balance of £1,025m in revenue reserves at 31st March 2025.
- 1.2 The outturn statement, as presented in Appendix 2, shows a larger deficit than expected of £332,500 for the year leaving a balance of £603,500 in revenue reserves at year end. This is the

Page 133

second year that the HRA balance has finished below the target level of £1.5m however the decision to wind up Cheltenham Borough Homes and bring the housing services back in-house will generate significant savings and strengthen the HRA revenue reserve in 2025/26 and 2026/27. It is expected that the target levels will be restored by 31 March 2027.

1.3 Below is an explanation of variances exceeding £50,000:

Detail	Forecast £'000	Actual £'000	Variation £'000	Explanation
General & Special Management	5,028	5,125	97.9	This overspend is as a result of ICT costs incurred for development in QL which were not able to be capitalised. The overspend is split between housing and general management based on the nature of the development activity.
Housing Management	5,178	5,436	258.4	
Rents, Rates, Taxes and Other Charges	159	231	72	A significant increase in void properties has meant the Council has had to pay the Council Tax and other bills for longer periods as delays are experienced in turn around and re-let.
Repairs & Maintenance	5,420	5,557	137	As a result of the reduction in activity on planned maintenance works in the capital programme, a greater proportion of spend than forecast was diverted to addressing reactive repairs and maintenance work.
Provision for Bad Debts	240	78	(162)	A lower turnover in tenants and leaseholders has meant better than forecast collection of rent and service charges, meaning less need to provide for bad or doubtful debt.
Interest Payable	3,302	3,211	(90)	An underspend on the capital programme has meant lower levels of borrowing were required than forecast, reducing the interest payable.
Dwelling Rents	23,706	23,643	(62.5)	Again, this variance is in part down to the increase in the turnaround time of void properties.

Major Repairs Reserve

1.4 In accordance with regulations this reserve is funded by sums equivalent to the depreciation provision and has been used to finance HRA capital expenditure.

HRA Capital Programme

1.5 Actual expenditure for the year was £18.055m, an underspend of £3.039m compared with the forecast of £21.094m.

1.6 The three year programme approved by Council in February 2024 includes projects where expenditure plans span more than one financial year and are delivered through more than one contract. Where delays occur, for example through extended consultation with leaseholders or procurement issues, we seek opportunities for advancing other projects within overall funding. Costs are controlled at both contract and project level.

1.7 Changes to the projected financing of the capital programme have primarily arisen from the

reduction in overall spend and the availability of additional capital receipts and revenue contributions.

4. Consultation

- 4.1. Appropriate members and officers were consulted in the process of preparing the outturn position and associated reports and accounts. The outturn figures will also be presented for discussion at the Budget Scrutiny Working Group in July.

5. Key risks

- 5.1. As outlined in Appendix 1.

Report author:

Gemma Bell, Director of Finance, Assets and Climate gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk

Appendices:

1. Risk Assessment
2. HRA Operating Account
3. HRA Capital Programme and Major Repairs Reserve

Background information:

- Final Budget Proposal for 2024/25 – Council 23 February 2024
- Section 25 Report – Council 23 February 2024
- Final Budget Proposals including the Revised budget for 2024/25 – Council 21 February 2025

Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
403	Prioritisation of capital resources – If CBC are unable to prioritise medium term projects and programmes which require significant capital financing, then it will increasingly have to rely of borrowing to fund service investments increasing the pressure on our revenue budgets to fund repayments.	Cabinet	5	4	20	Reduce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing review and alignment of the capital programme with the Corporate Plan - Quarterly budget monitoring - Cabinet engagement - budget proposals - Gateway reviews of all projects through the Corporate Programme office - Cabinet Away Day challenge and decisions - Business case and approval for all new projects, including allocation of resource and budgets 	Director of Finance & Assets	Ongoing

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
159	If the housing revenue account becomes unviable then this may result in the council being unable to fund service delivery, investment in existing homes and the delivery of new housing.	Cabinet	5	4	20	Reduce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting deliverable savings targets through the 2025/26 budget setting process - Ensure 30 year HRA financial model is in place and is reviewed and updated by regular stress testing. - Explore arrangements to re-finance the existing temporary debt taken by the HRA - Ongoing action regarding the turnaround of void properties to maximise the rental income generated from the existing stock - Develop a strategy for the rationalisation of high value, listed 	Director of Finance & Assets	Ongoing

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
							stock or stock which has significant development value to generate capital funding to replace borrowing		

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Appendix 2**HRA OPERATING ACCOUNT**

	2024/25	
	Forecast	Actual
	£	£
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
General & Special Management	5,027,060	5,124,900
Housing Management	5,177,700	5,436,100
Rents, Rates, Taxes and Other Charges	158,900	230,700
Repairs & Maintenance	5,420,400	5,556,800
Provision for Bad Debts	240,000	77,800
Interest Payable	3,301,800	3,211,400
Depreciation & Impairment of Dwellings	5,719,400	5,719,400
Depreciation of Other Assets	273,600	297,100
Debt Management Expenses	110,500	115,700
TOTAL	25,429,360	25,769,900
<u>INCOME</u>		
Dwelling Rents	23,705,500	23,643,000
Non Dwelling Rents	252,300	249,600
Charges for Services and Facilities	1,228,300	1,207,900
Feed in Tariff from PV Installations	271,000	273,900
Other Grants	-	17,000
TOTAL	25,457,100	25,391,400
NET INCOME FROM SERVICES	27,740	-378,500
Interest Receivable	61,000	46,000
NET OPERATING SURPLUS	88,740	-332,500
<u>Appropriations</u>		
Revenue Contributions to Capital	-	-
Net Increase/(Decrease) in reserves	88,740	-332,500
Revenue Reserve brought forward	936,000	936,000
Revenue Reserve carried forward	1,024,740	603,500

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Appendix 3**MAJOR REPAIRS RESERVE**

	2024/25	
	Forecast	Actual
	£	£
Balance brought forward	-	-
Depreciation of Dwellings	5,719,400	5,719,400
Depreciation of Other Assets	273,600	275,300
	5,993,000	5,994,700
Utilised to fund Capital Programme	-5,993,000	-5,994,700
Balance carried forward	-	-

HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME

	2024/25	
	Forecast	Actual
	£	£
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
EXISTING STOCK		
Property Improvements & Major Repairs	11,611,500	9,335,700
Adaptions for the Disabled	600,000	647,900
Repurchase of Shared Ownership Dwellings	60,000	167,700
	12,271,500	10,151,300
NEW BUILD & ACQUISITIONS	8,822,900	7,903,700
TOTAL	21,094,400	18,055,000
<u>FINANCING</u>		
Capital Receipts	4,165,000	3,912,700
HRA Revenue Contribution	-	-
Leaseholder & Other Contributions	100,000	217,800
Major Repairs Reserve	5,993,000	5,994,700
Grants & Shared Ownership Sales	1,232,700	1,642,900
Borrowing	9,603,700	6,286,900
TOTAL	21,094,400	18,055,000

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Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet Housing Committee – 16 July 2025

Rent collection performance for the financial year 24/25

Accountable member:

Cllr Flo Clucas, Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services

Accountable officer:

Matt Ward – Head of Housing Services

Executive summary:

To provide Committee with an understanding of the rent collection process.

Recommendations:

None – Information/Discussion Paper

1 Background

- 1.1 Rental income is a major source of finance for the Council (£25.6m rent roll in 24/25) and is used to meet the costs of our financial commitments and managing and maintaining our housing stock. The Housing Services Directorate has evolved over the years to maximise income and prevent arrears. It has proven that specialist teams with a focus on income get the results and is recognised as being proactive, innovative and high performing.
- 1.2 Our ethos is about personal contact and that “Prevention is always better than the cure” and this is never more apparent than in managing rent collection, especially in the current financial climate. The past decade has seen the Credit Crunch, Welfare Reform Act, Pandemic and the current Cost of Living Crisis and our teams and colleagues are well experienced and dedicated to helping our customers. Our ISOQAR 9001:2015 certified process recognises the need to adjust our approach based on individual circumstances and we are enthusiastic about supporting all those in need.
- 1.3 Last financial year (24/25) we achieved our year-end target and were £221k ahead of target.
- 1.4 This information/discussion paper includes a presentation that touches upon some of the invaluable work carried out by our teams and is to give reassurance to members that we are

doing our utmost to maximise rental income and mitigate risks.

2 Main content

2.1 Please see attached presentation.

3 Key risks

3.1 Please see the risk assessment included at appendix 1.

Report author:

Matt Ward – Head of Housing Services (Matt.Ward@cheltenham.gov.uk)

Appendices:

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Rent Collection Performance

Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
1.01	If changes in benefits, including changes to UC rates, or the cost-of-living crisis have a greater impact on tenants than anticipated and planned for, it may increase the level of arrears for the HRA and impact on vulnerable families	Paul Jones	3	2	6	Reduce the risk.	The HRA budget includes specific resources to control rent arrears and support tenants through transition to Universal Credit and support tenants during the cost-of-living crisis. This has been successful in mitigating the impact so far.	Matt Ward	Sept 25
1.02	Housing Revenue Account - If the housing revenue account becomes unviable then this may result in the council being unable to fund service delivery, investment in existing homes and the delivery of new housing.	Gemma Bell	4	2	8	Reduce the risk	Ensure effective controls are in place and ensure 30-year HRA financial model is in place and is reviewed and updated by regular stress testing.	Gemma Bell	Sept 2025

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Rent collection performance for the financial year 24/25

Matt Ward
Head Of Housing
Services



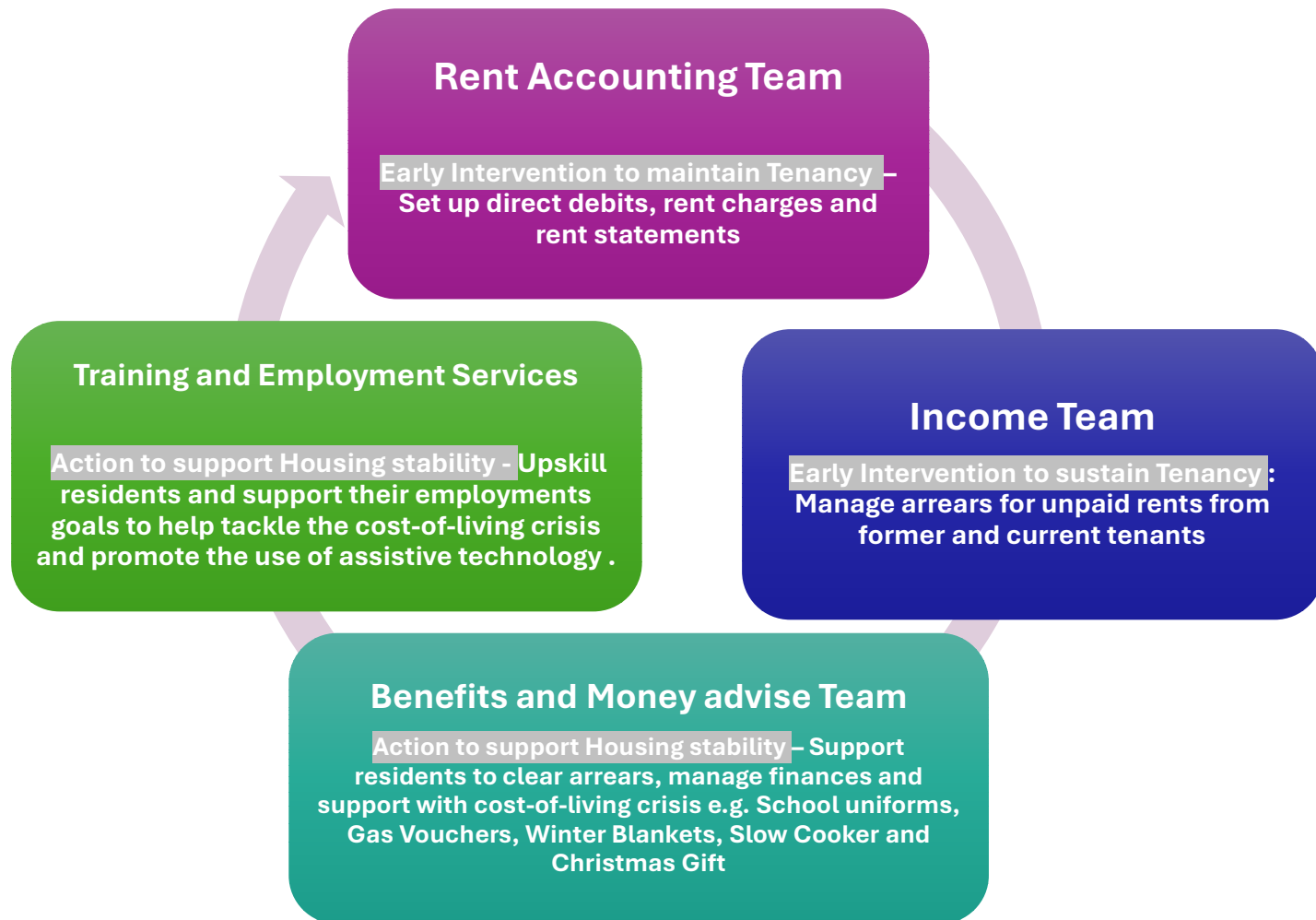
Introduction

Housing Services Teams

1. Empty Homes
2. Rent Accounting
3. Income Team
4. Benefit and Money Advice
5. Training and Employment Services
6. Leasehold, Shared Ownership, Right to Buy & Right to Acquire
7. Pest Control
8. Lifelines



EARLY INTERVENTION AND ARREARS PREVENTION



Rent Accounting Team 2024/2025 Achievements

Financial Management

💰 **£83,000 Refunded to Tenants**
Prompt refunds for overpayments




•  **£25.6M Fully Reconciled**
Managed & correctly posted to accounts

⚡ **£230,000 in Utility Payments Managed**
Communal electricity & void property bills

Key Achievements



Garage Arrears Reduced by 40%
12 months of focused support working with the Income Team and managing the current garage arrears.

 **Charge Increases Applied**
*5,000+ properties at 2.7% & garages charge increased by 20%. The **forecasted income** for the upcoming year is approximately: **£26.73M***

•  **1,570 Direct Debits Recalculated**
Accurately aligned to new year rents



Income Team Achievements 2024-25



CURRENT ARREARS:

- %age of rental income = 1.75% (target 2.60%) **0.46% lower than 23/24.**
- Tenant arrears level = £462,011.81 (target £683,470 - Saving £221,458.19) **£67,126.27 lower than 23/24.**
- Number of current arrears cases = 1182 (target 1400) **67 fewer than 23/24.**



Former Tenants ARREARS:

- Number of cases over £10 = 259 (target 315) **24 fewer than 23/24.**
- FT cash collected = £64,298.96 (target £45,000 exceeded by £19,298.96) **Additional £5,851.39 compared to 23/24.**

- Income Officer handbook published 1st April 2025 by the Income Team



- Successfully retained ISO accreditation following Audit on 11th March 2025. Auditor described it as Excellent Audit with 3 observations



- Preparation to launch Rechargeable repairs and Void recharges procedure



Page 151

Primary and secondary School uniform



WINTER WELFARE

We want to do everything we can to help keep our customers warm this winter, which is why we're working together with Dunelm Cheltenham on a Winter Welfare campaign.



DELIVERING JOY

Thanks to our communities for supporting our campaign with Dunelm this Christmas



Training and employment Services Team Achievements 2024 - 2025

Training & skills development

- **449** attendances for workshops and training, of which **99.5%** reported an increase in skills.

Substantial growth in the number of individual supported:




110 residents in 22/23

312 residents in 23/24

We achieved a 31% increase

- We delivered 25% more sessions/workshops in Cheltenham from Hesters Way Skills Hub, Oakley Resource Centre, and other community and partner venues.
- GARAS - supporting over 30 families with e-visa applications
- TES have successfully supported 68 customers into paid employment. Ranging from part time to full time work

Customer recommendations

-  100% of customers stated they would recommend our service to others.
- TES will continue to be a local provider of the Digi Hubs projects in 2025/26 following its success this year. 
- The Team achieved an additional qualification  to help ensure we offer a quality service to our customers – Level 3 Coaching and Mentoring.

Training and Employment Service's Team Achievements 2024-25

Training and skills outcomes - KPI target of 120 people - (90 previous year)
449 achieved

Employment figures - KPI target of 60 people
63 achieved

Page 154

99.5%

High satisfaction rate based on 1-10 scoring and 8+/10 deemed as high satisfaction

100%

Of customers would recommend the service to others

99%

Reported an increase in overall confidence



Digital Inclusion project



Levelling Up Together Skills Hub



Supporting our young adults to gain employability skills



Thrive Programme

Now increased from supporting 2 local schools to 3



Thrive programme



CSCS training

Construction Skills Certificate Services



MLD Group

Moderate Learning Difficulties

Questions/comments



Tenant Engagement Update, Housing Services, Cheltenham Borough Council July 2025

Tenant Panel

- Due to low numbers, the June tenant panel did not go ahead. There is a new date set for 17/07/2025 .
- Liam Pem, Resident Engagement Officer, will meet with the group to ensure we can fit in scrutiny work around the summer holidays, where attendance is always lower.
- An activity tracker has been set up for this group to ensure nothing is missed.
- Members of the tenant panel were invited to review and feedback on a draft Decant Policy and Tenancy Policy which was shared with the appropriate staff members.

Leaseholder Panel

- We welcomed Asset and Investment Manager, Julian Denslow to the group for a Q&A session about the stock condition surveys. Leaseholders were told they will have access to a ten-year plan of works for their properties, which can be used to forecast their spends.
- The group reviewed and agreed the new terms of reference to make sure the group is effective as possible
- Liam has set up a new action tracker for the group, to ensure no actions will be missed.

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Meeting	Title	Objective	Format
24th September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO/Director Briefing (if required) (Verbal) • Housing Improvement Plan • Housing Performance • Housing Complaints and Compliments Report - Quarter 1 • Impact of Right to Buy Legislative Changes • Housing Risk Register • Updates from the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels • Review of the Housing Committee Forward Plan • Briefing Note - Housing Sector Insight 	<p>An update from the Chief Executive/Director on key issues which may be of interest to the Cabinet Housing Committee.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with a progress update on the Improvement Plan developed to resolve areas of non-compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards.</p> <p>To provide the committee with KPI data for housing services</p> <p>To provide an overview of housing related complaints and compliments, identifying key areas of dissatisfaction and areas for learning and service improvement.</p> <p>To provide committee with an update on the impact of the Right to Buy legislative changes.</p> <p>To review the strategic risks relating to housing from the Council's Risk Register.</p> <p>To highlight the ongoing activities of the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels and provide an additional opportunity for tenant and leaseholder voices to be heard.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with opportunities to identify any additional areas they may wish to scrutinise.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with an overview of recent developments in the housing sector and provide opportunities for horizon scanning.</p>	<p>Verbal</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Briefing Note</p>
26th November 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO/Director Briefing (if required) (Verbal) • Property Compliance Performance - Quarter 2 • Tenant Satisfaction Measures - 6 monthly update • Housing Complaints and Compliments Report - Quarter 2 • Housing Performance Report - Quarter 2 • Anti-Social Behaviour Improvement Project - Update • 6 Monthly 2025-26 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Monitoring Report • Updates from the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels • Review of the Housing Committee Forward Plan • Briefing Note - Housing Sector Insight 	<p>An update from the Chief Executive/Director on key issues which may be of interest to the Cabinet Housing Committee.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with an understanding of our property compliance status and the planned improvements needed to address areas of non-compliance.</p> <p>To provide the committee with the 6 month position in relation to tenant satisfaction measures (April - September)</p> <p>To provide an overview of housing related complaints and compliments, identifying key areas of dissatisfaction and areas for learning and service improvement.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with key performance information relation to voids, arrears, day to day repairs, ASB and complaints.</p> <p>To provide the committee with an update on the progress of the ASB Improvement Project.</p> <p>To provide a monitoring position statement for the HRA against the budget approved by Council on 21 February 2025, highlighting any key variances.</p> <p>To highlight the ongoing activities of the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels and provide an additional opportunity for tenant and leaseholder voices to be heard.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with opportunities to identify any additional areas they may wish to scrutinise.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with an overview of recent developments in the housing sector and provide opportunities for horizon scanning.</p>	<p>Verbal</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Briefing Note</p>
21st January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO/Director Briefing (if required) (Verbal) • Compliance Strategy Action Plan Update 	<p>An update from the Chief Executive/Director on key issues which may be of interest to the Cabinet Housing Committee.</p> <p>To provide the committee with an opportunity to monitor progress on the Compliance Strategy action plan.</p>	<p>Verbal</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property Compliance Performance - Quarter 3 Housing Complaints and Compliments Report - Quarter 3 HRA draft budget proposal for 2026/27 and updated budget monitor for 2025/26 Updates from the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels Review of the Housing Committee Forward Plan Briefing Note - Housing Sector Insight 	<p>To provide the Committee with an understanding of our property compliance status and the planned improvements needed to address areas of non-compliance.</p> <p>To provide an overview of housing related complaints and compliments, identifying key areas of dissatisfaction and areas for learning and service improvement.</p> <p>To review and feedback on the HRA draft budget proposal.</p> <p>To provide a monitoring position statement for the HRA against the budget approved by Council on 21 February 2025, highlighting any key variances.</p> <p>To highlight the ongoing activities of the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels and provide an additional opportunity for tenant and leaseholder voices to be heard.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with opportunities to identify any additional areas they may wish to scrutinise.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with an overview of recent developments in the housing sector and provide opportunities for horizon scanning.</p>	<p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Briefing Note</p>
25th March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEO/Director Briefing (if required) (Verbal) Housing Improvement Plan Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit Report Housing Risk Register Updates from the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels Review of the Housing Committee Forward Plan Briefing Note - Housing Sector Insight 	<p>An update from the Chief Executive/Director on key issues which may be of interest to the Cabinet Housing Committee.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with a progress update on the Improvement Plan developed to resolve areas of non-compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with an overview of the Counter Fraud Enforcement Unit's work on housing and tenancy fraud over the previous year.</p> <p>To review the strategic risks relating to housing from the Council's Risk Register.</p> <p>To highlight the ongoing activities of the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels and provide an additional opportunity for tenant and leaseholder voices to be heard.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with opportunities to identify any additional areas they may wish to scrutinise.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with an overview of recent developments in the housing sector and provide opportunities for horizon scanning.</p>	<p>Verbal</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Briefing Note</p>
1st June 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEO/Director Briefing (if required) (Verbal) Tenant Satisfaction Measures Submission 2025/26 Property Compliance Performance - Quarter 4 Housing Compliments and Complaints Report - Quarter 4 Updates from the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels Review of the Housing Committee Forward Plan Briefing Note - Housing Sector Insight 	<p>An update from the Chief Executive/Director on key issues which may be of interest to the Cabinet Housing Committee.</p> <p>To provide the committee with an opportunity to review the TSM submission for 2025/26</p> <p>To provide the Committee with an understanding of our property compliance status and the planned improvements needed to address areas of non-compliance.</p> <p>To provide an overview of housing related complaints and compliments, identifying key areas of dissatisfaction and areas for learning and service improvement.</p> <p>To highlight the ongoing activities of the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels and provide an additional opportunity for tenant and leaseholder voices to be heard.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with opportunities to identify any additional areas they may wish to scrutinise.</p> <p>To provide the Committee with an overview of recent developments in the housing sector and provide opportunities for horizon scanning.</p>	<p>Verbal</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Information/Discussion Paper</p> <p>Briefing Note</p>

29th July 2026	• CEO/Director Briefing (if required) (Verbal)	An update from the Chief Executive/Director on key issues which may be of interest to the Cabinet Housing Committee.	Verbal
	• Property Compliance Performance - Quarter 1	To provide the Committee with an understanding of our property compliance status and the planned improvements needed to address areas of non-compliance.	Information/Discussion Paper
	• Housing Complaints and Compliments Report - Quarter 1	To provide an overview of housing related complaints and compliments, identifying key areas of dissatisfaction and areas for learning and service improvement.	Information/Discussion Paper
	• End of Year 2025-26 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Monitoring Report	To provide a monitoring position statement for the HRA against the budget approved by Council on 21 February 2025, highlighting any key variances.	Information/Discussion Paper
	• Updates from the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels	To highlight the ongoing activities of the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels and provide an additional opportunity for tenant and leaseholder voices to be heard.	Information/Discussion Paper
	• Review of the Housing Committee Forward Plan	To provide the Committee with opportunities to identify any additional areas they may wish to scrutinise.	Information/Discussion Paper
	• Briefing Note - Housing Sector Insight	To provide the Committee with an overview of recent developments in the housing sector and provide opportunities for horizon scanning.	Briefing Note

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Briefing Note

Committee name: Cabinet Housing Committee

Date: 16 July 2025

Responsible officer: Claire Hughes, Director of Governance, Housing and Communities, claire.hughes@cheltenham.gov.uk

This note provides information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Cabinet or a committee but where no decisions from Members are needed.

If Members have questions relating to matters shown, they are asked to contact the officer indicated.

Government Strategy and Announcements

- a. The Chancellor, Rachel Reeves MP, delivered the Government's Spending Review on the 11 June. The Review sets out planned day-to-day spending totals for all government departments for the years from 2026/27 to 2028/29, and investment spending plans for 2026/27 to 2029/30. Of particular note was the confirmation of:
 - A new 10-year rent settlement for social housing, beginning in 2026, which will allow social landlords to increase rents annually at Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1%. Accompanied by a consultation on how to implement social rent convergence (see point d).
 - A new £39bn Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) will provide funding of nearly £4bn a year over the next ten years. The new package is intended to provide the long-term certainty required to unlock stalled developments and support local authorities, housing associations, and private developers in scaling up affordable housing supply (see point b).
 - £10 billion funding for financial investments, including those to be delivered through Homes England (see point c).
 - Social housing is to have equal access to the £1 billion new fire safety remediation fund.
 - A £13.2 billion commitment over five years to the Warm Homes Plan for retrofitting properties.
 - Action to address the causes of homelessness and to support local authorities in England to increase the supply of good quality temporary accommodation and drive down the use of costly bed and breakfasts and hotels, totalling nearly £1bn. Linked to this is the announcement that housing asylum seekers in hotels is to end by 2029.

We are currently reviewing the plans to fully understand the impact for Cheltenham Borough Council.

- b. Further details of the new Affordable Homes Programme, now renamed the Social and Affordable Homes Programme were released at the start of July. The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have confirmed that the ambition is to deliver approximately 180k new social rent homes over the next decade, alongside an additional 120k of affordable homes (from a previous response to written questions this will include a mixture of sub-market rent and homeownership). This would be the largest expansion of affordable homes in a generation. The programme and £39 billion funding includes a pledge to nearly double annual affordable housing investment by the end of the Parliament and will be delivered primarily through Homes England, with up to 30% of funding allocated to the Greater London Authority.

An accompanying plan, Delivering a Decade of Renewal for Social and Affordable Housing, has been published. In it, the Government has committed to a five-step delivery approach:

- Deliver the biggest boost to grant funding in a generation
 - Rebuild the sector's capacity to borrow and invest in new and existing supply
 - Establish an effective and stable regulatory regime
 - Reinvigorate council housebuilding
 - Forge a renewed partnership with the sector to build at scale.
- c. As part of the Spending Review the Government has announced the formation of a publicly owned National Housing Bank, a subsidiary of Homes England aiming to accelerate housebuilding, create jobs and deliver over 500,000 new homes. It will be backed with £16 billion of financial capacity, on top of £6bn of existing finance to be allocated this Parliament, and aims to attract £53 billion of additional private investment. Homes England will be able to issue government guarantees directly and have greater autonomy and flexibility over long-term investments, acting in partnership with the private sector to bring stability and certainty to housing developers. The Bank is to deploy some of the £2.5 billion in low-interest loans announced at the Spending Review to support the building of social and affordable homes. It will also support SMEs with new lending products and enable developers to unlock large, complex sites through infrastructure finance.
- d. The Housing Minister, Matthew Pennycook MP. has confirmed that the Government will reintroduce a rent convergence mechanism in a letter to registered providers of social housing, as part of the new 10-year social housing rent settlement from April 2026. The policy will allow social landlords to raise lower social rents more quickly, subject to consultation, rather than higher across the board rent increases across all tenancies. The Government are expected to publish a consultation in the coming weeks with a final decision on implementation in the Autumn Budget.
- e. The Government has announced reforms to the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) to accelerate housebuilding. Changes will bring the building inspection and engineer capacity directly under the BSR to create a new fast track process for review of newbuild cases and remediation decisions to respond to sector concerns around delays. The changes will be supported by the recruitment of 100 additional staff

members for the BSR. A new arm's length body will also be created in the future to centralise the functions of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) relating to the BSR under the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

- f. Awaab's Law, covering damp and mould and emergency hazards, and new electrical safety standards will come into effect for the social rented sector from the 27 October. Phase 2 is expected in 2026 and will cover further hazards such as excess cold, fire risks, and falls, with phase 3 extending the law to all remaining HHSRS (Housing health and safety rating system) hazards, except overcrowding. The Government confirmed that they will use a 'test and learn' approach through implementation, closely monitoring and evaluating the impact the Law is having, the effectiveness of the processes put in place, and will clarify or adapt its approach as needed. Social housing tenants will be able to challenge landlords that do not abide by the regulations through their landlord's complaints process, the Housing Ombudsman, and through the courts by bringing a housing disrepair claim. Detailed guidance has also been issued and officers are working through this to ensure that the council is ready for when the new legislative requirements take effect.
- g. The Government has published the latest local authority housing stock condition modelling statistics, as part of its English Housing Survey. It uses modelled data based on full inspections between April 2022 and March 2024, focusing on local authority-level housing stock quality across tenures. Key findings include:
- Nationally, 10% of social rented homes were classified as non-decent in 2023, compared to 21% in the private rented sector and 14% in owner-occupied homes.
 - In nearly all parts of England, social rented housing was less likely to be non-decent than private rented housing. The only exception was London, where predicted non-decency levels were similar across both tenures.
 - The survey found that just 4% of social rented homes contained at least one Category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), lower than in the private rented sector (10%) and owner-occupied homes (8%).
 - Damp remains a significant issue for the social sector. In 2023, 7% of social rented homes were reported to have a problem with damp, which is higher than the 4% observed in owner-occupied housing, but below the 9% seen in private rentals.
- h. The Government has published its formal response to the Housing, Communities and Local Government (HCLG) Committee's April 2025 report, '*England's Homeless Children: The Crisis in Temporary Accommodation*'. Their response confirmed a package of recent and planned reforms, including:
- A £233 million increase in funding for homelessness services in 2025/26, bringing total spending to nearly £1 billion.
 - £2 billion in additional AHP funding from 2026/27, expected to deliver up to 18,000 homes, following an earlier £800 million top-up for up to 7,800 homes.
 - A commitment to eliminating the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for homeless families except in emergencies, supported by £8 million in pilot funding for 20 high-use local authorities.
 - Expansion of the Decent Homes Standard (DHS) and Awaab's Law to include temporary accommodation, subject to consultation

- Ongoing delivery of the Renters' Rights Bill, which will abolish Section 21 evictions and strengthen tenant protection.

However, they declined to implement several of the Committee's recommended safeguard proposals:

- Mandatory inspections and public reporting of temporary accommodation conditions, instead pointing to its DHS reforms and consultations.
 - Prohibiting placements of families in shared facilities, arguing that well managed placements may be appropriate in limited circumstances.
 - Establishing a fixed timeline or tenure target for ending homelessness, instead reiterating existing commitments to increased funding and housing delivery.
- i. New regulations will come into force for all councils in England from 10 July, which will exempt care leavers under the age of 25 and victims of domestic abuse from local connection tests for social housing. The exemption follows similar changes introduced in December 2024 for former members of the regular armed forces and is part of a wider strategy to support vulnerable groups and expand access to affordable housing.

Regulator of Social Housing (RSH)

- j. The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has published its Q4 2024-25 survey results, which has highlighted:
- Record spending on repairs and maintenance with private registered providers (PRPs) spending £9 billion on repairs in the 12 months to March 2025 (a 13% increase year-on-year) with forecasts rising further to £9.9 billion for the year ahead.
 - A fall in development spend, down from £14.4 billion in 2023–24 to £13.6 billion.
 - Impairment charges (a cost that shows a reduction in the carrying value of assets which is reported in accounts) have risen with 75 providers (38%) expecting to report charges totalling £407 million, up from £296 million the previous year, with £276 million relating to social housing.
 - Interest cover (the amount that a properties' rent covers interest on any associated loans) excluding sales remains tight at 82% and is forecast to drop to 65% next year. Over half of providers expect to fall below 100% interest cover, prompting concerns over sustainability.
 - However, the report indicates that PRPs arranged £4.3 billion in new finance in the quarter and liquidity improved to its strongest point in two years, sufficient to cover all forecast costs over the next 12 months without further borrowing or sales income.
 - Affordable home ownership completions fell by 8%, while market sale activity remained subdued.
 - Void losses and tenant arrears rose slightly, though rent collection rates remained strong at 99.8%.

- k. Housemark have released their initial analysis of the second full year of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) after collating data from 217 landlords. Their analysis shows:
- Overall tenant satisfaction has risen to 72.5%, an increase of 1.2% on the 71.3% reported last year. The figure had fallen in each year prior to this from a high of 85.1% in 2018/19. They did note that some of the increase may have been due to changing survey methods, but they believe overall the survey data suggests landlords are responding well to the new Consumer Standards.
 - Repairs remain the strongest driver of overall perception - satisfaction with repairs increased from 72.3% to 73.9%, time taken to complete repairs jumped from 68.2% to 69.9% and the TSM 'home is well maintained' rose from 71.1% to 72.8%.
 - Complaints have risen, with 49.3 stage one complaints per 1,000 homes in 2024/25 compared to 41.8 in 2023/24. Complaint satisfaction rates and volumes have also improved as landlords improve services to meet the mandatory Ombudsman code. They estimated that around 200,000 Stage 1 complaints were recorded by landlords during 2024/25 – around 30,000 more than the previous year.
 - Data also showed satisfaction among shared owners is more than 20% below social housing renters. Shared ownership satisfaction in 2024/25 was 51.4%, compared to 72.5% for renters.

Housing Ombudsman

- l. The Housing Ombudsman has published its 'Repairing Trust' spotlight report, based on hundreds of case reviews and more than 3,000 responses to a call for evidence. The report issued a warning about the management and condition of social housing, with figures showing a 474% rise in complaints about repairs since 2019-20. It has identified widespread systemic issues despite social landlords spending £9 billion on repairs and maintenance in 2023–24. Key findings include that 72% of complaints were caused by poor practice, £3.4 million was paid out in compensation in 2024-25, and an estimated 1.5 million children lived in non-decent homes in 2023 (nearly 1 in 5 of them in social housing). They have called for a statutory national tenant body to strengthen resident voice and accountability, alongside a comprehensive review of the national funding settlement for social landlords.

For landlords, the Ombudsman recommends a cultural shift towards respectful, empathetic, and human-centred services. This includes replacing reactive with predictive maintenance models, creating a code of conduct for all staff and contractors entering residents' homes, and ending poor practices such as closing cases on the basis of unverified "no access" claims. The report also highlights the need for improved record keeping, better diagnosis and repairs planning, and stronger quality assurance processes.

Developments that may impact tenants

- m. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) published further details on the changes to welfare reforms ahead of the second reading of the Universal Credit (UC) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Bill in the House of Commons. Key points include:
- The establishing of a comprehensive review of the PIP assessment led by the Minister for Social Security and Disability, Sir Stephen Timms MP, which will seek to ensure the system is fair, supportive and fit for the realities of modern life.
 - Alongside the review, draft regulations for the new Right to Try Guarantee will be introduced to enshrine in law the right for people receiving health and disability benefits to try work without fear of reassessment.
 - All existing PIP recipients will remain on the current system and the proposed changes to eligibility as part of the bill will only apply to new claims from November 2026.
 - The Bill will also reduce the health element for new UC claims from more than double the standard amount to the equivalent of £50 per week from April 2026, to reduce the incentive for people to define themselves as incapable of work.
 - All existing recipients of the UC health element and new customers with 12 months or less to live or who meet the Severe Conditions Criteria will see their standard allowance combined with their Limited Capability for Work Related Activity (LCWRA) rise at least in line with inflation every year from 2026/27 to 2029/30. The 200,000 individuals in the Severe Conditions Criteria group will also not be called for a UC reassessment.
 - £300 million of funding will be provided over the next three years to accelerate tailored employment, health and skills support to help disabled people and those with health conditions get into work as part of the Pathways to Work guarantee.
 - Partnerships with the NHS and WorkWell will offer personalised support to help individuals manage their health while preparing for or returning to employment.

Research and Campaigns

- n. The Resident Voice Index (RVI) has carried out a survey of over 2,000 social housing tenants and found that 90% of social housing residents are unaware of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). 66% reported they were unsure how their housing provider measures tenant satisfaction, and only 10% said they had noticed any improvement in services over the past year. In contrast, nearly 45% said their satisfaction had declined. The survey also found a strong tenant preference for digital communication, with 70% of respondents saying that they wanted updates via email and 31% via text message.
- o. The latest Household Costs Indices published by the Office for National Statistics has shown:

- Social housing tenants experienced an annual inflation rate of 3% in the year to March 2025, outpacing the all-households average of 2.6%, reflecting the impact of rising social rent payments.
- These rent payments contributed 1.7% to the total inflation rate for social renters and had a more significant effect on low-income households overall, accounting for 0.57% of their inflation compared to just 0.02% for high-income households.
- While private renters faced the highest inflation at 3.6%, the burden on social housing tenants remains pronounced, especially when combined with other rising costs such as food and non-alcoholic beverages. These costs affected low-income households more sharply than higher earners, with food contributing 0.18% more to inflation for lower deciles.
- The data also showed that households with children and non-retired households saw higher rates of inflation (both 2.8%) than households without children (2.6%) and retired households (2.1%).

Despite a national easing in household costs due to falling energy prices and slower growth in mortgage interest payments, the housing component – particularly rental payments – continues to be a major driver of cost increases for social tenants.

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