



Housing Engagement Board

Quarterly Meeting

26 September 2024 – 2pm to 4pm

Agenda Pack

Housing Engagement Board Agenda

Date: **Thursday, 26 September 2024**

Time: **2pm – 4pm**

Venue: **Zoom (Virtual Meeting)**

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1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair will welcome all present and apologies will be noted.

2. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of 50% of members.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting – 8 July 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2024 are included for approval.

Housing Engagement Board
Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting
held on Monday, 8 July 2024
from 2pm to 4pm via Zoom

Attendees: Cllr John Batchelor – Chair
Peter Campbell (SCDC – Head of Housing)
Bob Buss (Co-opted Tenant Representative)
Jim Watson (Co-opted Tenant Representative)
Margaret Wilson (Elected Tenant Representative)
Oana Sutherland (Co-opted Tenant Representative)

By Invitation: Brian Burton (Tenant Volunteer)
Patti Hall (Tenant Volunteer)
Julie Fletcher (SCDC – Service Manager – Housing Strategy)
Geoff Clark (SCDC – Service Manager – Tenancy and Estates)
Eddie Spicer (SCDC – Service Manager – Housing Assets)
Uzma Ali (SCDC – Housing Development and Policy Research Officer)
Dave Armitage (SCDC – Resident Involvement Team Leader)
Bronwen Taylor (SCDC – Resident Involvement Officer) – Minute taker

Apologies: Cllr Eileen Wilson
Cllr Heather Williams (absent – no apology received)
Dave Kelleway (Elected Tenant Representative) – Vice Chair

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting at 2.05pm.

2. Quorum

The meeting was quorate.

3. Minutes of previous Meeting – 28 March 2024

The Chair referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2024.

Margaret Wilson to send a few typing errors to Bronwen Taylor. Subject to the corrections, the minutes were approved by the board as a true reflection of the meeting.

3.1 Matters Arising from previous Meeting – 28 March 2024

The matter arising from the previous meeting is below.

Item 4.3 – Resident Involvement Framework Review Update

Bronwen Taylor advised that Dave Armitage had sent the notes from the framework meetings to Cllr Batchelor on 29 April 2024 and that he would send the approved Resident Involvement Strategy to him after this meeting.

Income and Expenditure Statements in Communal Halls

Margaret Wilson raised the issue of Income and Expenditure statements and said that they still did not have them in the communal halls.

Geoff Clark said that he had offered to set up a meeting with her and the Housing Accountant to get a better understanding of how they were set up. He said he would arrange a meeting.

Action: Geoff Clark

4. Standing Items

4.1 Forward Plan 2024 / 2025

Julie Fletcher referred to the Forward Plan included in the pack and said that this was a standing item on the agenda and was an opportunity for everyone to say if they would like anything added. She said that we had added a couple of new items, namely the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and the Assignment and Succession Policy, and only when the Policy Panel have a programme for review of policies, will they be presented to the HEB.

Julie Fletcher said that the Annual Tenant Satisfaction Measures and the Assessment of the Complaints Code both need to be added and discussed at the next meeting, and which need to be published by the end of June 2024. She added that they were going through SCDC's decision process and would be presented to the HEB at the next meeting. She referred to the items planned for the coming months, as follows:

- June 2024 – Communications Standard – Uzma Ali to provide an update at this meeting.
- June 2024 – Mutual Exchange Policy – Feedback to be provided at this meeting.
- June 2024 – Resident Involvement Framework – The Chair to approve the updated document following the changes agreed to in the framework at this meeting.

- June 2024 – Council Stock Condition Survey – Eddie Spicer to provide an overview report on the results of the survey at this meeting.
- October 2024 – Empty Property Re-let Disposal and Standards – To consider the findings and recommendations following the outcome of the project working group.
- TBC – Together with Tenants Charter – Review what actions are required to achieve the Together with Tenants Charter.
- TBC – Anti-Social Behaviour Policy – To approve the ASB policy following tenant consultation.
- TBC – Assignment and Succession Policy – Linked policy / procedure to Tenancy Policy.

The Chair asked where we were with the Empty Property Re-let Disposal and Standards findings which had been moved out to October 2024. He added that the Four-day Week Report had indicated that there were only two areas where the performance was not as good as prior to implementation of the four-day week and this was one of them.

Eddie Spicer advised that there was a sub-group who looked at every stage of re-lets and were looking at ways for it to be improved.

The Chair asked if we were working towards restructuring the targets.

Eddie Spicer said that we were looking at efficiencies that could be made to each step of the process and not restructuring targets.

The Chair asked if the underlying problem was that 17 days was not achievable and nationally we were in the top quartile.

Eddie Spicer said that irrespective of what the target was, we were looking extensively to find efficiencies within that, however, he agreed that the target was not achievable.

4.2 Resident Involvement Framework Review Update

Dave Armitage referred to the Resident Involvement Framework Strategy document included in the pack and said it was presented and approved by Cabinet on 25 June 2024, subject to any minor amendments that the HEB may want to make to it. He added that Terms of Reference documents for each panel had been written up and agreed by tenant volunteers.

The Chair requested the sign off date to be changed to today's date and asked for clarity on how the Chairs for each panel was appointed.

Dave Armitage explained that initially we asked for volunteers to chair and then going forward and at the start of each financial year a new chair would be appointed based on either voting or agreement by each panel.

The Chair said that as the membership was flexible, would the chair of each panel be a fixed point and always attend their respective panels meetings.

Dave Armitage said that they would be a fixed point and attend their respective panels meetings however they could also be a member of the other panels.

Margaret Wilson referred to page 20 in the pack, Tenancy Standard and the words “ended by landlords”, as she was conscious of anti-social behaviour not only in her area but also in other areas, and asked how Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) was treated within this framework and if it could be looked at in more detail, with reference to ASB in the Tenancy Standard.

Dave Armitage said that this would be looked at by the Policy and Procedure Panel and would be one of the policies at the top of their list.

Julie Fletcher said that the Tenancy Standard wording was taken from the Consumer Standards document and these were what we had to do in compliance with the Consumer Standards. She added that the Neighbourhood and Community Standard would cover ASB in more detail.

Margaret Wilson said that she felt that we need to hold area meetings as it was still problematic that they were not being held. She also referred to the communal garden project in Girton, which was an ongoing project, and said that praise had been given to both Mears and Dave Armitage who had done a lot of work on this. She added that she and the residents were impressed with the standard of work, and she thanked everyone who had been involved in the project.

Julie Fletcher said that area meetings were covered on page 13 of the restructure document as “Other forms of tenant contact” and that Dave Armitage would work with tenant volunteers to arrange area meetings.

The Chair asked if the HEB were happy to approve the document.

The HEB approved the document.

Peter Campbell said the Chair would sign the document.

Action: Dave Armitage

4.3 Estate Inspections Report

Bronwen Taylor referred to the document included in the pack for noting and said that two inspections had been cancelled due to heavy rain, however, had been rescheduled for later dates in the year.

Margaret Wilson referred to one of the issues on page 35 of the pack, “Parcel of land behind No. 27 needs cutting. Not been cut with the rest.” and asked why the council was paying more for work that should have been done and was covered in the contract.

Geoff Clark said that part of the formal estate inspections was to make sure that the grounds maintenance maps were accurate and up to date. He agreed that if work was on the map as a scheduled program of works for SP Landscapes and they missed it and we asked them to come back to do the work, then it should not be an additional charge. He said he assumes that this particular issue would not be a piece of land that was on their schedule of works.

Margaret Wilson said that maps should be reviewed and agreed to when the contract was renewed and signed, as it would appear that they were not. She said that as long as it was noted that they needed to be kept up to date by both sides.

Geoff Clark said the maps were accurate and up to date, and we review them all the time. He added that small pieces of land do change over time in terms of responsibility and we amend them to make sure they were accurate.

5. New Matters

5.1 Contracts Review Panel

Dave Armitage referred to the Terms of Reference document included in the pack and said that officers and tenants had met and gone through the document.

The Chair approved the Terms of Reference document.

5.2 Policy and Procedure Panel

Dave Armitage referred to the Terms of Reference document included in the pack and said that officers and tenants had met and gone through the document.

The Chair approved the Terms of Reference document.

5.3 Tenant Satisfaction Measures and Key Performance Indicators Review Panel

Dave Armitage referred to the Terms of Reference document included in the pack and said that officers and tenants had met and gone through the document.

The Chair approved the Terms of Reference document.

5.4 Mutual Exchange Policy – Monitoring Report

Julie Fletcher referred to the documents included in the pack. She said that the Mutual Exchange Policy was reviewed in September 2023 and that following the implementation of the policy, we would present a monitoring report to the board. She said that between October 2023 and March 2024, a six-month period, there had been 22 successful mutual exchanges and this compared with 25 in 2018 / 2019 and 40 in 2021 / 2022, which were one-year periods. She added that with the current information available, the number of mutual exchanges had increased slightly.

She referred the financial incentives to downsize and said that they felt that there was some ambiguity in terms of who could qualify for the financial incentives. She referred to point 10 of the report on page 50 of the pack and asked if the text in bold below could be added to item 6.7 in the Mutual Exchange Policy, to read:

To incentivise **existing council** tenants to downsize through Mutual Exchange, SCDC will provide financial incentives **to its council tenants who are downsizing** based on the number of bedrooms released. For every bedroom released, **council tenants exchanging to a smaller council property within the district will receive £1,000** and **council tenants downsizing to a housing association property or to another council will receive £500. Payments will be** payable upon successful exchange.

Where those in receipt of the financial incentive to downsize, then go on to move again within a year, the financial incentive will be repayable.

Julie Fletcher explained that this was to make it clear that this was only applicable to our own council tenants.

Margaret Wilson said that Dave Kelleway was instrumental in this policy, and it should be noted that his influence, together with the rest of the tenant representatives seemed to be positive and was having a positive effect so far.

Julie Fletcher said that the amendments to the policy would need to be made by decision notice and for the Chair to sign. She added that following what Margaret Wilson said, it

would be really good to publicise this in newsletters in that we have worked together with tenant representatives and this was the outcome.

Geoff Clark asked that a report back to compare the figures be given in 12 months' time.

The Chair agreed and said that we did have a communications drive to encourage tenants to go the mutual exchange route.

Geoff Clark said that we continue to advertise this in tenants and leaseholders' newsletters.

5.5 Communications Charter

Uzma Ali referred to the documents included in the pack and said that the Communications Charter was developed following tenants feedback to us through surveys conducted in 2022 and 2023, where communication was a key response and was scored quite low for satisfaction. She said the charter had been developed in response to that and to provide clarity and consistency in communication with tenants and leaseholders, which included the standard for communicating with clear information and the response times.

Uzma Ali said it was developed with feedback from tenants and leaseholders through a focus group, which was held with tenant representatives and housing managers to gather feedback. She said the aim was to roll out the charter to all housing staff with clear guidelines on style, language and response times, and to also look at internal communication guidelines. She added that the charter would also include contractors and those working on behalf of the council. She said that this would be measured by annual satisfaction surveys.

Uzma Ali said that the document would be presented to Cabinet in about September 2024.

Margaret Wilson said that at the meeting the issue of an internal call log was raised and asked if there had been further progress on this.

Julie Fletcher said that an email audit trail workflow system was on the Housing Systems team's list to do. She explained that the reason for promoting generic email inboxes was to ensure that queries were managed as officers were not always be available and this would ensure that they were attended to.

Margaret Wilson said that this must not be allowed to get lost.

Eddie Spicer said that we were doing a great deal of work in the background to ensure that the workflow system ran smoothly.

Uzma Ali said that this document was intended to improve internal communications and the document would be publicised by way of newsletters and on the website.

The Chair asked if contractors would be signing up to this.

Eddie Spicer said that the standards within the contract and their expectations were already included in the charter and they would be expected to agree with what was in there.

The Chair asked how this was done and if they were presented with this charter.

Eddie Spicer said he did not think that this had been agreed or discussed at the moment.

The Chair said he thought that it would form a part of the contractual arrangements.

Eddie Spicer said that the arrangements that were in the contract exceeded the requirements of this charter. He added that the charter could be included as an add-on in the contract or the charter could be signed.

5.5 Council Stock Condition Survey

Eddie Spicer referred to the document included in the pack and said that a great deal of work had been done on this survey. He said that from the data that we had, he was doing a great deal of work within our internal systems on costings, etcetera for the Forward Plan. He added that one of the comments made was that South Cambridgeshire District Council's stock was probably one of the better condition stocks in the country and that it was a very worthwhile exercise.

The Chair said that there were forward numbers for investment which was estimated at £240 million over the 30 years and asked if it was a separate entity to the green agenda. He said that in the business plan the figure was approximately £400 million over 30 years.

Eddie Spicer said what this survey related to was purely the element replacements and maintenance, which were considered standard, for example bathrooms, roofing, structures. He explained that the greening work, which was separate, was the upgrading to standard properties, for example, additional insulation, different types of heating solutions, solar panels, and would be in addition to the current maintenance plan.

The Chair asked if this estimate was in addition to the £400 million.

Peter Campbell said that we had to overlay the majority of the green issues on top of this and take account of the extra cost. He said that his understanding was that the total cost would not be one plus the other as there was already an allowance in Eddie Spicer's figures. He added that there was some availability for some external funding for greening,

however, this may change with the new government and that we need to look at the information from the Stock Condition Survey. He said that tenants and members agreed an Asset Management Strategy about two years ago and we had to apply those principles to the data that we have now and produce a costed business plan.

The Chair said that this was an excellent report and a great deal of work had gone into it. Margaret Wilson referred to the Greening policy, which fitted into this survey, and asked what the rush was to instal air source heat pumps as they were not good for properties that were not built to passive house standards.

Peter Campbell said the Asset Management Strategy recognised this entirely and that we were going to concentrate on the insulation for each property and getting houses ready to receive the next steps when the next steps were due.

Eddie Spicer explained the new generation of air source heat pumps were high temperature heat pump systems which meant they worked a lot more in tune with what a gas boiler was and the circulation temperature was up to 65°C, whereas the standard current boilers was 55°C which meant they took longer to heat which people did not like. He said technology was improving all the time and they were trialling high temperature ones at the moment.

Eddie Spicer said the next steps was looking at smoothing so we did not have huge peaks and troughs on expenditure, starting with the five-year plan and then he would extend it to the 10, 15 and 30-year plans. He added that it was a huge piece of work to undertake in addition to the day-to-day workload, however, there would be a revised report.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Heating System in Communal Halls

Margaret Wilson said that they have had nothing but problems with heating systems in communal halls and she would like to suggest that the whole system be revised as they were difficult to monitor. She asked that they be reviewed and that the people who have to operate them were listened to and that the tenants who used the halls were consulted.

Eddie Spicer said that the council were conducting a complete review of all the heating systems in all communal rooms.

Margaret Wilson asked that tenants be consulted during the review.

6.2 Policy Panel

Margaret Wilson asked for the policy on leasehold properties to be included on the Policy Panel's agenda and that this policy be reviewed as she felt that there were unintended consequences arising from the current lack of a definitive policy.

Dave Armitage said that it would be included on the list of policies to be reviewed.

Geoff Clark asked Margaret Wilson if she was referring to equity share leasehold or leasehold properties in general.

Margaret Wilson said that it was mostly equity share leasehold and added that she was aware of some issues with leasehold properties. She said that it appeared that there was no definitive policy.

Julie Fletcher said that historically tenants were on different leases, which would depend on what the rules and regulations were for them. She said there was not a "one size fits all" policy, as there were different leases depending on the legislation at the time. She added that we could look at it as part of the policy review programme, however, we would need to decide where it sat in terms of priority as we had a number of health and safety policies coming through from the Social Housing Regulator, as well as the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

6.3 Grass Cuttings

Margaret Wilson referred to tenant dissatisfaction in all areas due to the grass cuttings being left behind after the grass had been cut. She referred to the recent grass cuts at the estate where she lives and said that it had been left looking like a hay field, and that there were dead patches of grass under the cuttings left behind. She added that she had sent photographs to Bronwen Taylor and asked if they could be circulated as she would like the board to see them, as some people did not understand the mess she was referring to.

The Chair said they could be circulated.

Action: Bronwen Taylor

7. Proposed Meeting Dates for 2024 / 2025

The Chair referred to the proposed meeting dates for 2024 / 2025 as follows:

- 26 September 2024 (Zoom)
- 12 December 2024 (Monkfield Room, 1st Floor, SCDC, Cambourne)
- 27 March 2025 (Zoom)

8. Closing

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at 3.12pm.

3.1 Matters Arising from previous Meeting – 8 July 2024

3.1.1 Item 3.1 – Matters Arising from Meeting held on 28 March 2024

Income and Expenditure Statements in Communal Halls

Actions: Geoff Clark to set up a meeting with the Housing accountant and Margaret Wilson to discuss the issue of Income and Expenditure statements in communal halls.

Report back: Geoff Clark to provide feedback.

3.1.2 Item 4.2 – Resident Involvement Framework Review Update

Actions: Dave Armitage to arrange for the Chair to sign the framework document.

Report back: The document was sent to the Chair for signing.

For noting.

3.1.3 Item 6.3 – Grass Cuttings

Actions: Bronwen Taylor to circulate Margaret Wilson's photographs of grass cuttings to the Board.

Report back: The photographs were emailed to the Board on 9 July 2024.

For noting.

4. Standing Items

4.1 Forward Plan

Julie Fletcher to provide an update on the Forward Plan which is included in the pack.

Housing Engagement Board – Forward Plan – 2024 / 2025

Date of Meeting	Topic	Description	Lead Officer	Decision Route
March 2024 Defer until June 2024	Communications Standard	To consider the Communications Standard and make recommendations following wider tenant involvement	Julie Fletcher	Housing Engagement Board / Lead Member for Housing
June 2024	Mutual Exchange Policy	Monitoring report of mutual exchange policy – 6 months following implementation	Julie Fletcher	For Information
June 2024 [new]	Resident Involvement Framework	Approve updated document following changes agreed to the framework	Dave Armitage	Housing Engagement Board / Lead Member for Housing
June 2024	Council Stock Condition Survey	Outcome of the Stock Condition Survey	Eddie Spicer	For Information
September 2024 [new]	Annual Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM)	To note the TSMs submitted to the Housing Regulator and feedback on the proposed targets	Julie Fletcher	Cabinet – to agree targets
September 2024 [new]	Ombudsman Code of Conduct Self-Assessment	To feedback any comments on the Ombudsman Code of Conduct Self-Assessment	Julie Fletcher	Cabinet to approve Self-Assessment
January 2024 <i>Carried forward</i> <i>The mobilisation of the Mears Contract has taken more time than expected. Currently working on some preliminary works around this but won't be progressing with residents until at least October 2024.</i>	Empty Property Re-let Disposal and Standards	Consider findings and recommendations following the outcome of the project working group – Empty Property Re-let Disposal and Standards <i>Currently undertaking some internal process mapping to feed into the project working group</i>	Eddie Spicer	Housing Engagement Board

Date of Meeting	Topic	Description	Lead Officer	Decision Route
December 2024 [new]	Budget Update	To review the budget position for 2025 / 2026	Peter Campbell	To note
TBC	Together with Tenants Charter	Review what actions are required to achieve the Together with Tenants Charter	Resident Involvement Team Leader	Cabinet
TBC [new]	Anti-social behaviour Policy	To approve the ASB policy following tenant consultation	Julie Fletcher	Cabinet – March 2025
December 2023 <i>TBC – as part of programming of Policy Panel</i>	Assignment and Succession Policy	Linked policy / procedure to Tenancy Policy	Julie Fletcher	Housing Engagement Board / Lead Member for Housing

4.2 Contracts Review Panel

Patti Hall to provide feedback on the meeting held on 10 September 2024.

Included in the pack is a list of SCDC Housing Contractors.

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Housing Contractors

- Mears – Repairs and maintenance
- SP Landscapes – Grounds maintenance
- MRI – Delivers our Housing Management System
- British Gas – Energy supply for sheltered housing communal rooms
- Pococks – RTB and equity share leasehold valuations, marketing equity share leasehold properties (new lease)
- Residentially – Shared ownership staircasing valuations
- ESPO – General supply and equipment for sheltered housing
- JLA – Supply of rented washing and drying machines in sheltered housing communal rooms
- OPUS Energy – Supply of electricity to sheltered housing communal rooms
- Rentokil – Pest Control Services
- Camclean – Window cleaning contract – sheltered housing communal rooms
- Careium – Provide lifeline monitoring contract
- Tunstall and Doro – Provide the lifeline units
- BT – Provide telephone line and broadband in our communal rooms

4.3 Policy and Procedure Panel

Brian Burton to provide feedback on the meeting held on 20 August 2024.

Included in the pack is the Policy Overview document.

Policy Overview (2024)

Draft Completed

These have been drafted in full and are at a stage where the lead officer is happy with document to be put forward for review/approval.

- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Procedure
- Anti-Social Behaviour Service Standards

In Draft

A draft iteration of these have been put together but requires review and for the lead officer to confirm they are happy for the draft to be reviewed/put forward for approval.

- Asbestos Management Policy
- Communal Areas Storage Policy
- Electrical Management Policy
- Fire Risk Policy
- Gas Servicing and Safety
- Legionella Management
- Lifts and Lifting Equipment Safety

For Review

These have been noted that they require review.

- Communal Room Charge Policy
- Estate Inspections Policy
- White Goods

To Begin

These are those that need to be completed, although in most cases there is basis draft that can be built upon.

- Assignment & Succession Policy

Policy Overview (2024)

Future Considerations (Ideas)

These are a few examples of policies that might be worthwhile to look at moving forwards.

- Fencing Policy
- Pest Control Procedure
- Recharges Policy
- Tenant Alterations Policy
- Tenancy Changes Policy
- Tenant Handbook Review?

In addition to the above, there of course may be additional policies/procedures that need to be reviewed/drawn-up that come from leadership at the Council and/or Central Government.

4.4 Tenant Satisfaction Measures and Key Performance Indicators Panel

Margaret Wilson to provide feedback on the meeting held on 29 August 2024.

4.5 Estate Inspections Report

The following Estate Inspections were held from June to August 2024.

- 20 June – Orwell – Lordship Close, Meadowcroft Way and Fisher Lane
- 25 June – Bourn – Hall Close
- 11 July – Balsham – Mays Avenue, Dolls Close, Princes Close and Paddock Close
- 18 July – Whittlesford – Lettice Martin Croft, The Lawn and Butts Green
- 25 July – Great Shelford – Chaston Road and Grain Close
- 22 August – Willingham – Osborn Close, Lordship Close and Haden Way
- 29 August – Litlington – New Close, Chapel Close, Abington Rad and Church Street

For noting.

5. New Matters

5.1 Annual Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM)

Julie Fletcher to report on the Annual Tenant Satisfaction Measures document included in the pack.

Housing Regulator and Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Background

1. Following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in 2017 and the death of Awaab Ishak in 2020, the government has been working with the social housing sector and tenants to strengthen the voice of residents and introduce new legislation to ensure the quality of homes.
2. The Social Housing Regulation Act received Royal Assent in July 2023. The Act forms a new era of regulation for the social housing sector and is intended to give greater power to tenants and improve the standard of Social Housing.
3. In particular, the widening of the role of the housing regulator in England is expected to bring significant changes for local authorities, with a focus on improving housing standards, ensuring compliance with regulations, and protecting tenants' rights.
4. The main aims of the Housing Regulator are:
 - a) **Enhanced Oversight and Accountability:**
 - Local authorities will be subject to stricter scrutiny regarding their housing management practices. The regulator will monitor their performance, ensuring they meet national standards.
 - Authorities will need to demonstrate transparency and accountability in their operations, providing regular reports and data on housing conditions and management.
 - b) **Improved Housing Standards:**
 - The regulator will enforce higher standards for housing quality, safety, and maintenance. Local authorities will need to ensure that their housing stock complies with these standards.
 - This may involve increased inspections, regular maintenance, and quicker responses to repair requests.
 - c) **Tenant Protection and Empowerment:**
 - Tenants will have a stronger voice and better protection under the regulator's framework. Local authorities will need to establish effective complaint handling processes and ensure tenants' concerns are addressed promptly.
 - Authorities will be required to engage with tenants, involving them in decision-making processes related to housing policies and practices.

d) **Financial and Operational Challenges:**

- Implementing the new regulatory requirements may lead to increased costs for local authorities, necessitating budget adjustments and potentially more efficient resource allocation.
- Authorities may need to invest in training and development for staff to meet the new standards and regulatory expectations.

e) **Data Collection and Reporting:**

- There will be a greater emphasis on data collection and reporting. Local authorities will need to maintain comprehensive records on their tenants, housing conditions, tenant feedback, and performance metrics.
- This data will be used to assess compliance and identify areas for improvement.

f) **Sanctions and Incentives:**

- The regulator will have the authority to impose sanctions on local authorities that fail to meet standards. This could include fines or other penalties, providing a strong incentive for compliance.
- Conversely, authorities that consistently meet or exceed standards may receive positive recognition or incentives.

g) **Collaboration and Best Practices:**

- Local authorities will be encouraged to share best practices and collaborate to improve housing services. The regulator may facilitate forums and networks for knowledge exchange.
- This collaborative approach can lead to the adoption of innovative solutions and better overall housing management.

5. To achieve this the Regulator has adopted a co-regulation approach. Landlords are expected to monitor their own services and inform the regulator of any issues, (Note – the Council did self-refer over an error in some rent charges). However, the Regulator will also monitor organisations using data returns of a range of indicators and inspections, with indicators being returned annually, and each organisation being inspected every four years or so. In many ways this is a return to audit commission type regulation, albeit with a lighter touch and more emphasis on service improvement and safety.

6. The regulator promotes strong governance and is therefore keen that performance information is reported to the relevant boards, so in the case of SCDC this will be Cabinet, and we will also seek the input from Tenants through the Housing Engagement Board. This information will also be published on the Councils website.

Housing Performance and Tenant Satisfaction Measures

7. The Council has submitted the first of its annual returns. This involves a set of tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs) that social housing landlords must report on.
8. There are 22 tenant satisfaction measures, covering 5 themes, 10 of these will be measured by landlords directly and 12 will be measured by landlords carrying out tenant satisfaction surveys using a prescribed methodology.
9. The tenant satisfaction survey was carried out during December / January 2024 by an independent research company using both postal and on-line methods. The survey was sent to all 5,295 tenants, with 1,130 tenants responding. This equates to a response rate of 21% which gives us a margin of error of +2.6% at the 95% confidence level. Note that some of the survey information presented below (indicators beginning with TP) may not sum to 100, this is due to rounding.
10. A summary of our survey responses is listed below. This is the first time these measures have been reported this way, so there is currently no historic information, to identify trends. However, there is comparative information from HouseMark to see how we compare against other similar organisations (i.e. Local Authorities with less than 10,000 stock).
11. Targets will need to be set in consultation with tenants and agreed by members, however indicative targets are included below based on the following rationale.
 - a. Where performance is already in the top quartile, the focus should be on maintaining performance (maintenance).
 - b. For operational performance indicators, where targets have previously been set, and these targets would indicate top quartile performance the target should be retained. This includes targets for safety compliance which will always be set at 100% (agreed).
 - c. Other operational indicators should be set to meet top quartile in a reasonable and achievable timescale (improve).
 - d. No targets should be set for number of complaints or for reports of ASB. This reflects our aim to make reporting easier, so an increase in numbers may counter intuitively reflect better performance (none).

- e. For indicators that are based on perception, that are not within the top quartile, annual targets should aim for modest improvements recognising that perceptions may be based on experiences that occurred many years ago rather than the current services. This is likely to take time to change (perception).

12. Tenant satisfaction measures 2024

TP01: Overall satisfaction – 78.0%

- 78% – very or fairly satisfied
 - 11% – neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - 12% – very or fairly dissatisfied
- Quartile** – 1 (above 74.9%)
Suggested target – 78% (maintenance)

13. Keeping properties in good repair

TP02: Satisfaction with repairs – 77.0%

- 77% – very or fairly satisfied
 - 8% – neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - 16% – fairly or very dissatisfied
- Quartile** – 1 (above 76.9%)
Suggested target – 77% (maintenance)

TP03: Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair – 74.0%

- 74% – very or fairly satisfied
 - 8% – neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - 18% – very or fairly dissatisfied
- Quartile** – 1 (above 72.8%)
Suggested target – 74.0% (maintenance)

TP04: Satisfaction that the home is well maintained – 72.0%

- 72% – very or fairly satisfied
 - 11% – neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - 16% – very or fairly dissatisfied
- Quartile** – 2 (between 66.4% and 75.6%)
Suggested target – 74.0% (perception)

RP01: Decent Homes Standard

- Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard – **5.5%**
Quartile – 3 (between 4.1% and 5.95%)
Suggested target – 5% (improve)

RP02 (1): Repairs

- Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale – **92.8%**
Quartile – 1 (above 90.85%)
Suggested target – 92.8% (maintenance)

RP02 (2): Repairs

- Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale – **100%**
Quartile – 1 (above 92.8%)
Suggested target – 99.0% (agreed)

14. [Maintaining building safety](#)

TP05: Satisfaction that the home is safe – 82%

- **82%** very or fairly satisfied
- **10%** neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- **9%** very or fairly dissatisfied
Quartile – 1 (above 81%)
Suggested target – 82% (maintenance)

BS01: Gas safety checks

- Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out – **100%**
Quartile – 1 (100%)
Suggested target – 100% (maintenance / agreed)

BS02: Fire safety checks

- Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out – **100%**
Quartile – 1 (100%)
Suggested target – 100% – (maintenance / agreed)

BS03: Asbestos safety checks

- Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out – **100%**

Quartile – 1 (100%)

Suggested target – 100% – (maintenance / agreed)

BS04: Water safety checks

- Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out – **100%**

Quartile – 1 (100%)

Suggested target – 100% – (maintenance / agreed)

BS05: Lift safety checks

- Proportion of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out – **100%**

Quartile – 1 (100%)

Suggested target – 100% – (maintenance / agreed)

15. [Respectful and helpful engagement](#)

TP06: Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them – 54%

- **54%** very or fairly satisfied
 - **26%** neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - **21%** very or fairly dissatisfied
- Quartile** – 3 (between 50.6% and 55.5%)
- Suggested target** – 57% (perception)

TP07: Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them – 64%

- **64%** strongly agree or agree
 - **25%** neither agree nor disagree
 - **12%** disagree or strongly disagree
- Quartile** – 3 (between 60.5% and 66.0%)
- Suggested target** – 66% (perception)

TP08: Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect – 73%

- **73%** very or fairly satisfied
 - **19%** neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - **8%** very or fairly dissatisfied
- Quartile** – 3 (between 68% and 73%)
Suggested target – 75% (perception)

16. **Effective handling of complaints**

TP09: Satisfaction with the landlord’s approach to handling complaints – 29%

- **29%** very or fairly satisfied
 - **21%** neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - **51%** very or fairly dissatisfied
- Quartile** – 2 (between 28.2% and 34.4%)
Suggested target – 31% (perception)

CH01 (1): Complaints relative to the size of the landlord

- Number of stage one complaints received per 1,000 homes – **18.9**
- Quartile** – 2 (between 18.45 and 38.25)
Suggested target – Not set (none)

CH01 (2): Complaints relative to the size of the landlord

- Number of stage 2 complaints received per 1,000 homes – **3.8**
- Quartile** – 2 (between 3.2 and 4.8)
Suggested target – Not set (none)

CH02(1): Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales

- Proportion of stage one complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code timescales – **73.0%**
- Quartile** – 3 (between 50.22 and 74.15%)
Suggested target – 90%, (agreed)

CH02(2): Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales

- Proportion of stage 2 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code timescales – **80.9%**
- Quartile** – 2 (between 66.7% and 94.3%)
Suggested target – 95% (agreed)

17. Responsible neighbourhood management

TP10: Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained – 68%

- **68%** very or fairly satisfied
 - **10%** neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - **21%** very or fairly dissatisfied
- Quartile** – 2 (between 63.8% and 70.3%)
Suggested target – 70% (perception)

TP11: Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods – 49%

- **49%** very or fairly satisfied
 - **37%** neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - **14%** very or fairly dissatisfied
- Quartile** – 4 (below 52%)
Suggested target – 52% (perception)

TP12: Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour – 44%

- **44%** very or fairly satisfied
 - **39%** neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - **17%** very or fairly dissatisfied
- Quartile** – 4 (below 52%)
Suggested target – 47% (perception)

NM01(1): Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord

- Number of anti-social behaviour cases opened per 1,000 homes – **38.1**
Quartile – 2 (between 37.03 and 53.98)
Suggested target – Not set (none)

NM01(2): Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord

- Number of anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate incidents opened per 1,000 homes – **0.7**
Quartile – 3 (between 0.45 and 1.41)
Suggested target – Not set (none)

18. In addition the council, as landlord, needs to submit and publish a document which is a self-assessment of how well the organisation conforms with the regulators code of guidance on dealing with complaints. The code became statutory on 1 April 2024, with a requirement that the self-assessment is approved by the landlord's governing body (namely Cabinet). This is included within the report pack.

19. Next Steps

- a) The performance information in this report, including the complaints handling code self-assessment, will be discussed with tenants' groups and published on the Council's website.
- b) Targets will be set for each of the indicators, based on the indicative targets above, which will need to be agreed by tenants and members. Cabinet to approve targets at their meeting on 5 November 2024.
- c) In future years, as targets will have been developed, these reports can be considered alongside quarterly performance information, and the annual perception information reported each year.

Peter Campbell and Julie Fletcher

August 2024

5.2 Ombudsman Code of Conduct Self-Assessment

Julie Fletcher to report on the Ombudsman Code of Conduct Self-Assessment document included in the pack.

Complaints Code of Conduct: Self-assessment Form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer, and it must be reviewed and approved by the landlord's governing body at least annually.

Once approved, landlords must publish the self-assessment as part of the annual complaints, performance and service improvement report on their website. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.

Landlords are required to complete the self-assessment in full and support all statements with evidence, with additional commentary, as necessary.

We recognise that there may be a small number of circumstances where landlords are unable to meet the requirements, for example, if they do not have a website. In these circumstances, we expect landlords to deliver the intentions of the Code in an alternative way, for example by publishing information in a public area so that it is easily accessible.

Last updated 28 June 2024

Section 1: Definition of a Complaint

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
1.2	<p>A complaint must be defined as:</p> <p><i>‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’</i></p>	Yes	<p>Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)</p> <p>Complaints - South Cambs District Council (scams.gov.uk)</p>	<p>On review and update of the council complaint policy (September / October 2021 and May 2022), it had been decided to integrate the Housing Complaints policy into the Council’s overall Corporate Complaints Policy, and to use just one complaint definition which is the one recommended by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman as this also covers everything that is included in the Housing Ombudsman complaint definition:</p> <p>Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman definition of a complaint at that time was:</p> <p>“An expression of dissatisfaction about a council service (whether that service is provided directly by the council or by a contractor or partner) that requires a response.”</p> <p><u>Advice received from the Housing Ombudsman has confirmed that this is acceptable.</u></p> <p>As from the 1st of February 2024 the Local Government Social Care Ombudsman has updated their processes in line with the New Complaint Handling Code which has seen an amendment to the definition to a complaint.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing our complaint policy and will look to amend so to fully comply with the new complaint handling code 2024.</p>

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
1.3	A resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	See our complaint policy page 4 – 'Feedback' See our complaint policy page 11. 'Third Parties'
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	See our complaint policy pages 3 – 5.
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	See our complaint policy page 4. If a tenant / resident is dissatisfied with the response to their Service request, we encourage them to provide feedback, and if they wish they can have their case considered as a complaint.

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where landlords ask for wider feedback about their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	<p>See our complaint policy page 4.</p> <p>We encourage our tenants / residents to provide feedback good or bad and if they have chosen to leave their contact details, we will contact them to ask whether, they wish their case to be considered as a complaint.</p> <p>We will be reviewing our survey process to ensure we are capturing satisfaction levels on key transactions. As part of this review, we will look to add a link / information of our complaint policy on all relevant surveys</p>

Section 2: Exclusions

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint, they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scambs.gov.uk)	Covered within our complaint policy under 'Other Exceptions' pages 5 & 6
2.2	<p>A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. • Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court. • Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy. 	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scambs.gov.uk)	Circumstances not dealt with under the complaints handling processes are detailed within our complaint policy under 'Other Exceptions' pages 5 & 6

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	We will contact the customer and provide an explanation. See pages 5 & 6 of our Complaint Policy
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	We will contact the customer and provide an explanation. See pages 5 & 6 of our Complaint Policy
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	All complaints are reviewed on their own merit and the complainants' individual circumstances

Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scambs.gov.uk) Tenant and Leaseholder news - South Cambs District Council (scambs.gov.uk)	See our complaint policy pages 6 – 10. We have published in Tenant & Leaseholder newsletters.
3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scambs.gov.uk)	See our complaint policy pages 6 – 8 complaint stages and Appendix C – ‘responsibilities’ page 19 & 20. Complaints can be submitted through the My South Cambs customer portal. Where customers require support to submit a complaint through the customer portal route, this can be provided by calling our Customer Contact Service. Where a communication is received by other means (for example, Face to Face, an email, letter or social media) and it is clearly intended as a complaint, we will set this up as a complaint on the My South Cambs customer portal, contacting the customer for more information if this is required.

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
3.3	High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	We encourage customers to provide feedback, whether good or bad, about the services that they have received. If they so wish their case can be considered as a complaint. Feedback is used to plan how we will deliver and improve our services going forward. See our complaint policy page 4.
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the two-stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord's website.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk) Complaints - South Cambs District Council (scams.gov.uk) Housing complaints and compliments - South Cambs District Council (scams.gov.uk)	See links to our Housing complaint and corporate complaint website pages both have interlinks that take you to the same complaint policy.

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scambs.gov.uk) Housing complaints and compliments - South Cambs District Council (scambs.gov.uk)	See our complaint policy page 16, confirming how we monitor and report our performance. The code is published on our Housing website page which has a link to our complaint policy and details information regarding the Ombudsman.
3.6	Landlords must give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scambs.gov.uk)	See our complaints policy – Page 10 – 11 covering ‘Third Parties’
3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scambs.gov.uk)	See our complaints policy page 11: Details are on our webpage, within our complaint policy and response letter templates

Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	See our complaint policy pages 6 – 8 complaint stages and Appendix C – 'responsibilities' page 19 & 20. For our organisation, a 'Complaints Officer' will be referred to as 'Responding Officer' these officers job roles are not dedicated to just complaint handling, they will be Service Manager (Stage 1) and Head of Service (Stage 2)
4.2	The complaints officer must have access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints. They must also have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	See our complaint policy pages 6 – 8 complaint stages and Appendix C – 'responsibilities' page 19 & 20. For our organisation, a 'Complaints Officer' will be referred to as 'Responding Officer' these officers job roles are not dedicated to just complaint handling, they will be Service Manager (Stage 1) and Head of Service (Stage 2)
4.3	Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff must be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	We have template letters to help staff ensure all relevant wording and points are covered. 'Our Commitments' page 14 'Council Values and the Complaints Handling Process' page 17 'Appendix C – Responsibilities' pages 19 & 20 We provide staff training and updates in team meeting.

Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
5.1	Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	On review and update of the council complaint policy (September / October 2021 and May 2022), it was decided to integrate the Housing Complaints policy in to the one corporate document
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	We do not have a 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint stage
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	We have 2 stages; the 3 rd stage is the Ombudsman
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g., a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	Complaints received by our contractors will be referred to us for logging, monitoring and responding so to ensure they are in line with the code
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	Complaints received by our contractors will be referred to us for logging, monitoring and responding so to ensure they are in line with the code

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. The Code will refer to this as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	We do seek clarification from the complainant as and when needed. See our complaint policy page 9
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	We do seek clarification from the complainant as and when needed. See our complaint policy page 9
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. 	Yes	https://www.scams.gov.uk/housing/council-tenants/housing-complaints-and-compliments/	See our complaint policy. ‘Council Values and the Complaints Handling Process’ page 17 ‘Appendix C – Responsibilities’ pages 19 & 20

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	See our complaints policy – The Three Stages of the Complaints Process’ pages 6 – 10 We aim to resolve complaints within their timescales but if not possible to meet this target, we will inform the customer of a revised and realistic target timescale at the earliest opportunity and aim to extend by no more than 10 days
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.	Yes	https://www.scams.gov.uk/your-council-and-democracy/equality-and-diversity/equality-scheme/	See page 15 of our complaint policy and our Equalities Scheme webpage.
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	See our complaint policy pages 5 & 6 ‘Other Exceptions’

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
5.12	A full record must be kept of the complaint, and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	See our complaint policy – ‘Appendix C – Responsibilities’ page 19 & 20
5.13	Landlords must have processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process. Landlords must ensure appropriate remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	‘Council Values and the Complaints Handling Process’ Working Together page 17 ‘Appendix C – Responsibilities’ pages 19 & 20 Reasonable adjustments page 15
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	See our complaint policy – ‘Vexatious or Unreasonably Persistent Complaints’ pages 12 – 14 ‘Appendix B – Examples of Unreasonable Actions and Behaviours’ page 1
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	See our complaint policy: ‘Designating a Complaint as Vexatious or Unreasonably Persistent’ pages 12 – 14

Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
6.1	Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	'Council Values and the Complaints Handling Process' Working Together page 17. 'Appendix C – Responsibilities' pages 19 & 20 Reasonable adjustments page 15
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaint's procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	Yes	Contact us - South Cambs District Council (scams.gov.uk)	See link to our 'Contact us' website page where under 'Our customer service standards' it confirms we acknowledge complaints within 3 working days and has a link to our full complaint policy. We are currently reviewing our complaint policy and will look at if we retain 3 working days or increase to 5. Whichever is agreed we will ensure that it is added to our full policy document

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	<p>See our complaints policy – The Three Stages of the Complaints Process’ pages 6 – 10</p> <p>The new complaint code has changed their wording from receipt to acknowledged see below:</p> <p>response within 10 working days of receipt <u>changed to</u> 10 working days of being acknowledged.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing our complaint policy and will look at if we continue to calculate the response due date from receipt or acknowledgement. Whichever is agreed we will ensure that it is added to our full policy document</p>
6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	<p>See our complaints policy – The Three Stages of the Complaints Process’ pages 7 – 8</p>

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	Our current policy on pages 7 – 8 covers extensions. Page 11 – confirms that in addition to investigating Stage 3 complaints the Housing Ombudsman and Local Government Ombudsman services can also be contacted at any point during the complaints process for advice, guidance or support. Our holding letter templates have been updated to ensure ombudsman details are provided when an extension of time is provided
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	-	This is an area we have been working on particularly with regards to repair and maintenance repairs, ensuring a response is sent once an action plan is in place, instead of when work has been completed. We have template letters to help staff ensure all relevant wording and points are covered
6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	-	We have template letters to help staff ensure all relevant wording and points are covered

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related, and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	See our complaints policy page 5. If additional complaints are relevant, they will be added, but if not, they will be investigated as a separate matter / complaint.
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response. 	Yes	-	We have template letters to help staff ensure all relevant wording and points are covered

Stage 2

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
6.10	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scambs.gov.uk)	See our complaints policy page 8.
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaint's procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	Contact us - South Cambs District Council (scambs.gov.uk)	See link to our 'Contact us' website page where under 'Our customer service standards' it confirms we acknowledge complaints within 3 working days and has a link to our full complaint policy. We are currently reviewing our complaint policy and will look at if we retain 3 working days or increase to 5. Whichever is agreed we will ensure that it is added to our full policy document
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scambs.gov.uk)	See our complaints policy page 8.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scambs.gov.uk)	See our complaints policy page 8.

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	<p>See our complaints policy – The Three Stages of the Complaints Process’ pages 6 – 10</p> <p>We aim to resolve stage 2 complaints within 20 working days of receipt.</p> <p>The new complaint code has changed their wording from receipt to acknowledged as below: response within 20 working days of receipt <u>changed to 20 working days of being acknowledged.</u></p> <p>We are currently reviewing our complaint policy and will look at if we continue to calculate the response due date from receipt or acknowledgement. Whichever is agreed we will ensure that it is added to our full policy document</p>

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	<p>See our policy page 8.</p> <p>We aim to resolve stage 2 complaints within 20 working days but if not possible to meet this target, we will inform the customer of a revised and realistic target timescale at the earliest opportunity and aim to extend by no more than 10 working days.</p> <p>The new complaint code has increased the days from 10 to 20 working days.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing our complaint policy and will look at if we continue with 10 working days or increase to 20. Whichever is agreed we will ensure that it is added to our full policy document.</p>
6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	<p>Our currently policy on pages 7 – 8 covers extensions.</p> <p>The Ombudsman details are included with in our Stage 2 process.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing our complaint policy and template letters so will ensure ombudsman details are provided when an extension of time is required</p>

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	This is an area we have been working on particularly with regards to repair and maintenance repairs, ensuring a response is sent once an action plan is in place, instead of when work has been completed. We have template letters to help staff ensure all relevant wording and points are covered. See our policy pages 9 – 12
6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	We have template letters to help staff ensure all relevant wording and points are covered. See our policy pages 9 – 12
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied. 	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	We have template letters to help staff ensure all relevant wording and points are covered. See our policy pages 9 – 12

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	See our complaint policy pages 6 – 8 complaint stages and Appendix C – 'responsibilities' page 19 & 20.

Section 7: Putting things Right

Code Provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
7.1	<p>Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologising; • Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; • Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; • Taking action if there has been delay; • Reconsidering or changing a decision; • Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; • Providing a financial remedy; • Changing policies, procedures or practices. 	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	<p>We have template letters to help staff ensure all relevant wording and points are covered.</p> <p>‘Our Commitments’ page 14</p> <p>‘Council Values and the Complaints Handling Process’ page 17</p> <p>‘Appendix C – Responsibilities’ pages 19 & 20</p>
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	<p>Our policy clearing sets out our timeframes, commitments and reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>As well as our Council Values and Responsibilities</p>

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	We will always look to work with the tenant / resident to ensure we come to a mutual agreement to the proposed remedy. See our policy page 14 and Appendix A – our commitments and values
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scams.gov.uk)	We would also look towards the Housing Ombudsman guidance as an additional means to ensure any remedies are fairly considered. See our policy page 14 and Appendix A – our commitments and values

Section 8: Putting things Right

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
8.1	<p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord. 	Yes	<p>Tenant working groups - South Cambs District Council (scambs.gov.uk)</p> <p>Browse meetings - Housing Engagement Board (moderngov.co.uk)</p> <p>Housing performance and tenant satisfaction measures - South Cambs District Council (scambs.gov.uk)</p> <p>Our Performance - South Cambs District Council (scambs.gov.uk)</p>	<p>Following each self-assessment, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report the outcome to the Head of Housing; Housing Service Managers; Tenant led Housing Performance Panel and Housing Engagement Board Publish outcomes on our website. Include in our Annual Report / Tenant and Leaseholder Newsletters Quarterly Performance Management meetings are held with Housing Service Managers and the Head of Housing. Complaints performance is also monitored on a Corporate basis through the Council's Cabinet and Corporate Management Team <p>We are currently reviewing our Tenant led performance Panels to make them more focused on the new TSM's and monitoring performance; Our Complaint policy and Performance website page(s) to continue to improve on how we review and publish our performance</p>

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	Tenant working groups - South Cambs District Council (scamb.org.uk) Housing performance and tenant satisfaction measures - South Cambs District Council (scamb.org.uk) Our Performance - South Cambs District Council (scamb.org.uk)	<p>Our performance in relation to complaints handling is monitored through key performance indicators reported quarterly to Senior Management, Tenant Performance Panels and Councillor committees.</p> <p>Regular reviews of data and feedback allow the management of complaints handling processes on a day-to-day basis, with learning shared across our services. Reviews also take place in relation to any Stage 3 decision notices that are received, as well as Ombudsman annual review letters.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing our Tenant led performance Panels; Our Complaint policy and Performance website page(s) to continue to improve on how we review and publish our performance.</p>
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and / or change in procedures.	Yes	https://www.scamb.org.uk/housing-council-tenants/housing-complaints-and-compliments/	The first code was reviewed, completed and published on our website in January 2021, further reviewed and updated December 2021, March 2022, again in October 2022 and December 2023
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	-	This will be actioned as and when needed

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.	Yes	-	This will be actioned as and when needed

Section 9: Scrutiny and Oversight: Continuous Learning and Improvement

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scambs.gov.uk)	<p>See our policy page 16 – We value complaints as an opportunity to identify areas for improvement, forming the basis for continual organisational, service, and individual development.</p> <p>We are trialling a newly introduced survey for obtaining seeking feedback and a more robust learning from complaints process looking at how best to communicate with our tenants with the help from our resident involvement groups.</p> <p>Details of complaints are scrutinised by the Housing Service Management Team on a quarterly basis to identify trends and areas for wider service improvement, training, etcetera.</p>
9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scambs.gov.uk)	<p>See our policy page 16 – We value complaints as an opportunity to identify areas for improvement, forming the basis for continual organisational, service, and individual development.</p> <p>Details of complaints are scrutinised by the Housing Service Management Team on a quarterly basis to identify trends and areas for wider service improvement, training, etcetera.</p> <p>We are in the process of reviewing our corporate procedure to introduce a more robust learning from complaints process across the Council.</p>

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.	Yes	Feedback and Complaints Policy (scambs.gov.uk)	See our policy page 16 – We value complaints as an opportunity to identify areas for improvement, forming the basis for continual organisational, service, and individual development. Details of complaints are scrutinised by the Housing Service Management Team on a quarterly basis to identify trends and areas for wider service improvement, training, etcetera. We are in the process of reviewing our corporate procedure to introduce a more robust learning from complaints process across the Council.
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes	-	Head of Housing has been appointed
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').	Yes	Browse meetings - Housing Engagement Board (moderngov.co.uk) Browse meetings - Cabinet (moderngov.co.uk)	Lead Cabinet member for Housing has been appointed as MRC

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.	Yes	Browse meetings - Housing Engagement Board (moderngov.co.uk) Browse meetings - Cabinet (moderngov.co.uk)	Lead Cabinet member for Housing has been appointed as MRC, and will receive / have access to all suitable performance information quarterly and annual for review and reporting of findings at Housing Engagement Board and Cabinet meetings
9.7	<p>As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report. 	Yes	Browse meetings - Housing Engagement Board (moderngov.co.uk) Browse meetings - Cabinet (moderngov.co.uk)	Lead Cabinet member for Housing has been appointed as MRC, and will receive / have access to all suitable performance information quarterly and annual for review and reporting of findings at Housing Engagement Board and Cabinet meetings

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
9.8	<p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments; b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body. 	Yes	https://www.scamb.org.uk/housing/council-tenants/housing-complaints-and-compliments/	<p>See our policy. ‘Appendix C – Responsibilities’ pages 19 & 20.</p>

5.3 Tpas National Tenants Conference – Reports

Margaret Wilson, Jim Watson and Paul Bowman attended the Tpas National Tenants Conference in Coventry on 10 and 11 July 2024.

Included in the pack are their feedback reports for noting.

TPAS National Tenants Conference 10 – 11th July 2024

“This year has brought the most significant changes to the regulation of social housing in a decade! [...] our two-day National Tenants Conference is spotlighting the “new rules” with our Regulatory Reform Conference special.”

Osbourne, 2024

Feedback Report by Margaret Wilson – Tenant Volunteer

Thus, the written Programme for the conference began and, in her welcome, Jenny Osbourne MBE, the CEO of TPAS, said, “We know there is more change and regulation coming down the line and we need to be ready with the skills, resources, and resilience to meet these challenges and opportunities.” For me, this conference was inspirational because, at last, the tenant voice has power. The take-home buzzwords from the workshops and discussions that I attended were things like, “must” and “transparency” and “change”. No more wishy-washy “input” or “may” and no more hiding behind obfuscation and excuses.

Following the CEO’s opening address there was a Panel discussion comprising speakers from across the social housing spectrum. The title was *Tickbox or Transformation* and was concerned with the impact of the new regulations on tenants. The title neatly encompassed the excitement and hazards ahead as landlords face truly meaningful engagement with their tenants (or residents or customers as some landlords call us). On day two the Housing Ombudsman, Richard Blakeway, opened the day with some question-and-answer time.

The two days were split into 4 workshop sessions with several interesting offerings at each session. We attendees were asked to participate in different sessions so-as-to gain a wide coverage of information, advice, and experience to bring back for SCDC. Throughout all of this we were able to network among other tenants and landlord organisation representatives from all over the country. The sessions I attended were entitled; Getting to grips with Performance Information, Skills for tenants involved in Governance and Boards, Procurement & People, and Embedding Engagement across your organisation – getting the culture right. I summarise each session below.

Opening address and Panel Discussion

Jenny Osbourne MBE, CEO TPAS; Jack Smith, Assistant Director, Assessment & Tenant Engagement, Regulator of Social Housing; Stephen Walker, Director of Customer Services, MOAT; Matthew Baxter, CEO Echelon; Ibbby Ismail, engaged tenant, MSV Housing¹

¹ MOAT and MSV Housing are Housing Associations and Echelon is “a procurement consultancy specialising in providing advice, support and training to UK public sector organisations large and small, through all stages of the

The overarching theme of these opening talks was the changes brought about by the Social Housing Regulation Act 2024 and how they can be implemented by engaged tenants and their landlords.² Jenny Osbourne talked about “changing culture” and said, “effective management is key to success.” She based this on building trust between landlords and their tenants saying that it takes time. Stephen Walker, from MOAT referred to the legislation and what the Regulators would be looking for in their inspections. He highlighted the robust language used in the Act; “customer engagement has changed to customer influence” and that there should be “direct links to the Board [Cabinet / Housing Portfolio holder]”.

Matthew Baxter from Echelon talked about changing the culture around contractors and their operatives. For example, we must “get rid of the cycle of ‘get the operative out as quick as possible’” and change to encouraging them to look around and asking whether there are any other problems that they can fix. Landlords and their contractors should “take into account vulnerability” when dealing directly with tenants. He was encouraged that some contractors are “already making changes” but said that a new Procurement Act will be coming into force this year. The implication of this is that performance measures will have a new impact on contractors with repercussions for poor performance. The driver of the Act is for “cultural alignment” where there is more emphasis for bringing about understanding between landlords and tenants.

Ibby Ismail from MSV reminded us all that “change has come from tragedy” and challenged us that “if we want it to become a tickbox, it will.” Addressing tenants especially, he challenged us that “we [need to show] that we’re holding landlords to account” and “bring in external validation [...] organisations like TPAS”. His rousing cry was that landlords should “resource areas where it’s customer-facing” and that “tenants [should be] involved at every level”. However, there was a caution against more talking shops where nothing is achieved and the dangers of being “data rich but intelligence poor”.

Finally, Jack Smith, from the Regulator emphasised the power that tenants have been given to hold landlords to account. Tenants should be able to see progress and measure “how credible the landlord is”. Including Councillors, he referred to overall governance stating that “failures in consumer standards are symptoms of failure in governance.” All this concerned landlords’ staff taking responsibility for governance and management and that engagement with tenants is key to change. Additionally, ‘staff’ does not mean passing housing matters to Resident Involvement Teams but being willing to engage across the board.

procurement process, from scoping and pre-procurement to contract award and mobilisation.” Website accessed 15/07/24 <https://echelonconsultancy.co.uk/about/> MSV also specialise in housing marginalised people.

² The term landlords incorporates all organisations that rent social housing; specifically Local Authorities and Housing Associations.

The whole Panel agreed that involving more people was important whilst acknowledging that it has often been difficult. Within the atmosphere of change the suggestion was that landlords should look for the gaps in what is happening now. Suggestions included:

- Providing incentives
- Going to tenants 'where they are'
- Taking a different approach to engagement
- Continuously monitor engagement
- Reach out to 'non-complainers'
- Make *meaningful* changes
- Customers should *influence* and bring about changes

The biggest challenge of regulation was the complexity of individual needs. How will these data be captured? However, it is the individual tenant that comes into focus so new ideas will have to be developed. Changing the landlord culture requires them to embrace that they *must* do this; after all, it will improve both aspects of the landlord tenant relationship. Evidence will be required; for example, data should be provided to show commitment. A recognised risk associated with the current pressure to build more homes is that landlords may lose their focus on existing tenants.

It is clear that dramatic changes are expected and enabled by the new Act. Tenants should no longer be a peripheral body to the landlords' processes, they must be an integrated part of the housing fabric with the ability to influence matters that concern their housing and well-being. Communication has long been the substance of complaints and the Regulator will be looking for more dialogue and understanding from both sides. Furthermore, this will extend to contractors engaged by landlords.

All delegates were invited to attend the opening session on the second day with Richard Blakeway, the Housing Ombudsman. Naturally, his focus was complaints and how his department and landlords deal with them. We were reassured that the majority of cases are resolved within 6 months but informed that the number of caseworkers has risen from 20 to 130. His view was that "the jury's out for landlords". He was concerned that many landlords had not demonstrated their self-assessment, compliance with the [complaints] code and the forthcoming "report for 23-24 [which is] going out to landlords next month doesn't look good, there'll be a decline."

The Ombudsman thought that complaints should be a learning platform but said that many landlords treat them as a "sideshow". The recurring theme was "good record keeping" and "good communication"; in other words, these are where landlords need to improve. He gave an interesting definition; good practice = planned intervention, poor practice = landlord reaction and

talked of the “trade off [a stark focus] between responsive repairs and planned replacement.” The new regulations mean that “there must be a focus on legal obligations now against planned [actions] in the future.” In other words, just because things are planned, landlords cannot put off until later things that require action now.

The issue of what constitutes a complaint is frequently viewed differently by landlords and tenants. The Ombudsman is aware that “few complaints coming in to us could be as big a problem as a lot; [high dissatisfaction score versus low ‘official’ complaints]”. He also referred to landlords having a “pseudo complaints process” whereby tenants are not being directed to a proper complaints protocol.

Concerning the potential overlap between the Ombudsman and the Regulator a new Memorandum of Understanding was agreed on 10th July 2024 which sets out the degree of co-operation and collaboration between the two organisations³. It is important to note that the Regulator focus is landlords and ensuring compliance with the standards it sets whilst the Ombudsman’s focus is on individual complaints and their resolution. Both organisations’ aim is to improve standards throughout the social housing sector.

WORKSHOPS

Getting to grips with Performance Information

Sam Goodwin, TPAS

Under the banner of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 this session covered the type of involvement that tenants are expected to be involved in, how to interpret the data tenants are provided with, and how landlords should present information. However, the key area concerned the culture within landlord governance and how this affected most landlord / tenant interaction. We were provided with a TPAS booklet (available on their website www.tpas.org.uk) where the Act’s emphasis was summarised and the ensuing workshop covered the many finer points that illustrate the necessity to communicate properly with tenants to ensure that they have “free, unfettered access in timely fashion.”

Tenants should:

- Know how their landlord is doing (for example; how do they compare with other landlords, are they doing what they say they are, can their performance targets be improved)

³ The document can be found at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/668d4a70ab5fc5929851bc9b/20240705_RSH_HOS_MOU_FINAL_10_July.pdf

- Understand how their landlords collect and publish data (for example; recording dissatisfaction as well as complaints)
- Have clarity about who within the organisation is responsible for doing what (for example; being able to contact the right person)



A helpful TPAS diagram illustrates the complete spectrum of where the Act envisages tenant input and influence to be established and the landlord to facilitate this.

Source: TPAS

Clearly, the culture throughout the landlord’s organisation affects all their dealings with their tenants. The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) will consider effective tenant engagement as within their remit. To quote TPAS, “[...] poor engagement could indicate to [the Regulator] that an organisation has poor Governance, which is a clear indication of the importance that has been placed on engagement.”⁴

There were several examples and suggestions given as to how landlords could demonstrate their commitment to engaging with tenants. These were such things as:

- Publications like Newsletters, Annual Reports, etc.
- Joining benchmarking groups
- Senior management / heads of service meeting tenants
- Consulting tenants on services and targets
- Checking tenants’ priorities

For tenants there was also helpful guidance:

- Where are you compared with where you want to be
- Help your landlord understand you / your situation
- Know your neighbours / community

⁴ TPAS, National Tenant Engagement Standards, 4th edition, 2024: p.6.

- Ask for help to 'do it' rather than 'do it for me'
- Consider who is affected by poor performance and who is answerable, what pitfalls can you envisage if there is no improvement
- Ask the correct questions, what will you do with the answer

Good practice was described as following a protocol, improving landlord performance as a journey where the end result will improve matters for both parties in the discussion. Tenants should be provided with information that they want and not what the landlord wants to give. An example of excellent practice was for Heads / Managers of Housing at all levels to go out and speak to tenants – yes – go door knocking.

Skills for Tenants involved in Governance and Boards

Andy Fry, TPAS

The thrust of this session was provided by the new Consumer Standards⁵ published by the RSH with a focus on tenants within landlords' formal governance bodies. This publication provides a new context for tenant involvement where the old 'detriment test' has been transformed into a proactive inspection. The effect is that 'detriment', which was backward-looking at 'what went wrong', no longer dictates where scrutiny and inspection begins. Regulation now requires a proactive approach focused on preventing things going wrong before they do. The best way to bring this change about is to work with tenants at governance level and provide evidence of their influence within the culture of the organisation. This will no doubt be a challenge for many landlords that have become set-in-their-ways with some actively resisting meaningful tenant engagement. Nevertheless, there are also landlords leading the way in bringing about the transformation of landlord-tenant systems and protocols.

Derived from the Grenfell Report, a description of good Governance is, "arrangements put in place to ensure that intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved."⁶ The model produced by the speaker was a Co-Regulation model whereby the landlord, together with tenants at the highest level, self-regulates in conjunction with the RSH as an external Regulator. Mr Fry likened the governance template to a sandwich; the Board / non-executives / Cabinet →←senior executives →← front-line staff. Tenants must be involved at all levels. These arrangements must follow the Gunning Principles which apply to all forms of consultation to ensure that they are meaningful.⁷ It is recognised that resources will be required but this is an

⁵ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65fc480ca6c0f70011ef91c7/April_2024_-_Transparency__Influence_and_Accountability_Standard_FINAL__1_.pdf

⁶ This definition is included in many public body publications, for example; CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) at: <https://www.cipfa.org/policy-and-guidance/publications/d/delivering-good-governance-in-local-government-framework-2016-edition>

⁷ <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/The%20Gunning%20Principles.pdf>

unavoidable part of good governance. Clearly Local Authorities have different governance models from Housing Associations loosely described as, 'executives advise – cabinet decides'. Nevertheless, Cabinet members should provide performance oversight and hold executives to account. (We also heard about similar structures, protocols and responsibilities for Housing Associations).

Scrutiny by tenants forms a very large part of good governance. This should demonstrate:

- Scrutiny is from the tenants' perspective
- Gathering evidence
- Independent decision-making
- Improved decision-making

Tenants should decide their own agenda for scrutiny. For example, look at advice that goes to Cabinet, see how decisions are working in operation, check that their information is accurate and reliable.

It is clearly helpful for tenants to have skills and attributes such as knowledge, a lived experience, diversity awareness, objectivity, social awareness. They should be willing to challenge what they scrutinise and, naturally, have time to prepare and contribute their abilities and views.

Finally, TPAS sees context as vital to effective tenant engagement in governance;

- Are Cabinet decisions based on tenant feedback as well as executive input
- Are tenants and executives working collaboratively
- Do members see the 'big picture' AND the 'small picture'
- Are there good roots in the community
- Does Cabinet secure assurance rather than reassurance (that is, ask questions, look at evidence, challenge answers, do not take 'everything's fine' as a satisfactory answer)
- Do tenants share the overall values and objectives of the landlord
- Do tenants understand the core policies

These questions are equally important for all collaborating individuals as they work towards improving their own landlord / tenant relationships and services. We were shown a brief video clip of a witness at the Grenfell Inquiry. It was illustrative of being reassured that all was well because a reliable person said that it was. The glaring omission was the tenant perspective. TPAS identifies two groups of experts; lived experience of tenants and professional experience of executives. The SHR will expect to see tenant influence at work within the landlords' governance processes.

Procurement and People

Matthew Baxter, Echelon (see Fn.1)

This was a lively and interactive session centred around those who have access to tenants' homes. Naturally, those who have the most opportunity / reason to enter properties are the contractors that landlords use for repairs and maintenance. Interestingly, all contractors are held to the same regulation as landlords themselves.

The obvious focus of the conference was the introduction of inspection and the empowerment of tenants. However, always topical, this session concentrated on the implications of tragic and sad recent events whereby tenant families have endured terrible, sometimes fatal, living conditions. Emerging from this is the current focus on vulnerability. The link with repairs and maintenance is that these are the "eyes and ears of an organisation [...], how do we use that resource?"

The Housing ombudsman has published 27 reports of maladministration. These Reports should be taken as lessons to learn. What was exposed were landlords who did not consider their tenants' vulnerability. These are obviously individual cases, but they demonstrated a clear theme that landlords did not have a system in place that enabled them to know their tenant's *current* situation. Equally, in some cases, landlords did not *consider* their tenant's vulnerability. The Ombudsman's decisions were based on the view that landlords should be "making services bespoke".

Since social housing tenancies can be extremely long, it is not enough to have initial assessments of a tenant's capabilities. Tenant's health may well deteriorate over time, and this is something that persons entering homes may detect – so long as landlords have a protocol for record-keeping (many don't). Obviously, training of such individuals in recognising signs of vulnerability is necessary.

Delegates were then asked questions concerning their own experience.

Question: "Does your landlord have a published vulnerability policy?"

Answer: 75% (of the delegates) "Don't know."

Question: "Do you think your landlord should publish a vulnerability policy that is easily accessible to all tenants?"

Answer: 100% (of the delegates) "Yes."

Question: "When was the last time your landlord asked you if you have any vulnerability?"

Answer: 32% "In the last 6 – 12 months."

26% "When I moved in."

16% "My last interaction."

26% "Never."

Unsurprisingly many of the examples taken from the Housing Ombudsman's reports concerned repairs where data were supplied by the landlord. (NB. The Ombudsman's function and remit only concerns complaints. To get to that stage the complaint will have been through the landlord's own system.) Incomplete or failed repairs are accepted by tenants, but these data do not always get captured by transactional satisfaction scores (that is, those taken at the time of repair). Furthermore, vulnerable tenants may not recognise a problem or there may be a cumulative effect on the tenant of delayed repairs.

Good practice was identified as taking a proactive approach to building condition as well as ensuring that tenants' present situations are identified. Obviously, many / most tenants have no issues, but the proactive nature of the recommendations should help avoid some similar tragedies that may occur in the future.

In the Safety and Quality Standard vulnerability is mentioned 32 times. The Ombudsman defines this as, "a dynamic state which arises from [...] personal circumstances, characteristics and their housing complaint. Vulnerability may be exacerbated when a social landlord or the Housing Ombudsman Service does not act with appropriate levels of care when dealing with a resident's complaint."

Undoubtedly, landlords have new, higher responsibilities to ensure that their tenants can enjoy safe, secure homes. These responsibilities extend to their contractors and all staff. Not only are the physical conditions of properties vital but the individual circumstances of tenants must also be considered and acted upon where necessary. Tenants have diverse needs and landlords have a duty to understand them and act where necessary. This is something that feeds into community, demographics, suitability and up-to-date record-keeping.

How do we know about vulnerability:

- Initial details
- Annual census
- 'Eyes and ears' approach
- Annual visits such as gas safety checks
- Dedicated officers

The final question for delegates was, "Are you happy for landlords to keep vulnerability data?" The overwhelming response was, "Yes" from 95%.

Embedding engagement and Culture

Emma Gilpin, TPAS; Becky Pavey-Kenny, Sadie Parr, Ted Nestfield, bpha (formerly Bedford Pilgrims, Housing Association)

This session provided theory and practice as delegates heard from both TPAS and practitioners from a Housing Association. It began with a dissemination of the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard from the SHR (2024). The Standard requirements are high with tenants' well-being, communication, tenant engagement and scrutiny plus fairness and respect all highlighted. Ms Gilpin summarised this as 'behaviour matters' and 'beliefs matter' "across the whole organisation". For landlords this also makes "good business sense".

Landlord performance will be graded by the Regulator from 1 – 4 where 1 is the landlord is "delivering" and "demonstrated" and 4 is that the landlord has "very serious failings". Symptoms of the latter might be where landlords don't look or check below the surface; they "need to hear unpleasant truths". Helpful bullet points about culture were:

- For a significant cultural shift, you must **believe** something is worth doing, that tenant involvement can make a difference – you need to know your **WHY**
- In engagement, all must believe that tenants have a right to be involved
- All must believe that tenants have something worth saying
- All may have to recognise that previous beliefs may not be accurate
- Is there stereotyping without knowing it? Check communications, for example
- Don't believe you know it all – we must eject the ego / be willing to learn

Several potential problem areas were highlighted around tenant engagement such as only listening to involved / engaged tenants. Landlords are encouraged to go and meet their tenants especially those whose voices are quiet or silent. Meetings and consultations can enable all tenants to participate in issues that affect them and prevent any biased decision-making. During informal meetings, for example coffee mornings or evenings, people can be encouraged to chat about all kinds of things; they can also talk about getting involved themselves. On the other hand, significant changes require affected tenants to be consulted at the "formative" stages of any proposal. The consultation conditions are described in para. 2.2.6. of the 1st of April 2024 publication⁸ and they are designed to ensure that the tenant experience is properly considered.

However, one delegate, somewhat tongue-in-cheek, did remark that they "didn't want to be consulted to death". Another observed that their organisation staff tended to pass "anything connected with housing" to Resident Engagement regardless of the issue at hand and, usually, without registering whether this was the appropriate action. Such behaviour is illustrative of resistance to change and a possible symptom of individuals side-stepping responsibility.

⁸ Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard, consumer standards 1 April 2024 available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65fc480ca6c0f70011ef91c7/April_2024_-_Transparency__Influence_and_Accountability_Standard_FINAL__1_.pdf

Moving to the practical, we then heard from representatives from a Housing association – as it happens, fairly local, with 4,290 homes within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. They were the Customer Engagement Manager⁹ and two members of the Service Improvement Panel. An example of working / consulting with tenants was a major change to the repairs and maintenance operation. Tenants' complaints and comments were listened to and, following the consultation, this was recently taken 'in house'.

Consequently, a "customer first" ethos was instilled in the new operations team and they were given mandatory "empathy training" on employment. There was clear enthusiasm for the change as it enabled "getting to know who's behind the front door". Operatives are trained to engage with tenants so that they can feed back to the landlord what tenants think. They also report an improvement to their working conditions since the change to an in-house service. bpha will conduct a review of the change via their scrutiny protocol.

The Service Improvement Panel is designed to review performance from a customer perspective. Incentives are offered in the form of salary (although members are not employees). It was emphasised that incentives are not rewards and involved tenants are valued for their independent opinions and input. Shopping vouchers and training are also used as incentives. Time, skills, and experience are all valuable commodities and, as such, customers are treated as consultants – who all get paid.

Various levels of engagement are offered and obtained "through perseverance" on the part of the landlord. Customers involved in the Service Improvement Panel, for example, have a high level of time commitment and their task involves gathering, reading, and critiquing systems, documents and attending regular meetings. Among their objective are to suggest improvements, hold the landlord to account for any failings, and be an influential voice to the Board (Cabinet). From 90 applications 10 people were appointed following a process of short-listing and interviews. At the opposite end of the spectrum, 'customer stories' are invited so that tenant experiences can be shared via newsletters and other communications. Examples were how Anti-Social Behaviour problems had been dealt with or how life was following adaptations to a home.

For this landlord improving their customer engagement opportunities and incentivising participation has helped to bring about a major cultural change. The business structure reflects the centrality of resident engagement and their willingness to change an entire operation as a result of customer influence has brought benefits to both sides. No doubt, as this is recent, there

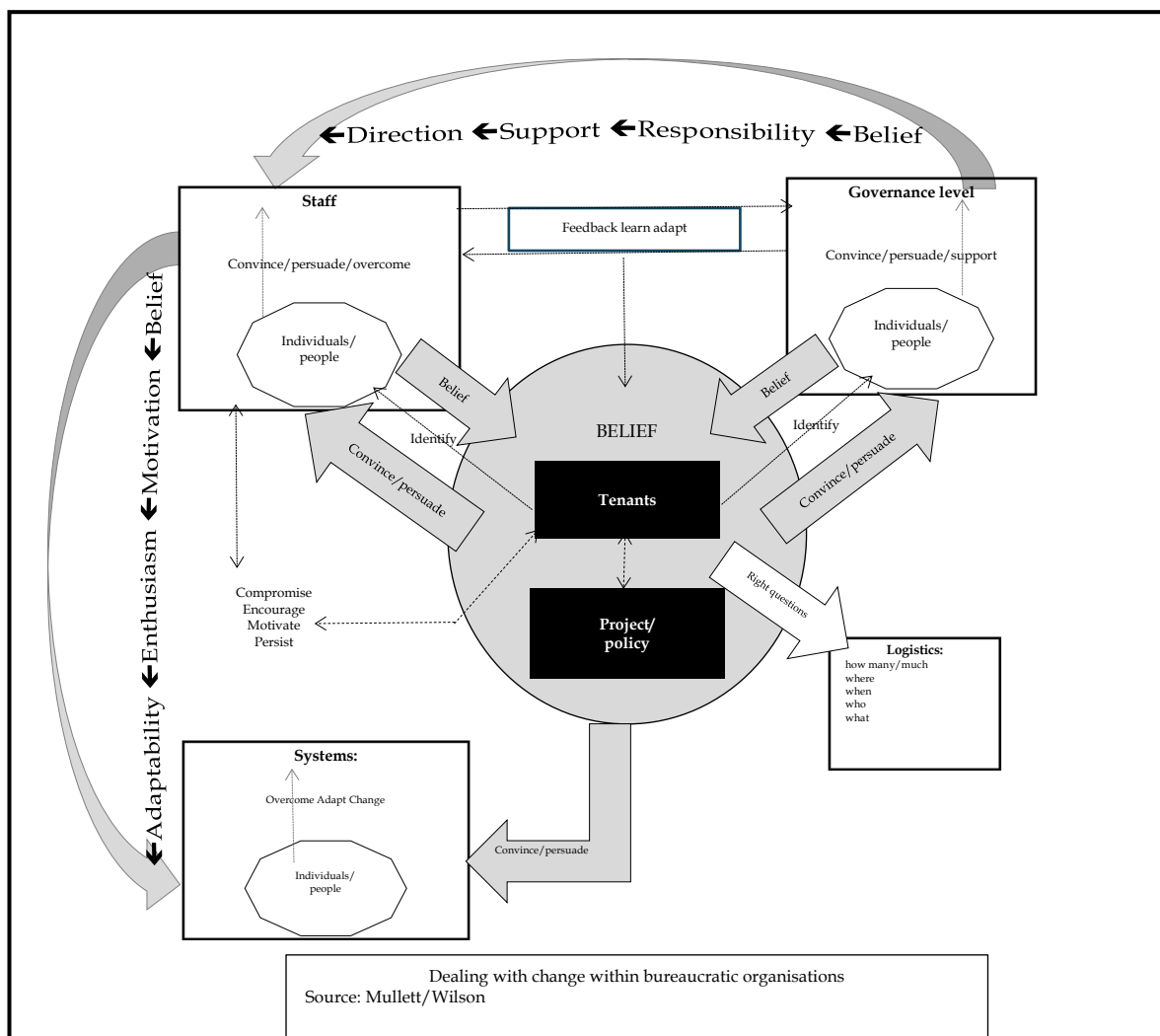
⁹ bpha describes its tenants as Customers.

may be a honeymoon period but only time will tell. There were many questions from the floor but all three presenters expressed their enthusiasm about the way forward.

Take Home Impressions

Without doubt this conference was about the empowerment of the tenant voice and the establishment of the Social Housing Regulator in April. Paternalistic attitudes and behaviour are not appropriate and evidence of tenant influence in policy and operations is required, not optional. An MOU has been published that clarifies the distinct roles of the Regulator and Ombudsman giving tenants the option of redress without having to follow a complaints procedure first. Sadly, all this has come about through tragedy but, as many who have experienced tragedy in their lives say, “something good has come from it”. The diagram shows how change can be affected when belief and buy-in from all concerned work together.

Governance-level decision-makers, all staff, and tenants can bring about changes to systems when they communicate and co-operate with respect and fairness. Consequently, changes improve the lot of all concerned.



Tpas National Tenant Conference – 10 and 11 July 2024

DoubleTree by Hilton, Coventry

Feedback Report by Jim Watson – Tenant Volunteer

[A3 – Resolving Conflict – Jackie Grannell – Tpas](#)

1 – Conflict good or bad can be resolved if both parties agree

2 – Accountability can work if council listen to problems

3 – Benchmark will take about a year

4 – 6 reasons

1 – conflict can be creative

2 – releasing strong feelings is healthier than harbouring resentment

3 – without conflict we may fail to realise how strongly someone else feels

4 – conflict can help the group by relieving personal agenda so that foundation on which is more stable

5 – seeing people disagree in open way can encourage others to contribute

6 – decisions can be better if we made to justified

[Richard Barkley – Housing Ombudsman](#)

Complaints appeal at last letter from landlord to contact housing ombudsman case worker does not have any qualifications.

Recognise record and report there should be a complaints board landlord tenants act 1985 landlord and contractor if issue landlord responsibility.

[STIGMA – Rachial Williamson](#)

1 – Pride in place of home (CHI)

2 – Education Responsibility

3 – Be listened to housing needs support where needed

4 – Accountability

Complaints Handling – Caritas Charles – Tpas

The section has done much work on this area but still more to learn. What are the implications of the housing Ombudsmen's new complaints Handling code? And what should we be taking as learning from their recent spotlight reports.

Croydon Council have been bankrupt 3 times in last 5 years present owners are not bothered about their tenants the present owners use their family members owns and does repairs? I'm told by a resident.

At time of conference there are 34 breach of regulation served to councils.

There is a new regulation only released on 9th July 2024 so will take time to read and digest and see what the council can implement the new regulation.

Tpas National Tenant Conference – 10 and 11 July 2024

DoubleTree by Hilton, Coventry

Feedback Report by Paul Bowman – Tenant Volunteer

With six workshops to choose from, twice a day for each day, we each attended different sessions in order to cover the subject matter most relevant to us and the Tenants we represent.

This being my fourth TPAS Conference, it was by far the most informative and productive. The quality of input from delegates has dramatically improved (through well attended Webinars set up by both TPAS and Four Million Homes, amongst others). The attendees were not all Tenants, either. Service providers were also present, along with Landlords from Housing Associations and Local Authorities. This provided some insightful discussions during the sessions, which spilled over into the coffee breaks....

Session A

Maximise the Influence! How to get more Tenants Involved

Getting more/different tenants involved at a strategic level to ensure effective tenant influence and scrutiny, holding organisations to account (including effective strategy co-design).

Engage – Involve – Influence

Appreciative Enquiry

Evidenced based approach – Ensure Equality of Contribution – Enable Checking Back – Qualitative

Behavioural Insights Principles

Successful Communications need to be:

Opened – Read – Understood – Actioned

**** Takeaways ****

Situational Logic: Someone lodges a complaint, so invite them to participate!

Train your volunteers – and front-line staff. Quality Input = Quality Output

Session B

Housing Regulator

Expectations – Realistic or Uninformed?

Social housing tenants' homes should be safe and well maintained, and landlords should deliver effective landlord services

Tenants should be able to hold their landlord to account for the delivery of effective landlord services

Four Pillars:

Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transparency-influence-and-accountability-standard>

Safety and Quality Standard

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safety-and-quality-standard>

Tenancy Standard

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tenancy-standard>

Neighbourhood and Community Standard

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/neighbourhood-and-community-standard>

What could your Landlord do differently?

1. More meetings
2. Better note taking
3. Read meeting minutes

** Takeaway **

Engage with Tenants and demonstrate how Tenants' views have been taken into account

(See Session A)

Keynote Speech: Housing Ombudsman

Reports of Complaints Handling Code failure have risen from 1200PA to 600PCM!

Victim of its own success.

Recruitment and training now bearing fruit.

[How does the Ombudsman monitor a landlord's compliance with the Code?](#)

The Ombudsman has a duty to monitor landlord compliance with the Complaint Handling Code. *As part of this, the Ombudsman is asking landlords to publish a Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report which includes its self-assessment against the Code. The landlord must publish this on their website (if they have one) and provide this information to the Housing Ombudsman in their annual submission.*

Session C

Most Used Social Media Platforms

WhatsApp – 79% Facebook – 73% Instagram – 60% X (Twitter) – 44% TikTok – 40%
iMessage – 38% Snapchat – 31% LinkedIn – 30% Pinterest – 27%

Different demographics tend to use different platforms

Build Trust

Be Authentic: People are clear what we stand for (Head)

Be Believable: We can deliver the standard we say we will (Hands)

Be Empathetic: So people believe that we care (Heart)

** Takeaways **

Build your reputation first – then be ready to respond on multiple platforms

Vital to Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard

Emerging trends: WhatsApp Channels

<https://houghbellis.co.uk/2024/06/12/whats-next-for-whatsapp/>

Session D

Rethinking Repairs and Maintenance

James Prestwich Director of Policy and External Affairs Chartered Institute of Housing

<http://www.bettersocialhousingreview.org.uk/>

Accurate Data Collection is vital

Landlord must support Tenants to Scrutinise

Poor oversight by Landlord on Contractors results in responsibility of errors by Contractor falling on Landlord's Management Team

Local Authority Landlords are unused to Oversight

** Takeaway **

Engage with Tenants and demonstrate how Tenants' views have been taken into account

Note: Please contact me for copies of the PowerPoint Files for the each of the above Sessions

6. Any other Business

Any additional issues to be raised.

7. Meeting Dates for 2024 / 2025

- 12 December 2024 (Monkfield Room, 1st Floor, SCDC, Cambourne)
- 27 March 2025 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)

8. Closing