



## Agenda for Housing Review Board Thursday, 19th September, 2019, 2.30 pm

### Members of Housing Review Board

Councillors: T McCollum (Chairman), P Sullivan, C Drew, P Gore, C Summers, A Williams, I Hall, D Ledger, H Parr and K Bloxham

**Venue:** Council Chamber, Exmouth Town Hall, Exmouth EX8 1AW

**Contact:** Alethea Thompson;

01395 517653; email [athompson@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:athompson@eastdevon.gov.uk)

(or group number 01395 517546)

Tuesday, 10 September 2019

East Devon District Council  
Blackdown House  
Border Road  
Heathpark Industrial Estate  
Honiton  
EX14 1EJ

DX 48808 HONITON

Tel: 01404 515616

[www.eastdevon.gov.uk](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk)

1 Public speaking

Information on [public speaking](#) is available online

2 Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 3 - 5)

3 Apologies

4 Declarations of interest

Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)

5 Matters of urgency

Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online

6 Confidential/exempt item(s)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded. There are no items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.

7 Housing Review Board Forward Plan (Pages 6 - 7)

8 Producing a Carbon footprint for Housing (Pages 8 - 16)

9 Draft of the Annual Report to Tenants 2018-19 (Pages 17 - 21)

10 HMO Update and Expenditure (Pages 22 - 27)

11 Community Development Update (Pages 28 - 31)

12 Update on Integrated Management contract (Pages 32 - 36)

- 13 Update on Your Home, Your Well Being Research Project (Pages 37 - 47)
- 14 Residents Involvement Strategy 2019-2022 (Pages 48 - 88)
- 15 Public Health Strategic Plan (Pages 89 - 112)
- 16 Consumer Regulation Review 2018-19 (Pages 113 - 155)

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, any members of the public are now allowed to take photographs, film and audio record the proceedings and report on all public meetings (including on social media). No prior notification is needed but it would be helpful if you could let the democratic services team know you plan to film or record so that any necessary arrangements can be made to provide reasonable facilities for you to report on meetings. This permission does not extend to private meetings or parts of meetings which are not open to the public. You should take all recording and photography equipment with you if a public meeting moves into a session which is not open to the public.

If you are recording the meeting, you are asked to act in a reasonable manner and not disrupt the conduct of meetings for example by using intrusive lighting, flash photography or asking people to repeat statements for the benefit of the recording. You may not make an oral commentary during the meeting. The Chairman has the power to control public recording and/or reporting so it does not disrupt the meeting.

Members of the public exercising their right to speak during Public Question Time will be recorded.

[Decision making and equalities](#)

**For a copy of this agenda in large print, please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01395 517546**

**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL****Minutes of the meeting of Housing Review Board held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Border Road, Honiton, EX14 1EJ on 12 August 2019****Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 2.30 pm and ended at 3.20 pm

**22 Public speaking**

There were no questions raised by members of the public.

**23 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Housing Review Board meeting held on 20 June 2019 were confirmed and signed as a true record, subject to the word 'was' being changed to 'is' in Minute 4 Declaration of interest. Councillor Hall's declaration of interest regarding his mother being a housing tenant.

In response to a question, Amy Gilbert-Jeans, Service Lead – Housing reported that the Housing Service were actively advertising the three current vacancies on the Board and would shortly be preparing a press release. Peter Sullivan, Vice Chairman reported that that he was encouraging tenants to volunteer as Board members through the various tenant meetings that he attended.

**24 Declarations of interest**

Councillor Ian Hall: Personal interest – mother is a housing tenant. Chairman of the Millwey Rise Action Group.

Councillor Dan Ledger: Personal interest – employed by a third party contractor for the current repairs and maintenance service.

Peter Sullivan: Personal Interest – housing tenant.

Cat Summers: Personal Interest – housing tenant.

Pat Gore: Personal Interest – housing tenant.

Alek Williams: Personal interest – housing tenant

**25 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency raised at the meeting.

**26 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There was one confidential item to be considered.

**27 Exclusion of the public****RESOLVED**

that under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, of the description set out on the agenda, is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing this item in private session (Part B).

28 **Proposed purchase of 18A & B St. Andrews Road, Exmouth (known locally as the Sailors Rest) involving the spending of Right to Buy (RTB) receipts for 2019/2020.**

Members noted that the report sought permission to proceed with the purchase of the properties known as 18A & B St. Andrews Road, Exmouth following submission of a conditional offer. The report also outlined the proposed spending plan of Right to Buy (RTB) receipts for the 2019/2020 financial year. The report also sought delegated authority to continue the programme of property acquisitions using Right to Buy receipts supplemented with HRA funds and borrowing.

During discussions the points noted included the following:

- The need to ensure good value from the investment and the difference between a commercial investment and one based on housing need.
- The importance of getting the right balance of tenants in the property.
- The greatest housing need was for one bedroomed accommodation in Exmouth.
- The property was in good condition and should not need extensive repairs.
- This was a special and rare opportunity to add to the council's housing stock in Exmouth and a good use of HRA and RTB funding.

The Board considered the need for continuing the spending of Right to Buy receipts on individual property acquisitions and supported a continuation of the arrangements that had been effective during [previous financial years.

### **RECOMMENDED**

1. that delegated authority be given to the Strategic Lead – Housing, Health & Environment, Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes & Communities and Chair of Housing Review Board to approve purchases to meet the 2019/2020 spending requirements using HRA funding to compliment the use of Right to Buy receipts;
  2. that the purchase of 18A & B St Andrews Road, Exmouth using Right to Buy receipts, HRA funding and any commuted sums available be approved;
1. that it be recommended to Council that the Constitution be amended to include a delegated authority for the Strategic Lead – Housing, Health & Environment to purchase land and property for the Housing Revenue Account (including Right to Buy receipts) subject to the funds being from within approved budgets, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities and the Chair of the Housing Review Board.

### **Attendance List**

#### **Board members present:**

Councillor Tony McCollum (Chairman)  
 Peter Sullivan, Tenant (Vice-Chairman)  
 Pat Gore, Tenant  
 Cat Summers, Tenant  
 Alek Williams, Tenant  
 Councillor Ian Hall  
 Councillor Dan Ledger

Councillor Helen Parr

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

Brenda Taylor  
Eileen Wragg

**Officers in attendance:**

John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment  
Giles Salter, Solicitor  
Amy Gilbert-Jeans, Service Lead Housing  
Paul Lowe, Housing Enabling & Allocations Manager  
Chris Lane, Democratic Services Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

Christine Drew, Independent Community Representative  
Councillor Kim Bloxham

Chairman .....

Date: .....

# HOUSING REVIEW BOARD – FORWARD PLAN

This forward plan identifies reports and other agenda items for future meetings of the Housing Review Board. It is also intended to assist agenda management and act as a reminder of items to come forward to future meetings.

Report title	Meeting date	Author
Update on Integrated Asset Management contract	September 2019	Property and Asset Manager
Resident Involvement Strategy	September 2019	Landlord Services Manager
Climate Change and Housing	September 2019	Strategic Lead- Housing, Health and Environment
Community Development	September 2019	Landlord Services Manager
Brexit preparations	September 2019	Acting Housing Service Lead
Update on Your Home, Your Wellbeing Project	September 2019	Information and Analysis Officer
Annual Report to tenants	September 2019	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
House in multiple occupation, update and refurbishment report	September 2019	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
For information: Consumer Regulation Review 2018/2019	September 2019	For Information
For Information: EDDC Public Health Strategic Plan	September 2019	For Information
<b>Quarterly performance reports and regular reports</b>		
Responsive repairs	Quarterly report	Asset and Property Manager
Letting of Council homes/voids	Quarterly report	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Devon Home Choice	Quarterly report	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Rent management	Quarterly report	Landlord Services Manager
Systems Thinking leading & lagging measures New Tenants Survey	Quarterly report	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Forward Plan	Every meeting	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Financial Monitoring	Every meeting	Housing Accountant
Formal Complaints	Annual report	Landlord Services Manager

Benchmarking survey	Annual report	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Evaluating the achievements of the Board	Annual report	

Board Members can propose agenda items during meetings/debates that can be included on the Forward Plan for future meetings, or outside the meetings with the agreement of the Chairman and Vice chairman.



<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Housing Review Board</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	19 September 2019
<b>Public Document:</b>	Yes
<b>Exemption:</b>	None
<b>Review date for release</b>	None

**Subject:** **Producing a carbon footprint for Housing**

**Purpose of report:** This report takes forward our commitment given as part of the Devon Climate Change Declaration, to produce an accurate carbon footprint for the Councils activities. This is a complex piece of work and is vital that we perform accurately as this will create a baseline against which we will be measuring our journey towards carbon neutrality.

I have engaged the expertise that can be found at the University of Exeter to assist us with this piece of work. This will also provide an independent and auditable assessment of our carbon baseline.

As members of SWEEG (South West Energy & Environment Group) we receive favourable rates when commissioning the University to provide advice and investigations in relation to environmental matters.

The Housing Service has a carbon footprint and calculating this will form an important part of the Council's overall footprint and therefore a key element of our ambition to become carbon neutral as a council

**Recommendation:** **To produce a carbon footprint for our Housing Service, identifying and quantifying the carbon emissions from our activities and assets. This includes our contractors work on our behalf and the homes and buildings in our ownership and control.**

**Reason for recommendation:** To establish a carbon emissions baseline for the Housing Service in order that we can accurately measure our carbon reductions in future years. The ultimate aim is to become a carbon neutral Council/Service, and producing a carbon footprint is an essential step in this process.

**Officer:** John Golding Strategic Lead – Housing, Health & Environment.

**Financial implications:** The financial implications at this stage will be any costs associated with contracting 3<sup>rd</sup> party experts to map out the carbon footprint of the council.

**Legal implications:** There are no legal implications on which to comment.

**Equalities impact:** Low Impact

If choosing High or Medium level outline the equality considerations here, which should include any particular adverse impact on people with protected characteristics and actions to mitigate these. Link to an equalities impact assessment form using the [equalities form template](#).

**Climate change:** Choose an impact level

**Risk:** Comments  
Medium Risk

Click here to enter text on risk considerations relating to your report.

- Links to background information:** ) Devon Climate Change Declaration  
) Cabinet report 10<sup>th</sup> July 2019  
)
- Link to Council Plan:** Outstanding Environment

## 1. Producing a carbon footprint

- 1.1 As part of signing up to the Devon Climate Change Declaration (July 2019) are aiming to become **Carbon neutral**. Carbon neutrality is a term used to describe the action that organisations, businesses and individuals take to remove as much carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as each put in to it. The overall goal of carbon neutrality is to achieve a much reduced **carbon footprint**.
- 1.2 The definition of a carbon footprint is the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere as a result of the activities of a particular individual, organisation, or community. A **carbon footprint** is measured in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) and CO<sub>2</sub>e is calculated by multiplying the emissions of each of the greenhouse gases by its 100 year global warming potential (GWP).
- 1.3 To become carbon neutral we need to accurately measure our carbon footprint and create a baseline against which future changes can be measured. In the past we have performed calculations to show our carbon use and these have been reported on our website:  
<http://eastdevon.gov.uk/property-services/carbon-footprint/>
- 1.4 The assessment needs to be brought up to date so we have a baseline from which to measure the reductions that we plan to make, and make informed intervention decisions.



- 1.5 There is no legal requirement for us to produce a carbon footprint and no definitive methodology for carbon foot printing. Where this is undertaken data is normally collected over the course of one year and all assumptions are clearly stated so this can form a baseline level. Emissions are then reported in tonnes of CO2 equivalent.
- 1.6 We need to be reporting on 7 gases mentioned under the Kyoto Protocol – carbon dioxide (CO2); methane (CH4); nitrous oxide (N2O); hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs); perfluorocarbons (PFCs); sulphur hexafluoride (SF6); and nitrogen trifluoride (NF3).
- 1.7 The advice that we should turn to when determining our carbon footprint is the Environmental Reporting Guidelines published by HM Government in March 2019. The guidance contains a series of conversion factors to identify carbon equivalents.

## Environmental Reporting Guidelines



- LAs should follow DECC published guidance for businesses and organisations
- [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/791529/Env-reporting-guidance\\_inc\\_SECR\\_31March.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/791529/Env-reporting-guidance_inc_SECR_31March.pdf)
- Or google “Environmental Reporting Guidelines”
- Document is for:
  - Companies required to require with reporting legislation (i.e. large companies, see Chapter 2) and...
  - All organisations with voluntary reporting on a range of environmental matters, including voluntary energy and GHG emissions reporting i.e. LAs
- Chapter 3 covers “voluntary greenhouse gas reporting” (pp.59 – 67).

- 1.8 The guidance specifies seven general principles to follow for accounting and reporting on greenhouse gas emissions. These are set out below:

# General Principles for Accounting and Reporting (p.7)

- **Relevant**
  - Ensure all data reflects environmental impact
- **Quantitative**
  - KPIs need to be measurable; quantification enables evaluation and validation
- **Accuracy**
  - Seek to reduce uncertainties where practical
- **Completeness**
  - Quantify all sources of impact within reporting boundary
  - Disclose and justify any omissions
- **Consistent**
  - Use consistent methodologies to enable comparisons over time
  - Document any changes to boundaries, methods or other relevant factors
- **Comparable**
  - Use accepted methods and KPIs in preference to inventing own versions
- **Transparent**
  - Address all issues in a factual and coherent manner, keeping a record of all assumptions, calculations, and methodologies used
  - Include descriptions and report on any relevant assumptions and make appropriate references to methodologies and data sources used

1.10 The guidance then goes onto identify five steps and seven actions to follow when reporting on an organisations environmental impact through greenhouse gas emissions.

## Steps in Reporting Environmental Impact

### 5 Steps

1. Determine organisational boundaries
2. Determine data collection period
3. Determine key environmental impacts
4. Measure
5. Report

### 7 Actions

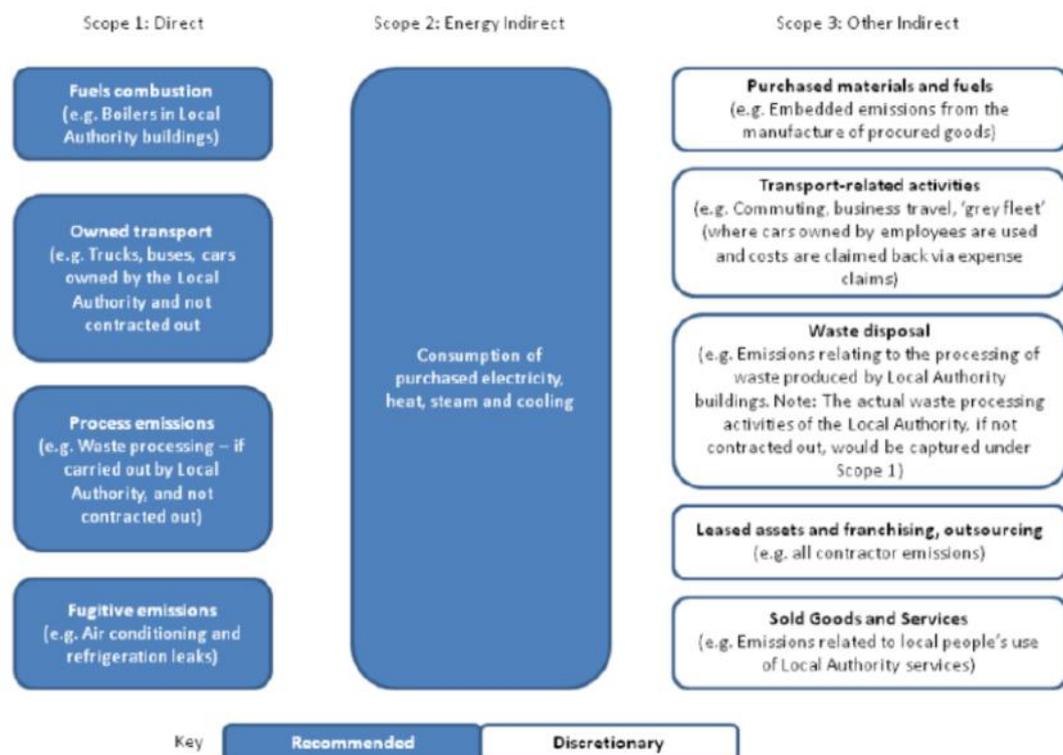
- i. Intensity ratios
- ii. Setting a base year
- iii. Setting a target
- iv. Verification and assurance
- v. Upstream supply chain
- vi. Downstream impacts
- vii. Business continuity and environmental risks

1.11 We need to determine the extent of our carbon footprint reporting. I am proposing that we commence with an accurate determination of scope 1 & 2 emissions, then follow this up with the more complex scope 3 emissions reporting.

# Scope of Emissions

- **Scope 1 (Direct emissions):** Emissions from activities owned or controlled (as previously defined in organisational boundary) by your organisation that release emissions into the atmosphere.
- **Scope 2 (Energy indirect):** Emissions released into the atmosphere associated with your consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam and cooling.
- **Scope 3 (Other indirect):** Emissions that are a consequence of your actions, which occur at sources which you do not own or control and which are not classed as scope 2 emissions.
  - Accounting is harder as information resides with other organisations
  - Generally involves more estimation and generic information

## Scope Examples for LAs



- 1.12 I have commissioned expert advice and assistance from the University of Exeter in order to accurately establish a baseline for our carbon footprint.
- 1.13 I think it will be helpful to have this exercise performed independently and from an organisation with considerable expertise in this field. Researchers at the University are also familiar with the national guidelines and what other local authorities have reported.
- 1.14 We need to gather our data accurately, particularly from our business premises (energy consumption) and business mileage undertaken by our staff, as a starting point.

- 1.15 The commissioning of expertise for carbon foot printing has indicated that the tasks where the University of Exeter could assist include:

**Defining the boundaries.**

I am proposing that we undertake an initial assessment on scope 1 & 2 emissions. However, I have sought advice and guidance on this aspect of our carbon foot printing to ensure that we are doing sufficient to inform the next stages in our journey to becoming carbon neutral. I am also seeking assurance that this is consistent with the Devon Climate Change Declaration, and good practice advice for local authorities.

We need absolute clarity on what is in and out of scope, and the rationale for the decisions in this respect. Our assumptions will need to be clearly stated.

I am anticipating some narrative around the boundaries we have chosen.

I am also keen that we quickly move onto scope 3 emissions to produce a comprehensive picture of the impact of our business, and the commission can help us identify the work and data requirements to produce an accurate assessment.

**Gathering data.**

This is data that we need to identify and collate much of which will involve identifying our property portfolio, the energy consumption from these premises, plus business mileage etc. I am seeking advice on the best way of gathering the data, formatting and ensuring we have a comprehensive picture of emissions.

Gathering data for scope 3 emissions is more complex and time consuming.

The University will guide us on the data requirements and the appropriateness of any assumptions that we have to make.

**Analysing data.**

This stage will involve the use of data conversion factors to ensure that we have our data in the correct format to publish in tonnes of CO2 equivalent.

The University will produce tables and graphs using the data collected, which will contribute towards the report and our Climate Change Action Plan.

**Spreadsheet creation.**

The University will create and format a bespoke spreadsheet for capturing our carbon emissions and the conversion factors that are relevant to each type of emission.

We require a spreadsheet that is comprehensive in coverage, as we do not want to make any major changes to the spreadsheet in future years because this will complicate future comparisons and estimates of carbon reductions.

A scope 3 spreadsheet is to be developed as part of this commission to allow us to populate it when we move onto this part of the project.

**Report writing.**

East Devon will prepare the report on the data collected as part of this exercise. We can interpret the data and identify where we can have the greatest impact. We can consider phasing mitigations and adaptations to achieve carbon neutrality prior to 2050 and predict a more accurate date than the 2040 date set by Council.

**2. Next Steps**

- 2.1 Once our carbon footprint is established we can refine our ambitions through the Climate Change Action Plan and begin to predict with some accuracy the costs associated with our plans and the period over which we will be reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and hence our carbon footprint. For Housing this is likely to include a significant investment requirement to make our stock more energy efficient.

- 2.2 In order to populate the carbon emissions spreadsheet we will need data from all Council Services. This work has been prioritised to make meaningful progress in the timescale set by the Climate Change Declaration.
- 2.3 Contractors activities on our behalf (for example Ian Williams) can be considered in scope 3, but this will be a point for discussion during the setting the boundaries phase of the commission.
- 2.4 The infographic from a Committee on Climate Change February 2019 report in **annex 1** shows how new and existing homes can be designed or adapted to reduce carbon emissions.
- 2.5 The Housing data we need to collect is in relation to all carbon emissions associated with the Service. The table below needs to be expanded and populated.

<b>Description of carbon emitters</b>	<b>Quantum of emissions</b>	<b>Scope 1, 2 or 3</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Offices: Exmouth Town Hall Home Safeguard 5 no. Area Offices 14 no. Community Centres		2	Meter readings for electricity and gas in housing occupied buildings
Transport business mileage		1	Staff mileage travelled to provide the housing services and activities
Housing fleet		1	Vans used for service delivery
Tenant transport		1	Taxi, mini bus hire, and mileage claims
Ian Williams Liberty Gas Other maintenance and improvement contractors		3	
Tenants homes		3	
Community development activities		1	Transportation
Procurement: Boilers Kitchens Bathrooms Electrical etc.			

- 2.6 Our Housing **Service Plan** will need to reflect climate change as a new corporate priority and should include coverage of what the Service is doing to progress the climate change agenda in Housing. We might want to consider an amendment to the Service Plan template to encourage thinking and actions that contribute towards our Action Plan.
- 2.7 I want to immediately start work on plotting scope 3 emissions. DCC are identifying their top ten partners/contractors by value and encouraging them to undertaken their own carbon foot

printing. If we took a similar approach we would be encouraging/requiring LED; Suez; Ian Williams etc. to be performing their own carbon footprint calculations.

- 2.8 In conclusion, it is worth remarking that establishing a carbon footprint is not an end in itself, it is merely the start of being able to identify and deliver carbon reductions.

# Homes of the future are needed today

Decarbonising and adapting the UK's housing stock is critical for meeting legally-binding emissions targets by 2050 and preparing for the impacts of climate change. The UK Government, householders and developers need to implement policies and measures now that ensure new and existing homes are fit for the future.

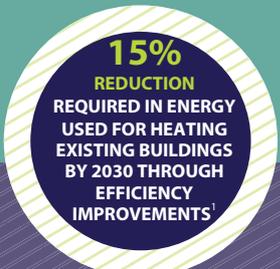
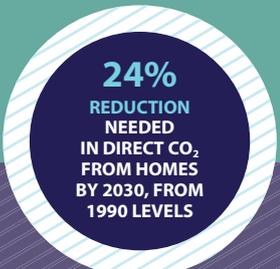
## What does a low-carbon, sustainable home look like?

Current technology, and measures aimed at preparing for the impacts of climate change, can help new and existing homes to become low-carbon and ultra-efficient as well as adapted to flooding, heat and water scarcity.

### Existing homes

Improving existing homes can help existing house-holders meet the challenges of climate change

- 1 **Insulation**  
in lofts and walls (cavity and solid)
- 2 **Double or triple glazing with shading**  
(e.g. tinted window film, blinds, curtains and trees outside)
- 3 **Low-carbon heating**  
with heat pumps or connections to district heat networks
- 4 **Draught proofing**  
of floors, windows and doors
- 5 **Highly energy-efficient appliances**  
(e.g. A++ and A+++ rating)
- 6 **Highly water-efficient devices**  
with low-flow showers and taps, insulated tanks and hot water thermostats
- 7 **Green space (e.g. gardens and trees)**  
to help reduce the risks and impacts of flooding and overheating
- 8 **Flood resilience and resistance**  
with removable air brick covers, relocated appliances (e.g. installing washing machines upstairs), treated wooden floors



### New build homes

New build homes can and should meet even more ambitious standards in some areas

- A **High levels of airtightness**
- B **More fresh air**  
with mechanical ventilation and heat recovery, and passive cooling measures such as openable windows
- C **Triple glazed windows and external shading**  
especially on south and west faces
- D **Low-carbon heating** and no new homes on the gas grid by 2025 at the latest
- E **Water management and cooling**  
more ambitious water efficiency standards, green roofs and reflective walls
- F **Flood resilience and resistance**  
e.g. raised electricals, concrete floors and greening your garden
- G **Construction and site planning**  
timber frames, sustainable transport options (such as cycling)

## What householders can do today

There are number of practical, easy and cheap steps that householders can take now to adapt their homes, and reduce their bills and carbon emissions:

### 1 Improve home energy, heating and water usage and efficiency

- Install low-energy lighting, hot water tank insulation, low-flow shower heads and draught-proofing
- Turn off the lights/other electricals when not being used
- Turn taps off when brushing teeth, have shorter showers, check pipes for leaks and water gardens only as needed
- Install water and smart energy meters to manage water and energy use and help identify water leaks

### 2 Is the heating system working correctly?

- Check your boiler annually and ensure your heating system is operating at no more than 55°C
- Install heating controls like timers and room thermostats
- Turn your thermostat temperature down to 19°C

### 3 Reduce the risk of overheating in summer

- Opt for thick curtains or blinds (close them during the day), plant trees to provide shade and open windows at night
- Use fans for bedrooms and living spaces (as long as temperatures are below 36°C)

### 4 Flooding

If you're in a flood risk area sign up to flood warnings and devise your own household plan to prepare for possible floods

## Our recommendations to Government

The Government needs to take action in five areas NOW to improve the UK's housing stock and help achieve long-term emissions reduction targets. This includes:

- 1 Enforcing standards, ensuring compliance with those standards and closing the 'performance gap'
- 2 Delivering a step-change in construction skills
- 3 Retrofitting existing homes so they are low-carbon, energy efficient and resilient to a changing climate
- 4 Ensuring new homes are low-carbon, ultra energy efficient and climate resilient, with sustainable transport options
- 5 Addressing urgent funding needs

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> A 15% reduction relative to 2015

Read our new report! Find it online here:

[www.theccc.org.uk/publications](http://www.theccc.org.uk/publications)





**Report to:** **Housing Review Board**

**Date of Meeting:** 19 |September 2019

**Public Document:** Yes

**Exemption:** None

**Review date for release** None

**Subject:** **Draft of the Annual Report to Tenants 2018/19**

**Purpose of report:** To comment on and approve the attached draft of the Annual Report to tenants. The draft is in word text format only and will be graphically designed once the wording has been finalised

**Recommendation:** That the Board approve the content of the annual report to tenants, subject to the information being graphically designed for reproduction in the December Housing Matters magazine

**Reason for recommendation:** To meet with good practice and provide performance information to tenants

**Officer:** Denise Rendell Housing Projects Officer  
[drendell@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:drendell@eastdevon.gov.uk)

**Financial implications:** The financial data below has been provided by finance.

**Legal implications:** The regulatory framework is set out at Par1.2 of the report and requires no further comment.

**Equalities impact:** Low Impact  
 If choosing High or Medium level outline the equality considerations here, which should include any particular adverse impact on people with protected characteristics and actions to mitigate these. Link to an equalities impact assessment form using the [equalities form template](#).

**Climate change:** Low Impact

**Risk:** Comments  
 Low Risk  
 Click here to enter text on risk considerations relating to your report.

**Links to background information:** ) [https://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2730664/housing-annual-report-2018\\_lowres.pdf](https://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2730664/housing-annual-report-2018_lowres.pdf)

**Link to Council Plan:** Living in this outstanding place

## 1 Background

- 1.1 This is our 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Report. The condensed format of the previous 2 years' annual reports was well received and will be continued this year providing key information in a very clear, concise, and easily accessible way.

1.2 The regulatory framework for social housing in England (from April 2012) states that 'registered providers should provide relevant performance information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlords' performance in a form which registered providers seek to agree with their tenants. Such provision must include the publication of an annual report which should include information on the repair and maintenance budget.'

## 2 Content & layout of report

2.1 The report covers the financial year April 2018 to March 2019. The sections mirror the current Housing Strategy as follows:

- ) Providing homes
- ) Improving homes
- ) Managing homes
- ) Improving communities
- ) Financing the service

2.2 The document is presented as a draft in word text only. Once the content of the report has been approved the draft will be passed to our senior Graphic Designer for the layout and graphic work. We have avoided lengthy explanatory text for facts and figures which are self explanatory.

## 3 Timescales

3.1 As in previous years, to save on postage the report will be sent to all tenants within the December copy of Housing Matters magazine. The report will be available on our website when finalised. We also email it to all staff and councilors.

## 4 Recommendation

4.1 That the Board approve the content of the Annual Report to Tenants 2018/19, subject to the information being graphically designed for reproduction in the December Housing Matters magazine.

# Annual Report to Tenants 2018/2019

This report gives you information on how we run and manage the housing service and our performance. It covers the period April 2018 to March 2019. Our aim with this report is to provide you with information on how we are doing and how we are working to provide and maintain homes for you.

(NB - figures in brackets are for 2017/18)

## Providing homes

Total number of properties (March 2018)	4202 (4210)
General need properties	2858 (2871)
Sheltered properties	1344 (1339)
Properties lost through Right to Buy sales	28 (32)
Properties purchased	16 (28)
Number of properties allocated	289 (204)
Number of mutual exchanges	41 (48)
Number of people on waiting list	4668 (3915)
Number of people downsizing	29 (26)

## Improving homes

Number of repairs carried out	11250 (9365)
% of repairs completed right first time	91 (82.5)
Average time to complete a routine repair	15.7 days (11.4 days)
Number of new kitchens fitted	59 (55)
Number of new bathrooms fitted	33 (65)
Number of boilers replaced	274 (250)
Number of void properties refitted	317 (318)
Number of days to re-let	25.2 (41.7)
% of properties that have a valid gas safety certificate	100 (100)
Number of Gas Services carried out	3140 (3153)
Number of fire risk assessments carried out	129 (134)
Number of legionella risk assessments (other than voids which are assessed routinely)	208 blocks (88)
Number of asbestos surveys	1440 (2402)

## Managing our homes

Number of antisocial behaviour cases	95 (318)
(nb there has been a change to how this is recorded)	
Number of evictions for antisocial behaviour	0 (0)
Number of evictions for rent arrears	5 (6)
% of rent collected	98.5 (98.8)
Complaints about allocations	4 (6)
Complaints about antisocial behaviour	7 (1)
Complaints about estate services	2 (5)
Complaints about tenancy management	4 (3)
Complaints about rent and service charges	4 (7)
Complaints about repairs	8 (7)
Complaints about staff & customer service	8 (3)
Other complaints	0 (0)
Total number of complaints 2017/2018	37 (32)

## Improving communities

### *Tenant involvement*

Number of tenants on the Key Player register	99 (222)
Number of tenants attending free training sessions	33 (133)
Number of community initiative grants allocated	11 (6)
Number of people attending the Tenant Conference	73 (75)
Number of tenants taking up the home contents insurance scheme	114 (115)

### *Neighbourhood and community events*

Community Projects and Events: Littleham Community Development; Millwey Memories; WW1 Centenary Celebrations in all 6 District Offices; 4 Community festivals; Greenday recycling. Dragons' Den.
9 x Nature and seasonal celebrations: Littleham, Moorhead and Millwey Community Orchards. Healthy Eating initiatives in Exmouth (Palmer House), Honiton (Dunning Court), and Axminster (Millwey Community Centre). Fairshare food scheme.
Work with the Countryside Team Education Ranger. Introduced discounted rates for tenants to some countryside attractions/events. Multi-generational themed activities around woodlands, beaches, rivers and wetlands. Started iFit Family Adventure Days (Sidmouth).
Annual Garden Competition: 37 entrants, 52 attendees at the prize giving event.
Youth projects and trips: Youth Tenant Conference; play days in rural areas; Survival skills - outdoor programme (4 sessions); SWITCH at Millwey, Honiton and Exmouth; Easter residential camp (31 young people); South West Rotary Youth Games – 3 parts in Mount Hawke, Paignton, and Dawlish; Xbox challenges in Exmouth and Axminster.
Mental Health Workshop across Sid Valley (7 workshops for different audiences).
Christmas events: Lymebourne; Dunning Court Christmas Fayre; Littleham.

## Financing the housing service 2018/19

Figures in £s

### Money In (Income)

<b>Total</b>	<b>-18,352,900</b>
--------------	--------------------

Rent	-17,266,800
------	-------------

Garage Rent	-426,100
-------------	----------

Interest and other	-660,000
--------------------	----------

### Money Out (Expenditure)

<b>Total</b>	<b>18,352,900</b>
--------------	-------------------

Repairs and maintenance	8,847,000
-------------------------	-----------

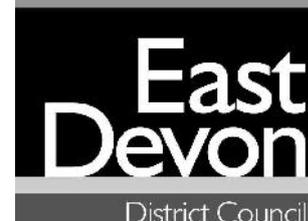
Staff costs	2,765,300
-------------	-----------

Principal repayment, loan interest and other expenditure	2,473,000
--	-----------

Other supervision/management	2,655,900
------------------------------	-----------

HRA surplus & Other Reserves Contributions	1,352,500
--	-----------

Other	259,200
-------	---------



**Report to:** John Golding, Strategic Lead for Housing, Health and Environment.

**Date:** 2 September 2019

**Public Document:** No

**Exemption:** None

**Review date for release:** None

**Subject:** **House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) refurbishment additional expenditure.**

**Purpose of report:** To approve works to a recently acquired property that exceed initial budget estimates under powers delegated to the Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment – Housing 25 - authority to enter into contracts, including the appointment, liaison and monitoring of contractors and consultants working on Council homes.

**Recommendation:** **That further expenditure is approved to ensure that the property recently acquired in Morton Road, Exmouth, is fit for purpose, using available budgets, by the Strategic Lead for Housing, Health and Environment.**

**Reason for recommendation:** To ensure that the refurbishment of the property meets regulatory compliance requirements and is suitable for occupation by our tenants.

**Officer:** Andrew Mitchell, Housing Needs & Strategy Manager  
[amitchell@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:amitchell@eastdevon.gov.uk)

**Financial implications:** Financial implications are contained within the budget section of the report

**Legal implications:** There are no legal implications on which to comment

**Equalities impact:** Low Impact

Click here to enter text on impact level relating to your report. Link to an equalities impact assessment form if necessary.

**Risk:** High Risk

Without these works the property would not meet the current statutory compliance regulations

**Links to background information:** [Proposed purchase of a suitable or existing property to be used as a House in Multiple Occupation to be owned and managed by EDDC](#)

## Report in full

### 1.0 Background

1.1 We reported to the Housing Review Board on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and it was agreed that a House in Multiple Occupation would be acquired to be used for temporary accommodation and managed by East Devon District Council. A budget of £500,000 was approved for the purchase using Housing Revenue Account (HRA) monies and Right to Buy receipts. We completed on the purchase of a nine bedroom HMO on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019.

1.2 Within the Board report a works budget of £25,000 was stated which was an estimated figure based on a cursory inspection of the property by a former member of the Repairs

team. At the time of purchase it was agreed that a light touch refurbishment would be sufficient for the intended use. Given the property was already in use as a HMO it was assumed that it complied with current regulations.

- 1.3 A full building survey was carried out prior to purchasing the property and a number of small repairs were noted as being required. This survey was a pre-purchase investigation and therefore concentrated on those parts of the property which were accessible, exposed or uncovered at the time of inspection. It was not an intrusive survey and relied on certificates available at the time.

## **2.0 Due diligence and results of surveys**

- 2.1 Following the purchase a number of intrusive surveys were undertaken, these included:

- Asbestos management survey
- Electrical installation condition report
- Fire risk assessment
- Fire alarm & emergency lighting report
- Gas installation inspection
- Legionella risk assessment and survey

- 2.2 A project team was established to get the property operational and ensure the building met the needs of the end users. At the start it was envisaged that this property would be treated as a normal 'void' property and the responsibility for the refurbishment would lie with the day to day repairs team and contractor.

- 2.3 Unfortunately, the timing of the purchase conflicted with mobilisation of the new Integrated Asset Management contract and there was some concerns with asking the current contractor to do the works as a 'void' due to spiralling costs and timing beyond the repairs contract end date. There was also a change in staffing at this time.

- 2.4 Furthermore, the intrusive surveys revealed a number of issues, previously unforeseen, which would need rectifying to ensure the property was fully compliant, especially with regards to electrical safety. Although the property had a current electrical certificate in place which suggested the electrical installation was compliant as part of our own due diligence we commissioned another one which highlighted a number of faults and areas of non-compliance. Given the age of the property and intended use it was felt that upgrading would not be good enough and a full re-wire should be undertaken. Some upgrading had already been carried out in 2015. This also directly affected the fire alarm and emergency lighting which would then need re-wiring and replacing to upgrade the system.

- 2.6 Other areas of concern were also raised in the fire risk assessment including the internal fire doors which need to be replaced and some concealed asbestos removal in the stairwell and subsequent redecoration. All the communal areas require specialist fire Class 0 flame spread coatings.

- 2.7 Additional expenditure is also required to extend the kitchen into the dining area to have a more workable layout for residents. This should alleviate any potential stress points and ensure residents can all access the kitchen. Security enhancements have also been suggested by the project team including CCTV installation together with a more sophisticated fob type operated door entry system. This will ensure that the property can be managed effectively and help our staff and residents be safe and secure when in the property. Given the high turnover of residents and the likely vulnerability of residents the door entry system is very important so that safety and security can be maintained.

- 2.8 These refurbishment works are all required to ensure the property is fully compliant and that our residents and own staff are safe. A 'light touch' approach is now not realistic given the findings of the surveys as is the estimated figure of £25,000 for the works.

### **3.0 Tender of refurbishment works**

- 3.1 A tender was put together to procure a contractor to carry out the refurbishment works identified following the surveys and project team's recommendations. An invitation to tender was issued in July to eight contractors with a tender deadline of 2 August. Three companies submitted a tender, two companies opted out and three did not reply.
- 3.2 Of the three companies who replied the tenders were close which suggests the price is realistic and gives us comfort.
- 3.3 The winning tender price was £128,522 and the officer recommendation is to award the contract.

### **4.0 Budget**

- 4.1 The original budget for the acquisition was £500,000 which included £25,000 for any works required. The tender figure of £128,522 is considerably higher due to the reasons stated above.
- 4.2 We have consulted with finance who have confirmed that 30% of the refurbishment cost can be funded through Right to Buy receipts. The shortfall to fund the contract can be found from other capital receipts or the new homes development fund.
- 4.3 Due to the timings and to guarantee the project is not delayed any further we have agreed to issue the contract to the winning contractor and will be proceeding with the refurbishment.
- 4.4 Further costs associated with internal fittings and fixtures will also arise. Each bedroom will require fire resistant curtains or blinds, new fire compliant bed and mattress, a starter pack of crockery and some rooms will have microwaves. The kitchen will also need saucepans and cooking equipment. We recommend that any further expenditure above that related to the contract should be approved by the Strategic Lead for Housing, Health and Environment in consultation with Finance.

### **5.0 Recommendations**

- 5.1 Subject to approval from the Strategic Lead for Housing, Health and Environment a report will be brought before the Housing Review Board on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019 to update them regarding the delegated authority decision, and the progress made towards bringing the HMO into use.

<b>Officer Executive Decision</b>
Any conflict of interest of any other member of Cabinet consulted by the Portfolio Holder must be recorded together with the Head of Paid Service's dispensation.
Officer Decision: This unforeseen work is required to the property prior to letting. The initial cost estimate clearly underestimated the work required and on closer inspection
Reasons for decision: To allow work to proceed prior to letting and occupation of the property. I have delegated powers under Housing 25 authority to enter into contracts, including the appointment, liaison and monitoring of contractors and consultants working on Council homes.

Budgets are available within the Housing Revenue Account and Right to Buy receipts to finance the work required.

Alternative options, if any, considered and rejected: Delay the decision until the Housing Review Board meet.

Identify delegated power in constitution or delegation from committee which authorised the officer decision: Strategic Lead – Housing, Health & Environment Housing 25.

Signed:



Dated: 6 September 2019

Officer name and job title John Golding Strategic Lead – Housing, Health & Environment.

\*Any conflict of interest of any other Cabinet Member consulted? Please circle: No

Dispensation granted by Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) for that conflict of interest? Please circle: Not applicable

**Equalities impact**

Will the proposal impact on promoting equality/opportunity as between people of different backgrounds [age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity]

Neutral

Details

Proposals to mitigate any negative impacts

\* A conflict of interest can be any interest which conflicts (or may reasonably be perceived to conflict) with that members' duty to take decisions only in the public interest in the light of material considerations. It is therefore much broader than a pecuniary interest. If you are in any doubt, please seek advice from the Democratic Services Team or the Monitoring Officer.

**GUIDANCE NOTES (please remove from form before publication)**

***What should be recorded as an Officer Decision?***

[Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 with effect from 6 August 2014]

**1. Where Cabinet has considered a report and delegated a decision to a particular officer.**

For example: The Cabinet minute says: 'Cabinet approves the disposal of Pooh Corner to Eeyore with the agreement of detailed terms and conditions delegated to the Principal Surveyor'. The Principal Surveyor should record approval of the detailed terms and conditions as an Officer Decision. All such specific delegations will require an Officer Decision form to implement the delegation even if routine.

## 2. Where a non-Cabinet Committee has considered a report and delegated a decision to a particular officer.

For example: 'Audit and Governance committee delegates to the Head of Finance the tendering and selection of external audit provision for 2015 - 2018.' The Head of Finance should record approval of the detailed terms and conditions as an Officer Decision. All such specific delegations will require an Officer Decision form to implement the delegation even if routine.

## 3. Where an officer takes an Executive decision [one within the functions of Cabinet] under general delegation (an authorisation in the Council's Constitution) s/he must complete an Officer Decision form, unless it is a day to day administrative or operational decision.

Government guidance suggests the following as examples which should require an Officer Decision form:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/341312/140805\\_Openness\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/341312/140805_Openness_Guide.pdf)

- ) decisions about awarding contracts above specified individual or total values;
- ) decisions to exercise powers of Compulsory Purchase; [although at East Devon this decision would normally be taken to Committee]
- ) decisions on disposal of and/ or provision of allotment land and green spaces;
- ) awarding of Discretionary Rate Relief
- ) the opening hours of local libraries; and
- ) the holding of car boot sales/markets on council-owned land.

Government guidance of examples of what need not be recorded:

- ) decisions to allocate social carers to particular individuals, or for example, to provide walking aids;
- ) decisions to allocate a social housing unit to an applicant or to send someone to carry out repairs;
- ) decisions to review the benefit claims of an individual applicant and
- ) decisions to allocate market stalls to individual traders.

## 4. Where an officer takes a decision under a general delegation [whether or not an Executive decision] s/he must complete an Officer Decision form where the effect is to:

- (i) grant a permission or licence;
- (ii) affect the rights of an individual; or
- (iii) award a contract or incur expenditure which, in either case, **materially affects the Council's financial position**. [The Council can set its own limits for this and the amount is currently under consideration]

**However**, the Officer Decision form is **not needed** where a written record of the decision is already required to be produced to comply with a statutory requirement and it includes the date of the decision, a record of the decision and the reasons for it. Government guidance suggests licensing applications, building control decisions and notices and listed building consents should be the subject of an Officer Decision. This list is not exhaustive – refer to your Service or Strategic Lead for guidance. As an example, a planning permission would not need an Officer Decision form because it is granted under statute and a planning permission contains the date, the decision and the reasons for it.

Government guidance suggests the following do not need to be recorded as officer decisions:

- ) Routine administrative and organisational decisions such as giving permission to a local society to use the authority's premises;
- ) decisions on operational matters such as day to day variations in services;
- ) decisions to give business relief to individual traders;
- ) decisions to review the benefit claims of an individual applicant; and
- ) decisions taken in response to requests under the Data Protection Act 1998 or the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

### **All Officer Decisions – append background papers**

Please note the requirement to append background papers to the officer decision. These are: documents relating to the subject matter of the decision which disclose facts or matters on which the decision or an important part of it is based and were relied on to a material extent in making the decision. It does not include published works.

### **Publication of Officer Decisions**

Please be aware that publication on the Council's website of both the Officer Decision and the background papers is a requirement of the 2014 Regulations, unless it is Exempt of Confidential information [see header at top of report.] Do not publish personal information protected by the Data Protection Act without first considering whether it should be Exempt information [and therefore not disclosed]. A payment to cover postage and printing may be required before supplying a paper copy of an officer decision that is not Exempt.

### **New criminal offence**

It is a criminal offence if, without reasonable excuse, a person with custody of a document (which is required by national rules to be made available to the public) intentionally refuses to supply part or whole of the document or intentionally obstructs any other person from disclosing such a document. If found guilty, there may be a fine of up to £200..



**Report to:** **Housing Review Board**

**Date of Meeting:** 19 September 2019

**Public Document:** Yes

**Exemption:** None

**Review date for release** None

**Subject:** **Community Development Update**

**Purpose of report:** To receive an update on the activities of the Community Development Workers, and to consider their work within the wider context of the Housing Service Plan 2019/20

**Recommendation:** **For Members to note the work that is underway that focuses on building our communities to be more resilient.**

**Reason for recommendation:** To ensure the Housing Review Board are fully appraised of why we employ Community Development Workers and how their work can be central to achieving the wider objectives of the authority.

**Officer:** Sue Bewes Landlord Services Manager

[sbewes@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:sbewes@eastdevon.gov.uk)

01404 515616

**Financial implications:** The financial implications are contained within the budget section of the body of the report.

**Legal implications:** There are no legal implications identified.

**Equalities impact:** Low Impact

If choosing High or Medium level outline the equality considerations here, which should include any particular adverse impact on people with protected characteristics and actions to mitigate these. Link to an equalities impact assessment form using the [equalities form template](#).

**Climate change:** Choose an impact level

**Risk:** Comments  
Low Risk

Click here to enter text on risk considerations relating to your report.

**Links to background information:** ) [Housing Service Plan](#)

**Link to Council Plan:** Encouraging communities to be outstanding

## Report in full

### 1. Background

1.1 In 2008 we recognised as a Housing Service that it would be beneficial to invest in our communities in order to help them to be resilient, vibrant places where people support each other and where people want to live. By putting our efforts into making communities more

sustainable, we would be able to provide the environment for people living in them to become more confident, social individuals, with the added benefit that they are more likely and able to sustain their tenancies as a result.

1.2 With this in mind we recruited one Community Development Worker (CDW) initially to set up mechanisms by which we could effectively work with young people who were some of our harder to reach residents at that time.

Gradually over time we have expanded the team to five and the function to cover many more activities to support wider groups of the community.

Some examples are given below.

- **Asset Based Community Development** – we are increasingly implementing this approach to community development which involves getting to know local residents in whichever area we are focussing on, and supporting them and the wider community around them to address anything they feel strongly about. It's also about making sure we are listening to tenants and that they are aware of any local services or opportunities that they might find helpful. Through the project in Littleham, Exmouth, we have supported the development of a peer-led mental health group and a partnership to improve green spaces. A second project is now commencing in St Pauls, Honiton; one of our Community Development Workers will be at the Board meeting to tell you first hand of progress so far.
- **SWITCH clubs** – Switch clubs are designed to provide children with positive free time activities, particularly focussed where we have our largest estates. Over the years we have found that linking in with the children helps us to build enduring relationships with local families. This helps us support them to engage positively with other teams within Housing such as Repairs, Estate Management and Rental, and we have also been able to connect families in need with other local activities and initiatives. We run three SWITCH clubs during term times in Littleham in Exmouth, Millwey in Axminster and St Pauls in Honiton, which continue to be well attended. We have expanded our activities so we offer trips and activities in holiday times, specifically activities that will challenge and take young people out of their comfort zones.
- **Right Track Programme** – a development programme for tenants and young people to improve key life skills, employability success, confidence building and mental health mentoring. Each programme is designed around the individual's needs and preferred outcomes. After an initial consultation a visit is carried out where plans are put in place to ensure that the programme is suited to their desired outcomes and style of working. A range of topics are covered and then further plans put in place to make next steps and progress. One of our Community Development Workers will be at the meeting to give more detail of one tenant's experience of the programme, illustrating one of the aims contained within the current Service Plan.
- **Youth tenant conference** – initially CDWs were brought into the annual Tenant Conference so they could look after the children of tenants who were attending, but they aspired for more! Over the last couple of years they had their own conference so that the voices of the children themselves can be heard and their opinions expressed, which helps us to shape the service for the future. Bringing communities together to solve problems can, in turn, help us to improve as a council.
- **Fun Days** – are activities we have run with from our early days and are very popular with local communities. This year we have had events in Broadclyst, Woodbury, Farway, Payhembury, Exmouth and an event in Seaton for National PlayDay. All continue to grow in popularity and give us the opportunity to run a series of events that is mostly in our more

rural areas, and to engage with families and younger people who we otherwise find it more difficult to consult with.

- **Dragons' Den** – 6 years ago we won funding from central government to build a place-based network in Honiton that supported local groups. The Dragons' Den came out of that project, and since then we have run it every year in partnership with Devon County Council and Honiton Town Council. It is an opportunity for small local groups to pitch for funding in front of an audience of their peers. The event itself is also an enjoyable, vibrant networking opportunity.
- **Countryside events** - as reported to the Board's June meeting we run a series of events with the Education Ranger and the Thelma Hulbert Gallery to ensure our tenants (many of whom are less likely to engage with these service than residents in the private sector) are able to access these activities either for free or at half price. This also heavily supports our Public Health agenda in relation to the benefits of using outdoor green spaces to improve physical and mental wellbeing.

## 2. Housing Service Plan 2019

2.1 For anyone wanting to see the thinking behind all the varied activities we undertake within our communities, the annual service plan is a good place to start, as it highlights particular pieces of work we need to carry out in order to support the work of the wider Housing Service for the coming year. Our Community Development workers are here to give you first hand their experience of how this is progressing using examples that are in this year's service plan.

2.2 **Mental Health Project** – responding to an increased demand to focus upon the mental health issues within our Landlord Services team, we have spent the last 9 months, since January 2019, assessing, reviewing and researching the Council's plans, processes and systems that relate to mental health support and understanding. As there is currently no existing mental health strategy, we are working to create a draft strategy for December 2019, to accommodate the visions, needs and requirements of the Housing Service. As an essential element of our front line work and customer service, we must improve the understanding and education within our staff and provide the training that is required to be better prepared and equipped to deal with mental health cases and individuals. The alarming number of cases that we have with underlying mental ill-health means we must have staff who feel confident and can respond accordingly, especially as it is within their remit to accommodate and refer individuals for the correct support. In addition, the consistency across Housing teams has to be stronger and more cohesive, whereby all parts of the service are working to the same guidelines and strategy to support our tenants with their mental health needs. Meeting the needs of our tenants with their mental health, looking after the wellbeing of our own staff and ensuring we put mental health at the forefront of our approach and service is paramount to meeting our aim of being an 'outstanding place' which encompasses physical, mental and emotional welfare.

2.3 **The St Pauls Project** – Our housing in 'The Square' at St Pauls Road in Honiton was, for some years historically, used as temporary accommodation for the authority, resulting in residents from across the district being housed in an emergency situation away from their jobs, schools and support. Many of these had required housing due to family breakdown, which meant St Pauls had a higher than usual proportion of children to adults on the estate. While this undoubtedly helped by giving a home to families in crisis, there was a high level of nuisance in and around 'The Square' and support required for the residents. We responded by taking a flat out of the housing stock to use as a community facility where we could meet with the Police, County Council and Health Services to co-ordinate our work on the estate and offer residents extra services as a landlord such as rubbish removal, Police and Estate Management surgeries, play facilities and events, and support them also through a residents association to

ensure full engagement and understanding of their needs. This policy of how we used our housing at St Pauls changed in around 2005 when we made the move to reduce the number of temporary households by offering tenants the chance to make their tenancies permanent. Many took up the offer, and although this successfully reduced the amount of temporary accommodation we were left with the legacy of an unusually high proportion of children on the estate and have continued to work with residents to some degree, responding to the level of need, using the links we set up in those early days. Since August 2019 we have been spending much more time in St Pauls in Honiton. This is the beginning of a project that we expect to last at least 3 years. The ultimate aim is to make the neighbourhood and community a safer, happier place to be. During this first phase we are running events and activities that will help us build trusting relationships with local people, starting to find out what people love about the area and what their biggest concerns are. Alongside our activities we have started a partnership with Sovereign and LiveWest (who also have housing on the estate) and with the police and local councillors so that we can work together, sharing resources, ideas and experiences.

**2.4 Case Studies** – We have personal stories from three tenants who've been part of the peer-led mental health group, and another who's been fundamental to the partnership for improving the green areas of Littleham for Wildlife and for People. We also have one from someone who's benefited from Right Track, a programme where tenants can sign up to receive mentoring to build confidence, improve employment opportunities and increase their life skills development.

**2.5 Budgets** – while the budget for us to spend on community development work over the past five years has remained relatively stable at around £20,000, our staffing costs over the period have risen from £74,719 to £147,154, as we have grown the team from two to five Community Development Workers at the recommendation of the Housing Review Board.

**2.6 Other work in our communities** - We have many more activities and opportunities available to residents in and around our areas of housing across the district, that are run by other Landlord Services teams, so when you see we have put on an event it may be our Mobile Support Officers or Estate Managers or Rental Officers who have organised it. You can keep an eye out for what is coming up on the Housing Events calendar on Outlook.

**2.7** For more information follow or like us on

<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/housing-and-homelessness/community-development/>



@EDDChome\_people

And for SWITCH:

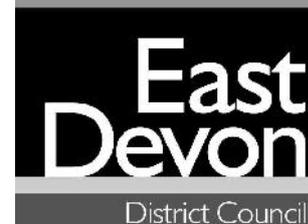


[SWITCHeastdevon](#)



[@SWITCHeastdevon](#)

Instagram [SWITCHeastdevon](#)



**Report to:** **Housing Review Board**

**Date of Meeting:** 19 September 2019

**Public Document:** Yes

**Exemption:** None

**Review date for release** None

**Subject:** **Update on Integrated Asset Management Contract**

**Purpose of report:** Our new Integrated Asset Management Contract commenced on the 1 July 2019.

This report will update Members on progress as we approach the end of the first 3 months of our new contracting arrangement with Ian Williams Ltd.

**Recommendation:** **To be aware of the commencement of the Integrated Asset Management Contract and to note early progress.**

**Reason for recommendation:** To ensure Members are up to date with new contracting arrangements covering the maintenance of our housing stock

**Officer:** John Taylor – Property and Asset Manager

**Financial implications:** As mentioned within the body of the report, consistent and quality monitoring of the contract is required to ensure the financial benefits that are expected from the PPP and PPV contracts are achieved.

**Legal implications:** There are no legal observations

**Equalities impact:** Medium Impact  
We have involved tenants throughout the process through the Housing Review Board, tenants groups and as part of the evaluation process. We have continued to involve tenants throughout mobilisation through tenant groups and through direct representation on a number of working groups.

**Climate change:** Choose an impact level

**Risk:** Comments  
Medium Risk

Not having sufficient contracting arrangements in place presents risks to management and maintenance of tenant's homes.

**Links to background information:** <http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2742359/combined-hrb-agenda-240119.pdf> (Item 10)  
<http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2602364/combined-hrb-agenda-200918.pdf> (Item 11)  
<http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2532954/combined-hrb-agenda-210618.pdf> (Item 13)  
<http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2317941/combined-hrb-agenda-110118.pdf> (item 11)

<http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/1973368/combined-hrb-agenda-120117.pdf> (item 14 and 15)

<http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2022994/combined-hrb-agenda-090317.pdf> (item 11)

<http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2140883/combined-hrb-agenda-150617.pdf> (item 9)

<http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2197069/combined-hrb-agenda-070917.pdf>(item 10)

<http://eastdevon.gov.uk/>

<https://democracy.eastdevon.gov.uk//ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=152&MId=162&Ver=4> HRB March 2019

**Link to Council Plan:**

J  
Encouraging Communities to be outstanding

## 1. Background

- 1.1 At the meeting of the June 2019 Housing Review Board, The Acting Housing Lead gave a detailed presentation of the work that has been undertaken to renew our repairs and maintenance contract since 2016. This has been an extensive project where the Board have played an important role in setting the direction and overseeing governance matters as we have moved towards putting in place our new contracting arrangements.
- 1.2 An intense mobilisation process ended on June 30<sup>th</sup> which enabled us to commence our new contracting arrangements from the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019. In order to deal with the transfer smoothly we set up an interim contracting arrangement just prior to the switchover, this has helped particularly with the management of void properties.
- 1.3 Mobilisation presented many challenges, particularly with setting up interfaces between our systems and those of Ian Williams in order to ensure the flow of information in the most efficient ways. Work in this area has not finished and as part of early monitoring the Housing Systems Manager remains focused on this area working closely with Ian Williams.

## 2. Early progress

- 2.1 Following extensive testing during the final week of June, the initial transfer of systems on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July worked seamlessly with tenants benefiting immediately from the ability for us to offer an appointment at first point of contact. Careful co-ordination and preparation meant a number of Ian Williams Officers were co-located with us for the duration of the first week in order to pick up any early issues that may have unexpectedly arisen and this also involved daily meetings/conference calls aided by an issues log which summarised each day matters that had arisen.
- 2.2 Overall a successful mobilisation and staff training plan was credit to the minimal number of issues that arose during the first few weeks. The Property and Asset Manager is having weekly meetings with the Ian Williams Business Manager to keep close to any operational issues that may be arising, this arrangement will remain in place for at least the first 6 months of the contract.
- 2.3 There have been some challenges with void properties and this has impacted on the times it has taken us to turn properties around for re-let. What has further impacted on this is the high number of void properties that we have dealt with during this quarter and the amount of work required as part of bringing them back up to re-let standard. Both of these issues have created additional challenges and overall have seen an increase in time taken for us to turn properties around. We are looking carefully at the reasons for the increase in voids and this will be closely monitored, it should be noted that the number of void properties passed to Ian Williams is currently well above the number expected as part of our previous years

statistics, we may therefore need to formally change the expected void number. This has created additional challenges mainly in terms of labour. Ian Williams have been working to engage sub-contractors that can assist in the short term, this has involved calling on nearby divisions of Ian Williams.

- 2.4 Challenges with voids has led to some delays in residents being able to occupy properties, this has been far from ideal and we have applied significant pressure on our contractors to ensure this work is prioritised. We have ensured open communication with incoming tenants and this has led to us having to issue apologies if dates have changed expectantly, recognising this is unacceptable.

### 3. Transfer of Undertakings protection of employment (TUPE)

- 3.1 Members will be aware that this contract has been subject to TUPE legislation and the final numbers for transfer are outlined below

<b>Number of employees put forward for final transfer</b>	37 ( This number was originally 53, 16 dropped off via their own accord or through challenges on applicability of TUPE)
<b>Number transferred</b>	37 on day 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 2 did not turn up on first day</li> <li>➤ 3 left during the first week</li> </ul>
<b>Number made redundant</b>	8 were made redundant on day 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 2 x working supervisors</li> <li>➤ 6 painters</li> </ul>
<b>Number of positions working full time on contract</b>	33 including all Office based staff and management

- 3.2 Transferred operatives have been subject to a significant amount of induction and training time in order to familiarise themselves with the detail and structure of the new contract. The management team report that good progress is being made but that weaknesses and further training needs are still being identified and plans made to ensure the appropriate support is put in place.

### 4. Key Performance Indicators

- 4.1 A summary of KPIs for month 1 and 2 have been included as **Appendix 1**

### 5. Resident engagement

- 5.1 Following the early commitment made to engage as many residents as possible regarding our new arrangements, we have launched a series of roadshows through-out the month of September. The aim of the roadshow's is to provide an informal opportunity for residents to drop in and learn more about the changes, tell us about their early experiences and meet the Ian Williams team. We have advertised the events widely and look forward to updating you on progress of the roadshows at the meeting.

- 5.2 We have launched a social media campaign and have been feeding information via our Corporate East Devon twitter feed as well as our EDDC Homes and People page, this will continue as part of the work undertaken by the Communication Group who have continually emphasised the importance of us pro-actively communicating.
- 5.3 Resident satisfaction is being captured in a number of ways, the information below relates to some testimonials received as a result of phone surveys undertaken by our own staff following completion of a job;
- *Noticed leaking from the ceiling called up and was dealt with well on the phone, came out to repair on the same day found the issue quickly and fixed with no issues. No issues with IW staff, they were polite and left without leaving any mess. Came back a couple of days later to do some painting, no issues here either*
  - *I emailed the repair in received a call quickly and arranged time and date that was only a few days later, IW worker called on the day before arrival, attended, very professional and polite, explained the repairs he had made and left the property clean and tidy. Overall happy with the work and service received.*
  - *Called up and call dealt with well but wires were crossed IW came out to replace the gate when a new, bigger gate needed to be fitted IW are coming out on Monday to complete the works but no other issues around staff that attended*
  - *Very pleased with service, called up and was given time and date, plumber turned up took pictures and needed a part, came back 2-3 days later and fitted the pump work was to a high standard and no mess left*

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 Overall, early signs are positive but we must not lose sight of the importance of the constant monitoring required as we continue into these early months of the new arrangement. We have had a significant number of our own staffing challenges mainly in the form of difficulties recruiting into some of our vacant positions, this has had an impact due to additional pressure of existing Officers.
- 6.2 Our early focus has remained on settling core business and over the coming months we look forward to picking up some of our additional work based on social value commitments.
- 6.3 The concerns in relation to void management need careful monitoring and as such the Property and Asset Manager remains in weekly contact with the IW Business Manager to ensure the required improvements are being made.
- 6.2 Due to the intensity of monitoring being undertaken, the Property and Asset Manager will present further information in relation to costs and key performance indicators at the September meeting of the Board.

## EDDC Contractual KPI's

Select Month  
July 2019



### Repair KPI's

<b>100%</b> R1 Customer Satisfaction	<b>0%</b> R2 Recalls	<b>87%</b> R3 Right First Time	<b>(Blank)</b> R4 Post Inspection	<b>97%</b> R5 Repairs Completed on Target	<b>5</b> R6 Average Repair Completion Time (Routine)	<b>92%</b> R7 Appointments Kept	<b>5%</b> R8 Orders Issued and Overdue	<b>15%</b> R9 Priority Repair Ratio
<b>279</b> Satisfied Q	<b>(Blank)</b> No. Recalls	<b>749</b> Completed same day	<b>(Blank)</b> Passed Inspections	<b>836</b> Jobs Completed on Target	<b>3698</b> Overall Days to Complete	<b>951</b> Appointments Kept	<b>19</b> Overdue Orders	<b>130</b> P1 Jobs Completed
<b>280</b> Completed Q	<b>865</b> Jobs Completed		<b>(Blank)</b> Post Inspections in Period	<b>865</b> Jobs Completed	<b>734</b> Routine Jobs Completed	<b>1031</b> Appointments Made	<b>359</b> Incomplete Orders	<b>864</b> P1and2 Jobs Completed

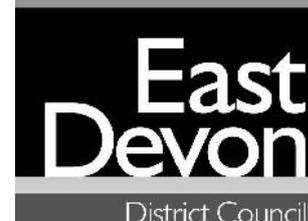
## EDDC Contractual KPI's

Select Month  
August 2019



### Repair KPI's

<b>98%</b> R1 Customer Satisfaction	<b>0%</b> R2 Recalls	<b>84%</b> R3 Right First Time	<b>100%</b> R4 Post Inspection	<b>95%</b> R5 Repairs Completed on Target	<b>8</b> R6 Average Repair Completion Time (Routine)	<b>93%</b> R7 Appointments Kept	<b>24%</b> R8 Orders Issued and Overdue	<b>12%</b> R9 Priority Repair Ratio
<b>250</b> Satisfied Q	<b>0</b> No. Recalls	<b>721</b> Completed same day	<b>40</b> Passed Inspections	<b>813</b> Jobs Completed on Target	<b>6106</b> Overall Days to Complete	<b>1050</b> Appointments Kept	<b>90</b> Overdue Orders	<b>100</b> P1 Jobs Completed
<b>255</b> Completed Q	<b>858</b> Jobs Completed		<b>40</b> Post Inspections in Period	<b>858</b> Jobs Completed	<b>758</b> Routine Jobs Completed	<b>1130</b> Appointments Made	<b>378</b> Incomplete Orders	<b>858</b> P1and2 Jobs Completed



**Report to:** **Housing Review Board**

**Date of Meeting:** 19 September 2019

**Public Document:** Yes

**Exemption:** None

**Review date for release** None

**Subject:** **Update on Your Home Your Wellbeing Research Project**

**Purpose of report:** To provide the board with an update on the progress of the three year research project being undertaken in partnership with LiveWest and the University of Birmingham.

**Recommendation:** **To note the ongoing progress of year 2 of the project including the wider contribution of the study to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Committee Inquiry into the long term delivery of social and affordable rented housing.**

**Reason for recommendation:** The results of the study provide information on the relationship between housing and wellbeing and landlord satisfaction.  
To raise the profile of the project and to recognise the contribution the project is now making to national debates.  
The results will support service improvement and raise awareness of the intrinsic link between better housing, better health.

**Officer:** Natalie Brown  
[nabrown@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:nabrown@eastdevon.gov.uk)

01395 571583

**Financial implications:** No specific finance implications.

**Legal implications:** There are no legal implications

**Equalities impact:** Low Impact

If choosing High or Medium level outline the equality considerations here, which should include any particular adverse impact on people with protected characteristics and actions to mitigate these. Link to an equalities impact assessment form using the [equalities form template](#).

**Climate change:** Choose an impact level

**Risk:** Comments  
Low Risk

Click here to enter text on risk considerations relating to your report.

**Links to background information:** ) [HRB Report November 2018](#)

**Link to Council Plan:** Encouraging communities to be outstanding

## Report in full

### 1. Background

- 1.1 In November 2018 the Information and Analysis Officer presented to the Board the first years results of the Your Home, Your Wellbeing project. This was the first stage of a 3 year project that is centred around exploring the relationship between housing and wellbeing.
- 1.2 The project is the brainchild of our own Information and Analysis Officer who has recognised for some time the need to go so much deeper than the traditional landlord surveys the housing sector has become used to. In order to develop the project, Birmingham University, Centre on Household Assets and Savings Management (CHASM) were approached to become involved and this also resulted in the involvement of a Local Housing Association, LiveWest.
- 1.3 The study is based around in-depth surveys of a proportion of our tenants and a proportion of applicants on the housing register as well as face to face interviews that have been carried out by our Information and Analysis Officer. The study focuses on a number of areas including financial status, health and wellbeing and general satisfaction with landlords. Quite powerfully, the study compares the tenure differences of a social housing tenant compared to someone living in the private rented sector and the impact that this has on overall health and wellbeing.
- 1.4 We are undertaking this research in order to explore deeper the intrinsic links between housing and wellbeing with the aim of using the results to directly influence how we operate our services going forward.

**Appendix 1** is the infographic that was presented at the November 2018 Board meeting, this displays the results of year 1 of the study.

### 2. Current Progress

- 2.1 Year two of the research is on track with 20 interviews and initial analysis of over 1,000 survey responses (including a comparison with year 1) completed. In the Autumn we aim to release an infographic (similar to year 1- included as **appendix 1**) presenting a summary of the findings.
- 2.2 One of the more strategic aims of the study for the partnership was to ensure the research was used and communicated widely to make the most of this innovative and exciting piece of research. Opportunities were taken to present the findings of year one to various audiences across the country, from homelessness to financial experts.
- 2.3 In July, the University of Birmingham submitted a response to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Select Committee Inquiry into long term delivery of social and affordable rented housing using the research to support their comment. A copy of the paper is attached as **appendix 2**.
- 2.4 The wellbeing agenda, within in all aspects of the housing sector has recently been gaining increasing traction nationally and locally. High profile 2019 reports from Shelter, NHS and CIH have all discussed the importance of home on wellbeing and quality of life. It has even cascaded down into the building sector with a recent TCPA's (Town and Country Planning Association) Healthy Homes Act campaign calling on government to introduce primary legislation that will ensure all new housing is of a decent standard and will enhance rather than undermine people's safety, health, wellbeing and life chances.

2.5 On June 27<sup>th</sup>, we were delighted to be invited as a Guest Speaker at the University of Birmingham, CHASM Annual Conference. Our Information and Analysis Officer attended and delivered an inspiring presentation focusing on why we were undertaking the research and a flavour of year 1's results.

A digital clip has been made to summarise activity on the day, the link is here;  
<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/chasm/events/index.aspx>

2.6 Within our own housing service, results of year 1 have been circulated widely across teams from officer to Strategic Management/Member level. The study has been used to support service planning across the housing teams and more specifically, in an NHS bid to provide mental health expertise, linking in with the new homelessness strategy and public health strategy and more recently to provide a locally meaningful analysis of poverty and social welfare issues for the Council's Overview Committee.

### **3. Conclusion**

3.1 One of the biggest points of difference about this study is its three year duration which gives us the ability to measure the impact change has for individuals and households. In light of this, following completion of year 3 and with our research partners we are planning to deliver a far wider communication programme to ensure the research is used internally, locally and nationally to support improvements within the housing sector.

3.2 We look forward to providing the board with the next set of results during the Autumn.



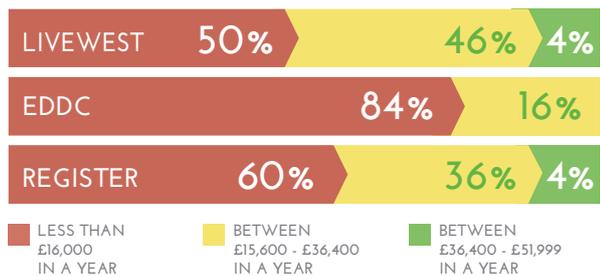
# YOUR HOME YOUR WELLBEING

1500+ people from the South West of England have taken part in **the first stage** of a joint three year project exploring the relationship between **housing and wellbeing** with the Centre on Household Assets and Savings Management (CHASM) at the University of Birmingham, East Devon District Council (EDDC) and LiveWest.

The respondents to the survey were a sample of social housing tenants from EDDC and LiveWest and a sample of those who are on the waiting list for social housing (Register).

## 1. RESPONDENTS' INCOME

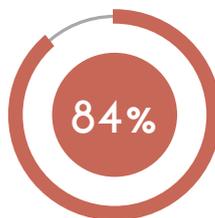
PROPORTIONS OF RESPONDENTS IN INCOME BRACKET PER SUB-SAMPLE:



RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE RELIED ON HOUSING BENEFIT IN THE LAST 3 YEARS:



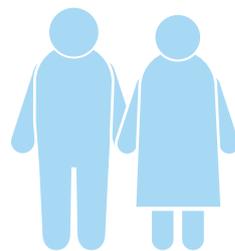
EDDC AND LIVEST RESPONDENTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO REPORT PROBLEMS WITH BENEFITS:



OF PEOPLE WHO HAD BENEFIT PROBLEMS SAID IT CAUSED THEM DIFFICULTY.

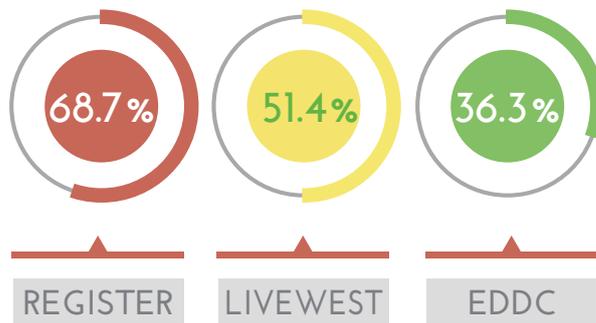


Women and households with children are more likely to experience benefit problems and to struggle financially.



Respondents over 65 years old are the most likely age group to struggle financially.

RESPONDENTS STRUGGLING TO MAKE ENDS MEET:

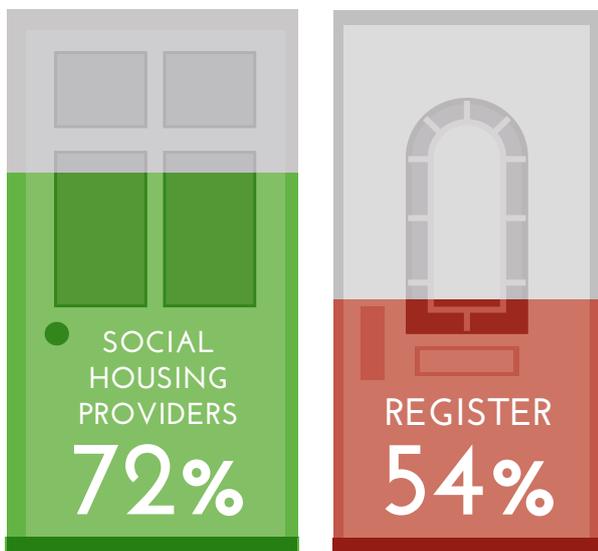




## 2. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

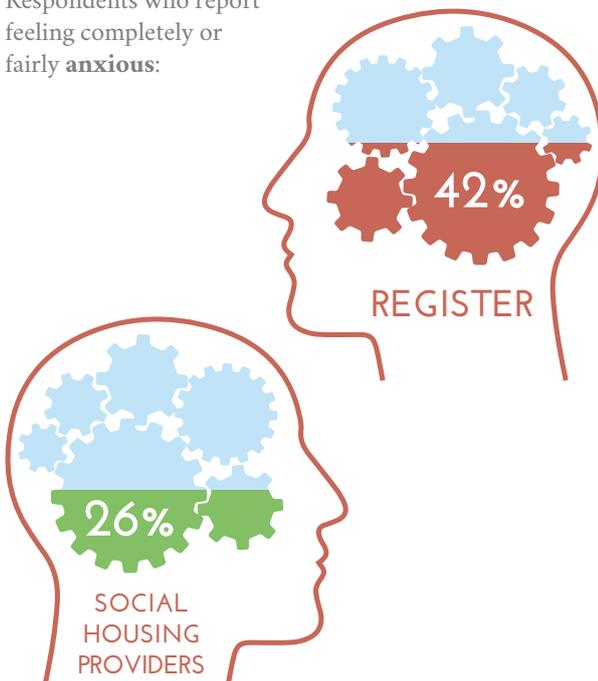
### LIFE SATISFACTION

Respondents who report being completely or fairly **satisfied with life**:



### ANXIETY

Respondents who report feeling completely or fairly **anxious**:



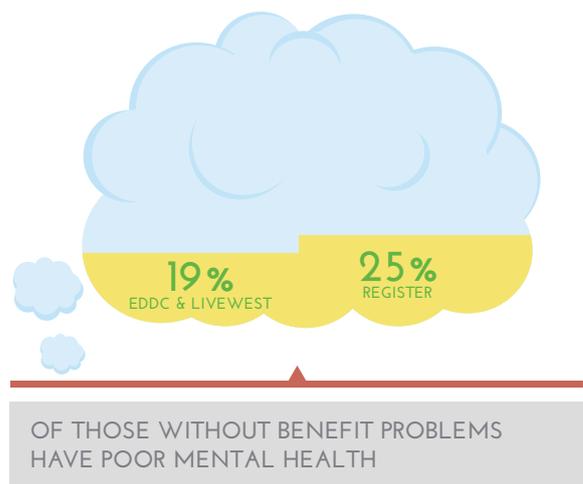
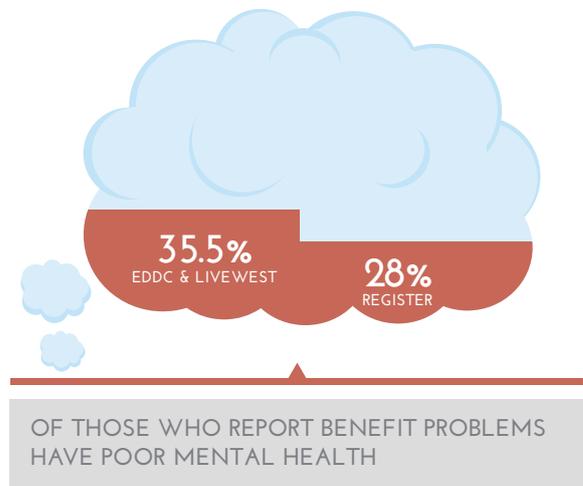
### MOBILITY ISSUES

People with **mobility issues** are nearly **twice as likely** to say they are anxious than those without mobility issues.



### BENEFIT PROBLEMS AND POOR MENTAL HEALTH

**Poor mental health** is more prevalent amongst those reporting **problems with benefits** for LiveWest and EDDC respondents. This trend cannot be found among Register respondents.





### 3. WELLBEING AND EXPERIENCE OF HOME

RESPONDENTS WHO ARE SATISFIED WITH THEIR LANDLORD:



#### LANDLORD SATISFACTION AND WELLBEING

GENERAL SATISFACTION WITH THE LANDLORD IS ASSOCIATED WITH MORE HAPPINESS AND LESS ANXIETY



SATISFACTION WITH LANDLORD MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS IS ASSOCIATED WITH MORE HAPPINESS AND LESS ANXIETY



RESPONDENTS WHO REPORTED SPECIFIC PROBLEMS WITH THEIR HOME THAT AFFECTS WELLBEING:



#### TOP PROBLEMS REPORTED

EDDC & LIVEWEST:



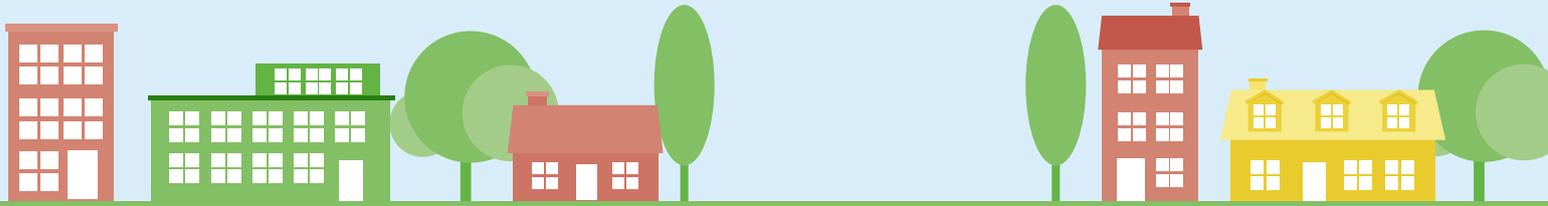
REGISTER:



#### REASONS FOR WANTING TO MOVE OR STAY IN CURRENT HOME

When asked what motivated respondents to stay in their current home or move to a new home, **the most important reason** is a desire for **long-term security** in their home. Other important reasons given are quality of life, affordability and suitability.





#### 4. TENURE AND WELLBEING

##### HAVING A GOOD HOME MATTERS FOR OVERALL LIFE SATISFACTION

People who **feel secure** in their home are **more likely** to report satisfaction with their lives.

##### RESPONDENTS IN SOCIAL HOUSING HAVE BETTER WELLBEING

Those on the **Register** have significantly **lower wellbeing** and feel worse about their home.

Those on the **Register** are nearly **twice as likely** to be unhappy than EDDC and LiveWest respondents.



of EDDC and LiveWest respondents are **unhappy**



of **Register** respondents are **unhappy**

##### RESPONDENTS WHO DON'T THINK THEY HAVE PRIVACY IN THEIR HOME:



REGISTER



LIVEWEST



EDDC

##### RESPONDENTS WHO DON'T THINK THEY CAN DO WHAT THEY WANT WITH THEIR HOME:



REGISTER



EDDC & LIVEWEST

##### RESPONDENTS WHO DON'T FEEL SAFE IN THEIR HOME:



REGISTER



LIVEWEST



EDDC

For more information about the research this summary is based on, please contact Dr James Gregory [j.gregory@bham.ac.uk](mailto:j.gregory@bham.ac.uk) or Prof. Andy Lymer [a.lymer@bham.ac.uk](mailto:a.lymer@bham.ac.uk). This project was undertaken by CHASM, supported by East Devon District Council and LiveWest. Find out more about this project and follow its updates over the next three years at [www.bham.ac.uk/chasm](http://www.bham.ac.uk/chasm).



This visual summary was edited and designed by the **Research Retold** team at [www.researchretold.com](http://www.researchretold.com).  
Published in October 2018.



**Written evidence submission from the Centre for Household Assets and Savings Management (CHASM) at the University of Birmingham.**

**Consultation question - How can the Government ensure the sustainable delivery of social and affordable rented housing to meet long-term need and contribute to the Government's overall housebuilding targets.**

In our response we advocate that MHCLG -

1. Provide greater support for local authority and housing associations as well regulated, usually very well run, social rent landlords to enable them to grow their housing stock towards addressing a larger part of the housing provision planned than they are currently able to address.
2. Provide greater support to such providers to develop the communities in which they operate to enable them to be key providers of good homes to their tenants.
3. Support the collection of more specific data on the role of social homes particularly in respect to self-reported wellbeing and 'experience of the home' indicators that can be used to better illustrate the extent to which social homes can and should provide suitable and stable homes for tenants.
4. Provide more public and visible support for the role of social rented accommodation as a home of choice not just of necessity, helping to reduce the stigma so often attached to those living in socially rented property that has developed in the last 40 years in the UK, but that is not widely experienced elsewhere in Europe linked with social housing provision.

**Who are we?**

The Centre for Household Assets and Savings Management (CHASM) (<http://www.bham.ac.uk/chasm>) is a research centre at the University of Birmingham exploring all aspects of personal financial wellbeing from pensions to housing to savings. We have operated for the last 10 years as a research centre providing research and consulting services to those engaged in all specs of personal finance and have a number of projects related to housing and tenure currently ongoing.

A sub-group operates under CHASM oversight entitled the Housing and Communities Research Group (HCRG – see <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/chasm/research/housing-communities/index.aspx>) that provides the focus for much of our housing work.

Our comments are drawn from our recent, relevant experience and research addressing the questions raised that we believe we have something useful to contribute.

We would be pleased to provide further details on any of these issues if so required.

## Specific Questions:

### 1. What the role of (a) local authorities – as enablers and providers, (b) Homes England (c) housing associations and (d) other providers should be in that long-term delivery.

1.1 We would strongly advocate a mixed approach to housing provision, but to include a much stronger role for social housing provision than is currently expected without further Government intervention (3% of planned 300,000 new homes).

1.2 This requires (a) a mix of providers, primarily local authorities and housing associations and (b) a more ‘hybrid’ approach to the role of social housing providers (see, Social Housing and the Good Society, 2016<sup>1</sup>). Since 2010 housing associations have increasingly used private development (in particular shared-ownership) to cross-subsidise social housing development. This can and should be taken as an opportunity for social landlords to act as reputable and trusted private landlords and to also become trusted developers of all forms of tenure – including owner-occupied housing. A cohesive housing provider that offers products across all tenures will be better able to promote the social as well as the financial benefits of mixed tenure communities for social tenants.

1.3 Our recent work with East Devon District Council, LiveWest Housing Association (both operating in Exmouth, Sidmouth and surrounding areas) and Vivid housing (operating in the Basingstoke and wider South East area), have illustrated how such landlords, providing a mix of tenure and supporting wider community development as a part of their oversight of areas in which they operate, provide a strong platform for tenants of all types, and those in other tenures in the same area, to enable the development of strong personal wellbeing. This included clear demonstrations of the relative benefits of trusted and well managed landlord provision over the situation faced by so many on waiting lists for social homes. For example, in our work with Vivid Housing in 2017/18 we illustrated how being a social tenant reduced levels of self-reported anxiety by 7 percentage points compared to our average respondent. Even higher levels of lower anxiety at 16 percentage points were reported in our study in Exmouth with East Devon District Council and LiveWest in comparing their tenants with respondents on the local housing register. This clearly indicates the needs for social landlord provision for a percentage of the UK population. With such low levels of social house building however, such support is becoming much harder to achieve for many who could benefit from this provision and for whom home ownership is not a near future, if ever, likely opportunity.

Further details on this work can be found at:

- ) Full report for Vivid Homes – ‘Housing and wellbeing - Breaking down housing stereotypes’ - <https://www.vividhomes.co.uk/media/516/homes-and-wellbeing-full-report.pdf>
  - o An animated summary of the findings of this work - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=8&v=Oe4TueEMHvw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=8&v=Oe4TueEMHvw)
- ) Year one results infographic – East Devon District Council and LiveWest Homes - <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/CHASM/2019/Housing-and-Wellbeing-Infographic-Research-Retold.pdf>

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://tinyurl.com/y6dfcb4s>

**-How does the Government ensure long-term provision (a) meets the needs of tenants and (b) is adequately regulated.**

Government needs to develop broader approaches to measuring the social and individual value of social housing to those who live in it. The dominant approach for the last two decades has been based on life-chances and issues such as the relationship between social housing and long-term unemployment and low levels of education amongst tenants. It is important to continue to monitor such characteristics. But the approach risks treating social housing instrumentally, as a behavioural policy lever or intervention.

CHASM advocates instead a wellbeing approach to meeting the needs of social tenants. Landlords and the Regulator of Social Housing should regularly survey the psychological wellbeing of a sample of social tenants, at the very least using the four wellbeing metrics developed by the Office for National Statistics and employed in the Annual Population Survey<sup>2</sup> to ensure direct comparison to wider levels of wellbeing data across the wider population.

Additionally, CHASM advocates the use of six 'experience of the home' indicators (see its research indicated above with EDDC, LiveWest and Vivid), which draws out tenant perceptions of social housing stigma as well, as responses to feelings about the role and value of social housing as a particular 'home'.

These wellbeing and 'experience of the home' items should also be incorporated as a continuous section in the English Housing Survey. This will encourage a view of social housing regulation that focusses more on the most fundamental question of whether or not people are happy living in social housing (over above issues of quality, price and landlord satisfaction).

**What lessons can be learned from alternative approaches to social and affordable rented housing delivery in other countries and jurisdictions.**

The most important lesson to be learnt from other countries is that strong social housing sectors have developed side by side with strong private rental and owner occupier sectors. This is the case in, for example, Austria and Germany, where historically housing development for the private rental market has been helped by capital subsidy from central and local government. This continues to be the case in Austria, where 80 percent of all construction is supported by direct or indirect subsidy, most of which is federally funded but distributed by regional government. This is funded by a hypothecated proportion of income tax, by corporation tax, and by employer 'housing contributions'.

The lesson from this kind of system is that households have more choice in their housing options, and there is a thriving social sector, alongside a strong and popular private rental sector, and with less of a push into owner-occupation as the tenure of choice. Austria and other countries with similar systems have largely avoided the concentrated, mono-tenure social housing that has been a significant feature of social housing across the UK.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing>

Yours sincerely

Professor Andy Lymer - Director of CHASM

Dr James Gregory – CHASM Senior Research Fellow



**Report to:** **Housing Review Board**

**Date of Meeting:** 19 September 2019

**Public Document:** Yes

**Exemption:** None

**Review date for release** None

**Subject:** **Resident Involvement Strategy**

**Purpose of report:** To consider the contents of the refreshed Resident Involvement Strategy and adopt it as fit for purpose for the period 2019/22

**Recommendation:** **To adopt the Resident Involvement Strategy 2019/22**

**Reason for recommendation:** To ensure our Resident Involvement Strategy is agreed at the highest level and recorded for all to see.

**Officer:**

Sue Bewes Landlord Services Manager

[sbewes@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:sbewes@eastdevon.gov.uk)

01404 515616

**Financial implications:** There are no specific financial implications

**Legal implications:** There are no legal implications which require comment.

**Equalities impact:** Low Impact

If choosing High or Medium level outline the equality considerations here, which should include any particular adverse impact on people with protected characteristics and actions to mitigate these. Link to an equalities impact assessment form using the [equalities form template](#).

**Climate change:** Low Impact

**Risk:** Comments

Low Risk

[Click here to enter text on risk considerations relating to your report.](#)

**Links to background information:** ➤ [Click here to enter links to background information; appendices online; and previous reports. These must link to an electronic document. Do not include any confidential or exempt information.](#)

**Link to Council Plan:** Encouraging communities to be outstanding

## 1 Introduction

1.1 The Government's Regulator of Social Housing publishes regulatory standards that registered providers of social housing must meet. The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard 2017 requires us to:

- Provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of tenants in the delivery of all standards

- Have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly
- Ensure tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in:
  - The formulation of our housing related policies and strategic priorities
  - Making decisions about how housing related services are delivered, including setting service standards
  - Scrutiny of our performance and making recommendations about how performance might be improved
  - Management of their homes, where applicable
  - Management of repair and maintenance services such as commissioning and undertaking a range of repair tasks, as agreed with landlords, and the sharing in savings made
  - Agreeing local offers for service delivery

1.2 So, with this in mind, the Resident Involvement Strategy 2013 has been updated to reflect our present position and aspirations. The term 'resident' has been maintained at the request of tenants who prefer to reflect our work with leaseholders and to show our intention to offer access to our involvement opportunities to all users of our services.

1.3 Effective customer involvement is seen as good practice in the housing sector and essential to the effective planning and operation of the service. Our recommended approach is to build on the improvements in resident involvement over recent years and consolidate what works well.

1.4 To this end it is important to formally agree as tenants, councillors and officers together how we will involve residents in the service at all levels so that they can influence its direction and delivery in a meaningful way. Failure to do so would give a negative impression to stakeholders that customer views were not important to us and had little value. This would be incorrect, and a risk to the authority's reputation as well as, importantly, the quality of the service delivered.

## **2 Background**

2.1 We have a history of positive commitment to customer involvement, of striving to improve and raising this element of the Housing Service to greater heights. Our work in this area has achieved recognition over the years: we won a national award for our tenant magazine in the 1990s; we were the first local authority in the South West to produce a tenant compact in 2000; we were one of the first local authorities to invite tenant and community representatives onto our Housing Review Board in 2006; our work on tenant scrutiny and involving tenants in our formal complaints process won us praise from Government Office in its turn, and we are now recognised by Involvement Devon as one of the few remaining social landlords that continues to offer a comprehensive menu of involvement opportunities.

2.2 We have been keen to involve customers to improve service delivery and have seen positive benefits by doing so which include:

- Delivery of services that tenants want so that they reflect local priorities
- This has contributed to a service that produces less waste and that represents good value for money
- This approach has also helped bring high levels of customer satisfaction and performance when measured against our peers.

- 2.3 Our collective approach has been in line with recognised good practise which requires that residents should have a clear voice and the genuine opportunity to be involved in setting priorities, determining outcomes and developing relevant performance measures to assess whether these outcomes are being met.

### **3 The Resident Involvement Strategy**

- 3.1 Over the past 18 months we have been reviewing our customer involvement offer by a variety of means, including:
- Formal impact assessment of all areas of the structure including Service Review Groups, the Tenant Involvement Forum, the Tenant Scrutiny Panel, the Designated Tenant Complaint Panel, the Conference Committee, the Editorial Group.
  - A series of focus groups to gain the views of tenants who are not routinely involved in a regular way.
  - Questionnaires to tenants attending training sessions.
  - Sessions with Residents Associations.
  - Survey of Housing Staff.
- 3.2 What the consultation and review has shown us is that our determination and strong partnership working over the years has stood us in good stead, and we have a structure in place that is tried and tested and has worked well for us in many areas. Some areas though have not worked as well and have benefited from the review to challenge their usefulness, and how we can redefine the shape of our involvement structure to make sure it is truly inclusive for the future and able to deliver real improvements for the service.
- 3.3 For the most part the feedback gained showed that most areas of the structure have worked well and made a positive impact on the service. Looking closely and challenging ourselves in this way has led to some changes, for example amalgamation of work with residents across sheltered and general needs estates, as the sheltered group, in particular, had been struggling to achieve any meaningful results and become an information giving meeting that was not helping residents shape their service or influence it in any way. Another change is the re-emergence of the Tenant Involvement Forum (TIF) in a focus group format that will be convened as and when required. This was because the forum was not representative of the larger tenant body, being composed largely of residents over retirement age living in sheltered housing who could not comment on behalf of younger families living in general needs accommodation. It did not achieve its goal of reporting to the Board on its thinking, or play a great part in shaping or influencing services. It did serve the purpose of bringing the service review groups together and listening to what they had achieved, but did not offer advice or act upon the information that it received. It was recognised that the TIF's practice of meeting just after Board agendas were produced meant that they were unable to influence the content of papers, as the meaningful consultation had already been undertaken with the service review or focus groups at an earlier stage in the process.
- 3.4 The TIF has operated successfully as a focus group over the past three months to help me look at the material gathered during the review and to draw up the new strategy for the next phase of our future. The aims and objectives are little changed, but we have tried to be less structured, but concentrate on ensuring we respond to residents and offer opportunities for involvement wherever they tell us they would like to be involved.
- 3.5 The consultation has shown the demographic of our involvement structure does not match our actual demographic, and the fact that our structure has been heavily weighted towards physical meetings during the daytime hours when many of our younger families will be at work, does not help us to engage these residents in our activities. The new structure is

more innovative and accommodates our requirement to pay more attention to communicating with younger people in the way they communicate with each other, oftentimes this will mean offering a digital option where possible. At the same time we do not want to lose our loyal tenants who have been offering their time for many months and years, and without whose expertise and knowledge we would be seriously debilitated. In recognition of this we have kept the majority of the present structure, where it is recognised that this has been working well and achieving great results.

3.6 Earlier this year a paper was brought to the Board's March meeting which drew your attention to the **National Housing Federation (NHF) publication and consultation – Together with Tenants**. This document had been produced in response to the Housing Green Paper and the aftermath of the Grenfell tragedy. Whilst the document is intended for housing associations, there is much of value to our tenant involvement and Housing Review Board agenda. It asks some basic questions:

- Are residents listened to when things go wrong with their home or the service they receive?
- Do they have a chance to influence decisions made about their home or service they receive?
- What can they do if they don't think their landlord is taking their concerns seriously?

3.7 They have been working hard to protect and strengthen the rights and interests of tenants living in social housing, and to this end have produced a set of 8 commitments they are asking 40 housing associations to sign up to and test in a move to pilot the draft plan. They have been kept deliberately simple and straightforward, making it easy for people to relate them to their own experience. These are:

1. Every tenant and resident has the right to be treated with respect.
2. Every tenant and resident has the right to a decent safe home and quality of service.
3. Every tenant and resident has the right to be listened to and have their voice heard on decisions that affect their community, home and services they receive.
4. Every tenant and resident has the right to know how the organisation is run, how decisions are made and how they can get involved.
5. Collectively tenants and residents have the right to influence decisions that affect their community, home and the services they receive.
6. Every tenant and resident will have simple, clear and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints and seeking redress.
7. Every tenant and resident will receive support and advice when things go wrong or their expectations aren't met.
8. Every tenant and resident will have access to the information they need to make informed decisions and hold their landlord to account.

3.8 The Board recommended at that meeting that we should follow the progress of the NHF project and weave its findings into our strategy of involvement for the future.

## 4. Conclusions

4.1 We believe that what the new strategy offers is sustainable for both residents and officers alike but, like its predecessors, this strategy continues to shift the emphasis and responsibility of resident involvement from the Tenant Participation team towards all Housing staff, as is expected by accepted good practise, and required for effective involvement to result. We believe it has the right structure to deliver the expectations of the NHF Together with Tenants draft plan, and that the requirements of the plan are catered for within the strategy.

- 4.2 We have some great examples of tenants having meaningful involvement such as the procurement of our new integrated asset management contract where we have made a real effort to integrate by having tenant involvement from the very start. We work with a skilled team of editors to produce a high quality tenant magazine, have a Tenant Scrutiny Group that is recognised by neighbouring authorities for the excellent reviews and reports it has undertaken and made to the Board as well as a strong history of making sure we achieve every single recommendation that it has made (so far!). Our Designated Tenant Complaint Panel has helped shape the corporate complaints process for the better as well as much of the staff training we received last year from the Government Ombudsman and mental health and legal experts, and who again report directly to the Board in their own right. These examples and others have been kept within the structure.
- 4.3 It is time now to look at and provide more digital options, and also to make best use of the 'tenant portal' element of our housing system when it is brought on line.
- 4.4 What matters most to tenants is not just the strategy, but that we deliver on our promises contained within it. Monitoring is essential and therefore built in to the structure going forward, but it will require more than just this to make the strategy a success.
- 4.5 To this end the commitment of the Board, and strong leadership across Housing teams, as well as an improved focus on digital inclusion and involvement opportunities, will enable us to build on our firm foundations and improve our offer to younger families and residents, in particular.



# Resident Involvement Strategy

2019 - 2022

DATE: September 2019

Version 4

East Devon – an outstanding place



## Contents

<b>1.1 Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.2 The Housing Service believes residents' ideas make a difference</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.3 Why do we involve you?</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.4 Our eight involvement principles</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2.1 Opportunities for involvement – ways of getting involved</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.1 Involvement Priorities and Targets for 2019/22</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Appendix 1 Standards for Involvement – how we will support you</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Appendix 2 Support Information</b>	<b>29</b>

### For further information about this document please contact:

The Housing Landlord Services Manager  
East Devon District Council,  
Blackdown House  
Border Road  
Heathpark Industrial Estate  
Honiton  
EX14 1EJ  
Telephone: 01395 516551

Tenant Participation contact details:  
01395 517453 or email [tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk)

The tenant participation team and resident volunteers wish to thank the following groups for their invaluable comments, suggestions and support for the Strategy Review Consultation Exercise.

List of bodies consulted:

- ) Tenants Involvement Forum
- ) Joint Community Action Panel (JCAP)
- ) Repairs and Maintenance Group
- ) Tenant Scrutiny Panel
- ) Designated Tenant Complaint Panel
- ) Conference Committee
- ) Editorial Group
- ) Wider Consultation – Focus Groups
- ) Residents who attended training sessions
- ) All Tenant and Residents Associations
- ) Housing Staff

We want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you who took the time from your busy lives to make comments regarding our priorities and targets for 2019 - 2022.

The tenant participation team appreciates and values these contributions, which are geared towards ensuring equal access and satisfaction of resident involvement for all people.

Without all your support, co-operation and contributions we would not have been successful in developing the priorities and targets to such a high standard.

Thank you.

This strategy sets out our commitment to developing the range of ways and extent to which residents (by which we mean tenants and leaseholders) can become involved in the housing service. We constantly strive to develop and improve our services by involving our tenants.

The Resident Involvement Strategy is part of a suite of integrated housing documents that sit under the Regulatory Standards that registered providers of social housing must meet, which is regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards>).

The two main standards are: [Economic standards](#), [Consumer standards](#)

The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard – 2017 comes under the Consumer Standard and states the following:

**Consumer service, choice and complaints:**

Registered providers shall provide tenants with accessible, relevant and timely information about:

- a) how tenants can access services
- b) the standards of housing services their tenants can expect
- c) how they are performing against those standards
- d) the service choices available to tenants, including any additional costs that are relevant to specific choices
- e) progress of any repairs work
- f) how tenants can communicate with them and provide feedback
- g) the responsibilities of the tenant and provider
- h) arrangements for tenant involvement and scrutiny.
- i) Providers shall offer a range of ways for tenants to express a complaint and set out clear service standards for responding to complaints, including complaints about performance against the standards, and details of what to do if they are unhappy with the outcome of a complaint

**Involvement and empowerment:**

Registered providers shall support their tenants to develop and implement opportunities for involvement and empowerment, including by:

- a. supporting their tenants to exercise their Right to Manage or otherwise exercise housing management functions, where appropriate
- b. supporting the formation and activities of tenant panels or equivalent groups and responding in a constructive and timely manner to them
- c. the provision of timely and relevant performance information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in a form which registered providers seek to agree with their tenants. Such provision must include the publication of an annual report which should include information on repair and maintenance budgets
- d. providing support to tenants to build their capacity to be more effectively involved.

2.2.2 Registered providers shall consult with tenants on the scope of local offers for service delivery. This shall include how performance will be monitored, reported to and scrutinised by tenants and arrangements for reviewing these on a periodic basis.

4

2.2.3 Where registered providers are proposing a change in landlord for one or more of their tenants or a significant change in their management arrangements, they shall consult with affected tenants in a fair, timely, appropriate and effective manner. Registered providers shall set out the proposals clearly and in an appropriate amount of detail and shall set out any actual or potential advantages and disadvantages (including costs) to tenants in the immediate and longer term. Registered providers must be able to demonstrate to affected tenants how they have taken the outcome of the consultation into account when reaching a decision.

2.2.4 Registered providers shall consult tenants at least once every three years on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the organisation's housing management service.

**Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants:**

Registered providers shall demonstrate how they respond to tenants' needs in the way they provide services and communicate with tenants

**East Devon District Council Resident  
Involvement Strategy**

When we use 'resident' we mean East Devon District Council tenants and leaseholders.

## Section 1

### 1.1 Introduction

This section explains:

- ) Why we have this strategy
- ) the Housing Service's Tenant Involvement Vision
- ) why residents are involved
- ) our involvement principles
- ) who our partners are

This strategy is produced in two versions; a plain language short brochure for all residents, and this detailed resource package for people who are, or who intend to become, involved.

Residents and officers have worked together to write the Resident Involvement Strategy which contains our strategy as well as an action plan for us to monitor together going forward, to make sure contents of the strategy are achieved.

Homes England, under the Regularity Framework, requires landlords to involve residents and has established standards for involvement. Also see 1.4

The information contained within this pack is built on a determination to work well and to make improvements together, to build mutual respect and a better future for housing and communities. A new structure for resident involvement is being implemented focusing involvement opportunities on achieving outcomes and improvement in service delivery.

The structure is aligned to the national regulatory framework standards and continues to provide an opportunity for information sharing and challenge at a variety of levels, including in depth reviews by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel.

More residents are involved in more activities than ever before, and we are determined to continue making progress as we plan to continue trying new

involvement methods, while keeping the elements of the current structure that are working well to help residents influence and shape services. Plans will be actively monitored and targets regularly reviewed. These will develop, becoming better and more ambitious over time.

### 1.2 The Housing Service believes customers' ideas make a difference

The Housing Service's way of working involves putting customers at the forefront of all we do. We currently offer residents a range of engagement opportunities for consultation, participation and involvement, along with details of our governance arrangements.

These standards for engagement are detailed in appendix 1.

We want to provide the kind of service that customers really need, but we can only achieve this with the help of residents and leaseholders living on council estates, who know better than anyone, the type of improvements needed in their homes and on their estates.

Before decisions are taken and changes are made, we need to know what people think. As a council resident or leaseholder, your opinions will be sought on a number of issues, in a variety of ways, and you may see that your good ideas make a positive difference. We will keep you informed with articles in our Housing Matters magazine which you receive three times a year and is on the East Devon District Council's website.

Our main objective remains to continue to improve landlord services for our residents. The plan for achieving this includes:

- ) giving everyone the chance to have a say
- ) seeing stronger, supportive, more connected communities through involvement
- ) working together to be sure the best service is provided

- working together to ensure services continue to improve, are effective and efficient.

### 1.3 Why do we involve you?

Our vision for the service is to deliver the best local authority Housing Service. We will achieve this by putting customers first and foremost.

Obtaining the views of residents and is vital in helping us to gain a better understanding of changing needs and aspirations leading to a constant improvement of services.

By involving people at whatever level they choose, there are many benefits for the Housing Service, residents and leaseholders. These benefits include:

- increasing customer satisfaction
- having policies and procedures that are fit for purpose
- continuous improvement in service delivery
- creating sustainable communities
- having a role in decision making, helping people gain a better understanding, why some changes are gradual and some happen overnight.

### 1.4 The Tenant Empowerment Programme

The Homes England's Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2012 on the following link: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/homesengland](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/homesengland)

### 1.5 Our eight involvement principles

#### 1. Open information

Residents will receive regular magazines. They will also have, on request, access to information on all housing matters. We want people to have the information they need to give fully informed views on the service they receive.

#### 2. Residents will decide their own depth and degree of involvement

The housing service would like to see residents involved at all levels, and in everything we do. But what residents get involved in will be up to them.

#### 3. Everything in housing is open to influence

The council has certain statutory legal duties and, occasionally, things will be confidential. Beyond this, if something is of interest, residents can get involved. There are no topics or services that are off limits.

#### 4. Involvement is everyone's business

While the council has a specialist tenant participation team, all sections and staff in the housing service have important roles to play in our partnership with residents.

#### 5. Early enough influence

We aim to start **talking together before issues have been decided**. Members of the Service Review Groups and Focus Groups will have the opportunity to influence issues at the earliest stage, before any formal decisions are made.

#### 6. Getting everyone involved

We want everyone to have a chance to take part and will take steps to encourage people who are not properly represented amongst our current volunteers.

We want to remove barriers which can slow or prevent the participation of young people, young families, gay/lesbian couples, trans-gender, members of black or minority ethnic and faith communities, people with disabilities or with caring responsibilities.

#### 7. Demonstrating that everyone's views have been taken into account and providing feedback

Local people need to know what happens next. We will provide feedback verbally, digitally, by letter or email and sometimes via newsletters. It is impossible to please everyone all of the time, but we will provide the outcome of consultations making sure recognition is given to groups/panels for their achievements.

**8. Planning for successful involvement – and keeping the plans on track**

Residents and the Housing Service will make and monitor joint plans. We want involvement to have a positive impact. Volunteers must feel their time and efforts are usefully spent.

## Section 2

### 2.1 Opportunities for Involvement - Ways of Getting Involved

In this agreement when 'we' is used, our meaning is usually the Housing Service and residents, working together.

Any council resident or leaseholder living on council estates can get involved.

#### 2.1.1. Ways of being involved

Getting involved can mean going to regular meetings, or becoming a committee member.

Many people find this method of involvement too formal or simply do not have the time or commitment for it. These options involve meetings with differing degrees of formality, but we will offer digital options **as well** for those who prefer them. They are straightforward ways and means of getting your views heard and making sure they are taken into account.

We want to make your involvement easy, not create obstacles. We want you to be able to be involved at times that are suitable to you and are developing more opportunities, including by digital on our website and social media, thereby providing you with 24 hour access.

#### 2.1.2. Our invitation to all residents to become involved

There is a 'menu' of involvement opportunities - different ways in which residents can, and do, influence and shape the Housing Service and make it better.

You can become involved by:

- ) reading the letters we write to you
- ) reading the regular articles in Housing Matters magazine
- ) visiting our website [www.eastdevon.gov.uk](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk)
- ) looking at our Facebook site by clicking on the link on our website, or searching East Devon Housing on

your Facebook page: EDDC tenant participation

- ) reading or commenting on our Twitter feed: EDDC home & people
- ) making a suggestion
- ) taking part in telephone surveys
- ) filling in questionnaires and consultations via traditional methods and online
- ) coming to events and one off focus groups
- ) attending the Housing Review Board meetings held in public
- ) inspecting your neighbourhood
- ) coming to the residents' promotional events
- ) working with a local Tenants' and Residents' Association
- ) attending training courses
- ) coming to other housing-related meetings
- ) working with other voluntary agencies with a housing interest
- ) using the resident portal, email or via our website at [tenantparticipation@eastdevn.gov.uk](mailto:tenantparticipation@eastdevn.gov.uk)

....simply telling us what you think.

#### We will always listen

#### 2.1.3. Promoting the involvement message

This is an important message and an important part of our strategy is to ensure it is communicated effectively by:

- ) digital means: for example website and social media
- ) distributing copies of the Involvement Strategy brochure to every resident, and making copies available in all offices and community centres
- ) giving new residents information about involvement and its importance, when taking up their tenancies
- ) reinforcing the message in our publicity and promotions
- ) continuing to promote our message to all staff
- ) engaging with East Devon District Council's diverse communities. To

help with this, we promote our message to agencies which work with all sections of the community in the district.

## **2.2. The parts of the service residents can become involved in**

Examples of the housing services are listed on the following table and are open to resident involvement.

Some are already being shaped by residents' views.

Section 2.5 provides more information about some of the opportunities available. Suggestions of who will be involved and digital/consultation options are not exhaustive.

How you can get involved	Structures for involvement (for council residents, leaseholders and where applicable, other local residents)		
	Who will be involved	Digital Options	Consultation Options
Anti-social behaviour policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Estate Management Officers</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> JCAP (Joint Community Action Panel)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing Review Board (HRB)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Development Workers (CDWs)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Police</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social Services</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mobile Support Officers</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agencies</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Texts</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Website</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Facebook</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Twitter</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meetings</li> </ul> <p>leave a lot to be desired</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> JCAP</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policies</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leaders</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Impact Assessment</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neighbourhood consultation, some affected more than others, listen to those affected</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Letters</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Magazine</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation (open days/face to face)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Questionnaires</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Need new group</li> </ul>
Management of local housing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residents</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HRB</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> JCAP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Texts</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Website</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Twitter</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meetings</li> </ul> <p>leave a lot to be desired</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Magazine</li> </ul>	Feedback forums
Policies and procedures for repairs and maintenance, rent collection and rent arrears, empty homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service Review Group (SRG)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residents</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HRB</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus Group</li> </ul>	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meeting with SRG's.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encourage residents to report problems early.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encourage residents to use Whistle Blowing policy if they suspect cheating.</li> </ul>
Tenancy management and sustainability issues, tenancy agreements and conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SRG</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residents</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HRB</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TSP</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus Group</li> </ul>	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meetings – take on board residents' opinions/views &amp; experiences.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Formalise resident meetings (minutes &amp; voting)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">HRB</p>

Housing benefits, debt prevention and recovery procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) SRG</li> <li>) Rental team</li> <li>) Benefits team</li> <li>) Senior staff</li> <li>) HRB</li> <li>) Focus Group</li> </ul>	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Meetings</li> <li>) Cause and effect of debt in magazine (article)</li> <li>) Identify possible problem residents</li> </ul>
---	---	----------	---

How you can get involved	Structures for involvement (for council residents, leaseholders and where applicable, other local residents)		
	Who will be involved	Digital Options	Consultation Options
Leaseholder issues and charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Property &amp; Assets team</li> <li>) Leaseholders</li> <li>) Finance team</li> <li>) HRB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Magazine</li> <li>) Email</li> <li>) Website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Set up consultation with leaseholders</li> </ul>
Supported housing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) JCAP</li> <li>) Home Safeguard</li> <li>) Mobile Support Officers</li> <li>) HRB</li> </ul>	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Meeting with all groups. Listen to residents affected. MSO's</li> </ul>
Housing services and performance strategies, including Best Value or continuous improvement, and arrangements for monitoring and reviewing performance, addressing shortcomings and remedial action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Strategic Lead</li> <li>) HRB</li> <li>) SRGs</li> <li>) Regular focus group</li> <li>) Staff</li> <li>) JCAP</li> <li>) Focus Group</li> <li>) TSP</li> <li>) External agencies</li> <li>) Service Lead</li> <li>) Residents</li> </ul>	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Meeting</li> <li>) Monitor Performance</li> <li>) Collection of data throughout the year.</li> <li>) Collection of data to highlight shortcomings</li> <li>) Other residents</li> <li>) Resident Inv. Action Group</li> <li>) Resident lead group</li> <li>) Ask residents what they think – magazine survey (data collection)</li> </ul>

Commented [BA1]:

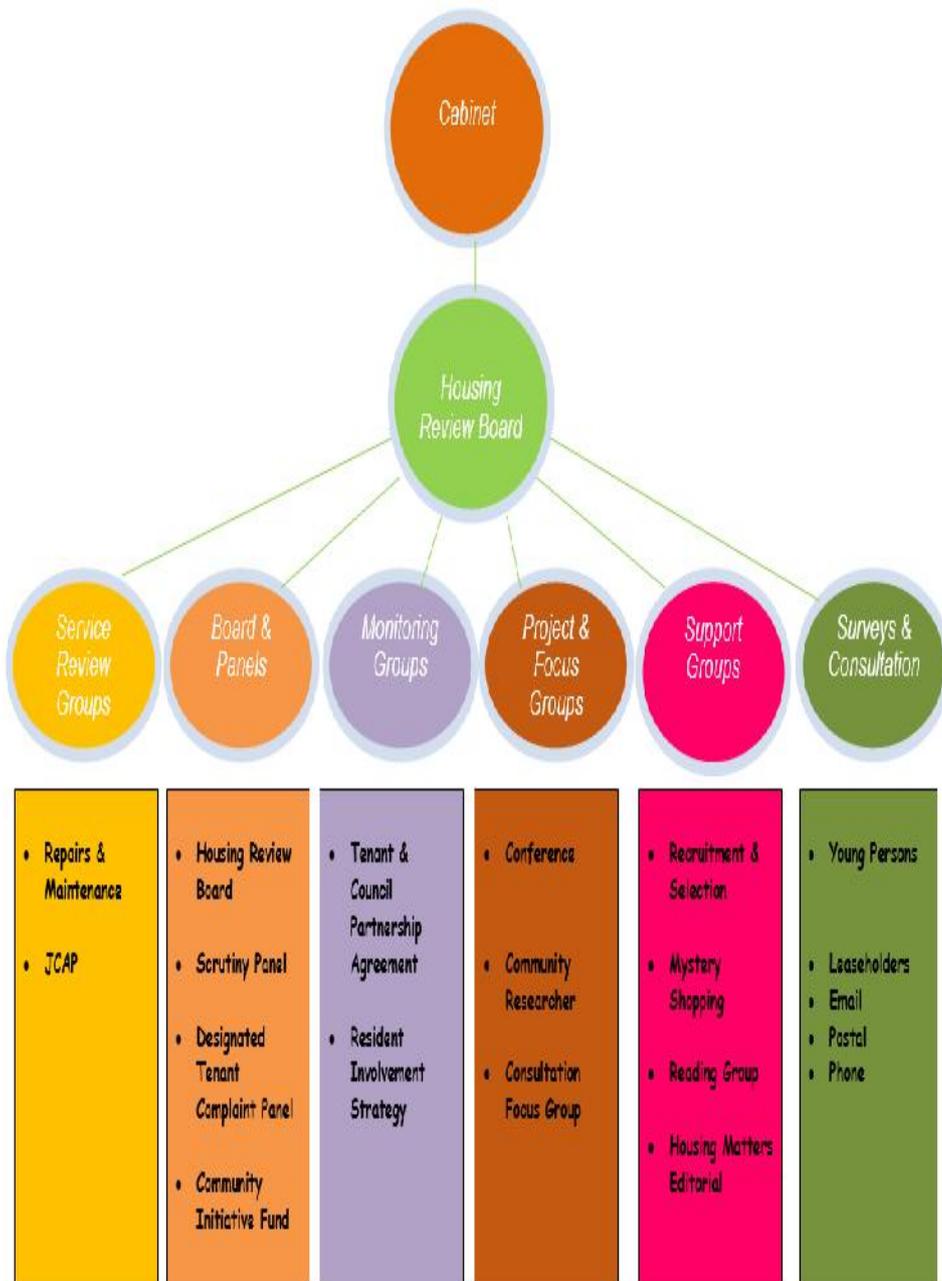
Setting, monitoring and reviewing services, performance standards and targets for housing management services. Ground maintenance, and cleaning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Strategic Lead</li> <li>) SRG/forum</li> <li>) Streetscene</li> <li>) HRB</li> <li>) JCAP</li> <li>) Scrutiny</li> <li>) Focus Group</li> </ul>	Mystery Shoppers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Need new SRG to cover Streetscene</li> <li>) Collection of data throughout the year.</li> <li>Collection of data to highlight shortcomings</li> </ul>
Developing the council's housing policy and strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Tenant Scrutiny Panel</li> <li>) Focus Group</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Projects and focus groups</li> </ul>

How you can get involved	Structures for involvement (for council residents, leaseholders and where applicable, other local residents)		
	Who will be involved	Digital Options	Consultation Options
Drawing up and appraising options for housing investments and improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) JCAP</li> <li>) SRG's</li> <li>) Focus Group</li> </ul>	Repairs SRG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Tenants &amp; Residents Associations (TRAs)</li> </ul>
Drawing up the council's capital and renovation programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) HRB</li> <li>) TAFFS (Task &amp; Finish Forum set by HRB)</li> <li>) Repairs SRG</li> <li>) Focus Group</li> </ul>	Repairs SRG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) With other involved groups</li> <li>) SRG's</li> <li>) Feedback forms</li> </ul>
Developing and implementing regeneration and improvement programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) HRB</li> <li>) Residents</li> <li>) Staff</li> <li>) SRG's</li> <li>) Focus Group</li> <li>) External (Grenfell recommendations to be implemented)</li> </ul>	Repairs SRG  Digital Portal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Specific groups</li> <li>) Questionnaires</li> <li>) Consultation with residents – choice of products</li> <li>) TRAs consultation &amp; choices</li> </ul>
Budgets and finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) HRB</li> <li>) Focus Group</li> <li>) HRA</li> </ul>	Digital forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Budget Group</li> <li>) Focus Group</li> </ul>
Allocations and lettings policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) HRB</li> <li>) SRG's</li> <li>) Rental team</li> <li>) Focus Group</li> </ul>	Portal  Bidding process online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) DTCP</li> <li>) Homeless people</li> </ul>
Proposals to contract housing services to other providers including through partnering contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) SRG's</li> <li>) HRB</li> <li>) Local residents</li> <li>) Focus Group – as new repairs contract</li> </ul>	Focus groups online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Other groups</li> <li>) General needs &amp; sheltered</li> <li>) New resident group</li> <li>) Question contractors – commitment to standards</li> </ul>

Commented [BA2]:

How you can get involved	Structures for involvement (for council residents, leaseholders and where applicable, other local residents)		
	Who will be involved	Digital Options	Consultation Options
Neighbourhood issues which affect residents' homes or the management of housing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) JCAP</li> <li>) Local residents</li> <li>) HRB</li> <li>) Agency involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website</li> <li>Facebook forum</li> <li>Twitter hashtag</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Need new group</li> <li>) Questionnaires</li> <li>) Face to face</li> <li>) Meetings with local residents</li> </ul>
Customer care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) SRG's</li> <li>) All staff</li> <li>) Residents</li> <li>) Every group</li> <li>) Everybody</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Website</li> <li>) Social media</li> <li>) E forum &amp; surveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Meeting &amp; consultation with managers</li> <li>) Keeping standards high, meeting obligations</li> </ul>
Environmental works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Local residents</li> <li>) Estate management team</li> <li>) Local environment groups</li> <li>) JCAP</li> </ul>	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) JCAP</li> <li>) Focus Groups</li> </ul>
Arrangements for providing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) SRG proof reading of leaflets</li> <li>) TP focus group</li> <li>) TP team</li> </ul>	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Meeting SRG</li> </ul>
Arrangements for resident consultation, involvement and influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) TP</li> <li>) Make every effort to include residents</li> </ul>	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Make consultation easy to take part in and inform those involved of the outcome of the consultation</li> </ul>
Arrangements for complaints, comments and compliments with remedial action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) DTCP</li> <li>) TP</li> <li>) Focus Group</li> </ul>	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Housing Matters magazine</li> <li>) Continue to encourage complaints and be seen to act on them.</li> <li>) Encourage residents to comment on issues and pay compliments where earned</li> </ul>
Community Events, projects and social value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) SRG's</li> <li>) CDWs</li> <li>) Tenant Participation</li> </ul>	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) The events themselves</li> </ul>

### 2.3 Structure for resident involvement from consultation/review



## 2.4 Our structure for involvement

The previous diagram shows the current involvement structure, the groups available and the way they relate to local issues. As part of our regular monitoring and review, the diagram will be updated and modified from time to time in line with ideas brought forward by residents and staff.

Updates will be loaded onto the council's website for customers to download. They will also be available from the tenant participation team.

## 2.5 How the involvement structure works

### Time Commitment

This section helps give you an idea of the minimum time and commitment that an activity can take, and how much influence your involvement can have on services. Some of these activities can lead to a wider involvement and time commitment. This is however, optional. Activities are split into those that require a monthly commitment, quarterly commitment, those that happen once or twice a year and the last section includes activities where you choose how often you get involved.

Each activity has a key:

 Egg Timer - The more timers that appear, the more time the activity takes.

### 2.5.1 Designated Tenants Complaint Panel (DTCP)

This panel which tries to resolve resident complaints at a local level. The complaint panel also monitors formal complaints and makes suggestions on how to improve customer satisfaction. If a resident remains dissatisfied with the council's response following stages one and two of the formal complaints

procedure residents have the right to take their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman, and/or to the DTCP in the meantime. This group reports directly to the Housing Review Board.

### 2.5.2 Independent Tenant Scrutiny Panel

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel is independent of other parts of the involvement structure and has its own Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct. The Panel undertakes reviews to investigate areas of concern, take an unbiased view of services to drive up performance, and give advice and suggestions to influence standards and improve service delivery. This group make recommendations directly to the Housing Review Board.

### 2.5.3 Housing Review Board (HRB)

The board was set up in 2006 and consists of five councillors, five resident and leaseholder representatives and two independent community representatives. The board considers matters relating to our landlord and housing management functions. It advises our executive board on housing policy and operational practice where this affects residents and leaseholders. It monitors service delivery and promotes good practice. The Board meets at least 4 times a year, during the daytime, with other interim meetings also possible.

### 2.5.4 Joint Community Action Panel (JCAP)

Reviews the work of the Estate Management and the Housing Support Services. Takes part in estate visits to identify areas for improvement and reviews performance information. Produces a yearly plan of work for the group. They will consider value for money in these areas of the service. This review group is made up of both residents and

staff. Monitor work coming out of walkabouts.

### 2.5.5 Repairs and Maintenance Group



Reviews the work of the Property & Assets team including programmed work and the performance of the contractors. Be involved in the decision making process at the earliest opportunity, in the setting of the annual budgets to maintain value for money and identify areas for improvement. To be actively involved in the obtaining of goods (doors, kitchens, bathrooms etc.) and services and the choices available for all residents. This review group is made up of both residents and staff.

### 2.5.6 Editorial Group



The Housing Matters magazine is produced three times a year, which is sent out to residents and leaseholders. Residents, staff and councillors are asked to submit articles of interest to be included in the magazine. The magazines are put together and edited by an editorial panel made up of both residents and staff.

### 2.5.7 Conference Committee



Conference Committee organise a resident's conference once a year, open to all residents and leaseholders, which includes refreshments and a light lunch. Residents have an opportunity to meet staff and ask questions, take part in debates and share their views with managers.

Each year East Devon District Council residents hold a conference in a different area across the district. The committee are involved in finding the right venue, catering and subjects for the conference. The aim is to find the right formula to encourage more residents to come along.

If you have any ideas then we need you on this group.

### 2.5.8 Tenant Inspectors



Tenant Inspectors help monitor the quality of workmanship and standard of the service provided by our day to day repairs contractors and work alongside officers to ensure agreed standards are maintained.

### 2.5.9 Resident Involvement Strategy Monitoring Group



We have drawn up an agreement and strategy with our residents setting out our commitment to resident involvement with the Housing Service. This group will be constituted and will meet quarterly to monitor the strategy.

### 2.5.10 Join or start a tenants/residents association



A tenant/resident association is a group of people living in an area, block or street who have come together to take up issues of common concern in relation to their housing, community and general environment. As a resident living in your area you automatically qualify for membership.

The associations enable residents to have a say on housing and estate matters, to help towards building a friendly, caring community, to exercise choice in how services are delivered, and to find out more about how we work. Some of the projects tackled by associations include the landscaping of communal areas, securing a community meeting place, improving shared lighting, fundraising for a children's play area, and car parking problems.

### 2.5.11 Recruitment and Selection Panel



Be involved in recruiting new housing staff and acknowledge the resident perspective will help to recruit employees who are committed to customer focused services and resident involvement. Staff

19

and residents on the interview panels are considered equal members of the recruitment process and receive the same training.

### 2.5.12 Community Initiative Fund Panel



Residents who have a project or an idea that benefits the residents of East Devon District Council can apply for a grant from the Community Initiative Fund. Each application is passed to the Community Initiative Grant Panel to approve or refuse. The applications are posted or emailed to panel members so this can be done from your home.

### 2.5.13 Focus Groups



Why not volunteer a little of your time for one off focus groups. We would call on you from time to time to help us improve and refine aspects of our services.

### 2.5.14 Annual Garden Competition



Each year we organise a garden competition that is open to council residents. There are a number of categories (for example, best overall garden, children's garden, containers and hanging baskets) with prizes awarded for each one. The competition is advertised in the spring edition of the Housing Matters magazine. Judging usually takes place in July with a prize-giving ceremony in September.

### 2.5.15 Surveys



Sometimes we may contact residents to ask for their opinions of the Housing Service. It may be about the area or their

**So your views will, and do, make a difference.**

#### Interested?

If you want to register to be part of the Key Player database, ring 01395 517453 and ask to speak to a member of the tenant participation team or email [tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk)

homes. We may ask how the service has performed, or ask for ideas or views. Surveys are carried out digitally or by post, door to door, by telephone, at community events, online, via Facebook, Twitter or a survey link.

### 2.5.16 Key Player Database

The Key Player register is a database, or record, of everyone who is interested in being consulted, or wants to be involved in resident involvement in some way. All the Housing Service's residents or leaseholders are entitled to register. You choose the topics on which you want to comment and you choose how you want to be involved. You can choose which subjects you would like to be involved in from a list, on pages 11 to 13.

You can choose to be contacted about all of the above (and more), or just the one area that really interests you. The choice is yours. You can then decide how you would like to be consulted, from a range of options such as:

- ) questionnaires and digital or telephone surveys
- ) focus or working groups
- ) roadshows and events
- ) online or email surveys

You can choose to take part in one or more of the options available to you, by the Getting Involved form.

Residents who have registered on the Key Player Register will be contacted from time to time and asked for their views and opinions, regarding specific topics.

These views will be collated and will be passed on to project or focus groups to help the members of those groups make decisions.

### Section 3

#### 3.1 Involvement Priorities and Targets 2019 – 2022 Resident Involvement priorities following consultation

<b>PRIORITY 1</b>			
<b>Increase customer participation to support evolution of service provision</b>			
	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Target/s</b>	<b>How this is monitored/measured</b>
1.1	Ensure structures are in place to allow residents to monitor performance of the housing service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Resident involvement framework provides a menu of opportunities for involvement</li> <li>) Performance feedback through magazine and website</li> <li>) Agreed performance indicators at Project and Focus Groups</li> <li>) Groups to expand their knowledge by the use of wider consultations</li> <li>) Providing opportunities for volunteers to benchmark performance with other housing providers and seek out best practice</li> <li>) Provide an annual report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Number of service changes and reviews recorded</li> <li>) through resident involvement</li> <li>) Number of residents who provide feedback through a resident involvement opportunity</li> <li>) Housemark benching information presented annually to Housing Review Board and customer surveys</li> <li>) Annual report</li> <li>) Performance information available via the web and resident portal</li> <li>) Agree performance indicators for every group</li> </ul>
1.2	Ensure there are methods of involvement in place that allow residents to monitor the standard of estate management and safety in local communities	Develop with JCAP (add to their 12 month work plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Total number of walks and actions issued. Monitored JCAP.</li> <li>) Total number visits and satisfaction forms received/monitored and evaluation at the</li> </ul>
1.3	Resident recruitment to resident participation activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) 10 promotional activities per year</li> <li>) Information to be given on sign up for new residents</li> <li>) Information left after new tenancy visits at 6 weeks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) 100% Information to be given on sign up for new residents</li> <li>) 100% Information left after new resident visits at 6 weeks</li> </ul>
1.4	Provide support to Tenants' and Residents' Associations (TRAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Provide information to all TRAs of support available.</li> <li>) Provide all TRAs with an opportunity for an annual review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Number of TRAs accessing funding and support</li> <li>) Annual Resident Satisfaction Survey/impact assessments</li> </ul>

<b>PRIORITY 1</b>			
<b>Increase customer participation to support evolution of service provision</b>			
	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Target/s</b>	<b>How this is monitored/measured</b>
1.5	Ensure mechanisms are in place to feedback impact of resident involvement to active and non-active customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Annual Report</li> <li>) Articles in magazine</li> <li>) Residents' Conference 'Thank you' event</li> <li>) Feedback to be made through the following methods: rent statement, website, Twitter, Facebook or results of consultation published</li> <li>) Report to HRB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service Review Groups</li> <li>Focus Groups</li> </ul>

<b>PRIORITY 2</b>			
<b>Provide support to individual residents and Tenants' and Residents' Associations to give them the necessary skills, knowledge, information and resources to enable effective involvement</b>			
	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Target/s</b>	<b>How this is monitored/measured</b>
2.1	Provide support to individual Tenants' and Residents' Associations and all involved residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Undertake training needs analysis of involved Tenants' and Residents' Associations (TRAs) annually</li> <li>) Ensure that training is available to provide residents with Housing knowledge, legislation and policies and procedures</li> <li>) Assess all TRAs against the recognition criteria and where appropriate work with the committee to help them meet the criteria to enable them to access funding available</li> <li>) Provide training on Self Service Resident Portal and the new Councils website within local communities</li> <li>) Mandatory Training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Number of deliver capacity building training courses, to develop an individual's personal skills and knowledge when required</li> <li>) Number of opportunities to network with other providers to increase their awareness and learn from others</li> <li>) 100% of all TRAs wanting to access funding are enabled and supported to do so</li> <li>) Number of people signed up to self service</li> <li>) Opportunities through Ian Williams social value activities</li> <li>) Monitor service plan</li> </ul>

**PRIORITY 3**  
**Assess customer satisfaction, and seek feedback from a range of customers to ensure equality and diversity in all services.**

	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Target/s</b>	<b>How this is monitored/measured</b>
3.1	Address barriers to involvement, working with underrepresented groups	Identify and contact partnerships with other organisations to ensure representation	All consultation activities are, as far as reasonably possible, representative of the customer profile data  Equality Impact Assessments

**PRIORITY 4**  
**Monitor Resident Involvement Strategy 2019 – 2023**

	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Target/s</b>	<b>How this is monitored/measured</b>
4.1	Monitor Involvement Strategy to continue partnership and to meet regulatory requirements	Review annually with impact assessments and update actions  To improve standards	Final Involvement Strategy 2023 approved by all parties

## Appendix 1 - Standards for Involvement – How We Will Support You

**1.1. Standards for getting everyone involved** We want all council residents to have the opportunity to take part and will take steps to encourage involvement from groups which to date are underrepresented such as young families.

We want to remove any barriers that limit or prevent the participation of young people, young families, members of black minority ethnic and faith communities, people with disabilities or caring responsibilities.

Most reasonable travel and out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed on production of a receipt, for example, a bus ticket. We will organise road shows and attend events in the community, carry out door knocking campaigns and continue to develop digital access to our services.

The Housing Service will undertake equality impact assessments for all housing policies, functions and procedures. These will identify any adverse impact on minority groups and make sure that all our services are accessible.

To ensure this, we will monitor who is accessing our services and their satisfaction with the services they have received. We want our developing experience in implementing resident involvement to contribute to this.

### 1.2. Reaching out to everyone

These include:

- ) carrying out tenancy visits by housing staff
- ) using only accessible venues
- ) providing people with information in a format which meets their needs on request and if practical
- ) accessing people in their groups and communities
- ) reimbursing reasonable travel and out of pocket expenses on production of a receipt, in line with the expenses policy
- ) offering relevant training, including the commitment to involve everyone as one of our core standards for residents' groups
- ) offering meeting times when people can attend (meetings have traditionally been between Monday - Friday 9 - 5pm). For example, holding evening meetings or digital options.

We will promote a positive 'can-do' message. We will ask people what they need to help them to become involved and assure them that we will do all we can to provide it.

### 1.3. Improving accessibility

To ensure equality in involvement we will

- ) set targets for involvement of under-represented groups
- ) monitor levels of involvement and representation by all groups to aim for no group being significantly under-represented
- ) develop procedures to make sure that all resident groups are encouraged, able to participate, and are inclusive
- ) develop training options for residents, staff and others to raise awareness of equal opportunity issues in housing
- ) seek to open communication channels with different community groups, to encourage their active involvement.

#### 1.4. Standards for information

We will make sure we give our customers good quality, easy to understand information. This information may take many forms such as magazines, web pages, social media, personal discussion and explanation. The standards are explained in more detail below. Our standards for information on involvement will be adopted by all individuals or groups producing information for our customers. These include the tenant participation team, front line staff, other sections of the Housing Service and those resident groups which have an active role in providing information to residents.

#### 1.5. Our standards in detail

**Accessibility** - information should be openly available and actively promoted.

**Print size and clarity** – Where practical all document text will be laid out no smaller than a 12 point type.

Documents may be available in alternative formats on request and where practical.

**Expressed clearly** - information will be written in plain English, avoiding jargon, racist, sexist or other inappropriate language that enables the reader to understand the message the first time they read it.

**Appropriateness** - information will be accurate, relevant and timely. Tailored to our customers' needs.

#### 1.6. Examples of the type of information provided to residents

All council residents can receive information on the council's:

- ) housing strategies, policies and priorities
- ) housing investment options and plans
- ) arrangements for developing and implementing best value, including monitoring and reviewing performance and setting service standards and targets
- ) Equality and racial harassment policies

#### 1.7. Standards for providing information to active residents

Active residents will naturally receive more information relating to the subjects or areas in which they are involved.

These residents may be encouraged to share this information, where appropriate, with other residents across the district. The Housing Service will assist resident groups in providing information to their members. This may include copies of information, design support or guidance and encouraging participation in training where appropriate.

#### 1.8. Standards for residents' groups

Each year the tenant participation team will contact all groups to assess their progress and interests, to update and remind them about opportunities for involvement, and to explain the financial and other support available for groups.

At this point, their compliance with the standards for groups will be assessed. Only groups which comply with the standards for formally recognised resident groups will be eligible for annual support grant funding from the Housing Service.

The minimum standards are included below.

#### 1.9. Recognition of Tenants' and Residents' Associations – minimum standards required

- ) approved written constitution
- ) Equal Opportunities Policy
- ) annual elections to committee roles
- ) open financial records, to account for all money received from the Housing Revenue Account and any other public resources

- )] regular meetings (minimum: one Annual General Meeting (AGM), one public and four committee meetings)
- )] publicised activities
- )] membership clearly open to all living in the area they cover
- )] a demonstration that a group is meeting its aims and objectives (e.g. a copy of an end of year report, or publications, minutes of meetings and surveys etc.)
- )] invitation to the tenant participation team to any AGM or public meeting.

### 1.10. Assessing efficiency and value for money

In both planning involvement activities and in monitoring the budget, the tenant participation team will regularly question the cost and value of activities.

We will ask such questions as

- )] how could this have been done differently?
- )] could the same result have been achieved with fewer resources?
- )] could we do this better by using an external provider?
- )] how could we have increased the reach and impact of this activity?
- )] has it made a difference to the service we provide?
- )] how can we improve the effectiveness of this activity?

We aim to develop a better understanding of the costs and benefits when weighing up different types of involvement activity. This will help to identify what resources are needed to support resident involvement.

The Government lays down clear rules about how councils can and cannot spend their rent income.

Increasingly, estates are populated by a mix of tenures and both residents and leaseholders are now being consulted on issues beyond housing.

It is important to consider who supports the costs for involvement. Where it is a housing-related matter and for the benefit of residents, it should be funded from the HRA (Housing revenue Account).

For consultation on non-housing issues, other council budgets may be more appropriate. This is increasingly important as the council develops wider consultation and participation initiatives in relation to best value and community planning.

### 1.11. Resources which encourage involvement

For some considerable time, we have provided start up and support grants for resident groups, paid for training, networking, visits, conferences, and independent advice. We aim to target spending carefully to remove some of the barriers and the reluctance some people may feel about taking part.

We can help by:

- )] promptly reimbursing residents' reasonable travel and out of pocket expenses incurred in attending agreed activities
- )] making sure that disabled or vulnerable residents have a safe journey to and from events
- )] providing information in different formats when requested and where practicable.

### 1.12. Standards for effective meetings

Effective involvement requires clear communication and good feedback. We do all we can to ensure all meetings (whether of a residents' group, or between staff and residents) are as good for all participants as they can be.

We have established the following set of guidelines.  
Those meetings which are part of the involvement structure will always follow them.  
We also encourage others to adopt them.

#### **1.13. Effective involvement meetings should have**

- ) clear objectives
- ) a clear mandate, it needs to be clear what level of influence or decision making the meeting has
- ) friendly meetings with good conduct and be free from harassment
- ) meetings should be business-like and courteous
- ) a clear action plan to deal with matters arising
- ) arrangements for good quality and timely feedback to all those who took part.

Some examples of behaviour that may constitute harassment are (but not limited to):

- ) violence or threats of violence towards any person
- ) abusive, intimidating or insulting words or behaviour
- ) discrimination or harassment on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnicity, gender or gender identity, transgender status, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious belief or health, including HIV/aids status
- ) unreasonable persistent insistence on the individual's own viewpoint at times when the group and/or chair have responded/decided and are clearly ready to move on with the agenda/meeting
- ) behaviour which unreasonably undermines the views of/or information provided by other attendees at a meeting or serves to belittle or try to belittle any attendee.

#### **1.14. Involvement meetings should be**

- ) publicised effectively - using appropriate methods which can reach everyone
- ) publicised in good time
- ) held at suitable times
- ) held in accessible places
- ) properly chaired
- ) conducted in a fair and democratic way
- ) open to all residents.

#### **1.15. Standards for resolving disputes and disagreements**

Comments, compliments and complaints about the Housing Service are a welcome and productive part of our involvement arrangements.

Disputes and disagreements are costly and unproductive, and we will work to avoid them wherever possible.

This section describes the approach we will follow should disputes and disagreements occur.

Any shortcomings in the performance and delivery of this agreement will be dealt with at the earliest stage.

We want people to feel encouraged to comment or complain if they feel the spirit of this agreement is not being adhered to.

#### **1.16. Regular monitoring**

We receive feedback on involvement activities.

This will consider

- ) different approaches to resident participation

- ) what other housing organisations and residents are doing and achieving
- ) how our approach and performance compares
- ) how we can change our approach to make sure it remains effective and efficient
- ) ensure resident representatives and groups are playing an effective role and all parts of our structure achieving this
- ) appraising equality of opportunity and levels of involvement by all groups, including ethnic minorities
- ) ensure we are reaching everyone – and that our message is effective
- ) the impact of involvement activity at every level.

#### **1.17. Annual Monitoring**

Groups will provide an update on their impact and future plans.

Key information will be reported to all residents within the annual report.

#### **1.18. Monitoring the views and impact on all residents**

Every year we will conduct the standard resident satisfaction survey. In addition, we will conduct our own monitoring on satisfaction assessment after each activity to enable us to continue to improve.

#### **1.19. The views and experience of officers**

Many involvement activities consist of officers working alongside volunteers. Resident involvement is a partnership between volunteers, officers and Councillors. All ideas for improvements and enhancements will be considered by the relevant body.

## Appendix 2 - Support Information

### 2.1. Conditions of involvement in meetings and other involvement activities and enforcement

For meetings, and other activities, any actions undertaken under the following conditions will be transparent throughout the process, where confidentiality is not at risk. Prior to, during and following the meeting or activity, a volunteer must avoid:

#### (i) Discrimination

There will be no discrimination. People who attend meetings have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, age, sexuality, faith, or any other matter which causes people to be treated with injustice, nor will any discriminatory language be tolerated in discussions.

#### (ii) Conflicts of interest

Individual volunteers must disclose any interest, whether personal or on behalf of any group they represent, if they think it may affect or influence their approach to matters under discussion.

#### (iii) Relationship with other volunteers

Individual volunteers must:

- ] treat other volunteers with dignity and respect
- ] promote a friendly and harassment free environment for all.

#### (iv) Relationships with officers and contractor representatives

Individual volunteers must:

- ] treat all Council staff and contractor representatives with dignity and respect
- ] use the normal procedures for reporting repairs, complaints etc.
- ] not expect to receive more or less favourable treatment by staff because of their involvement with the Housing Service.
- ] not bring the authority or service into disrepute.

See section 4.5.1 for examples of harassment

#### (v) Confidentiality

Volunteers should respect the confidentiality of all individuals, whether present or not, and refrain from mentioning specific individual cases which may cause embarrassment or identification of an individual.

Resident volunteers, on occasion, may be provided with confidential information, for example, about the housing service and partner organisations. In such cases, they will be asked to sign confidentiality undertakings.

Any such information, provided to allow project/focus group to take place, must not be disclosed to anyone else.

#### (vi) Political affiliation

Individual volunteers may be affiliated to, or be members of, a political party but they cannot represent a political party in their role as a resident volunteer.

#### (vii) Capacity to participate

Volunteers cannot take part in any activities if they are under the influence of prescribed or other drugs, or alcohol, which may impair their capacity or endanger their own, or other people's safety.

(viii) Code of Conduct

Volunteers must agree to abide by the Code of Conduct for meetings and activities, failure to adhere to the Code of Conduct will follow the process detailed at 5.2.

(ix) Safeguarding and criminal offences

Consideration will be given to the level of involvement available to volunteers in relation to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children.

As administrators, the Council reserves the right to close a meeting/activity.

## 2.2. Code of Conduct for all involvement meetings and enforcement

A Code of Conduct is a set of ground rules which help ensure a meeting is run in an orderly and fair fashion.

All meetings and involvement activities, have agreed to adopt the Code of Conduct, which is available from the Tenant Participation team.

If the conditions for involvement are not met, and/or a complaint is received, the process shown at flowchart 1 will be followed.

A complaint can be made both verbally or written to a member of the Tenant Participation team.

Examples of penalties that may be imposed for breaking the Code of Conduct are as follows (this list is not exhaustive): -

- ) no action
- ) verbal warning
- ) written warning
- ) final warning
- ) suspension for length of time
- ) permanent exclusion
- ) referral to another agency.

If a volunteer does not follow the code of conduct, the Chair of the group concerned will issue a verbal warning. If there is a second breach, the Chair will give a written warning. If breaches continue, the Chair will suspend the meeting and the Chair and Vice Chair will decide whether to ask the volunteer to leave or terminate the meeting.

If a volunteer is expelled from a meeting or the meeting terminated due to their conduct, the Chair and Vice Chair will decide the next course of action. This may be either no action required or to follow the complaint process as identified within the code of conduct.

If a volunteer breaks the code of conduct at an activity or outside of a meeting, the supporting Housing Officer will issue warnings in line with the Code of Conduct and if

necessary terminate the activity. Following the activity, the issue will be escalated to the

<b>Minor</b>	<b>Major</b>
Banter	Abusive
Mischief (light-hearted causing disruption)	Discriminatory behaviour
Constant Interruptions during meetings	Harassment e.g. face to face, electronic etc.
Unnecessary gestures (visible irritation)	Bad language
Unwelcomed over familiarity	Assault
Poor personal hygiene	Threatening behaviour
Taking without permission i.e. milk cartons etc.	Victimisation
Behaviour aimed to disruption (not moving on)	Hazardous actions
Not sticking to the agenda (after repeated reminders).	Breaching confidentiality/data protection (when confidentiality agreed previously)
	Slander
	Unwelcomed physical contact
	Hijacking agenda for personal gain

Tenants & Communities Manager (or delegated officer).

If the Chair does not follow the Code of Conduct, the Chair will be given an opportunity to explain the reasons for their conduct. If there is a second breach the Vice Chair will give a formal warning. If breaches continue, the Vice Chair will suspend the meeting and will decide whether to ask the Chair to leave or terminate the meeting.

If the Chair is expelled from a meeting or the meeting terminated due to their conduct, the Vice Chair and the Tenant Participation Assistant will decide the next course of action. This may be either no action required or to follow the complaint process as identified within the Code of Conduct.

If the Chair is expelled, appropriate measures will be taken to fill any vacancies for that meeting only.

For minor breaches, the Tenants and Communities Manager will agree a suitable resolution with all relevant parties.

For major breaches, the Landlord Services Manager will deal with officer or any other party complaints against volunteer/s. They will authorise any sanctions following the investigation.

For examples of major/minor breaches please see table below (this list is not exhaustive).

Once a complaint has concluded the process shown at below, the complainant/accused may progress through the appeals process shown at flowchart 1.

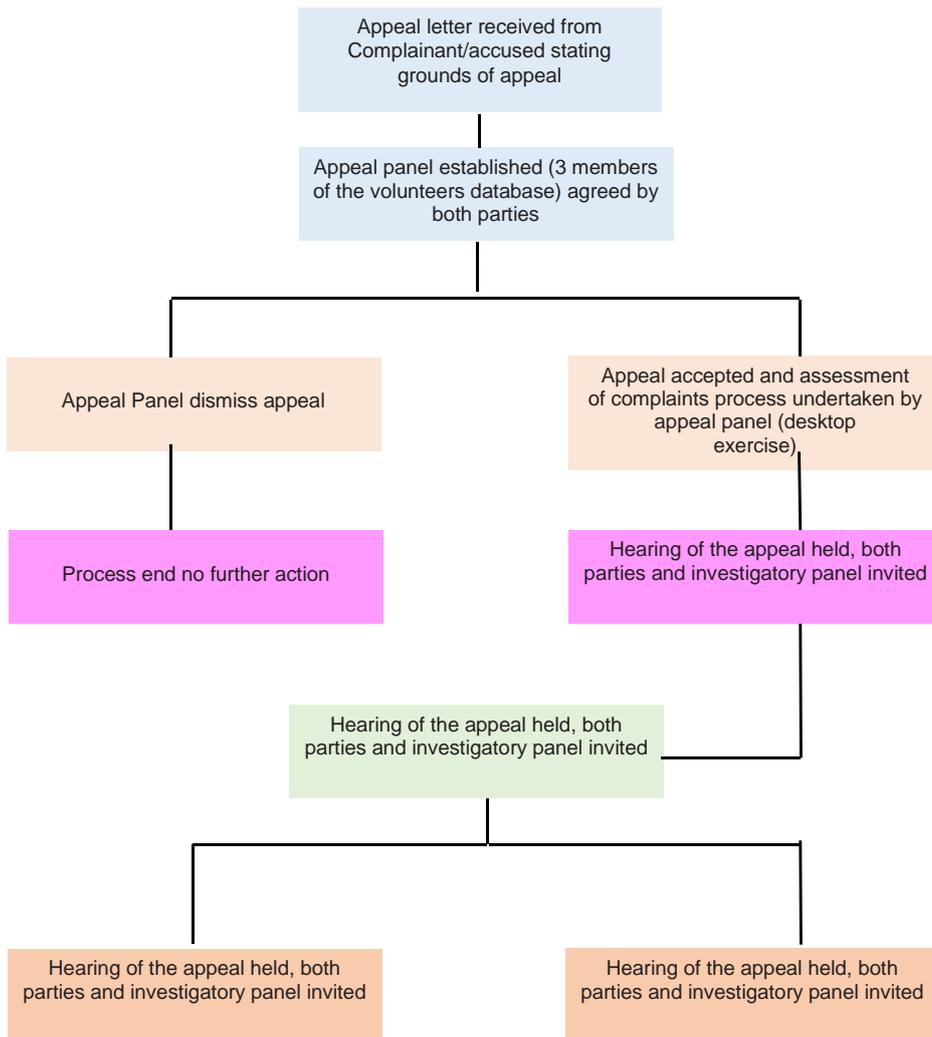
Upon conclusion of the appeals process, there will be no further right of appeal.

The complainant will not be informed of the details of any sanctions imposed where this would breach the data protection rights of the volunteer against whom the complaint was made.

The following timeframes are suggested for the process

	<b>Aim</b>	<b>How this is monitored/measured</b>
1.	Complaint received	Within five working days
2.	Tenants & Communities Manager (or delegated officer) to assess suitability of the process to deal with the complaint	
3.	Start of complaints process or refer to another agency	
4.	An independent investigatory panel established	
5.	Notification of complaint to be made to both accused and complainant	Within five working days
6.	Desktop exercise undertaken by panel members, to establish minor or major breach	
7.	Invite all parties involved to investigatory interviews.	DTCP to determine and advise timeframe based on nature of complaint
8.	Investigatory interviews held	
9.	Statement of investigatory interview to be circulated to all interviewees for amendments/signing as an accurate record five working days following the interview	
10.	Statements to be returned for final decision five working days from receipt	
11.	Final decision to be made to uphold/dismiss complaint within 15 working days of investigatory interview and letter sent to complainant and accused with decision made. Offer of appeal to be made which must reach the Tenants & Communities Manager (or delegated officer) within ten working days of receipt of the outcome letter	
12.	Appeal letter received	
13.	Letter of acknowledgement sent to both parties	Within five working days
14.	A specific Appeal Panel (consisting of three independent members of the volunteer database) will be established. These must be accepted by both parties and must not consist of initial investigatory panel members	
15.	Appeal panel to consider if suitable grounds to proceed with appeal	
16.	If appeal is dismissed, No further action	Panel to determine and advise timeframe
17.	Appeal accepted / appeal panel to undertake assessment of complaints process previously followed (desktop exercise)	
18.	Hearing of the appeal held interviewing both parties and the investigatory panel	
19.	Conclusion of the appeal to uphold/dismiss to be confirmed by letter	
20.	If appeal upheld, investigatory panel to reconsider decision	

Flowchart 1



### 2.3. The Housing Service's minimum standards for constitutions

For a residents' group or association to become recognised by the Housing service, its constitution must contain a number of key features. It will:

- ) guarantee the rights of members to voice their views and vote on issues which affect them
- ) protect the interests of members if the organisation runs into difficulties
- ) provide assurance that the group is open, democratic and responsible for the actions of its members.
- ) set out a commitment to equal opportunities
- ) detail how funding will be raised, how the funding can be used and its accountability.

The Housing Service can offer further advice and support to groups wishing to develop a constitution.

### 2.4. Training opportunities, new initiatives and the current programme

The Housing Service is committed to assessing training needs and providing training for members of groups, residents associations and individuals.

Training is also offered on issues relating to housing services, business planning and the strategic development of the Housing Service. Training provision is both in-house and via external providers, where appropriate. The training offered aims to provide residents and residents with the knowledge and skills to enable them to develop their involvement.

The cost of training will be met by the Housing Service, provided funds are available. Joint training with council officers and elected members will be provided where possible and appropriate.

#### Mandatory Training

All members will follow the East Devon Council policies and have completed the mandatory resident training programme once every 2 years, consisting of the following:

- ) Data Protection
- ) Equalities & Diversity
- ) Effective Meetings
- ) Safeguarding

Failure to attend any of the above courses will result in the resident leaving the group/panel until the training has been undertaken.

In addition to the above opportunities, individuals or groups can request specific training from the housing service at any time during the year. This can be done by contacting the Tenant Participation on 01395 517453 or email [tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk)

Training is open to individual residents and resident groups. An annual training budget is allocated from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

### 2.5. Course availability

The Tenant Participation Assistant will evaluate and prioritise training in line with the budget available and on how many residents request training for that subject.

Availability of courses is always subject to resources.

The tenant participation team will keep groups informed of training opportunities. This information will also be provided through articles in the magazine sent out annually in April, August and December.

Previous courses have included:

- ) equalities awareness - a course for all resident groups committee members and involved residents
- ) chairing a meeting - basic skills on how to run effective meetings
- ) minute taking - basic skills on how to write minutes of meetings
- ) General Data Protection Regulations learning how to look after personal information
- ) Safeguarding
- ) Complaints Workshop
- ) First Aid and Food Hygiene

## **2.6. Resources for resident involvement 2019 – 2022**

### **2.6.1. Budgets and other resources**

The budgets that support resident involvement can be found in the Housing Revenue Account (the budget which accounts for all spending paid for by residents' rents).

The highest spending at present is the cost of salaries for the staff who support resident involvement followed by the Housing Matters magazine.

As the Housing Service has adopted a culture of resident involvement, all housing staff have an important role in making resident involvement work.

### **2.6.2. Resident expenses**

If you are attending a prearranged meeting by the Housing Service, payment will be made to cover out of pocket expenses for mileage at the current rates are 45 pence per mile plus 5 pence per mile per passenger. All claims should be made at the end of each month, or if this is not possible the claims must be made within 3 months of the first event.

A lunch allowance is available in the amount of £6 per person, if a resident is attending a full day meeting and where a free lunch is not provided.

All claim forms must be completed and signed. Electronic signatures are acceptable. We cannot accept details over the phone. Mileage claims are verified by using the AA route planner online website.

Housing Review Board members have their expenses paid through the Council's payroll system.

For more information contact the tenant participation team on 01395 517453 or email [tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk)

The resident expenses policy is reviewed annually by the Tenants and Communities Manager.

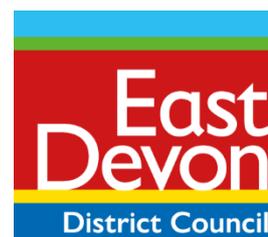
### **2.6.3. Funding levels for recognised resident groups**

Recognised tenant and resident associations are entitled to apply for the following grants:

- ) one-off start up grants (£100)
- ) annual funding grants (£100 to £250)\*\*
- ) additional support grants using the Community Initiative Fund application form.

\*\*Copy of association annual bank accounts are required.

Application forms for grant funding are available from the tenant participation team.



# East Devon Public Health Strategic Plan

***2019 - 2023***

***Improving health and  
wellbeing for residents and  
communities across  
East Devon***

# Contents

<b>Public Health Strategy: at a glance</b> .....	3
<b>1 Executive Summary</b> .....	4
<b>2 Introduction</b> .....	6
<b>What we mean by public health</b> .....	6
<b>Context</b> .....	7
<b>Financial position</b> .....	8
<b>Our district</b> .....	8
<b>Our partners</b> .....	9
<b>Engagement</b> .....	9
<b>How our strategies and plans fit together</b> .....	10
<b>3 What we have already done: some highlights</b> .....	11
<b>4 Our aims and priorities</b> .....	13
<b>5 How we will do our work</b> .....	14
<b>6 Playing to our strengths</b> .....	15
<b>7 Monitoring and feedback</b> .....	16
<b>Appendix 1: Council service plans that support health and wellbeing, 2018/19</b> .....	17
<b>Appendix 2: maps of our priority communities</b> .....	20



Exmouth Parkrun © LED

***East Devon – an outstanding place***

# Public Health Strategy: at a glance

## Why does public health matter to us?

Most people want to be in better health. People are living longer, but often in poorer health

We believe we have an overarching responsibility to consider health and wellbeing in all our council activities

## Our strategic aims

To help more people be and stay healthy, to enhance self-care and community resilience, and to integrate and improve support for people in their homes

## How we will meet our aims

Identify health and wellbeing priorities in each annual service plan  
Encourage officers, members and partners to help determine what is important to people  
Continue to build strong community partnerships  
Plan for healthy communities  
Ensure our outstanding environment contributes to health and wellbeing  
Ensure sufficient resources to reduce inequalities and achieve greater health and wellbeing  
Support East Devon's communities and residents in making it a healthier place  
Seek and respond to new opportunities  
Embrace technologies for sharing health messages.

Develop annual implementation plans with SMART objectives in all council services.  
Monitor progress.  
Report and publish progress annually.

## Our priority activities

### Where we will focus

Exmouth ~~Littleham~~  
Exmouth Town Centre  
Exmouth Withycombe -  
Raleigh Moorfields Rd  
Honiton Dowell Street  
area near High Street  
Cranbrook

### What we will focus on

Physical activity	Dementia
Diet and nutrition	Long-term conditions
Smoking	Frailty and falls
Alcohol	Housing and homelessness
Mental health	Indoor environment factors
Loneliness; social isolation	

# 1 Executive Summary

## OUR VISION

*“An outstanding place”*

*Making a positive difference to the health and wellbeing of residents and communities*

*Most people want to be in better health*

*People are living longer, but often in poorer health*

### What we mean by public health

Public health is the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organised efforts of society. Throughout our Strategic Plan ‘public health’ is used to cover physical and mental health and wellbeing of everyone in our district.

### Why public health matters to us

Most people want to be in better health. Although people are living longer, many are often in poorer health. We believe we have an overarching responsibility to consider health and wellbeing in all our council activities. Everything we do aims to ensure that East Devon is a place where people want to live, work, visit and enjoy life, focusing on where there is greatest need.

### Our strategic aims

1. To help more people to be healthy and stay healthy
2. To enhance self-care and support community resilience
3. To integrate and improve support for people in their homes

### How we will approach our work, monitor progress and feed back

To approach our aims we will:

- Tackle environmental and social conditions to promote good health
- Encourage healthier behaviour so fewer people become ill
- Address loss of independence
- Promote wellbeing and self-care.

To achieve our aims we will:

- Identify health and wellbeing priorities in each annual service plan such that a golden thread runs throughout council actions
- Encourage officers, members and partners to help determine what is important to people
- Continue to build strong community partnerships, maximising partnership-working at a strategic level, ensuring clarity of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities
- Plan for healthy communities in all developments
- Adopt a health-in-all-policies approach.

- Ensure that our outstanding environment contributes to health and wellbeing
- Ensure there are sufficient resources to reduce inequalities and achieve greater health and wellbeing across East Devon
- Support East Devon’s communities and residents in making it a healthier place
- Seek and respond to new opportunities such as MECC [making every contact count] and social prescribing activities
- Embrace technologies such as web and social media for sharing health messages.

To monitor and ensure our work is accountable we will:

- Develop annual implementation plans with SMART objectives based on activities across all council services
- Deliver a steering group of officers who will monitor progress
- Report and publish progress by each service against their SMART objectives annually.

#### **Our priorities: what activities will we focus on?**

- Physical activity
- Diet and nutrition
- Smoking
- Alcohol use; alcohol-specific admissions in under 18s
- Mental health – children, young people, adults; including self-harm
- Loneliness; social isolation
- Dementia
- Long-term conditions
- Frailty and falls
- Housing and homelessness
- Indoor environment factors.

We will prioritise those local activities which we are most able to influence.

#### **Our priorities: which communities will we focus on?**

We will work across the district, with particular focus in:

- Exmouth Littleham
- Exmouth Town Centre
- Exmouth Withycombe - Raleigh Moorfields Road
- Honiton Dowell Street/Northcott Lane area near High Street
- Cranbrook.

***Challenging  
but realistic***

***Systems  
thinking to  
emphasise  
prevention***

#### ***SMART***

***S Specific  
M Measurable  
A Achievable  
R Realistic  
T Timed***

***Planning for  
healthy  
communities***

***Building  
community  
resourceful-  
ness***

***Information  
and  
signposting***

## 2 Introduction

Everything we do aims to ensure that East Devon is a place where people want to live, work, visit and enjoy life. We believe we have an overarching responsibility to consider health and wellbeing in all our activities.

As leaders we have scope to influence our population's health and wellbeing. We work together with other organisations and with local people to create an outstanding community, economy and environment for East Devon, now and for future generations.

In this section we:

- Set the context for our strategic plan and explain what public health is
- Summarise our district
- Identify partners and engagement activities
- Show where public health fits in the context of council activities
- Give a flavour of public health activities already achieved.

## What we mean by public health

Public health is the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organised efforts of society.

The term 'public health' is used to cover physical and mental health and wellbeing of everyone in our district throughout our strategic plan.

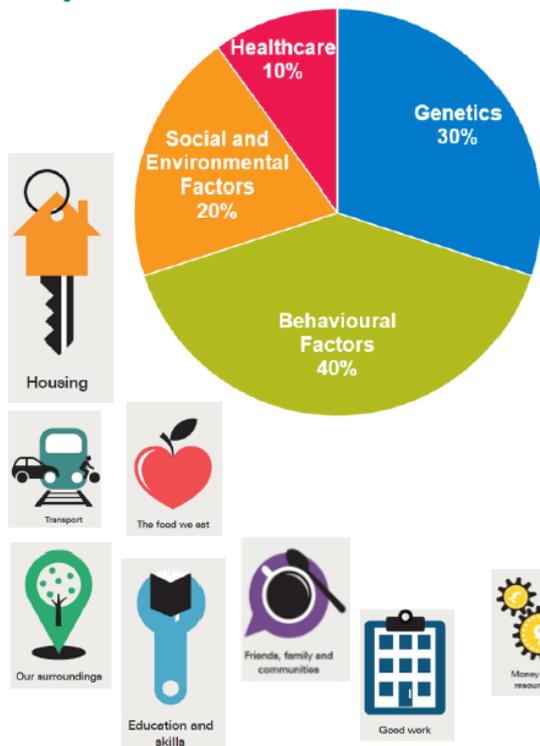
Public health activities include:

- Assessing the health of populations
- Formulating policies to prevent or manage health problems and significant disease conditions
- Promoting healthy environments
- Societal action to invest in health-promoting living conditions.

Genetics and healthcare together have only 40% impact on the risk of morbidity and mortality. Behavioural, social and environmental factors have a 60% impact on those risks. Housing, transport, diet, surroundings, education and skills, friends / family / community, employment, money and resources can all be modified.

Almost half of the burden of illness in the UK is associated with four unhealthy behaviours: smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, poor diet and low levels of physical activity.

## Impact of Different Factors on risk of morbidity and mortality



### In Devon:

- 2.7% are frail and it is estimated to rise to 3.9% by 2038
- Most areas of the county have significantly higher levels of frailty compared to national average (1.9%)
- 1 in 3 people live with one or more long term conditions

### Opportunities

- Detection and prevention to address risk factors at an early stage to reduce ill health and burden on health and social care services

Source: Schroeder, SA (2007). 'We Can Do Better – Improving the Health of the American People'. New England Journal of Medicine. 357: 1221-8 (cited in Public Health England Strategic Plan, 2016-2020)



## Context

This strategic plan updates our [Public Health Plan 2014/17](#). We reflect national, regional and local priorities. Our priorities support those of Public Health England, Devon County Council, and Devon's STP alongside East Devon's own priorities.

We use information such as [JSNA \[joint strategic needs assessment\] data](#) collated by Devon County Council's public health intelligence team to understand and highlight local priority issues and communities.

Our strategic plan will be updated as required to reflect changing priorities as needed.

## EVIDENCE

We use evidence to understand the lives of individuals, communities and the resources they can access.

# Financial position

The period covered by this plan will be challenging for public services and communities. Councils are facing tough and complex pressures. The public health grant for England was cut by almost 10% (£531m) from 2015/16 to 2019/20. Cuts in funding, rising demand for services and challenges in economic growth all need to be managed.

East Devon is no different from other local authorities. We will continue to face financial pressures as funding from central government reduces and demands for services increase. In this context we will prioritise local public health activities which we are able to influence.

## Our district

East Devon's catchment area covers 314 square miles, and serves a resident population of nearly 140,000 [JSNA 2018] plus numerous summer visitors. There are dispersed rural communities and several towns including the new town of Cranbrook. 15.9 % of East Devon's population have no car.

Affordability of homes is an issue. East Devon is in the top 25% of local authority areas for house prices but one of the lowest nationally in terms of wages. Adults in lower-income households were more likely to report acute sickness than higher-income households [Health Survey For England (HSE) 2015]

### Key facts:

- East Devon's population has an older age structure than England.
- Residents' average age is 50.3 years (national average is 40 years).
- East Devon has the highest age profile in Devon, with the largest percentage of those aged 65+ at 30.6%.
- The percentage of those aged 85+ years or more in East Devon is 4.8% and in Sidmouth the figure is 7.6% compared with 2.3% for England. This proportion is expected to increase as the 'baby boomer' generation gets older and people choose to retire here.
- Depression, social isolation and loneliness are concerns, as well as more complex physical health issues developing with age. An ageing population impacts on housing requirements, the labour market and economic growth in addition to healthcare-provision.
- With an increasingly ageing population the number of paid and unpaid carers is expected to increase. Caring can have a negative impact on the carer's physical and mental health alongside reduced income, and for young carers it can also impact on education.
- There are pockets of social and economic deprivation particularly in areas of Exmouth and Honiton. Shorter life expectancy is seen across Devon in deprived areas and areas with a high concentration of care homes. It is also lower in certain groups including Gypsies and Travellers, the homeless and persons with moderate or severe learning disabilities [JSNA].
- Averages mask variations within the district. Between 2012-16 average life expectancy at birth for the population across Exmouth ranged from 77.3 years [Exmouth Town: Central, Exeter Road East (Madeira Villas area)] to 92.8 years [Exmouth Brixington: Dinan Way and Bystock Road area]. This is a difference of 15.5 years across Exmouth.

## Our partners

We recognise that we cannot achieve all of our aspirations alone and that the work requires close partnerships. We will work to strengthen these, by aligning and sharing knowledge, skills and resources to achieve the population health outcomes to which we aspire.

We will maximise partnership working at a strategic level to identify priorities, extend reach, align resources most effectively and avoid duplication.

Some of our partners include:

- Devon County Council
- Action East Devon
- NHS providers and commissioners
- Police
- DSFRS
- Active Devon / Sport England
- LED Leisure
- HALFF
- Headlight [formerly The Project]
- Schools
- WEB Board, Honiton Health Matters
- Exeter City Council
- Teignbridge, Mid Devon and other districts
- Devon Wildlife Trust
- Devon Local Nature Partnership
- Many more voluntary and community groups.

**Supporting and expanding programmes which enable communities to help themselves**

**A Asset  
B Based  
C Community  
D Development**

## Engagement

We will help people to live healthier and happier lives in their communities by:

- Strengthening town- level, community-led initiatives by helping to align voluntary sector resources for health and wellbeing and building social support networks
- Enabling local communities to find their own solutions.

# How our strategies and plans fit together

Our Public Health Strategic Plan supports our [Council Plan 2016-20](#) and [Transformation Strategy](#). Priorities and outcomes set out in the council plan are:

Encouraging communities to be outstanding

- More good quality, local homes for local people
- Balanced communities for a sustainable future

Developing an outstanding local economy

- Greater investment and economic growth into East Devon

Delivering and promoting our outstanding environment

- Abundant leisure opportunities and quality open spaces
- Protection and enhancement of our natural and built environment

Continuously improving to be an outstanding council

- A culture that promotes continuous improvement, innovation, commercial thinking and new ways of working.
- A council that prioritises keeping our residents informed.

**Outstanding  
Communities  
Economy  
Environment  
Council**

The Public Health Strategic Plan supports others of our strategies and plans, including Housing, Homelessness, Mental health, and Planning policies such as health impact assessment work.

Health and wellbeing priorities appear in annual service plans such that a golden thread runs throughout council actions. Health and wellbeing activities already identified in service plans for 18/19 are summarised in [Appendix 1](#).

# 3 What we have already done: some highlights

Annual reviews of each previous year's progress towards the Public Health Strategy are submitted annually to SMT and to Cabinet. We are particularly proud that we successfully led the bid for Cranbrook to gain a place on NHS England's national Healthy New Town programme and retained second-year funding. [Annual reviews are published on the health and wellbeing page](#) of the council's website.



**Clockwise from top left:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1: One Small Step roll-out                | 4: Sugar Smart roll-out                 |
| 2: Campfire cooking with Countryside team | 5: Countryside volunteers               |
| 3: Exmouth's Passivhaus                   | 6: Health information skills, Cranbrook |



**onesmallstep**  
to a healthier you

**Making Every Contact Count**



Sign up for the free MECC (Making Every Contact Count) training.

Complete the form to register.

**Training Outline:**

- A behavioural change programme which is aimed encouraging frontline staff to make the most of the opportunities and contacts with people, in order to positively impact on their health and wellbeing
- Provides and enhances skills of frontline staff, to deliver health improving conversations, and empowering people to make positive steps towards behavioural change
- Competence and confidence to deliver healthy lifestyle messages, to help encourage people to change their behaviour and to direct them to local services that can support them

MECC training promotional poster, One Small Step

## Ways 2 Wellbeing



You have been referred to the Ways2Wellbeing scheme to meet with a health and wellbeing coach.

**Take 5 Steps To A Better Wellbeing:**



**Give**  
Your time,  
your words,  
your presence



**Connect**  
Be there,  
Feel connected



**Take notice**  
Remember this,  
simple things  
that give you joy



**Be Active**  
Do what you can,  
Enjoy what you do,  
Move your mood



**Keep Learning**  
Embrace new  
experiences,  
See opportunities

**Clockwise from top left:**

- 1: Cranbrook's tooth-brushing club
- 2: Dementia friendly walk, Honiton
- 3: Painting for Parkinson's; Thelma Hulbert

- 4: Social prescribing pilot – Ways2Wellbeing
- 5: MECC training roll-out
- 6: Exmouth Parkrun

# 4 Our aims and priorities

## Challenging but realistic

### Systems thinking across our services

Our ambition is to be an outstanding council which works together with local people to create great value services and an outstanding community, economy and environment for East Devon, now and for future generations.

Our strategic plan aims to be challenging but realistic. We will need systems thinking across all services as we deliver services in new and innovative ways.

## Strategic aims

1. To help more people to be and stay healthy
2. To enhance self-care and community resilience
3. To integrate and improve support for people in their own homes.

To approach our aims we will:

- Tackle the environmental and social conditions to promote good health
- Encourage healthier behaviour so that fewer people become ill, and to help manage early illness to prevent progression
- Address loss of independence
- Promote wellbeing and self-care.

## Priority activities



Cranbrook country park © EDDC

### Which communities will we focus on?

We will work across the district, with particular focus in:

- Exmouth Littleham
- Exmouth Town Centre
- Exmouth Withycombe - Raleigh Moorfields Road
- Honiton Dowell Street/Northcott Lane area near High Street
- Cranbrook.

## What activities will we focus on?

- Physical activity
- Diet and nutrition
- Smoking
- Alcohol use; alcohol-specific admissions in under 18s
- Mental health – children, young people, adults; including self-harm
- Loneliness; social isolation
- Dementia
- Long-term conditions
- Frailty and falls
- Housing and homelessness
- Indoor environment factors.



For maps of our priority communities see [Appendix 2](#). We will prioritise those local activities which we are most able to influence.

# 5 How we will do our work

To achieve our strategic aims we will:

- Continue to monitor evidence to inform and update priorities e.g. by using JSNA data
- Identify health and wellbeing priorities in each annual service plan such that a golden thread runs throughout council actions
- Communicate to officers, members and residents so that all understand the vital part we each play in maximising our health outcomes
- Encourage officers, members and partners to help determine what is important to people
- Continue to build strong community partnerships, maximising partnership-working at a strategic level, ensuring clarity of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities
- Plan for healthy communities in all developments
- Adopt a health-in-all-policies approach
- Ensure that our outstanding environment contributes to health and wellbeing
- Ensure there are sufficient resources to reduce inequalities and achieve greater health and wellbeing for our residents and communities
- Support East Devon's communities and residents in making it a healthier place
- Seek and respond to new opportunities such as MECC [making every contact count] and social prescribing activities
- Embrace technologies such as web and social media for sharing health messages.

# 6 Playing to our strengths

East Devon is an outstanding place. Everything we do aims to ensure that East Devon is a place where people want to live, work, visit and enjoy life.

We are lucky that our district has such special green spaces and beautiful coastlines. We are committed to ensuring that this outstanding environment contributes to the health and wellbeing of our residents.

Prevention is better than cure: nature plays an important role in health and wellbeing. Our natural open spaces provide valuable opportunities for us to achieve many of our public health priorities, ranging from increasing levels of physical activity, to improved mental wellbeing and reducing social isolation. It offers us tangible opportunities to align with STP work and includes the potential for social prescribing.

We will work alongside Devon Wildlife Trust and others to meet our shared goal of a healthier, happier and greener future.

We will help to create and protect local networks of places that are good for wildlife and people, which together will form part of a national Nature Recovery Network. We will deliver this on our own land and encourage landowners to follow our example.

A healthier and richer natural environment has health and wellbeing benefits as well as supporting biodiversity. Nature Recovery Networks can be designed to bring additional benefits including greater public enjoyment, pollination, carbon capture, water quality improvement and flood management.

Our Planners will work with partners to ensure the joined-up thinking needed to create this Network and avoid social and environmental problems. Streetscene, our Countryside team, our Community Development Workers and others will involve our communities in delivering and deriving benefit from Nature Recovery Networks.



Canoe safari, © EDDC

# 7 Monitoring and feedback

To ensure our work is accountable, we will monitor, review and report progress annually:

- We will develop annual implementation plans based on activities stated in service plans
- Each annual plan will outline SMART actions to progress our strategic priorities. They will have outcome and evaluation measurements
- A Public Health Steering Group chaired by the Strategic Lead for Housing, Health and Environment and consisting of officers from each service will meet throughout each year to monitor progress
- An annual review of work will reflect on progress against services' objectives and report achievements along with any areas needing further work.

## SMART

<b>S</b>	<b>Specific</b>
<b>M</b>	<b>Measurable</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Achievable</b>
<b>R</b>	<b>Realistic</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>Timed</b>

---

*Author: Helen Wharam, Public Health Project Officer, November 2018*

***East Devon – an outstanding place***

# Appendix 1: Council service plans that support health and wellbeing, 2018/19

Each part of the council plays its part in a joined-up approach to service delivery supporting health and wellbeing.

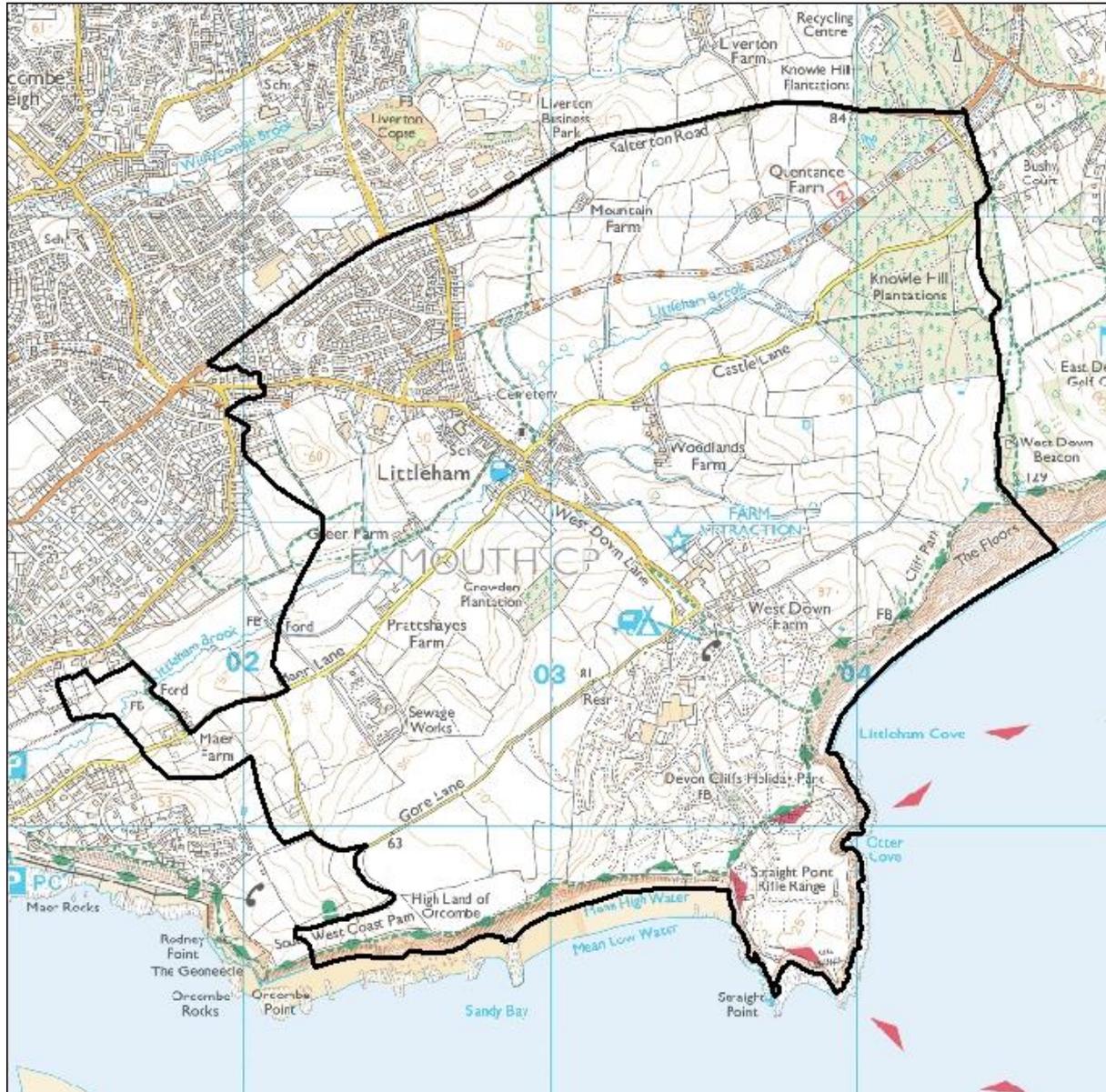
Service	Summary of types of role underpinning health and wellbeing
Countryside and Arts; Leisure East Devon [LED]	<p>This Service provides Nature Reserves, a programme of outdoor activities and supports the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. We encourage access to and use of the countryside, which contributes towards emotional wellbeing and physical activity. We also have a role in protecting trees and hedgerows across the district. Our corporate priority recognises that East Devon is an outstanding place and our Countryside Service attempts to ensure that residents and tourists benefit from the high quality environment in which we live, work and play.</p> <p>The service also has responsibility for the leisure client role working with the council's leisure provider LED and the local authority arts and culture offer. Leisure East Devon (LED) is the council's leisure trust established to provide sports and recreational facilities throughout the district. LED provides leisure facilities in most East Devon towns and outreach facilities for the rural parts of the district. LED programmes link with GPs and health professionals to deliver the exercise referral scheme PULSE and other condition-specific rehabilitation programmes.</p> <p>Many activities actively support health and wellbeing e.g. Countryside outreach work programme within targeted housing tenanted communities; community orchards; LED activities including GP referral scheme; provision of high quality &amp; accessible green space in line with the Green Space Plan 2016-26; support for volunteering, outdoor learning and public events programme; THG's outreach learning programme.</p>
Economy and Regeneration Services	<p>Deliver projects that further the economic growth and productivity of the district. Deliver regeneration outcomes by creating new facilities for people to visit or work in; transform places; facilitate business advice; create partnerships; attract inward investment; support new development through the planning process; help develop a skilled workforce. Deliver sustained local economic improvement and an improved return to EDDC. Prepare practical business support and regeneration developments that visibly deliver the council's environmental, cultural and countryside/coastal commitments.</p>
Environmental Health and community Safety	<p>The Environmental Health team work across a range of areas to influence decisions and to control a range of behaviours and environmental factors that affect the health and wellbeing of people in East Devon. The team plays a key part in maintaining and improving public health through its advice, regulation and enforcement roles. These include maintaining food hygiene in commercial premises, protecting employees' health and safety, monitoring air quality, correcting issues of poor sanitation. The Public Health Project Officer, based within this team, has an active health promotion role supporting people to make informed healthy living choices and ensuring implementation of this Public Health Strategy.</p>

	<p>Community safety covers the reduction in crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. East Devon has a community safety coordinator and supports a partnership of agencies, contributing to public health by sustaining an environment in which people can live happily and safely.</p>
Finance	<p>The Revenues and Benefits team offer means-tested financial support in respect of housing and council tax costs in accordance with prescribed legislation and a locally determined scheme.</p> <p>Toolkit for assisting those in crisis - referrals mechanism</p>
Governance and Licensing	<p>With responsibility for regulating temporary events, licensed premises, the sale of alcohol and overseeing the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles, decisions have a marked influence on public health.</p> <p>The Licensing team contribute to the welfare of residents and visitors and promote a vibrant and sustainable future by securing affordable housing (and other planning benefit) through planning and property transactions; supporting the Development Management function in securing the right development in the right place and taking effective enforcement action against unauthorised and harmful development; delivering licences and consents in accordance with Licensing and Gambling Policies and enforce where necessary; ensuring effective implementation of the new Street Trading regime.</p> <p>The Democratic Services team help Members make informed decisions and help Members to develop their skills and knowledge to better serve the community.</p>
Growth Point Team	<p>The Growth Point team works to ensure that growth is accommodated within East Devon's outstanding natural environmental and helps to realise positive environmental benefits. They deliver projects that further the economic growth and productivity of the district on behalf of the whole community.</p>
Housing	<p>The council's <a href="#">Housing Strategy</a> was refreshed in July 17, the vision being to provide a decent home for all residents of East Devon.</p> <p>The Housing team work towards having no homeless individuals or households; work with local communities especially in rural areas to provide more community led affordable housing; are increasing the range of digital technology and telecare devices to meet individuals' needs; improve housing standards within the private sector across the district; enable people to stay in their own homes for longer; work in partnership with support agencies and other groups to improve the lives of all residents across the district; organise events to build relationships with and earn the trust of residents living on our estates; work to make residents feel safer in their own communities; supporting Early Help and helping people into work; developing the SWITCH job club preparing more young people for work; promoting Community Orchards and tenants accessing the countryside; promoting and installing energy efficiency measures in council properties and the private sector.</p> <p>We aim to achieve a decent home for all. This involves preventing homelessness and improving housing conditions in the public and private sector. This may include resolving poor housing or nuisance issues, enforcing appropriate conditions if needed in houses of multiple occupation and converting empty homes back to use for those</p>

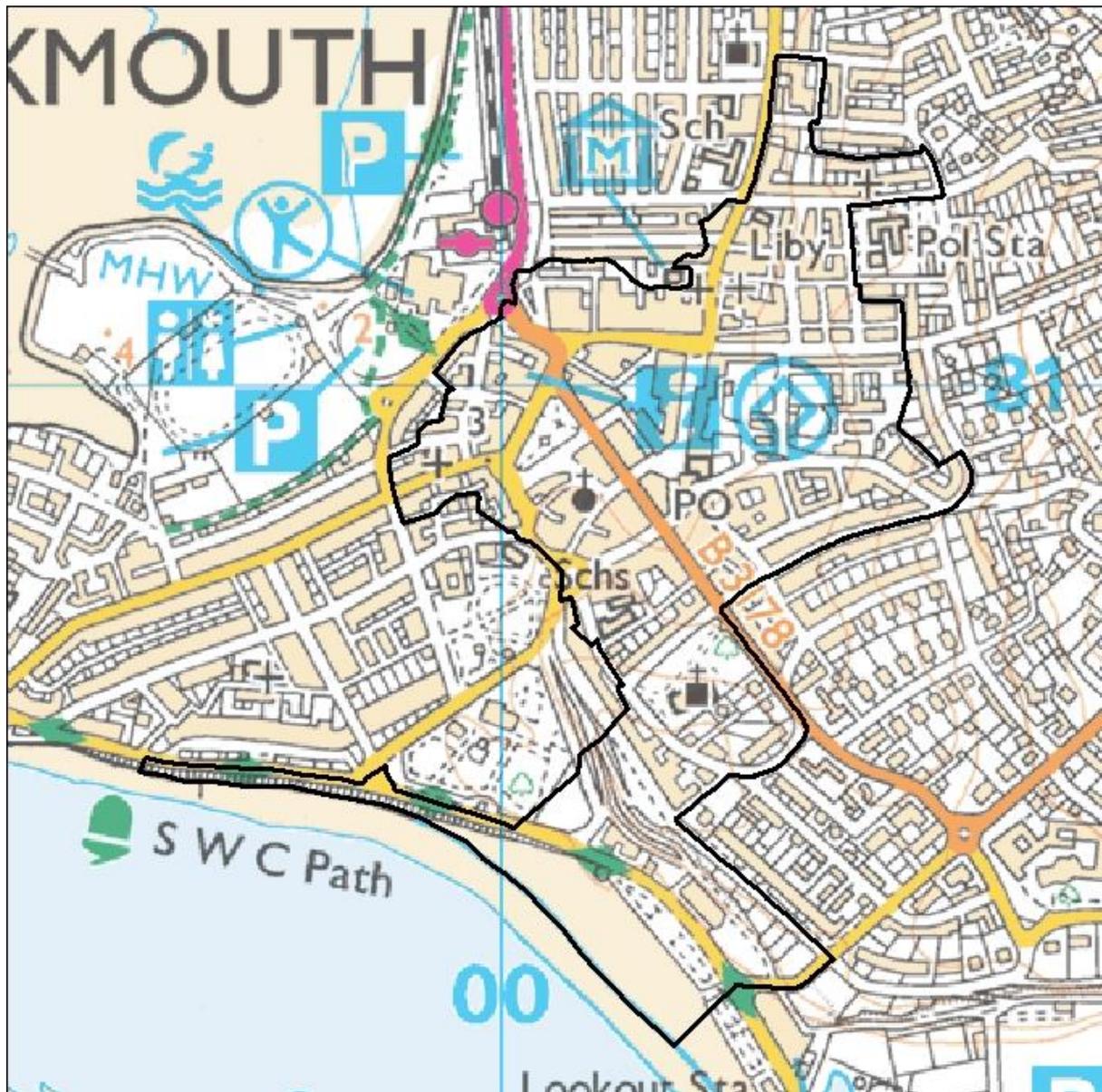
	<p>who need to somewhere to live or adaptation of a property to aid those living with disabilities. Our Housing Service also delivers community development initiatives which contribute towards the emotional wellbeing of residents and attempts to improve the quality of life in targeted communities. We operate a community alarm service called Home Safeguard with over 5,000 customers connected to our control centre providing 24/7 assistance.</p>
Organisational Development, Transformation and Equalities	<p>Activities and schemes supporting staff health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Ensuring due consideration of equalities across the district.</p>
Planning and Planning Policy Service	<p>Planning is a means to deliver good growth, thriving communities and environmental care. Development requires active intervention and stewardship. Planning in East Devon has a broader role that contributes to health and wellbeing. It delivers outcomes and can stimulate growth in a cared-for environment; it helps to create the places where people want to live, work, invest and visit; it can shape places and stimulate markets.</p> <p>Through its planning policy work, primarily the Local Plan, the council is able to consider the formulation of a range of policies to be taken into consideration when new development proposals come forward. The range and extent of these must be compatible with the national planning context, most particularly the National Planning Policy Framework, published by the government in March 2012. Policies can cover issues such as the provision of walking and cycling routes, access to community facilities and provision for children’s play and recreation for all ages. The council’s Local Plan ensures that adopted policies are into account in decision making with future development proposals.</p>
Streetscene	<p>This service is committed to creating and maintaining the outdoor environment to a high standard across the district. The Service manages a range of operations which have a positive effect on everyday healthy living including street cleansing, refuse collection, recycling, the reduction of waste, maintaining parks and open spaces and beach management.</p> <p>Staff develop a range of cultural events and engagement activities such as outdoor theatre, children’s education and outbound activities to link with the Countryside events brochure and give our communities varied opportunities to make the most of our outside spaces for culture and leisure, link with the health and wellbeing agenda to maximise opportunities for health in the environment.</p>

# Appendix 2: maps of our priority communities

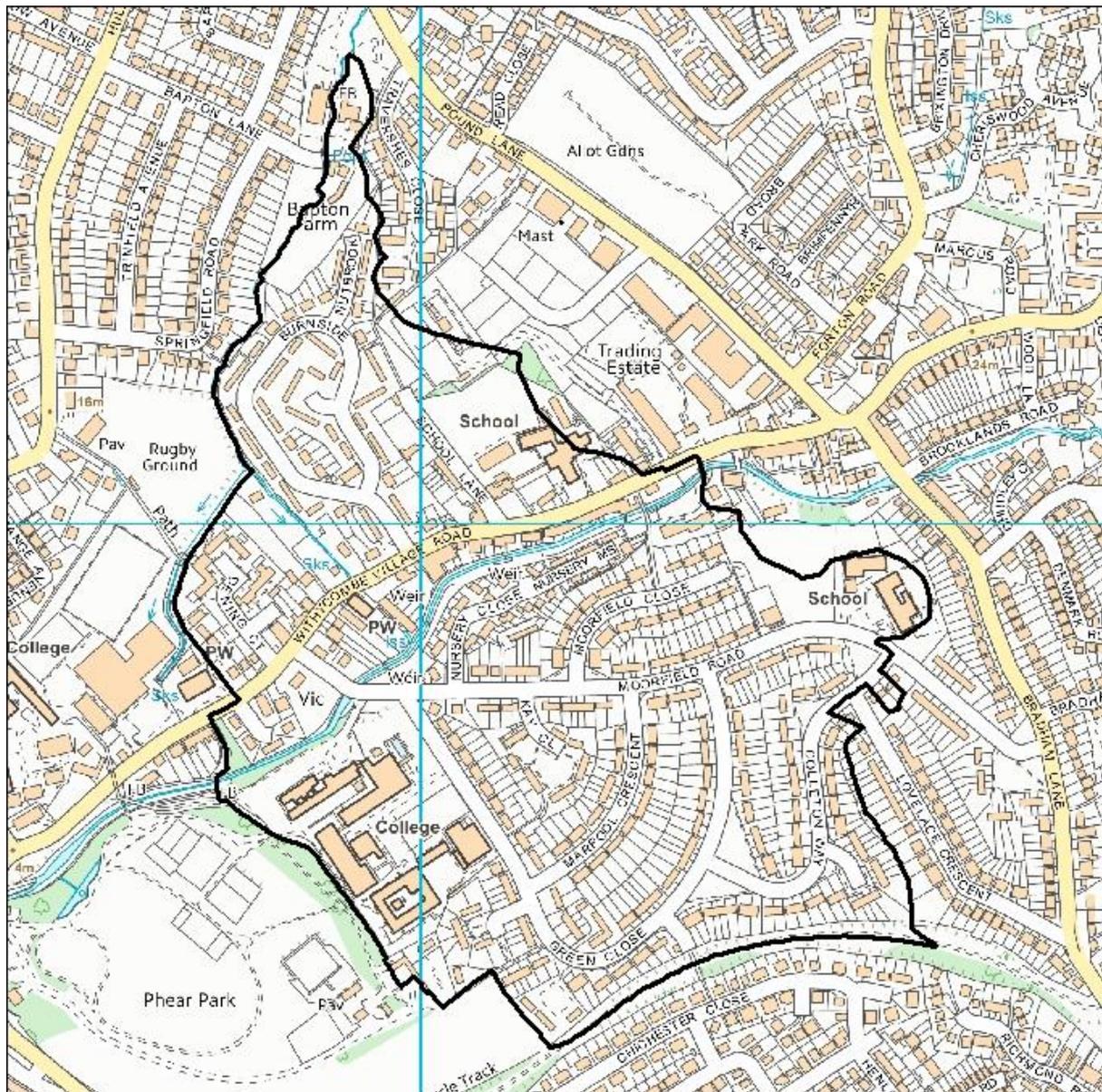
## 1. Area map for LSOA covering Exmouth - Littleham



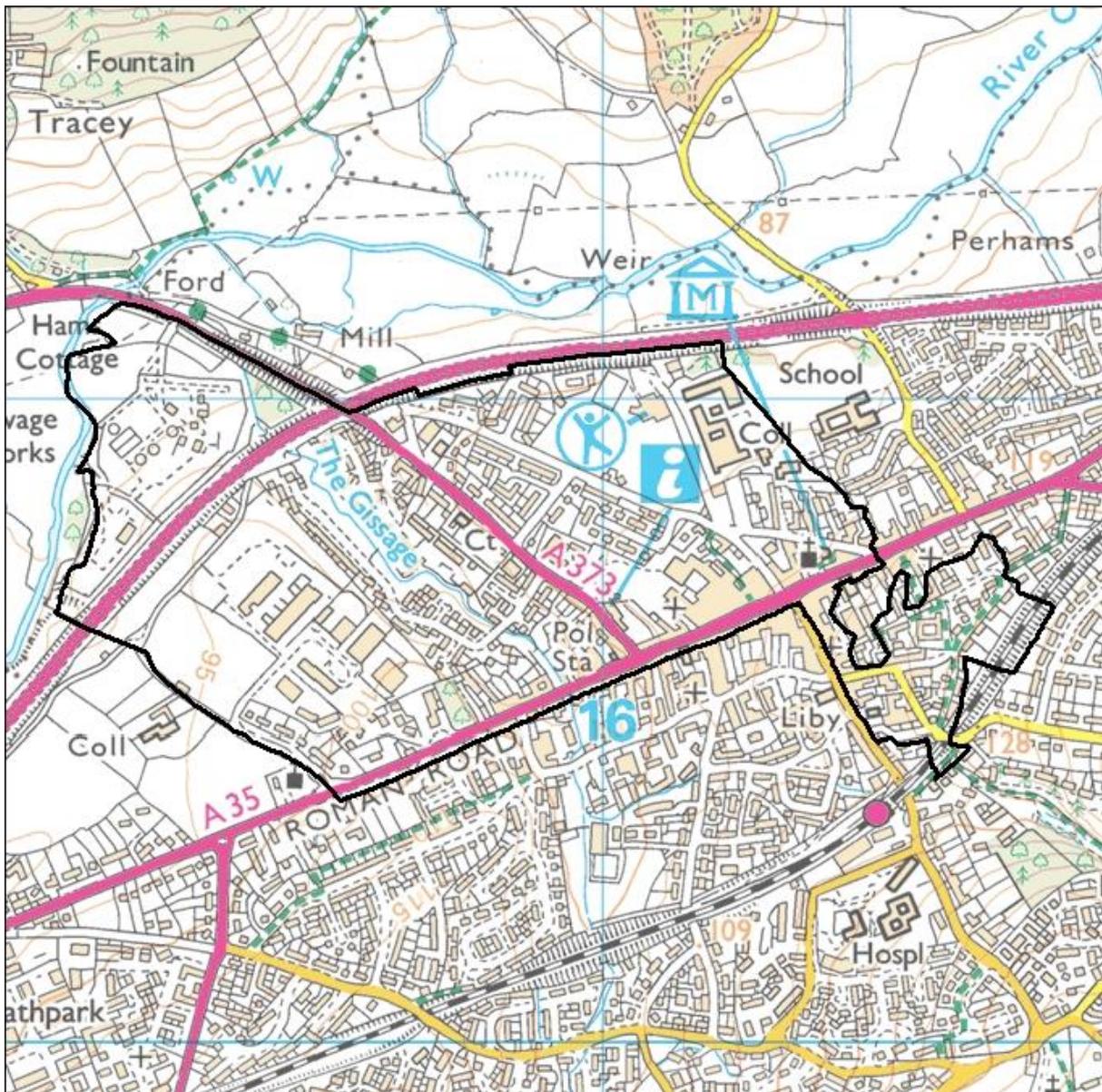
2. Area map for LSOA covering Exmouth - Town Centre area



### 3. Area map for LSOA covering Exmouth - Moorfield Road area



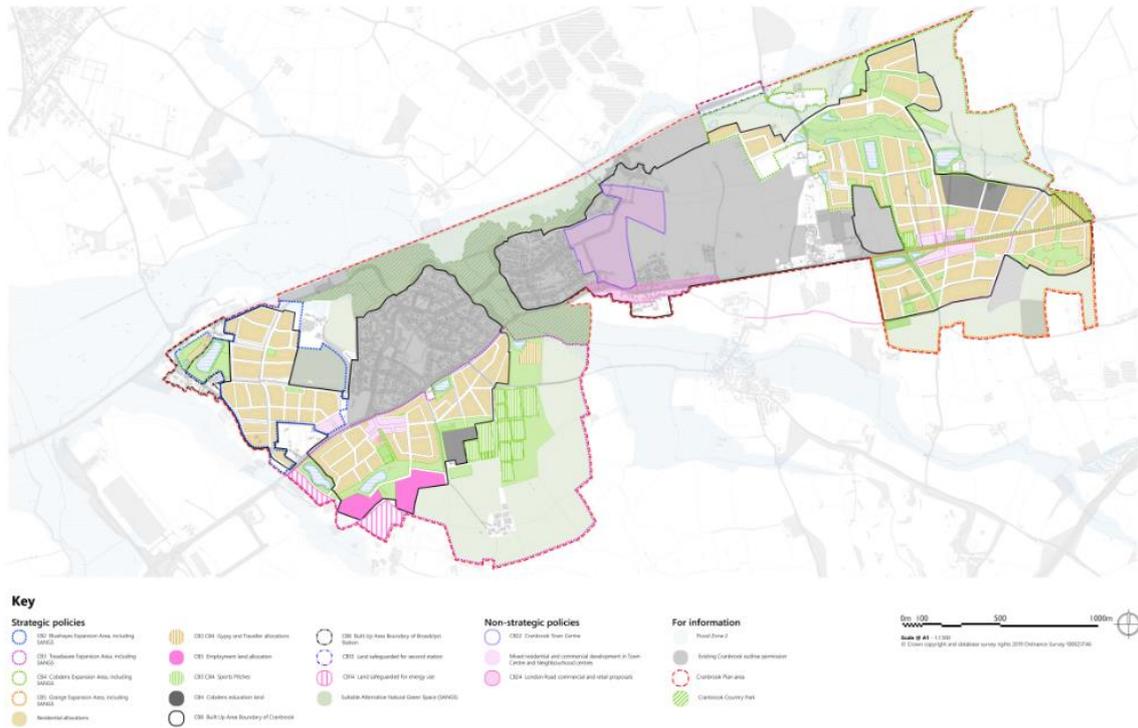
4. Area map for LSOA covering Honiton - Dowell Street/Northcott Lane area near High Street



*Maps 1 – 4 are from JSNA profile links 2018*

5. Cranbrook

**Cranbrook Plan - Master Plan**



EDDC Planning Department 2019



Aerial view of Cranbrook, 2018 © Still Imaging



19 July 2019

Dear CEO,

### Our Consumer Regulation Review 2018-19

I am writing to draw your attention to our [Consumer Regulation Review 2018-19](#) which is published today.

The Consumer Regulation Review provides a summary of the Regulator's consumer regulation work for the year 2018-19. It includes case studies to demonstrate our approach to consumer regulation, as well as key lessons we wish to share with the sector and explains our current role and mandate as set by Parliament.

The report focuses on the importance of social housing providers complying with all of the consumer standards, including how they engage with their tenants, how they respond to neighbourhood issues, and how they allocate their properties.

In terms of health and safety, the report reminds social housing providers about the importance of having effective systems in place to ensure the homes where their tenants live are safe. We are also urging all social housing providers to look at how accountable they are and how they are transparent with their tenants.

Most registered providers are well-run and can demonstrate they meet the expectations set out in the regulatory standards, but on occasions, issues do arise that represent a risk to tenants and where intervention by the regulator is required. We would encourage providers to review the lessons set out in the report, and consider what they can learn from these to ensure that tenants' homes are safe, of good quality and well-managed, and that they are accountable to tenants.

For that reason, I would ask that you bring this letter and the Consumer Regulation Review to the attention of your board or elected members.

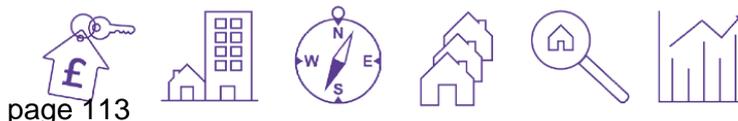
As ever, transparency with the Regulator is essential. Based on our co-regulatory approach, we would expect providers of social housing to notify the Regulator of any potential breaches of the consumer standards in a timely manner.

If it would be helpful to discuss this letter, or the Consumer Regulation Review itself, please let me know.

Yours sincerely

**Fiona MacGregor**  
Chief Executive

The address for service of any  
legal documents on RSH is:  
Level 1A, City Tower, Piccadilly Plaza,  
Manchester M1 4BT





Regulator of  
Social Housing

# Consumer Regulation Review 2018-19

July 2019



## Contents

1.	Executive summary .....	2
	Key messages from recent cases.....	2
2.	Introduction.....	3
	Our role .....	3
3.	Key themes arising from our casework.....	6
4.	How we carry out our consumer regulation .....	9
	How we handle referrals.....	10
5.	Consumer regulation and governance.....	12
6.	Local authorities' compliance with the consumer standards.....	16
7.	The Home Standard .....	18
	Fire safety.....	18
	Electrical safety .....	19
	Meeting all statutory health and safety requirements .....	21
8.	Responding when things go wrong .....	22
9.	The Tenancy Standard.....	24
10.	Neighbourhood and Community Standard .....	26
11.	The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard .....	28
12.	Annex A – Analysis of cases .....	31
	Referrals by stage .....	31
	Sources of referrals .....	34
13.	Cases referred to the Consumer Regulation Panel .....	36
14.	Annex B – How we carry out our consumer regulation.....	37
15.	Annex C – Summary of previous lessons learned.....	38

# 1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This Consumer Regulation Review sets out a summary of our consumer regulation work for the year 2018/19<sup>1</sup>. Most registered providers are well-run and meet the expectations set out in the regulatory standards<sup>2</sup>, but on occasions, issues do arise that represent a risk to tenants, and where intervention by the Regulator is required.
- 1.2 In this report we set out key messages as well as themes and learning points from recent consumer regulation cases. We also set out how we deliver our consumer regulation role based on our mandate and current legislation.

## Key messages from recent cases

- 1.3 All registered providers have an obligation to act to ensure the homes where their tenants live are safe. Providers must meet the full range of statutory health and safety obligations.
- 1.4 This requires registered providers to have robust reporting and assurance arrangements in place for effective oversight of compliance by boards and councillors.
- 1.5 Effective assurance relies on good quality data, and maintaining compliance requires effective systems.
- 1.6 Registered providers should understand, and be able to demonstrate compliance, across all aspects of the consumer standards, including how they engage with their tenants, how they deal with neighbourhood issues, and how they allocate their properties.
- 1.7 Delivering compliance with the consumer standards depends on good governance, and on an organisation's culture.
- 1.8 The quality of relationship with tenants underpins registered providers' ability to meet their objectives. The effectiveness of registered providers' complaints handling affects the level of trust and confidence tenants have in their landlord.
- 1.9 Transparency with the Regulator is essential. Co-regulation requires registered providers to be transparent with the regulator, and a failure to do so can indicate broader governance concerns.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Regulator was established on 1 October 2018 by the Legislative Reform (Regulator of Social Housing) (England) Order 2018, which amended the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. Prior to this, the regulation of social housing in England was the responsibility of the Regulation Committee of the Homes and Communities Agency (which uses the trading name Homes England in relation to its non-regulation functions).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards>

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1 This report provides a summary of the Regulator's consumer regulation work for the year 2018/19. It explains our current role and mandate, our approach to consumer regulation, how we apply the serious detriment test as well as key themes and lessons arising from our casework.
- 2.2 As Regulator, we have a duty to be transparent in our work and we are keen to share lessons from our work with the sector. In 2018/19, we published six regulatory notices where registered providers had failed to meet a consumer standard and had risked or caused serious detriment to tenants. This report reminds readers of the details of those six cases. It also includes a number of anonymised case studies where we did not find a breach of the consumer standards and serious detriment. These cases demonstrate how the Regulator considers a number of factors in reaching our decisions, and it is intended to provide valuable insight for registered providers and other stakeholders.

### Our role

- 2.3 As the Regulator of Social Housing, our aim is to promote a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector, able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs. The Regulator has both an economic objective and a consumer regulation objective, as set out in legislation.
- 2.4 The consumer regulation objective is intended to:
- support the provision of well-managed and appropriate quality housing,
  - ensure tenants are given an appropriate degree of choice and protection,
  - ensure tenants have the opportunity to be involved in the management of their homes and to hold their landlords to account,
  - encourage registered providers to contribute to the well-being of the areas in which their homes are situated.
- 2.5 To achieve this objective, the Regulator sets consumer standards. There are four consumer standards:
- Home
  - Neighbourhood and Community
  - Tenancy
  - Tenant Involvement and Empowerment

- 2.6 The standards are set out on our website<sup>3</sup>. We set these standards so that tenants, landlords and other audiences know the outcomes that are expected. Boards and councillors who govern registered providers' services are responsible for ensuring that their organisations meet the standards.
- 2.7 Consumer regulation for registered providers was fundamentally changed by the introduction of the Localism Act 2011 and subsequent directions. As a result, the Regulator does not currently have a mandate to proactively monitor providers' performance or routine compliance with the consumer standards.
- 2.8 The Regulator's ability to use its powers in relation to a provider failing to meet a consumer standard is subject to this legislation. This means that from April 2012, our role as Regulator is to investigate only where we have reasonable grounds to suspect there is actual or potential serious detriment to tenants as a result of a failure to meet one or more of our consumer standards. We are only able to use our powers where we judge both that there is evidence that a consumer standard has been breached and, as a result, there are reasonable grounds to suspect that:
- the failure has resulted in a serious detriment to the provider's tenants; or
  - there is a significant risk that, if no action is taken by the regulator, the failure will result in a serious detriment to the provider's tenants
- 2.9 The legislation specifies that the Regulator must exercise its functions in a way that minimises interference and is proportionate, consistent, transparent and accountable. We therefore take a proportionate approach to each case and in deciding whether a failing constitutes a breach of standards, focus on whether there is evidence of a systemic failing by a registered provider. When applying the serious detriment test we will balance the factors of the case including the number of tenants, the duration of the harm (or risk of harm) and the seriousness of the issue, as well as taking into account the diverse needs of tenants, in accordance with our duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.10 In each case, the Regulator will have regard to the consumer regulation objectives and will seek to balance the interests of the provider, its tenants, its key stakeholders and the impact on public funds when responding to the circumstances of each individual case.

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-standards>

- 2.11 Our approach to consumer regulation is reactive reflecting the role set out in legislation for the Regulator and our current mandate. We therefore respond upon receipt of information of possible consumer standard breaches, considering carefully all referrals made to us. Our reactive approach does not lessen the obligation on registered providers to comply and communicate with us in a timely manner in relation to a potential breach.
- 2.12 Providers have principal responsibility for dealing with, and being accountable for, complaints about their services. The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard requires that they have clear and effective mechanisms for responding to tenant complaints. A tenant with a complaint against their landlord should raise it with their landlord in the first instance and, should the matter remain unresolved, consider contacting first a Designated Person (someone identified under the Act to deal locally with the resolution of complaints such as their MP, a local housing authority councillor or a designated tenants' panel) and subsequently the Housing Ombudsman.
- 2.13 Further detail on our approach is set out in Annex A and B of this report and in Annex B of our publication *Regulating the Standards*<sup>4</sup> which is available on our website.

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulating-the-standards>

### 3. Key themes arising from our casework

- 3.1 Across all our consumer regulation casework there are common themes and learning points that are useful to all registered providers. In our casework we sometimes observe that, although there has not been a breach of the consumer standards with potential or actual serious detriment, the way in which registered providers listen to and engage with their tenants can fall short of what could be expected.
- 3.2 Through our engagement we will seek to feedback to registered providers, highlighting the need to understand why services have fallen short and what needs to change as a result. In this section we have summarised these themes and feedback messages, in order to share those lessons more widely with the sector.
- 3.3 A significant part of our consumer regulation work comes from referrals where there are concerns about the arrangements providers have in place to keep tenants safe in their homes. This is ultimately the responsibility of the governing bodies of registered providers – boards and local authority councillors<sup>5</sup>. It is paramount that registered providers, including local authorities, ensure that they comply with the expectations of the consumer standards, including that they meet the full range of statutory health and safety obligations so that tenants are safe.
- 3.4 Good governance is critical in managing risks effectively. A registered provider's governing body must ensure that it has effective oversight via timely and accurate reporting, and that it understands what assurance it has that risks are being identified, managed and monitored, with escalation mechanisms where appropriate.
- 3.5 Increasingly there is recognition that ensuring tenants' homes are safe goes beyond complying with specific pieces of legislation. It is vital that registered providers understand their tenants and their tenants' needs, as well as the stock that they are responsible for, and have clear and informed policies about what it takes to ensure that tenants are not exposed to risk for which the landlord has a responsibility. This has been particularly important where, for specific risks, the law does not specify a timescale for completing a safety check or an action arising from those checks. It is for registered providers to set out clearly and implement what they have concluded is needed to keep tenants safe in their homes and to make sure that they have the expertise and skills to do this, taking external advice where necessary.

---

<sup>5</sup> Throughout this report where we have referenced governing bodies, this refers to local authority councillors and boards of registered providers who hold the same responsibility for ensuring compliance with regulatory standards.

- 3.6 The importance of good quality data cannot be overstated. In a number of cases, the Regulator has seen that a breach of the consumer standards, including a failure to comply with statutory requirements and policies on health and safety, has arisen because organisations do not hold good quality data about the homes their tenants live in. Registered providers can also find themselves unable to evidence whether required work has been carried out to time and quality, or even at all. This may be due to the existence of different data systems, but often stems from inadequate arrangements for data reconciliation, weak controls and inconsistent record keeping. The expectation is that all registered providers will have assurance on the quality and integrity of their data. This is the foundation on which all other assurance of compliance is based.
- 3.7 There can also be issues that arise from a lack of clarity on contractual and management arrangements for the homes in which some of a registered provider's tenants live. This can cause gaps in a registered provider's assurance that it is complying with the consumer standards in relation to all tenants, including providing an effective repairs services and identifying and managing health and safety risks. While these arrangements may add complexity they do not remove a registered provider's responsibility as the landlord for compliance with regulatory standards and for the safety of all of its tenants in their homes.
- 3.8 Where things do go wrong, it is often the case that systems have been poorly designed or poorly implemented or both. Some failures are relatively isolated in nature, perhaps arising as a result of an individual's actions or lack thereof, but some are more widespread across the organisation. Registered providers must ensure they understand the causes of the problems that arise and seek to resolve both the presenting issue and the underlying causes, to reduce the chance of a similar issue arising again. Registered providers focusing on the lessons that can be learned, and the systems that can be improved, are signs of a well-governed organisation. Where possible it is helpful for registered providers to share learning more widely, beyond their own organisation.
- 3.9 Where the Regulator finds a breach of the consumer standard and serious detriment, it is most often in relation to the Home Standard. However, our expectations are the same across all of the consumer standards. Registered providers should understand, and be able to demonstrate compliance, across all aspects of the consumer standards, including how they engage with their tenants, how they deal with neighbourhood issues, and how they allocate their properties.

- 3.10 Complying with the consumer standards should not solely be driven by the requirement to do so from the Regulator, but because the expectations set out in the standards are the outcomes any registered provider should seek to achieve in the course of a well-run business. Focusing on and delivering the right outcomes is also an integral part of establishing and maintaining effective relationships with tenants and other stakeholders, as well as managing any potential reputational risk.
- 3.11 How registered providers engage with their tenants, how they listen to tenants and give tenants the opportunity to make their views known is a key indicator of organisational culture and it goes to the heart of why registered providers exist and their purpose. Through our casework we gain an insight into how registered providers engage with their tenants and this is often indicative of the organisational culture and the quality of governance. In some cases this may cause us to change our published view of the provider's governance. Even where this does not happen we will, where necessary, give feedback on what we see to senior leaders in the organisation.
- 3.12 It is the responsibility of registered providers as landlords to respond to complaints and to do so promptly and effectively. Failing to deal effectively with complaints impacts on the level of trust and confidence tenants have in their landlord and can have a significant reputational impact for registered providers. It may also affect our view of a registered provider's governance. Governing bodies must ensure that they have sufficient oversight of the effectiveness of arrangements for complaints handling.
- 3.13 Analysis of complaints data and trends can inform a registered provider's understanding of the messages tenants are giving them and importantly whether the issues being raised indicate a potential significant and/or systemic failure. Where this is the case there should be a route for escalation and where necessary, a different approach to ensure effective resolution in a timely way. Through our casework we have seen occasions where registered providers acknowledge that they have not handled complaints in the way they would have wished to and have commissioned reviews which have learning points for the wider sector.
- 3.14 Finally, where issues do arise, transparency with the Regulator is essential. The Governance and Financial Viability Standard sets out this requirement explicitly. However for all registered providers, including local authorities, the co-regulatory settlement is fundamentally based on transparency and co-operation between the Regulator and registered providers. Where we find a breach of a consumer standard and serious detriment, and the registered provider has failed to be transparent with the Regulator, we will take that into account as we consider what regulatory action is needed.

## 4. How we carry out our consumer regulation

- 4.1 Social housing tenants of registered providers can expect their homes and their landlords to meet certain standards. This includes: living in homes that are safe and of appropriate quality; having choice and protection; the ability to be involved in its management and to hold their landlords to account.<sup>6</sup> These are part of our consumer standards, which the Regulator sets as part of the framework for regulation.
- 4.2 The Regulator receives referrals and information about potential breaches of the consumer standards from a range of different sources. These include complaints from tenants, statutory referrals (including those from Members of Parliament, the Housing Ombudsman and the Health and Safety Executive) or information obtained during the course of our economic regulation work. We also receive referrals direct from providers about failings they have identified. In line with our co-regulatory settlement, registered providers should notify the Regulator of any potential breaches of the consumer standards. This applies to all registered providers including local authorities and regardless of any management contracting arrangements in place.
- 4.3 When considering information we receive about potential non-compliance with our standards, our role is to determine if this evidence indicates a wider failing within the registered provider's systems or processes. Such a systemic failing may lead us to determine there has been a breach of our standards; however, in line with our role set out in legislation, we must also see that this caused or has the potential to cause serious harm. We call this the serious detriment test. Harm, or potential harm, can relate to health and safety, loss of home, unlawful discrimination, loss of legal rights and/or financial loss. Where the Regulator judges there is evidence of the serious detriment test having been met, we will publish a regulatory notice. Where we judge the test has not been met but shortcomings have been found, we are likely to still follow up with registered providers to address any issues informally.
- 4.4 It is important to highlight the considerations made before reaching a decision of breach and serious detriment. Keeping in mind the Regulator's legislative requirement to be proportionate and consistent, each case is considered based on its particular circumstances as well as taking account of responses from the registered provider and its willingness and ability to address any failings.

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-standards>

- 4.5 A regulatory notice is made public and is likely to have significant consequences for the registered provider. However, securing sustainable and long term improvements is paramount and registered providers are expected to demonstrate they understand what went wrong and why, to address failings promptly and effectively to remedy issues of non-compliance. A registered provider must provide assurance that they have assessed and put in place any arrangements needed so that tenants are not at risk of harm while improvements are being delivered. In addition to publishing a regulatory notice the regulator has a range of enforcement powers which can be used to force a provider to take appropriate action. We will always seek to secure the changes and improvements required using the least amount of interference. In any case where regulatory action is taken, the most appropriate way for registered providers to evidence their commitment to remedying any failings is through timely and effective action.
- 4.6 There may be occasions when the Regulator is of the view that the serious detriment threshold has not been met and therefore we are unable to take regulatory action in relation to the consumer standards. In those cases, we may consider that the information obtained raises issues about the governance of a provider. We will consider the provider's compliance with the economic standards and where we conclude that a provider's governance grading should change, we will also publish a narrative judgement.
- 4.7 If a referral or information received is not within the Regulator's remit to consider we will, wherever possible, advise a referrer of the appropriate route to pursue the concerns raised. For example we do not have a role in resolving individual disputes between landlords and tenants. Where we receive such complaints, wherever applicable, we will signpost the referrer to the provider's own complaints procedure and the Housing Ombudsman. If appropriate we may make the referral on behalf of the referrer, with their consent.

### How we handle referrals

- 4.8 Under our reactive consumer role, we consider all referrals received to assess whether there is evidence of a systemic failure which may represent a breach of a consumer standard.
- 4.9 The consumer regulation process consists of three stages, although not all referrals will pass through each of these.

- At Stage 1 any information or referral received is initially reviewed to determine if it is a matter that we can, under our remit, consider. During this stage we also consider if the issue is covered by our consumer standards and could potentially represent a breach.
- If these tests are satisfied, the referral moves to Stage 2. This is where our Consumer Regulation Panel (CRP) carries out a detailed review of the information we have received to determine whether any potential breach of the standard has caused or could cause serious harm to tenants.
- If a view on these points cannot be reached by CRP without further information, we will make the necessary enquiries of either the provider, the referrer or a third party. This is called a Stage 3 Investigation.

- 4.10 The length of time an investigation takes will depend on the circumstances of the case and the level of assurance we obtain from the registered provider; it can take some time to investigate some cases thoroughly, though other cases are relatively straightforward and we are able to reach a conclusion quickly.
- 4.11 We consider all information we receive from a regulatory perspective and we recognise that individual disputes between tenants and landlords can potentially be evidence of a systemic failure that represents a breach of the standards. However, as a Regulator, we do not have a role in resolving individual complaints about registered providers and we are unable to mediate in disputes between tenants and their landlords. We receive contact from tenants with complaints about their landlord and we will wherever possible, provide information about the well-established routes for tenants seeking to resolve an individual dispute with their landlord.
- 4.12 In the first instance, tenants should raise their concerns with their landlord. The Housing Ombudsman can assist residents and registered providers to resolve disputes locally. If a complaint is not resolved via the registered provider's complaints procedure, the resident may contact a Designated Person such as an MP, a local authority councillor or a designated tenants' panel to help with the resolution of the complaint. The Designated Person may help resolve the complaint or may refer the case to the Housing Ombudsman for investigation.
- 4.13 A resident can also escalate their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman directly. The Housing Ombudsman's role is to resolve disputes and to encourage the resolution of disputes by others. Information about the Housing Ombudsman is available on their website<sup>7</sup>.

---

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk>

## 5. Consumer regulation and governance

- 5.1 In order to comply with the consumer standards, registered providers should have effective governance and risk management arrangements in place. That means registered providers should assess their own compliance with all the consumer standards including those where the expectation is that they will identify and understand the risks to their tenants and take appropriate action to mitigate those risks. This also means having arrangements in place so registered providers can identify themselves at an early stage when something is going wrong, as well as having an effective escalation and response where those issues are identified.
- 5.2 Where the Regulator finds that a registered provider has failed to meet a consumer standard, and that the serious detriment test has been met, our experience is that there can often be a corresponding failure in an organisation's governance.
- 5.3 For private registered providers (as opposed to local authorities), where the Regulator concludes that there has been a breach of the consumer standards and serious detriment, we will consider whether that failure has any implications for our view of the registered provider's governance. Our consideration of governance is a separate decision, taking into account the facts of the case and information we have obtained through our planned regulatory engagement.
- 5.4 We will also take into account:
- whether the failure raises any wider systemic concerns
  - the effectiveness of the board's oversight, for example, whether the board was receiving adequate and timely information and challenging the executive on performance
  - the effectiveness of the registered provider's risk management and internal controls
  - actions taken to mitigate the failure
  - the board's assurance that the failings will be addressed, including their willingness and ability to put things right
  - the registered provider's transparency and the timeliness of communication with the Regulator.
- 5.5 The remainder of this report set out details of the cases we have considered under each of the consumer standards. It includes examples of where we have found a breach of the consumer standards and serious detriment, and for these case studies, we have included details of how we considered the implications for an organisation's governance. The report also includes anonymised case studies where we have not found a breach of the standards.

The case study below shows how the Regulator considered our view of a registered provider's governance, when we had evidence of a breach of the consumer standards.

### **Case study 1 – Links between consumer regulation and governance**

Knowsley Housing Trust (KHT) notified the Regulator that the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service had issued three fire enforcement notices in November 2017 in relation to a scheme known as Quarry Green. The enforcement notices said that KHT had failed to comply with the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The issuing of the enforcement notices followed KHT's completion of a fire risk assessment in June 2017 which identified actions required to reduce the risk of fire at Quarry Green, and two subsequent warning letters from the fire service in August and September 2017 which had not been acted upon.

During our investigation of this referral, we learned that KHT also had a number of high risk fire safety actions outstanding following the completion of fire risk assessments and that an internal audit completed by KHT had found that the board did not have assurance of compliance with statutory health and safety requirements. Taking all of these factors into account, the Regulator concluded that this was a breach of the Home standard, because KHT had failed to have an effective system in place for delivering statutory compliance, particularly in relation to fire safety. We also concluded that tenants had been put at risk as a result. We published a regulatory notice setting out our findings in June 2018.

At the same time as KHT made its referral to the Regulator, the Regulator was undertaking a planned in depth assessment (IDA) of KHT. Taking into account the health and safety issues identified, as well as information gathered during the IDA, the Regulator found that there were significant weaknesses in the effectiveness of board oversight and scrutiny, including incidents of inadequate reporting. We also found that the KHT board did not have sufficient oversight of a range of activities undertaken in other parts of the group, and so was unable to demonstrate that key risks were effectively managed. The Regulator concluded that KHT had failed to comply with our governance requirements, and the provider was downgraded to G3. A regulatory judgement was published in August 2018.

Since then, KHT has been working with the Regulator as it seeks to resolve these issues. Its action plan sets out how it is addressing the failure to comply with our regulatory standards, including both the statutory compliance issues set out above, and the underlying governance issues which led to the health and safety issues arising. The Regulator will continue to engage intensively with KHT until it is satisfied that the issues have been addressed, and KHT is compliant with all regulatory standards.

The case study above shows the clear links between consumer regulation and governance, and how a failure to meet one of our consumer standards is often symptomatic of more widespread weaknesses in an organisation's governance. It also demonstrates the importance of registered providers seeking to understand the causes of health and safety failures when they arise, in order to tackle both the presenting issues and the underlying causes, to prevent a recurrence.

It is often the case that a breach of consumer standards leads the Regulator to conclude that there has been a failure in an organisation's governance. This year however, we also saw the reverse: when we found that a registered provider which was already non-compliant with our governance requirements had also breached the consumer standards. The case study is set out below:

### **Case study 2 – Link between consumer regulation and governance**

The Regulator was already engaging with Kinsman in relation to concerns about its governance when we received a referral from a third party which said that Kinsman had not adequately responded to potential issues with the structural safety of a number of its homes, along with concerns about the safety of gas, fire and electrical installations. Shortly after receiving this referral and on the basis of the information we had gathered during our governance investigation, we completed our assessment of Kinsman's governance, and concluded that it was non-compliant with our governance requirements. We published a regulatory notice<sup>8</sup> setting out our views, and then continued to engage with Kinsman in relation to both our governance concerns, and to complete our investigation into the concerns raised about the safety of the property.

Through our investigation, we learned that Kinsman had been notified of the potential issues in January 2017, but did not put in place plans to carry out the necessary survey work until September 2018, following the referral to the Regulator. While Kinsman's survey on the structure of the building did identify some significant issues, it did not conclude that these posed a serious risk to tenants. However, this initial survey did recommend further, more intrusive inspections including of the gas, electrical and fire safety mechanisms in place.

A subsequent survey carried out in December 2018 identified some serious and wide-ranging concerns in relation to fire safety. In addition, although a fire risk assessment had concluded that the risk was at a tolerable level, there were a number of follow up actions necessary to ensure the property and its tenants were safe.

These risks were known about for a considerable period of time, and the evidence demonstrated that Kinsman were extremely slow to act when concerns were raised. The Regulator concluded that given the seriousness of the issues, and the duration for which

---

<sup>8</sup> We do not publish regulatory judgements for registered providers which have fewer than 1,000 social housing units. However, if we have evidence that such a provider has breached an economic standard, we will issue a regulatory notice.

tenants were potentially exposed to risk, that this was a breach of the Home standard and that there had been a risk of serious detriment to tenants. We published a second regulatory notice setting out our conclusions.

Kinsman put in place a schedule of works in relation to fire safety and the other remedial work identified in its surveys and has provided assurance that tenants are not at risk in the meantime. The Regulator continues to engage with Kinsman to seek assurance on the completion of works and evidence that this has remedied the issues found. Alongside this, we are continuing our intensive engagement with Kinsman to ensure that the underlying governance issues which formed the basis of the first regulatory notice are resolved.

- 5.6 This case study highlights that complying with our Home standard goes beyond simply meeting statutory health and safety requirements. It shows the importance of registered providers understanding and acting on their fundamental responsibility for tenant safety by having systems in place which allow them to take prompt and effective action when there is a suggestion that tenants might be at risk. Governing bodies of registered providers should listen to, and engage with, tenants and third parties where they are giving messages that they might be at risk, and should act swiftly to identify whether any such risks exist, and to mitigate those risks.

## 6. Local authorities' compliance with the consumer standards

- 6.1 Although the Regulator's economic standards do not apply to local authorities, the Regulator's consumer standards apply equally to private registered providers and local authorities and we expect all registered providers to be open and transparent with the Regulator when issues arise which indicate non-compliance (or potential non-compliance) with our standards.
- 6.2 The Regulator also expects that all tenants, regardless of whether their landlord is a private registered provider or a local authority, should have the same experience: they should have homes that are safe and of reasonable quality, access to an effective complaints process when things go wrong, and the opportunity to have a say in decisions which affect them.
- 6.3 With this in mind, where the Regulator receives a referral relating to a local authority, we will consider that in the same way as we consider referrals relating to private registered providers. The example below shows how we determined a breach of the Home standard and serious detriment in relation to a local authority.

### **Case study 3 – Regulating local authorities' compliance with the consumer standards**

We received a referral from an individual raising concerns about how Arun District Council had responded to reports of repairs in their home and fire safety. We followed up this referral and sought assurance from Arun District Council that it was responding appropriately to the reports of repairs and that it met all applicable statutory health and safety requirements.

Through our investigation, we learned that up until 2016, Arun District Council did not have a comprehensive programme in place to carry out fire and Legionella risk assessments across its entire stock. Sheltered housing schemes were subject to a programme of works, but the general needs stock was assessed on a reactive basis when issues were reported. That meant that Arun District Council could not provide assurance that all of the relevant properties had a risk assessment in place until very recently. A programme of works had been developed to resolve the issues and Arun District Council was implementing a new structure and resourcing to improve the oversight and delivery of compliance work. However this had not yet addressed the issues at a speed which would reflect the level of risk to its tenants.

The Regulator concluded that Arun District Council had breached the Home standard as it had not had a system in place which allowed it to effectively meet its statutory duties to assess the risks of fire and legionella.

In response, Arun District Council commissioned an external review of its health and safety compliance, which identified weaknesses in the overall system for managing health and safety, and it developed an improvement plan to resolve the issues. The Regulator is now working closely with Arun District Council as it implements the actions set out in the improvement plan. That includes actions to complete outstanding risk assessments and any actions arising from those risk assessments, as well as addressing the underlying causes of the breach of the consumer standards.

## 7. The Home Standard

- 7.1 Ensuring tenants have good quality accommodation and are safe in their homes is a fundamental responsibility of registered providers. Each year, the Home Standard features in around half of all referrals considered by Consumer Regulation Panel, covering issues relating to repairs and maintenance, the decency of tenants' homes and registered providers' compliance with statutory health and safety requirements.
- 7.2 This year, all of the cases where the Regulator found a breach and serious detriment related to the Home standard, in particular in relation to the repairs and maintenance service provided by registered providers, and their compliance with statutory health and safety requirements across a range of areas including fire safety, gas safety, electrical safety, lifts and Legionella. Most common were issues relating to fire safety, which featured in five of the six cases where we found a breach and serious detriment. However, it was striking that in a number of those cases, where we considered concerns relating to fire safety, weaknesses across other areas of health and safety were also identified.
- 7.3 As the case studies below will demonstrate, complying with fire safety requirements is critical for registered providers to ensure tenants are safe. However providers also need to continue to seek assurance on the systems they have in place for delivering safe homes for their tenants across all areas. This includes data management, policy and processes, monitoring, reporting and oversight.

### Fire safety

#### Case study 4 – Meeting fire safety requirements

Beyond Housing was formed following the merger of Yorkshire Coast Homes and Coast & Country Housing in October 2018. Like all registered providers, Beyond Housing, and its predecessor organisations, has a duty to comply with the Home Standard which requires registered providers to comply with statutory health and safety requirements which provide for the safety of tenants in their homes; the applicable statutory requirements include the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 which requires registered providers to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks of fire. Having identified those hazards and people at risk, it has a duty to take precautions to prevent the risk of fire, and to update the risk assessments regularly.

As part of the pre-merger process, Yorkshire Coast Homes had identified concerns about fire safety. In particular, it found that a large number of fire risk assessments had passed their review date, and a small number of properties did not have a risk assessment in place. It said it also had concerns about the quality of the fire risk

assessments which had been carried out, and that there was limited evidence to demonstrate that actions identified had been completed.

The Regulator concluded that Yorkshire Coast Homes had breached the Home Standard as it had failed to have an effective system in place to provide assurance that tenants were not at risk from fire. A regulatory notice was published. Yorkshire Coast Homes put in place an urgent plan to deliver actions and to mitigate the risk to tenants. It brought in additional resources and carried out initial inspections to ensure there were no combustible materials in communal areas. It also carried out the outstanding fire risk assessments, prioritised by risk. When the merger was completed, Beyond Housing became the organisation responsible for completing this work and for resolving the issues set out in the regulatory notice.

Since then, the Regulator has had regular engagement with Beyond Housing, as it has progressed in the delivery of this work. It has completed all of the fire risk assessments, and is now working through the actions which were identified, tackling the highest risk actions first to mitigate any risk to tenants. Beyond Housing has also looked at the underlying causes of the breach of the Home standard, and has completed work to cleanse its data, to implement a new compliance system, and to improve reporting to the board.

### Electrical safety

- 7.4 For some areas of health and safety, the legislative requirements are very explicit (for example, the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 states clearly that gas appliances and flues must be tested annually). In other areas, the law is less explicit, but that does not lessen the obligation on registered providers to act to ensure their tenants are safe.
- 7.5 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires registered providers to conduct their undertakings in such a way that third parties (including tenants) are not exposed to risk. Recently there has been increased focus on electrical safety and recognition of the importance of registered providers setting their own policies and procedures that clearly articulate the arrangements they operate in order that tenants are not exposed to risk.

7.6 Below is an example of how we considered a case relating to electrical safety.

**Case study 5 – Meeting electrical safety requirements**

Lincolnshire Housing Partnership (LHP) made a self-referral to the Regulator in July 2018, having identified concerns about the quality of its electrical testing programme and the certification available to demonstrate that electrical testing had taken place. LHP explained that for a number of properties, electrical certificates were either missing or were over 10 years old. Quality control checks had also found a number of errors in both the categorisation of works, and completion of certificates.

LHP was created as a result of the merger of two organisations: Boston Mayflower and Shoreline Housing Partnership. In their engagement with the Regulator, LHP set out that a previous external assessment of a sample of electrical inspections for Boston Mayflower had found a high proportion had failed quality requirements. LHP then commissioned a review which raised concerns about the lack of valid or in-date certificates for the majority of Boston Mayflower properties.

The Regulator noted LHP's self-identification of the issues, and its subsequent referral to the Regulator, but taking into account the seriousness of these issues, and the number of tenants potentially affected, the Regulator determined that it was proportionate to find a breach of the Home Standard and serious detriment in this case. A regulatory notice was published and the Regulator also considered implications for LHP's governance, concluding that its current interim G2 grade remained appropriate. In reaching that view, the Regulator was assured that once the issue was identified, LHP immediately put a plan in place to address the issues and commissioned a review to understand how the failing had happened. It put in place a programme of remediation which prioritised the works required by risk and is addressing the issues in line with that programme.

7.7 The case study shows the importance of registered providers having assurance that tenants are safe in their homes. In this case, LHP was not able to be certain that the relevant electrical safety checks had been completed and it was not assured that the checks carried out were of appropriate quality. Clearly this had an impact on understanding whether remedial actions arising from electrical safety checks had been assessed correctly and completed. It was these factors which led the Regulator to conclude a breach of the Home Standard and serious detriment. LHP's interim G2 governance grade remained unchanged reflecting the registered provider's identification of the issues, quality of response and timely self-referral to the Regulator.

## Meeting all statutory health and safety requirements

- 7.8 The case studies above set out two different cases where we found a breach of the Home Standard relating to a failure to comply with one area of health and safety requirements (fire safety for Beyond Housing and electrical safety for LHP). However, in a number of cases this year, we have identified that registered providers have failed to comply with our consumer standards because of failures which were more widespread across a range of health and safety areas. The case study below is an example of that.

### **Case study 6 – Meeting all applicable statutory health and safety requirements**

GreenSquare Housing Group (GreenSquare) made a self-referral to the Regulator in July 2018, followed by a second referral in November 2018 when it had found a number of properties with overdue gas certificates. On commissioning a wider review of compliance with statutory health and safety requirements, GreenSquare also identified issues relating to fire safety and lift safety and made a further referral to the Regulator.

The main concern related to fire safety. GreenSquare told the Regulator that although all fire risk assessments were up-to-date, it had identified that there was a large number of overdue actions arising from fire risk assessments including some that had been categorised as high priority that had not been completed. Some of these urgent actions had been outstanding for a number of months, and the issue affected a significant number of tenants, including potentially vulnerable tenants. A number of lifts were also found to have an out-of-date lift service check. The Regulator concluded that this was a breakdown in the overall systems in place to allow GreenSquare to deliver an effective repairs and maintenance service and therefore found that GreenSquare had breached the Home Standard with potential serious detriment as a result. A regulatory notice was published.

Given the seriousness of the issues, GreenSquare had commissioned a root cause analysis review to fully understand the factors that led to this including governance, culture and leadership as well as operations and management.

The Regulator was carrying out an in-depth assessment of GreenSquare at the time of the second referral. We considered the implications of this for the Regulator's view of GreenSquare's governance as part of the in-depth assessment and we concluded that a downgrade to G2 was appropriate.

## 8. Responding when things go wrong

- 8.1 The case studies above set out a number of cases where things have gone wrong, and where the Regulator has judged the registered provider to have breached our regulatory standards and risked serious detriment to tenants. However, we seek to be proportionate in our regulation of the consumer standards and simply because something has gone wrong, it does not necessarily mean the standards have been breached. In reaching our view, we consider whether the issues identified indicate a systemic failure by the registered provider. We also take into account the seriousness and duration of the issue, and the number of tenants potentially affected. We also consider what action the provider is taking, to put things right.
- 8.2 Registered providers should design effective systems and processes which allow them to comply with our consumer standards, and which allow them to identify at an early stage when things are going wrong. How an organisation responds when things have gone wrong tells us a lot about the organisation and how it is run. Well-run organisations will seek to address the underlying causes of the failure as well as the presenting issues. They will also seek to learn the lessons from the failure, in order to strengthen systems and processes where necessary. The case study below sets out an example of that.

### **Case study 7 – Learning lessons when things go wrong**

The Regulator was contacted by a registered provider who told us that there were longstanding repair and defects issues relating to one of its mixed tenure new build housing schemes. This was causing a relatively high volume of complaints from residents as well as attention more widely, including through the media.

The Regulator considered this self-referral under its consumer standards and specifically the requirement for registered providers to have an effective repairs and maintenance service, as well as the requirement to have an approach to complaints to ensure they are resolved promptly, politely and fairly.

The Regulator received a significant amount of information from the registered provider, including the report from a review it commissioned externally into the issues, their handling of complaints and lessons learnt. This looked across a number of the registered provider's new build schemes.

From this, we concluded that the registered provider had a repairs service in place that was effective overall and there was evidence they had responded to all the issues raised and followed up where they were not resolved. We noted that there were some incidences where the registered provider's response was not as timely as it should have been. There was also the added complexity of establishing responsibility for remedial work, given the scheme was within its defects period.

Notwithstanding the ongoing repair issues, evidence was provided of compliance with statutory health and safety requirements.

We considered carefully the information provided regarding the provider's approach to complaints. There was a clear, accessible and timely process in place with evidence that residents had been able to make complaints and have those responded to.

- 8.3 However, as the provider's own review highlighted, there were a number of improvements that could be made. In particular where an issue or area of service is resulting in complaints and dissatisfaction over a protracted period, more should be done to escalate this, identify trends and learning and adjust the approach. Changes relating to training and support for staff, as well as improving communication across different departments, were recommended, as was an emphasis on effective resolution rather than seeing the delivering the process as the outcome in itself. We considered whether, in light of these issues, this changed our view of the registered provider's governance. The information and responses gained through our engagement provided assurance that this was not the case.

## 9. The Tenancy Standard

Registered providers may at times have tenants who are facing challenges maintaining their tenancies. A decision to evict a tenant should never be taken lightly and the consumer standards set out the expectation that registered providers will support tenants in such situations and avoid unnecessary evictions. The case study below shows an example of a referral we considered under this standard.

### **Case study 8 – Supporting tenants to maintain their tenancies**

We received a referral from the friend of a tenant in a supported housing scheme who had sadly died in their property shortly after the registered provider was granted a possession order. The referrer alleged poor treatment of the tenant by the registered provider including taking unnecessary steps to evict. We considered this referral under the Tenancy Standard which states registered providers should provide support to tenants to enable them to maintain their tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions.

We do not have a role in resolving individual complaints about registered providers. This can include complaints such as this where it appears to be an individual issue regarding an eviction rather than one which indicates systemic failings. However, the Tenancy Standard as outlined above, places an expectation on registered providers to ensure tenants are appropriately supported to try and avoid situations such as this and given the tragic circumstances of this case, the Regulator considered the matter to ensure the registered provider had appropriate systems in place for all its tenants in similar cases.

While it is not our role to consider if the eviction itself was reasonable, we sought information from the registered provider to ensure that any action taken was in line with the Tenancy Standard. The registered provider told us that from the tenancy commencement, the tenant had been in breach of the visitors' policy and tenants' charter. The tenant had also failed to engage with support from the specialist drug team and had fallen into arrears. The registered provider engaged with the tenant and agreements to pay were made. Unfortunately the payments were not made and possession action began on the grounds of rent arrears. The registered provider told us that it tried to arrange re-housing for the tenant in another supported unit but they refused the offer of a place which they could have moved to before the court hearing that led to the possession order.

We considered that the evidence did not indicate a systemic issue within the registered provider as to the way they dealt with vulnerable residents. We saw that consideration was given to the requirements under the Tenancy Standard. Possession action was carried out as a last resort after other options had been pursued and we saw evidence of attempts by the registered provider, alongside other agencies to support the tenant during this time.

9.1 The Tenancy Standard in regards to tenure states that registered providers shall publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management and set out their policy on granting discretionary succession rights, taking account of the needs of vulnerable household members. The case study below shows how we considered a referral under the Tenancy Standard and how the registered provider had taken appropriate steps to ensure this standard was met.

### **Case study 9 – Managing succession rights**

We received a complaint from a tenant regarding the alleged lack of transparency of their registered provider's succession policy. The tenant also complained that the registered provider did not make discretionary allowances to its succession policy if there are vulnerable household members. The tenant stated that they were classed as disabled and they had been trying to find out about discretionary succession from the registered provider.

We saw that the registered provider had written to the tenant to clearly explain its succession policy. The registered provider had explained in detail why the policy did not apply to the tenant based upon their current circumstances but that this would be reviewed should these circumstances change. We also saw the information the registered provider considered when taking into account the tenant's needs and those of their household members and that they had provided a single point of contact who was able to assist the tenant by collating information and co-ordinating responses to him.

The steps taken by the registered provider were in line with expectations under the Tenancy Standard and we found no breach in this case.

## 10. Neighbourhood and Community Standard

- 10.1 The Neighbourhood and Community Standard places an expectation on registered providers that they will work collaboratively with other agencies to address anti-social behaviour. This year we have received several referrals from tenants who are concerned about this issue. We recognise the challenges registered providers face in tackling such issues, however tenants should expect to feel safe and comfortable in their homes and communities. For that reason, where we receive complaints of this nature, we ask registered providers what assurance they have that they are listening to tenant concerns and taking reasonable actions to address these.

### **Case study 10 – Dealing with anti-social behaviour**

We received a referral from a tenant on behalf of a registered provider's residents association. The residents association was concerned that the registered provider had not acted properly to deter anti-social behaviour in and around their block of flats.

We considered the referral under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard which states that registered providers shall work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhood where they own homes.

We saw that the registered provider had clear policies and dedicated staff to help deal with anti-social behaviour. The registered provider said they cooperated fully with local agencies and partners including the police and the local authority. There had been two instances of anti-social behaviour reported and the registered provider was liaising with the police and the council's environmental noise enforcement department to address this. The registered provider was also aware of rough sleepers in and around the block of flats and was working in conjunction with the police and the council's rough sleeper team to tackle this.

The registered provider said it attended the residents association's quarterly meetings and intended to discuss with them the further measures that would be taken to make the property more secure. On the basis of the information and evidence we received, we concluded that the registered provider had taken reasonable steps to listen and respond to tenant concerns and had not breached the Neighbourhood and Community Standard.

- 10.2 The Neighbourhood and Community Standard also places an obligation on registered providers to keep the areas surrounding their properties such as communal gardens and play areas clear and safe. In line with standard, we expect registered providers to ensure that these areas are maintained to a reasonable standard for tenants to enjoy. The case study below highlights that although we found no breach of our standards, there may be times when we will follow up with registered providers where we see improvements to service can be made.

### **Case study 11 – Standard of estate services**

A local councillor complained to the Regulator on behalf of residents about the estate maintenance services provided by the registered provider. This service was previously outsourced but the registered provider had since taken the service back in house. Tenants were unhappy that costs had increased and considered the work carried out was substandard. We considered this referral under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard which states that registered providers shall keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes they own clean and safe.

We sought information from the registered provider about the service it was providing in relation to estate maintenance. The registered provider said it monitored this work through quality inspections and then posted the inspection reports on the building's notice board for residents. Evidence was provided that demonstrated that work of the estates team was being monitored and completed to an agreed standard.

We acknowledged that some residents might be dissatisfied with the estate maintenance service, particularly since the service was taken back in house, and as the costs had increased. However the evidence from the registered provider did not indicate a failure to keep communal areas clean and safe as the standard requires. When investigating a referral, even if we do not find a breach of our consumer standards we do feedback to registered providers, where appropriate, and in this case we sought to reinforce the expectation that all registered providers engage constructively with tenants and their elected representatives.

## 11. The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

- 11.1 The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard sets out expectations of how registered providers should treat their tenants and the importance of demonstrating that they understand the different needs of tenants including those with additional support needs. Registered providers should recognise the importance of building trust with tenants and compliance with this standard helps to achieve this.

### **Case study 12 – Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants**

A registered provider self-referred to the Regulator following the death of tenant in one of their homes. The tenant was not found until two weeks after her death. We considered this referral under the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard which requires all registered providers to demonstrate they understand their tenant's diverse needs, treating each fairly and with respect. We followed up with the registered provider to seek assurance that they had arrangements in place to ensure this was the approach being taken with their tenants.

The tenant was living in housing for older people with communal facilities and alarm pull cord system but no onsite warden. The registered provider had found it difficult to keep in regular contact with the tenant as she did not have a telephone and was often not at home when staff visited the property. When the registered provider was able to contact the tenant, they made offers of support and visits to the tenant, however these were all refused. The tenant also declined to use the alarm pull cord system and had stated she only used the property to sleep in.

It is inevitable that at times tenants will pass away in their homes and in this case it is particularly sad given that the tenant was not found for some time. When considering the relevant consumer standards in this case, we took into consideration that the registered provider had made reasonable attempts to arrange support for the tenant over the course of her tenancy and that when these were firmly refused, staff respected the tenant's requests. While a registered provider should understand their tenants' needs and take steps to assist with support where appropriate, this must also be balanced with a tenant's wishes and their desire to live their preferred lifestyle. For those reasons, we concluded that the registered provider had an approach in place that meant tenants' specific needs were understood and taken into account and that the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment standard had not been breached in this case.

- 11.2 Throughout the year we have also received a number of referrals about the customer service delivered by registered providers and the way they handle tenant complaints. The standard sets out that a registered provider shall provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants in the delivery of all standards and has an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible. A registered provider should also ensure that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly.

### **Case study 13 – Complaints handling**

We received a referral from a tenant who had raised various complaints with the registered provider, including about anti-social behaviour in his neighbourhood. The tenant did not consider that the registered provider had responded appropriately to their concerns or followed their complaints procedure. They said that they felt that the registered provider's handling of his complaint had caused their mental health condition to become worse.

We saw that the tenant had raised a significant number of complaints with the registered provider. The evidence showed that the registered provider had sought to provide detailed responses to each complaint and tried to implement alternative measures to allow the tenant full access to their complaints processes in a pragmatic way. This included providing dedicated case managers and contacts. The evidence demonstrated that the registered provider's approach to complaints met the expectations of the standard and there had not been a systemic failing with the registered provider's complaint handling or procedures.

- 11.3 The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard sets clear expectations that registered providers should communicate with and listen to their tenants. This is particularly important where registered providers are proposing a change in landlord for one or more of their tenants or a significant change in their management arrangements.
- 11.4 Consultation should be carried out in a fair, timely, appropriate and effective manner with any proposals clearly set out in an appropriate amount of detail including on any actual or potential advantages and disadvantages (including costs) to tenants in the immediate and longer term. Registered providers must be able to demonstrate to affected tenants how they have taken the outcome of the consultation into account when reaching a decision. The following case study illustrates the importance of registered providers having a robust approach to their decision making and in how they consult with tenants, taking fully into account whether the proposals are aligned with their objectives as a social housing provider and meet regulatory expectations.

### **Case Study 14 – Consulting with tenants**

A registered provider notified the Regulator of its disposal of a tenanted social housing scheme to a non-charitable organisation (for profit registered provider). The information submitted by the registered provider in its notification raised questions on the consultation carried out with tenants.

We considered whether the approach taken by the registered provider met the expectations within the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard. Our follow up engagement sought further detail of the range and quality of consultation carried out and asked the registered provider to provide evidence that it had met the requirements of the standard including setting out clearly for tenants any potential costs and disadvantages of the proposed disposal.

We concluded that, although improvements could be made to the approach taken by the registered provider, there was not a breach of standard and serious detriment. In reaching this conclusion we took into account that the tenants would remain in the regulated sector.

However we also considered how the registered provider had made its decision to dispose of the social housing scheme and whether this changed our view of its governance. The Regulator concluded that improvements were required to the registered provider's governance to ensure that key decisions of this nature are informed by a sufficiently broad range of quality information and that appropriate delegations are in place. There had been insufficient board oversight of the disposal and the registered provider's governance was downgraded as a result.

## 12. Annex A – Analysis of cases

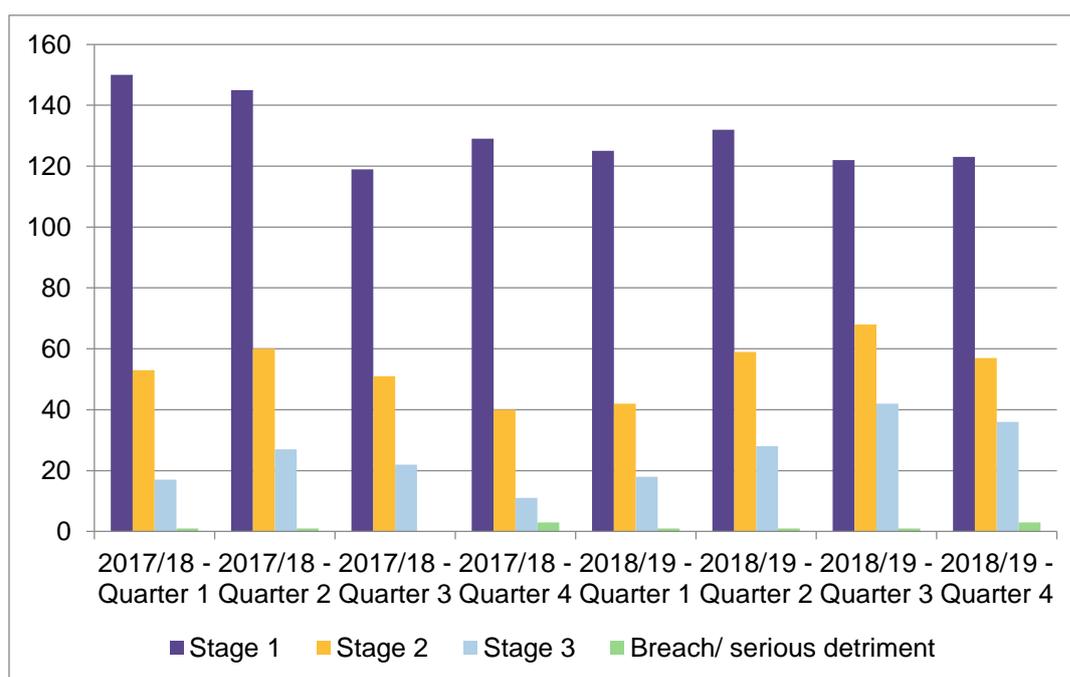
### Referrals by stage

12.1 Our consumer regulation process has three stages:

- Stage 1 – the Referrals and Regulatory Enquiries (RRE) team is responsible for collating all referrals to the Regulator. The RRE team’s role is to review referrals and determine whether the issues raised appear to be within the Regulator’s remit, and if there appears to have been a breach (or a risk of a breach) of the consumer standards. If so, the RRE team refers the case to the Consumer Regulation Panel.
- Stage 2 – the Consumer Regulation Panel considers each case to determine whether there is evidence of a breach of the standards and, if so, whether there has been harm, or potential harm, to tenants. It considers two questions:
  - I. if the issues raised were true, is it likely that there has been, or could be, a breach of a consumer standard?
  - II. if the issues raised were true, would there be any impact on tenants which would cause serious actual harm or serious potential harm?
- Stage 3 – if the Consumer Regulation Panel considers that the evidence could indicate a breach of the standards, or if there is a suggestion that tenants are at risk of serious harm, we will carry out an investigation. During the investigation, we will usually seek information from the individual making the referral and the registered provider, as well as any third parties if necessary.

12.2 The table below shows the total number of consumer regulation referrals handled by the Regulator by quarter and how many of those went on the subsequent stages of our process. The 2017/18 figures are shown in brackets.

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
Stage 1 – All consumer referrals	125 (150)	132 (145)	122 (119)	123 (129)	502 (543)
Stage 2 – Considered by Consumer Regulation Panel	42 (53)	59 (60)	68 (51)	57 (40)	226 (204)
Stage 3 – Investigation undertaken	18 (17)	28 (27)	42 (22)	36 (11)	124 (77)
Published findings of breach of standard and serious detriment	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (0)	3 (3)	6 (5)



12.3 In 2018/19, we received 502 consumer standard referrals. Of those, 226 (45%) were referred to the Consumer Regulation Panel, and 124 (25%) were investigated further. We found a breach and serious detriment in six cases (1%).

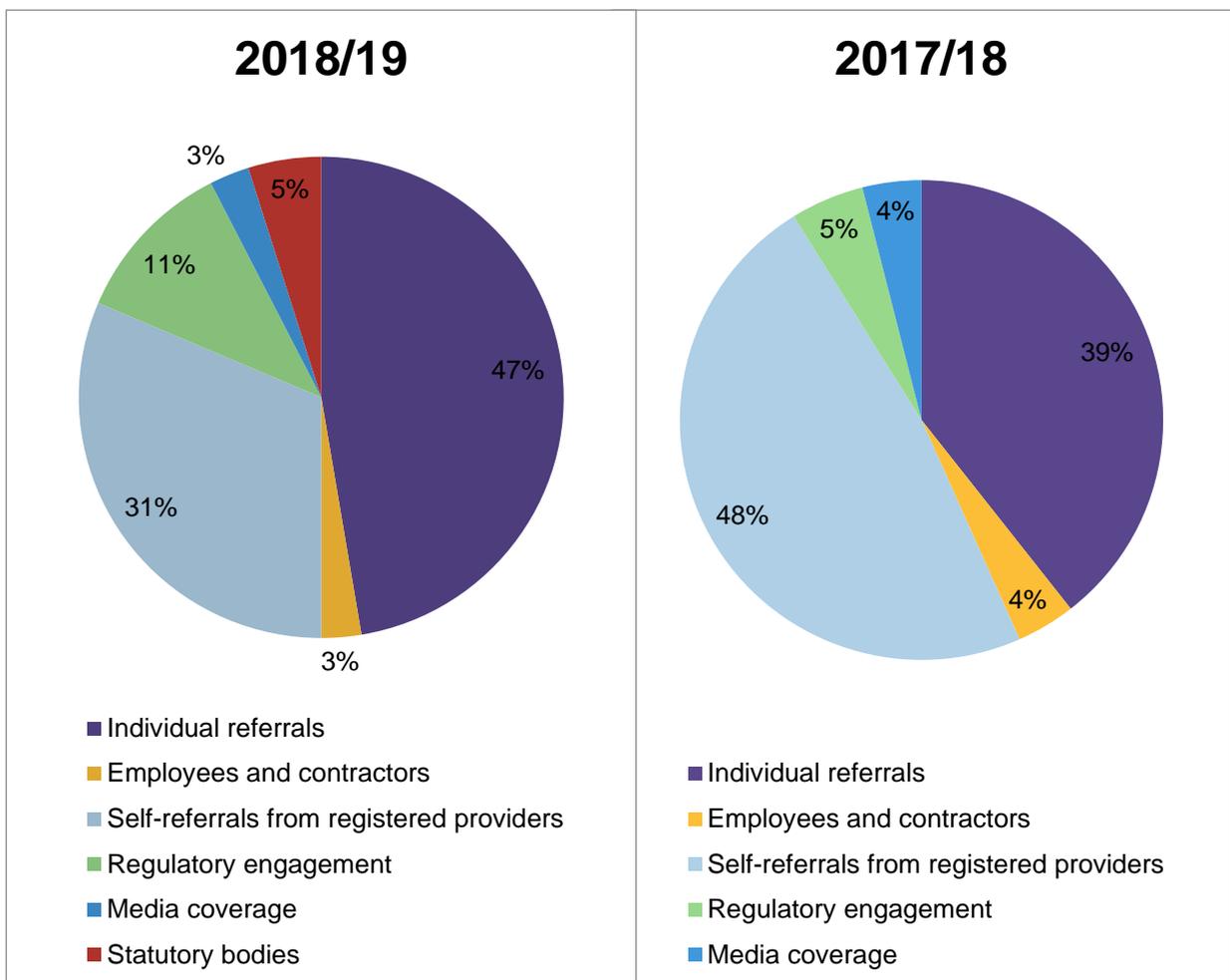
## Consumer Regulation Review 2018-19

- 12.4 The data shows that the overall number of referrals to the Regulator in 2018/19 declined slightly (502 in 2018/19 compared to 543 in 2017/18), but the total is in line with the average across previous years. The number of cases referred to CRP increased slightly on the previous year (45% compared to 38%) but we do not consider this to be a material change.
- 12.5 For the cases which were not escalated to Consumer Regulation Panel, there are a number of reasons why this may be the case. Often referrals are not within our remit, for example: they were made by homeowners or leaseholders, the issues raised related to private landlords or organisations which were not registered providers, or the issues raised did not fall under our regulatory standards. In a number of cases, tenants also sought advice on how to complain about their landlord. In response, we would signpost the tenant to their landlord's complaints process and the Housing Ombudsman where appropriate.
- 12.6 The number of cases reaching a stage 3 investigation increased from 77 cases (14%) in 2017/18 to 124 cases (25%) in 2018/19. This is a significant year-on-year increase. However, the rate of investigations for 2017/18 was low compared to previous years (for example, in 2016/17 we investigated 112 cases (20%), and in 2015/16 we investigated 98 cases (21%)), and the figures for 2018/19 year are more in line with previous years' investigation rates. We do not consider there to have been a material change in the Regulator's thresholds for investigating referrals, but rather we consider the presenting facts on each case before making a decision about whether an investigation is reasonable and proportionate.
- 12.7 Our data shows that of the cases we investigate, 33% are self-referrals from registered providers, 21% are from tenants or their representatives, 15% are issues identified through our regulatory engagement. The remainder are from a range of other stakeholders including MPs and Councillors, leaseholders or homeowners, or employees.

### Sources of referrals

12.8 The Regulator receives referrals from a range of sources, most commonly from tenants and as self-referrals from registered providers. We also receive information from employees or contractors, and we identify referrals in the course of our regulatory engagement with providers.

12.9 The charts below show that while the number of referrals to Consumer Regulation Panel remained relatively consistent, the number of referrals from individuals increased from 39% in 2017/18 to 47% in 2018/19, and this year, unlike previous years, 5% of our referrals were received from other organisations such as local authorities, NHS services and the Housing Ombudsman.

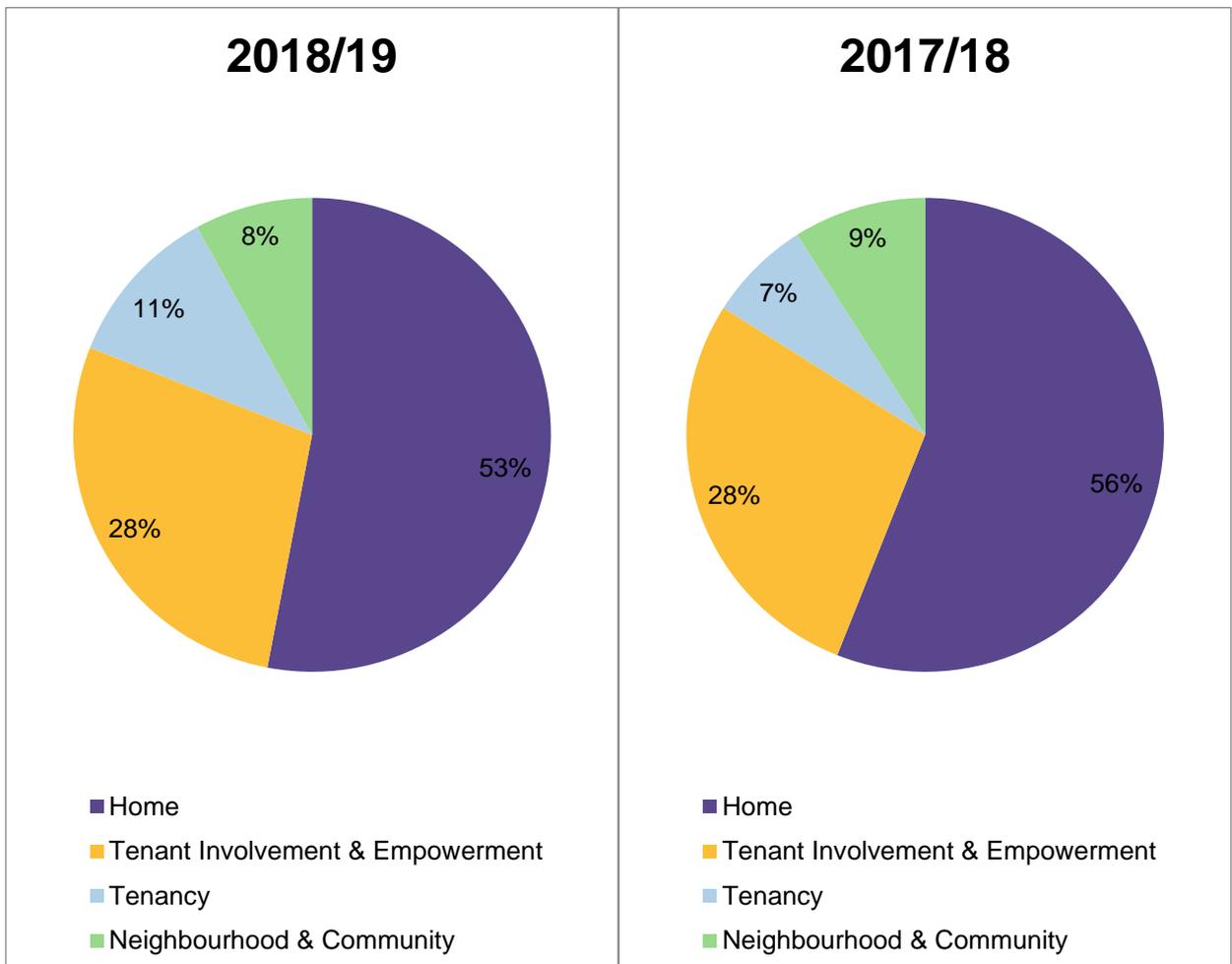


## Consumer Regulation Review 2018-19

- 12.10 The number of referrals from registered providers decreased from 48% in 2017/18 to 31% in 2018/19. Our analysis shows that the figure for self-referrals the previous year (2017/18) was relatively high, and we attribute this to a number of referrals we received from registered providers in the immediate aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire, notifying the Regulator of the presence of cladding on buildings and providers' plans to mitigate risks to tenants. Although the number of self-referrals we have considered has declined this year, it is in line with previous years' figures and represents a significant proportion of our casework.
- 12.11 We have also noted a correlation in some cases between the timing in which we notify a registered provider of our intention to carry out an in-depth assessment and their self-referral to the Regulator, accounting for 1 in 7 of all self-referrals. We therefore continue to remind registered providers of their co-regulatory responsibilities, in accordance with the requirements of our Governance and Financial Viability Standard, to communicate with the Regulator in a timely manner in all cases of potential non-compliance with our regulatory standards.
- 12.12 This year, we have also identified more consumer regulation cases through our planned regulatory engagement (an increase from 5% to 11% of our casework), and accounting for 32% of all regulatory engagement referrals. We attribute this partly to boards having an increased focus on compliance with consumer standards including health and safety requirements, and better reporting across all areas, which is subsequently identified by our Regulatory Operations team when reviewing board papers and information submitted to the Regulator during our in-depth assessments. Our in-depth assessment process focuses on the quality of governance and risk management in relation to a registered provider's key risks. The safety of tenants is usually amongst the top risks registered providers.

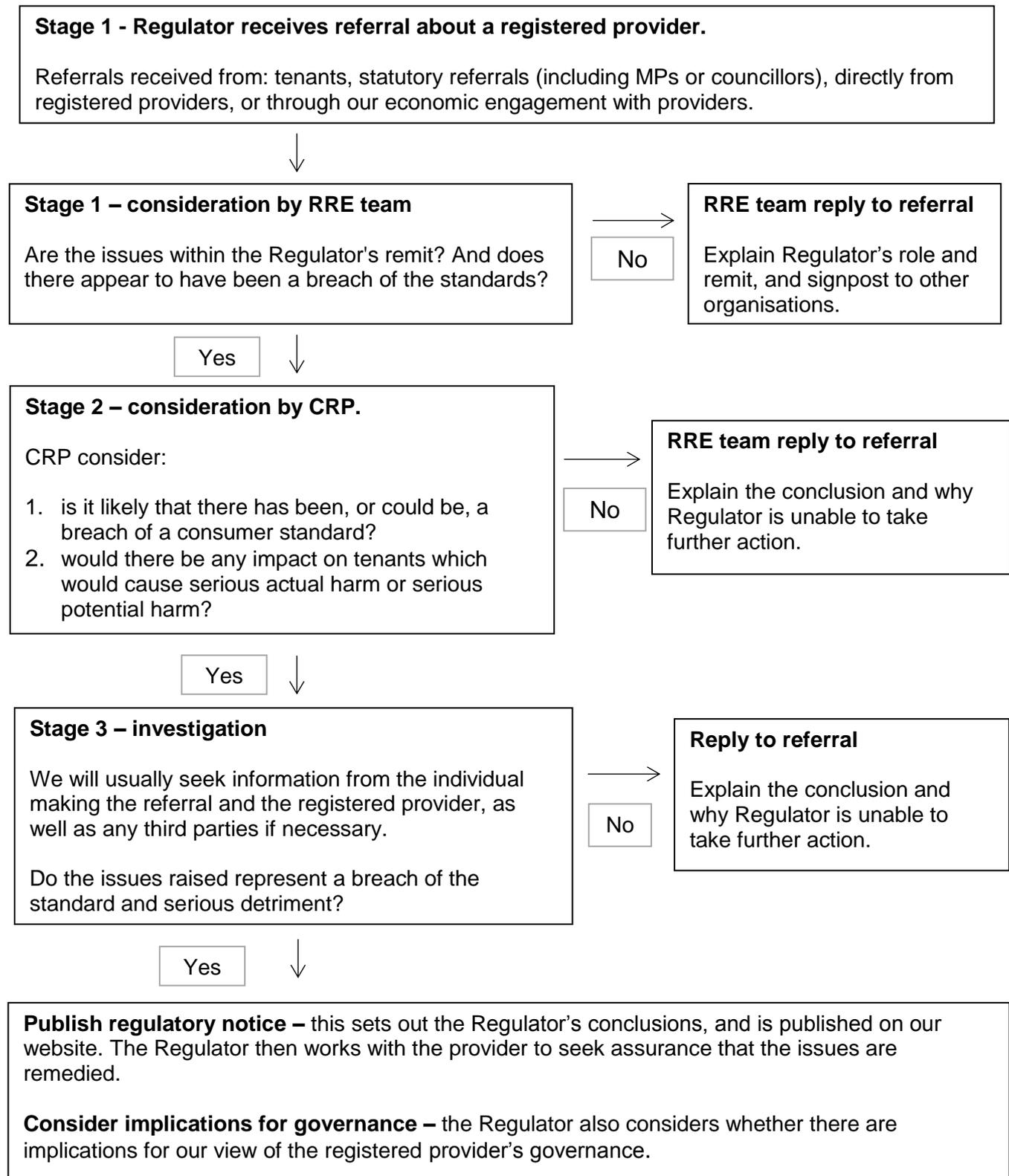
### 13. Cases referred to the Consumer Regulation Panel

- 13.1 As in previous years, the Home Standard continues to be the consumer standard which is most often cited. Although the percentage of cases in relation to the Home Standard declined slightly this year, it still accounts for more than half of all referrals considered by the Consumer Regulation Panel. Referrals across all standards have remained relatively consistent, with a slight increase in referrals relating to the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment standard, offset by a small decline in referrals relating to the Neighbourhood and Community Standard. The percentage figures and representative charts are set out below.
- 13.2 Our data shows that the majority of self-referrals from registered providers (88%) relate to compliance with the Home Standard, with only 9% of self-referrals relating to the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard. In contrast, referrals from individuals such as tenants and their representatives are spread more evenly across the standards, with referrals relating to the Home Standard accounting for 37% of all referrals, and the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard representing 35% of referrals.



## 14. Annex B – How we carry out our consumer regulation

14.1 Through this report, we have explained how we carry out our consumer regulation work and our consumer regulation processes. Below is a diagram which sets this out in more detail.



## 15. Annex C – Summary of previous lessons learned

15.1 This is our seventh Consumer Regulation Review and each year our reports set out the key messages we wish to share with the sector. Full versions of each of the reports are available on our website<sup>9</sup>:

15.2 Compliance with the Home Standard, including health and safety requirements and transparency with the Regulator, are recurring themes, but each year we identify new lessons that we wish to share with the sector. We have set out a short summary of these lessons below.

### 2012/13

15.3 This was the first annual Consumer Regulation Review. That year we published one regulatory notice for a failure to meet gas safety requirements.

15.4 In the report, we said:

- Registered providers are responsible for meeting statutory health and safety requirements. We recognise that, for good reason, registered providers prefer to work with tenants to secure access to properties. However, on occasion, registered providers may need to make use of legal mechanisms available to ensure the safety of tenants, and they should do so in a timely manner.

### 2013/14

15.5 In our second Consumer Regulation Review, we set out details of the three cases where we had found a breach of the consumer standards and risk of serious detriment. All three cases related to a failure to meet gas safety requirements. We also reminded registered providers of their duty to be transparent with the Regulator.

15.6 We said:

- Registered providers have a responsibility to communicate with the Regulator in a timely way. Where a registered provider becomes aware of a breach of the standard which might cause serious detriment, it must notify the Regulator promptly.

---

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/consumer-regulation-review>

## Consumer Regulation Review 2018-19

### 2014/15

15.7 In 2014/15, we set out the details of six cases where we had found a breach of the consumer standards and risk of serious detriment. Four of those cases related to compliance with gas safety requirements but, for the first time, two of those cases related to the repairs and maintenance service provided to tenants.

15.8 In the report, we highlighted that:

- Responsibility for complying with the consumer standards applied to local authorities as well as private registered providers.
- It is important for registered providers to have in place good asset management systems. Where failures occur, we often find those systems are not fit for purpose, or that the board did not probe or challenge the assurance they were given.

### 2015/16

15.9 In our fourth Consumer Regulation Review, we set out the details of the four regulatory notices we published that year, all in relation to gas safety. One of those cases related to a registered provider who had contracted out delivery of gas safety compliance. We explained that that did not remove the responsibility on the landlord to ensure statutory compliance.

15.10 We said:

- Meeting health and safety obligations is a primary responsibility for registered providers. Contracting out the delivery of services does not contract out responsibility to meet the requirements of legislation or standards.

### 2016/17

15.11 In our fifth Consumer Regulation Review, published shortly after the terrible fire at Grenfell Tower, we again reiterated the importance of complying with statutory health and safety obligations, and for registered providers to have clarity over their statutory responsibilities. We also shared our view on the importance of good complaint handling and the need for transparency with the Regulator.

15.12 We said:

- Compliance with health and safety obligations and the consumer standards has always been a key responsibility for governing bodies of registered providers.
- Registered providers must be clear about what stock they own and are the landlord for, and must understand their responsibilities to deliver statutory compliance.

- Registered providers are responsible for ensuring tenants know how to complain, and for responding to complaints effectively. Boards should have access to the messages that tenants are giving them.
- Transparency with the Regulator is essential. Where consumer compliance problems come to light and the registered provider has failed to be transparent with the Regulator, this is a concern in relation to compliance with the Governance and Financial Viability Standard, and may be indicative of broader governance issues.

### 2017/18

15.13 In our last Consumer Regulation Review, we set out the details of five cases where we had found a breach of the consumer standards, and serious detriment. We reiterated the importance of landlords meeting their statutory health and safety obligations. We also set out the importance of providers having an effective complaints process, and listening to the messages their tenants give.

15.14 We said:

- Complying with health and safety obligations remains the most fundamental responsibility for registered providers. Registered providers should be clear about their responsibilities, including for properties that are leased or managed.
- Compliance with the consumer standards, including how tenants are listened to, reflects the culture of the organisation, and goes to the heart of why registered providers exist and their purpose.
- Providers are responsible for responding to complaints about their service, and getting the culture right on complaints handling affects the level of trust and confidence tenants have in their landlord. Registered providers must ensure they understand the messages that tenants are giving, and should probe where those messages indicate a significant or systemic failure.



© RSH copyright 2019

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3)

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at: [www.gov.uk/rsh](http://www.gov.uk/rsh)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us via [enquiries@rsh.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@rsh.gov.uk) or call 0300 124 5225.

or write to:

Regulator of Social Housing

1st floor – Lateral

8 City Walk

Leeds LS11 9AT

**RSH regulates private registered providers of social housing to promote a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs.**