



# Housing Complaints Task Force Q3

1st October – 31st December 2025

# Agenda

- ▶ Welcome & Introductions
- ▶ Actions from Last Meeting
- ▶ Q3 Complaint (Stage 1 & 2) figures by Team
- ▶ Lessons Learned – New Format
- ▶ Housing Ombudsman Updates
- ▶ Compliments
- ▶ Complaint Scrutiny Recommendations Progress
- ▶ AOB



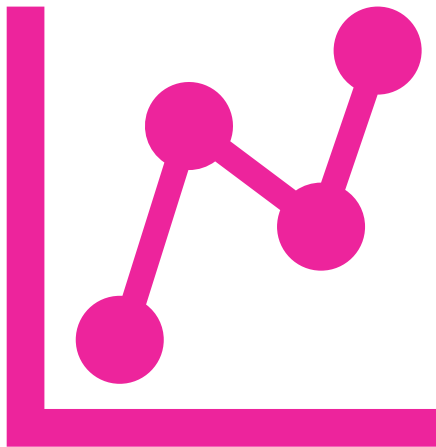
# Actions from Previous Meeting



- ▶ After discussion 'Blank' responses from Compliance Alan Fletcher-Hill agreed to feed back to colleagues.
- ▶ Need to ensure participation from Planned Works team at this meeting.
- ▶ Once Complaints Experts are recruited ask them to review the form, categories and website.
- ▶ FD to add to lessons learnt that spot checks are being carried out and work has been removed from some contractors.
- ▶ JH to look at some training.

# Complaints Data

Q3 – 1st October – 31st December 2025



# Housing Repairs and Maintenance (inc. Voids) – Q2



- ▶ Year on Year Comparisons
  - ▶ Q3 2024/25 – Stage One Complaints – 55
  - ▶ Q3 2025/26 – Stage One Complaints Received - 49
- ▶ Outcomes for Q4
  - ▶ 34 – Upheld
  - ▶ 10 - Not Upheld
  - ▶ 1 - Not Considered to be a complaint
  - ▶ 4 – Blank
- ▶ Timeframes
  - ▶ 94% acknowledged on time
  - ▶ 97% responded to on time
  - ▶ 9.71 days average to respond

# Property Assets

## Property Assets (inc. A&As)

- ▶ Year on Year Comparison
  - ▶ Q2: 2024/25 - 8
  - ▶ Q2: 2025/26 – 14
- ▶ Outcomes for Q2 2025/26
  - ▶ 6 – Not Upheld
  - ▶ 5 – Upheld
  - ▶ 2 – Blank
  - ▶ 1 – Not considered to be a complaint
- ▶ Timeframes
  - ▶ 79% – Acknowledged in time
  - ▶ 57% - Responded to in time\*
  - ▶ 15.54 - Average working days to respond

\*4 complaints breached the extended deadline



# Compliance

## Compliance (Big 7)

- ▶ Year on Year Comparison
  - ▶ Q3: 2024/25 - 48
  - ▶ Q3: 2025/26 – 55
- ▶ Outcomes for Q2 2025/26
  - ▶ 44 – Upheld
  - ▶ 9 – Not Upheld
  - ▶ 2 – Blank
- ▶ Timeframes
- ▶ 84% - responded to on time\*
- ▶ 14.85 – Average working days to respond

\* 34 complaints extended out of a possible 55



# Tenancy Services



- ▶ Year on Year Comparisons
  - ▶ Q3 2024/25 – 23
  - ▶ Q3 2025/26 – 37
- ▶ Outcomes for Q3
  - ▶ 14 – Upheld
  - ▶ 11 - Not Upheld
  - ▶ 11 - Not Considered to be a complaint
  - ▶ 1 - Blank
- ▶ Timeframes
  - ▶ 3.94 days average to acknowledge
  - ▶ 10.11 days average to respond
  - ▶ 95% responded to in time

# Housing Solutions



- ▶ Year on Year Comparisons
  - ▶ Q3 2024/25 – 13
  - ▶ Q3 2025/26 – 12
- ▶ Outcomes for Q2
  - ▶ 0 – Upheld
  - ▶ 3 - Not Upheld
  - ▶ 9 - Not Considered to be a complaint
- ▶ Timeframes
  - ▶ 2.00 – average working days to acknowledge
  - ▶ 5.58 days average to respond
  - ▶ 100% responded to in time

# Q3 Stage 2 Housing Complaints



- ▶ Year on Year Comparisons
  - ▶ Q3 2024/25 – 24 S2 Complaints
  - ▶ Q3 2025/26 – 23 S2 Complaints Received
- ▶ Outcomes for Q3
  - ▶ 13 – Upheld
  - ▶ 3 - Not Upheld
  - ▶ 4 – Not considered to be a complaint
  - ▶ 2 - Blank
- ▶ Timeframes
  - ▶ 3.44 average days to acknowledge
  - ▶ 15.56 average days to respond
  - ▶ 100% responded to on time

# Complaints – Themes, Lessons Learned, and Service Improvements



- ▶ We run the outcomes data from the complaints system, to create trends within each service area within our new lessons learnt register
- ▶ Using the root cause analysis data, we populated the category and the trends for each service area
- ▶ We then asked you to complete the learning, the planned service improvement and the action taken
- ▶ These lessons learned are for you as a service to own and put in place.
- ▶ Please remember that any actions will need to be evidenced
- ▶ Over the next few slides, we have highlighted some from each service area.

# Housing Repairs



- ▶ Trends
  - ▶ Contractor behaviour on site, lack of updates being provided to tenants, lack of timeframes being provided to tenants, and quality of repairs
- ▶ Learning:
  - ▶ Need for clearer expectations surrounding conduct and professionalism, improve accuracy of communication between contractor and tenants, clearer job specifications and improve communication standards as well as reinforcing our organisational values
- ▶ Planned Service Improvement
  - ▶ Regular progress review meetings have been introduced to go through complaint lessons learned with contractors, ensure that CRMs are tracked and DLO/Staff to be reminded of our values.
- ▶ Action
  - ▶ Contractor moving on to TM Connect so we can track tenants feedback, and TMC feedback reviewed each month. TMC highlighting high levels of satisfaction.

# Compliance (Gas and Elec)



- ▶ Trends
  - ▶ Poor communication between contractor and tenants leading to missed and incomplete appointments, vulnerability data not being used pre-visit and multiple visits taking place to rectify matters
- ▶ Learning:
  - ▶ Need for clearer expectations surrounding conduct and professionalism
- ▶ Planned Service Improvement
  - ▶ Regular progress review meetings have been introduced to go through complaint lessons learned with contractors, implement stricter KPIs for appointment keeping including no access and failed visit rates, TM Connect will be introduced for compliance and provide more visibility for contractors of our tenants needs and availability, assess resource requirements within the compliance team.
- ▶ Action
  - ▶ Contractor moving on to TM Connect so we can track tenants feedback, missed and late appointments are now being monitored via monthly reports, van stock checks are taking place, and a new role has been appointed for to support contract managers.

# Compliance – Damp and Mould



- ▶ Trends
  - ▶ Poor communication from contractor, lack of coordination between surveyors and contractors, delays in dealing with damp and mould, remedial work taking longer than planned.
- ▶ Learning:
  - ▶ Ensure contractors keep tenants up to date and fully explain the impact of the works, a full review of the damp and mould workflow, recognise the need for more proactive follow up to confirm issues haven't reoccurred.
- ▶ Planned Service Improvement
  - ▶ Regular progress reviews have been implemented and these will be minuted, ensure all damp and mould work is completed to an acceptable standard.
- ▶ Action
  - ▶ As complaints take time to filter through some of these complaints analysed will relate to the previous damp and mould contractor. However, the new contractor has been briefed on the require communication standards. Guidance has also been provided to all necessary teams to ensure that delays are minimised and the correct action is taken.

# Planned Works



## ▶ Trends

- ▶ Lack of communication between the Council and it's contractors/tenants, there was a poor quality of work undertaken, lack of awareness surrounding the works taking place, and not managing tenants expectations.

## ▶ Learning:

- ▶ The need to introduce a consistent communication protocol between the council, tenants and contractors so timeframes, updates and escalation routes are available. Communication affected due to the current high workload and limited staffing capacity

## ▶ Planned Service Improvement

- ▶ Contractor meetings to be minuted, a restructure of assets is finalised clear responsibilities need to be embedded, and hold coordination meetings to ensure alignment.

## ▶ Action

- ▶ Regular process reviews have been implemented with contractors; the assets restructure is now in place providing a clear ownership of roles and responsibilities.

# Tenancy Services



- ▶ Trends
  - ▶ Lack of communication in ASB process, lack of actions/action plans and letters sent to ASB victims, lack of proactive updates during ASB process. There has been a lack of resource causing an impact.
- ▶ Learning:
  - ▶ Tenants require a point of contact for urgent matters, it is important to communicate regarding responsibilities of tenants at signup stage, our new website could be difficult to report ASB, need for better ASB case management, needs to be better TORT procedures, gap in service when housing officer leaves organisation.
- ▶ Planned Service Improvement
  - ▶ Website may need updating to improve ASB process visibility, new ASB process is being drafted, new TORT procedure, better contingency plans for absences.
- ▶ Action
  - ▶ Housing Officers received bespoke ASB training in January, teams issued with a reminder regarding communication options, new 12 month fixed term housing officer role starting,

# Initial Feedback



- ▶ This is a work in progress that we are continually looking to develop, if you have any feedback please provided it to James or Kerry.
- ▶ The data that is put in the spreadsheet is based off the data that you put into the outcomes. The more information in outcomes, the better this will be.
- ▶ We will complete columns B and C
- ▶ You need to complete D (learning), E (planned service improvement), F (action taken)
  - ▶ D (Why) – Why has that learning occurred?
  - ▶ E (How) – How are you going to implement
  - ▶ F (What) – What action have you taken/taking?
- ▶ For action taken implementing minutes is likely not going to be enough to resolve the issues. What have you done to ensure that things like communication has improved.

From next Q – Please bring evidence of changes. This will be saved to document changes.

If matters remain, they will be carried over to the next quarter and you may need to try a different improvement and action to resolve.

Lastly, all of this will be public information, and our tenants will be able to challenge you on this information.

# Compliments Q3



- ▶ “Spot on repair works completed. Both repairs' ops are an asset to BMSDC . Pleasure to have some lovely workmen in the property providing excellent repairs”
- ▶ “We had a visit today from Principle Construction and Maintenance and I was so impressed the young chap was so friendly and professional he has done such a good job cleaning all the area of mould and painting everywhere to future protect it he gave some great advice to avoid it retuning and left everywhere so clean and tidy it's been a long time since we have had such an amazing contractor visit the property he made both me and my wife feel at ease as soon as he arrived thanks so much for the speed in resolving this issue.”
- ▶ “Our housing officer really showed myself and my husband such kindness and empathy while we were trying to sign our tenancy, he went out of his way to sort out problems and he has made us feel supported and listened to”

# Housing Ombudsman Report – Vulnerabilities



## ► Spotlight report on attitudes, respect and rights

### General needs does not mean no needs

The Regulator's Statistical Data Return (SDR) 2022-23 reports that only 11.5%<sup>13</sup> of social housing stock is given over to supported housing, a proportion which has remained consistent over recent years. Therefore, the vast majority of social housing is provided in the 'general needs' category. It defines general needs housing as "stock that is not designated for specific client groups". This is a broad definition and illustrates the difficulties with the term: **general needs does not mean no needs**.

*People who require care and support live in all forms of housing not just supported and retirement housing, which can sometimes be assumed. Many tenants in general need housing are ageing, experience long term conditions or are disabled, or can require safeguarding due to abuse or neglect.<sup>14</sup>*

- Chartered Institute of Housing

# Housing Ombudsman Report – Vulnerabilities



In 2021-22, 43% of new social housing letting households included at least one person with a long-term physical or mental health condition.<sup>15</sup> Digging deeper into the data, the following proportion of potentially vulnerable new tenants were allocated general needs housing, not supported housing:<sup>16</sup>

- 43% of single elder people
- 64% of elder couples
- 73% of those who had been statutorily homeless
- 66% of households who had disability or access related housing needs
- 65% of those households containing a member with a long-term illness
- 67% of those who left their last settled home due to domestic abuse

# Housing Ombudsman Report – Vulnerabilities



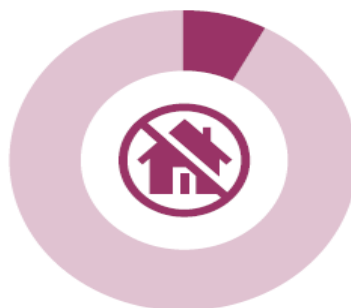
## Vulnerable groups

As set out earlier, the reduction of available social housing and an increase in those facing challenges means that the needs of residents have become more complex.

The social rented sector contains a larger proportion of vulnerable groups than private rented and owner occupied sectors



**54%**  
of social rented households  
have at least one household  
member with a long-term  
illness or disability



**8%**  
of social renters  
have experienced  
homelessness



**18%**  
of social rented  
households are  
lone parent households

# Housing Ombudsman Report – Vulnerabilities



The Housing Ombudsman Service defines vulnerability as:

**A dynamic state which arises from a combination of a resident's 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... if effective reasonable adjustments have been put in place, the vulnerability may be reduced.**

**Residents are at risk of being labelled, but without any of the associated benefits a label can bring.**

Landlords' approach to vulnerabilities is vital, including the need to recognise, adjust and respond to their residents' individual circumstances. Social housing residents are ageing, increasingly vulnerable and disadvantaged. Landlords must adjust approaches and attitudes to meet the needs of this changing population. Without this approach, residents are at risk of being labelled, but without any of the associated benefits a label can bring.

There is an increasing recognition that close attention must be given to the particular circumstances of the individual 'in the round' – looking at the cumulative effect. <sup>33</sup>

# Complaints Experts Findings

Q3 2025/6



# Methodology



- ▶ Three (redacted) complaints with our corresponding responses were shared with a group of tenants along with a survey link.
- ▶ Three questions were asked for each case:
  - ▶ What did you think of the complaint and response generally?
  - ▶ Was the language used easy to understand and clear?
  - ▶ Is there anything in the response which could be improved or added?
- ▶ The complaints were chosen randomly but we ensured they were each for a different element of our service provision.
- ▶ Eight tenants responded. We also asked them how long the task took them and it was between 15 and 45 minutes.

# Summary of Complaints



## ► Complaint A

We had replaced the heating system which had originally been oil-fired. We had advised we would remove the oil tank and refund the cost of the oil but this was delayed.

## ► Complaint B

The tenant had ongoing issues with their boiler and repeated visits by different operatives and contractors couldn't seem to provide a permanent fix.

## ► Complaint C

A scaffolding contractor had caused damage to the tenants' possessions when carrying out work – namely to things in the garden set up for their disabled child.

# General Comments

- ▶ The most common statement was that they felt the complaint was justified.
- ▶ The next was that they felt that our responses were proportionate and effective, although there were four responses indicating they felt we could have been more apologetic.
- ▶ Poor communication, lack of appropriate action and timelines which kept being missed were issues often identified.

## Language and Clarity



All respondents advised that the language was clear and easy to understand with the following suggestions

“It would be clearer if the bullet-points were reserved for short sentences, stating the precise action being taken and the timescale.”

“it does come across as a bit 'fill in the blanks' on a one size fits all standard response form.”

“do feel it could have been made further straightforward.”

“However, the layout of the response is messy and long winded and tends to repeat what the tenant already knows.”

# Improvement Suggestions

- ▶ Deal with complaints more quickly.
- ▶ Prioritise financial reimbursement.
- ▶ More personalised language (not 'relevant department').
- ▶ Less 'word soup'.
- ▶ More empathy.
- ▶ When booking work clearly advise the tenant of any preparatory work they need to do.

# Next steps

- ▶ Learning opportunity
- ▶ Continue to recruit
- ▶ Change wording slightly to get more narrative detail
- ▶ Target areas



# Complaint Scrutiny Update



- ▶ Recommendations approved by Tenant Board and ratified by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- ▶ Complaints Experts recruited via MyHomeBulletin and involved tenants groups.
- ▶ First audit carried out by 12 tenants.
- ▶ Action plan monitored and updated on following:
  - ▶ Complaints Experts up to 80% complete
  - ▶ Adjustments to vulnerability at 70% due to GTKY project - now have over 75% full information up from 20%
  - ▶ Lessons learnt held at 60%
  - ▶ Complaint response audit up to 80%
  - ▶ Action Plan up to 71% completed overall



**AOB**