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Friday 12 September 2025

Notice of Meeting

Dear Member

Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel

The **Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel** will meet in the **Council Chamber - Town Hall, Huddersfield** at **10.00 am** on **Monday 22 September 2025**.

This meeting will be live webcast. To access the webcast please go to the Council's website at the time of the meeting and follow the instructions on the page.

The items which will be discussed are described in the agenda and there are reports attached which give more details.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S Lawton".

Samantha Lawton

Service Director – Legal, Governance and Commissioning

Kirklees Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair/Clerk of their intentions prior to the meeting.

The Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel members are:-

Member

Councillor Zarina Amin (Chair)

Councillor Timothy Bamford

Councillor Donna Bellamy

Councillor Harry McCarthy

Councillor Alison Munro

Chris Friend (Co-Optee)

Agenda

Reports or Explanatory Notes Attached

Pages

1: Membership of the Panel

To receive apologies for absence from those Members who are unable to attend the meeting.

2: Minutes of the Previous Meeting

1 - 6

To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on the 11 August 2025.

3: Declaration of Interests

7 - 8

Members will be asked to say if there are any items on the Agenda in which they have any disclosable pecuniary interests or any other interests, which may prevent them from participating in any discussion of the items or participating in any vote upon the items.

4: Admission of the Public

Most agenda items take place in public. This only changes where there is a need to consider exempt information, as contained at Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. You will be informed at this point which items are to be recommended for exclusion and to be resolved by the Panel.

5: Deputations/Petitions

The Panel will receive any petitions and/or deputations from members of the public. A deputation is where up to five people can attend the meeting and make a presentation on some particular issue of concern. A member of the public can also submit a petition at the meeting relating to a matter on which the body has powers and responsibilities.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10, Members of the Public must submit a deputation in writing, at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting and shall subsequently be notified if the deputation shall be heard. A maximum of four deputations shall be heard at any one meeting.

6: Public Question Time

To receive any public questions.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, the period for the asking and answering of public questions shall not exceed 15 minutes.

Any questions must be submitted in writing at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

7: Response to Awaab's Law

9 - 18

This report outlines Kirklees Council's preparedness for the implementation of Awaab's Law, which introduces new statutory duties for social landlords to address damp, mould and condensation (DMC) hazards and other emergency hazards within strict timescales. It sets out the steps taken by the Council to date to ensure legal compliance, enhance service capacity, invest in preventative measures, and support both staff and residents.

Contact: David Brook: Head of Property Services - 01484 221000

8: Update of the Housing Management & Partnerships Service Redesign

19 - 26

The report presents an update on the ongoing redesign of the Kirklees Homes & Neighbourhoods (KHNs) Housing Management and Partnerships (HMP) service.

Contact: Lisa Ramsden, Head of Housing Management and Partnership Tel: 01484 221000.

Contact Officer: Jenny Bryce-Chan

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

GROWTH AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY PANEL

Monday 11th August 2025

Present: Councillor Zarina Amin (Chair)
Councillor Timothy Bamford
Councillor Donna Bellamy
Councillor Harry McCarthy
Councillor Alison Munro

Co-optees Chris Friend

In attendance: Cllr Moses Crook, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member
for Transport and Housing
Cllr Graham Tuner, Cabinet Member for Finance and
Regeneration
Lucy Wade, Project Manager, Transport Strategy Policy,
and Development
Rory Davies, Transport Strategy and Policy Lead
Dave Wildman, Service Director, Skills and Regeneration

Observers: Cllr Cahal Burke, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny
Management Committee
Albert Hoey, work experience student

- 1 Membership of the Panel**
All Panel members were in attendance.
- 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
That the minutes of the meeting held on the 10 March 2025 be approved as a correct record.
- 3 Declaration of Interests**
No interests were declared.
- 4 Admission of the Public**
All agenda items were considered in public.
- 5 Deputations/Petitions**
No deputations or petitions were received.
- 6 Public Question Time**
In accordance with Council Procedure rule 11, Ms Julia Roebuck submitted written questions. In accordance with Council Procedure rule 37, the Chair agreed that the

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question could be asked under agenda item 8. A response was given by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration.

7 Kirklees Transport Strategy, Consultation Results and Adoption

Cllr Moses Crook, Cabinet Member for Transport and Housing, introduced the agenda item, advising the Panel that it is a positive time to be bringing the first Kirklees Transport Strategy through the governance process for adoption. He explained that there are many opportunities for companies to benefit, for example with the bus franchising, the TransPennine route upgrade project underway, mass transit or tram in the pipeline and the development of West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) LTP4. In addition, further powers coming with further funding through the extension of the devolution process in West Yorkshire.

Kirklees having its own transport strategy, aligned with LTP4, will help to embed local priorities around sustainable transport and inclusive prosperity. It will maximise the benefits to Kirklees from external funding and regional projects. Working together with regional partners but with a focus on specific transport needs in Kirklees.

In Kirklees there is higher unemployment and lower earnings than the national average, with many travelling out of the district to work. These factors all point to, inequality, exclusion, and deprivation. The hope is that this strategy will help to provide greater opportunity for communities, whilst also reducing the collective environmental impact.

The Panel was reminded that the draft strategy was presented to the Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel in January 2025, following which, Cabinet gave approval for the strategy to go out for public consultation. The consultation was successful with 2112 responses, with approximately 1500 providing free text input to illustrate their concerns and interest in transport. Responses confirmed public approval of priorities in the strategy, in particular support for prioritising and improvements around bus transport, including the move to publicly controlled bus services through franchising.

The final draft of the strategy will be presented to Cabinet in September for approval. Cllr Crook thanked officers for the excellent work they have undertaken to produce the first transport strategy.

David Wildman, Service Director for Skills and Regeneration, Rory Davis, Transport Strategy and Policy Lead, and Lucy Wade, Project Manager, Transport Strategy Policy and Development, were also in attendance at the meeting to provide further details on the Transport Strategy.

David Wildman, advised the Panel that the strategy is not an action plan or a list of projects, it is a statement of intent that aligns with the Local Plan, which is currently undergoing revision, and WYCA, emerging LTP4. It sets out how transport schemes will be approached, ensuring that future work remains in synergy and alignment with regional priorities, to ensure future funding opportunities can be targeted. Importantly, it reflects the unique needs and aspirations of the district.

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Rory Davis provided an update on the revisions made to the strategy since its previous presentation to the Panel in January 2025. In summary, he informed the Panel that the consultation had been a wide-reaching campaign, funded by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), enabling engagement with communities through social media, marketing, and publicity events. Officers actively engaged with residents across the district, bringing the conversation directly to the public.

The Panel was reminded that during the January meeting, members raised several issues all of which have been incorporated in the strategy, including:

- Accessibility and the need for the strategy to support effective travel for people with disabilities.
- Concerns around safety, particularly in relation to using transport such as bus stations at night.
- Comments regarding the rollout of electric vehicles (EVs), with emphasis on ensuring businesses can support the transition without disadvantaging individuals who may face challenges installing home chargers.
- Clarification on how the success of the strategy will be measured.

In response to the information presented, the Panel asked a number of questions and made comments including some of the following:

- The report outlined public responses to the strategy's objectives. It showed that the environmental objective received 68% support, which was lower than the other objectives. Are you aware of the reasons behind this and are there any anticipated challenges in gaining wider public support for the environmental aspects of the strategy.
- What level of control will the council have over the bus fleet under the proposed bus franchising system? Will there be scope to influence the transition to electric vehicles, given that many buses operating in Huddersfield and across Kirklees are still diesel-powered, refurbished, and prone to breakdowns. Will it be possible to ensure a modern, reliable, and environmentally sustainable fleet to serve local residents?
- With regard to the statistical significance of the survey results, with 2,112 respondents which represents less than 0.5% of the Kirklees population. Are you able to provide further details how this sample size produces a confidence level of 99%, and further explanation of the methodology used to interpret the data?
- In terms of accessibility, has consideration been given to addressing the broader aspects of vulnerability, not only for women and girls but for all vulnerable adults?
- What specific metrics will be used to assess whether the strategy is successfully encouraging a shift towards public transport and active travel, the report does not clearly outline this?

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- Has any consideration been given to freight transport within the strategy, particularly in relation to the development of a charging network for electric trucks to support urban deliveries?

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet Member and officers be thanked for providing an update on the Kirklees Transport Strategy.

8 Our Cultural Heart Update

Cllr Graham Turner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration, introduced the agenda item, informing the Panel that the update is part of the regular update on Our Cultural Heart. He encouraged the Panel to visit the site when the opportunity arises to view the progress that has been made and to see the vision come to life.

David Wildman informed the Panel that Our Cultural Heart (OCH), is a key part of the Huddersfield Blueprint and one of the Council's flagship regeneration programmes. Referring to the presentation slides, he informed the Panel that: -

- the blueprint launched in June 2019 and identified six target areas for transformation across the town, and OCH is central to that vision.
- OCH delivers against one of the Council's areas of focus, investment, regeneration, and place and is a named programme within the Blueprint.
- The OCH Mobilisation Steering Group was established in January 2025, to work with internal services that have responsibilities as part of OCH to co-ordinate their pre and post opening budgets and preparations.
- In terms of governance and reporting, OCH reports monthly to a programme board and regeneration portfolio holder's briefings.
- To achieve the council's capital projects priorities, Cabinet approvals have reallocated funding from the OCH construction budget to support other capital priorities.

The Panel was informed that progress is reviewed through the gateway process, with key stages brought to Cabinet for consideration. This phased approach enables strategic alignment and ensures that approvals are sought at appropriate intervals. It gives the ability to make changes as needed.

The next report to Cabinet is scheduled for September 2025, with a primary focus on the next steps for delivering the museums and galleries programme. This will form part of the phase two scheme, gateway 4. At this stage, it will conclude the detailed design phase and set out the delivery targets and move to construction.

The Panel was informed that extensive communication and engagement activity is underway in relation to the scheme, supported by an ongoing communications

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campaign and a series of events aimed at fostering a positive atmosphere and raising the scheme's profile.

The Panel was shown an illustration which outlined the masterplan and informed that, phase one includes the food hall, new library and adjacent square. Phase two, is the museum and gallery. The other plots are Queen Street plot, public realm/park and venue and multi-story car park. The phased approach provides both the Council and Cabinet with flexibility and a review of the phases is currently being undertaken and will be presented to Cabinet in September.

The Panel was provided with a summary of the decisions taken to date in respect of phase two. This included committing funding for phase two to move towards Gateway 4, delegated authority for the enabling works for a pre-construction services agreement and delegated authority to instruct relevant works. The Panel was also provided with information which outlined the timelines and key milestones for the different phases of the scheme.

The Panel was advised that a newsletter providing updates and information and a snapshot on current progress is available on OCH website.

A member of the public attended the meeting and asked the following questions: -

- Seeing as Our Cultural Heart is about far more than bricks and mortar and is about people and place to build on and celebrate the character and culture of our diverse and exciting town, how will the existing creative organisations on the Piazza be included in the plans, particularly the Queen Street area?
- Is there potential to work with the council to create a business plan for space which will then support the existing creative ecosystem?

Panel members asked a number of questions, and made comments including some of the following: -

- The library building is Grade II listed, and the Council is currently undertaking a design review to identify cost savings, will the revised design compromise the architectural character of the original building?
- Can you explain why you aim to save on costs, and can you give an idea of how much you aim to save or need to save?
- Will councillors and the public be able to comment on the new design before they are approved?
- How realistic is the timeline for phase two and the conversion of the library building?

What are the top three current risks to the project and what contingency plans are in place should they occur, for example, finding more asbestos than expected in the museum and galleries?

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RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet Member and officers be thanked for providing an update on Our Cultural Heart.

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

COUNCIL/CABINET/COMMITTEE MEETINGS ETC

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Growth & Regeneration Scrutiny Panel

Name of Councillor

Item in which you have an interest	Type of interest (eg a disclosable pecuniary interest or an "Other Interest")	Does the nature of the interest require you to withdraw from the meeting while the item in which you have an interest is under consideration? [Y/N]	Brief description of your interest

Signed:

Dated:

NOTES

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your disclosable pecuniary interests under the new national rules. Any reference to spouse or civil partner includes any person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or as if they were your civil partner.

Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner, undertakes.

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses.

Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority -

- under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
- which has not been fully discharged.

Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.

Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.

Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) - the landlord is your council or authority; and the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.

Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -

(a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and

(b) either -

the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or

if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.



REPORT TITLE: KIRKLEES COUNCIL'S PREPARATION FOR AWAAB'S LAW / POLICY UPDATES

Meeting	G&R Scrutiny Panel
Date	22 nd September 2025
Cabinet Member	Cllr Moses Crook Deputy Leader and Transport and Housing
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	No N/A
<p>Purpose of Report: This report outlines Kirklees Council's preparedness for the implementation of Awaab's Law, which introduces new statutory duties for social landlords to address damp, mould and condensation (DMC) hazards and other emergency hazards within strict timescales. It sets out the steps taken by the Council to date to ensure legal compliance, enhance service capacity, invest in preventative measures, and support both staff and residents.</p>	
<p>Recommendations To note the approach set out in this report.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations To enable the Council's compliance with Awaab's Law.</p>	
<p>Resource Implications To meet the requirements of Awaab's Law, the Council has significantly increased both internal and external resourcing. Internally, additional staffing capacity has been built into the DMC triage and inspection teams to improve throughput and case resolution times. Surveyors, housing officers, and triage staff have all received specialist training to support more efficient working practices. These efforts have enabled the Council to reduce its backlog and reach a business-as-usual position by June 2025.</p> <p>Externally, the Council has procured the services of two dedicated mould treatment contractors who, alongside our in-house teams, are currently delivering an average of 91 inspections and 89 treatments per week. These figures exceed the projected weekly demand of 83 cases expected during the winter season. To enhance resilience, a third contractor, Allerton's, is retained under our contractor framework and can be deployed as needed. In addition, temporary agency resources remain available to manage any unexpected surges in demand.</p> <p>These internal and external resources, now embedded in the Council's operational model, have proven essential to our current success and will be critical to sustaining compliance with Awaab's Law moving forward. Continued investment in staffing, contractor capacity, and service coordination will ensure that the Council is well positioned to meet both seasonal increases in demand and the statutory timeframes for investigation, treatment and follow-up.</p>	

Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> and name	David Shepherd, Executive Director of Place on 20 th August 2025
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	N/A for G&R Scrutiny Panel
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	N/A for G&R Scrutiny Panel

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: N/A

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? N/A

1.0 Executive summary

- 1.1 Awaab’s Law, which comes into effect on 27 October 2025, introduces stringent statutory duties for social landlords to respond swiftly and effectively to issues of damp, mould, and condensation (DMC) in tenants’ homes. The legislation mandates that social landlords investigate reported cases within 10 working days, provide written feedback within 3 working days, and carry out any necessary treatments or repairs within set timescales: 5 working days for significant hazards and 24 hours for emergencies. The treatment of mould is generally classed as a significant hazard but may sometimes be classed as an emergency hazard, depending on the severity/extent of the mould and the tenant’s individual circumstances. This legal framework aims to safeguard tenants’ health and wellbeing following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak.
- 1.2 Kirklees Council has proactively prepared to meet these requirements. A key element of our Regulatory Notice was the requirement to act on DMC to ensure we were managing the health and safety risks and reduce cases. The service successfully achieved business-as-usual operational capacity in June 2025 following the reduction of a significant backlog of treatments. This achievement reflects a comprehensive programme of service redesign, investment, workforce development, and strategic partnerships which has supported preparations for Awaab’s Law coming into force.
- 1.3 Between September 2024 and March 2025, the Council received 2,196 reports of DMC, averaging 73 cases per week during the autumn and winter months. Impact analyses have been carried out on planned interventions, including stock condition surveys and a new housing management model, which are likely to increase the identification of damp, mould, and condensation in our homes. Initial analysis has projected an increase of up to an average of 83 new cases per week. however, this will be closely monitored. To meet this demand, the Council has mobilised two specialist contractors alongside internal teams, to consistently survey and treat more cases per week than projected, with additional contractors and agency support available if needed. This will ensure that a business-as-usual position can be maintained without a backlog building up.

- 1.4 Legal compliance is assured through rigorous processes to demonstrate all reasonable efforts to gain access to properties, including multiple documented attempts and escalation routes through the enforcement of the tenancy agreement, or via EPA (Environmental Protection Act) route as required. This is supported by a multidisciplinary working model where housing officers are providing support to vulnerable and non-respondent tenants to encourage access. The addressing of the backlog has greatly reduced occurrences of no access as cases are dealt with at the point a case is raised.
- 1.5 A robust training and development programme ensures staff are equipped to deliver services aligned with Awaab's Law and best practice.
- 1.6 The Council provides significant information and support to tenants to promote understanding of damp, mould, and condensation including the importance of ventilation.
- 1.7 This support is offered throughout the remediation process with the dissemination of leaflets and advice offered by surveyors at the point a survey is carried out. Additionally, information is distributed setting out what tenants should expect from the Council when raising a DMC case. This is being further developed with the timelines set out within Awaab's Law.
- 1.8 To further reduce occurrences of damp, mould, and condensation in our homes in the longer term, significant investment in structural improvements, ventilation upgrades, and prevention measures, are being explored through our capital investment programme, which is currently being reviewed and, re-set based on the analysis and, capital investment requirements.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Awaab's Law was first introduced by the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 (Clause 42 'Social housing leases: remedying hazards'), the details of which were to be set by secondary legislation. The secondary legislation 'Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025' (Awaab's Law) sets out the detailed requirements for social landlords and was laid in Parliament on 25 June 2025.
- 2.2 Awaab's Law, due to take effect on 27 October 2025, introduces new statutory responsibilities for social landlords across England, requiring them to respond promptly and effectively to issues of damp, mould and condensation (DMC), and other emergency hazards within tenants' homes. This legislation has been developed to ensure that tenants are protected from the health hazards associated with poor housing conditions, in the wake of the tragic death of Awaab Ishak.
- 2.3 The legislation outlines specific timescales that social landlords must adhere to. These include investigating potential DMC hazards and other potential emergency hazards within 10 working days of first becoming aware of them, providing tenants with written feedback on the findings within 3 working days, and making homes safe from any significant or emergency hazards within 5 working days, or 24 hours for emergencies. Any required remedial work must commence within 12 weeks of the investigation, and landlords are expected to make all reasonable efforts to gain access to homes, record their attempts, and consider the individual vulnerabilities of tenants in determining priority.

- 2.4 Kirklees Council has responded robustly to these forthcoming legal requirements. Through targeted investment in systems, service redesign and staff training, the Homes and Neighbourhoods service is now equipped to manage DMC cases in accordance with the expectations of Awaab's Law. Notably, the Council has achieved business-as-usual operating levels as of June 2025, ahead of the previously targeted August 2025 milestone. This early achievement is testament to the proactive approach taken to ensure readiness for the new legislative framework.
- 2.5 This report sets out a comprehensive overview of the Council's readiness for the initial required action around Damp, Mould, and Condensation. This includes legal compliance measures, service capacity, workforce development, and resident engagement.
- 2.6 Awaab's law requires further action in 2026 relating to excess cold and heat, falls risks, structural issues, fire and electrical safety, domestic and personal hygiene. In 2027 the requirement will extend to all hazards identified in the housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS).

3.0 Legal compliance

- 3.1 In anticipation of Awaab's Law, the Council has taken steps to ensure it can demonstrate compliance with all legal obligations. We have developed processes to evidence 'all reasonable endeavours' to gain access and resolve DMC issues. Working in consultation with legal experts Trowers & Hamlin's, the service has implemented robust procedures that include a minimum of three documented access attempts per case, photographic evidence of calling cards left at the property, and formal closure letters issued where access cannot be gained.
- 3.2 Furthermore, we have enhanced our approach to safeguarding tenants with known vulnerabilities. Any case involving such tenants is escalated to a housing officer for a more targeted and supportive response. Should access remain an issue, the matter is escalated to our Environmental Protection team for formal enforcement action, including the option of seeking a warrant to gain access where appropriate.
- 3.3 We are reviewing and updating relevant service policies in response to the requirements set out in Awaab's Law, as set out in the table below:

H&N Policy	New requirements	Key proposed policy changes
Repairs & Maintenance Policy	Awaab's Law sets specific timescales for certain types of repairs to be investigated and completed. The law also sets out requirements on communication with tenants and recording of actions.	Specific reference to requirements of Awaab's Law. Changes made to repair prioritisation categories. Commitments made about tenant communication and recording of actions.
Damp, Mould and Condensation (DMC) Policy	Awaab's Law sets specific timescales for certain types of repairs (including damp and mould repairs) to be investigated and completed.	Specific reference to requirements of Awaab's Law, including timescales, communication and recording of actions.

	The law also puts responsibilities on landlords to understand their tenants and to tailor services to meet individual needs, particularly about hazard risk assessment and access.	Additional emphasis on our commitments to working with tenants to understand and address DMC issues.
Decant Policy	Awaab's Law requires social landlords to provide suitable alternative accommodation for tenants if certain identified hazards cannot be made safe within specified timescales.	Specific reference to Awaab's Law requirements. Improved clarity for tenants on the decant process. Information added about alternatives to decant properties. A new Kirklees Decant Policy and Procedure is being developed and, will ensure that any requests for decants are in line with this procedure. The aim is to support households with a range of options for leaving their home whilst extensive work is undertaken whilst also not increasing levels of households in temporary and emergency accommodation.
Decoration Allowance & Disturbance Allowance Policy	No specific requirements within Awaab's Law.	Policy refreshed to align with changes to other repair-related policies. A review of the DADAP is being undertaken that improves governance and allows a stream lined compensation process. Also looks at how budget is managed aiming to reduce risk of multiple applications and, a range of support options including triaged housing management support.
Recharge Policy	No specific requirements within Awaab's Law.	Policy refreshed and will align with changes to other repair-related policies (including leaseholder charging policy) and, is consistent with the forthcoming H&N Recharge Debt Management Policy and to ensure this is consistently applied.
Vulnerable Tenant Policy	Awaab's Law requires social landlords to take individual tenant vulnerabilities into account when assessing and prioritising risks, and when attempting to gain access to tenants' homes.	New policy introduced March 2024 supports the council in meeting the requirements of Awaab's Law.

4.0 Service capacity and demand forecasting

- 4.1 Between 1 September 2024 and 31 March 2025, the Council received 2,196 reports of DMC within the Kirklees area. This equates to an average of 73 reports per week during the autumn and winter period. This seasonal trend is expected to continue, particularly as the Council progresses with its stock condition survey programme and implements a new housing management model. These actions will lead to greater resident interaction and, consequently, an increase in DMC case reporting. We estimate this may result in an additional 10 reports per week, bringing the projected total to approximately 83 DMC reports per week during the next winter period.
- 4.2 To respond to this anticipated demand, the Council has put in place a robust service model. Since February 2025, two specialist contractors have been supporting our internal teams. Together, these teams have been consistently surveying an average of 91 cases and completing treatments on 89 cases per week. This performance exceeds the anticipated demand and gives us confidence in our ability to meet the statutory response times.
- 4.3 To further strengthen our resilience, additional contractor capacity is available through our contractor framework which can be mobilised if demand exceeds current projections. Additionally, we retain the ability to deploy agency staff in response to unforeseen peaks. These measures ensure we can inspect all reported DMC hazards within 10 working days, initiate repairs relating to significant hazards within 5 working days and respond to emergencies within 24 hours.
- 4.4 Having now reached a business-as-usual position in June 2025, with a steady state of approximately 300 open DMC cases, we are confident that our service model is capable of sustaining performance in line with the statutory timescales outlined in Awaab's Law. Although the average survey lead time is currently 15 working days, this continues to reduce and will align with the 10-working day statutory limit ahead of the legislation's commencement.

5.0 Case management and repairs

- 5.1 The Council has developed a streamlined triage and inspection process. Once a report is received, surveyors or contractors complete the inspection within target timeframes, and their findings are uploaded to our system within 48 hours. Our triage officers then issue work orders and ensure that follow-up communications are sent to residents within 3 working days. This approach will also be rolled out to recently acquired general fund properties which are managed by the council for the purpose of temporary accommodation.
- 5.2 Emergency hazards are treated within 24 hours, while significant hazards are actioned within 5 working days. Where more substantial remedial work is required, this begins within 12 weeks of the initial inspection. These timeframes will be codified into the new Repairs Policy currently under consultation.

6.0 Investment and prevention

- 6.1 The Council has adopted a data-led approach to identifying estates in need of structural intervention to address recurring DMC issues. For example, targeted investment is being delivered in Chinewood (Batley) and Riddings (Deighton), where drainage systems and building exteriors require improvement.
- 6.2 In addition, we are upgrading ventilation systems, including the installation of Mechanical Extract Ventilation (MEV), installing in some archetypes DMC monitoring equipment and Positive Input Ventilation (PIV) units, in properties where persistent condensation has been identified.
- 6.3 A review of the 5 year H&N Housing Capital Investment Programme has recently taken place to improve the quality of Council homes and address non-decency, this includes the structural work that has been delayed over a number of years; work identified by Property Services that is required to reduce and prevent the levels of DMC in some archetypes; information collected from the root-cause analysis from the DMC cases which has all been used to re-set and inform the Housing Capital Investment Programme.
- 6.4 The Council's 30-year Asset Management Strategy will also be reviewed in 2026-2028 that will also include further evidence from the stock condition survey programme which is due to commence from September 2025, these surveys will also include a HHSRS assessment and, retrofit assessments and could identify more homes that are impacted by DMC or indicate archetypes which require future investment.
- 6.5 This strategic investment will help prevent the recurrence of DMC and reduce long-term demand for remedial services and plans to achieve a minimum EPC C for Council homes by 2030.

7.0 Workforce development

- 7.1 To ensure that staff are equipped to deliver services in line with Awaab's Law, the Council has undertaken a comprehensive training and development programme. All members of the DMC team have completed a Level 2 VRQ in Understanding and Preventing Damp and Mould in Domestic Premises. In June 2025, the full team also completed training on the requirements of Awaab's Law and associated responsibilities delivered by Aico.
- 7.2 Surveyors are currently completing training in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), due to be completed by the end of August 2025. This will enable them to accurately identify category 1 and 2 hazards and raise the necessary repair works in line with regulatory requirements.
- 7.3 Senior officers, including General Managers and Team Leaders, attended the Social Housing Professional Network Roadshow in June 2025. The event included a legal update from Trowers & Hamlin's on Awaab's Law, disrepair and building safety, helping our teams remain aligned with national best practice.

8.0 Resident engagement and communication

- 8.1 Our commitment to residents goes beyond compliance. Tenants have been encouraged to provide feedback throughout the process of management of damp, mould and condensation.
- 8.2 Tenant feedback has helped us to improve several areas including better coordinated housing management approach; putting in place hardship support for our most vulnerable tenants; understanding how we can work with partners and statutory services better; and addressing fuel poverty.
- 8.3 Consultation has also supported us in the development of our triage system that make it easier for tenants to contact the Council enabling us to act quickly, with wrap around support and, early intervention. Our engagement forums have been particularly helpful in this area.
- 8.4 When cases are in progress, we provide clear, accessible advice at every stage of the DMC journey. At the point of report, residents are given information leaflets on identifying and managing damp and mould. During inspection, we provide hygrometers and offer ventilation advice.
- 8.5 Following treatment, residents receive guidance on how to prevent future issues. Our website has been updated to reflect this information, and our contact centre staff have been trained to provide accurate and consistent advice to tenants reporting issues. All information is being updated to reflect the requirements of Awaab's Law to ensure tenants understand what to expect from the Council.

9.0 Information required to take a decision

- 9.1 Not applicable in this report

10.0 Implications for the Council

- 10.1 The implementation of Awaab's Law has wide-reaching implications for the Council, both operationally and reputationally. Compliance requires a sustained commitment to resourcing, data management, resident engagement, and continuous service improvement.
- 10.2 The Council must maintain the additional capacity it has built in-house and through contractor frameworks to ensure it can consistently meet the statutory response times for identifying, investigating and remedying damp and mould hazards by appropriately qualified contractors.
- 10.3 There is also a need to embed Awaab's Law requirements into key policies, including the Repairs & Maintenance Policy and wider tenancy management practices, to ensure that legal duties are clearly reflected in frontline delivery.
- 10.4 Failure to comply with Awaab's Law could expose the Council to significant legal and regulatory risk. This includes potential intervention by the Regulator of Social Housing, reputational damage, increased disrepair claims, and adverse outcomes for residents, particularly those who are vulnerable. Conversely, continued compliance will enhance trust in the Council's services, improve the health and wellbeing of tenants, and support the delivery of safe, decent homes in line with the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.

11.0 Council Plan

- 11.1 *Thriving People and Communities:* Ensure people are living in homes that are modern, safe, and warm, addressing all outstanding issues in compliance relating to fire safety, water quality, and damp, mould, and condensation.

12.0 Financial implications

- 12.1 A revenue budget of £2.75m is currently provided for in the H&N financial plan to address issues of damp, mould, and condensation works. This budget includes any additional works to make good properties after treatment and/or repair. Other costs associated with addressing the requirements of Awaab's Law have been factored into future budgets including the consideration of any potential legal disrepair costs.
- 12.2 As the backlog of cases has reduced and the services finds a position of business as usual, we would expect the budget position to reduce in forthcoming years.

13.0 Legal Implications

- 13.1 The Council is currently subject to a Regulatory Notice issued by the Regulator of Social Housing in March 2024, following a self-referral relating to damp, mould and condensation (DMC). Under Section 198A of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 (as amended), the Regulator has the authority to take enforcement action where a registered provider fails to meet a consumer standard.
- 13.2 In this case, the Regulator found that the Council had potentially breached part 1.2 of the Home Standard, which relates to the provision of a safe and well-maintained home. While statutory enforcement action was not taken at the time, this decision was based on the Council's commitment to deliver an improvement programme and its early actions to rectify the identified failings.
- 13.3 As a result, the Council remains under ongoing regulatory scrutiny and must continue to demonstrate progress and provide assurance that the breaches are being effectively addressed. Failure to comply with the requirements of Awaab's Law, or any further shortcomings in managing DMC, could lead to more serious regulatory action, legal consequences, and reputational harm. Sustaining the resources and systems now in place is therefore essential not only to meet statutory requirements, but also to restore full compliance with the Home Standard and safeguard tenant health and wellbeing.

14.0 Climate Change and Air Quality

- 14.1 The actions outlined in this report support the Council's wider climate change and air quality objectives. Tackling damp, mould and condensation (DMC) through improved ventilation, insulation, and energy-efficient repairs contributes to better indoor air quality and healthier living environments for tenants.
- 14.2 The investment in Mechanical Extract Ventilation (MEV) and Positive Input Ventilation (PIV) systems, alongside preventative maintenance and fabric improvements, helps to reduce excess moisture and mitigate mould growth without relying on high-energy heating solutions.

14.3 In the longer term, these measures also contribute to more energy-efficient homes, supporting the Council's ambition to reduce carbon emissions across its housing stock. By addressing the root causes of DMC, the Council is also reducing the need for repeat visits and remedial works, further lowering its operational carbon footprint.

15.0 Other

15.1 Not applicable in this report.

16.0 Consultation and engagement

16.1 Not applicable in this paper.

17.0 Options

17.1 Not applicable in this paper.

18.0 Reasons for recommendations

18.1 Not applicable in this paper.

19.0 Next steps and timelines

19.1 Not applicable in this paper.

20.0 Contact officer

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21.0 Background Papers and History of Decisions

21.1 None applicable to this report.

22.0 Appendices

22.1 None attached.

23.0 Service Director responsible

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REPORT TITLE: UPDATE OF THE HOUSING MANAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIPS SERVICE REDESIGN

Meeting	G&R Scrutiny Panel
Date	22 nd September 2025
Cabinet Member	Cllr Moses Crook Deputy Leader and Transport and Housing
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	No – Information Only Not Applicable
Recommendations	
The ELT is requested to review the report, which presents an update on the ongoing redesign of the Kirklees Homes & Neighbourhoods (KHNs) Housing Management and Partnerships (HMP) service.	
Resource Implications	
Job Descriptions and Terms and Conditions remain unchanged, but it is recognised that some officers will need additional support from managers during periods of change.	
Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> & name	David Shepherd, Executive Director of Place on 27 th August 2025
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	N/A for G&R Scrutiny Panel
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	N/A for G&R Scrutiny Panel

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: A report will be prepared for PHB Cllr Crook, Deputy Leader and Transport and Housing on 2 September (and Exec Board on 8 September).

A briefing note will be prepared for Ward councillors.

Public or private: Private

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update of the re-design of Kirklees, Homes & Neighbourhoods (H&Ns), Housing Management & Partnership (HMP) service. It highlights the progress made in the key changes to operational delivery to improve efficiency, performance, and increase tenant engagement and satisfaction with the services we deliver.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 The HMP service is responsible for the delivery of landlord functions to 21,500 council tenancies. HMP comprises of 250 members of staff who work across frontline estate management and specialist areas of Housing Management including.

- **Neighbourhood Management** – resident engagement and support, tenancy visits, estate inspections, environmental checks, tenancy issues and permissions, anti-social behaviour, compliance checks, and the viewing of empty homes and sign up of new tenants.
- **Caretaking** – compliance checks, garden clearance from void properties, removal of rubbish/waste left in communal areas, cutting back of bushes/hedges and grassed areas on estates that are not covered within the Grounds Maintenance Service Level Agreement.
- **Retirement Living** – delivery of estate management and independent living support for 19 Retirement Living Schemes consisting of 492 properties, and estate management of Ashview, Extra Care Living Scheme.
- **Income Management** – rent collection, advice on income/expenditure and specialist financial services, recovery of current and former tenant arrears, preparation of legal cases for possession of council tenancies and presentation of cases in the County Court, processing of Direct Debits, credits on accounts, and raising of invoices for services required by HMP.
- **Empty Homes** – shortlisting and pre-allocation checks for new tenants, monitoring of empty homes throughout the voids process, and allocation of properties for decants and management lets.
- **Tenancy Enablement** – a team delivering support for tenants to sustain tenancies, independent money advice, employment & support, and delivery of the pre-apprenticeship programme. The service has specialist officers delivering advice, support and training for safeguarding and domestic abuse for H&N's. Collation and review of information for Domestic Homicide, and Serious Case reviews, including attendance at case conferences to identify and respond to good practice and lessons learnt.
- **Leaseholders** – responsible for services delivered to circa 1,200 leaseholders including, legal enquiries, collation of service charges and billing, and notification of emergency or planned works.
- **Right to Buy** – responsible for the statutory obligations when a tenant purchases a council property including background/fraud checks, instructing surveyors for valuations, and legal and conveyancing enquiries.

- 2.2 In April 2024, the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) introduced the following consumer standards:
- Neighbourhood and Community Standard
 - Safety and Quality Standard
 - Tenancy Standard
 - Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
- 2.3 The standards include requirements around the safety and quality of homes, estate and tenancy management, partnership working in neighbourhoods, transparency and accountability with performance information and availability of tenant engagement opportunities. Moving forward it is crucial that the HMP service is compliant with the regulatory requirements and can effectively evidence how we achieve this.
- 2.4 The RSH introduced twenty-two Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). Twelve of these are tenant perception measures where information is captured from a perception survey, and ten TSMs are obtained from management information. The outcome from the tenant perception survey shows a decline in tenant satisfaction from the previous year. Our mid-year results, published in August 2025, we have seen improvements across all indicators indicating a turnaround in performance. Appendix 1 demonstrates Kirklees Councils performance across the 12 tenant perception measures of the TSMs.
- 2.5 Whilst our TSMs are improving that are falling below the standard we ultimately want and the expectations of our tenants in relation to our neighbourhood management responsibilities, and a redesign of this area of HMP has been undertaken in response to this.

3. Neighbourhood Management Redesign

- 3.1 The feedback from the TSMs demonstrates that HMP has not fully met the needs of our tenants. Whilst it is accepted that much of the work involved in managing housing and neighbourhoods can be reactive, we must move to a model where we work proactively with our tenants and neighbourhoods to tackle issues before they escalate.
- 3.2 It has been clearly communicated to housing teams the need to increase presence on our estates. In the absence of an effective IT reporting system to track performance, housing officers are logging this information manually. This has posed a challenge to some housing officers who need to balance an increased presence within neighbourhoods, with an increase in time spent on administrative tasks. This means that the data is not reliable because information has not been logged or logged incorrectly.
- 3.3 Housing managers are closely monitoring the activity of their teams and continue to monitor performance and support staff. The new CX Housing Management System, will be implemented in September 2025, this will include reporting features to support the effective performance monitoring of activity.
- 3.4 The current housing team model has historically been structured using a model where each team manages an equal share of housing stock. The same number of housing management officers were then assigned to each team. This approach does not align

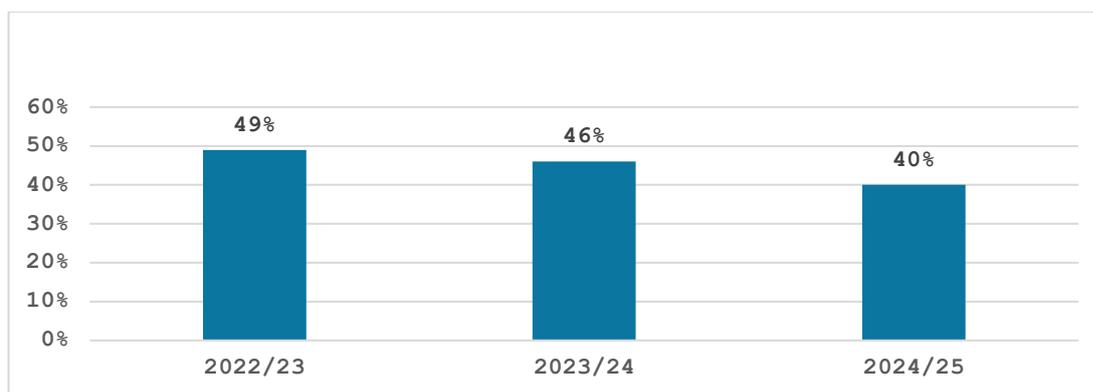
staffing levels with the differing needs and demands of individual neighbourhoods. This has been reviewed as part of the service redesign.

- 3.5 To understand the needs of our neighbourhoods we must work with tenants and key stakeholders from within the community. We will utilise available data and intelligence from a range of sources to understand more about the make-up of our tenants and communities. This information will be collated and will form part of a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.6 The aim of the plans is to understand the needs within our neighbourhoods and will also provide a voice for tenants and stakeholders to ensure we are working on the right things to improve service delivery for them. They will also ensure that future staff deployment is guided by the demand and complexity of the neighbourhood. More detailed information about the Neighbourhood Plans is outlined in Section 5 of this report.

4. **Anti-Social Behaviour**

- 4.1 It is essential that our tenants and communities feel assured that when they report ASB, and that it is addressed effectively and swiftly.
- 4.2 The Annual Complaints Performance report for 2024-25 indicates that 268 Stage 1 complaints were submitted regarding the Housing Management & Partnerships service. Out of these, 70 complaints (representing 26%) were related to anti-social behaviour or noise nuisance issues.
- 4.3 The Housing Ombudsman (HO) in the same period also made 49 determinations of maladministration against H&Ns services, four (8%) of the negative determinations related to ASB and Noise
- 4.4 Tenant satisfaction with ASB has also been in decline since 2022/23.

Tenant Satisfaction – ASB Case Handling



- 4.5 It is acknowledged that managing ASB cases presents significant challenges, and whilst ASB training for HMOs has been deployed, it can often take time for staff to develop the confidence required to enter tenant's homes and manage individuals who may be exhibiting a range of emotions, including, at times, aggressive behaviour.
- 4.6 In response to the decline in tenant satisfaction, the number of formal complaints received, and the determinations made by the Housing Ombudsman our response to ASB needs to improve and quickly.

- 4.7 It is therefore proposed that a core team of 4 housing officers from the existing HMP staffing structure, with the addition of a Housing Manager on a twelve-month temporary basis will undertake the responsibility for ASB case management.
- 4.8 This core team will focus exclusively on ASB case management and will also support neighbourhood housing officers in addressing environmental enforcement issues. This proposal will enable officers to dedicate more time to managing ASB cases and ensure that tenants receive an improved level of service.
- 4.9 It is imperative that front line housing officers maintain active involvement with matters arising in the neighbourhoods under their management. They are expected to monitor HMOs addressing anti-social behaviour, offer support through joint visits, and participate in multi-agency meetings to enhance professional development.
- 4.10 If approved, this model will be subject to ongoing review to assess its effectiveness.

5. Neighbourhood Plans

- 5.1 As outlined in paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6 of this report, we need to ensure that resource is deployed in the right place to improve service delivery for our tenants. To support this approach HMP is formulating Neighbourhood Plans that will incorporate data from a range of sources including.
- Feedback from tenants/TLP/TARAs/Cllrs/key stakeholders
 - Kirklees Observatory – deprivation, demographics, educational attainment, worklessness and health
 - Community Safety Partnership – Strategic Intelligence Assessment and District Intelligence plans.
 - Kirklees Joint Strategic Assessment (Health)
 - H&Ns data
 - Tenant satisfaction/feedback
 - Ongoing projects e.g, Clear, Hold Build in Ashview, improving recycling levels in North Kirklees
 - Levels of fly-tipping and general waste management across the district
- 5.2 Regular communication with tenants across a range of channels is key to the success of the neighbourhood plans. This will ensure there is opportunity for tenants to feedback about what matters most to them. To encourage engagement with tenant and resident/community groups a wider communication strategy will be developed to ensure tenants are informed about events in their area, policy changes, and service delivery.
- 5.3 The neighbourhood plans will be completed by November 25, enabling more meaningful engagement with tenants and stakeholders and will provide HMP with a solid basis for the efficient deployment of resource.
- 5.4 The finalised plans will be a live document that will continue to capture feedback and new areas for improvement. They will be delivered in conjunction with our tenants, partners and key stakeholders. The reporting structure for the outcomes achieved will be communicated when the plans are shared.

6. Staff Training and Development

- 6.1 To ensure our workforce possesses the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their roles effectively, a skills analysis is being undertaken to identify specific training needs. Additionally, a review of the induction programme is in progress, with a designated service manager appointed to oversee its future development.
- 6.2 It is noted that legal training for housing staff has not taken place recently. Legal Services plans to deliver training on tenancy breaches, which will include the updated conditions of the new Tenancy Agreement during November 25. The training will be designed to support housing teams to investigate and understand the steps required to advance a case through the legal process.

7 Implications for the Council

7.1 Council Plan

The redesign of the HMP service supports the Council Plan. It ensures we get the basics right, take responsibility, focuses on customers, collaborates, connects, listens, and responds.

7.2 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications for this proposal.

7.3 Legal Implications

N/A.

7.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

N/A.

7.5 Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) or Human Resources

N/A.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The service will consider any aspects of the service re-design that may require discussions with Trade Union colleagues.

9. Engagement

- 9.1 The Head of Service and Strategic Managers are attending team meetings in September 2025 to reinforce the above approaches, to reassure staff that support will be provided if needed, and to encourage feedback from staff.

10. Options

- 10.1 To note the content of the report, the work ongoing and the work already completed to re-design the HMP service.

11. Reasons for recommended option

- 11.1 The Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) survey outcome shows a decrease in tenant satisfaction compared to the previous year and lower performance compared to the Housemark benchmark of similar sized social housing providers.
- 11.2 We recognise that our TSM results demonstrate that we are below where we want to be as an organisation, and we are failing to meet the expectations of our tenants. The redesign of the service is necessary to improve the services we deliver to our tenants and neighbourhoods.

12. Next steps and timelines

- 12.1 This report highlights the many areas of work undertaken to re-design the HMP service. It is recognised that the changes needed to happen at pace. However, it is noted that the service has experienced a significant amount of disruption during the last 12 months. And although not fully implemented at this time, a significant amount of work and change has already taken place during a period of high levels of staff turnover, and key areas of work needing to be completed within tight timescales i.e. service change to achieve budget savings, the review of the Tenancy Agreement, and service charge review for tenants.
- 12.2 To ensure the service re-design is embedded it has been essential that the foundations of the service are robust, with effective mechanisms established to measure performance and demonstrate how we communicate with our tenants and communities. Adequate support has been required for managers and frontline staff throughout the changes already implemented.
- 12.3 The next steps for the HMP service are to complete the Neighbourhood Plans in collaboration with tenants, ward members, and key stakeholders. The correct deployment of resources to neighbourhoods will then be made.
- 12.4 The service needs to review communication with tenants, and how we can be pro-active in capturing the tenant's voice. Work has commenced with the Governance and Improvement team to create a communication plan that will support the objectives of the Tenant Voice Strategy.

13. Contact officer

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14. Background Papers and History of Decisions

- 14.1 N/A.

15. Appendices

- 15.1 Appendix 1 - Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) results.

16. Service Director responsible

Phil Jones for Home & Neighbourhoods
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Appendix 1 – Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) results.

Code	Measure	% 2023/24	% 2024/25	TREND	2025/26 Mid Year	TREND	National Benchmark Posiiton (Reference)
TP01	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with the overall service from their landlord.	63.20%	57%	↓	65%	↑	68%
TP02	Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the overall repairs service.	68.80%	67%	↓	75%	↑	70%
TP03	Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair.	66.30%	64%	↓	72%	↑	66%
TP04	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is well maintained.	63.40%	59%	↓	68%	↑	68%
TP05	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is safe.	69.40%	66%	↓	73%	↑	74%
TP06	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them.	53.20%	50%	↓	58%	↑	60%
TP07	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps them informed about things that matter to them.	60.70%	57%	↓	64%	↑	65%
TP08	Proportion of respondents who report that they agree their landlord treats them fairly and with respect.	73.40%	69%	↓	74%	↑	77%
TP09	Proportion of respondents who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are satisfied with their landlord's approach to complaints handling.	23.20%	22%	↓	26%	↑	31%
TP10	Proportion of respondents with communal areas who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained.	56.10%	46%	↓	55%	↑	65%
TP11	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood.	54.90%	50%	↓	55%	↑	60%
TP12	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with their landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour.	46.50%	40%	↓	47%	↑	53%