



LEEDS HOUSING BOARD AGENDA

Meeting: Leeds Housing Board Meeting
Date: Thursday 6th June **Time:** 10:00–11:30
Location: via Teams

Item	Presented by	Time
1. Introductions and apologies	Councillor Lennox	10:00-10:05
2. Minutes of the Last Meeting	Councillor Lennox	10:05-10:10
3. Tenant Satisfaction Measures 23/24 Year End Update	Ian Strickland/Frank Perrins	10:10-10:30
4. Tenant Engagement Update	Ian Montgomery	10:30-10:45
5. Complaints Handling Self-Assessment	Ian Montgomery	10:45-11:00
6. BITMO 23/24 Annual Performance Overview:		
a) Introduction	Mandy Sawyer	11:00-11:20
b) Main report	Deborah Kelly	
7. AOB	Councillor Lennox	11:20-11:30

Date and Time of Next Meeting: 10am, Tuesday 23rd July

Minutes



Meeting Name:	Leeds Housing Board	
Date:	Tuesday 23 rd January 2024	Time: 13.00-14.30
Location:	Microsoft Teams	
Chair:	Cllr Jessica Lennox (JL)	
Members Present:	Cllr Kayleigh Brooks (KB), Cllr Julie Heselwood (JH), Cllr Barry Anderson (BA), John Gittos, Zioness-Amaka Curry	
Attendees Present:	James Rogers, Director of Communities, Housing and Environment (JR), Gerard Tinsdale, Chief Officer, Housing (GT), Mandy Sawyer, Head of Housing & Neighbourhood Services (MS), Simon Baker, Policy Officer (Housing) (SB), Adam Crampton (AC), Ian Strickland (IS), Frank Perrins (FP), Ian Montgomery (IM), Kerrie Murray (KM), Bethan Melling (BM)	
Apologies:	Lynne Al-Muhtaseb, Cllr Mary Harland	

Minutes

Item	
1	Introductions and apologies
1.1	Apologies were given by Cllr Harland and Lynne Al-Muhtaseb.
2	Minutes of the Last Meeting
	The Board accepted the minutes from November's meeting.
3	TSM Q3 data
3.1	FP guided the Board through the Q3 tenant satisfaction survey data, highlighting the improving performance outlined in the report. IS then brought the Board up to date on the internal management information TSM data covering the year April-November. Re repairs figures IS pointed out that the service is using new targets so there is no comparison available with previous years' performance, but current performance is at a high level against the target of 85%.
3.2	AC clarified that since the report was written, fire safety checks have hit 100% completion rate.
3.3	JL welcomed the good work that is reflected in the improving satisfaction figures.

3.4	KB pointed out that 1 in 4 people are still not satisfied that their home is safe and asked what tenants' concerns are and why don't they feel safe?
3.5	AC replied that it is quite a subjective question. A lot of work has been done re the Building Safety Act in high rise, which is 14% of stock. Damp and mould is also a big factor in that perception – a lot of work is being done around comms, how to report, etc, and hopefully fears around this will improve. We're not aware of any Category 1 hazards in our stock.
3.6	MS pointed out that the Board's tenant representatives had asked if we can include the targets we aim for in future reports. Action point: include relevant targets in future reports.
3.7	GT asked the Board to note that the tenant surveys responses are perceptions, and scores could be affected for a number of reasons, eg a perception of overcrowding in high rise buildings. KB agreed but pointed out that it is worth keeping an eye on any significant changes.
3.8	FP pointed out for clarity that the perception was that under the 5 point scale used, it is more like 1 in 6 disagree that their home is safe. 7% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.
4	HOS Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment
4.1	IM led the Board through the report, which contains Housing's self-assessment of how it complies with the current Complaint Handling Code. The self-assessment shows we are compliant.
4.2	From April compliance becomes a statutory duty, and we expect to be approached by the Housing Ombudsman (HO) for a copy of our self-assessment. The HO also expects that providers to show more governance and learning from complaints; there is an opportunity here to plan out what that looks like for Board members.
4.3	We can demonstrate compliance with the current Code, but we are waiting for the new Code to be published and will self-assess against this when it is published. We have published our current self-assessment online.
4.4	The new Code is now online and was shared with tenants via the tenant email on Friday. A requirement is that we share the HO's Annual Performance report with tenants. This shows our performance is in line with other large urban landlords. Thank you to the Board's tenant representatives for their input.
4.5	JL welcomed the role of the Board – a similar approach being used by Licensing is working well.
4.6	BA queried whether further reports will be going to Scrutiny or Executive Board. IM confirmed it will be both.
5	Tenancy Standard Self-Assessment
5.1	MS explained to the Board the result of housing's self-assessment against the proposed new Tenancy Standard. Part of the updated Consumer Standards that will come into force from April, we will also be carrying out robust self-assessments against the remaining three.

5.2	We looked at each of the specific expectations and used a number of criteria to assess if we are compliant.
5.3	Each of the specific expectations was given a RAG rating for compliance. One is red, four are amber and 11 are green. The red one is a new expectation. MS outlined each of the red and amber areas and explained measures being taken to ensure full compliance.
5.4	The three remaining self-assessments will be reported to the Board, and the Board will be kept informed of progress in complying with any red and amber expectations.
5.5	BA asked if our IT systems have the capacity to alert tenants and members via email to any changes? GT answered that they don't, but we regularly update tenants on key changes via the monthly all tenant email. Action Point – IM to check that the all tenant email is forwarded on to Members via the regular Members email update.
5.6	BA asked if there is a wider role for the Board in considering budget management of the service. Action Point: Add a budget report to the agenda for September's Strategy session. Response: Completed.
6.	Proposed dates 24/25
6.1	Members raised no issues with the proposed dates.
7.	Work programme
7.1	Members supported the proposed work programme.
8.	AOB
	n/a

Next Meeting (Housing Strategy)

Date: 5th March 2024

Time: 13:00 – 14:30

Location: Microsoft Teams

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Title: Tenant Satisfaction Measures 23/24 Year End Update

Author: Frank Perrins/Ian

Strickland

Meeting Date: 6th June 2024

1. Background

- 1.1. Social housing providers have, since April 2023, been required to collect and collate data against 22 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).
- 1.2. We are required to submit the 2023/24 results to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) by the end of June.
- 1.3. The RSH will collate the national data and publish it online so provider performance across the country can be compared.
- 1.4. The new requirements are part of the wider regulatory changes being introduced to the sector via the Social Housing (Regulation) Act, which includes updated Consumer Standards and the introduction of a regime of inspections for social housing providers.
- 1.5. This report gives the Leeds Housing Board the opportunity to review and comment on our 23/24 results as they are submitted to the Regulator of Social Housing.
- 1.6. Throughout the municipal year the Leeds Housing Board has received updates on the Q1, Q2 and Q3 results as they became available, putting our performance in the public domain as the year has progressed. We have also outlined what actions have been implemented to improve performance in priority areas throughout the year.

2. 2023/24 TSM results

- 2.1. TSM performance reportable to the RSH for the full 2023/24 year is outlined in the below table:

Code	TSM	2023/24 overall result
TP01	Overall satisfaction	66%
TP02	Satisfaction with repairs	70%
TP03	Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair	67%
TP04	Satisfaction that the home is well maintained	68%
TP05	Satisfaction that the home is safe	74%
TP06	Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	55%

TP07	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them	67%
TP08	Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	74%
TP09	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints	29%
TP10	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	65%
TP11	Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods	60%
TP12	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour	53%
RP01	Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	3.5%*
RP02	Repairs completed within target timescale	Non-emergency: 82.5% Emergency: 93.6%
BS01	Gas safety checks	99.35%
BS02	Fire safety checks	100%
BS03	Asbestos safety checks	100%
BS04	Water safety checks	100%
BS05	Lift safety checks	100%
CH01	Complaints relative to the size of the landlord	Stage 1: 41.42 per 1000 homes Stage 2: 10.43 per 1000 homes
CH02	Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales	Stage 1: 88.15% Stage 2: 87.66%
NM01	Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord	15.77 per thousand homes

* Provisional figure

- 2.2. Appendix 1 provides an overview of the results for the TSMs collected via quarterly tenant satisfaction surveys, along with more detailed analysis of performance and trends.
- 2.3. Appendix 2 contains the results for the TSM Management Information (MI) data that are derived from our internal performance data.

3. **Validation of the 23/24 TSM data**

- 3.1. It is critical that TSM performance reported to the RSH is reported exactly in accordance with the definitions outlined in the RSH's TSM Technical Requirements [here](#). In finalising our year end calculations of TSM performance the methodology and data used to complete the calculation have been validated to ensure that performance is calculated in accordance with the technical requirements, incorporates all required services and organisations, including BITMO, and that checks have been completed of data to ensure the accuracy of reported performance.
- 3.2. In relation to the management information indicators, the Directorate's Business Development Manager has worked with service leads/PFI/BITMO

for each of the indicators to review data available in systems to calculate TSM performance, incorporate data held by PFI and BITMO and identify where manual adjustments are required to ensure strict compliance with the definition. All calculations are clearly recorded with a clear audit trail back to source data used from relevant systems. The Council's Internal Audit team is currently undertaking work to validate the methodology and data sources used to make the calculation. Although this work covering four identified TSMs is still in progress, the review has not identified anything that would suggest any different or raise significant concern regarding either the, calculation methodology or the accuracy of the data to be submitted.

- 3.3. In relation to the tenant satisfaction survey indicators, consideration was given to the TSM survey methodology prior to the start of the 2023/4 financial year. To design a rationale for the TSM survey collection method, Housing Leeds SMT considered a range of options based on the findings from 2022/23 before agreeing a combination of online and phone methods (at a 20:80 ratio). These methods were seen to attract a generally representative response from different groups.
- 3.4. We were supported to carry out the TSM surveys by a specialist contractor, Acuity, who are Company Members of the Market Research Society (MRS) and work to the Society's Code of Conduct. Their telephone interviews are carried out in-house by experienced staff with an understanding of social housing tenants needs. Their software ensures phone numbers are tried at different times of the day, during and outside of office hours including weekends, until assuming a non-response.
- 3.5. Acuity samples contacts from a current list of all tenants to carry out more than the number of surveys required to meet regulatory requirements (>2,300, $\pm 2\%$ at the 95% confidence level). We have worked with them to design a sampling approach that targets quotas of tenants based on the key factors that are most likely to affect satisfaction (Area, Tenure <General Needs or Retirement Life> and Age). These quotas update dynamically during the fieldwork period, so that completions from these groups in the final survey should represent the tenant population. We regularly audit that this process is working correctly, by checking that proportions of these groups in the completed data follow those within the tenant profile.

4. How the data is being used to drive performance improvements

- 4.1. Once the RSH publishes TSM data for 2023/24 this will enable us to undertake robust benchmarking against validated data with other landlords to identify how our performance on each of the TSMs compares with other landlords. During 2023/24 we have undertaken some benchmarking of TSM performance via Housemark, but on the understanding that the benchmarked data was not yet validated.

- 4.2. From benchmarking that we have undertaken we have identified that for most TSMs our performance exceeds the average for other similar landlords (based on Quarter 2/3 Housemark data). However for some TSMs our performance was similar to or below the average for other similar landlords and so targeted action is underway to strengthen our performance on these particular indicators, as outlined below:
- 4.3. **TP07 Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them** - performance was only slightly higher than other similar landlords at 65%. Our self-assessment against the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard also identifies that our communications and information sharing arrangements could be strengthened. We are currently looking to develop a consistent service wide Communication Strategy during summer 2024 setting the expectation of how services will communicate with customers. Individual services will then self assess their approach against the strategy and implement actions to strengthen the quality of our communications by the end of 2024/25.
- 4.4. **NM01 ASB cases relative to size of landlord / TP12 Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling ASB** - The number of ASB cases is very low when compared to other similar landlords and customer satisfaction is also low. We have reviewed the methodology for the reporting of NM01 and identified that for 2023/24 we were not capturing all ASB cases reported - where a report resulted in advice and signposting only this was not formally opened as a case. A change has been made to reporting arrangements and from April 2024 a case will be opened for all reports. Alongside this a review is underway of the ASB policy and procedures and as part of the review there will be customer engagement to ensure that the updated policy and procedures take into account customer feedback.
- 4.5. **RP02 Repairs completed within target timescales** - Average repairs performance is in line similar landlords at around 88% across both emergency and non-emergency repairs, however it is acknowledged that performance against non-emergency repairs (82.5%) requires improvement. During 2023 and early 2024 the service has focused on reducing the level of work in progress (WIP) generated during the previous two years. This backlog reduction has now concluded, with WIP levels now at or below target levels. As such, the focus of the service has shifted to achieving completion within target across all repair categories. This has already delivered improvements in performance and this positive trend is anticipated to continue.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1. Our performance management frameworks have been updated to enable regular reporting of TSM performance within teams, to the Senior Management Team and to the Council's Scrutiny Board. Performance will be monitored on a regular basis and actions taken to strengthen our

performance across all of the TSMs. Performance will be reported on a quarterly basis to the Leeds Housing Board, along with benchmarked performance.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. The Board is requested to note and comment on the 2023/24 TSM results and actions being taken to improve performance.

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TSM Survey 2023/24 – Full year Report for LHB

Background:

- Since April 2023 the survey has become a compulsory requirement and we are now working towards collecting enough surveys to meet our targets and report to the regulator after March 2024.
- Taking the learning from our detailed survey pilot we agreed for the upcoming period to carry out a combination of telephone surveys (80%) and email invitations to online surveys (20%) with text message reminder. Only the TSM questions, an open text comment and the further question ‘landlord is easy to deal with’ were included in the phone survey, with further questions included in the online survey only.
- We have included BITMO results and partial responses here in the reporting, as these are the figures that will be sent to the regulator. Figures are weighted to take account of the BITMO over-sample.
- Following an exercise to check VFM with three quotes, we have confirmed a further two-year arrangement with Acuity to continue to collect the TSM perception measures.

Results for 2023/24:

Results for the TSM questions (and ease of dealing with) are included below:

TSM Survey Results	2022/ 23	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2023/2 4	Trend	Diff to 22/23
Count of total completed responses	2652	644	672	632	623	2571		
Statistical accuracy - confidence interval	1.9%	3.8%	3.8%	3.9%	3.9%	1.9%		
Overall								
Overall satisfaction with services provided	60%	62%	63%	68%	70%	66%		6%
The home								
Percentage of tenants who had a repair in the last 12 months	66%	67%	70%	70%	70%	69%		3%
Satisfaction with overall repairs service received in the last 12 months	66%	68%	71%	71%	71%	70%		4%
Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair	61%	63%	67%	67%	71%	67%		6%
Satisfaction that landlord provides a home that is well maintained	61%	67%	65%	69%	69%	68%		7%
Satisfaction that landlord provides a home that is safe	61%	73%	73%	76%	73%	74%		13%
Contact and communication								
Satisfaction that your landlord listens to your views and acts upon them	44%	54%	54%	57%	56%	55%		11%
Satisfaction that you are kept informed about things that matter to you	53%	66%	65%	69%	69%	67%		14%
Percentage of tenants agreeing 'my landlord treats me fairly and with respect'	62%	75%	73%	75%	73%	74%		12%
Percentage who made a complaint in the last 12 months	32%	29%	26%	27%	27%	28%		-4%
Satisfaction with your landlord's approach to complaints handling	24%	29%	25%	34%	27%	29%		5%
Satisfaction that your landlord is easy to deal with*	56%	67%	65%	66%	65%	66%		10%
Neighbourhood and community								
Satisfaction that communal areas are kept clean and well maintained	56%	66%	62%	68%	64%	65%		9%
Satisfaction that landlord makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood	44%	64%	59%	61%	58%	60%		16%
Satisfaction with your landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour	42%	50%	52%	55%	55%	53%		11%

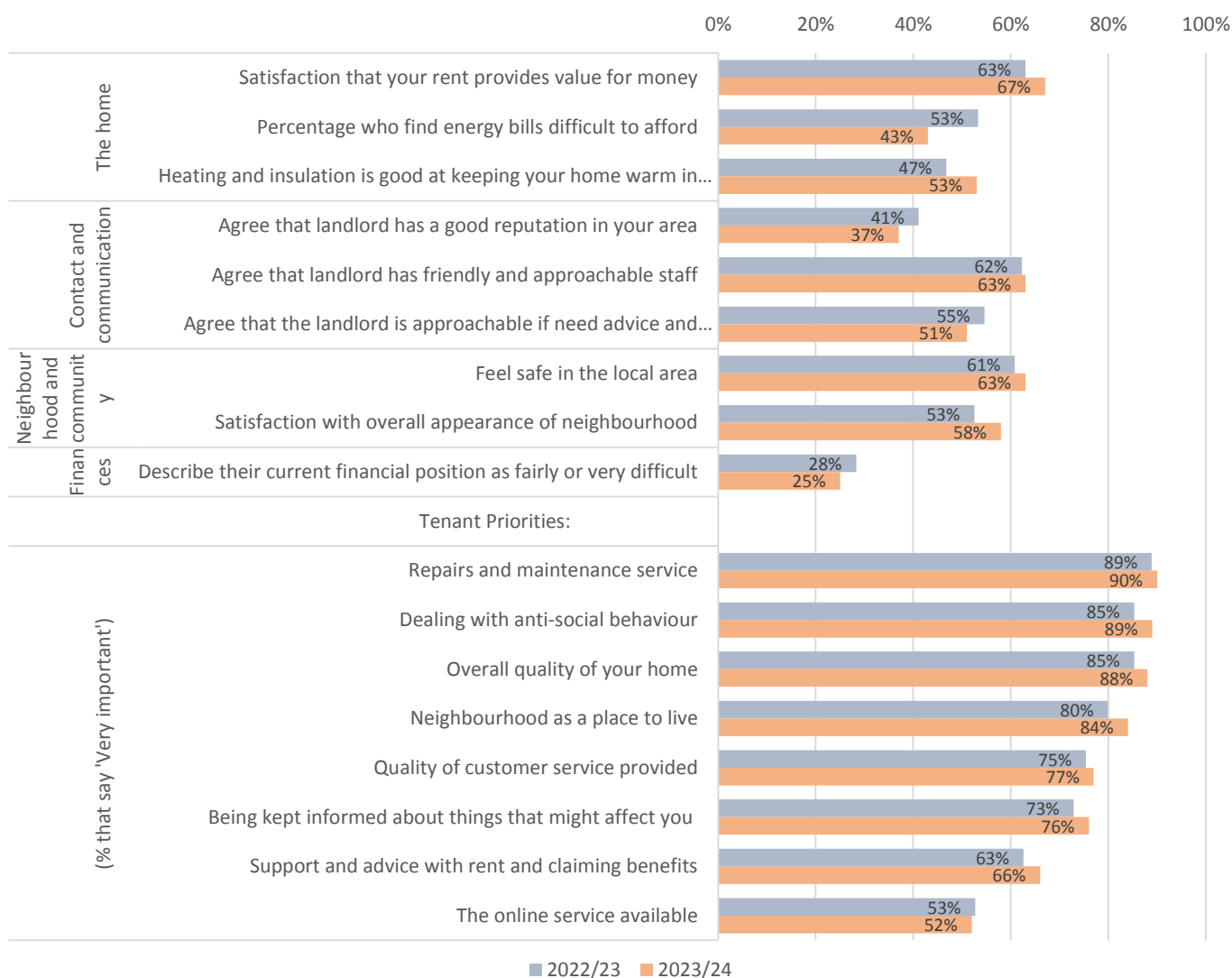
*Included in telephone survey as key customer services indicator

- During 2023/24, 2571 surveys were completed, 2017 by telephone and 554 through an online survey.
- Results across quarters remained consistent on the whole and show an improving trend in many areas, though this was generally within the margin for error of around +/- 4% so wasn't necessarily significant. Notable improvements during the year that were greater than the quarterly margin for error, include:
 - Overall satisfaction was 70% for Q4, an improvement of 8% compared to Q1.
 - Satisfaction with time taken to complete the most recent repair was 71% for Q4, an improvement of 8% compared to Q1.
- Cumulative results for 2023/24 for all the TSM questions compare favourably with 2022/23. With the larger sample size the margin for error is +/- 1.9%, so the results can be considered significant.

- Particularly notable improvements compared to 2022/23 include:
 - Overall satisfaction with services (+6%)
 - Landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood (+16%)
 - Being kept informed about things that matter (+14%)
 - Landlord provides a home that is safe (+13%)
 - Landlord treats me fairly and with respect (+12%)
 - Landlord listens to views and acts upon them (+11%)
 - Landlord’s approach to handling ASB (+11%)

Further survey results from the online element only are listed below, compared to the online results from 2022/23. Quarterly results have not been included due to the low sample sizes and large margins for error.

Further survey results (online survey only)



- A number of the cumulative results show an improvement compared to 2022/23 greater than the margin for error (+/- 4.1%), including:
 - Satisfaction with the overall appearance of the neighbourhood (+5%)
 - Heating and insulation is good at keeping your home warm in winter (+6%)
 - Percentage who find energy bills difficult to afford (-10%)
- Tenant priorities - The survey asked tenants to rate the importance of key aspects of the service. Overall, tenants rated 'Repairs and maintenance service' and 'Dealing with anti-social behaviour' as the top priorities. 'Online services available' was rated as the lowest priority.

Results by Community Committee area:

Results for the TSM questions were analysed by Community Committee area and BITMO:

- The highest rated area was Outer West, where satisfaction around repair times and being treated fairly and with respect performed particularly well.
- The worst performing area was seen to be Inner North East, where results highlight particular concerns around repair times and views being listened to and acted on.
- Several areas have seen a notable improvement in overall satisfaction compared to 2022/23, including: Outer North West (+11%), Outer East (+10%), Inner South (+9%), Outer South East (+9%).

Other notable improvements include:

- Inner North East – Landlord provides a home that is safe (+25%), Approach to handling ASB (+23%),
- Outer East– Kept informed about things that matter to you (+22%), Provides a house that is safe (+21%),
- Outer South East - Landlord treats me fairly and with respect (+20%),
- Inner East - Kept informed about things that matter to you (+20%).

Key Driver Analysis:

Analysis was carried out using ordinal regression to find the questions that were key drivers for how participants responded to overall satisfaction. Those that had most influence on how participants are listed below:

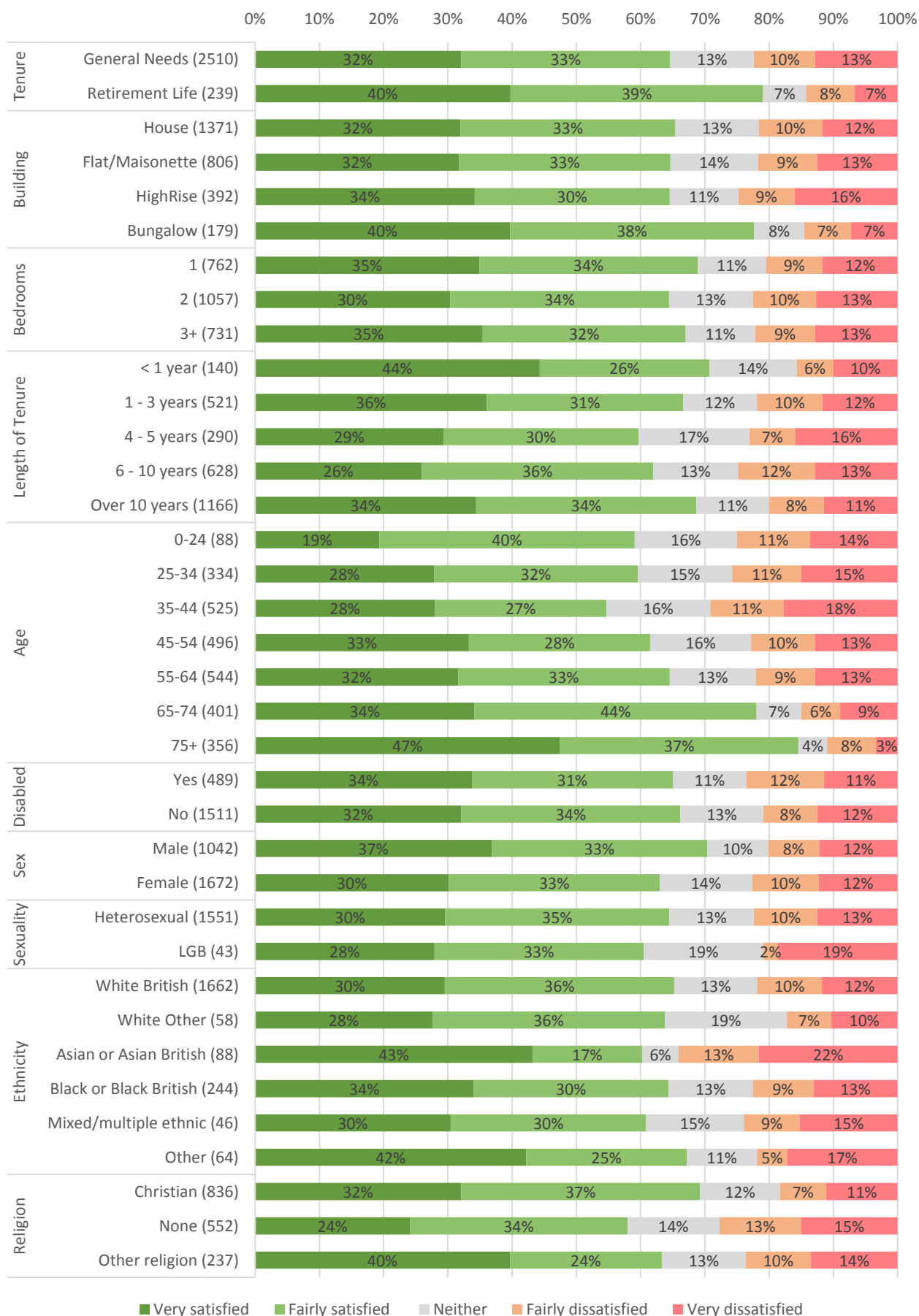
- The key drivers were: **Well maintained home, Easy to deal with, Listens to views and acts on them.**
- To a lesser extent: **Repairs service in last 12 months, Home is safe, Treated fairly and with respect.**
- And to a much lesser extent: **Time taken to carry out repairs.**

Demographic Analysis:

Survey results and comments have been analysed against a range of tenant demographic and property characteristics to understand areas of high and low satisfaction by different groups. Key findings included:

- **Tenure** - Retirement life tenants were generally much more satisfied than general needs, with figures similar to those of older tenants and were much more likely to say their financial position is okay and that energy bills are affordable. They were more likely to say that 'Being kept informed' is a high priority and were much more likely to leave a negative comment about customer service. General needs tenants however were much more likely to comment about moving home, bidding and allocations.
- **Length of tenure** - those that had either been a tenant for fewer years or for longer were more likely to be satisfied. However, this is linked closely to tenant age, for example the large increase in satisfaction with those over 10 years tenure being due to higher satisfaction with older tenants.
- **Age** - Younger tenants were generally less positive than older tenants throughout, satisfaction levels remained fairly consistent up to age 55, with satisfaction often dipping lowest at 35-44. Those least likely to describe their financial situation positively were also in this middle age group. Younger tenants were much more likely to have had a repair in the last 12 months and were more likely to make a comment about the repairs service and timescales, and moving home / allocations. Older tenants were more likely to make negative comments about the appearance of the neighbourhood and customer service.
- **Sex/Gender** - Female tenants were much less positive throughout; in particular around the neighbourhood and their financial position, and they were more likely to have had a repair in the last 12 months. They were more likely to report most services as a highly important; in particular the neighbourhood, and more likely to comment about disrepair / outstanding repairs.
- **Ethnicity** - For many areas ethnic diverse tenants showed similar levels of satisfaction to White:British, though most groups were much more likely to be satisfied around the neighbourhood, ASB and communication and they were much more likely to say they could afford energy bills. They were generally much less likely to report a service as highly important, in particular the neighbourhood, ASB, the quality of the home, and support and advice. Ethnic diverse tenants were more likely to leave a negative comment about neighbour/ASB issues however, and around communal areas and moving home / allocations.

Taking everthing into account, overall satisfaction



Open Text Comments:

Tenants were asked to provide comments following the overall satisfaction question. Overall, 2341 respondents left a comment, which were analysed and categorised into themes.

Theme	Count	As %	Summary of theme	Example comment
Disrepair or repairs needed/ outstanding	391	17%	The common themes are outstanding repairs, long waiting times for reported repairs, poor quality of the property, lack of communication and responsiveness from the housing service. Some of comments refer to the state of the property when they moved in.	I moved in here 4 years ago. When I moved in the window was leaking and they still have not repaired it. the wood outside the balcony is rotting and the house is in disrepair.
Good/ fast service	303	13%	Tenants praise the housing service for their responsiveness, efficiency, and helpfulness in addressing issues and making repairs. Residents appreciate the quick and professional manner their problems are resolved and the good communication.	They are brilliant, we never have any issues and they are always prompt in dealing with any problems we do have, to our satisfaction.
No complaints/ issues	274	12%	The overall sentiment is positive, with most comments expressing satisfaction with the service. Common themes include tenants having no problems or issues to raise.	I haven't had any issues with it so far so it must be ok.
Repairs completed on time/ well	271	12%	These comments are positive, with tenants reporting that repairs are done quickly and efficiently. The overall theme is that the repair service is generally good and responsive.	Every time I have needed repairs they have been prompt and have done a good job with the repairs.
Poor/ improve customer service	245	10%	Common themes are difficulty contacting the housing service, long telephone wait times, unhelpful or rude service, and lack of communication and responsiveness from the housing service. Many individuals expressed frustration with the housing service's inability to effectively address their concerns and needs.	Answer the phone when you ring, reply to messages when you leave any. Believe what people have to say. I have kitchen cupboard filled with black mould at the moment.
Repair timescales are too long	220	9%	Comments refer to long wait times for repairs to be completed, with some tenants reporting waiting for months or years. Overall, the comments are calling for quicker and more efficient repair services.	It takes a length of time to get a repair booked in and then it takes a long time for the repair to actually get done.
Poor quality repairs/ contractors	159	7%	Comments express dissatisfaction with the quality and timeliness of repairs and maintenance. Many individuals report poor workmanship, incomplete or incorrect repairs, and repeated visits.	The need to regulate the companies they do repairs with better as they dont turn up to jobs, jobs are not finished and quality isn't good.
Helpful/ respectful service	139	6%	Tenants express satisfaction with the service and helpfulness of the staff. Many people mention that the housing service has helped them in various ways, including offering timely and courteous support, and being easy to communicate with.	I've been treated with respect and informed of all what is happening and the people and managers have been great
Damp/ mould issues	110	5%	Individuals have reported these issues to the relevant authorities, but the issues have not been resolved satisfactorily. The damp and mould have caused health issues and damage to property, and individuals are frustrated with the lack of action taken to resolve the problem.	I have damp and I have to remove it myself they have told me, and I have asthma, when you report things they are not being put through properly. I find it shocking asking me to clean and get rid of the mould when I suffer from asthma.
Neighbour/ ASB issues	92	4%	Concerns range from anti-social behaviour, noise, safety concerns, and a lack of response from the authorities. The residents express frustration with a lack of action taken to address their concerns and improve their living conditions.	We have trouble with drug users and people sleeping rough in the building. This has been reported several times and no action has been taken.
Moving/ bidding/ allocations issues	88	4%	Tenants report difficulties with the bidding system, long waiting times to be rehoused, overcrowding, and unsuitable housing conditions. Many report a lack of support from the council in addressing their concerns and resolving their issues.	I have been on the waiting list for a move for 6 years now and they haven't done anything to help me, I have 4 boys sleeping in one room which isn't ideal.

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TSMs generated from management information – 2023/24 KPI year-end return

CH01 – Complaints relative to the size of the landlord		
Number of:		
1. stage one complaints and		
2. stage two complaints received per 1,000 homes:		
Number of stage one complaints	Divided by: Number of dwelling units owned of the relevant stock type at year end.	Multiplied by 1,000
2,193	52,925 (LCRA dwelling units)	41.42 per 1,000 homes
Number of stage two complaints		Multiplied by 1,000
552		10.43 per 1,000 homes

CH02 – Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales.		
Proportion of:		
1. stage one complaints responded to and		
2. stage two complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code timescales.		
Stage one complaints response time		
Number of stage one complaints made by tenants during the reporting year for the relevant stock type that were responded to within the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code timescale.	Divided by: Number of stage one complaints made by tenants in the relevant stock type during the reporting year.	Multiplied by 100
1,933	2,193	88.15%
Stage two complaints response time		
Number of stage two complaints made by tenants during the reporting year for the relevant stock type that were responded to within the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code timescale.	Divided by: Number of stage two complaints made by tenants in the relevant stock type during the reporting year.	Multiplied by 100
485	552	87.86%

TSMs generated from management information – 2023/24

KPI year-end return

NM01 – Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord		
Number of:		
1. anti-social behaviour cases, of which		
2. anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate incidents opened per 1,000 homes.		
1. Anti-social behaviour cases		
A. Total number of anti-social behaviour cases opened by or on behalf of the provider during the reporting year (including any ASB cases that involve hate incidents).	Divided by B. Number of dwelling units owned of the relevant social housing stock at year end.	Multiplied by 1,000
835	52,932 (LCRA & LCHO dwelling units)	15.77
2. Anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate incidents		
Number of anti-social behaviour cases (as reported in part 1) that involve hate incidents opened by or on behalf of the provider during the reporting year.	Divided by Number of dwelling units owned of the relevant social housing stock at year end.	Multiplied by 1,000
45	52,932 (LCRA & LCHO dwelling units)	0.85

RP01 – Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard		
Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard		
Number of dwelling units owned to which the Decent Homes Standard applied which failed the Decent Homes Standard at year end.	Divided by: Number of dwelling units owned of the relevant stock type at year end.	Current provisional % (Source: City Dashboard)
To take from approved LAHS statutory return.	52,925 (LCRA dwelling units)	3.5%

TSMs generated from management information – 2023/24

KPI year-end return

RP02 – Repairs completed within target timescale		
Proportion of:		
1. non-emergency and		
2. emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord’s target timescale.		
Number of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the provider’s target timescale during the reporting year.	Divided by: Number of non-emergency responsive repairs completed during the reporting year.	Multiplied by 100
97,178	117,740	82.5%
Number of emergency responsive repairs completed within the provider’s target timescale during the reporting year.	Divided by: Number of emergency responsive repairs completed during the reporting year.	Multiplied by 100
80,916	86,424	93.6%

BS01 – Gas safety checks		
Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out		
Number of dwelling units owned for which all required gas safety checks were carried out and recorded as at year end.	Divided by: Number of dwelling units owned for which gas safety checks were required to have been carried out as at year end.	Multiplied by 100
45,692	45,989	99.35%

BS02 – Fire safety checks		
Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out.		
Number of dwelling units owned within properties that required an FRA for which all required FRAs	Divided by: Number of dwelling units owned within properties for which an FRA was required to	Multiplied by 100

TSMs generated from management information – 2023/24 KPI year-end return

were carried out and recorded as at year end.	have been carried out as at year end.	
13,633	13,633	100%

BS03 – Asbestos safety checks		
Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out.		
Number of dwelling units owned within properties that required an asbestos management survey or re-inspection for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections were carried out and recorded as at year end.	Divided by: Number of dwelling units owned within properties for which an asbestos management survey or re-inspection was required to have been carried out as at year end.	Multiplied by 100
12,312	12,312	100%

BS04 – Water safety checks		
Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out.		
Number of dwelling units owned for which all required legionella risk assessments (LRAs) were carried out and recorded as at year end.	Divided by: Number of dwelling units owned for which an LRA was required to have been carried out as at year end.	Multiplied by 100
7,644	7,644	100%

BS05 – Lift safety checks		
Proportion of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out.		

TSMs generated from management information – 2023/24 KPI year-end return

Number of dwelling units owned within properties with communal passenger lifts for which all Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) inspection reports were carried out and recorded as at year end.	Divided by: Number of dwelling units owned within properties with communal passenger lifts as at year end.	Multiplied by 100
7,993	7,993	100%

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Title: Tenant Engagement Update (inc. High Rise Building Safety Survey)

Author: Ian Montgomery

Meeting Date: 6 June 2024

1. Introduction

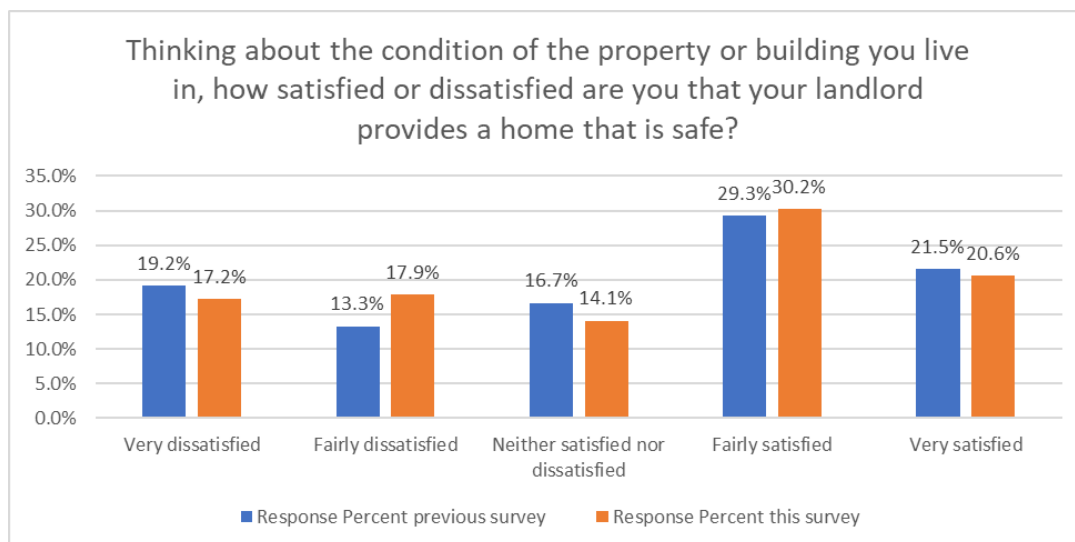
- 1.1. This report updates the board on recent tenant engagement activity, in particular, the findings of the high-rise building safety survey and the proposed updated local tenant engagement service offer.

2. High Rise Building Safety Survey

- 2.1. Our [high-rise resident engagement strategy](#) outlines our commitments to engage with all high rise residents. This included a commitment to carry out an annual survey to assess how effectively we are communicating key messages and if residents understanding of these was improving over time. This was in line with the [good practice recommendations](#) coming from the Social Sector (Building Safety) Engagement Best Practice Group.
- 2.2. Our first survey took place in November 2022. This helped us develop our engagement strategy and set a baseline from which we could assess progress. The most recent survey took place between February and March this year, and was responded to by 598 residents, representing a response rate of 8.6% (higher than the 6.5% in 2022). The survey was largely delivered online via emails and texts to residents, with additional in person visits to Retirement Life Schemes to increase the responses from those who may not have online access or be confident in replying to an online survey.
- 2.3. Similar to 2022, there is a slight under-representation of all age groups under 50, a slight over representation of residents between 50-80 and an under representation of those over 80. This year we mitigated the risk of under-representation from more elderly residents by visiting Retirement Life Schemes within high-rise blocks and completing the surveys in person. Overall, the proportions of responses from each age group are proportional to the number of residents in each age bracket.
- 2.4. Fewer Black/Black British residents took part in the survey compared to the tenant population as a whole, with different levels of participation by different ethnic groups taking part this year compared to previous years. Black/Black British residents are therefore under-represented in the survey results, with Asian or Asian British slightly over-represented.

Ethnicity	All high-rise residents	% 2022	% This year
Any other background	6.85%	2.7%	2.01%
Any other White background	3.71%	2.4%	2.68%
Any Asian or Asian British	1.49%	2.4%	2.17%
Any black British	16.43%	12.8%	7.36%
Gypsy or Traveller	0.04%	0.2%	0.17%
Any white British	51.08%	62.4%	57.02%
Not known/home in void	20.41%	17.7%	28.60%

- 2.5. 17% of respondents had a known disability, the same proportion as those who live in high-rise homes. The survey responses are also broadly geographically representative with the highest number of responses coming from the communities with this most high-rise homes. There is slightly less ethnic diversity among this years respondents compared to last year and compared to the diversity of high-rise residents as a group.
- 2.6. 51% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied that Housing Leeds provided a home that is safe, the same as in 2022.



This is lower than the 71% satisfaction reported by those living in all property types, and the 68% satisfaction living in high rise homes collected through the 23/24 TSM perception measures. However, as the method of collection was largely online, the satisfaction when compared to the TSM online only responses is similar.

- 2.7. This perception question asked respondents to 'explain why you said that'. A summary of the themes and responses is below. Further analysis is now taking place to identify if there are any service requests or issues that we can respond to on an individual or block basis. Note the below are responses from a largely online survey and will therefore be self-selecting

in terms of being more likely to have responses from those residents with a current concern or issue.

2.8. Key themes were:

- Security and access: feeling unsafe due to the security and access issues of the building, such as broken entry doors, CCTV, intercoms, or strangers accessing the building.
- Sprinkler system: feeling safer after the installation of a sprinkler system.
- Anti-social behaviour and noise: being impacted by noise from other tenants or visitors, smoking, littering, vandalism, or loud music.
- Cleanliness and hygiene: believing the cleanliness and hygiene of the communal areas, such as the lifts, stairs, hallways, or bin chutes could be better.
- Heating and insulation: being unhappy with the heating and insulation of the flats, which could be inefficient or costly.
- Maintenance and repair issues: Many residents highlighted what they felt was the poor condition of the windows, doors, lifts, plumbing, heating, or balcony. They said that these problems can cause damp, mould, leaks, cold, noise, or inconvenience. They also said that the council was slow or unresponsive to fix the issues or provide adequate compensation.
- Positive feedback: Some residents gave positive feedback about the building, saying that it was well maintained, looked after, or improved. They also praised the council staff, such as the housing officer, the caretaker, or the repair workers, for being helpful, friendly, or efficient.

2.9. The survey sought to measure the effectiveness of our communication and engagement work over the last 18 months, asking residents for their understanding of various aspects of building safety.

How do you rate your understanding of the following:	Responses	Last year
Answer Choice	Good Understanding	Good Understanding
What to do in an emergency or fire inside your flat	87.35%	86.36%
What to do in an emergency if a fire is in someone else's flat	85.35%	79.60%
How the sprinkler system works (if your block has one installed)	71.43%	63.76%
Electrical safety within your flat e.g., trying to keep to one plug per socket	87.35%	83.11%
How to use the chutes to get rid of waste	84.85%	82.92%

Keeping communal areas clear	82.15%	81.03%
Where you can and can't park (i.e., not blocking access for waste collection or emergency vehicles)	78.67%	70.88%

2.10. Positively, across all questions, residents reporting having an improved level of understanding of the above safety and safety related issues. Areas with any lower levels of understanding can now be used to inform our communication priorities for the year ahead.

2.11. Previously, 61% of residents said that Housing Leeds had given them information on building safety. This had increased to 77% this year.

2.12. The most recent survey also shows positive trends in terms of the familiarity of residents to report issues or undertake certain tasks:

Do you know how to:	% 2022	% This year
Test your smoke alarm	85.87%	87.35%
Report any rubbish or items left in hallways or staircases.	77.43%	80.94%
Report any problems like a broken communal light or door	78.13%	81.90%
Contact us for any help and support you may need	81.66%	86.87%
Make a complaint if we haven't got something right	New question	79.83%

2.13. When asked what issues residents would like to know more about, there was less interest this year in most topics which may indicate that residents have an improved understanding, with the exception of 'how we can work together to help keep your block secure' - see the below table. This may reflect residents interest in anti-social behaviour and how we manage this so the impact to residents is kept to a minimum. The 'other' comments most commonly referred to low and higher level anti-social behaviour, issues related to cleanliness and block security in terms of preventing access to non-residents.

Answer Choice	% 2022	% This year
Fire Safety in your individual flat	38.4%	26.7%
Fire Safety in communal areas	37.4%	28.3%
How we keep communal areas safe	38.8%	32.9%
How to dispose of waste/rubbish	27.4%	24.4%
How we can work together to help keep your block secure	Not asked	57.4%
Other (please specify):	41.1%	31.0%

2.14. The survey identified up to 200 residents who reported they may not be able to self-evacuate. These residents are currently being contacted by the service and a person-centred fire risk assessment undertaken if

required/if not already in place.

- 2.15. 45% of respondents reported having received the bi-monthly e-bulletin and finding this useful. 41% of respondents said they did not receive the bulletin, but 1 in 3 of these then gave an email address to help us improve our data quality and ensure were included in future mailing lists. 13% of respondents said they received the bulletin but did not find this useful.
- 2.16. In line with our engagement strategy and reflecting residents had reported to us that both digital and hard copy content was how residents wished to be communicated with, in September 2023 we issued a building safety themed hard copy newsletter. 50% reported having received the newsletter and finding this useful, 33% reported having not received this, but may include some newer residents and 14% reporting receiving the newsletter but not finding this useful.
- 2.17. As a result of the survey, we have increased the number of high-rise residents volunteering to be part of the Tenant Voice Panel to 74.
- 2.18. In summary, the survey as a whole has been a positive exercise in terms confirming that a higher proportion of residents are aware of certain building safety features or know how to action or report issues that impact on building safety. This suggests that our activity related to sharing more information and communicating with residents is having an impact.
- 2.19. Suggested actions in response to the survey to help further our approach include:
- Using high-rise members on the TVP to help us review the e-bulletins (and other communications options including hard copy newsletter, leaflets) and other service improvement activity, to continue to improve this with resident input.
 - To extract and respond as far as possible to any comment that suggests there is an open service request, either to individual homes or in specific blocks.
 - To undertake an equality analysis of the results to better understand the experience of specific customer groups, especially those from ethnically diverse communities.
 - To include within the above, analysis to help identify any learning or improvements we can make to how accessible our communications are, language needs or other barriers to accessing or receiving building safety related information.
 - To consider how we include community safety and anti-social behaviour advice and guidance in future communications. To this end we included an item about how we report ASB in the last e-bulletin and introduced the role of the Leeds Policing Team, with a view to sharing outcomes from this team in future newsletters.
 - Use the information to influence the content of our communications on specific issues where this will help improve residents understanding of key issues.

3. Wider high-rise engagement activity

- 3.1. A [Building Safety Hub](#) was launched in November 2023, following input from residents on the Tenant Voice Panel. This allows residents access to building safety information unique to their flat and block and request information in other formats. New website content is also available to allow residents to [report a building safety concern](#). The Hub has been visited by 1,000 residents to date, with 380 going through the registration process to access documents.
- 3.2. Individual block engagement strategies that summarise the citywide approach, along with some headline information about each block, have been uploaded to the Hub for residents to also access and are in the process of being added to the hard copy poster suite within individual blocks.
- 3.3. The electronic noticeboard trial is progressing, with content now on display in Cottingley Heights. A number of technical issues have needed to be overcome but is useful learning in terms of assessing the feasibility and value for money of further investment in this method.

4. An updated Tenant Engagement Service Offer

- 4.1. Following the decision in February to stop funding the Housing Advisory Panels (HAPs) into 2024/25, the HAPs concluded their activity and held their final meetings in March. Staffing changes linked to the removal of the HAPs have also now concluded and we now have a local Tenant Engagement team of six Tenant Engagement Officers supported by a Housing Manager.
- 4.2. It is important that we continue to offer local opportunities for tenants to provide feedback on and influence housing service delivery and local priorities and to this end, we will shortly be consulting on a future local tenant and community engagement Service Offer.
- 4.3. Key attributes of the new approach include creating a strong interface between the service and Community Committees and offering both a generic level of support for all residents, with additional support and activity taking place in priority wards or places with particular local issues. A full outline of the proposed new offer is attached as an appendix to this report.
- 4.4. It is proposed that engagement and consultation of the updated local tenant and community engagement offer is undertaken as follows:
 - Engagement with the Housing Leeds Tenant Voice Panel, former HAP members and wider tenants including a survey and follow up online discussion.
 - Engagement with Elected Members at a local level and via Community Committee at their Chairs meeting in July 2024.
 - Engagement with Housing and Communities teams.

- Engagement with the Leeds Housing Board.
- 4.5. Final proposals will be developed following conclusion of this engagement, by the end of August 2024 and will be shared with Leeds Housing Board for their support.

5. Other updates:

- 5.1. Following the completion of their review into the advice and support we give to residents about damp and mould, the Tenant Scrutiny Board have selected complaints as their next topic for review. They are currently finalising the scope and action plan for their review but is likely to include looking at how we ensure 100% compliance with responding to complaints in timescales and how effectively we learn from complaints.
- 5.2. The service is due to present a final report to Tenant Scrutiny Board in July with an update on the delivery of the recommendations from their damp and mould review, though many are now delivered including new, more detailed, [website content](#) and more engaging [video content](#).
- 5.3. Our Annual Report for 2023/24 is currently being developed with input from Tenant Voice Panel members and will be shared with the Board ahead of release in July.
- 5.4. The Tenant Engagement Strategy is currently being updated following the work to self-assess ourselves against the Regulator of Social Housing's Transparency, Influence and Accountability Consumer Standard. To help ensure we can evidence positive outcomes from residents engagement across the whole service we will be shortly implementing an internal self-assessment for teams so all teams to understand the opportunities and can build in using feedback and insight from customers in any changes made.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. The Leeds Housing Board are asked to:
- a) Note the content of this report and discuss any matters arising.
 - b) Comment on and support the proposed local tenant engagement Service Offer.

Appendix 1:

Proposed Local Tenant and Community Engagement Offer

1. Key Principles of Any Tenant and Community Engagement Offer

- 1.1 It is proposed that the following principles will influence the future tenant and community engagement offer:

- a) The new approach will further build on Housing's ABCD influenced '[Communities On Top](#)' service offer, supporting community groups to implement tenant-led activities.
- b) With a smaller team supporting tenant engagement, less staffing resource will be available to support local tenant and community engagement activity and so any future service offer must be focused on engagement that has most impact and reduces administrative burdens.
- c) Any new ways of working will need to help us comply (or exceed) the current and future '[transparency, influence and accountability](#)' regulatory standards as set by the Regulator for Social Housing.
- d) The new approach must be accessible and inclusive so that we serve and respond to a diverse range of customer voice, using wider local customer insight to inform priorities.
- e) The new approach will provide a strong interface between Housing and Community Committees, ensuring that there is an opportunity for Housing, Elected Members and communities to discuss local housing issues and identify joint solutions.
- f) The offer must in the main be focused on providing support to Council tenants, or communities where Council tenants will be the main beneficiaries of the engagement.
- g) Whilst a generic support offer will be available to all residents' particular support will be provided to some communities, e.g. priority wards / neighbourhoods, communities with particular issues such as community safety.
- h) It is important that the updated service offer is flexible – enabling the service to adapt its service offer to meet emerging engagement priorities and adapt to new circumstances and pressures.
- i) The service offer will be closely aligned to the Best Council Ambition and wider strategic priorities, supporting tenant and community engagement on wider priorities, including inclusive growth, health inequalities and the cost-of-living crisis.
- j) As far as practical the service will monitor its engagement activity and report on outcomes to residents, the Leeds Housing Board and the Social Housing Regulator.

2. A proposed updated Service Offer

Proposed strands of Housing's updated Tenant and Community Engagement offer are as follows:

Communities on Top

- 2.1 A continuation of the current service offer to develop and support new and existing local tenants, residents and community groups in line with the 'ABCD' influenced 'Communities On Top' Service Offer. Supporting groups with advice, training and development, and helping them achieve their aims. This could include becoming more expertise in the sourcing and gaining of external funding (using www.fundingleeds.co.uk) and strengthening our relationships with the 14 ABCD 'pathfinder' sites and third sector organisations who employ a Community Builder. Assisting those who wish to implement any tenant-led activities that influence what we do locally.

Tenant Voice Panel

- 2.2 Establishing a consistent citywide approach to local tenant engagement as a replacement / enhancement of tenant engagement via HAPs, inviting tenants to be part of a 'Local Tenant Voice Panel' community to be involved in a range of local tenant engagement opportunities:
- a) Sharing local information on Housing performance, customer satisfaction and other updates from local housing teams and providing an opportunity for feedback / challenge.
 - b) Communications to help connect tenants with other local tenants, residents and community groups in their area, community projects and initiatives, both in the locality but also at a citywide level.
 - c) Local engagement on issues, performance, priority setting and in developing proposed solutions within communities.
- 2.3 Whilst in the main this engagement will be managed online and with connections into local social media groups, some engagement will be facilitated using different approaches, such as postal communications, by phone or in person as part of a site visit or community drop in.
- 2.4 We will explore the use of digital and other approaches to broaden resident participation in priority setting and the scrutiny of our services, involving a wider range of residents in a locality in being able to review and comment on our service improvement plans and priority setting. Sharing with residents in a locality our performance and giving feedback on how we've taken their views into account.

Support to Local Housing Teams

- 2.5 Tenant engagement officers will continue to provide support to local housing teams with a range of meaningful opportunities to influence what we do at a local level:

- a) Help support and promote local estate action days or clean up days (involving Local Tenant Voice members).
- b) Support estate walkabout activity, helping to promote and make more accessible and helping find solutions to local issues that may fall outside day-to-day operational housing management.
- c) Support the digital 'virtual walkabout' offer, (involving Local Tenant Voice members) making this more commonplace across the city and feeding back outcomes to participants.
- d) Support local projects or initiatives, involving other partners, for example, open sessions with residents to help with the cost of living in line with local needs in priority wards or communities.
- e) Work more closely with the Retirement Life Service and local Support Officers, supporting the wider health and well-being offer given by the service. For example, instigating a programme of digital inclusion activity in partnership with a third sector group.
- f) Support the wider service in the delivery of the Social Value commitments of our contractors, helping connect contractors with local communities and their priorities.

Engagement with Elected Members and Community Committees

- 2.6 Each Housing Manager / Area Housing Manager already offers Elected Members regular meetings to discuss local issues, projects and casework with the opportunity for tenant engagement activity to be discussed on a routine basis. However, it is identified that HAPs provided a useful forum for Housing officers, Elected Members and residents to come together to discuss local issues and identify potential solutions and so it is important that an alternative mechanism is in place to facilitate this.
- 2.7 Some ideas for consideration of Housing's interface with Community Committees are as follows:
 - a) A regular Housing report presented to and attendance at Community Committee meetings by the Area Housing Manager (frequency determined by the Community Committee).
 - b) The Housing report to include local housing performance, an update on local tenant and community engagement and involvement activity, sharing any local customer insight, an update on investment programmes in the area, local community issues, e.g. community safety, environmental updates, trends and priorities.
 - c) Housing Leeds to feed into agenda setting in relation to particular local issues, promoting the Community Committee meetings with local residents encouraging participation in the meetings and then providing feedback to local residents e.g. You said, we did.

- d) Collective discussion of any local issues and priorities to identify actions. Such actions could include further targeted resident engagement or community interventions and collaborative multi agency responses.

2.8 Housing will formalise its new relationship with Community Committees as part of the current review of Community Committees.

Targeted Community Engagement Support

2.9 Whilst the above service offer will be offered across all areas, to ensure that we are hearing the voice of all residents on local issues, it is proposed that some of our community engagement offer will be targeted in areas which are identified as a priority for a particular community engagement intervention. Some examples of areas that may be identified as a priority for targeted community engagement are:

- Priority wards / neighbourhoods – ensuring that any targeted interventions are connected into wider Neighbourhood Improvement approaches]
- Areas which are experiencing particular issues, such as community safety issues, community tensions.
- Communities who may find it difficult to engage with our tenant and community engagement offer due to barriers, e.g. language, disability.

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Leeds Housing Board

Title: Complaints Handling Performance

Author: Roisin Donnelly/Ian Montgomery

Meeting Date: 6 June 2024

1. Introduction

1.1. The service wishes to update the Leeds Housing Board on activity related to the management of complaints, specifically:

- a) Full year complaints performance for 2023/24
- b) An overview of complaints by type and issue
- c) Complaints’ satisfaction monitoring findings
- d) Our wider complaints management activity
- e) Our most recent self-assessment against an updated Complaint Handling Code
- f) The Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) role

2. Performance update

A summary of performance is below:

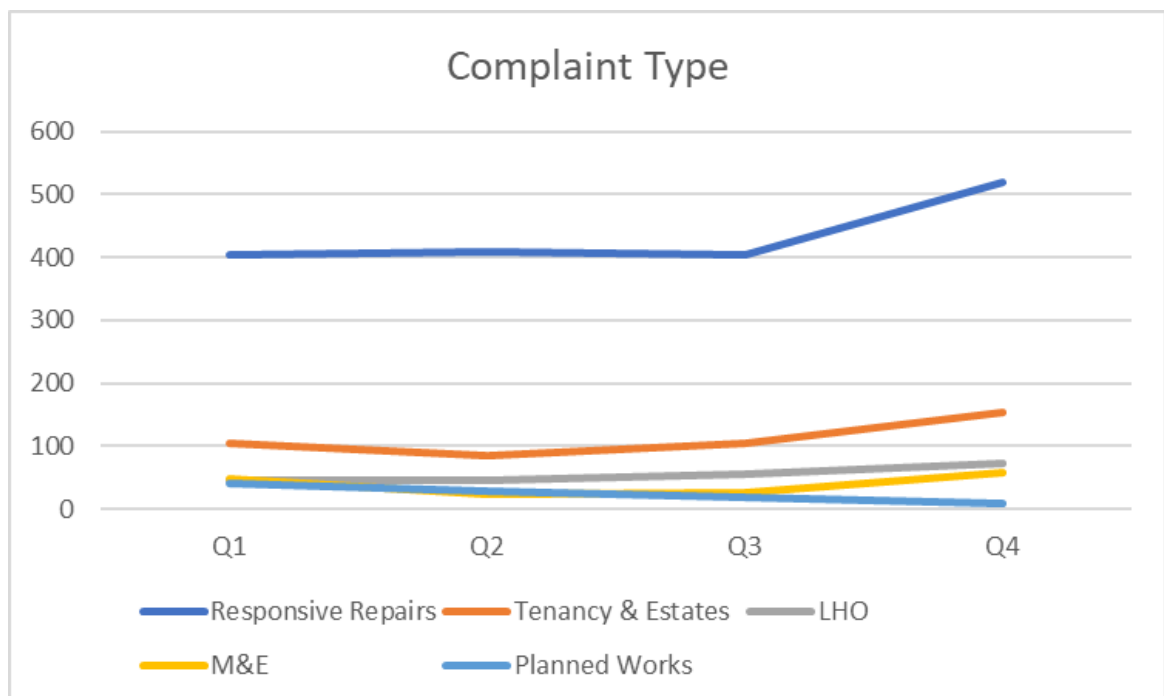
Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Stage 1 complaints received	590	532	543	696
<i>Previous year comparison</i>	552	536	655	668
Stage 1 responded in code (10 working days or with an extension)	82.7%	93.0%	88.2%	87.5%
<i>Previous year comparison</i>	74.6%	73.7%	76.0%	73.2%

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Stage 2 complaints received	139	143	134	173
<i>Previous year comparison</i>	114	118	145	136
Stage 2 responded in code (20 working days or with an extension)	88.5%	88.8%	83.6%	90.8%
<i>Previous year comparison</i>	60.1%	67.0%	67.6%	63.4%

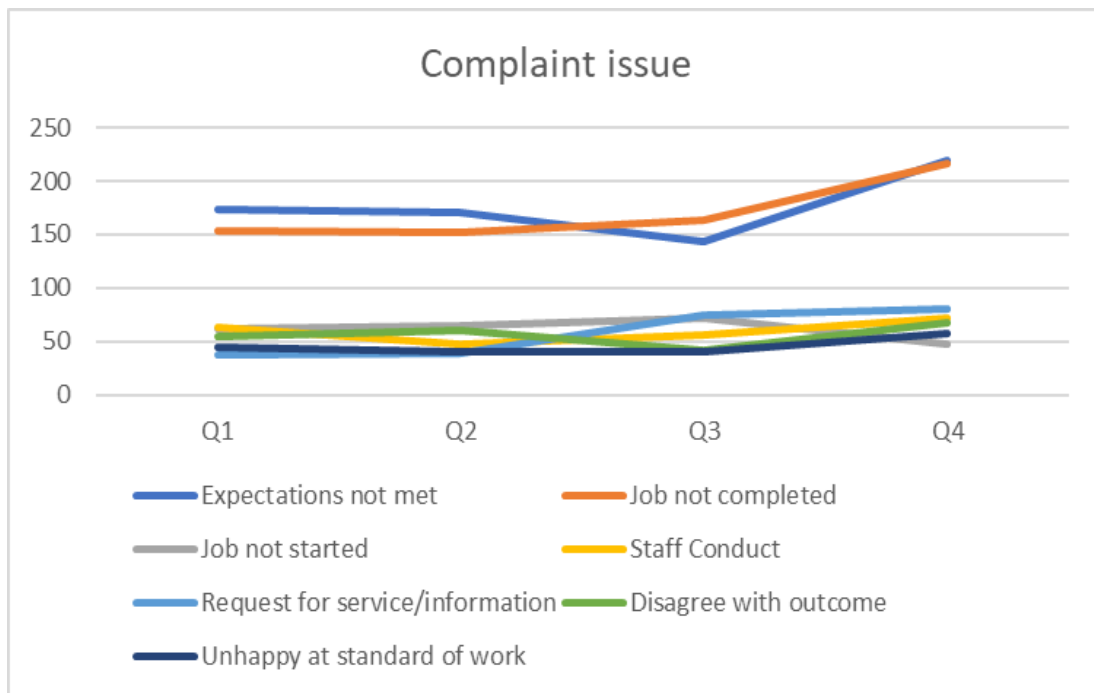
2.1. As of 1 April 2024, the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code became statutory. After consultation last year, the [Complaint Handling Code was updated](#). The updated code is not a joint Housing and Local Government code (as expected) – recognising that the Housing Ombudsman and the Housing code are now statutory requirements, unlike the LGSCO Code, which is non-statutory, best practice guidance. A [presentation for local authorities](#) about the Code is more detail is available.

2.2. Tenant Satisfaction Measures (or TSMs) performance related to complaints will be provided to the board separately.

- 2.3. Performance for the year has improved from 2022/23. At stage 1, 87.8% of complaints received a response in timescale or were compliant with the complaint handling code, improved from 74.4% in 2022/23. At stage 2, 88.1% of complaints received a response in timescale or were compliant with the complaint handling code, improved from 65.0% in 2022/23.
- 2.4. For April 2024, our latest full performance month, we are currently responding to 87.9% of stage 1 complaints within code requirements and 94.5% of stage 2 complaints.
- 2.5. Complaints by type - The largest complaints by type relate to our day-to-day repairs service, reflecting the volume of activity undertaken. We undertake approximately 200,000 repairs a year, with less than 1% of repairs resulting in a stage one complaint being received. The chart below presents complaints by volume over the last four quarters for the five highest service areas.
- 2.6. The volume of complaints for Quarter 4 is higher than in Quarter 4 22/23, however, this may not reflect changes in service levels and is likely to be influenced by a number of factors including various promotions and campaigns to highlight how residents can access the complaints process and dealing with fewer cases informally to ensure compliance with the code and give clarity to the customer on the status of their complaint. During this time overall satisfaction with the service and the repairs service has also improved.



- 2.7. For each complaint received, we record the key issue in terms of what has led to the failure or complaint being received.



2.8 All managers have access to a complaints dashboard which gives an overview of complaints by stage, area, type, issue, and sub issue. Teams can filter this to produce meaningful information for their specific area and highlight any trends or concerns. The dashboard also records the date a complaint was received for managers to monitor complaints responses in timescales.

2.9 Whilst there has been an increase in complaints relating to repair jobs not completed' since Q3, we have also seen a corresponding month on month increase in customer satisfaction with repairs during the quarter. Alongside this, we have also seen a continuing month by month reduction in the quarter of the overall volume of live repair jobs. We will continue to monitor trends over the coming periods and work with providers to determine any further improvement measures if this trend continues. We are currently finalising a review of our Tenant Handbook, as well as reviewing our published service standards on the leeds.gov webpages, and alongside the promotion of better quality communication with residents, we are hopeful that this will help improve the way that we manage residents' expectations.

2.10 A summary of BITMO performance for the same period is below:

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Stage 1 complaints received	10	10	6	6
<i>Previous year comparison</i>	4	1	14	12
Stage 1 responded in code (10 working days or with an extension)	90%	90%	83%	100%
<i>Previous year comparison</i>	0%	100%	64%	100%

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Stage 2 complaints received	3	2	5	2

<i>Previous year comparison</i>	2	1	4	2
Stage 2 responded in code (20 working days or with an extension)	100%	100%	60%	50%
<i>Previous year comparison</i>	100%	100%	75%	50%

2.11 In terms of Ombudsman cases, during 2023/24 we received:

	HOS assessment	HOS Formal*	LGO assessment	LGO formal
Q1	6	6	2	5
<i>Q1 last year</i>	7	14	2	5
Q2	7	10	3	6
<i>Q2 last year</i>	7	11	1	1
Q3	9	10	0	1
<i>Q3 last year</i>	5	8	1	2
Q4	13	16	5	2
<i>Q4 last year</i>	4	10	3	3

*Formal cases are those which the Ombudsman will investigate, whereas assessment requests are where the Ombudsman asks us for information, and these may or may not progress to formal cases. The HOS are more likely to progress straight to formal investigation than the LGO.

2.12 Outcomes received during 2023/24 are:

- 11 cases were closed after the initial enquiry with no further action required or were outside of jurisdiction.
- 9 cases were not upheld
- 27 cases were upheld (with a decision letter and remedies outlined)
- 8 cases the HOS found a service failure (with a decision letter and remedies outlined)

2.13 In May the Housing Ombudsman issued a severe maladministration finding against Housing Leeds related to our handling of a complex structural repair and subsequent actions and impact to a family. The case provided an opportunity to identify the lessons learnt and actions have been implemented as a result. For example:

- Sharing the learning as a case study with all staff and our contractors.

- Providing refresher training/extra guidance for all officers who investigate and respond to complaints to make sure that we are meeting our service standards.
 - Introducing improved procedures for managing this type of complex repair.
 - Reviewing our procedures for capturing and tailoring our services to meet vulnerability needs.
- 2.14 A further case outcome has identified the need to make sure that all complaint responses are in writing. The LCC Complaints Policy advises that responses can be written or verbal, but the Housing Ombudsman Code specifies that they must be in writing. We are reviewing this with staff and will review the wording in the policy also.
- 2.15 The Housing Ombudsman has changed its approach to publishing severe maladministration cases moving forward. Instead of publishing each case individually a monthly 'learning from severe maladministration report' will be published by the HOS. A copy of the May release is [here](#), which includes the case outlined in 2.13.
- 2.16 We are currently developing a system to monitor outcomes, actions, and learning from Ombudsman cases. This will help us to monitor compliance and report learning to the Board. It will also help collate information for our Annual Report.

3. Satisfaction Monitoring

- 3.1. The Housing Ombudsman's [Complaint Handling Code](#) requires all social landlords to create a '*positive complaint handling culture through continuous learning and improvement*'. To help do this, we undertake monthly satisfaction surveys to try and better understand the customer experience of the complaints process. In the second week of the month, a text message is sent with a survey link to those who have had a complaint closed in the previous month. There were 271 responses informing the findings for 2022/23. For Q1-Q3 2023/24 (Apr-Dec) we received 140 responses. Data is currently being processed for Q4.
- 3.2. The survey is likely to achieve lower results by the nature of the topic and how it is difficult to separate the complaint outcome (which may or may not be upheld) with the overall quality of the process. The survey design is therefore focused on the quality of the process in terms of how well we communicate, listen, and respond to the complaint – not about the complaint outcome. The survey is also completed by a relatively small numbers of residents, with residents more likely to complete if they remain unhappy. We therefore use the results as a guide to identify learning opportunities.
- 3.3. **Summary for 2023/24**

- 3.4. When comparing satisfaction for 2023/24 to 2022/23, the key findings from our own internal satisfaction monitoring are that:
- **Overall satisfaction** with how we handle complaints has **increased** from 20% to 29%
 - Satisfaction with the **speed with which we manage complaints** has **risen** from 28% to 34%
 - Satisfaction with how **well we have kept a resident informed** about the progress of their complaint has **risen** from 21% to 32%
 - Satisfaction with **how well we listened and understood** a person's complaint has **risen** from 21% to 38%
 - Satisfaction with how well we took a **resident's individual circumstances into account** has **risen** from 18% to 28%
 - Satisfaction with **how much we cared about putting the complaint right** has **risen** from 17% to 28%
 - 76% of respondents said they would **feel confident making a complaint again**, which is an **increase** of 9% from last year's 67%.
 - The survey includes a final question, "Is there anything you would like to tell us about how we managed your complaint?". **20%** of respondents had something **positive to say**, which is up from 8% last year.
- 3.5. Information from recent satisfaction monitoring has helped us to:
- Provide practical advice and reminders that we share in a monthly learning from complaints feature in Housing Leeds Matters, the internal staff bulletin.
 - Identify those cases where satisfaction is poor or if there is an issue outstanding so we can highlight to the relevant team and proactively intervene if value or benefit for the customer in doing so.

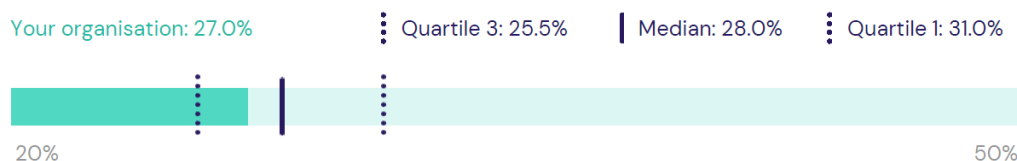
4. Wider complaints management activity

- 4.1. To strengthen our approach to complaints management we have undertaken the following actions:
- a) In the ongoing appraisals, all staff will be set a complaint's related objective (as per Code requirement).
 - b) We continue to deliver monthly 'Investigating Officer' training/refresher sessions for investigating officers from across the service. This reminds investigating officers about good practice and requirements of the complaints process, especially the importance of contacting the customer to understand their complaint so we can effectively respond. We will continue to offer training and support for those staff and teams who need this.
 - c) As a result of an Ombudsman outcome, BITMO with effect from the 1st May adopted the LCC Complaints Policy to help strengthen and simplify our compliance with the code. The HOS stating from this case that Housing Leeds remain the landlord of BITMO managed homes and we are

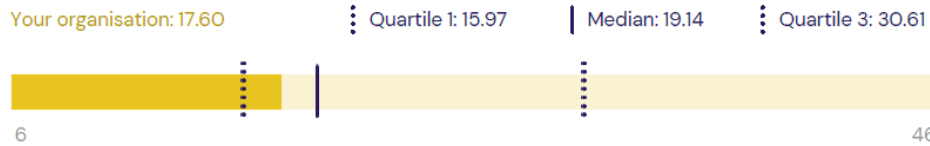
responsible for responding to complaints in compliance with the code. The Self-Assessment against the code (see later in this report) therefore includes the position of BIMO.

- d) The Housing Ombudsman continue to share 'Spotlight' reports and cases of severe maladministration from social landlords nationally that are reviewed by the service to identify lessons learnt. In February 2024 the HOS published a Spotlight report on '[Attitudes, respect, and rights – relationship of equals](#)'. This includes several recommendations for the future of social housing to landlords and policymakers and suggest what changes need to be made in both the short and long term. This is currently being reviewed by the service. In addition, the service promoted to tenants the opportunity to be part of the Housing Ombudsman Resident Panel and promoted the Housing Ombudsman 'Make Things Right' campaign.
- e) In April, the Tenant Scrutiny Board selected complaints as their next review topic. Specifically, looking at how we can ensure all complaints are responded to within compliance of the code and how we learn from complaints and reports outcomes back to customers. We will support the board in their review and draw in practice from other landlords to help the board in their evidence gathering.
- f) The service participated in a voluntary mid-year Housemark TSM benchmarking exercise. When comparing performance with our peer group, performance six months ago was similar to that of other large urban landlords. Though should be noted that year end TSM results are now required to be submitted by all landlords to the Regulator for Social Housing for 2023/24 which will enable us to benchmark more reliably in the future.

TPO9: Landlord's approach to complaints handling



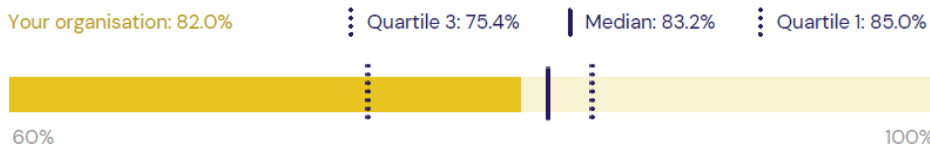
CHO1(1): Number of stage one complaints received per 1,000 homes



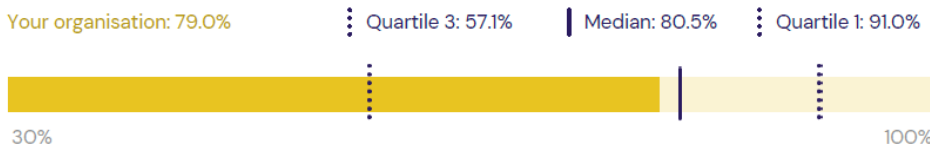
CHO1(2): Number of stage two complaints received per 1,000 homes



CHO2(1): Stage one complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales



CHO2(2): Stage two complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales



- g) We continue to engage with other landlords through the Housing Quality Network (HQN) to discuss and share best practice.
- h) The service continues to receive compliments on it's complaint handling for example, a recent compliment received by Lianne Vickers, in the Repairs Intervention Team, stated *"Thank you for the caring and considerate way in which you have handled my complaint, which you have done your best to resolve. You have been in touch frequently to keep me up to date with all your efforts."*

5. Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment:

- 5.1. A full copy of the self-assessment against the updated Code is attached to this report.
- 5.2. In January our self-assessment against the previous code was assessed as fully compliant. For the latest version of the code, we are not currently compliant in the following aspects. To be fully compliant with the updated code, the following actions are required:

- a) To improve from 88% to 100% the responses to stage 1 complaints within the initial 10 working days, or within an extension time period as per code guidance.
 - b) Similar to above, improve from 88% to 100% the responses to stage 2 complaints within 20 working days or within an extension as per code guidance.
 - c) To update the complaints policy to state how we publicise our policy and share information about the Complaint Handling Code.
 - d) To make more explicit in the complaints policy the difference between service requests and complaints.
 - e) Have in place an approach to keep any reasonable adjustments 'under active review'. This is linked to wider actions related to the HOS Spotlight report being managed through our wider Social Housing Regulation work.
 - f) To review the forward work programme of the Leeds Housing Board to ensure an annual complaints report is provided and a response from the board (and the annual report) is published online and promoted to residents.
 - g) To identify a 'suitably senior lead person as accountable for complaint handling'. We proposed that Gez Tinsdale, as Chief Officer Housing is the senior lead person accountable for complaint handling.
 - h) To confirm an (elected) 'Member Responsible for Complaints'
- 5.3. More detail on the required actions in response to areas of non-compliance is outlined in the self-assessment.
- 5.4. The new Code requires that a 'Member Responsible for Complaints' (or MRC) is appointed. The member is responsible for supporting a positive complaint handling culture and ensuring that insight on complaint handling and performance is shared with the 'governing body'.
- 5.5. The MRS should be a member of the governing body (the Leeds Housing Board) and within a local authority, means a lead member or a Councillor who has oversight in the cabinet for housing. The MRS has a [role profile](#) and additional information about the role has been shared by the HOS in the form of [FAQ's](#).
- 5.6. To date we have engaged the tenant Housing Board members who are all supportive of undertaking a more active complaints scrutiny role as part of board activity. We propose this remains the case and we continue to invest in tenant board member development in this area to help strengthen tenant influence.
- 5.7. However, to fully comply with the Code it is recommended that an Elected Member of the LHB takes on the formal role of Elected Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC). It is proposed that Councillor Jordan Bowden as Deputy Executive Member for Housing takes on this role. If supported by the Board, we would wish to discuss the practicalities of the role including how the Tenant Board Members can support Cllr Bowden in fulfilling this role.

- 5.8. The Housing Ombudsman now has a legal duty to monitor compliance with the Code and therefore we are required to submit our self-assessment by the 30th June 2024. The self-assessment must also be published on our website and in wider resident communications.
- 5.9. The next steps by the service are therefore to make the changes required to comply as far as possible with the requirements of the new Code ahead of sharing the outcome of the self-assessment with the HOS and residents at the end of June.

6. Recommendations

- 6.2. The Board are asked to note and comment on the information included in this report.
- 6.3. The Board support the proposed actions to strengthen our compliance with the HOS Complaints Handling Code, including support for Gez Tinsdale, as Chief Officer Housing taking the role of lead person accountable for complaints.
- 6.4. The Board confirm the appointment of Councillor Jordan Bowden to act as the formal Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) and for discussions to take place on putting the role into practice alongside and with support from Tenant Board Members.

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <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>	Yes	The Council’s complaints policy is in place for all council services including Housing, and includes this definition	No change
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	Staff are aware that where a customer raises an issue as defined in 1.3, this is logged as a complaint. Where a third party raises a complaint on behalf of a customer, we will log this as a complaint. If we don’t have permission/advocacy in place to deal with that third party, we will ask for advocacy to be put in place, or address the response to the customer	No change
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	No	An assessment is made of service requests and complaints logged where requested/appropriate but now need policy to specifically reflect this.	New or updated provision. Action: To update the Complaints Policy by end June 2024 and share with teams in ‘Housing Leeds Matters’ as part of regular complaint update for staff teams. To share in July 2024 residents email

	be recorded, monitored, and reviewed regularly.			bulletin a link to updated policy and self-assessment.
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	Staff ensure that all service requests are followed through as per policy and process. Where a complaint is raised about the service request, staff will decide whether the Investigating Officer is best placed to progress the service request as part of the complaint resolution. The customer will be kept up to date with who is dealing with their service request	New or updated provision
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	Our quarterly overall tenant satisfaction survey (the main survey programme we have in use) makes this clear to residents and signposts to how to log a complaint. During 2024, the service will be reviewing our approach to satisfaction surveys and, where possible, will take this into account	No change

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	Our policy states “Not all complaints are be dealt with under this policy. (See Appendix 1). If a formal appeal process exists, then this will be used to address your concerns. Appeals processes exist for several areas including school admissions, benefit claims and planning applications. To ensure you are using the correct route for the issues you are raising, please see Appendix 1 for guidance on what we cannot deal with”	No change
2.2	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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. 	Yes	Reasons for exclusions are detailed within the complaints policy.	No change

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 			
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	We accept all complaints referred to us within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue unless they are excluded on other grounds. Where the complaint is outside these timescales, we will apply exceptions where it reasonable to do so	No change
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	We will inform the customer of the reason why we're unable to investigate and signpost to the relevant appeals process (if applicable) and to the HOS. If the HOS advises us to reconsider investigating a complaint, we will do so.	No change
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they	Yes	We will consider the individual customer's circumstances and	No change

	must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.		consider the complaint where it is reasonable to do so	
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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	<p>Customers can raise a compliment or complaint by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing an online form • Calling 0113 222 4405 (the dedicated Customer Relations line) or 0800 188 4000 (Contact Centre) or any local Housing team • Emailing complaints@leeds.gov.uk • In writing or in person to any of our local community hubs or housing teams <p>During any enquiry (email, telephone, or in person), if a customer expresses a wish to complain, we will direct or transfer the customer to the Customer Relations Team. We can also take the complaint on the customer's behalf and send this to the Customer Relations Team to log and allocate for investigation.</p>	No change

			<p>Our policy states that “We are committed to understanding the impact of a complaint on a customer, taking their individual circumstances into account. To assist in this, where reasonable adjustments are required concerning how complaints are made, considered, or responded to, we aim to accommodate requests where possible. We encourage in the first instance to discuss any reasonable adjustments with the Customer Relations team (0113 2224405, csu.customer.relations@leeds.gov.uk)”.</p> <p>Additionally, our in-house Customer Care training and Investigating Officer training reminds staff about the different considerations/needs of our customers.</p>	
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	As part of induction staff are made aware of the complaint process and their role in supporting customers to access this process. Regular reminders are shared in our staff e-bulletin. During any enquiry (email, telephone, or in person), if a customer expresses a wish to complain, we will direct or transfer the customer to the Customer Relations Team. We can also take the complaint on the customer’s behalf and send this to the Customer Relations	New or updated provision

			Team to log and allocate for investigation.	
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	Numbers of complaints continue to increase as we ensure that the process is publicised to customers through regular communications	New or updated provision – this is more a statement than a requirement. No additional action required.
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	Our complaints policy is included on the ‘complaints, compliments and feedback’ page of our website. This describes the different ways customers can make a complaint, the stages involved, and what happens next. A printed copy of the policy can be provided on request. The website version is accessible for screen-readers and other supportive technology such as translation tools.	No change
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	No	This isn’t specifically included within the policy though we regularly promote the complaints process and signpost the HOS on different channels	New or updated provision. Action: To include in the Complaints Policy by end June 2024 and share with teams in ‘Housing Leeds Matters’ as part of regular complaint update for staff teams. To share in July 2024 residents email bulletin a link to updated policy and self-assessment.

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	We accept complaints from advocates or representatives where this has been agreed with the customer. If no advocacy in place, we would direct the response to the customer and give advice about how advocacy can be established. If a customer wishes to have an advocate present at any meetings, we will accommodate this where reasonable	No change
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	<p>We include information on the Housing Ombudsman, and the Complaint Handling Code on the complaints, compliments, and feedback page of our website.</p> <p>Information is also shared via the monthly tenant email, and social media. For those customers who aren't online, we make sure that communication clearly signposts the HOS at the beginning of the complaint's process, and in all stage 2 response letters.</p>	No change

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	Yes	The Council has a central Customer Relations Team who are responsible for complaints administration and ensuring that complaints are allocated to	No change

	<p>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.</p>		<p>appropriate named Investigating Officers and the customer is informed by way of an acknowledgement. The Customer Relations team also collate and share management information with the housing service leadership team. During 2023 we set up the new Leeds Housing Board. Complaints performance and compliance with the Code is reviewed regularly at the Board meetings.</p> <p>Additionally, we have an 'intervention team' which works directly in the repairs service and looks to provide early resolution to complaints where possible.</p>	
4.2	<p>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.</p>	Yes	<p>Investigating Officers are empowered to resolve complaints. Investigating Officers are also supported with guidance and advice from the Customer Relations Team if needed. In-house complaint handling training is provided for Investigating Officers.</p> <p>We also provide customer care training for all staff and additional training related to customer care skills to enable staff to sensitively and fairly deal with all enquiries (regardless of whether a complaint or not).</p>	No change
4.3	<p>Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff</p>	Yes	<p>The Customer Relations Team sit under a different directorate to Housing Leeds. They ensure that we adopt a 'one council' response for complaints and</p>	New or updated provision

	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		encourage ownership by the service that most of the complaint relates to. The team provide regular feedback to the Housing Leadership Team and complete quality assurance checks on 10% of complaint responses using an agreed matrix.	
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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	The Council's complaints policy is in place for all council services including Housing in line with the HOS Code. Complaints are viewed as valuable feedback on the service that we provide – customers who complain are not treated differently	No change
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	In line with the HOS Code, we operate a two stage complaints process.	No change
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process	Yes	In line with the HOS Code, we operate a two stage complaints process.	No change

	unduly long and delay access to 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	Complaints are covered as part of the contractual obligations we have with third party providers such as repair contractors. Complaints are investigated and responded to in line with the Leeds City Council policy	New or updated provision
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	As above, complaints are investigated and responded to in line with the Leeds City Council policy and the HOS Code	New or updated provision
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	Written acknowledgements briefly describe the nature of the complaint. For complaints acknowledged over the phone, the officer will clarify all the details with the customer before allocating to an Investigating Officer. As part of the investigation, the Investigating Officer should attempt to speak to the customer about their complaint. This is our opportunity to understand the complaint in full, the impact to the customer, and what the customer would like us to do to resolve the complaint.	No change

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	Leeds City Council complaints are managed by a central team. Where a complaint involves a service other than Housing, this is acknowledged at the beginning of the process. The service with most of the complaint will lead on the response with input from the other service/s.	No change
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: 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	In-house complaint handling training is provided for Investigating Officers. Further advice and guidance can be obtained from the Customer Relations Team if necessary. Additionally, the Housing Customer Care and Inclusion team provide support sessions for Investigating Officers on individual complaints. All staff also undertake mandatory annual information governance training so that we properly manage people’s information.	No change
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	When a complaint is logged, the officer asks the customer how they would like to be communicated with. If the response timescale needs to be extended, this is communicated to the customer. We would agree communication methods and frequency with the customer as part of the investigation.	No change

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.	No	<p>Our policy states that “We are committed to understanding the impact of a complaint on a customer, taking their individual circumstances into account. To assist in this, where reasonable adjustments are required concerning how complaints are made, considered, or responded to, we aim to accommodate requests where possible. We encourage in the first instance to discuss any reasonable adjustments with the Customer Relations team (0113 2224405, csu.customer.relations@leeds.gov.uk)”</p> <p>Additionally, our in-house Customer Care training and Investigating Officer training reminds staff about the different considerations/needs of our customers.</p>	<p>New or updated provision. Action: The service acknowledge that we need to improve how we manage reasonable adjustments in terms of being ‘kept under active review’ could be improved. This will be reviewed and changes incorporated into current service improvement plans by the end of December 2024.</p>
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	As above, this is set out in the complaints policy. A customer will be provided with reasons for why their complaint isn’t being escalated alongside signposting to the relevant appeals process (if applicable) and to the HOS.	No change
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	Yes	We have a central complaint logging system, and records are held on this	No change

	correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.			
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	Investigating Officers are empowered to resolve complaints at the earliest opportunity. Investigating Officers are also supported with guidance and advice from the Customer Relations Team if needed. In-house complaint handling training is provided for Investigating Officers.	No change
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	Our complaints policy (appendix 2) describes how we manage persistent and vexatious complainants. We seek as far as possible to apply a balanced approach to ensure residents can maintain access to our service and make service requests. Should any aspect of this policy be applied, officers will also consider any equality considerations.	No change
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	We will only restrict or reduce customer contact as a last resort to safeguard staff. We will always ensure that a channel of communication is available	No change

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	Our in-house Intervention Team aim to deal with repair related complaints as quickly as possible to support customers in getting repairs completed and receive a speedy resolution. All Investigating Officers are encouraged to contact customers as soon as possible to discuss the complaint and what resolution the customer is seeking.	No change
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	Yes	This is set out in our policy – during 2023/24 all complaints met this standard	No change
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	No	Between April 2023 and March 2024, 88% of stage 1 complaints received a response in the initial 10 working days or within the extended 10 working day timeframe.	No change Action: To continue to support and train Investigating Officers and application of the extension

				process and guidance for staff.
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.	No	Between April 2023 and March 2024, 88% of stage 1 complaints received a response in the initial 10 working days or within the extended 10 working day timeframe. Any extensions were clearly explained to the customer.	Updated provision Action: To continue to support and train Investigating Officers and application of the extension process and guidance for staff.
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	As part of the update to the customer about the extension, the contact details for the HOS are provided. During 2024/25 we will include this within the quality assurance checks	No change
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 in line with our current guidance to Investigating Officers.	No change
6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear	Yes	Response templates support and guide Investigating Officers to respond to the	No change

	reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.		complaint in full, with all relevant information	
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	Investigating Officers are encouraged to be flexible. At both stage 1 and stage 2, the complainant is given the opportunity to speak with the Investigating Officer for both the Investigating Officer and customer to understand each other's position and to help provide a considered and high-quality response. At this time, additional concerns or queries can be raised, if relevant.	No change
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: the complaint stage; a) the complaint definition; b) the decision on the complaint; c) the reasons for any decisions made; d) the details of any remedy offered to put things right; e) details of any outstanding actions; and	Yes	Our response templates have been reviewed and updated to ensure that customers are receiving detailed responses to their complaints. 10% of responses are checked for quality assurance and outcomes are fed back to the leadership team and relevant officers.	No change

	f) details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.			
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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	Within the Council's two stage policy, should a customer be unhappy with how their complaints has been handled at stage 1, they are able to escalate this to stage 2. A stage 2 response to a complaint would be considered the final decision and would then allow the customer to address their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service.	No change
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	This is set out in our policy – during 2023/24 all complaints met this standard.	No change
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	Customers are invited to set out the reasons for their dissatisfaction and these will be investigated by a senior officer. The complainant is given the opportunity to speak with the Investigating Officer for both the Investigating Officer and customer to understand each other's	New or updated provision

			position and to help provide a considered and high-quality response.	
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	As per policy, the stage 2 will be investigated by a different senior officer	No change
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	No	Between April 2023 and March 2024, 88% of stage 2 complaints received a response in the initial 20 working days or within the extended 20 working day timeframe.	No change Action: To continue to support and train Investigating Officers and application of the extension process and guidance for staff.
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.	No	Between April 2023 and March 2024, 88% of stage 2 complaints received a response in the initial 20 working days or within the extended 20 working day timeframe. Any extensions were clearly explained to the customer.	Updated provision Action: To continue to support and train Investigating Officers and application of the extension process and guidance for staff.
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	As part of the update to the customer about the extension, the contact details for the HOS are provided. During 2024/25 we will include this within the quality assurance checks	No change
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is	Yes	This is in line with our current guidance to Investigating Officers.	No change

	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.			
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	Response templates support and guide Investigating Officers to respond to the complaint in full, with all relevant information	No change
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: 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	Our response templates have been reviewed and updated to ensure that customers are receiving detailed responses to their complaints. 10% of responses are checked for quality assurance and outcomes are fed back to the leadership team and relevant officers.	No change

6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord’s final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	As per policy, stage 2 is dealt with by an appropriate senior officer who will liaise with all relevant staff members before sending a final, considered, response.	New or updated provision
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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	<p>Part of the template response used by Investigating Officers prompts the officer to describe the actions they are taking to put things right. For example, putting right any outstanding repairs, undertaking further visits or appointments to support tenants, or working with our contractors to carry out any further works. Any practical action to put the customer back in the position they would have been in if something hadn’t gone wrong, including an apology for the failure in service.</p> <p>Investigating Officers have the autonomy to consider a financial remedy if this is appropriate.</p>	No change

7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Our guidance encourages Investigating Officers to understand the individual impact of any service failures and take appropriate action. This includes taking measures or steps to support residents with any additional needs. Our Financial Remedy Guidance has been reviewed in line with good practice as suggested by the HOS. This provides staff guidance around financial and non-financial redress, which helps ensure a fair and consistent approach. Additionally, Investigating Officers are aware of adhering to city-wide policies and processes so that a consistent and fair service is provided for all.	No change
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	As per the guidance provided to Investigating Officers	No change
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Our Financial Remedy Guidance has been reviewed in line with good practice as suggested by the HOS. All HOS Spotlight reports are reviewed, and action plans developed from the recommendations	New or updated provision

Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. b) 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; c) any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; d) the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; e) any annual report about the landlord’s performance from the Ombudsman; and 	Yes	<p>For our governing body, the Leeds Housing Board, we provide regular complaints management information and the opportunity for our board to challenge our performance and wider complaints management activity.</p> <p>Complaints’ performance and an overview of service actions in response to complaints learning is also reported to the council’s Environments, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board and the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee.</p> <p>Complaint information is also offered to the Tenant Scrutiny Board to help inform them of potential future areas of inquiry.</p>	No change

	f) any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.			
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 section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body’s response to the report must be published alongside this.	No	Whilst a range of information is provided to the Leeds Housing Board we have not previously asked for a response from the Board or published this.	New or updated provision. Action: To review the work programme of the Leeds Housing Board for 2024/25 and ensure this report is presented to board and their response is published alongside the report. Hosted online, linked/promoted in the complaints section of the website and in the tenant email.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	This will be completed as required. This self-assessment is in response to the updated HOS Code valid from 1 April 2024	No change
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	We will review as per any HOS outcome recommendation	No change
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	Yes	We would update the HOS if relevant	New or updated provision

	website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.			
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Section 9: Scrutiny & 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	<p>Complaints management information, our performance and trends and issues are reported formally to our senior management team and key messages cascaded to managers. From this and other complaints management activity we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provided refresher training/ extra guidance to staff • continued to share our monthly ‘hints, tips, and reminders’ for all staff • developed our damp and mould team to help with the early intervention and triage of cases. • used customer satisfaction data to address dissatisfaction and put in place service improvements 	No change
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	Yes	<p>Complaints management information and the learning from complaints is regularly considered by the leadership team and is reported to the Leeds Housing Board. We can strengthen this within the greater involvement of complaints champions.</p>	No change

	positive changes in service delivery.			
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	<p>We shared a summary of complaints performance and learning in our 2022 23 Annual Report to Tenants in August 2023. A summary will be included in our 2023/24 Annual Report due out in July 2024.</p> <p>For staff we share:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular learning from complaints articles in our staff e-bulletin - A monthly performance summary of complaints with managers. This includes access to a dashboard where staff can access regular information in terms of numbers, types, and about what issues. - Quarterly summary reports are shared with the leadership team. - Feedback from quality assurance checks with relevant officers/the service <p>As above, we share regular information with our governing body and relevant committees.</p>	No change
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,	No	Complaints management information, our performance and trends and issues are reported formally to our senior management team and key messages cascaded to managers	New or updated provision. Action: To identify a lead officer accountable for complaint handling by the end of June 2024. To consider with the

	serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.			accountable person if any new complaints practice is required for them to undertake this responsibility. To make residents aware by adding to overview of senior roles and responsibilities on our website.
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').	No	The Leeds Housing Board are being requested to appoint an MRC at their June 6 th 2024 Board meeting.	New or updated provision Action: To confirm MRC at the Leeds Housing Board on the 6 th June 2024.
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.	No	As above	New or updated provision Action: To consider by the end of June 2024 with the newly appointed MRC the full role description. To ensure access to information, resources and ways of working are in place to allow the MRC to undertake their role.
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive:	No	Complaints management information and the learning from complaints is regularly considered by the leadership team and is reported to the Leeds Housing Board.	New or updated provision Action: As above in relation to the role of the MRC and

	<p>a) regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance;</p> <p>b) regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling;</p> <p>c) regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman’s investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and</p> <p>d) annual complaints performance and service improvement report.</p>		<p>We can strengthen this with the greater involvement of complaints champions and subject to confirmation of the MRC by the Leeds Housing Board on the 6th June.</p>	<p>an annual complaints report.</p>
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> <p>a) have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments;</p> <p>b) take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and</p>	Yes	<p>All Housing Leeds staff are set a complaints objective depending on their role.</p> <p>All staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with customers to resolve queries at first point of contact where possible • To be familiar with the complaints policy so that you can advise customers about this and how they can access the complaints process if needed. 	No change

	<p>c) act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.</p>		<p>Investigating Officers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with colleagues and other service areas to respond to complaints in line with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code • Ensure that individual circumstances are taken into account, and reasonable adjustments considered for customers going through the complaints process • Using the support and training available, provide high quality complaints responses <p>Area/Service Managers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help create a strong learning from complaints culture by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ regularly monitor performance and reviewing the quality of complaint responses within your service area ○ working with Customer Relations and Customer Insight to identify and share learning from complaints within your service area. ○ supporting teams to improve the quality of responses through regular training and awareness sessions or other 	
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			activity.	
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Title: Introduction to the BITMO 23/24 Annual Performance Overview

Author: Mandy Sawyer

Meeting Date: 6th June 2024

1. Background and Purpose of Report

- 1.1. Housing Leeds has a strong and long standing relationship with Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation (BITMO), managing 1900 properties on behalf of Leeds City Council as part of Right to Manage Regulations. A modular management agreement sets out the functions which are retained by the local authority and delegated to BITMO.
- 1.2. The Social Housing (Regulation) Act sets out that it is the responsibility of landlords to meet regulatory requirements and that where functions are delegated to other services or organisations to deliver on their behalf, that the landlord remains responsible. Leeds City Council therefore remains accountable to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) for services provided by BITMO and so must gain assurance from BITMO that services are provided in accordance with regulatory standards. BITMO is not directly accountable to the Regulator.
- 1.3. This report is an annual report to the Leeds Housing Board, covering 2023/24, to provide an update to the Board of BITMO's TSM performance, compliance with the Consumer Standards and progress in delivering its wider priorities.

2. Leeds City Council's Assurance Framework / Relationship with BITMO

- 2.1. As Leeds City Council is accountable to the Regulator of Social Housing for ensuring that regulatory standards are met in relation to services provided by BITMO it is important that the Council gains assurance through its contractual and performance management frameworks with BITMO.
- 2.2. Leeds City Council has a management agreement with BITMO which sets out details of delegated functions along with arrangements for the financing, staffing and performance management of these functions. Alongside this a performance management framework is in place which sets out how BITMO's performance will be monitored and how the relationship between Leeds City Council and BITMO will be managed.
- 2.3. With the introduction of a more proactive regulatory approach from 1 April 2024, Housing Leeds will be seeking to strengthen arrangements with BITMO as follows:
 - Undertaking a review of the management agreement in 2025, with a particular focus on reviewing appendices to provide strengthened

details of policies, responsibilities, and performance management arrangements.

- Completing a review of BITMO's management fee calculation to ensure that it accurately reflects delegations/recharges and is proportionate to wider Council housing budget allocations with any changes taking effect from 1 April 2025.
- Undertaking a review of the performance management framework so that it is aligned to TSMs and Consumer Standard expectations.

2.4. A review of the Council's performance management framework of BITMO will take place during quarter 2 with a view to strengthening arrangements as follows:

- Regular reporting of TSM performance
- Introducing regular reporting of its compliance with the 4 Consumer Standards along with periodic checks of evidence / quality assurance arrangements in place
- A review of arrangements for regular liaison, via the Quarterly Review Meeting and BITMO Board, to ensure that robust arrangements are in place that are aligned to the regulatory framework.

3. TSM Performance

3.1. Housing Leeds is responsible for reporting TSM performance for all Council tenants, including for properties / tenancies managed by BITMO. As outlined in the TSM report earlier on this agenda Housing Leeds has co-ordinated the calculation of all TSM performance to include BITMO performance as follows:

- The Council's arrangements for collecting tenant satisfaction survey data via the Acuity contractor includes for BITMO tenants, with a larger sample size to ensure that performance is statistically relevant at an organisational level.
- The Directorate's Service Delivery Manager has worked with BITMO officers in collating performance data for the calculation of the management indicators for BITMO managed tenancies / properties.

3.2. As outlined in the main report BITMO's performance on the tenant satisfaction survey TSMs is very positive, with BITMO performing above the average for the city on most TSMs.

4. Consumer Standards

4.1. Housing Leeds has undertaken self assessments against each of the updated Consumer Standards – the outcome of these will be shared at the July Leeds Housing Board meeting. Alongside these self assessments, BITMO has undertaken its own self assessments against the Consumer Standards as outlined in the main report.

4.2. Housing Leeds will work with BITMO as part of the updated performance management framework to ensure that compliance is strengthened where

required. Whilst some areas of improvement can be owned by BITMO, some are linked to systems and data reporting and so improvements are owned by Leeds City Council. The self-assessment exercise has identified some gaps in the sharing of policy, performance and data reports with BITMO to assist them in meeting the standards. Corrective measures have been put in place to address this.

5. Complaints 2023/24

- 5.1. During 2023/24 BITMO oversaw complaints made about services provided by BITMO via their own Complaints Policy. Performance is outlined in the main report. BITMO undertook their own self-assessment against the Complaints Handling Code and put in place corrective action to strengthen compliance.
- 5.2. In April 2024 the Council received a determination from the Housing Ombudsman that any complaints raised by Council tenants managed by BITMO should be overseen by Leeds City Council as the landlord, in accordance with the Council's complaints policy and not by BITMO via its own complaints policy. Changes have been made to arrangements so that any BITMO complaints are administered by the Council in accordance with the Council's policy and this has been communicated to tenants.

6. Wider Regulatory Requirements

- 6.1. In acknowledgement that BITMO has a key role in supporting the Council's compliance with updated regulatory requirements, Deborah Kelly, as Chief Executive, is an attendee of the Social Housing Regulation Board with regular attendance at meetings and connection into citywide approaches in response to updated regulatory requirements.

7. Internal audit arrangements

- 7.1. As part of the Council/BITMO Performance Management Framework the Council undertakes one annual assurance audits each year. In 2022/23 an audit was undertaken of BITMO's information governance arrangements, finding that there were good controls in place and minor organisational impact. The 2023/24 audit is being undertaken of BITMO's core organisational policies and procedures – staff conduct and disciplinary, recruitment, EDI and Health, Safety and Wellbeing. This audit has not yet concluded.
- 7.2. To support these arrangements Housing Leeds appointed a consultant to undertake a Governance Health Check of BITMO and its Board, taking into account updated regulatory requirements. Housing Leeds will work with BITMO to consider the recommendations from this exercise.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. Leeds City Council and BITMO's established relationship is a good starting point for us to review and strengthen arrangements in order to evidence both the Council and BITMO's robust compliance with regulatory requirements.

Actions outlined in this report will progress during 2024/25 and inform the next annual report to the Leeds Housing Board in June 2025.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1. Members are requested to note and comment on BITMO's report and the information it contains.

Title: BITMO 23/24 Annual Performance Overview

Author: Deborah Kelly

Meeting Date: 6th June 2024

1. Background

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to provide Leeds Housing Board with an appreciation of BITMO's position and arrangements in relation to the new regulatory framework, performance, tenant satisfaction, tenant engagement and the improvements it is planning to those arrangements and service delivery over the coming months.
- 1.2. The information below is intended to help the BITMO Board, LCC and all stakeholders to understand BITMO's preparedness and degree of compliance with each of the Consumer Standards together with the plans in place to strengthen compliance, and improve service delivery.
- 1.3. **Evidencing compliance** with the regulatory requirements will be a detailed, painstaking exercise that will require concrete evidence that is based on objective data, about money spent, services provided, interventions made and customer experience. Sourcing and collating the data is a considerable challenge for any provider. There are particular challenges for Leeds and consequently BITMO because data held in IT systems is difficult to access in some cases.
- 1.4. The section that follows shows BITMO's current position in terms of the consumer standards, and tenant satisfaction measures. Later sections cover tenant engagement and complaints in greater detail. The 2023/24 Key Performance Indicator (KPI's) are appended for reference. The detailed self-assessment against the consumer standards is available for review but not provided here.

BITMO's Performance Data

2. Consumer Standards

2.1. Safety and quality

- 2.2. This standard relates to the health and safety compliance regime, property condition and services. It emphasises the importance of maintaining effective systems to ensure the safety of people's homes. It draws heavily on the Building Safety Act 2022. It requires accurate asset records that hold real time data regarding all aspects of compliance in reportable form. This is referred to as the "golden thread".

- 2.3. It requires providers to make sure their homes are decent and in good repair, and that property-based services to tenants achieve KPI targets and deliver a responsive service that tenants are satisfied with. It should be evidenced quantitatively, qualitatively and should cover customer experience.
- 2.4. Of the 12 specific expectations BITMO can evidence compliance with 8, partial compliance with 1, and non compliance with 2. Partial compliance is in terms of ease of reporting repairs. We don't have reporting that evidences this. Non compliance relates to stock condition data, and repairs being completed within published target timescales.

<p>Strengths: Health and Safety legal compliance requirements are met, as evidenced by KPIs. Remedial actions are carried out in a timely way. The damp and mould monitoring spreadsheet is reviewed every three months and reported via the Health and Safety forum, and to Board. It is easy to report repairs. See TSMs. [We have a clear adaptations policy and leaflet that makes clear what tenants can expect, we can evidence vfm in the delivery of services as a result of competitive pricing, and works order controls which have reduced variations, renewals and costs.</p>	<p>Weaknesses Assurance around decency Stock quality data Some Cx system reporting constraints Timescales for completion of repairs Communication with tenants around repairs.</p>
<p>Improvement Plan Asset management strategy being produced Stock condition survey programme is underway Voicescape Feedback module being implemented to increase customer engagement</p>	

- 2.5. We identified significant weaknesses in our stock condition data in 2019. Since then we have conducted a small number of stock condition surveys per year. Since 2024 we have increased the rate of stock condition surveying and aim to have up to 90% non-cloned data in place by 2025. We currently hold 20% accurate stock condition data.
- 2.6. Expenditure on homes has been driven by local knowledge, our strategic priorities (kitchens and bathroom and thermal efficiency) and customer preference to date, as it has not been possible to rely solely upon stock condition data.
- 2.7. 76% of tenants say their home is well maintained, 80% say that it is safe, 77% are satisfied with repairs completed in the last 12 months, 73% are satisfied with the time taken to complete repairs and 79% are happy with

the management of communal areas. Source – Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM’s) Quarters 1-4, 2023-24.

2.8. Transparency influence and accountability

- 2.9. This standard requires housing providers to involve and empower tenants in decision making processes that affect them. It includes requirements such as providing clear and accessible information. It incorporates the importance of equality diversity and inclusion. Providers need to be able to evidence clearly concrete examples of how tenants influence decisions and hold the provider to account, and how services are delivered with regard to protected characteristics.
- 2.10. The standard requires providers to develop a culture of openness in which it is easy for tenants to access information, understand the quality of service that is to be provided and challenge when it falls short. The Tenant Satisfaction measures support this standard.
- 2.11. Of the 22 specific expectations BITMO currently complies with 8, partially complies with 3, and does not comply with 7, the others are not applicable. The main areas of non-compliance are in relation to evidencing fairness and respect through data which shows that services are accessible and that outcomes are consistent across the characteristics of diversity.

<p>Strengths</p> <p>Range of opportunities for engagement Feedback to tenants on the difference their engagement makes Supporting tenant led activities Growth of Right To Manage is a strategic priority We can evidence efforts to capture tenant priorities and act upon them.</p>	<p>Weaknesses</p> <p>Disaggregation of transactional data and analysis by demography or protected characteristics Analysis of accessibility of services e.g inbound call failure rates are not currently available but this is being addressed for the future Evidencing provision of support that meets the diverse needs of tenants.</p>
<p>Improvement Plan</p> <p>Improved customer service leaflets that make clear the service offer and how to access it.</p> <p>There are no actions that BITMO can take that will substantially alter the assessment of weaknesses in relation to analysis of service access by protected characteristics. The issue lies with data configuration and reporting capability within Leeds IT systems.</p>	

- 2.12. TSM data for the year to 31.3.24 indicates that 62% of tenants feel that BITMO listens to them and acts on what they say, 75% feel they are kept informed about the things that matter to them, 80% feel they are treated

fairly and with respect, 74% feel that BITMO is easy to deal with, and 60% feel we are friendly and approachable

- 2.13. We will promote our work in tenant engagement and the benefits of tenant leadership.
- 2.14. **Neighbourhood and community standard**
- 2.15. This standard requires housing providers to promote and support thriving neighbourhoods and communities. It includes the requirement to work with other agencies to improve the local environment, support community initiatives, and address anti-social behaviour and other issues that affect quality of life in local areas. It is necessary to evidence the impact of its work in this area thorough quantitative and qualitative measures which capture data on ASB, crime, actions taken and tenant satisfaction with its impact.
- 2.16. Of the nine specific expectations BITMO complies with three, achieves partial compliance in three, and one is not applicable.
- 2.17. The areas of partial compliance relate to the management of ASB and hate incidents. Resource issues, and IT issues within the Council together with an approach that does not make full use of all the tools available combine to provide a service that we believe does not provide sufficiently prompt and appropriate action to support tenants experiencing ASB. We are unable to report on engagement with the ASB service in terms of diversity.

<p>Strengths</p> <p>Work with 3rd party agencies such as Health for All, local Registered Social Landlord's, GroundWork and Fruit Works Cooperative to improve shared spaces. Local relationships with Police</p> <p>Engagement in MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conference) and tasking group.</p> <p>Funds are in place to support tenant led neighbourhood improvements</p> <p>Tenancy support team focusing on ASB and support</p> <p>At risk tenancy meetings to provide cross team support.</p>	<p>Weaknesses</p> <p>System reporting, speed of action, decisive use of tools to rectify problems of ASB for e.g practice of needing to evidence statutory noise nuisance, and use of noise monitoring equipment to progress action in relation to noise ASB.</p>
<p>Improvement Plan</p> <p>BITMO has requested an audit of case management and training from LCC. We have requested involvement in the service review. We will improve quality reviews of case management to identify opportunities to improve the customer experience, and improve performance reporting in this area</p> <p>Produce new ASB leaflet.</p>	

- 2.18. TSM data 2023-24 indicates that 58% feel the neighbourhood is safe, 59% are satisfied with the appearance of their neighbourhood. 75% feel that BITMO makes a good contribution to the neighbourhood. 55% are satisfied with the approach to ASB
- 2.19. **Tenancy**
- 2.20. This standard requires providers to offer tenancies that are fair, transparent, and flexible (where it is policy to do so), to provide clear information on tenancy terms and conditions, let homes in a fair and transparent way considering housing needs, demonstrating that we make the best use of available housing, are compatible with the purpose of the housing, and contribute to the local authorities strategic housing function and sustainable communities. Providers must provide a clear application and appeals process and facilitate transfer and exchange by way of internet enabled systems. It relates to tenancy sustainment, evictions, and tenancy fraud.
- 2.21. Of the 22 specific expectations BITMO complies with nine, seven are not applicable, and does not comply with six.

Strengths Tenancy support team, community fund, Financial inclusion work, tenancy fraud work.	Weaknesses Lack of targeted approach to tackle under occupation, no clear published information on tenancy management Inadequate system reporting to evidence equality and diversity in tenancy management
Improvement plan Produce tenancy leaflets giving information about succession, MX, Tenancy Support, Financial Inclusion.	

- 2.22. TSM data 2023-24 indicates that 71% are generally satisfied with the way BITMO manages the services they use.

3. Tenant Satisfaction Measures

- 3.1. There are 22 tenants' satisfaction measures covering 5 themes. They are:
- keeping properties in good repair.
 - maintaining building safety.
 - respectful and helpful engagement
 - effective handling of complaints.
 - responsible neighbourhood management
- 3.2. These measures are designed to assess how well social housing providers are meeting the needs and expectations of their tenants and to drive improvements in the quality of social housing services. The BITMO Board has set a target to achieve over 70% satisfaction in all areas, which is challenging but usefully focuses action for improvement over time.

3.3. At the time of writing we have two forms of data: Q4 data which just compares LCC overall and BITMO (table 1), and from Q3 A comparison between BITMO, LCC overall, two local comparator areas – Middleton and Hunslet, and national comparisons; (table 2).

Table 1

BITMO/LCC-COMPARED-Q1-4-2023-24


Click to view trend 	Leeds City Council	BITMO
Overall Satisfaction	66%	71%
Well Maintained Home	67%	76%
Safe Home	74%	80%
Repairs Last 12 Months	70%	77%
Time Taken Repairs	67%	73%
Communal Areas	64%	79%
Neighbourhood Contribution	60%	75%
Approach to ASB	53%	55%
Safety in neighbourhood	63%	58%
Neighbourhood Appearance	58%	59%
Listens & Acts	55%	62%
Kept Informed	67%	75%
Fairly & with Respect	74%	80%
Complaints Handling	29%	27%
Easy to Deal With	65%	74%
Friendly Approachable	62%	60%
Advice & Support	50%	56%
Good Reputation	37%	54%
Rent VFM	67%	65%

Table 1 shows that there are 8 areas that we need to focus attention on, with the greatest challenge being in resolving complaints. As we only receive approximately 50 complaints per year, the majority of which are not upheld, on the basis that we have followed the correct policy or procedure and administered it fairly it is difficult to know what scope there is to increase this satisfaction percentage significantly.

Table 2 BITMO Comparative TSM performance

TSM's Quarters 1-3 2023-24											
	BITMO	Leeds City Council	Variance	Hunslet	Variance	Middleton	Variance	Acuity England	Variance	Acuity Non London	Variance
Overall Satisfaction	71%	64%	7%	78%	-7%	70%	1%	73%	-2%	69%	2%
Well Maintained Home	76%	67%	9%	72%	4%	74%	2%	71%	5%	73%	3%
Safe Home	81%	74%	7%	85%	-4%	73%	8%	78%	3%	79%	2%
Repairs Last 12 Months	77%	70%	7%	83%	-6%	71%	6%	74%	3%	77%	0%
Time Taken Repairs	74%	66%	8%	72%	2%	65%	9%	70%	4%	73%	1%
Communal Areas	76%	65%	11%	87%	-11%	88%	-12%	66%	10%	66%	10%
Neighbourhood Contribution	75%	61%	14%	74%	1%	58%	17%	66%	9%	68%	7%
Approach to ASB	55%	53%	2%	64%	-9%	58%	-3%	61%	-6%	59%	-4%
Safety in neighbourhood	59%	63%	-4%	60%	-1%	50%	9%				
Neighbourhood Appearance	64%	59%	5%	60%	4%	57%	7%				
Listens & Acts	64%	55%	9%	69%	-5%	66%	-2%	60%	4%	63%	1%
Kept Informed	76%	66%	10%	71%	5%	66%	10%	77%	-1%	74%	2%
Fairly & with Respect	79%	74%	5%	80%	-1%	38%	41%	75%	4%	77%	2%
Complaints Handling	28%	29%	-1%	40%	-12%	35%	-7%	34%	-6%	36%	-8%
Easy to Deal With	75%	66%	9%	69%	6%	69%	6%	73%	2%		
Friendly Approachable	62%	64%	-2%	80%	-18%	71%	-9%				
Advice & Support	55%	54%	1%	60%	-5%	64%	-9%				
Good Reputation	55%	39%	16%	80%	-25%	57%	-2%				
Rent VFM	66%	69%	-3%	80%	-14%	79%	-13%				

Table 2 shows that compared to Hunslet and Middleton we have work to do in terms of communal areas, complaints handling, and being friendly and approachable, and providing advice and support, as well as in terms of reputation, and perceptions of value for money of the rent charged

3.4. The areas of relative strength for BITMO are:

- the maintenance of homes,
- the time taken to complete repairs,
- contribution to the neighbourhood,
- the appearance of the neighbourhood,
- keeping tenants informed of issues that matter to them,
- being treated fairly and with respect, and
- being easy to deal with

3.5. The areas where we need to improve tenant experience are in relation to:

- communal areas,
- complaints handling,
- managing ASB,
- the advice and information we provide
- being friendly and approachable,
- our reputation
- value for money of the rent charge

3.6. These issues are being discussed by BIMTO colleagues and an improvement plan is being prepared.

4. Improvement actions currently underway

4.1. ASB

4.2. We have arranged an audit of case management and training and will strengthen ongoing quality reviews of case management. We have improved the information we provide, the letters we are using, and need

to maintain closer contact with complainants to keep them informed of the action we are taking.

4.3. Complaints

4.4. Our approach to managing complaints has been reviewed. The process is being aligned with that of LCC. We do not anticipate that this will result in any change in customer satisfaction as a result, however.

4.5. Advice and Support

4.6. We will consult with residents to find out what kind of advice and support they need and more actively promote the advice and support service that we do provide via the Tenancy Support Team, Financial Inclusion Service, and our Community Development Team. We do not have a plan for improving our reputation, other than raising awareness of the work we do, and the extent to which tenants are able to influence how we manage the Belle Isle estate on their behalf

4.7. There are a number of areas where self-assessment indicates that BITMO is not fully compliant with the requirements of the consumer standards. Where compliance can be influenced by BITMO we have developed an improvement plan to address the areas of weakness.

5. Tenant Engagement

5.1. This section of the report describes BITMO's approach to tenant engagement, information about surveys and other activities carried out and planned and evidence of engagement informing decision making and improving outcomes for tenants.

5.2. BITMO is a tenant led, customer driven organisation. Our aim is to work with tenants to create a safer stronger, greener Belle Isle. We adopt an "outreach approach" to work with tenants across all service points and social media to amplify the tenant voice and use it to improve what we do, so that we are advocating on behalf of our community and providing the best services possible.

6. Planned maintenance work

6.1. When planned maintenance work is scheduled we involve tenants in the design and planning of that work. We are clear about the options they have within the work being done and we will support them during the work so that they are able to have access to bathroom and kitchen facilities whilst the work is ongoing.

6.2. We carry out satisfaction surveys to understand the customer experience of the work done and feed this information to Board and to tenants.

Table 3 Customer satisfaction with planned maintenance

Satisfaction with kitchen and bathroom programme 2023/24	% people completely satisfied
Overall satisfaction	100%
Colour choices	84%

Time taken to complete	84%
Quality of work	85%
Courtesy of tradesperson	100%
Satisfaction with roofing programme 2023/24	% people completely satisfied
Overall satisfaction	92%
Time taken to complete	85%
Quality of workmanship	92%
Courtesy of tradesperson	92%

7. **Responsive repairs**

7.1. We have begun using the Voicescape platform to increase customer contact where a repair has recently been completed. We use the platform to check that the experience was a positive one and that there are no outstanding issues. This will demonstrate our commitment to high quality customer service and allow us to identify any problems and resolve them. Current information indicates 84% satisfaction with the responsive repairs service. (The data is from both the Mears survey and the BITMO survey. Both methodologies provide 84% satisfaction (Q3))

8. **Shareholder Meetings**

8.1. We host 3 shareholder meetings each year. Shareholders are those tenants who have shown an interest in the operation of the TMO and who vote on business at AGM's. The purpose of the meetings is to encourage active participation by shareholders, to listen to their thoughts on the services we provide and to adapt what we do in the light of their comments.

9. **Retirement Life Meetings**

9.1. We meet with Retirement Life residents monthly to discuss our support offering, the services available to them and the social activities that we arrange. Newsletters are produced following these meetings and sent to all Retirement Life residents.

9.2. A survey of Retirement Life residents was carried out in Spring 2024. 97 surveys were sent out and 41 were returned – overall response is 42%

9.3. Overall, the warden service is well received amongst residents, and they feel supported. The employment of a new permanent warden has increased satisfaction amongst residents. The activities within the communal areas have increased and are now more diverse. We will consider ways to improve the service provided when the regular wardens are off, and speak to residents about what they want from the communal activities. We will also seek to increase participation by promoting these activities to older members of the wider community.

10. **Social Media**

10.1. We use social media channels, predominantly FaceBook to run engagement campaigns throughout the year, asking tenants to comment or complete short surveys. This has very limited success. For example we

consulted with tenants around the issue of ASB in ginnels on the estate.

We only received one response, saying they had not experienced any ASB.

10.2. We are changing the approach this year to use Voicescape to carry out more targeted engagement. The engagements we have planned in for the next twelve months include:

- May - Digital adoption consultation
- June - Advice and Information consultation
- July - Ballot
- September - Ballot
- November - 5 year plan

11. **Face to Face Consultation**

11.1. We have carried out a range of face to face consultations in the GATE and via outreach. The issues raised and actions taken are presented below.

This information has been shared with the people who attended, the people living in the accommodation concerned, and with all tenants via the website. This provides evidence of tenant led decision making by management and the Board, and improved services for tenants.

11.2. **People are concerned** about the appearance of the estate and in particular the condition of people's gardens and our enforcement team pick up this issue. **We have developed a garden tool library to help people who don't have access to gardening tools, and we can provide skips to help people if needed.**

11.3. **People told us** that the standard of cleaning in the three storey blocks is not high enough. **We have** increased the frequency of cleaning. **They also told us** that the gutters and drains need of the three storey blocks needs unblocking – **We arranged for all the gutters to be cleared.**

11.4. **Residents told us** that they are concerned about ASB around the BITMO office outside office hours that impacts on people living nearby. **We have improved the CCTV and lighting and have told the police about these concerns.**

11.5. **Retirement Life residents told us that the facilities provided are not very good.** In consultation with residents **we have: Repurposed** the bowling green as a community orchard and **redecorated**, carpeted and furnished the communal room, and **improved** access to the laundry, and provided garden tables and chairs.

11.6. As part of the Health Needs Assessment residents **told us that a lack of usable green space** is a problem in terms of recreation and health and wellbeing. We are working with groups of volunteers on the community orchard, community garden, and tree planting across the estate. We have fenced off Belle Isle Circus, and providing lighting so it is a safer place. We are refurbishing the multi-use games area, and establishing a play programme at Low Granges.

11.7. **Closing the Consultation loop**

11.8. The results of BITMO's engagement activity is reported back to tenants via the Annual Report as well as throughout the year via the website, in the

You Said We Did section. They are presented to and discussed by the Board annually, and form the basis of the Board strategy development. Individual consultation activities are reported to the Board at each meeting. Board papers are published on the website. There is clear evidence that Board decisions are influenced by community engagement.

12. Complaints 2023/24

- 12.1. Tenants were asked to provide comments following the overall satisfaction question. Overall, 2341 respondents left a comment, which were analysed and categorised into themes.
- 12.2. From 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, 45 complaints were received. This is 25 per 1k units. The majority of complaints involved repair issues (35) with the remainder being about managing tenancies (10). Most complaints were resolved at Stage 1 of the complaints process. 12 were escalated to stage 2. 39 out of 45 complaints were responded to within target timescales. 6 complaints (13.33%) failed to meet the deadline. This was due to lack of information available to complete a response. Holding letters/email messages/telephone calls were sent to inform the complainants of the delay. Of the 45 complaints received 9 (20%) were upheld in the complainants favour, 4 were partially upheld (8.9%) and 32 (71.1%) were not upheld. During this period 4 compliments were received. These were all responded to within the specified timescales and passed on and congratulations given to the relevant department/service and staff members involved.
- 12.3. Three complaints were referred to the Ombudsman, one was not upheld, one was upheld and maladministration found (we have requested a review of this decision), we are still awaiting the outcome of the third.
- 12.4. The key areas of dissatisfaction regarding repairs are time taken to complete a repair, the number of attempts to resolve a defect, without the root cause being identified (particularly in the case of roofing repairs¹ and mould and condensation²), and BITMO not carrying out work to the satisfaction of the tenant. This latter category is particularly in relation to kitchen and fencing replacements, where in relation to the former, it is considered that the kitchen has not exceeded its lifespan and is still in reasonable condition, and regarding fencing, where we decline to carry out fencing works that are the tenants responsibility.
- 12.5. The second category of complaints, tenancy management, fall into two main areas, ASB, and tenancy changes. Complaints about ASB tend to be that BITMO is not acting sufficiently quickly or effectively to eradicate the ASB complained of and requests to succeed to tenancies are not granted. In terms of ASB, we have recognised that our information to tenants about ASB could be clearer in setting out 1] what constitutes ASB, 2] the level of

¹ Correct diagnosis of roof repairs is often difficult and can be a case of trial and error

² The majority of complaints of mould and condensation are caused by excessive humidity

information we need to begin action, 3] the level of evidence needed to progress a case and 4] the tools we are able to use in different circumstances and the factors that influence decision making.

12.6. From complaint to service improvement

12.7. In terms of learning from complaints and improving the service, we have revised and enhanced our repairs offer to include matching kitchen units and worktops to extend the life of the kitchen, and increased planned maintenance expenditure on roofs. We provide specific advice regarding mould and condensation, carry out repeated anti-fungal washes and provide de-humidifiers to help tenants to manage humidity. We have also targeted our winter warmth campaign to those tenants most affected.

12.8. We have improved our ASB leaflet, and information on the website, and have improved the letters we use to close cases to set out the action we have taken and why the case is being closed. As mentioned above we have requested an audit of ASB cases from LCC as well as training for officers. We are strengthening our case management quality review arrangements.

12.9. Regarding successions we are producing a leaflet to explain to people who is eligible to succeed a tenancy, and the action we will take to help them secure suitable alternative accommodation where appropriate.

12.10. The table below shows that the number of complaints received has been maintained at a level of 25 to 30 per 1,000 units in management over the last 9 years. Repairs has always been the main area of complaint as is typical across the sector as this is the aspect of the service that most people engage with regularly.

Table 4 Complaints trends 2015- 2024

	Previous Years						Compliments
	Total	Main type of complaint	Response on target	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	
April 2015 - March 2016	27	Repairs	25 out of 27	7 out of 27	8 out of 27	12 out of 27	5
April 2016 - March 2017	26	Repairs	26 out of 26	12 out of 26	1 out of 26	13 out of 26	7
April 2017 - March 2018	54	Repairs	53 out of 54	20 out of 54	11 out of 54	23 out of 54	11
April 2018 - March 2019	32	Repairs	32 out of 32	5 out of 32	5 out of 32	22 out of 32	20
April 2019 - March 2020	43	Repairs	43 out of 43	14 out of 43	12 out of 43	17 out of 43	2
April 2020 - March 2021	27	Repairs	22 out of 27	15 out of 27	4 out of 27	8 out of 27	2
April 2021 - March 2022	32	Repairs	20 out of 32	22 out of 32	7 out of 32	3 out of 32	11
April 2022 - March 2023	40	Repairs	29 out of 40	5 out of 40	14 out of 40	21 out of 40	6
April 2023 - March 2024	45	Repairs	39 out of 45	9 out of 45	4 out of 45	32 out of 45	4

13. Wider strategic priorities

13.1. At the BITMO Board strategy away day in August 2023 , Board members considered what their strategic priorities are for the next five years. They discussed the future of the repairs service, organisational growth, and challenges and opportunities that regulatory reform presents in terms of service improvement and increased customer engagement.

13.2. Repairs

13.3. Challenges with the quality of the repairs services arising from financial pressures upon contractors in the context of macroeconomic turbulence, labour shortage and material costs, combined with underdeveloped LCC IT systems that make contract management difficult, create a situation in which the level of customer service we are able to provide falls below contractual KPIs. This means that customer satisfaction and value for money have not been at the level we need. We have been able, working with LCC colleagues and the contractor to make some changes that have reduced costs and increased quality.

13.4. The Board wanted to examine three options for the future procurement of repairs contracts:

- Continue to procure a single contractor on a JCT measured term contract
- Create an internal labour force to deliver repairs direct
- Contract with a number of smaller contractors

13.5. Board have requested an option appraisal of these models, and this will be presented to them in September.

13.6. Growth

13.7. The Board considers that tenant leadership and community control bring benefits to tenants in the quality and range of services provided. They believe that tenant management as a movement should be promoted in Leeds and nationally.

13.8. The number of units managed by BITMO reduces each year as a result of Right To Buy legislation. Income reduces accordingly. This impacts the long term sustainability of the organisation. The Board considers that in order to continue to deliver benefits to tenants it needs to grow as an organisation. There are different options for growth that were considered at the away day:

- Increase the number of units in management
- Develop income generating ventures such as setting up a CIC
- Establish the LIFT OFF charity to generate funds

13.9. Increasing the number of units in management is a long term goal. It could be achieved by an organised group of tenants from adjacent neighbourhoods requesting to become incorporated into BITMO. It will require an active tenant management information campaign, support from the local authority, local engagement and resources to develop the capacity of the tenant group to work through the issues involved in becoming incorporated into BITMO.

13.10. There are numerous options for the development of community interest companies. Ideas that have been discussed include:

- a not for profit driving school that provides low cost driving lessons to Belle Isle tenants
- a tree nursery
- a TMO information training and consultancy provider
- a handyman service

- 13.11. The Lift Off Charity is currently in the process of being registered. Its aims are to alleviate poverty through the support of educational attainment in Belle Isle.
- 13.12. The Board will have a further away day in October this year, at which a five year plan will be developed to carry forward the priorities agreed.

13.13. Service Improvement

- 13.14. The improvement plans in place to support service improvement and increased levels of tenant satisfaction will be discussed at the next Board meeting at the end of May.

14. Conclusion

- 14.1. Self-assessment against the regulatory framework indicates an organisation that is preparing to be fully compliant with the requirements of the regulatory framework, that is performing well against key metrics, and has clearly defined improvement plans in place to strengthen its arrangements and service outcomes

15. Recommendations

- 15.1. Members are requested to note and comment on BITMO's report and the information it contains.

Standard	sub category	Requirements	Position	Compliance
Safety and quality	Stock quality	Accurate record of all properties based on physical survey (not archetypes and cloning)	We have less than 20% accurate stock condition data. We have recruited a stock condition surveyor to bring our records up to 100% within 12 months.	No
	Decency	Evidence from across records (golden thread 360 view)	an external assurance of compliance and record holding in 2019 identified weaknesses in our arrangements. An action plan was put in place to correct the errors and omissions. We requested LCC to conduct an assurance audit in 2024 to check on the robustness of records held, this has been declined and we will source an independent audit.	Yes
	Health and Safety	Meet all legal requirements	We are confident that we meet all legal requirements	Yes
		All remedial actions are carried out in a timely way	We monitor completions and report to health and safety forum	Yes
		Safety is integral to the design and delivery of services	We can evidence this in adaptations, emergency repairs completions, compliance data and monitoring of damp and mould	Yes
	Repairs maintenance and planned improvement	It is easy to report repairs	Repairs can be reported on line, by email, face to face, by phone, letter or via facebook, but we don't have any data about how easy the process is for e.g call failure rate, numbers of people using each channel	Partial
		Timescales for completion are clear and adhered to	Timescales are clear but approximately 30% of jobs are overdue. This is monitored closely and subject to an improvement plan with the contractor.	No
		Communication with tenants is clear and timely	We are implementing Voicescape to increase engagement with customers around the quality and timeliness of repairs	Yes
		Understanding and fulfillment of obligations regarding communal areas	A tenant consultation exercise regarding the quality of communal areas led to a change in the cleaning regime, decoration, new floor covering, CCTV and new front doors and door entry systems	Yes
		Delivery of services and improvements is informed by needs of tenants		
		Provides VFM	Maintenance contracts are let through competitive tender as per the LCC procurement strategy. Where incumbent contractors are not offering competitive pricing for planned works these are re-tendered or offered on a framework to an alternative contractor. Cf Equans kitchen programme 2023/24	Yes
	Adaptations	Clear communication re how the housing provider will help people needing adaptations	We have an adaptations policy and leaflet, that makes clear to tenants the prioritisation process for adaptations.	Yes

Standard	sub category	Requirements	Position	Compliance
Transparency, Influence and Accountability	Fairness and respect	How will we evidence that all tenants are treated with fairness and respect? Are sanctions or indicators of a lesser service, such as disrepair claims, service of NISP/ complaints or eviction analysed by protected characteristics? What does this show?	We are unable to disaggregate data at a transactional level and analyse it by demography or protected characteristics because of the limitations of the reporting capacity within LCC operated IT systems	No
	Diverse needs	Are services accessed equally e.g repairs/lettings	See above	No
		What information is held on the diversity of needs	See above	No
		How can we evidence that communication and information is clear, accessible, relevant and timely and appropriate to the diverse needs of tenants	We have a clear tenants handbook, and BITMO service offer. However most complaints relate to weaknesses in communication with the tenant around issues of repairs.	Yes
		How do we evidence that services are accessible?	See line 16 above. We are trying to improve accessibility by having our services available via the GATE two evenings a week, and increasing customer contact proactively to provide a pre-emptive customer service.	No
		tenants and prospective tenants must have the opportunity to be supported by a representative or advocate	We provide translation services where needed, and meet with advocates and support workers to help people to broker the correct service resolution for them.	Yes
	Engagement with tenants	Provide a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise strategies, policies and services	We carry out consultation exercises based on locality, property type, and issue. Shareholder are invited to scrutinise our services. We provide communications to all tenants via email, text and social media to let them know what we are working on, and how they can get involved. There is an	Yes
		Assist tenants to implement tenant led activities to influence and scrutinise strategies, policies, and services	We have a community fund designed to support tenants to create groups and activities to meet local needs. We work with tenants to co-design services. We have done very little around co-design of landlord services. The focus is much more upon community development activities.	Yes
		Provide accessible support that meets the diverse needs of tenants so they can engage with the opportunities provided	The majority of engaged tenants are White British. We are increasingly engaging with a younger cohort of families of different ethnicities around tuition, food, and community based activities. Our consultation activities with retirement life tenants is focused on those aged 55 and over.	No
		Support tenants to exercise their Right to Manage and Right to Transfer	We are a RTM organisation, and have growth as one of our strategic objectives. We communicate the benefit of tenant leadership, and tenant management across the estate and more broadly to generate interest in it as a model of community control.	Yes
	Consider ways to improve and tailor their approach to delivering landlord services including engagement	We have recently procured the Voicescape Engage module which will be the platform from which we develop a rich understanding of tenant priorities	Yes	
	Consult fully on any proposed significant change in management arrangements	We consult extensively with regard to the continuation of the TMO, but not in relation to any other change in management arrangements.	Yes	
Landlord services	Provide information about landlord services, how to access them, and service standards	The Website, our notice boards, Facebook and leaflets provide information regarding services. Standards, and how to access them.	Yes	
	Information on standards of safety and quality re homes and communal areas	We could do more to provide information to tenants about this	No	
	Information on rents and service charges that are payable by tenants	This is provided by LCC	Yes	
	Information on landlord and tenant responsibilities	Tenants handbook and enhanced service offer and website provide this information.	Yes	
	Landlords must communicate with affected tenants on progress, next steps, and outcomes when delivering landlord services	We have been criticised for not keeping tenants sufficiently informed and we try to address this via Voicescape, email text and social media, as well as inviting shareholders and other tenants to board meetings. TSM evidence is that we do keep tenants informed	Yes	
	Housing and neighbourhood policies should be fair, reasonable, accessible, and transparent	We operate LCC policies which are published but not necessarily accessible and transparent.	No	
	Providers must make information available to tenants about the relevant roles and responsibilities of SLT including who has responsibility for compliance with the standards	We have information available on the website.	Yes	
	Performance information	Meet the technical requirements in relation to the TSMs	We publish KPIs in relation to the TSMs and the service performance that underpins them.	Yes
		Collect information relating to performance against the TSMs	This is done by LCC and provided to us. We publish the information to our tenants	Yes
		Annually publish performance against the two items above	This is done in the annual report to tenants	Yes
		Submit the above to the regulator	LCC will submit their report to the regulator. BITMO's will also be available	Yes
Complaints	Simple accessible approach to addressing complaints		We have a clear two stage complaints policy	Yes
	Publicise complaints process		We promote the complaints policy on the website and in the tenant email. We highlight lessons learnt and brief staff on this. We build this into our annual report	Yes
	Publish info complaints received and lessons learnt to support CSI		We have not done this very well to date, but have scheduled to do so at year end.	Yes
Self Referral	Communicate with the regulator in a timely manner regarding any material issues that relate to potential or actual non compliance		N/A	N/A

Standard	sub category	Requirements	Position	Compliance
Neighbourhood and community	Maintenance of shared spaces	Work cooperatively to resolve issues affecting shared spaces for which they do not have legal responsibility	We work with LCC, Health for All and RSLs in the area to agree approaches to improve shared spaces, such as green spaces, the multi use games area and the circus. We work with Groundwork and fruitworks around the development of a community orchard, community garden and tree nursery.	Yes
	Local cooperation	Identify and communicate to how they will promote social environmental and economic wellbeing	BITMO's approach to ASB is determined by LCC. We have been critical of the approach taken as it doesn't seem neighbourhood or victim centred but also understand the resourcing limitations that the LA faces.	Yes
	Safer Neighbourhoods	Have a clear policy on how they will work with relevant organisations to deter and tackle ASB	See above	partial
		Have a clear policy on how they will work with relevant organisations to deter and tackle hate incidents	See above	partial
		Enable ASB to be reported easily and keep tenants informed about the progress of their case	See above	Yes
		Provide prompt and appropriate action to ASB using the full range of tools and legal powers available	See above	partial
		Support tenants affected by ASB including by signposting to appropriate agencies		Yes
	Domestic Abuse	Have a policy for how you respond to reports of domestic abuse	Our safeguarding policy and domestic abuse policy make clear the support we will provide to people reporting DA. Senior staff are trained in recognising and supporting people experiencing DA. We work with MARAC and tasking groups, and provide support to individuals.	Yes
		Demonstrate how you meet your duty to develop a strategy and commission services for victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation	See Local Authority strategy.	N/A

Standard	sub category	Requirements	Position	Compliance	
Tenancy Standard	Allocations and lettings	Duty to meet identified need (the rest of the standard refers to cooperating with the LA in the discharge of their duties)	See Local Authority Lettings Policy	Yes	
		Allocate homes that are designated, designed or adapted to meet specific needs in a way that is compatible with the housing.	See Local Authority Lettings Policy	Yes	
		Address under occupation and overcrowding, focusing on the needs of the tenant	We have encouraged the local authority to develop a strategic approach to tackling under occupation to release larger homes. BITMO will help with moving and getting the new home ready, we have asked the LA to develop a similar scheme and to incentivise moves more proactively.	Yes	
		Take action to prevent tenancy fraud	We have two colleagues trained in preventing detecting and addressing tenancy fraud. We are extending this to a further five members of staff.	Yes	
		Provide fair, reasonable simple, accessible appeals process for allocations decisions	See LA Lettings policy. We have not received a complaint or appeal about an allocations decision in the last five years .	N/A	
		Record all lettings on CORE	Yes	Yes	
		Tenancy sustainment and evictions	Provide services that support tenants to sustain their tenancy and prevent unnecessary evictions	We have a tenancy support team, a community fund that makes grants available to people to support successful tenancies, we have financial inclusion officers who have generated £267k additional income for tenants over the last twelve months.	Yes
			Provide tenants required to move with timely advice and assistance about housing options before the tenancy or license ends	We provide clear advice to tenants regarding how a property is to be left, the rent balance, any recharges, rehousing options, we provide support with making applications and bidding.	Yes
		Tenure	Publish clear and accessible policies which outline the approach to tenancy management including interventions to sustain tenancies and setting out :	Our ASB leaflet does some of this, but more could be provided .	No
			the type of tenancies granted	Introductory and secure	N/A
			the length of fixed term tenancies	None	N/A
			the circumstances in which particular types of tenancy will be granted	N/A	N/A
			the appeal arrangements	N/A	N/A
			How they take into account the needs of vulnerable household members	N/A	N/A
		Advice and assistance to be given to help people find a follow on tenancy	N/A	N/A	
		Information on succession rights, taking into account the needs of vulnerable people	We provide clear and consistent advice on succession rights, and enforce termination of use and occupation where appropriate given the circumstances needs and vulnerability of the household.	Yes	
		what information and evidence is available regarding introductory tenancies? How many are terminated, and for what reasons? How many appeals are there, and how many are upheld ?	This information is not available	No	
		how will we evidence continuity of security for social housing tenants?	This information is not available	No	
	Mutual Exchange	Evidence easy access to a MX service	We conduct a lot of MX per year. The number is growing as tenants find it increasingly difficult to access transfers.	No	
		Publicise the MX service	We don't advertise it.	No	
		Provide support for accessing MX	No evidence	No	
		Provide information about the implications for tenure, rent and service charges	We do provide this information and could evidence through archived correspondence	Yes	

			Aim: Provide High Quality Services		2022-23 Q1-4	2023-24 Q1-4		
Aims	Goals	Ownership	Indicators of progress	Curr target			RAG	New Comments
Provide High Quality Services	A quick and reliable repairs and maintenance service that gets the job done right first time	Repairs and Maintenance	(RR1) Repairs done right first time	95%	Not available	Not available	N/A	Continued issues with BI Power reporting. Manual figures for last quarter only.
			(RR2) Repairs completed within target timescale	95%	Not available	69.72%	R	2,753 completed from 3,949. Quarter 3 & 4 figures considered more reliable.
			(RR3) Repairs appointments made and kept	95%	Not available	Not available	N/A	Continued issues with BI Power reporting
			(Mears) Repairs - Post Inspections	10%	Not undertaken	12%	G	All jobs are checked via desktop inspections to post completion photos.
			(BITMO) Repairs - Number of post inspections	10%	2%	16%	G	Started 17.2.23
			(Mears Only) Repairs - Customer satisfaction surveys	90%	No data	89.00%	A	Average of 38 responses per month
			Satisfaction with repairs - most recent (internal survey)	90%	98.14%	86.52%	A	Contact by phone.
			Satisfaction with repairs - last 12 months (TSM survey)	90%	76.00%	77.00%	R	TSM survey via consultancy. 237 tenants Q1-3. LCC average 70%.
			Percentage of estate issues completed from 1/4ly estate walkabout	100%	N/A	89%	A	28 issues identified, 25 actioned.
	Quality and targeted investment that maintains decent homes	Repairs and Maintenance	Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	0	0	1	G	Surveys re-started
			Percentage of communal areas meeting the required standard	100%	100%	100%	G	Inspections completed weekly
			Properties with a stock condition survey completed in the last 5 years	1843	c.200	544	R	Staff post being advertised.
			Capital Investment programme completed (100% for the year)	100%	100%	95%	A	Commitments will ensure that spend will equal budget by the year-end.
	Maximise rent collected with timely intervention and support	Income & Tenancy	Percentage of rent collected	96%	95.99%	96.22%	G	Ahead of city - in upper quartile - City 94.87%
			Percentage of rent owed	3%	3.58%	2.85%	G	Ahead of city 4.38% / Ranked 1st in City
			Amount of rent owed	£250k	£268,069	£226,299	G	£268,069 at end Mar 2023 / Hunslet £390k, Middleton £330k, Beeston £354k
			% of arrears cases owing 7 weeks rent plus	7.7% (LCC end Mar 23)	5.70%	3.91%	G	At end Mar 2023 City was 7.70%.
			Number of Household Supported with Financial Hardship	TBC	160	179	N/A	Target to be set based on resource
			Income generated	TBC	£107,170	£386,352	N/A	2 FI Officers
			Number of notices served	N/A	98 (11.38%)	133 (14.86%)	N/A	Hunslet 108 (11.25%) Middleton 50 (4.81%) Beeston 88 (8.94%)
Number of cases entered to court			N/A	9	14	N/A	1 April, 1 May, 1 June, 1 July, 1 Aug, 1 Sep, 1 Oct, 2 Nov, 2 Dec, 1 Jan, 2 Feb	
		Number of Court orders obtained	N/A	8	13	N/A	63% increase	

		Number of evictions	N/A	3	7	N/A	1 April, 1 May, 3 June, 0 July, 0 Aug, 0 Sep, 0 Oct, 0 Nov, 0 Dec, 1 Jan, 1 Feb
		% of Financial Hardship cases closed with a positive	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Local and responsive Tenant and Customer Contact	Tenancy Support	Quick and reliable telephone service - number of	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	N/A	Phone statistics being developed.
		Tenancy Amendments completed within target time	10 working days	100%	100%	G	100% within target - 3 April, 2 May, 1 June, 2 July, 4 Aug, 2 Sep, 3 Oct, 2 Nov, 1 Dec, 3 Jan, 4 Feb, 4 Mar (31)
		Mutual Exchanges completed within target time	42 days	26	26	G	100% within target - 1 April, 2 May, 4 June, 5 July, 3 Aug, 2 Sep, 0 Oct, 1 Nov, 1 Dec, 1 Jan, 2 Feb, 3 Mar
Effective reletting of properties to minimise time properties are empty	Tenancy Support	Time taken to relet empty properties - Gross Relet	28 days	72.96 days	46.86	R	Above target but improvement over the year as new systems adopted.
		Number of tenancy terminations	N/A	85	102	N/A	Opening of new housing our of area.
		Number of commencements	N/A	101	111	N/A	Affected by higher terminations
		Number of voids at period end	18	9	11	G	New procedures introduced.
		Percentage of properties untenanted	1.00%	0.40%	0.60%	G	11 of 1832
Support for those older tenants who need it	Tenancy Support	Retirement Life Residents with a Support Plan	N/A	108	101	G	Service review to follow.
		Support Plan reviewed within target time	95%	97.22%	98.09%	G	Exceeding target
		RL Residents receiving Warden Service	N/A	63	65	N/A	Service review to follow.
		Number of residents signed up for floating support	N/A	3	5	N/A	Partially countering the overall decline in numbers.
		Yearly RL service review report	May annually	May-22	Due July 24	G	Due July 2024