

Public Document Pack



**Service Director – Legal, Governance and
Commissioning**

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Monday 2 June 2025

Notice of Meeting

Dear Member

Cabinet

The **Cabinet** will meet in the **Council Chamber - Town Hall, Huddersfield** at **1.30 pm** on **Tuesday 10 June 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 cursive script, 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.

Cabinet Members:-

Member	Responsible For:
Councillor Carole Pattison	Leader of the Council / Culture and Change
Councillor Moses Crook	Deputy Leader of the Council / Transport and Housing
Councillor Beverley Addy	Cabinet Member – Public Health
Councillor Nosheen Dad	Cabinet Member – Adult Social Care and Corporate
Councillor Viv Kendrick	Cabinet Member - Children (Statutory Responsibility for Children)
Councillor Tyler Hawkins	Cabinet Member – Highways and Waste
Councillor Amanda Pinnock	Cabinet Member – Communities and Environment
Councillor Jane Rylah	Cabinet Member – Education
Councillor Graham Turner	Cabinet Member – Finance and Regeneration

Agenda

Reports or Explanatory Notes Attached

Pages

1: Membership of Cabinet

To receive any apologies for absence.

2: Minutes of Previous Meeting

1 - 8

To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 6 May 2025.

3: Declaration of Interests

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

4: Admission of the Public

Most agenda items will be considered in public session, however, it shall be advised whether the Committee will consider any matters in private, by virtue of the reports containing information which falls within a category of exempt information as contained at Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

5: Deputations/Petitions

The Cabinet 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: Questions by Members of the Public

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: Questions by Elected Members (Oral Questions)

Cabinet will receive any questions from Elected Members.

In accordance with Executive Procedure Rule 2.3 (2.3.1.6) a period of up to 30 minutes will be allocated.

8: Appointment of Cabinet and Portfolios (Notice under Article 7)

9 - 10

To note the appointment of Cabinet Members and portfolio allocations, in accordance with Articles 7.2.4 and 7.3.4 of the Constitution.

9: 2025/26 Proposed Allocation of Funding from the Children and Families Directorate, Learning and Early Support Capital Plan

11 - 28

To consider projects for approval, to be funded from the 2025/2026 Learning and Early Support Capital Plan.

Contact: David Martin, Corporate Landlord / Martin Wilby, Education Places and Access

10: Housing Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report and Self-Assessment 2024/25 29 - 130

To receive the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report for 2024/25.

Contact: Erran Taylor, Housing Services

11: Estate Buildings - Residential Development Update and Delivery approach 131 - 182

To receive an update on Estate Buildings and give consideration to the proposed delivery approach with a development partner.

Contact: Liz Jefferson, Housing Growth

12: Kingsgate Property Investment Fund - Loan Extension 183 - 192

To consider a one year extension of the previously approved Property Investment Fund loan for the Kingsgate Centre.

Contact: Liz Jefferson, Housing Growth

Exempt information is provided in the appendix to the report.

Consideration must be given to whether the public and press should be excluded from the meeting prior to the determination of the matter to enable the exempt information to be discussed by passing the following resolution:-

To resolve that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

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Contact Officer: Andrea Woodside

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CABINET

Tuesday 6th May 2025

Present: Councillor Carole Pattison (Chair)
Councillor Moses Crook
Councillor Beverley Addy
Councillor Munir Ahmed
Councillor Viv Kendrick
Councillor Amanda Pinnock
Councillor Graham Turner

Observers: Councillor Tanisha Bramwell
Councillor Andrew Cooper
Councillor Jo Lawson
Councillor Imran Safdar

Apologies: Councillor Tyler Hawkins

127 Membership of Cabinet

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hawkins.

128 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 April 2025 be approved as a correct record.

129 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

130 Admission of the Public

It was noted that all agenda items would be considered in public session.

131 Deputations/Petitions

Under the provision of Council Procedure Rule 10, Cabinet received a deputation from Mr John Avison, on behalf of Armitage Bridge Village Association, in regards to the declassification of Armitage Road (B6110).

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Ahmed).

132 Questions by Members of the Public

The Cabinet received and noted the following question that had been submitted by Mr John Avison in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11;

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“Would Kirklees Council consider lowering the classification of Armitage Road, Armitage Bridge from ‘B’ to ‘U’?”

A response was provided by the Leader of the Council.

133 Questions by Elected Members (Oral Questions)

Cabinet received the following questions in accordance with Executive Procedure Rule 2.3;

Question from Councillor Cooper

“Pursuant to the Cabinet Member’s response to the public question, in regards to the comment that gritting won’t be provided if the road is declassified, a large proportion of it is a bus route and so gritting would be retained. In regards to the bridge impacts, we’ve seen pictures of the vehicle that did the damage, and the impact is by large vehicles. In regards to navigation, on a daily basis HGVs are getting jammed up, damaging walls and vehicles and stopping the flow of traffic. We achieved a weight restriction on that stretch of road but it isn’t enforced and so it would be easier to have the road declassified to stop vehicles using the route in the first place. I’d like more detail on the answer that the Cabinet Member has provided. In regards to lineage, I’m pleased that Bankfoot Lane is being done, but more generally we’ve got lineage in the town centre and permit parking zones which isn’t being done and that’s reducing a revenue stream for the council and also means that people who have paid for parking permits are not receiving the service they pay for because lineage in parking permit areas can’t be enforced. So, can we look again at Armitage Bridge and the claims that declassification won’t make a difference?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Ahmed).

Question from Councillor J D Lawson

“I welcome the new Government initiative to get tough on fly tipping but I hope there will be money to address the causes of fly tipping. Kirklees needs to look at how we stop fly tipping with a two-pronged approach, opening the tip 7 days a week, maybe a token bulky goods fee charge to encourage residents to use Kirklees services and not unregistered operatives. We could also look at initiatives use in other authorities whereby wagons and trucks go to hotspots to collect waste and household goods and residents bring the items to the wagons.

I wish to raise the state of Yews Hill play area. The latest fly tip was reported in the middle of March, the pile has now grown and still we are told that it doesn’t warrant covert monitoring. I also have concerns regarding the lack of collection of bags of fly tipping collected by volunteers. There are bags still waiting collection from a litter pick that took place in my ward in February. The Calder Conservation Group in Dewsbury have been waiting six weeks for their litter pick to be collected.

Councillor Arshad asked me to raise the work of litter pickers on Sands Lane, Dewsbury, who are still waiting after nine weeks for the litter to be collected, and

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have had to go and re-bag the waste as it was being ripped by vermin. The sight of the bags has also attracted further fly tipping at the site.

We should be championing volunteers. If we have people cleaning out street for us surely we should take the waste away in a timely fashion?

Could you tell me how much Kirklees Council is paying to remove fly tipping, what is the whole time equivalent for the fly tip team, and does this differ from this time last year?"

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Ahmed).

Question from Councillor Bramwell

"My question relates to fly tipping and maintenance cutbacks. On Moor end Lane there is a huge access point to an open space to the back of Moorside estate. The maintenance of this land was cut back. According to my HMOs this area hasn't been maintained or cut back for over six years, who have made requests. It has now become a hotspot for fly tipping and we are seeing referrals coming almost daily from residents, which have been passed to the HMOs. Officers are at a stalemate as the fly tipping won't be removed until the land has been maintained and the land won't be maintained until the fly tipping has been removed.

I would like advice. Its having a massive impact on the residents on Moorside Road. Their gardens are close to vermin and rat faces. Where do we turn as Councillors with this issue if this is the feedback that we are getting from Officers?"

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport (Councillor Crook).

Question from Councillor Safdar

"Residents have asked me a couple of questions regarding tips. On a number of occasions the Vine Street/Emerald Street tip has been closed 12/15 minutes early with queuing traffic, so can we ask the Cabinet Member to find out why residents are left stranded in their cars? How much money has the Council saved by ceasing the operation of rubble skips at the household waste and recycling centres? In our ward we are seeing building waste, diy waste, rubble etc being dumped. We need to think about extending the hours of the sites. Environmental enforcement have told us that further signage and cameras can't be provided but let's try to find another way to put a camera up on the Lees Hall estate area."

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Ahmed).

134 Healthy Child Programme

(Under the provision of Council Procedure Rule 36(1), Cabinet received representations from Councillors Cooper and J D Lawson).

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Cabinet received a report which provided the Cabinet with information regarding the re-procurement of the Healthy Child Programme, specifically (i) an overview of the programme (ii) the background to the programme contract (iii) the vision of the new programme (iv) an update on the key milestones for the competitive tender process of the programme and (v) the governance process undertaken.

Cabinet noted that the Healthy Child Programme was a national evidence based public health initiative aimed at improving the health and well being of children and young people from the antenatal period up to the age of 19 (and to 25 for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) through the means of health and development reviews, health promotion, parenting support and screening immunisation programmes.

The report advised that the procurement process would evaluate submitted bids up until August 2025 and work would then take place with the successful bidder with the new contract scheduled to commence on 1 April 2026. It was noted that the value of the Healthy Child Programme contract would be £8.1m per annum for the first five years of the contract and would be funded from the ring fenced public health grant.

RESOLVED - That the Health Child Programme Report be received and noted.

135 Highways 2 Year Detailed Capital Plan allocation 2025/26 and 2026/27

(Under the provision of Council Procedure Rule 36(1), Cabinet received a representation from Councillor J D Lawson).

Cabinet received a report which advised of the intended delivery programme for the Highways Capital Plan budget allocation for the years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 and identified the planned highways projects for 2025-2026 and indicative programme 2026/2027. Cabinet were advised that the Highways Capital Plan, which included additional grants from the Department for Transport and the West Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority, outlined circa £20.8m of investment in highways infrastructure over the next 12 month period, and circa £16.4m investment in 2026 -2027.

The report provided an overview of how the investment had been prioritised and how the works would support regional objectives. It set out a breakdown of allocated budgets and detailed programmes of planned works for all highway asset groups, including highways maintenance, repairs of structure, replacement of life expired street lighting columns, upgrades to signalised crossings, junction improvements and works to improve road safety and encourage active travel by making of road routes more accessible.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That approval be given to the budget and programme/scheme allocations within the detailed two year Highways Capital Plan to the sum of £20,827,680 and £16,453,364 for 2025/2026 and 2026/2027 respectively (Appendices A and B refer), to allow the budget allocation and spend on the schemes identified to improve the Highway Network and increase safety on the roads

whilst improving air quality and positively impacting climate change across the district.

- 2) That approval be given to the delegation of authority to the Executive Director (Place) or the Service Director (Highways and Streetscene) in consultation with the Cabinet Member (Environment and Highways), and any other Cabinet Members, as considered appropriate by the Executive Director (Place), to enable any amendments to be made to identified schemes, agree the addition of future schemes, and award funding (within £20,827,680) for those schemes in accordance with Council Financial Procedure Rules.
- 3) That approval be given, where necessary, to accelerate spend of the City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement and accelerate the two year forward programme through delegation to the Cabinet Member for Highways.
- 4) That authority be delegated to the Service Director (Highways and Streetscene) in consultation with the Service Director (Legal, Governance and Commissioning) to negotiate, agree and enter into the terms of any applicable funding agreements (and associated documents) to enable individual projects and schemes to proceed.

136 Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure fund (LEVI) Charging Points in Kirklees Residential Areas

Cabinet gave consideration to a report which provided details of the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund Project. The report advised that the total value of the capital grant from WYCA would be £2,494,389 and this would be added to the capital plan, which would be supplemented by approx. 50/60% additional investment from private providers, both for initial installation and ongoing revenue costs for the duration of the project, which would lead to a total investment of approx. £3.8m.

The report explained that WYCA had been awarded grants of £1.5m (revenue) and £14.44m (capital) from the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund and all five West Yorkshire districts had been allocated an equal share of £282,000 for phase 1, and Kirklees had been awarded £2,212,389m for phase 2. A breakdown of the phases was set out in the report. It was noted that the project would deliver charging infrastructure in areas which were currently deemed to be non commercially viable to the private sector and that the project aimed to bring the infrastructure closer to densely terraced areas to support residents who wished to consider the use of electric vehicles.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That authority be delegated for the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund to be added to the Capital Plan, the value of which shall be £2,494, 389.
- 2) That the sites included in Phase 1 be noted and the use of these sites be authorised for the delivery of Phase 1.
- 3) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director (Place), in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, to identify and agree up to 10 additional off-street sites for Phase 1, if for whatever reason, the agreed sites in Phase 1 are not deliverable or additional funding becomes available.
- 4) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director (Place), in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, to agree the number, type and speed of

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- any EV charge point on any site (Council owned land) or land constituting adopted highway for the delivery of the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund project.
- 5) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director (Place), in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, to identify and authorise the use of the Council owned land, including off street parking places and in the Highway for Electric Vehicle Charging infrastructure leading to the installation of EV charge points in Phase 2.
 - 6) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director (Place), in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, to determine if the requirement of a car parking fee or a parking permit for the use of EV charging should be applicable and to make amendments to the Parking Places Order(s) and/or a Traffic Regulation Order or a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order to facilitate a charging strategy for any site or sites.
 - 7) That authority be delegated to the Service Director (Development) to negotiate and agree terms for leases of Council land and agreements for positioning equipment on the highway including the actual location of the charge points, consideration payable, terms of the agreement and area of demise for any sites included in the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund Project.
 - 8) That the procurement process conducted by West Yorkshire Combined Authority be noted and authority be delegated to the Service Director (Environmental Strategy and Climate Change) to contract with the selected provider(s) for the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund Project.
 - 9) That authority be delegated to the Service Director (Legal, Governance and Commissioning) to enter into all agreements necessary to affect the arrangements set out within these resolutions.

137 Combined Authorities (Adult Education Functions) (Amendment) Order 2025 (Under the provision of Council Procedure Rule 36(1), Cabinet received a representation from Councillor Cooper).

Cabinet received a report which requested that consideration be given to the Combined Authorities (Adult Education Functions) (Amendment) Order 2025 which had been published in draft form by the Department for Education. The report advised that the order proposed the transfer of funding powers from Government to Combined Authorities and Combined County Authorities to enable them to utilise their Adult Skills Fund budgets to fund new technical qualifications developed by 2024 by the Institute for Apprenticeships and technical Education, and that the consent of each of the constituent local authorities forming the West Yorkshire Combined Authority was required to make the Order.

Cabinet noted that the agreement would ensure that adult learners in Kirklees were able to access the full range of new technical qualifications developed by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education from the start of the 2025/2026 academic year, and would enable the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to draw down funding from the Adult Skills Fund to support these qualifications.

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It was noted that formal consent was required from each of the West Yorkshire Combined Authorities to enable the Order to be ratified, finalised and enacted before the parliamentary recess to ensure that the delivery of new qualifications could commence at the start of the 2025/2026 academic year.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That consent be granted in principle to the Department of Education's creation of a statutory instrument – the Combined Authorities (Adult Education Functions) (Amendment Order) 2025 conferring additional funding powers for adult education functions to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.
- 2) That it be noted that the Chief Executive of the Combined Authority, in consultation with the Mayor of the Combined Authority, will finalise and consent to the final draft of the Order and any related changes to existing statutory instruments.

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KIRKLEES COUNCIL NOTICE UNDER ARTICLE 7 OF KIRKLEES COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

I give notice under Article 7.2.4 and 7.3.4 of the Kirklees Council Constitution that I wish to make the changes to the Cabinet portfolio of functions described below, including the Councillors appointed as Deputy Leader and with Statutory Responsibility for Children.

Executive Functions and Delegations to the Cabinet and others including officers will remain as set out within Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

Name	Description of Portfolio or other responsibility
Carole Pattison	Leader - Culture and Change
Moses Crook	Deputy Leader - Transport and Housing
Graham Turner	Finance and Regeneration
Viv Kendrick	Children's Services (Statutory Responsibility for Children)
Beverley Addy	Public Health
Nosheen Dad	Adult Social Care and Corporate
Amanda Pinnock	Communities and Environment
Jane Rylah	Education
Tyler Hawkins	Highways and Waste

Leader the Council

Signed



Date 23/05/2025

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Report title: 2025/26 Proposed allocation of funding from the Children and Families Directorate, Learning and Early Support Capital Plan.

Cabinet date	10th June 2025
Cabinet Member	Finance & Regeneration (Corporate Landlord) - Cllr Graham Turner Children’s Services - Cllr Viv Kendrick Education – Cllr Jane Rylah
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	Yes Yes
<p>Purpose of Report This report will identify potential capital projects, for Member information and approval, to be funded from the 2025/26 Learning and Early Support Capital Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Maintenance section of the Capital Plan to address urgent condition related needs in maintained schools. • Strategic Priorities District Sufficiency including ARP’s/Satellite section to increase local sufficiency of SEND places in schools linked to the Kirklees SEND Transformation Plan. 	
<p>Recommendations Cabinet Members are requested to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider and approve the business case at Appendix A which outlines the rationale for the schools’ condition works programme, the availability of funding, the selection process and the main categories of work, thereby enabling the projects concerned to be designed, procured and implemented. • Consider and approve the detailed list of proposed condition works in schools for 2025/2026, which is attached at Appendix B. • Note the update on the Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARP’s) / Satellites Phase 1 programme. • Consider and approve the two proposed new ARP schemes identified within this report, to support the creation of additional places for children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND). • Approve the delegated powers to the relevant Service Directors as detailed in paragraphs 2-16 - 2.18 of this report in order to aid the management of the schools’ baseline condition and the ARP / Satellite sites SEND programmes 	

Reasons for Recommendations

The vital schools condition programme will address urgent Health & Safety related capital condition works across the maintained schools' portfolio and will help ensure that they remain safe, dry, warm and secure, ensuring positive outcomes for children both now and in the future. Ensuring our children and young people with additional needs can live and be educated in their local communities as a key priority. Therefore, providing a range of places available locally for children with SEND in the form of ARP/Satellite Provision is an essential part of the Council's SEND Transformation Plan. This capital investment will ensure families in Kirklees continue to have access to an appropriate school place benefitting from the improved facilities we are able to deliver with this investment.

Resource Implication: The capital works within the programmes identified in this report are funded through government grant.

Date signed off by Executive Director & name

David Shepherd (Place) – 23/05/2025
Tom Brailsford (Children & Families) – 25/05/2025

Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?

Kevin Mulvaney – 23/05/2025

Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Governance and Commissioning?

Samantha Lawton – 29/05/2025

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: No

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? There are no GDPR implications relating to this report.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report will identify potential projects to be funded from the Learning and Early Support Capital Maintenance baseline section of the Capital Plan approved by Council on 5th March 2025. This funding is used to address urgent condition related needs in maintained schools. Academies and Voluntary Aided Schools have access to their own capital funds through their Responsible Bodies.
- 1.2 An update is provided on the investment in the first phase of ARP's and satellite provision to increase local sufficiency of SEND places linked to the Kirklees SEND Transformation Plan.
- 1.3 Members will be asked to consider and approve the Capital Maintenance and APR's/Satellite programmes with the proposed named schemes so that they can be delivered in 2025/26 and to approve the authorised delegated powers for officers to manage these programmes. This enables further investment in the creation, expansion or enhancement of places for children with SEND and management of the Capital Maintenance programme.

2.0 Information required to take a decision

(a) Background

- 2.1 In April 2024 the Department for Education (DfE) announced a Schools Condition Capital grant allocation for 2024/25 of £3.488M for Kirklees. This level of grant was also

to be indicative of the allocation for the Authority for 2025/26, subject to future confirmation by the Department in spring 2025.

- 2.2 The DfE revised the condition funding system and methodology used for their capital settlements in 2022/23, using new data from their National Condition Data Collection, and more up-to-date pupil numbers from the spring 2020 census. Weighted pupil numbers underpin funding calculations for the School Condition allocations. The numbers are weighted to reflect the different levels of floor area per pupil in different settings. We expect this same methodology to be used for future years' allocations.
- 2.3 Grant allocations from the Department are revised annually to reflect new or closing schools and where a school moves to a new responsible body (e.g., from Maintained to Academy status), in which case the pupil-led core condition funding will move with the schools. An in-year grant reduction for 2024/25 was applied by the DfE in October last year due to three schools academizing of £113,596, this has been deducted from the 2025/26 Capital Plan allocation. Altogether, five maintained schools converted to Academy status in 2024/25. When setting the Council's Five-Year Capital plan, we estimated that our grant allocation for 2024/25 from the DfE would be £3.1M. The DfE has since made an announcement on the 22nd May 2025 that the Schools Condition Capital grant allocation for Kirklees will be £3,576,238, significantly more than originally forecast.
- 2.4 In addition to the original allocation of £3.1M and grant reduction, in year re-profiling of funds totalling £627,679 was completed bringing the total budget approved at Council on 5th March 2025 to £3,614,083. Since this date, the new grant allocation announcement (additional £476,238), further re-profiling on uncommitted funds from 2024/25 (£532,000) and rollover funds (£676,780, of which £587,439 is contractually committed) have increased the 2025/26 budget to a total of £5,299,101. The re-profiling of funds from 2024/25 is primarily related to additional condition funds received in previous years designated for aging modular classroom replacement schemes and a delay in developing the fire safety works schemes. A programme of schemes that maximises the use of the re-profiled funds is currently being worked up by the Schools Asset Management Team and Fire Safety Team.

(b) Capital Maintenance for schools – Proposed condition based projects 2025/26

- 2.5 It is proposed that the £5.299M budget allocation for 2025/26 will be distributed as follows pending approval of the 5 Year Capital Plan Outturn report due at Council in July 2025:

Allocation	2025/26 Capital Plan
Urgent condition needs-based projects and Health & Safety works	£3.219M
Aging modular classroom moves/replacement/repair schemes	£0.600M
Essential fire safety works	£0.490M
Essential Physical adaptations works	£0.030M
Capital Plan preparation, advance surveys, feasibility studies, advance design, and condition surveys in relation to delivery of projects	£0.150M
Risk pot for emergency additions to the capital plan in year / balance for high tenders and asbestos removal.	£0.223M
2024/25 Rollover to committed schemes	£0.587M
TOTAL	£5.299M

- 2.6 Attached at **Appendix A** is a business case that outlines the process for identifying the condition needs of individual schools, explains how the backlog of repairs is prioritised across all schools and how the 2025/26 schools' condition programme, if approved, will be designed, procured and implemented. In order to maximise spend on works it is proposed to manage asbestos risk via the main risk pot which will be carefully monitored throughout the year.
- 2.7 Following feasibility work undertaken by the Council's Technical Services; a prioritised list of urgent condition works required to be undertaken in schools during 2025/26 has been identified. This is attached at **Appendix B**. All of the works proposed have scored 28-30 on the matrix scoring system (described in **Appendix A**), indicating that a failure of the element concerned would have a major impact on the individual school from a Health and Safety and/or building closure and/or building damage perspective.
- 2.8 The proposed programme of works primarily consists of the following categories of work:
- replacement of life expired flat and pitched roofs.
 - whole or partial school electrical re-wires.
 - replacement of obsolete boilers and heating distribution systems.
 - urgent health and safety works including fire safety improvements and structural repairs.
- 2.9 In addition to the new condition works, the following activities are also proposed to be funded from the available capital grant:
- £150K to cover survey and preparation costs for the 2025/26 programme along with advance feasibility and design costs for the 2026/27 programme.
 - £223K for a risk pot for items such as emergency in year additions to the programme, higher than anticipated tenders and unexpected asbestos discovered once works are under way.
- 2.10 Currently, all schools that have a scheme of work within the approved programme are asked to make a funding contribution from their Devolved Formula Capital (DFC), which is a capital grant given to schools to maintain and improve their buildings. In recent years, the level of DFC received has allowed for over £80K of additional works to be added into the annual programme. Although, as with the Capital Maintenance grant, this fund is decreasing year on year due schools moving to Academy status. The level of DFC contributions for 2025/26 is yet to be determined but will be added to the Capital Maintenance programme throughout the financial year.

(c) District Sufficiency ARP's/Satellites – Phase 2 update and proposed schemes 2025/26

- 2.11 On the 27th June 2023 Cabinet approved phase 1 ARP's/Satellite schemes to be delivered to help ensure there were sufficient SEND school places available within Kirklees. In order to complete these works and respond quickly to other opportunities Cabinet were asked to approve delegated authority for Service Directors to transfer resources within capital programme areas in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules.
- 2.12 Further to the named schemes approved at June 2023 Cabinet the following projects listed below have been undertaken using the delegated authority referred to above:

- Netherhall Junior School
Additionally Resourced Provision for up to 12 children with complex communication and interaction needs. Work was required for classrooms and toilets remodelling including the creation of sensory and regulation spaces. Estimated cost £120K.
- Woodley Moor
Temporary Special School Satellite Provision in Crosland Moor for up to 25 children. Woodley Moor has enabled Woodley School and College to increase pupil numbers prior to moving to their new, purpose-built school. The provision has used an empty council-owned building. Work required to enable this included creating classrooms, toilet facilities for pupil, creating of a hygiene room, installation of sensory-friendly lighting and access controls. External areas were cleared, made safe and a safe pupil drop-off zone created. Estimated cost £291K.
- Old Bank Academy
Additionally Resourced Provision for up to 16 children with cognition and learning needs, operational from September 2023. Further minor internal configuration works were identified to meet the needs of pupils with secondary needs of complex communication and interaction difficulties. Estimated cost £20K.

2.13 On 5th March 2025 Council approved the 5 Year Capital Plan which included the 2025/26 ARP's/Satellites budget of £929K. Since then, the DfE has announced an additional £6.118M of High Needs Provision Capital Grant for 2025/26 to Kirklees, pending approval by Council in June 2025 this will be added to the Learning & Early Support Capital Plan for the allocation to projects to support the SEND Transformation Plan.

2.14 Officers are currently working with Schools and Capital Delivery colleagues to identify the following priority works to support the creation of additional SEND provision to be funded from the 2025/26 budget:

- New Mill Infants School
Additionally Resourced Provision for up to 9 children with complex communication and interaction needs, subject to approval by the DfE Regional Director. Work will be required for classrooms and toilets remodelling including the creation of sensory and regulation spaces, secure external boundary and outdoor play spaces. Estimated costs £150,000.
- New Mill Junior School
Additionally Resourced Provision for up to 9 children with complex communication and interaction needs, subject to approval by the DfE Regional Director. Work will be required for classrooms and toilets remodelling including the creation of sensory and regulation spaces, secure external boundary and outdoor play spaces. Estimated costs £150,000.

2.15 In order to ensure that the Local Authority can discharge its statutory duty to provide sufficient high-quality places for children with SEND, it is expected that further opportunities to create, expand or enhance places for children with SEND will be required. Pending Council approval in July 2025, draw down from the additional High Needs Capital Grant allocation, through Service Director delegated authority, as schemes are developed will enable this fast-paced programme to be delivered (business cases will be presented at the Children's Service Capital Board).

(d) *Financial Delegations*

2.16 In order to aid the implementation of the baseline schools' condition programme for 2025/26 mentioned in this report, Members are requested to delegate authority in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rule 3.9 dated June 2025 (as approved at Council on 21st May 2025) to the Service Director – Development – PLACE Directorate to manage the implementation of the identified works within the respective agreed total programme budget and to:

- add new urgent projects to the 2025/26 programme without prior Cabinet approval providing that the total cost of the programme remains within the approved capital allocation set by Council and transfer resources to or from any unallocated resources within a programme area without restriction.
- Slip or delete projects in response to operational need and reallocate budget between projects during the course of 2025/26 providing that the total cost of the programme remains within the approved capital allocation to enable the effective management of the programme, especially during the exceptionally busy six-week summer break when the majority of these works will be delivered.

These delegations are additional to the general delegations set out in the Council's Financial Procedure Rules 3.9, dated June 2025, for Service Directors to:

- Transfer resources within a programme area without restrictions.
- Transfer resources between any project or programme area up to a maximum of £2,000,000 in any financial year.
- Transfer resources within programme areas between any year within the approved capital plan.

Subject to compliance with Financial Procedure Rules 3.10 and 3.11 and notification to the relevant Cabinet Member and appropriate Ward Members.

2.17 Significant amendments to the approved programme under delegated powers will be reported to Cabinet through the Quarterly Financial Monitoring process or through delegated decision notices on the Council's website.

2.18 In relation to the ARP / Satellite provision programme, Members are requested to delegate the same powers of officer delegation to add, slip or delete projects within the Strategy Priorities District Sufficiency programme to the Service Director for Learning and Early Support – Children's and Families.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

Should the proposals be approved, officers will work in close partnership with the schools to ensure the delivery of the projects to an excellent standard that will help secure positive outcomes for children both now and in the future.

There is regular engagement with the school system about progress with the Kirklees SEND Transformation Plan and work continues with individual schools to expand the number of places available in Additionally Resourced Provision, Satellite Provision and Special Schools.

3.2 **Working with Partners**

In preparing each of these proposals, Children's Services and Capital Delivery Officers work closely with the Senior Management of each school and, where appropriate, their respective Academy representatives to agree a package of works for each school.

The transformation of the SEND system to deliver better outcomes and on a sustainable financial basis is reliant on a strong partnership approach with Kirklees internal and external partners.

The opportunity for expanding places for Kirklees children and young people with SEND, cannot be realised without good relationships and collaboration with our education providers, local elected members and communities. Ensuring that we maximise opportunities for the next stages to be shaped by partners will be crucial to ensure that services are joined up and well understood.

3.3 **Place Based Working**

Schools are at the centre of their communities, delivering essential educational, health and well-being activities for children, parents and the wider community. These works will ensure that schools remain safe, dry, warm and secure for the benefit of all and deliver high quality places to meet the needs of local pupils.

One of the cornerstones of our SEND Transformation Plan is building provision within Kirklees to ensure there is sufficient capacity locally to meet need wherever possible. We recognise that some children may need to receive support outside of Kirklees, but we want to ensure that is kept to a minimum through better integration of provision and support across partners.

We are passionate about ensuring services are accessible to our Children and Young People and their families and plan to move towards a place-based approach of joined up working with services across Education, Health and Care.

3.4 **Climate Change and Air Quality**

The condition schemes identified in this report will ensure that we are replacing inefficient roofs, boilers, heating and electrical systems with modern, energy efficient materials and equipment that will contribute to an ever-reducing carbon footprint for the Council. For example, roofs will be repaired and insulated to modern standards, LED lighting and new ceilings will be introduced during rewire projects and heating distribution systems that are 40-50 years old will be replaced with new. These projects demonstrate the Council's commitment to investing and managing its school estate to ensure that the Council's Carbon Neutral Vision is supported and enhanced.

Enabling more children to go to their local school will have a positive impact and support Kirklees climate change / air quality ambitions.

3.5 **Improving outcomes for children**

The works identified in **Appendix B** are urgent condition works that could close a school, thereby disrupting the education of children, or represents a potentially significant H&S issue. Improvements in the condition of school buildings will have a positive impact in that they that will contribute to a safe, warm, dry and secure learning environment for all pupils and staff. This capital budget is also used to improve accessibility to school buildings when works are identified in relation to the needs of specific pupils, helping them to attend their local school where possible.

The investment in provision for children with SEND will improve outcomes for children by providing access to high quality facilities to meet the specific needs of children and young

people helping to ensure they have the widest opportunities to fulfil their aspirations and ambitions.

3.6 Financial Implications

The proposed capital programmes provide opportunities for small and medium sized contractors and sub-contractors to deliver projects for the Council potentially employing local labour and suppliers.

The investment in local state funded provision for children with SEND helps avoid the need for more expensive independent places.

3.7 Other (Financial)

The Capital investment outlined in this report for 2025/26 is funded from DfE capital grant and therefore has no impact on Council prudential borrowing.

3.8 Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

The Equality Act 2010 (Section 149) requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:

a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.

b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

An Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out for the Schools Condition programme. The IIA considered that there are no adverse impacts arising from this proposal under the duty and the overall impact will be positive.

4 Consultation

4.1 This report has been subject to consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate and the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, they were happy with the recommendations in report including the delegation of powers to the Service Directors for Learning and Early Support and Place.

4.2 Following approval by Cabinet, consultation will occur with the individual schools that are due to be part of the programme to discuss the scope of the works, proposed timings and decant options and this will continue throughout the year as the projects are developed, designed and implemented.

4.3 The Children's SEND Assessment and Commissioning team works closely with the Schools Asset Management team to identify pupils with disabilities to ensure that their needs are being met where appropriate. This involves close consultation with the individual schools concerned and parents to ascertain and agree the level of "reasonable adjustments" required to the school's buildings and grounds, and also to its day-to-day operations and curriculum.

4.4 The establishment of two new ARP's is subject to a significant change business case being presented to the Department for Education Regional Director by the responsible Multi-Academy Trust. Part of this process requires a public consultation, the outcome of which will form part of the decision-making process.

5 Engagement

Engagement with all the schools named in this report that have created or there are proposals to create SEND provision has been vital.

6 Options

6.1 Options Considered

Not undertaking this programme of urgent condition works would lead to the potential closure of the schools if the relevant items failed, as well as causing significant damage and/or creating H&S issues within schools.

It is not a cost-effective option to rely upon high-cost independent provision for children with SEND.

6.2 Reasons for recommended Option

Undertaking the proposed programmes of work will help ensure that our maintained schools remain warm, dry, safe and secure.

Children with SEND can access high quality local provision with facilities to meet their needs, provided in a cost-effective state funded model.

7 Next steps and timelines

Subject to approval of the proposed projects and final business case, Technical Services will ensure that the 2025/26 Capital Plan is updated, and the projects concerned are designed, developed, procured and implemented.

Continue to support the progress of the proposed ARP's and continue to explore further opportunities to meet the needs of children with SEND in Kirklees – ensuring enough of the right stuff (Sufficiency).

8 Contact officer

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9 Background Papers and History of Decisions

5th March 2025 Council: 5 Year Capital Investment Plan 2025/2026 to 2029/2030

26 July 2022, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) – Transformation plan update (including Safety Valve update),

27 June 2023, 2023/24 to 2027/28 Council Capital Plan – Proposed allocation of capital funding from the Directorate for Children's Achieve and Aspire Strategic Priorities in the capital plan.

SEND The Big Plan – Dec 2023

[SEND - The Big Plan! | How we plan for SEND | Kirklees SEND Local Offer](#)

12 March 2024, Kirklees Council Cabinet Report Increasing special school places for children with complex autism at Woodley School & College - final decision

SEND The Big Plan – What are we doing next - 2025

10 Appendices

Appendix A: Final Business Case for the Capital Maintenance Schools' Condition programme.

Appendix B: Detailed list of proposed 2025/26 Learning and Early Support Capital Maintenance Schools' condition programme.

11 Service Director responsible

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Jo-Anne Sanders – Service Director – Learning & Early Support – Tel: 01484 221000

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Project Title:	Capital Maintenance for Schools – Condition Programme
Project Manager:	David Martin
Client Service:	Learning & Early Support
Date of this OBC:	June 2025
KMC Capital total (Gross) (£000s):	£5.299M

DESCRIPTION

Description of the project and its purpose:

The Capital Maintenance for Schools grant is provided to all Local Authorities for expenditure on Schools to ensure that:

- buildings and equipment are properly maintained.
- health and safety issues are addressed and.
- a backlog of repairs does not build up over time.

In addition, Kirklees uses the funding to ensure that where required, schools are accessible for pupils with disabilities and that appropriate specialist equipment is provided to meet the needs of individual pupils. Since FY 2011/2012 Councils have been expected to fund physical adaptations to schools from the Capital Maintenance grant provided to all LAs. Specialist equipment will, wherever possible, be funded from revenue and only be capitalised as a last resort.

On 5th March 2025, the Council approved a Five-Year Investment Plan, which included proposed funding under Capital Maintenance for Schools totalling £3.614M, £3.1M for the main FY 2025/26 allocation and £514K of grant funding re-profiled from FY 2024/25. A DfE final grant announcement on 22nd May 2025 has confirmed the Schools Condition Capital 2025/26 allocation at £3.576M, further re-profiling and rollover fund, make the revised total programme figure of £5.299M

A programme of urgent condition works in schools totalling £4.309M is proposed. The key categories of works are:

- a programme of urgent and essential repairs to replace leaking and life-expired pitched and flat roofs. Incorporated in these works are enhancements or in some cases the introduction of insulating material, which greatly improves the thermal efficiency of the roof. This contributes to a reduction in the building's carbon footprint through lower energy usage. In the case of pitched roofs in Victorian schools it includes, where necessary, essential repairs to lath and plaster ceilings using a chicken wire and timber batten technique above the suspended ceiling. This greatly reduces the risk of old plasterwork falling through the suspended ceiling. These works also include replacing the existing suspended ceiling grid and luminaries with new energy efficient recessed lighting, which greatly enhances the teaching and learning environment for pupils and staff through an improved quality of lighting, whilst simultaneously contributing to lowering the building's carbon footprint and running costs.
- a programme of whole school electrical re-wiring projects to replace life expired existing systems and to comply with the latest legislative standards. As well as full replacement of the electrical wiring systems, these projects have the added benefit of providing new ceilings and modern, energy efficient LED lighting which provide the schools with a fresh look and greater energy efficiency. Where appropriate, these projects also incorporate improvements to ICT infrastructure e.g., enhancement or rationalisation of data point coverage and the replacement of the existing fire alarm and/or lightning protections systems and provides the opportunity to manage asbestos to support ongoing maintenance of building fabric and other services.
- replacement of inefficient and obsolete boilers with energy-efficient boiler plant and/or the replacement of inefficient heating distribution systems, with low surface temperature radiators providing better control. These works can also have a positive impact on the working environment for pupils and staff as they lead to the provision of heating that better matches an individual school's requirements, reducing energy wastage and utility costs and contributing to meeting the Council's carbon reduction targets.
- A programme (£490K) of essential fire safety works in schools arising from Fire Risk Assessments carried out by the schools/Local Authority.

- A programme (£600K) of improvements to aging modular buildings through replacement or refurbishment.

In addition to the H&S programmes, there is an allocation of £150K for preparation costs for the FY 2025/26 and 2026/27 capital plans. These costs include feasibility studies / asbestos surveys / condition surveys / advance design in relation to the preparation and implementation of projects.

- There is an allocation of £223K to act as a risk pot for emergency schemes that may emerge as the financial year progresses. As the backlog of repairs exceeds the availability of capital, it has only been possible to fund projects with a matrix score of 28-30. Inevitably, there is a risk that schemes that miss the programme cut may deteriorate during the course of FY 2025/26 prompting the need to bring some projects back into the programme in order to tackle serious H&S issues or potential school closures. The risk pot also covers unexpected discoveries of asbestos on site once works have started and the impact of increased inflation on material costs as previously experienced in 2024/25.
- An allocation of £30K is provided to cover disability access schemes not yet identified. In all schools the Head teacher and governing body are asked to consider if reasonable adjustments to how they deliver the curriculum can be made without the need to undertake physical adaptations. In addition, consideration is given as to whether specialist equipment can meet the needs of the individual. Where physical works are required, consideration is given to minimising the level of works required to that which would be considered to be “reasonable.” In all cases, the works identified are either required to enable the admission of pupil(s) to the school chosen by their parents / carers from the start of the new academic year in September 2025 or are required to meet the needs of schools where pupils have already been admitted but where adaptation works have subsequently been identified. Works to schools will have wider benefits for staff, visitors and the local communities by increasing the accessibility of the buildings and grounds for all.

Allocation methodology for condition funding

Every school receives a condition survey covering internal and external fabric, mechanical and electrical services, as well as external areas on a planned rolling five-year programme. All surveys are undertaken by the Council using external consultants and are funded through a combination of the Schools Traded Service for Repairs and Maintenance and the Learning & Early Support Schools Condition programme.

The information collected is stored on the Council’s K2 Asset Management database and is used to set the Council’s capital investment plan for schools, as well as being used by schools themselves to prioritise expenditure from their revenue Repair and Maintenance budgets and their Devolved Formula Capital allocations.

All surveys are based on the DfE’s condition surveying methodology, which has been in operation since 2000. The methodology allocates a condition and priority to each individual element using nationally agreed DfE stipulated grades as follows:

GRADE	MEANING
A	Good - Performing as intended and operating efficiently.
B	Satisfactory - Performing as intended but exhibiting minor deterioration
C	Poor - Exhibiting major defects and / or not operating as intended
D	Bad - Life expired and / or serious risk of imminent failure.
Priority 1	Urgent work that will prevent immediate closure of the premises and / or address an immediate risk to the health and safety of occupants and / or remedy a serious breach of legislation.
Priority 2	Essential work required within two years that will prevent serious deterioration of the fabric or services and / or address a medium risk to the health and safety of occupants and / or remedy a less serious breach of legislation.
Priority 3	Desirable work required within three to five years that will prevent deterioration of the fabric or services and / or address a low risk to the health and safety of occupants and / or remedy a less serious breach of legislation.
Priority 4	Long term work outside the five-year planning period that will prevent deterioration of the fabric or services.

This results in each element of a school building and its grounds receiving a grade that indicates its current condition and life expectancy e.g. A 35-year-old boiler might be rated D1 which indicates that the item is life expired and in urgent need of replacement whilst a five-year-old boiler might be rated A4, which means that it is in a good condition and needs no major investment in the next five years.

As the backlog of repairs exceeds the capital available, a matrix scoring system is used to prioritise the backlog of urgent priority 1-3 works, considering issues such as health and safety, the remaining life of the element and the impact of a failure on the building. Each of the three categories is allocated a maximum of 10 points, which produces a maximum score of 30 points. The elements with the highest scores are considered for the condition programme. In using the above system, it can be demonstrated that the programme of works identified represents the most urgent and highest priority repairs for the Council.

A weighting system is employed to give greater importance to some types of repairs than others. Elements that receive a weighting are mechanical services, electrical services, roofs and external walls. Where the number of schools with a matrix score of 26 – 30 exceed the financial resources available, officers prioritise the programme according to the asbestos risk, continuation of previous phases, and links between mechanical & electrical works.

Weightings are not allocated to fixed furniture, external areas, redecoration, sanitary services and internal walls and doors. These areas are often prioritised by schools using their own DFC funds.

What are the benefits / critical success factors?

The Capital Maintenance for Schools baseline condition programme will help reduce the backlog of priority maintenance in Kirklees community / voluntary controlled / foundation / trust schools.

It will contribute to addressing a key priority for the Directorate for Children's Services, which is to ensure that all schools are warm, dry, safe and secure.

Many of the projects being implemented will have a direct impact on reducing the Kirklees carbon footprint – all new roofs will incorporate significantly improved insulation; new boilers will be modern, energy efficient equipment with the latest TREND controls; re-wired buildings will contain LED energy efficient lighting with significantly improved controls including movement sensors and dimming switches.

The programme is designed and procured to ensure that all schools re-open without loss of teaching days where physically and organisationally possible. Health and Safety concerns will always be taken into account before reopening a school after the summer works period.

FINANCE

KMC **Gross** Total (including external/grant funding if applicable) (£000):

Profile: Year

25/26

Sum

£5.299M

Funding for this section of the Capital Plan comes from the Capital Maintenance for Schools grant, which is not a ring-fenced capital grant, provided by the DfE for Councils to improve and maintain the condition of their schools' estates.

Lifespan of assets

New boilers fitted should have a life of 15-20 years, whilst new heating distribution systems should last 40-50 years. New flat roofs will have a lifespan of 15-30 years depending on the materials used (e.g., felt, asphalt, EPDM) whilst pitched slate roofs can have a life expectancy of 50-100 years+. Rewired electrical systems are expected to have a life of 25-40 years. This will be dependent of an appropriate planned regime of inspection/servicing/repair being carried out by schools and the Local Authority.

Lifecycle Capital costs (during the lifetime of the asset):

It is recognised that there are life cycle capital costs associated with this programme of works. All the roofs, boilers, electrical systems etc. installed will require ongoing maintenance and eventual replacement. All elements of a school building and grounds are covered by condition surveys co-ordinated by the Schools FM team in conjunction with Corporate Landlord Compliance team. All condition related data is stored on the Council's K2 Asset Management system and is used to prioritise works for future capital replacement projects.

Responsibility for the lifecycle costs of this programme rests with the schools and the Council. Schools undertake significant capital repairs / replacement works from their Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) and their own revenue budgets. The Council undertakes capital works in schools using the Capital Maintenance Grant provided by the DfE.

Revenue Implications

Increased levels of insulation in new roofs, the installation of energy efficient boilers, the introduction of energy saving lighting and other devices and the greater use of sustainable technologies should have a positive impact on school running costs by reducing energy usage and therefore bills. These works should also reduce school maintenance costs in the short term by providing new assets, though schools will need to ensure that appropriate revenue budgets are set in the medium and long term in order to maintain the new assets properly. Due to the way that the Kirklees LMS scheme operates any revenue savings will accrue to the individual schools rather than the overall Dedicated Schools Grant.

DELIVERY & MANAGEMENT

How will the project be delivered/managed?

Delivery & Management.

Design and delivery of the Capital Maintenance programme is the responsibility of the Council's Technical Services. Within the Schools Facilities Management Team, the Asset Manager (Schools) and Asset Management Officers will act as a key link between schools and the allocated surveyor / external framework consultant / external framework contractor / Technical Advisor / Project Manager (the actual combination will be dependent on the procurement route for each individual project) to ensure the delivery of each scheme at an operational level. The Head of Service for Corporate Landlord and Capital will act as the Council's overall Project Executive.

How will the Programme/Project impact on hard-to-reach groups?

All sections of the community will benefit from improvements to their local schools including hard to reach groups such as lone parents, traveller families and minority ethnic groups as well as pupils with physical disabilities.

Is this subject to OJEU Regs?

None of the projects are individually large enough to fall under OJEU Regulations. Most projects will be tendered but where projects are delivered via Framework Agreements, these agreements will have already been subject to the full OJEU process.

How will this be procured:

This programme of works will be delivered through the Council's Technical Services. Works delivered externally by contractors will be tendered; or will be negotiated if delivered by KHN (Kirklees Homes & Neighbourhoods). We will also negotiate with private contractors on multi-phased schemes where contractors have performed well on the first phase of works – management of the procurement process will be through the Capital Delivery team.

Key risks in undertaking / not undertaking this programme/project:

This programme contains urgent condition items relating to school buildings (e.g., roof repairs; boiler replacements; whole school electrical rewires; H&S works etc.) that could, if not tackled, lead to damage to the buildings, H&S risks to the building occupants and the potential partial or full closure of schools, which would impact on the educational attainment of young people.

In running this large and varied programme, we encounter many risks including:

- There are some larger schemes (e.g., whole school re-wires or projects that combine different disciplines e.g., boiler replacement combined with a whole school re-wire) which will be complicated to deliver due to programming issues; availability of decant space etc.
- Many schemes will need to be undertaken during the summer holidays due to the nature of the works e.g., the replacement of a slate roof on a Victorian School and therefore any potential slippages could have serious consequences.

OTHER INFORMATION

Key Contacts

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Project	Ward	Expected Total Cost of Project
LEARNING & EARLY SUPPORT CAPITAL MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2025/26 - CONDITION PROJECTS		
2025/26 Capital Plan preparation costs - Advance Surveys/feasibility studies/asbestos surveys/condition surveys costs in relation to the delivery of Children's Service projects and advance design of projects for the 2026/27 programme.	Various	£150,000
Risk Pot for emergency additions to the Capital Plan/balance for high tenders/asbestos	Various	£223,112
2024/25 Rollover for committed schemes	Various	£587,439
Battysford CE (VC) Primary School - Boiler plant replacement	Mirfield	£148,000
Birkby I & N School- Fire safety works	Greenhead	£100,000
Birkby I & N School - Phase 1 rewire	Greenhead	£264,000
Birkby Junior School - Fire safety works	Greenhead	£60,000
Brockholes CE (VC) J & I School - Phase 4 felt roof replacement	Holme Valley North	£94,000
Clough Head J & I School - Rewire	Colne Valley	£176,000
Crossley Fields J & I School - Phase 3 KS2 window refurbishment	Mirfield	£120,000
Crow Lane Primary and Foundation Stage School - Fire safety works	Golcar	£85,000
Dalton School - Boiler plant replacement	Dalton	£120,000
Headlands CE (VC) J I & N School - Phase 2 roof section to rear	Liversedge & Gomersal	£175,550
Hepworth J & I School - Septic tank/drainage replacement	Holme Valley South	£90,000
Hightown J I & N School - Modular replacement/refurbishment after fire damage	Cleckheaton	£120,000
Holme J & I School - Stonework repairs	Holme Valley South	£20,000
Hopton Primary School - Fire safety works	Mirfield	£70,000
Lydgate J & I School - Lighting replacement (KS2 Extension)	Batley East	£85,000
Moldgreen Community Primary School - Resurface external playground	Almondbury	£70,000
Norristhorpe J & I School - Phase 1 felt roof replacement & slate roof to caretakers house	Heckmondwike	£190,000
Pentland I & N School - Replacement of old fan convectors	Dewsbury South	£79,000
Scapegoat Hill J & I School - Fire safety works	Colne Valley	£30,000
Shepley First School - Boiler plant replacement	Kirkburton	£144,000
Slaithwaite CE (VC) J & I School - Fire safety works	Colne Valley	£45,000
Various Schools - Disabled adaptations	Various	£30,000
Various Schools - Fire safety works	Various	£100,000
Various Schools - Modular moves/replacements/repairs	Various	£600,000
Various Schools - Mobile boiler plant replacements	Various	£10,000
Warwick Road Primary School - Partial heating distribution replacement with LST's	Batley East	£75,000
Wellhouse J & I School - Kitchen refurbishment	Colne Valley	£200,000

Project	Ward	Expected Total Cost of Project
Westborough High School - Phase 5 Condition & fire safety works	Dewsbury West	£257,000
Westborough High School - Internal drainage downpipe replacement	Dewsbury West	£30,000
Westmoor Primary School - Boiler plant replacement	Dewsbury West	£127,000
Westmoor Primary School - Phase 1 roofing works	Dewsbury West	£135,000
Westmoor Primary School - Phase 2 rewire	Dewsbury West	£178,000
Whitechapel Primary School - Phase 3 re-roof flat roof	Cleckheaton	£150,000
Wilberlee J & I School - Boiler plant replacement & heat pumps	Colne Valley	£161,000
Total		£5,299,101



REPORT TITLE: ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT AND SELF-ASSESSMENT 2024/25 (AGAINST THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN’S COMPLAINTS HANDLING CODE) AND UPDATED COMPLAINTS HANDLING AND REDRESS POLICIES

Meeting(s)	Cabinet
Date(s)	10 June 2025
Cabinet Member	Cllr Moses Crook Deputy Leader and Transport and Housing
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	Yes Yes
<p>Purpose of Report To provide Cabinet with the mandatory Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report for 2024/25 including the Council’s self-assessment set against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code for approval prior to submission to the Housing Ombudsman by 30th June 2025.</p> <p>To seek Cabinet approval of an updated Complaints Handling Policy and Redress Policy.</p>	
<p>Recommendations Cabinet is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2024/25, which includes the self-assessment against the Code, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2. • Provide its response to the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2024/25 and Annual Self-Assessment, along with any changes to either document which will then be submitted to the Ombudsman. Cabinet’s response is a mandatory requirement. • Delegate the Service Director – Homes and Neighbourhood to publish the final report including Cabinet’s response and the self-assessment, on the Council’s website, post submission. • Approve the updated Complaints Handling Policy and Redress Policy. 	
<p>Reasons for Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To meet the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code (‘Code’) which is statutory under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. 	
<p>Resource Implications: There are no significant resources implications associated with the production of the annual performance report and self-assessment which are currently funded via existing budgets in the Housing Revenue Account.</p>	
Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> & name	David Shepherd 23/04/2025
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	Kevin Mulvaney 15/05/2025

Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?

Samantha Lawton
20/05/2025

Electoral wards affected: All
Ward councillors consulted: None
Public or private: Public
Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Executive summary

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 introduced major changes in how social housing landlords are held accountable. Under this new framework, local authority landlords like us are now subject to stronger oversight by both the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator of Social Housing.

As part of these reforms, we are required to publish an Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report by 30 June 2025. This report shows how we are performing in handling complaints, how we are learning from them, and what we are doing to improve our services.

This report also works alongside the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), giving a full picture of how we are listening to residents, resolving concerns, and improving the quality of our services.

We have clear and specific duties in relation to both the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator of Social Housing:

- The Housing Ombudsman is responsible for ensuring that residents of social landlords have access to fair, effective complaint resolution. We must comply with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code, which sets out best practice for dealing with complaints quickly, fairly, and openly.
- The Regulator of Social Housing monitors how well landlords like us deliver core tenant services. They assess how effectively we respond to complaints, how we listen to residents, and how we take action based on feedback.

Together, these bodies hold us to account — and we are committed to meeting their expectations by being open, learning from complaints, and continuously improving.

2. What this report covers

The 2024/25 report includes:

- A review of how well we comply with the Complaint Handling Code.
- Our complaint volumes and performance data.
- Themes and reasons for complaints and escalations.
- Learning from the Housing Ombudsman’s findings.
- The steps we have taken to improve, and what we are planning to do next.

Our complaints performance this year

This year, we handled 772 Stage 1 complaints, a drop of 54 from last year. Of these, 64.34% were upheld, meaning we accepted that things went wrong and took steps to put them right. We responded to 82.71% of Stage 1 complaints within 10 working days, an improvement from 74.33% in 2023/24.

While we are encouraged by this progress, a third of all Stage 1 complaints (250 cases) escalated to Stage 2. This is an 18% increase from last year and shows that many residents still do not feel their concerns are resolved early enough.

At Stage 2, we responded to 68.18% of complaints within the target of 20 working days, down from 75.26% last year. We know this is not good enough and we need to do more to resolve complaints earlier and respond quicker at both stages.

Housing Ombudsman findings

The Housing Ombudsman made 21 decisions about complaints relating to our service this year, covering a total of 49 determinations. Of those, 65% included findings of maladministration — meaning the Ombudsman found we did not handle things properly.

This is a reduction from last year's 75% maladministration rate, but we know we need to go further. The sector average for local authority and ALMO landlords is currently 78%, so we are slightly below average — but still not where we want to be.

We fully accept the importance of learning from these findings and taking concrete action to avoid repeat failings.

Improved data and better understanding

This year, for the first time, we have had more detailed and structured data about complaints. This includes the specific reasons for resident dissatisfaction and why complaints escalate. Previously, broad categories like “poor communication” were used. Now we record the exact service areas involved — such as repairs, damp and mould, or antisocial behaviour. This clarity allows us to act more precisely and effectively. These insights, combined with learning from Housing Ombudsman determinations, have already informed a wide range of service improvements.

Service improvements to date

We have taken several important steps to address complaint themes and improve how we deliver services:

Complaint Handling Training: Over 400 staff members have completed complaint handling training, helping them respond more effectively, fairly, and within timescales.

Antisocial Behaviour (ASB):

- We launched a new ASB policy, with clear guidance for consistent case management.
- All housing management staff were trained on the new procedures.
- We introduced ASB audits to check that the policy is embedded in day-to-day casework.

New Housing Management System:

- We are preparing to roll out a new digital system later this year to improve how we record and manage resident issues, including complaints, ASB, and repairs.
- The system will support our Vulnerable Tenant Policy by helping us collect and review information so we can better support residents who need additional help.

Repairs and Property Investment:

- We have started redesigning our repairs process, including developing a new repairs IT system.
- Stock condition surveys will begin later this year, helping us plan smarter investment in homes that need it most.

Damp, Mould and Condensation (DMC):

- We have improved the way we respond to DMC issues, added treatment capacity, and built in vulnerability assessments.
- We have also set up a dedicated team to support residents experiencing repeat or complex DMC problems.

Compliments and Resident Satisfaction

While complaints help us learn, we also recognise and value positive feedback. This year we received 125 compliments — a 30.4% increase from last year — showing that many residents do appreciate the service they receive.

However, our Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) show that only 42.2% of residents are satisfied with how we handle complaints. This is a key area we are committed to improving. We want residents to have confidence that when things go wrong, we will listen and put things right.

Looking Ahead: What We Are Working On

We are continuing our improvement journey by:

- **Updating our Complaints Policy** to make it clearer, more accessible, and easier for residents to use.
- **Revising our Redress Policy** to ensure residents understand how and when we will offer compensation, apologies, or service improvements.
- **Launching our new Housing Management System**, which will improve how we manage complaints and consider resident vulnerability.
- **Rolling out our patch-based housing management model**, giving residents more direct access to housing staff in their neighbourhoods.
- **Beginning a 3-year programme of stock condition surveys** to help us target investment and improve homes where it's needed most.
- **Delivering the Tenant Voice Strategy** to ensure that tenants have a say in how we develop and deliver services to ensure the best outcomes
- **Embedding culture change** through the introduction of 'Our Council'

Conclusion

We understand the importance of complaints — they are not just problems to fix but opportunities to learn, improve, and build trust.

We have made some important progress this year:

- Improved complaint handling at Stage 1.
- More accurate data and insights into resident dissatisfaction.
- Stronger training and clearer policies, especially around ASB and repairs.
- Early implementation of service changes based on Ombudsman and tenant feedback.

We recognise that there is still more work to do and remain fully committed to:

- Complying with the Complaint Handling Code.
- Engaging transparently with the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator of Social Housing.
- Listening to our residents and using their feedback to shape a better, more responsive housing service.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Council Plan

3.1.1 As set out in the Council Plan, as a social landlord, the Council is '...striving to transform council services to become more modern, efficient and effective'. Of specific relevance to council housing under Priority 2, is '...the work to deliver transformation of services and homes for our housing tenants' which includes:

3.1.2 *Ensuring the tenant's experience (customer journey) informs the development and delivery of housing services throughout 2024-25 and ongoing* (relates to performance updates under Safety and Quality Standard (including Fire Safety and Damp, Mould and Condensation), Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard (including Complaints Handling), Neighbourhood and Community Standard (including Anti-Social Behaviour) and, Tenancy Standard (including Income Management).

3.1.3 We are committed to delivering the principles within 'My Council' which is essential to improving service delivery and outcomes for tenants. This fundamentally includes:

- Tenants having access to reliable and high-quality services.
- All employees understand how the work they do contributes to tenant experience and outcomes.
- Performance and contract management practices are embedded to ensure efficiency and quality.
- Tenants understand what to expect from the Council as set out in the tenancy conditions.
- Tenant involvement is representative of our communities and ensures that services are designed based on lived experience.
- Feedback is proactively sought on a regular basis and consistent communications ensure tenants understand how it is used to shape service improvements.
- Staff are visible and accessible to our tenants.

3.2 Financial Implications

3.2.1 Dissatisfied tenants are more likely to want to complain which has a direct impact on capacity and resources at a time of budget constraints. Complaints Handling is administered by the Customer Experience Team, comprising 5 FTE staff budgeted at £210,623 in 2024/25. Based upon the 1022 stage 1 and stage 2 complaints received in 2024/25, it costs on average £200 to administer each complaint received.

3.2.2 The Complaints Handling and Redress Policies will provide a more robust, consistent and transparent framework when considering redress and ensures that any compensation is fair, appropriate to the situation and protects council resources. In 2024/25 the budget was £20,000 and expenditure for the year was £54,852. The increased spend reflects the higher number of payments made and the level of compensation paid which is more in line with awards made by the Housing Ombudsman to improve our compliance against the code. In addition, the budget also now covers compensation payments that were previously paid from other budget headings e.g. rent refund, right to repair to ensure that all complaint resolution payments are visible in one budget.

3.3 Legal Implications

3.3.1 The Social Housing Regulation Act (2023) expanded the powers available to the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH). These now include the ability, upon the RSH determining a social housing provider is failing to meet its standards, to require a social housing provider to submit

a performance improvement plan; take emergency remedial action; issue penalties or pay compensation. The RSH's standards include Consumer Standards.

3.3.2 The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code became statutory on 1 April 2024 meaning that social housing landlords are required to follow the requirements set out in the code. The Social Housing Regulation Act (2023) places a duty on the Housing Ombudsman to monitor compliance with its Complaint Handling Code. The Housing Ombudsman has the power to make a social housing landlord apologise, carry out works or pay financial compensation

3.3.3 If complaint handling is poor and/or there are low levels of tenant satisfaction this could indicate that a social landlord may not be compliant with the RSH's Consumer Standards and/or the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code.

3.3.4 It is therefore important the Council continues to ensure it is managing complaints in accordance with legal and regulatory frameworks to avoid enforcement action.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

Not applicable.

3.5 Other (e.g., Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)

3.5.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) was undertaken to reflect the requirements contained within the revised joint handling code - [IIA-576688161](#). There were no actions confirmed but further assessments may be required as the approach to complaints handling continues to develop and improve.

4. Consultation

4.1 Under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code ('Code') is statutory, and the Council is required to produce an annual complaint performance and service improvement report including a self-assessment.

4.2 Landlords must ensure that this has been reported to Cabinet and published on the section of the website relating to complaints. When publishing the self-assessment as part of the annual report, the council must include Cabinet's response to the report to provide assurance that the self-assessment is a true reflection of the council's complaint handling. The response should set out how the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC), Portfolio Holder, Transport and Housing, has scrutinised and challenged the self-assessment and how any risks identified as part of the review have been addressed. The Annual Report was presented to the Portfolio Holder on 29 April 2025.

5. Engagement

5.1 The Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board (HNIB) was briefed on the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report on 13 May 2025. The Council's Tenant-Led Panel (TLP) were briefed at the Panel's meeting on 28 May 2025 who commented that it was a fair and honest assessment of complaints handling and recognition from the Council that improvements still need to be made. In addition, the TLP receive quarterly performance reports on complaints handling throughout the year.

6. Options

6.1 No other options have been considered in the development of this report.

Options considered

6.2 Not applicable.

Reasons for recommended option

6.3 Not applicable.

7. Next steps and timelines

7.1 Cabinet is asked to:

7.1.1 Consider the draft Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2024/25, which includes the self-assessment against the Code, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2.

7.1.2 Provide its response to the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2024/25 and Annual Self-Assessment, along with any changes to either document which will then be re-submitted to the Ombudsman. Cabinet's response is a mandatory requirement.

7.1.3 Authorise the Service Director – Homes and Neighbourhood to publish the final report including Cabinet's response and the self-assessment, on the Council's website, post submission.

7.1.4 Approve the updated Complaints Handling Policy and Redress Policy

8. Contact officers

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9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

9.1 None.

10. Appendices

10.1 Appendix 1: Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2024/25.

10.2 Appendix 2: Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment.

10.3 Appendix 3: Housing Ombudsman Landlord Report (2023-2024).

10.4 Appendix 4: Complaints Handling Policy.

10.5 Appendix 5: Redress Policy.

- 11. Interim Service Director responsible**
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Homes and Neighbourhoods

**Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement
Report 2024/25**

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Introduction

At Kirklees Council we aim to deliver high quality services, but we know that sometimes things go wrong and that you might not always be satisfied with our services. If that happens, you can make a complaint.

We have a complaints policy that is designed to ensure that if you need to make a complaint, we handle the complaint well and ensure that we put things right for residents. Customer satisfaction is very important to us, and we use your feedback from complaints to shape and make improvements to our services and procedures.

When dealing with housing-related complaints from our tenants or leaseholders, we follow the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code. This sets out how landlords are expected to deal with and learn from complaints, and it is a statutory requirement for all social housing landlords to abide by the code.

You can find out more information on the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code here: [Housing Ombudsman- Landlords Info-Complaint Handling Code](#)

Each year we carry out a self-assessment against the Code to ensure we are compliant and are handling complaints in the right way. We publish this on our website for our tenants and leaseholders. You can see a copy of our latest assessment here: [link to be added](#)

We are dedicated to using your feedback to drive meaningful change and enhance the overall customer experience. The lessons learned from complaints can improve the quality and focus of services provided. More information on what improvements have been made already and what is being undertaken this year can be found later in this report.

This report accompanies the self-assessment and covers three main topics:

- How well we deal with complaints
- Any issues the Housing Ombudsman has found in how we deal with complaints
- What service improvements we have made by learning from complaints

If you have any questions about this report, or any comments on how we deal with complaints, please contact us at HN.Customer.Service@kirklees.gov.uk

Governance statements

Leader of Kirklees Council

A statement will be provided following the meeting of Cabinet.

Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC)

In my role as the council's Cabinet Member responsible for Complaints (MRC), I have scrutinised and challenged the report including a self-assessment completed by officers on behalf of the council, and how any risks identified as part of this process have been addressed.

Whilst I appreciate complaints in themselves are an opportunity to learn, that some good practice exists in the way the Council handles complaints and that complaints have reduced in some key service areas, I have specifically challenged the overall number of complaints received and the number of complaints dealt with within the timescales set out in the Council's policy. I am concerned by the number of complaints escalated and not resolved at stage one, and the number of complaints upheld at both stages of the process indicating an ongoing degree of service failure. I am further concerned by the perception from tenants, as reflected in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), that service handling of complaints was not satisfactory.

I have sought assurances that necessary learning has been embedded into the way we work, not only with complaints handling but further 'upstream' in the way we deliver services. It is clear from the annual report that tenants would like better communication when, for example, a repair is requested but also throughout, and at every stage of that service interaction. The service has undergone improvements in its end-to-end repairs process over the last year with communication touchpoints now embedded within the process, reducing complaint volumes in this discrete area.

I have assured myself that the self-assessment against the Code is an accurate reflection of the Council's position, and I am satisfied that both short and long-term plans to rectify service deficits are in place and being progressed.

Along with the Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board and the Tenant Led Panel, I will continue to receive regular performance reports at my portfolio briefings, to ensure learning is being embedded and that improvements are having the desired impact on tenant experience.

As required in Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, this annual report has been published on the Kirklees Council website alongside policies and procedures, and our Complaints Handling Code Self-Assessment.

Complaints Handling Performance 2024/25

Summary Table

Table 1- Summary of Complaints Handling Performance

Activity	Position*	Variance	Next Steps
Stage 1 complaints responded to	772	 Reduction of 54 (6.5%) new complaints compared to 2023/24	Continue to actively promote and publicise our Complaints Policy
	82.71% in time	 An improvement of 8.38% responded to within 10 day timescale	Continue to improve the % responded to within 10 days
	64.34% upheld	 A 0.89% increase in upheld cases	Make the necessary improvements to reduce the % of upheld complaints
Stage 2 complaints responded to	250	 Increase of 45 (18%) complaint escalations to Stage 2	Continue to work with managers to ensure complaints are resolved at Stage 1
	68.18% in time	 A 7.08% reduction of complaints responded to in 20 days	Improve the % responded to within 20 days
	63.22% upheld	 A 2.17% increase in upheld cases	Make the necessary improvements to reduce to % of upheld complaints
Number of complaints not accepted	25	 6 last year	This is a positive trend and is an indicator of greater compliance against the Code
Housing Ombudsman determinations	49 (21 cases)	 8 determinations made last year	Continue to work with managers to ensure complaints are resolved and learning/service improvements delivered to stop complaints occurring in the first place
Number of compliments received	125	 38 more (30.4%) compliments received	Continue to find opportunities for residents to feedback on their positive experiences with us
Overall satisfaction with complaint handling	42.2%	No comparison due to survey improvements and amendments.	We have implemented a new and improved telephone satisfaction survey

Average amount of compensation paid

£418.72  £287.03

We have adopted the new Housing Ombudsman Financial Remedies Guidance to better calculate the amount of compensation paid. Which has seen a rise in the level of compensation paid. This figure includes all payments associated with resolving complaints.

*Red indicates a negative change, green indicates a positive change, amber indicates minimal change

Reasons why residents made complaints

We received 772 new Stage 1 complaints and 250 complaint escalations to Stage 2. This is a 6.5% (54) reduction in Stage 1 complaints, and an increase of 18% (45) in escalations to Stage 2.

It is encouraging to report that we reduced the overall volume of complaints relating to the repair and maintenance of homes by 105 (18.2%) in the last 12 months. This is a result of our Property Services Teams implementing a new real time feedback survey as soon as a repair has been completed. Any resident giving a low satisfaction score is contacted straight away in order to resolve any concerns as soon as they arise.

However, the repair and maintenance of residents' homes remains the most common reason for complaints and accounts for 60.8% (470) of all Stage 1 complaints.

Within this category, the below were the most common reasons for complaints:

- Damp, Mould and Condensation (DMC) (78) 10.1%
- General repair e.g. repair left incomplete, or quality of workmanship (74) 9.6%
- Attitude and behaviours of staff (42) 5.4%
- Timescales of repair (40) 5.1%
- Roof leaks (35) 4.5%

When we investigated these cases 75% were justified as we had failed to meet the required service standards.

We have reviewed our approaches to address the number of Damp, mould and condensation (DMC) cases and can report an increase in the number of treatments undertaken and as a result a reduction in the number of open cases of DMC. Vulnerability information is gathered when a new case is received, and cases are prioritised by vulnerability. To further improve performance a team of 6 Housing Management Officers (HMOs) have been assigned to the DMC Team who contact tenants and visit vulnerable tenants to establish any further support needs and to provide signposting.

We want to improve satisfaction with the repair, maintenance and condition of your homes. In response we have commenced a Repairs and Maintenance Redesign project which includes a review of the Repairs and Maintenance Policy ahead of implementing a new repairs IT system later this year. We will ensure we take into consideration everything we have learnt from complaints and Housing Ombudsman cases and improve customer satisfaction.

The redesign will see new improved operational ways of working to align with the introduction of Awwab's law in October 2025 and will ensure there is improvement in the communication with residents about the timescale and progress of their repairs.

We have also implemented a new process for when residents experience any type of leak to ensure jobs are not closed after not being able to access the property. This will help reduce any delays in the resolution of leaks.

This year we will be looking in more detail about how the attitude of operatives has impacted on our service delivery ensuring that all teams receive regular updates on how to deliver customer excellence.

Complaints about our Housing Management service accounted for 34.7% (268) of all Stage 1 complaints. Within this area the most common reason for complaints was:

- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) (70) 9.1%

For us in Kirklees 'Housing Management' refers to activities carried out in association with rent collection, the allocation and letting of properties as well as tenancy and estate management. Tenancy and estate Management is defined as property and environmental management and services that are designed to give our tenants and residents quiet enjoyment of their homes in a safe, secure and decent environment. This goes beyond the physical care, repair and improvement of the built environment.

Whilst 34.7% of all complaints related to our Housing Management services, we found that 47.86% of these complaints were not upheld.

With regard to anti-social behaviour we want to improve your satisfaction with this area of our service, so in March 2025 and we implemented new Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse and Vulnerable Tenant Policies to prioritise and act directly, in our capacity as landlord, to protect and support our tenants.

In addition to this we have also delivered training to all our Housing Management Officers in the handling of Anti-Social Behaviour cases and have implemented new ASB case handling audits to improve assurance in the handling of ASB cases. We will continue to do this over the next 12 months in addition to exploring the full range of tools and powers available to us to support us in resolving cases of ASB e.g. using closure orders etc.

We know we need to improve the number of complaints escalating to Stage 2 about Housing Management Services. As a result, we have implemented additional peer support for managers to ensure we are putting things right as soon as we can in the complaints process and reducing the need for you to escalate your complaint to achieve a resolution.

Reasons why residents escalated their complaints

We ask residents if they would like to advise on the reasons for escalating their complaint. These are the most common reasons:

- Unhappy with the response provided or decision made at stage 1 53%
- The outcomes agreed in the Stage 1 response were not completed 35%
- Stage 1 response was not provided within agreed timescales 6%
- Unhappy with compensation amount 5%

In response to the above we will undertake quality audits of stage 1 letters to ensure that the investigating manager engages with the resident's concerns and that their response answers all the points raised in the complaint, explains the reasons for any delays or failings and provides a clear rationale for any decision making, including providing a clear decision as to whether the complaint was upheld or not upheld. The learning and outcomes from these case audits will be shared with investigating managers and relevant staff involved in complaint handling.

How we did on our timescales of responding to complaints

We improved the number of Stage 1 complaints responded to within the 10 day timescale, with 82.71% responded to within the required timescale, this is an improvement of 8.38% compared with last year. Our performance deteriorated for complaints that were escalated to Stage 2, with 68.18% responded within the 20 day timescale, a reduction of 7.8%.

Ensuring we respond to your complaints within the timescales set out in our Complaints Policy and the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code is something that is important to residents and to us.

In recognition that we need to further improve our performance around the number of complaints responded to within timescale we have made some changes to the way in which we organise and allocate our complaints, along with improved management oversight. These changes have resulted in improvements to response times and we are confident that performance will further improve in 2025-2026.

Reasons why we didn't accept complaints

This year we have not accepted 25 complaints, for the following reasons:

- The complaint had already been reviewed at Stage 1 and 2 of the Complaint Policy (12)
- The complaint related to an issue that arose more than 12 months ago (6)
- The issue or concern had not previously been raised and therefore treated as a service request (2)
- A separate appeal process is available (2)
- Legal proceedings had started (1)
- Complaint related to personal injury, and was therefore handled by Kirklees Risk and Insurance Team (1)
- The complaint did not relate to services provided by Kirklees Council (1)

When it is the first time a resident has expressed dissatisfaction about a service provided by Kirklees Council, it will be treated as a service request. In these cases, we will ensure you are notified in writing of our intention to do this. If you remain dissatisfied this can then be logged at Stage 1 of the Complaints Policy.

In cases where the complaint has already gone through Stage 1 and 2 of the complaints handling process, the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code advises that residents should be directed to the Housing Ombudsman Service if they remain dissatisfied. All our response letters provide residents with contact details of the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Satisfaction with Complaints Handling

How did you find our complaint handling?

We implemented a new and improved satisfaction survey to improve our understanding of your experience with complaint handling. Below shows what your feedback tells us from the text survey:

- 62% were satisfied with the ease of complaint process
- 48% were satisfied with the information provided
- 44.2% satisfied with the speed of complaint handling
- 63.4% were satisfied and comfortable in making a complaint again
- 42.2% were satisfied with our complaint handling overall

The above figures are based on a response rate of 36.6%.

We do often find that the satisfaction levels when completing the text survey results are often indicative of whether a resident is happy with the outcome of their complaint, rather than their satisfaction with the actual complaints handling process.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) and complaint handling?

Complaints handling forms part of the TSMs ('Tenant Perception' measures) which are based on tenants' views of how the council is performing. There is also a suite of 'Management Information' measures included in the TSMs which are based on information to be provided directly by the landlord. The TSMs includes two specific questions on the topic of complaints and the following shows the results from the TSM survey undertaken for 2023/24 where 2636 (or 13%) of households took part:

- Have you made a complaint to Kirklees Council Housing Services in the last 12 months? – 30% of tenants said they complained*
- How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Kirklees Council Housing Services approach to complaints handling – 23.2% said they were satisfied.*

The regulatory complaints satisfaction question is considered very broad, it is important to understand these questions in the context of the wider experience of residents when discussing repairs and other issues, as opposed to the much narrower formal complaints procedure. Almost a third of tenants that responded to the survey claim to have made a complaint, which is a very large proportion. Experience with this question has shown that it will include relatively few who used the formal complaints process. Instead, this should be better understood as those who had some sort of issue or problem over the last 12 months that they believed the Council needed to solve. The results should therefore be viewed as comments on how the Council deals with issues or problems that arise, rather than a measure of how the formal complaint process performs.

Table 2- TSM Summary Table

TSM ID	Tenant Satisfaction Measure	Kirklees Council 2023/24	Median Score Similar Landlord Comparison 2023/2024	Median Score National Comparison 2023/2024
Management Information Data				
CH01	Number of Stage 1 complaints relative to the size of the landlord (number of complaints per 1,000 properties)	36.54	39.1	46.5
CH01	Number of Stage 2 complaints relative to the size of the landlord (number of complaints per 1,000 properties)	11.83	4.8	6.05
CH02	Stage 1 complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales	82.71%	82.40%	83.00%
CH02	Stage 2 complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales	68.81%	78.30%	80.75%
Tenant Perception Data				
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.	23.2%	35.10%	34%

Housing Ombudsman Cases

Determinations Summary

49 determinations were received from the Housing Ombudsman following a review of 21 individual cases. We received:

- 2 Severe Maladministration determinations
 - 20 Maladministration determinations
 - 10 Service Failures
 - 14 No maladministration determinations
 - 3 cases the Housing Ombudsman felt we had offered appropriate redress that satisfactorily resolved the complaint.
-
- 27 of the negative determinations related to property condition and repairs
 - 11 of negative determinations related to complaint handling
 - 4 of the negative determinations related to ASB and Noise

The Housing Ombudsman also found 14 determinations of no maladministration where we showed good practice in the handling of cases to implement more service improvements. Please see the Learning section of this report for more information.

Outcomes and Orders from the Housing Ombudsman

Table 3- Table of Housing Ombudsman Determinations

Complaint	Date received and outcome received	Orders and recommendations
202217807	16 th April 2024	<u>Order(s)</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Response to reports of damp and mould in the property. b. Handling of the resident's decant from the property. c. Handling of the resident's compensation claim. d. Handling of the associated complaints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Severe maladministration b. offered reasonable redress, which satisfactorily resolves the complaint c. Maladministration d. Maladministration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay the resident compensation 2. Reassess liability for the damage caused to the resident's possessions 3. Complete all identified repairs to the property if not already done so <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay the resident the compensation offered in relation to its handling of the decant, if it has not already done so 2. Undertake a detailed review of the case to identify lessons learnt, including its record keeping systems and processes
202322104	29 th April 2024	<u>Orders</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Handling of leaks and the damage caused by those leaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Maladministration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write to the resident to apologise for the failings identified in the report. 2. Pay the resident compensation
202226542	23 rd May 2024	<u>Orders</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Response to the resident's reports of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. No maladministration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offer an apology to the resident for the failings

<p>leaks from the upstairs flat.</p> <p>b. Response to the resident's reports of noise transfer from the upstairs flat.</p> <p>c. Handling of the resident's complaint.</p>	<p>b. Service failure</p> <p>c. Service Failure</p>	<p>2. Pay the resident compensation.</p> <p>3. Contact the resident and confirm there are no compartmentalisation issues between the 2 properties and provide the resident with a copy of the survey report</p> <p>4. Review approach to noise nuisance.</p> <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>1. Pay the resident compensation it previously agreed to pay, if not already paid.</p>
<p>202229077</p> <p>a. The condition of the property when it was let to the resident.</p> <p>b. Handling of subsequent various repairs at the property.</p> <p>c. Complaint handling</p>	<p>30th May 2024</p> <p>a. No maladministration</p> <p>b. Maladministration</p> <p>c. Service failure</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p> <p>1. Pay compensation to the resident</p> <p>2. Provide the resident and Housing Ombudsman with action plan including timescales for completing any outstanding associated work at the property</p> <p>3. Review the handling of the repairs and provide the Housing Ombudsman with its action plan for improvement.</p> <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>1. Provide the resident and the Housing Ombudsman Service with an update on when the resident's new home will be ready to move into.</p>
<p>202308305</p> <p>a. Handling of repairs to the property, specifically relating to broken guttering and repointing.</p> <p>b. Response to the resident's reports of</p>	<p>26th June 2024</p> <p>a. Maladministration</p> <p>b. Maladministration</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p> <p>1. Pay the resident compensation</p> <p>2. Arrange and carry out an appointment to post-inspect the pointing works and create an action plan, with</p>

<p>damp, mould and water ingress.</p>		<p>dates, for any further outstanding repairs that are identified.</p> <p>3. Carry out a review of Redress Policy to ensure there is clarity regarding whether compensation will be paid when failings by third parties/contractors are identified.</p> <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>1. Reviews recording and data handling processes to ensure measures are in place to track repairs appropriately</p>
<p>202307979</p> <p>a. Handling of a leak from a burst pipe.</p>	<p>27th June 2024</p> <p>a. Service failure</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p> <p>1. Pay the resident compensation</p> <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>1. Review records and identify, where required, provide evidence to show the dates and times it attended for repairs appointments.</p> <p>2. Provide staff training on repair categorisation in line with its repairs policy.</p>
<p>202234428</p> <p>a. Response to the resident's complaint about its handling of asbestos in her home</p>	<p>28th June 2024</p> <p>a. As redress was offered to the resident prior to investigation, in the Ombudsman's opinion, resolves the complaint satisfactorily.</p>	<p>No order or recommendations made.</p>
<p>202322546</p>	<p>19th July 2024</p> <p>a. Maladministration</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p>

a. Handling of report of threatening behaviour by a neighbour

1. Pay the resident compensation
2. Apologise to the resident for the maladministration identified in this report.
3. Take steps to remind ASB case handlers of the importance of:
 - i. Appropriately recording all reports of ASB on its relevant system.
 - ii. Carrying out a risk/vulnerability assessment with complainants as early as possible and signposting to any appropriate support.
 - iii. Agreeing a contact method and frequency with all complainants, as per its policy

202218768

30th July 2024

Orders

- a. Handling of reports of leaks, damp and mould in her property.
- b. Handling of associated complaint.

- a. Maladministration
- b. Maladministration

1. Provide a written and detailed apology to the resident for the failings identified in this report.
2. Pay compensation directly to the resident
3. Contact the resident to discuss the damp and mould surveys, assess the outstanding repairs and agree a work schedule for the repairs.
4. Provide the resident with information on managing the levels of humidity in her home.
5. Provide the resident with the outcome of its review (which it said it would carry out in its final response to the resident's complaints in January 2023) of the

		findings from its investigation
202323479	8 th August 2024	<u>Orders</u>
a. Handling of major works to the property and the resident's associated decant.	a. Maladministration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay the resident compensation 2. Refund the resident any remaining credit on her rent account. 3. Apologise to the resident for the maladministration identified by this report
202345536	20 th August 2024	<u>Orders</u>
a. Handling of damp and mould concerns.	a. As redress was offered to the resident prior to investigation, in the Ombudsman's opinion, resolves the complaint satisfactorily	1. Pay the resident compensation
b. Handling of concerns about the adequacy of the heating system.	b. No maladministration	
c. Accuracy of information about the property including an oven and hob.	c. Service failure	
202327383	30 th September 2024	No order or recommendations made.
a. Handling of the resident's reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) including harassment from his neighbour and the housing officer's conduct.	a. No maladministration	
b. Handling of the resident's complaint.	b. No maladministration	
202314578	29 th November 2024	<u>Orders</u>

<p>a. Response to the resident's concerns about a rent increase.</p> <p>b. Handling of the resident's reports of outstanding repairs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Kitchen smoke damage. ii. Windows and doors. iii. A bathroom leak. iv. A faulty boiler. <p>c. Complaint handling</p>	<p>a. decision to increase the rent is outside of this Service's jurisdiction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Maladministration ii. maladministration iii. service failure iv. no maladministration <p>c. Service failure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A senior manager of the landlord should apologise to the resident for the failings identified in this report. 2. Pay the resident compensation
<p>202325823</p> <p>a. handling of repairs including damp and mould, removal of polystyrene ceiling tiles in the hallway, repairs to the kitchen ceiling, repairs to the windows and clearing the rear gutter at the resident's property.</p> <p>b. associated complaint handling</p>	<p>4th December 2024</p> <p>a. Maladministration</p> <p>b. Maladministration</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inspect the bathroom window and replace the friction plate if necessary. 2. Inspect the vent in the small bedroom window to see if it can be repaired and if not, it should replace the vent. 3. Pay the resident compensation 4. Carry-out staff training in relation to responding to residents' complaints to ensure that it addresses all complaint points raised. <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set out in writing to the resident, the reasons it cannot install a larger extractor fan in the kitchen. 2. Confirm to the resident what plastering it is due to carry-out to her kitchen and carry-out within timescales for completing routine repairs. 3. Inspects the beading securing the hallway floorboards and if

		necessary, remedies any mould.
202347538	9 th December 2024	
a. Condition of the void property.	a. No maladministration	No orders or recommendations made
b. Handling of reports about condensation, damp and mould at the property and requests for repairs to the plastering at the property.	b. No maladministration	
c. Handling of requests for repairs to the doors, the radiators, and small hole under the kitchen units.	c. No maladministration	
d. Handling of the formal complaint.	d. No maladministration	
202309150	6 th February 2025	
a. response to the resident's reports of antisocial behaviour (ASB) by way of fly tipping.	a. No Maladministration	No orders or recommendations made
202408595	12 th February 2025	<u>Orders</u>
Handling of:		
a. roof repairs.	a. Maladministration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write to the resident to apologise for the failures 2. Pay the resident compensation 3. Write to the resident to confirm whether the window and roof repairs have resolved his concerns 4. Arrange for relevant staff to undertake complaint handling training to strengthen its working practices 5. Review record keeping practices, focusing on the failures identified
b. window repairs.	b. Maladministration	
c. damp and mould.	c. Maladministration	
d. the complaint	d. Maladministration	
202306363	13 th February 2025	

<p>a. Handling of repairs to the stairs in the resident's property.</p> <p>b. Response to reports of damaged asbestos.</p> <p>c. Response to the resident's request for reimbursement for damaged belongings.</p>	<p>a. No Maladministration</p> <p>b. No Maladministration</p> <p>c. No Maladministration</p>	<p>No orders or recommendations made</p>
<p>202317062</p> <p>a. Handling of subsidence reports.</p>	<p>24th February 2025</p> <p>a. Severe Maladministration</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write to the resident with a full apology for the failings identified in this report. In this it is to confirm whether it has completed the drainage patch repairs. 2. Pay the resident compensation 3. Produce a report for the resident and Ombudsman detailing timeline for the temporary move including the investigation and resolution work. 4. Organise for a suitably qualified person to assess the front door lintel. 5. Carry out a senior management review as to what happened in this case, so it can identify the blockages and resolve these for the future.
<p>202313374</p> <p>a. handling of request for permission to install an electric vehicle charging point and driveway.</p> <p>b. Complaint handling</p>	<p>17th March 2025</p> <p>a. Service failure</p> <p>b. Service failure</p>	<p><u>Orders</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write to the resident to apologise. 2. Pay the resident compensation <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider if a policy or procedure would be helpful in making residents aware of how it deals with

requests for permission to make alterations.

2. Consider how it can avoid referring to irrelevant matters in future when responding to complaints.

202336416

24th March 2025

Orders

- a. response to reports of a leak from the resident's bath and bathroom sink, and damage to his belongings.
- b. response to reports of damp and mould in the resident's property.
- c. handling of the resident's complaint.

- a. Service failure
- b. Maladministration
- c. Maladministration

1. Provide an apology letter to the resident acknowledging the failures identified in this report.
2. Pay the resident compensation
3. Appoint a single point of contact for the resident to discuss the repair issues.
4. Arrange for an inspection of the property to confirm what works remain outstanding to the bathroom and assess the issue of damp and mould throughout the property.
5. Write to the resident to provide the outcome of its inspection and include identified work required and timescales for completion.

Recommendations

Review staff training needs to ensure all relevant officers:

- a. Respond to requests for repairs appropriately and progresses works orders in accordance with its relevant policies and procedures.
- b. Are keeping relevant records up to date and making sure information is accessible to all relevant departments.
- c. Respond to formal complaints appropriately. Responses must address all issues raised by the

resident. It should ensure all relevant officers do so in an efficient and timely manner, and in accordance with its relevant policies and procedures and the Code.

We have complied with all Orders made by the Housing Ombudsman Service and received no Complaint Handling Failure Orders.

You can view our determinations on the Housing Ombudsman website [here](#) and you can find the annual report for 23-24 produced by the Housing Ombudsman [here](#)

Learning from Complaints

Summary

Complaints need to be used as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery. Effective and positive complaint handling also offers a valuable insight into the services provided by the council as a landlord and how we are perceived and received by tenants. Complaints or lessons learned from a complaint can improve the quality and focus of services provided to all customers.

The following provides a summary of learning identified and improvements already made as a result of complaints, and new actions identified for the coming year.

Table 4- Summary of Learning

Themes	Completed Actions	Next Steps
Repairs and Maintenance	<p>We implemented a new Repair Survey in June 2024 for residents to give live feedback on their repair. Any resident giving a negative score is contacted immediately as part of our commitment to resolve dissatisfaction as early as possible. This has reduced the volumes of new complaints to Property Services by 27%.</p> <p>New process implemented for when residents experience any type of leak to ensure jobs are not closed after not being able to access the property.</p> <p>In response to the number of references the Housing Ombudsman have made in</p>	<p>Reviewing what happens if a customer is not home when we come to carry out repairs. The council aims to reduce the time it takes for these repairs to be rescheduled and completed</p> <p>We will continue our Repairs and Maintenance Redesign to align with the implementation of our new repairs system.</p> <p>We will be looking in more detail about how the attitude of operatives has impacted on our service delivery ensuring that all teams receive regular</p>

	<p>relation to non-adherence to the timescales for repair outlined in the current Repairs and Maintenance Policy a repair redesign project is underway. This will change operational practices and communication with residents. It will improve customer satisfaction by ensuring residents are better informed on the progress of their repair.</p>	<p>updates on how to deliver customer excellence.</p>
Damp & Mould (DMC)	<p>We set up a new DMC Team in April 2024 so that customers can contact directly, ensuring reports of damp and mould are recorded and responded to quickly by identifying the root causes, and customers are kept updated</p> <p>We have reviewed our approaches to address the number of Damp, mould and condensation (DMC) cases and can report an increase in the number of treatments undertaken and as a result a reduction in the number of open cases of DMC. Vulnerability information is gathered when a new case is received, and cases are prioritised by vulnerability. To further improve performance a team of 6 Housing Management Officers (HMOs) have been assigned to the DMC Team who contact tenants and visit vulnerable tenants to establish any further support needs and to provide signposting.</p>	<p>Continue to work with the regulator to reduce overall number of DMC cases.</p> <p>Align repairs timescales and procedures with the implementation of Awwab's law in October 2025.</p>
Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	<p>Housing Officers and Housing Managers have completed newly developed ASB training</p> <p>Developed and implemented ASB case audits</p>	<p>Explore full range of tools and powers available to landlords</p> <p>Continuation of ASB Audits</p>
Policies	<p>Fencing addendum to Repairs and Maintenance Policy. Full policy to be updated 2025/26.</p>	<p>Tenancy Agreement review to provide further clarity for residents on expectations</p>

	<p>New ASB Policy approved March 2025.</p> <p>New Domestic Abuse Policy approved March 2025.</p> <p>New Vulnerable Tenant Policy approved March 2025</p> <p>DMC Policy approved July 2024</p>	<p>New 'Required Access' Policy being developed to detail what happens if a customer is not home when we come to carry out repairs.</p> <p>Repairs and Maintenance Policy in development to align with Awwab's Law Oct 2025 and provide clarity on repairs and maintenance expectations.</p>
Systems	<p>We have been preparing to implement a New Housing Management System that will enable improved case management, record keeping and enable us to store resident information and reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>Upgraded our Asset Management database this year to improve records of our assets.</p>	<p>We will finalise the implementation of our new Housing Management System.</p> <p>We will procure a new Repairs and Maintenance system following our Repairs design.</p>
Complaint Handling	<p>In April 24 we improved the data gathered when we take complaints. This is helping us identify underlying thematic causes and trends and develop solutions at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>We amended information on how to make a complaint online to make it more user friendly.</p> <p>We improved the information available to customers about the complaints process on the council's website</p> <p>We delivered bespoke Complaints Handling Training to circa. 400 members of staff to reflect the updated code and learning from the severe maladministration determination.</p>	<p>We will continue to run regular complaints handling training across the organisation which will include learning from both complaints and HO determinations.</p> <p>We will undertake quality audits of stage 1 letters to ensure the response answers all the points raised in the complaint, that the investigating manager engages with the resident's concerns, explain the reasons for any delays or failings and provides a clear rationale for any decision making, including providing a clear decision as to whether the</p>

We changed how we allocate complaints, this improved our performance for responding to complaints within timescale

We have updated the Complaints Policy to improve accessibility for residents and reflect the level of investigating manager responding to complaints at each stage.

The Redress Policy. It includes improvements to accessibility and aligns with the new Housing Ombudsman Service Remedies and Insurance Guidance e.g. our policy now aligns with levels of redress recommended by the Housing Ombudsman Service

complaint was upheld or not upheld.

Complaints Handling Governance

A quarterly programme of performance reporting is in place which is reported to the Homes and Neighbourhoods' Senior Management Team (SMT), the Council's Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Housing, Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board (HNIB) which is independently chaired and the Tenant Led Panel. The Cabinet also receives periodic updates as well as the Council's Scrutiny Function. These reports include updates on complaint volumes, performance, learning, Housing Ombudsman casework including compliance with maladministration orders and updates on self-assessments. Ultimate responsibility for compliance against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code and the Regulator for Social Housing's Consumer Standards (which includes complaints handling) lies with the Council's Cabinet as the overall governing body.

Making a Complaint

For more information on making a complaint please visit the council's [website](#) or contact the Homes and Neighbourhoods' Customer Support and Information Team on 01484 414886 where a member of the team can discuss and log your complaint.

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Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code Provision	Code Requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / Explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.'</i>	Yes	Kirklees Council's Complaint Policy reflects the definition of the Code. The Complaint Policy was updated April 2025 to ensure our continued compliance against The Code. Homes and Neighbourhoods complaints and compliments Kirklees Council	
1.3	A resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	Kirklees Council's Complaint Policy details the definition of a complaint and includes flow chart to support accurate identification of complaints.	
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service	Yes	Kirklees Council's Complaint Policy details the definition of a complaint and includes flow chart to support the identification of a complaint and service request.	

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	requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.			
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes	If a resident remains dissatisfied with our response to a service request, they can escalate their case to a formal complaint.	
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where landlords ask for wider feedback about their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.	Yes	Following completion of electronic surveys residents are provided a link to make a complaint if they are dissatisfied with the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the Kirklees Council, its staff, or those acting on its behalf of Kirklees Council.	

Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint, they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits	Yes	<p>Complaints will be accepted unless it relates to any of the reasons as outlined Kirklees Council Complaints Policy.</p> <p>Where a complaint has not been accepted, the reason is provided in writing to the resident.</p>	
2.2	<p>A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to residents. Acceptable exclusions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. • Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the claim form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court. 	Yes	<p>Kirklees Council Complaints Policy states the reasons why we may not accept a complaint.</p> <p>However, it may not always be appropriate for us to rely on these exclusions e.g., where complaints concern safeguarding or health and safety issues, in these cases a complaint can be logged.</p> <p>In all cases the resident will be written to advise if their complaint has not been accepted.</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy. 			
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.	Yes	Kirklees Council Complaints Policy states the reasons why we may not accept a complaint.	
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.	Yes	<p>Circumstances of when a complaint may not be accepted are detailed in Kirklees Council's Complaint Policy.</p> <p>In all cases the resident will be written to advise if their complaint has been accepted.</p>	
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	<p>Circumstances of when a complaint may not be accepted is detailed in Kirklees Council's Complaint Policy.</p> <p>However, it may not always be appropriate for us to rely on these exclusions, and this will be assessed on a case by case basis.</p>	

Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process.	Yes	<p>Kirklees Council offers a wide range of ways for residents to make a complaint.</p> <p>Reasonable adjustments and accessibility are detailed in the Council’s Complaints Policy and is in line with the Council’s Inclusion and Diversity Strategy.</p> <p>An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) was undertaken in January 2025 to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.</p>	<p>Multiple routes to complain are available e.g. website, telephone, email, in writing, face to face and social media.</p> <p>The IIA was carried out in January 2024 and has been reviewed again January 2025 alongside the start of the self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code.</p>
3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes	<p>The Policy states that residents will be able make a complaint in any way and with any member of staff. Staff have been trained on complaints handling which included the importance of referring any expressions of dissatisfaction to the HN Customer Experience Team (CET) so they can be considered in line with the Policy.</p>	<p>The latest round of Staff Training (in response to changes in the Code) was delivered for all managers and staff (circa.400) involved in complaints handling between Jun-Sep 2024</p>

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3.3	High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.	Yes	<p>The policy says that the Council's welcomes complaints as an opportunity to listen to what our customers say and to help shape service improvements.</p> <p>The number of complaints received is consistent against last year. The promotion of the complaints policy along with simpler and more accessible ways for residents to complain ensures residents are know how to make a complaint.</p>	
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the two stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord's website.	Yes	<p>The Complaints Policy is accessible via our website, or alternatively residents can request a copy of this to be printed.</p> <p>Where this is required in another language this can be translated using the Council's language services and shared with a resident.</p> <p>The policy sets out the details of each stage of our process and timescales</p>	
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the	Yes	This is included in Kirklees Council's Complaint Policy	

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	complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.			
3.6	Landlords must give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.	Yes	Kirklees Council accepts complaints from 3rd party representatives supporting residents and this is included in the Complaints Policy.	
3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.	Yes	<p>This is included in the Complaints Policy.</p> <p>Kirklees Council website page on complaints and compliments includes details of the Ombudsman scheme and links to the Complaint Handling Code. All correspondence at each stage of the complaints process includes the Ombudsman's details and information about the scheme.</p> <p>Kirklees Council also promotes the Housing Ombudsman Service via the website and social media communications etc.</p>	

Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

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Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes	<p>Kirklees Council has a dedicated Customer Experience Team (CET) with a Services Manager and Team Manager to oversee complaints handling within Kirklees Homes and Neighbourhoods. The Team is responsible for logging and allocating all complaints across the organisation. Until a complaint is assigned to the complaint handler (who investigates the complaint) this team act as a liaison with the complainant to obtain as much information with regard the complaint when it is logged.</p> <p>The Head of Housing Management and Partnerships is the designated main contact for the Housing Ombudsman (HO) and the CET Services Manager is the lead liaison with the HO.</p> <p>Kirklees Council Cabinet Member for Transport and Housing is the designated Lead on the governing body (Cabinet) for Complaints</p>	

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			The CET Services Manager provides quarterly reports to the Governing Body (Cabinet) and other governance structures within the Council.	
4.2	The complaints officer must have access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints. They must also have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.	Yes	<p>The CET Services Manager is appointed at a senior level with access to all relevant staff to ensure where possible early resolution to complaints, they liaise with investigating managers to provide support to ensure complaints are handled fairly and in line with policy and procedure.</p> <p>The same manager also reports quarterly on complaints handling performance, including Ombudsman determinations to Senior Management Team, Portfolio Holder, Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board and the Tenant Led Panel.</p>	
4.3	Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff must be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a	Yes	The Customer Experience Team have improved the data collected on complaints to help identify themes and trends in complaints.	The latest round of Staff Training (in response to changes in the Code) was delivered for all managers and staff (circa.400) involved in complaints

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	core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively.		<p>Bespoke reports for each service area are shared with the service leads to show detail of complaints and provide opportunities to identify service improvements.</p> <p>Staff are trained on complaints handling.</p> <p>Kirklees Council Annual Report (council housing) includes a section on Complaints including learning and service improvements identified through complaint handling.</p>	handling between Jun-Sep 2024
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Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.1	Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.		Kirklees Council, as a social housing landlord, has one policy covering the complaints under the Complaint Handling Code.	
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not	Yes	Kirklees Council operates a 2 stage process as required as	

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	appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.		part of the compliance against the Code.	
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes	Two stage process in place.	
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	Yes	All complaints, involving a 3rd party e.g. a contractor, are handled through the council's complaints process. The council does not ask 3rd Parties to respond directly to complaints.	
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Please see above.	
5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. The Code will refer to this as "the complaint definition". If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.	Yes	The complaint and the outcomes are summarised as part of the acknowledgement for both Stages 1 and 2 in writing. Clarification is sought from a resident if the complaint or outcome required is not clear.	
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear	Yes	Kirklees Council's Customer Experience Team (council	

	<p>which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.</p>		<p>housing) contacts residents by phone or email to clarify reasons for complaints and details this in writing. The team also detail any aspect of the complaint not accepted and detail the reasons why within the letter.</p>	
5.8	<p>At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. 	Yes	<p>All complaints handlers have received training, updated and delivered again Jun-Sep 2024. This ensures they have the skills to handle, investigate and respond to complaints effectively.</p> <p>Complaint handlers are senior managers within the organisation, Stage 1 Housing/Team Manager Level and Stage 2 General/Service Manager level.</p> <p>Complaints are allocated to managers who have had no previous involvement with the case.</p> <p>An information and guidance pack are provided to the complaint handler at the outset of the investigation which provides background information</p>	

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			<p>on the complaint and the outcome sought.</p> <p>Advice and guidance is also provided by the CET Service Manager to ensure complaints are handled fairly and in line with policy and procedure. Handling Complaints forms part of the performance management of all staff and managers.</p>	
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	Kirklees Council will advise residents when an extension is required will confirm in writing the length of the extension. This should not be over the timescales prescribed i.e. 10 days stage 1 and 20 days stage 2	
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.	Yes	An updated Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) was undertaken in January 2025 as part of the review of our Complaints Handling Policy using the Council's standard template, no actions were identified arising from the IIA. The IIA will be reviewed when the self-assessment is updated or if there is change in the Code or Policy	Kirklees Council have now launched the Vulnerable Tenant Policy. An interim system is in place for support the collection of this information in preparation for when the new Housing Management system is launched in November this year.

			<p>Information on reasonable adjustments is collected through day to day interactions and requests from customers. Currently these are not stored on one system.</p>	
5.11	<p>Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.</p>	Yes	<p>Kirklees Council will only refuse to escalate a complaint if the timescales for responding to complaint have not been achieved e.g. to escalate on day 7 of a complaint at stage 1 where the timescale is 10 days.</p>	
5.12	<p>A full record must be kept of the complaint, and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.</p>	Yes	<p>Kirklees Council Customer Experience Team (council housing) keep a record of all their communication with residents regarding their complaint. The team operate a shared mailbox for residents to send in evidence, communications, and updates on complaints. Investigating Managers retain a record of all their communication as part of their investigation.</p>	

			Not all correspondence or supporting documentation (e.g. reports or surveys) is automatically stored alongside the complaint handling system. Such documentation is held on other systems and can be made available if required.	
5.13	Landlords must have processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process. Landlords must ensure appropriate remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.	Yes	Kirklees Council encourage any individual member of staff or the complaint handler (consistent with information above) to adopt a restorative/early resolution approach to remedying complaints at any stage.	
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.	Yes	The policy includes a section on unacceptable behaviour and reference is made to tackle any unacceptable behaviour through the Council's Reasonable Behaviour Policy.	
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	The policy includes a section on unacceptable behaviour and reference is made to tackle any unacceptable behaviour through the Council's Reasonable Behaviour Policy	

			Where appropriate we log details on the Council's Hazard Warning Database to forewarn other Council staff and this database is reviewed annually.	
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Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.1	Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.	Yes	<p>At the resident's initial point of contact, the Council's Customer Support and Information and Team (council housing) undertake appropriate triaging so any high risk cases or residents with a vulnerability can be escalated quickly for early resolution.</p> <p>The CET then speak with the complainant and try and resolve the complaint at the point of contact and action any urgent issues. If further investigation is required, this is logged and assigned to a complaint handler within the relevant service area. Early resolution is a key element of the complaints process, which</p>	

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			has been communicated to all managers and staff.	
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints' procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	Yes	All complaints are acknowledged and logged within 5 working days by the CET.	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	The council's Policy states that complaints must be responded to within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	
6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	The council update residents when an extension to a timescale is required. The complaint handler will explain the rationale for this in writing along with the new response deadline. Any extension must be agreed with the resident. The process for extensions is overseen by the Customer Experience Team (CET) to ensure consistency and appropriateness of extensions.	
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Kirklees' Council confirms all extensions in writing i.e. letter or email and this is logged and the	

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			contact details for the Housing Ombudsman are provided in the extension letter.	
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Complaint responses provide answers to the complaint are known. If there are outstanding actions to address the issue in full then reference is made to these in the reply, along with timescales and who the lead officer is.	
6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	Response letters are bullet pointed to provide the complainant with an answer to each individual point raised in the acknowledgement letter. These are then transferred over to the response letter, where we use standard letter templates which require Investigating Managers to address every point of the complaint.	
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related, and the stage 1 response has not been	Yes	Where additional complaints / issues are raised by the resident following the complaint being logged, these are considered on a case by case basis to minimise	

	<p>issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.</p>		<p>the delay in providing a response and any confusion for the resident.</p> <p>Where possible, additional issues are added to the ongoing complaint.</p> <p>Where the issue(s) relate to a different service area or are completely unrelated to the original complaint, a second complaint will be logged.</p> <p>The CET aim to capture all issues in 1 complaint where possible.</p>	
6.9	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response. 	Yes	<p>Kirklees' Council uses the Housing Ombudsman template letters to respond to complaints.</p>	

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Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.10	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	The council progress complaints to Stage 2 if the resident is not satisfied with the Stage 1 response. Stage 2 responses are investigated and signed off by a senior manager.	
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints' procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	The council progress complaints to Stage 2 if the resident is not satisfied with the Stage 1 response and these are acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt. Stage 2 complaints will be dealt with by a manager who is senior to the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage 1.	
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a Stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its Stage 2 response.	Yes	Kirklees' Council do not require residents to explain their reasons for requesting a Stage 2 complaint however residents are provided with an opportunity to add any reasons they would like to aid the investigation.	

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6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at Stage 1.	Yes	The allocation and escalation route for complaints ensures that the Stage 2 complaint is investigated by a manager in a more senior role than the manager at Stage 1.	
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	The Policy states that complaints must be responded to within 20 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	The council will update residents when an extension to a timescale is required. The council explain the rationale for this in writing along with the new response deadline. Any extension must be agreed with the resident. The process for extensions is overseen by the Customer Experience Team (CET) to ensure consistency and appropriateness of extensions.	
6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Kirklees' Council confirm all extensions in writing i.e. letter or email and this is logged and the contact details for the Housing	

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			Ombudsman are provided in the extension letter.	
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Complaint responses provide answers to the complaint are known. If there are outstanding actions to address the issue in full then we make reference to these in the reply, along with timescales and who the lead officer is.	
6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	Response letters are bullet pointed to provide the complainant with an answer to each individual point raised in the acknowledgement letter. These are then transferred over to the response letter, where we use standard letter templates which require Investigating Managers to address every point of the complaint.	
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language:	Yes	Kirklees Council use the Ombudsman template letters to respond to complaints.	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied. 			
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Stage 2 investigations and responses are currently undertaken at Service/General Manager Level who have the authority to sign off the detail of the investigation / response and to ensure impartiality is maintained.	

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or	Yes	Kirklees Council's letter template provides a guide for investigating managers to ensure all elements	

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	<p>intends to take, to put things right. These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologising; • Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; • Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; • Taking action if there has been delay; • Reconsidering or changing a decision; • Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; • Providing a financial remedy; • Changing policies, procedures or practices. 		of the complaint are addressed in the response including any follow up actions.	
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Remedies are considered on a case by case basis, using the guidelines set out in the Compensation and Redress policy. The Investigating Manager will discuss the case with the CET and agree the level of remedy appropriate. Where an ex-gratia payment is to be made over £100 this needs to be agreed with the CET Manager to ensure consistency.	
7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in	Yes	Template letters include a section for remedy / compensation which	

	agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.		the Investigating Manager completes to detail the level of compensation, for what issue, and the level of financial payment offered. The remedy/compensation has to be agreed by the resident before payment is made. Once agreed the resident is informed on how the payment will be made and by when. The final response letter will outline all actions identified to put things right	
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.		Kirklees Council Redress Policy (council housing) was updated in January 2025 to ensure it reflects the financial remedies guidance provided by the Ombudsman.	

Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	<p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <p>a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements.</p> <p>b. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord’s complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept;</p> <p>c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman;</p> <p>d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints;</p> <p>e. any annual report about the landlord’s performance from the Ombudsman; and</p> <p>f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.</p>	Yes	<p>Annual and quarterly reports on learning and service improvement are provided to Senior Managers, the Member Responsible for Complaints and relevant governing bodies in Kirklees Council.</p> <p>The 2024/25 Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report to residents will be published in the summer 2025 to meet the requirements outlined in this code.</p> <p>Complaints handling information was provided in the 2023/24 Homes and Neighbourhoods’ Annual Report.</p>	

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8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	2024/25 Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report will be reported to the Council's Cabinet and Portfolio Holder as the Member responsible for complaints along with their response in June 2025.	
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	This self-assessment was undertaken in January/February 2025 as required as part of our compliance with The Code.	
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	The Council will comply with all HOS investigations, orders and recommendations	
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.	Yes	If the Council are unable to comply with the code due to exceptional circumstance, the Ombudsman will be informed, along with any affected residents and this will be published on the website. A timescale for restoring compliance will be provided	

Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	Evidence of learning from complaints is outlined in the 2024/25 Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report referred to in 8.1 above	
9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	Yes	See above. Identifying learning opportunities from complaints is a requirement for investigating managers as part of their investigations. Any learning is logged in the complaints system and shared through quarterly SMT performance updates.	
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to	Yes	Quarterly Complaints Handling Performance information is reported to SMT, Portfolio Holder, Tenant Led Panel and Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board (HNIB).	

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	stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.		<p>These reports include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -analysis of complaint handling performance and types of complaints HN wide and also by service area - updates on any self-assessment - Service improvements and learning - Ombudsman determinations and casework <p>Kirklees Council has also provided complaints handling information in 2023/24 Annual Report</p>	
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes	<p>The Head of Housing Management Partnerships, Homes and Neighbourhoods, is the senior lead person for complaints.</p> <p>This HoS oversees complaint Handling on behalf of Kirklees Council.</p>	
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person	Yes	<p>The Cabinet Member for Transport and Housing holds this role on behalf of Council Cabinet.</p>	

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	is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').			
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.	Yes	Quarterly reports are provided to the Cabinet Member for Transport and Housing (the MRC), this includes details of any maladministration found by the Housing Ombudsman along with details of the case review, learning and service improvements.	
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.	Yes	Quarterly reports are provided to the Cabinet Member for Transport and Housing (the MRC) , this includes details of any maladministration found by the Housing Ombudsman along with details of the case review, learning and service improvements.	
9.8	Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint	Yes	The Policy states as members of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme, the Council commit to	

	<p>handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <p>a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments;</p> <p>b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and</p> <p>c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.</p>		<p>follow the Housing Ombudsman Dispute Resolution principles of being fair, putting things right and learning from outcomes.</p> <p>At all times co-operate with the Housing Ombudsman or other regulatory body with responsibilities for oversight of complaints handling.</p> <p>Aim to ensure that approaches reflect best practice, including the expectations set out in the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.</p> <p>Kirklees Council will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show that the customer voice is at the heart of any complaints resolution by listening carefully to what is being said to us by using restorative techniques - Treat all complainants equally and fairly - Aim to resolve dissatisfaction at the first point of contact wherever possible - Have a formal two stage complaints process - Monitor and record formal complaints through our Customer Experience Team 	
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use complaints to learn, improve and develop our service - Take steps to put things right and, where possible, to restore the complainant to the position which existed prior to the service failure - Ensure building safety related complaints are escalated to the appropriate responsible person - While it is important to note that the complaints process cannot be used to bypass procedures, processes and statutory requirements, officers will work flexibly and creatively to see if they can positively help the customer with their concern <p style="text-align: center;">This is relevant to all staff working for Homes and Neighbourhoods, on behalf of Kirklees Council as well as our contractors and agents.</p>	
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Housing
Ombudsman Service

**LANDLORD
PERFORMANCE
REPORT**

2023/2024

Kirklees Council

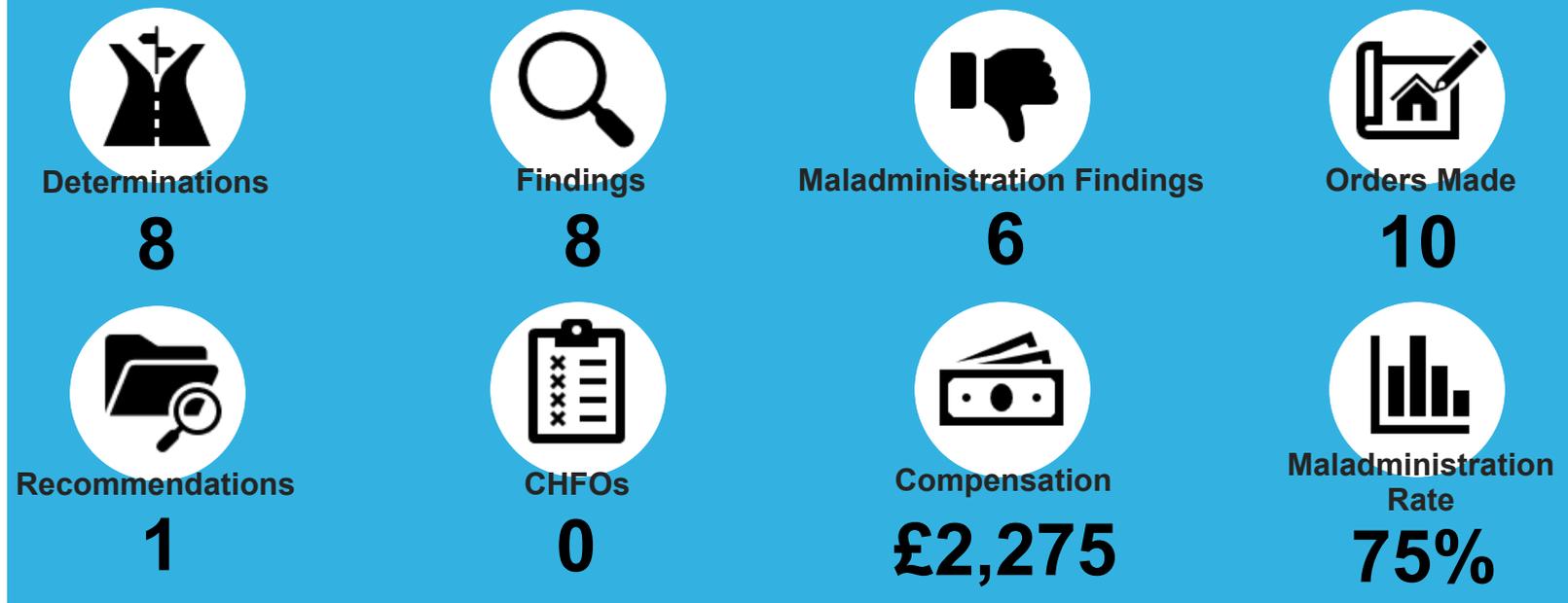
Kirklees Council

Landlord:

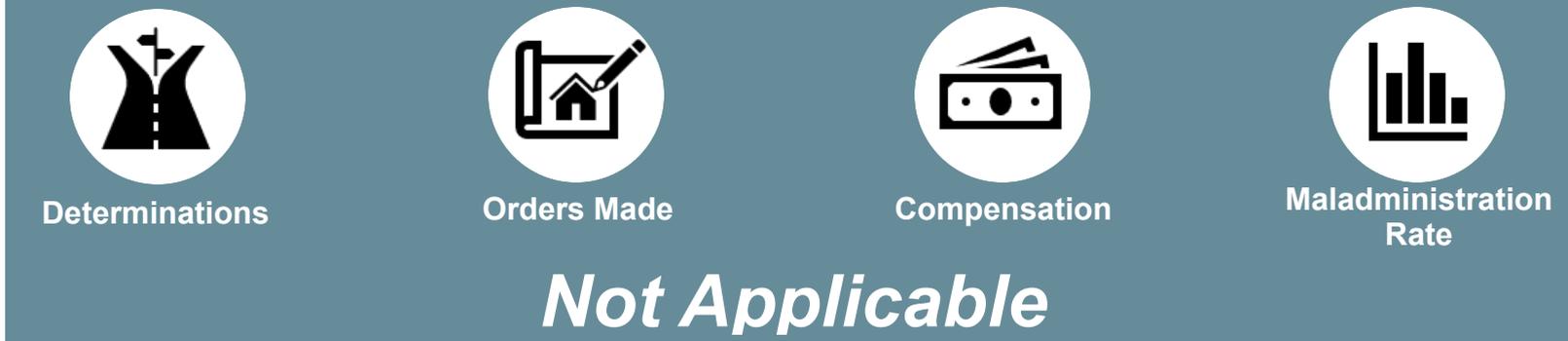
Landlord Homes: 22,922

Landlord Type: Local Authority / ALMO or TMO

PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE



PERFORMANCE 2022-2023



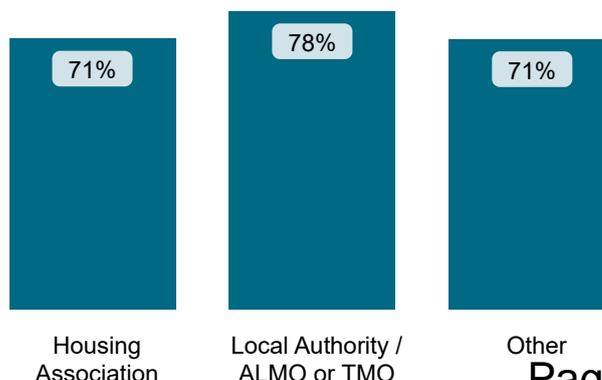
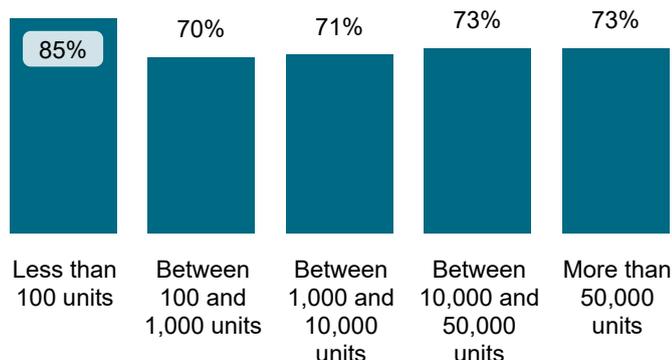
Maladministration Rate Comparison | Cases determined between April 2023 - March 2024

NATIONAL MALADMINISTRATION RATE: 73%

The landlord performed *similarly* when compared to similar landlords by size and type.

National Mal Rate by Landlord Size: [Table 1.1](#)

by Landlord Type: [Table 1.2](#)



Findings Comparison | Cases determined between April 2023 - March 2024

National Performance by Landlord Size: Table 2.1

Outcome	Less than 100 units	Between 100 and 1,000 units	Between 1,000 and 10,000 units	Between 10,000 and 50,000 units	More than 50,000 units	Total
Severe Maladministration	14%	6%	4%	8%	7%	7%
Maladministration	35%	37%	41%	42%	43%	42%
Service failure	18%	19%	20%	18%	19%	19%
Mediation	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Redress	0%	5%	7%	8%	12%	9%
No maladministration	12%	21%	20%	15%	12%	15%
Outside Jurisdiction	22%	11%	8%	7%	5%	7%
Withdrawn	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Kirklees Council	
Outcome	% Findings
Severe Maladministration	0%
Maladministration	63%
Service failure	13%
Mediation	0%
Redress	0%
No maladministration	25%
Outside Jurisdiction	0%
Withdrawn	0%

National Performance by Landlord Type: Table 2.2

Outcome	Housing Association	Local Authority / ALMO or TMO	Other	Total
Severe Maladministration	6%	9%	6%	7%
Maladministration	41%	45%	36%	42%
Service failure	19%	18%	21%	19%
Mediation	1%	1%	0%	1%
Redress	12%	4%	5%	9%
No maladministration	15%	15%	21%	15%
Outside Jurisdiction	6%	9%	11%	7%
Withdrawn	0%	0%	0%	0%

Outcome	% Findings
Severe Maladministration	0%
Maladministration	63%
Service failure	13%
Mediation	0%
Redress	0%
No maladministration	25%
Outside Jurisdiction	0%
Withdrawn	0%

Landlord Findings by Category | Cases determined between April 2023 - March 2024

Table 2.3

Category	Severe Maladministration	Maladministration	Service failure	Mediation	Redress	No maladministration	Outside Jurisdiction	Withdrawn	Total
Property Condition	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
Complaints Handling	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Anti-Social Behaviour	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Health and Safety (inc. building safety)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	0	5	1	0	0	2	0	0	8

Findings by Category Comparison | Cases determined between April 2023 - March 2024

Top Categories for Kirklees Council

Table 3.1

Category	# Landlord Findings	% Landlord Maladministration	% National Maladministration
Property Condition	4	75%	73%
Complaints Handling	2	100%	84%
Anti-Social Behaviour	1	100%	68%
Health and Safety (inc. building safety)	1	0%	62%

National Maladministration Rate by Landlord Size: Table 3.2

Category	Less than 100 units	Between 100 and 1,000 units	Between 1,000 and 10,000 units	Between 10,000 and 50,000 units	More than 50,000 units	% Landlord Maladministration
Anti-Social Behaviour	71%	61%	60%	67%	75%	100%
Complaints Handling	100%	87%	87%	86%	81%	100%
Health and Safety (inc. building safety)	0%	67%	68%	56%	65%	0%
Property Condition	75%	63%	72%	74%	74%	75%

National Maladministration Rate by Landlord Type: Table 3.3

Category	Housing Association	Local Authority / ALMO or TMO	Other	% Landlord Maladministration
Anti-Social Behaviour	68%	69%	67%	100%
Complaints Handling	81%	91%	91%	100%
Health and Safety (inc. building safety)	58%	69%	80%	0%
Property Condition	72%	77%	59%	75%

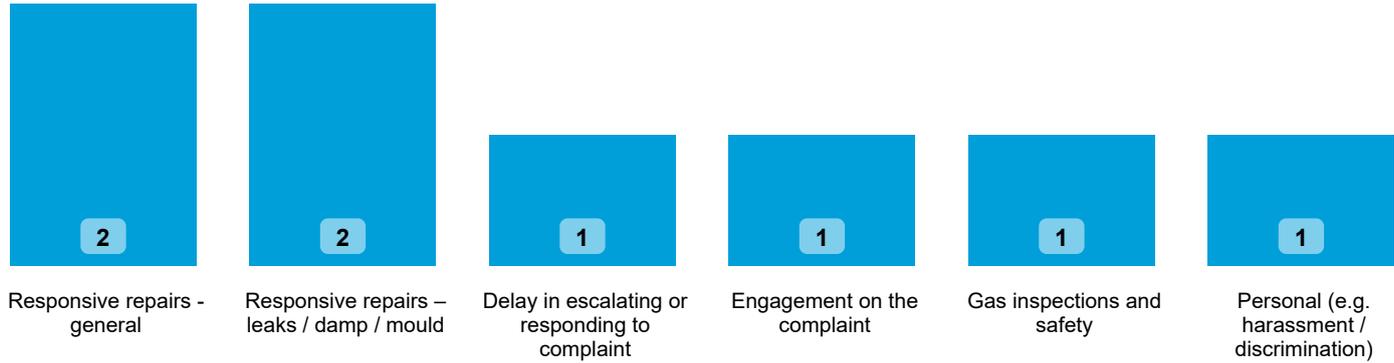
Findings by Sub-Category | Cases Determined between April 2023 - March 2024 Table 3.4

Highlighted Service Delivery Sub-Categories only:

Sub-Category	Severe Maladministration	Maladministration	Service failure	Mediation	Redress	No maladministration	Outside Jurisdiction	Withdrawn	Total
Responsive repairs - general	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Responsive repairs – leaks / damp / mould	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Gas inspections and safety	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	5

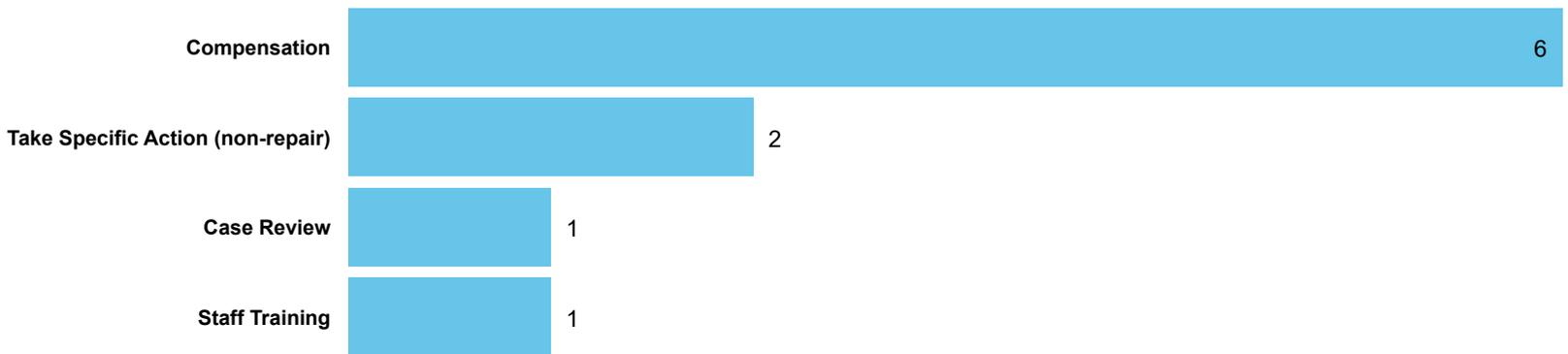
Top Sub-Categories | Cases determined between April 2023 - March 2024

Table 3.5



Orders Made by Type | Orders on cases determined between April 2023 - March 2024

Table 4.1



Order Compliance | Order target dates between April 2023 - March 2024

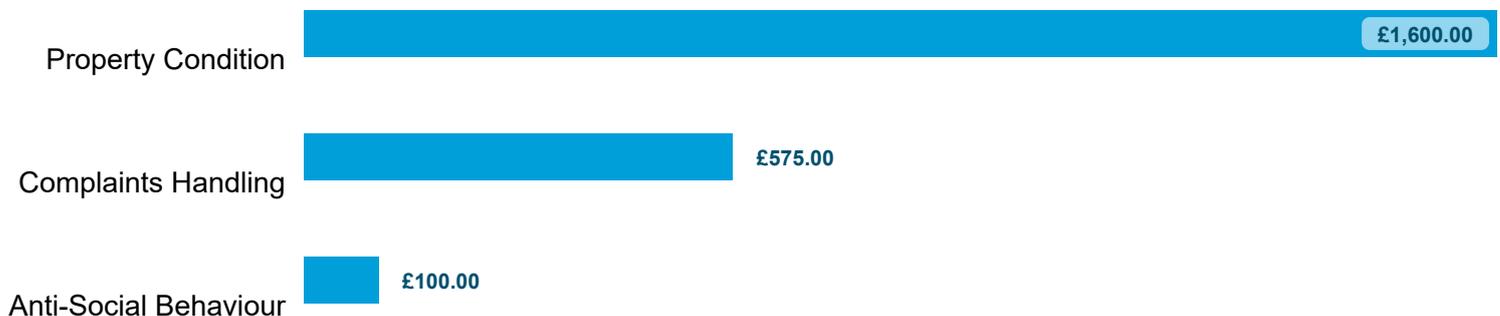
Table 4.2

Order Complete?	Within 3 Months	
	Count	%
Complied	10	100%
Total	10	100%

Compensation Ordered | Cases Determined between April 2023 - March 2024

Table 5.1

● Ordered ● Recommended



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Complaints Policy

Homes & Neighbourhoods

DRAFT

Publication date: **TBC**
Next review date: March 2026
Reference: Complaints Policy 2025

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Document Control

Governance

Table 1 – Policy information

Item	Response
Title	Complaints Policy
Responsible officer	Lisa Ramsden- Head of Housing Management and Partnerships
Author	Robert Scott
Approved by	Homes and Neighbourhoods, Senior Management Team
Version approval date	TBC
Next review date	March 2026
Review responsibility	Robert Scott
Applicable to	Kirklees Homes and Neighbourhoods staff and subcontractors Kirklees Homes and Neighbourhoods tenants and leaseholders
DPIA date	No alternative or specific requirements
IIA date	IIA-576688161 Jan 2025
Regulatory framework	Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards- Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard. Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code

Revision history

Table 2 – History of revisions

Date	Version	Author	Authorised by	Revision details
05/09/2022	1.0	Michelle Anderson-Dore	SMT	First publication
18/03/2024	2.0	Michelle Anderson-Dore	SMT	Revised in line with Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, mandatory from 01/03/2024
30/01/2025	3.0	Robert Scott	SMT	Format/drafting reviewed to improve accessibility & align with

Date	Version	Author	Authorised by	Revision details
				RSH Consumer Standards. minor changes in process.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purposes of this policy

- 1.1.1 Kirklees Council is committed to providing high quality services to all residents in the district. However, we recognise that there are times when our services do not meet the high standards we set ourselves and that this can lead to complaints.
- 1.1.2 As a social housing landlord, we have developed a complaints process for council tenants, leaseholders, and third parties (other residents). The process aims to be simple and accessible. It enables complaints to be resolved quickly, consistently and fairly, while meeting relevant codes of practice, regulations, and statutory requirements.
- 1.1.3 This policy sets out Homes & Neighbourhoods' complaints process and the associated service standards that tenants and others can expect.
- 1.1.4 The policy also describes how opportunities for learning from complaints will be identified and used to make improvements to the way we work and deliver services for our customers.

1.2 Legal context

- 1.2.1 This policy responds to the [Social Housing \(Regulation\) Act 2023](#) and the associated [Regulatory Standards](#) by addressing the following requirements:

Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard

- Registered providers must treat tenants and prospective tenants with fairness and respect.
 - Registered providers must communicate with tenants and provide information so tenants can use landlord services, understand what to expect from their landlord, and hold their landlord to account.
 - Registered providers must ensure complaints are addressed fairly, effectively, and promptly.
- 1.2.2 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 also legislates that social housing landlords must comply with the **Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code (the Code)**. The Code aims to achieve best practice in complaint handling and ultimately to provide a better service to residents. This policy is developed to meet the requirements published in the Code.

1.2.3 This policy supports Kirklees Council in complying with the following legislation and guidance:

- Housing Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- General Data Protection Regulations 2016
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code 2024

1.3 Definitions

1.3.1 For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Table 3 – List of definitions used in this policy

Term	Definition
Tenant	A person that has an active tenancy or lease agreement, living in a home owned by Kirklees Council.
Resident or customer	A tenant, leaseholder or other person who has a licence or other arrangement to occupy a council home or receive a service provided by Homes & Neighbourhoods.
Licensee	Where permission has been given to a resident to occupy a property but the resident does not have a tenancy agreement for the property.
Complainant	A person making a complaint about a service provided by Homes & Neighbourhoods.
Homes & Neighbourhoods, H&N, we, us	Kirklees Council’s housing management service, inclusive of all departments and teams.
Staff or officer	An employee of Homes & Neighbourhoods.
Contractor or agent	A person working on behalf of Homes & Neighbourhoods.
Customer Experience Team	A small team of specialist staff who monitor and record complaint handling.
MRC	Member Responsible for Complaints – the council’s Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Transport and Housing.

2. Objectives and scope

2.1 Policy objectives

2.1.1 We understand that sometimes things go wrong. This policy is designed to ensure that if residents have the need to complain, we handle the complaint well and in line with the statutory [Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code](#). It ensures that we put things right for residents, identifying learning and make improvements from complaints.

2.1.3 Throughout the complaints handling process, we aim to:

- be fair – treat people fairly and follow fair processes
- put things right
- provide a simple and accessible two-stage complaints process
- Resolve dissatisfaction at the first point of contact wherever possible.
- Ensure building safety related complaints are escalated to the appropriate responsible person.
- Monitor and record complaints through our Customer Experience Team.
- Take steps to put things right and, where possible, to restore the complainant to the position which existed prior to the service failure.
- Use complaints to learn, improve and develop services.

2.2 Policy scope

2.2.1 This policy is relevant to all staff, contractors and agents of Homes & Neighbourhoods.

2.2.2 Where the complaint is one that crosses over into other service areas, we will ensure a joined-up approach and will fully co-operate with other services to achieve the right outcome for the resident. This may include the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, where appropriate.

Definition of a complaint

2.2.3 Homes & Neighbourhoods applies the following definition of a complaint:

'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.'

2.2.4 Examples of the types of complaint we can consider include where:

- We have failed to provide a service when we should.
- We have provided a poor standard of service.
- We have made a mistake in the way we have provided the service.
- We have failed to meet our existing service standards or comply with our policies and procedures.
- Our staff behaviour has not been acceptable.
- We have failed to communicate as we promised.
- We have not managed reports of Anti-Social Behaviour.
- We have given wrong or misleading advice.

- There is a delay in undertaking work which cannot be explained within the terms of policy and procedure.
- We display bias or inequality of treatment

What is not a complaint?

2.2.5 When you are telling us about a problem for the very first time, we will try to resolve first expressions of dissatisfaction quickly as a normal service request.

2.2.6 Exceptions to 2.2.5 above will be made where the complaint concerns the behaviour of a member of staff, or where it immediately requires a senior manager to consider a complex area of policy or legislation. (See Appendix A -[Complaint Handling Code](#)).

2.2.7 Homes & Neighbourhoods will not consider any of the following as a complaint:

- Making an initial request for service or information.
- Making an initial report about anti-social behaviour (ASB); this will be managed in line with our ASB policy.
- Matters that have previously been considered under the Complaints Policy and have been through both stages will not be considered again under this policy. Residents will instead be signposted to the Housing Ombudsman Service (see Roles & Responsibilities below).
- Complaints concerning the level of rent or service charge or the amount of the rent or service charge increase. (We will accept complaints about the quality or frequency of work paid for via service charges).
- Complaints about the actions of an organisation that is not working for, or supported by, Homes & Neighbourhoods or Kirklees Council.
- Personnel matters including issues about staff employment or former employment including applications for employment. We will accept complaints about the behaviours or actions of a member of staff that has a direct impact on a resident.
- Where legal proceedings have been started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court.
- Where the issue being raised should be dealt with under any statutory review procedure including but not limited to decisions made under the terms of Kirklees Allocations Policy.
- Complaints relating to insurance claims which are managed by the council's Risk Management and Insurance Department
- Things that happened more than 12 months ago which were known about and have not been raised since. (There may be rare exceptions to this exclusion where appropriate, e.g. where the complaint relates to health and safety or safeguarding concerns).
- Anonymous complaints - we would usually expect a complainant to be willing to provide their details to progress a complaint. (There may be rare exceptions to this exclusion where appropriate, e.g. where the complaint relates to health and safety or safeguarding concerns).
- When a complaint is very similar to a resolved complaint that has been raised before and relates to an aspect of general law which we have correctly applied then, subject to the exercise of discretion, we will advise that the matter is closed.

- When a resident repeatedly makes serious allegations that employees or contractors have committed criminal, corrupt, or perverse conduct without any evidence.
- 2.2.8 Although we will not normally treat the scenarios listed above as complaints under the terms of this policy, we will deal with them in an appropriate manner, and we will provide confirmation of the decision in writing.
- 2.2.9 Each complaint is considered on an individual basis, we do not take a one size fits all approach when excluding complaints.
- 2.2.10 We record and report on any complaints that we have not accepted.
- 2.2.11 Dissatisfaction with services made through a survey. If residents express dissatisfaction with services when completing a satisfaction survey, we do not treat this as a complaint. All surveys will clearly outline how to make a complaint if the resident wishes to do so.

Who can make a complaint?

- 2.2.12 A complaint can be raised by any person or group of people affected by an activity or service provided by Homes & Neighbourhoods, including:
- Current tenants/licensees and members of their households
 - Former tenants/licensees
 - Leaseholders
 - MPs and Councillors
 - Advocates of the complainant such as friends, relatives, or other representatives (providing prior consent from the complainant is received)
 - A resident or group of residents who have been affected by our activities and services in the locality.
 - Clients/customers for some contracted/outsourced services.
- 2.2.13 If we are contacted by a third party or representative including family members or friends, we will establish with them how the resident would like to progress the complaint. Once we have established the need for a service request or a formal complaint, we would obtain permission from the resident they are representing. We would not ask for permission if the representative was a Local Authority Councillor, MP because they have the resident's contact information, summary of issues, and are acting in the capacity of their role. This shows they have implied consent. We would however still establish whether the contact from the Local Authority Councillor, MP is an enquiry, service request or are they representing the resident to make a complaint.

3. Policy statement

3.1 How to make a complaint

3.1.1 We offer a wide range of ways for our residents to make a complaint. These are:

- Online: By completing the [online complaint form](#) on our website.
- Phone: By speaking to a member of the Customer Support & Information Team on 01484 414886.
- In person: By speaking to a member of Homes & Neighbourhoods staff (e.g. Housing Management Officer)
- In writing: Homes & Neighbourhoods, PO Box 1720, Huddersfield, HD1 9EL
- Social media (by private message). For residents wishing to lodge a complaint by social media, we request that this is done by private message on the following channels:
 - Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/KirkleesHN>
 - X (formerly known as Twitter) - <https://x.com/HNKirklees>

3.1.2 In some circumstances, we are able to accept complaints in person. Residents would need to book an appointment in advance for this. The discussion would be held with a member of the Customer Experience Team, or another officer who's not directly involved in the complaint. We would agree a convenient venue with the customer (at home or in a community building).

3.2 How we deal with complaints about high-rise residential buildings

3.2.1 A high-rise residential building (HRRB) is defined as a building that has at least 7 floors or is at least 18 metres high, and include at least two residential units.

3.2.2 The Building Safety Act 2022 requires landlords to set up a process for residents in high rise residential buildings to be able to make a complaint about a building safety risk. Residents in HRRBs can complain to the accountable person(s) and the principal accountable person about building risks. Relevant complaints include:

- Structural failure that could lead to part or all of the building collapsing, or parts of the building falling off.
- Flammable cladding on the outside of a high-rise building.
- Any risk in the building that could lead to a fire spreading, such as Fire doors or smoke extraction which are not working or missing that may increase the risk of fire spread.
- Performance of an accountable person, including their communication to residents
- Their responses to raised concerns
- How they manage building safety risks

3.2.3 All complaints about high rise buildings will be dealt with in line with this policy.

3.2.3 If the resident is not satisfied with our procedure, they can refer a complaint to the Building Safety Regulator <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-the-building-safety-regulator> online or by telephone 0300 790 6787

3.3 Accessibility

- 3.3.1 We are committed to ensuring that our complaints process is accessible to all and can offer help and support to ensure any concerns from residents or their advocates are listened to and understood.
- 3.3.2 Kirklees Council's Inclusion and Diversity Strategy sets out our commitment to equality of opportunity for all and identifies what types of support we may be able to provide to support customers to make a complaint.
- 3.3.3 An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been undertaken to inform the development of this policy.
- 3.3.4 Individual tenant vulnerabilities will be considered when complaints are made, in line with the council's Vulnerable Tenant Policy. Where appropriate changes to the way Homes & Neighbourhoods process the complaint may be made to ensure that tenants do not face additional barriers in accessing the service.
- 3.3.5 Some residents may prefer to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented and/or accompanied by them at meetings with Homes & Neighbourhoods. The representative may be by an advocate, carer, family member, Local Authority Councillor, agency, or professional body. Where this is the case, we must have prior consent from the resident which authorises us to communicate with their appointed advocate or representative on their behalf.
- 3.3.6 A resident may contact the Housing Ombudsman at any time throughout the course of their complaint for advice and support.
- 3.3.7 Complainants may also choose to seek assistance and advice from external agencies, such as [Citizens Advice](#).

3.4 Unacceptable behaviour or actions

- 3.4.1 We understand that upsetting and distressing circumstances can result in people acting out of character and we do not view behaviour as unacceptable just because a resident is assertive or determined. However, the actions of an individual(s) who is angry, demanding, or persistent may sometimes lead to unreasonable demands or unacceptable behaviour towards staff. If this happens, we may take action to tackle the behaviour.

3.5 Complaint handling process

Early resolution

- 3.5.1 Sometimes residents tell us they are unhappy with something and may not wish to make a formal complaint but just that we put things right. We refer to this as a service request (see Appendix A- [Complaint Handling Code](#).) Our early resolution approach will aim to

resolve these concerns at the first point of contact. The Customer Experience Team will take the lead in helping to put things right as quickly as possible.

3.5.2 Where our early resolution fails to resolve the matter, or where the issue is particularly serious, such as a health & safety or safeguarding issue, or a complaint about staff behaviour, we will move on to a formal two-stage complaint process. The process and associated timescales are set out below:

Stage 1

3.5.3 Where an investigation is required, we will acknowledge a complaint within 5 working days and provide a final response within 10 working days. An appropriate Housing Manager or Team Leader will take lead responsibility for investigating the issue raised and for responding to the complaint.

The stage 1 response will contain:

- The complaint stage.
- The details of the complaint (complaint definition).
- The decision on the complaint.
- The reasons for the decision/s.
- The details of any actions we will take to put things right including timescales for this.
- Details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the resident is not satisfied with the response.

3.5.4 We respond to a complaint when we know the answer to the complaint, not when we complete the actions required to address the issue.

3.5.5 We will let the resident know that they have 4 weeks to consider our response and to request that the complaint is escalated through to the next stage of the process. While we would not expect residents to restate their complaint if asking for it to be reviewed, we would expect them to tell us what elements have been resolved, and what areas they remain dissatisfied with.

3.5.6 Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, we incorporate these into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued.

3.5.7 Where we have issued the stage 1 response, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, we log the new issues as a new complaint.

3.5.8 There may be occasions when due to the complexity of the complaint, we need extra time to investigate. Should an extension to the standard timescale be needed we will inform them resident of this and the reasons. Where possible we aim to do this at least 2

working days before the deadline. Any extension must be no more than a further 10 working days without good reason.

Stage 2

3.5.9 If the resident is not happy with the Stage 1 response, the complaint will escalate to Stage 2. We will acknowledge the escalation within 5 working days and provide a final response within 20 working days. An appropriate Service Manager or General Manager will take lead responsibility for reviewing the Stage 1 investigation and response.

3.5.10 The person investigating the complaint at stage 2 will not be the same person that investigated the complaint at stage 1. If we have accepted the complaint and responded at stage 1, we would only refuse to escalate the complaint to stage 2 for either of the following reasons:

- If the complaint should not be looked at further because it could compromise legal proceedings to do so.
- If it has now become clear that this complaint has previously fully exhausted the complaints process.

3.5.11 The stage 2 response will contain:

- The complaint stage.
- The details of the complaint (complaint definition).
- The decision on the complaint.
- The reasons for any decisions we have made.
- The details of any actions we will take to put things right including timescales for this.
- Details of how the resident can escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman if they remain dissatisfied.

We respond to a complaint when we know the answer to the complaint, not when we complete the actions required to address the issue.

3.5.12 At each stage of the process, we will aim to speak to the resident directly to explain how we will investigate the complaint and to ensure that we understand the complaint and the outcome the resident is seeking.

3.5.13 Our final response to the resident will be in writing and will be the end of our complaint's procedure. After a complaint has gone through both stages of our complaint's procedure, and if the resident remains dissatisfied, they can complain to the Housing Ombudsman

3.5.14 There may be occasions when due to the complexity of the complaint, we need extra time to investigate. If we need an extension to the Stage 2 standard timescale, we will inform the resident of this and the reasons, where possible at least 2 working days before the response is due. Any extension must be no more than a further 20 working days without good reason.

3.6 Putting things right

- 3.6.1 Where a complaint has been upheld, Homes & Neighbourhoods will, where possible, offer a remedy to return the resident to the position they would have been in if things had not gone wrong. The remedy will depend on the individual circumstances of the case, but will usually be achieved by:
- Acknowledging where things have gone wrong
 - Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons
 - Making an apology
 - Reviewing a decision we have already made
 - Reviewing our policies or procedures
 - Amending a record
 - Consider offering compensation, in line with the Homes & Neighbourhoods Redress Policy
- 3.6.2 We will consider each case on its own merit and offer the most suitable remedy to resolve the issue. The priorities are to take steps to put things right for the resident, and to learn and make service improvements.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Homes & Neighbourhoods' responsibilities

- 4.1.1 Team leaders and managers will be responsible for ensuring that their staff are aware of and comply with the provisions of this policy through supervisions and appraisals.
- 4.1.2 Training and procedures will be made available to managers, staff and officers to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities.
- Our Head of Housing Management and Partnerships is the Lead Officer with responsibility for complaint handling and compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Code.
- 4.1.3 Our Senior Management Team have shared responsibility for ensuring their service areas handle complaints in line with this policy and the Housing Ombudsman Code. They have responsibility for ensuring resolutions are delivered effectively and their service responds to any learning.
- 4.1.4 We have a Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC') who has lead responsibility for complaints. They receive regular information on complaints that provides insight on complaint handling performance. The Cabinet Member for Transport and Housing has lead responsibility for governance of and assurance that our complaint policy and practice aligns to the Housing Ombudsman Code.

- 4.1.5 We will co-operate with the Housing Ombudsman or other regulatory body with responsibilities for oversight of complaints handling.

4.2 Working with Councillors and MPs

- 4.2.1 We know that some residents will want to involve a local elected representative. The key role of the Local Authority Councillor is to make sure that a concern is fully considered in a timely fashion. They may use their knowledge and experience to offer information about whether they feel a policy or legislative requirement has been appropriately followed.
- 4.2.2 However, a Councillor or MP cannot become involved with, or influence or make a decision on an individual situation.
- 4.2.3 They may use the resident's experience to inform their opinion on a policy or law, however, an individual councillor/MP cannot alter that policy or law

4.3 Working with other services

- 4.3.1 We recognise that some complaints “crossover” with other Kirklees Council services, and also that some elements of the complaint may be under the jurisdiction of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman. In such cases, we will liaise with the individual services in question, or with the council's corporate Customer Standards Team to discuss and agree how the concerns will be considered. It may be that a joint response can be practically collated (our preferred outcome) and, if so, we will agree which service will take the lead on drawing the response together. We will explain this to the resident and discuss it with them.

4.4 The Housing Ombudsman

- 4.4.1 The role of the Housing Ombudsman is to encourage and assist landlords and tenants to resolve disputes at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.4.2 Residents can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service at any point before or during the complaints process. The Ombudsman cannot investigate complaints while they are going through our internal complaints process. However, the Ombudsman may be able to help complainants and Homes & Neighbourhoods reach a resolution.
- 4.4.3 If a resident remains dissatisfied with our response following the complaints process, they can make a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman who will investigate fairly and impartially.
- 4.4.4 The Housing Ombudsman can be contacted in several ways:

Online: [Housing Ombudsman website](#)

Phone: 0300 111 3000

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Writing: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston, PR2 0ET

5. Monitoring and review

5.1 Monitoring, Learning and improvement

- 5.1.1 We are committed to creating a positive complaint handling culture in Homes & Neighbourhoods. We provide annual and quarterly reports on learning and service improvement to Senior Managers, the Member Responsible for Complaints and relevant governing bodies and staff. We publish an Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report to Cabinet and publish this on the [complaints and compliments page](#) of the council's website.
- 5.1.2 Resident satisfaction is very important to Homes & Neighbourhoods and we use feedback from complaints to shape improvements to our services and procedures. When a complaint is resolved, we will identify any learning opportunities. The Customer Experience Team will work with the appropriate Service Manager or Strategic Manager to identify any themes or trends and implement positive changes in service delivery.
- 5.1.3 We annually submit and publish Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) data according to requirements set by the Regulator of Social Housing.
- 5.1.4 Our reporting for Tenant Satisfaction includes information on volumes of complaints, response timescales and proportion of respondents who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are satisfied with their landlord's approach to complaints handling.
- 5.1.5 We carry out an annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code to ensure this policy remains in line with its requirements as set out by the Housing Ombudsman. We will also conduct a review of the self-assessment following a significant restructure or change in our procedures. We publish our self-assessment and Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report on our website by 30th June each year and we will also include a response to our self-assessment from Council Cabinet. Our latest self-assessment can be read on our [complaints and compliments webpage](#).

5.2 Policy review

- 5.2.1 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis as part of our regular self-assessment, or in response to relevant changes in legislation, regulation or organisational structures.

- 5.2.2 Any significant changes will be consulted on prior to implementation. Relevant approvals will be sought from Homes & Neighbourhoods' Senior Management Team and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Housing in their capacity as MRC.
- 5.2.3 This policy will be published on the complaints and compliments page of the council's website and will be made available to residents on request.
- 5.2.4 This policy, how to make a complaint, and information about the Housing Ombudsman Service will be publicised through a range of communication channels e.g. letters, tenant publications and social media.

6. Associated policies and procedures

6.1 Associated council policies

6.1.1 The following Kirklees Council Homes and Neighbourhoods strategies and policies are relevant:

- [Homes & Neighbourhoods Service Standards](#)
- [Anti-Social Behaviour \(ASB\) Policy](#)
- [Redress Policy](#)
- [Repairs & Maintenance Policy](#)
- Vulnerable Tenant Policy (link to be added once approved)

6.1.2 The following broader Kirklees Council strategies and policies are relevant:

- [Kirklees Council Access Strategy 2021-26](#)
- [Kirklees Council Inclusion and Diversity Strategy](#)
- [Kirklees Council Safeguarding Policy](#)

Redress Policy

Homes & Neighbourhoods

Publication date: **TBC**

Next review date: March 2026

Reference: Redress Policy 2025

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Document Control

Governance

Table 1 – Policy information

Item	Response
Title	Redress Policy
Responsible officer	Lisa Ramsden, Head of Housing Management and Partnerships
Author	Robert Scott
Approved by	Senior Management Team
Version approval date	TBC
Next review date	March 2028 (every 3 years)
Review responsibility	Robert Scott
Applicable to	Kirklees Homes and Neighbourhoods staff and subcontractors Kirklees Homes and Neighbourhoods tenants and leaseholders
DPIA date	No alternative or specific requirements
IIA date	N/A
Regulatory framework	Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards- Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.

Revision history

Table 2 – History of revisions

Date	Version	Author	Authorised by	Revision details
05/09/2024	1.0	Michelle Anderson-Dore	SMT	First publication
12/06/2024	2.0	Michelle Anderson-Dore	SMT	Revised in line with Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, mandatory from 01/03/2024
30/01/2025	3.0	Robert Scott	SMT	Revised in line with Housing Ombudsman Remedies Guidance.

Date	Version	Author	Authorised by	Revision details
				Format/drafting reviewed to improve accessibility.

DRAFT

1. Introduction

1.1 Purposes of this policy

- 1.1.1 Kirklees Council is committed to providing a high-quality service to all residents and aims to resolve any issues before the need for redress arises. However, we recognise that there are times when our services do not meet the high standards we set ourselves and, as a result, residents become inconvenienced.
- 1.1.2 This policy relates to claims or awards that arise as a result of a complaint or service failure. Our focus is upon restoring residents to the position they would have been in had the service failure not occurred.
- 1.1.3 This policy outlines how we will put things right when things go wrong (offer redress) should a tenant or leaseholder, other resident or third party complain to us.

1.2 Legal context

- 1.2.1 This policy responds to the [Social Housing \(Regulation\) Act 2023](#) and the associated [Regulatory Standards](#) by addressing the following requirements:

Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard

- Registered providers must treat tenants and prospective tenants with fairness and respect.
 - Registered providers must communicate with tenants and provide information so tenants can use landlord services, understand what to expect from their landlord, and hold their landlord to account.
 - Registered providers must ensure complaints are addressed fairly, effectively, and promptly.
- 1.2.2 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 also legislates that social housing landlords must comply with the [Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code](#) (the Code). The Code aims to achieve best practice in complaint handling and ultimately to provide a better service to residents. This policy is developed to meet the requirements published in the Code.
- 1.1.4 This policy also aims to align with the [Housing Ombudsman's Remedies Guidance](#), which includes guidance on financial remedies.
- 1.2.3 This policy supports Kirklees Council in complying with the following legislation and guidance:
- Housing Act 1996
 - Equality Act 2010
 - General Data Protection Regulations 2016

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code 2024

1.3 Definitions

1.3.1 For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Table 3 – List of definitions used in this policy

Term	Definition
Tenant	A person that has an active tenancy or lease agreement, living in a home owned by Kirklees Council.
Resident or customer, you	A tenant, leaseholder or other person who has a licence or other arrangement to occupy a council home or receive a service provided by Homes & Neighbourhoods.
Complainant	A person making a complaint about a service provided by Homes & Neighbourhoods.
Homes & Neighbourhoods, H&N, we, us	Kirklees Council’s housing management service, inclusive of all departments and teams.
Staff or officer	An employee of Homes & Neighbourhoods.
Contractor or agent	A person working on behalf of Homes & Neighbourhoods.
Customer Experience Team	A small team of specialist staff who monitor and record complaint handling.
MRC	Member Responsible for Complaints – the council’s Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Transport and Housing.

2. Objectives and scope

2.1 Policy objectives

2.1.1 The overarching aims of this policy are to ensure:

- Practical solutions, not just compensation, are explored fully to resolve a situation.
- Where financial payments are appropriate, they are proportionate to the loss or inconvenience caused.
- All residents making a claim are treated in a fair and equal way.
- Any financial payments are considered against clear guidelines.

- Responsibility will be taken by Kirklees Council for any detriment or damage caused to an individual or their property and belongings by a third party (contractor) working on our behalf.
- Legislative/mandatory compensation will be paid in accordance with the relevant guidelines.

2.2 Policy scope

- 2.2.1 This policy applies to all council housing-related complaints managed by Homes & Neighbourhoods. Organisations providing housing-related services on behalf of Homes & Neighbourhoods, or the Council, will be expected to follow this policy.
- 2.2.2 This policy does not apply in the following situations:
- Claims for personal injury or damage covered by contents insurance.
 - Claims for damage caused by circumstances beyond our control as a landlord (e.g., through storm or flooding).
 - Problems caused by a third party not working for Kirklees Council
 - Where legal proceedings have been started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court
 - Issues that would be covered by insurance claims.
 - Issues that involve a member of staff that would be covered by HR policies.
- 2.2.3 Homes & Neighbourhoods on behalf of Kirklees Council ('the landlord'), will consider claims outside of the scope of this policy (such as accidental damage or personal injury), in conjunction with claims of negligence, via the Council's Risk Management and Insurance Team.
- 2.2.4 In conjunction with this policy, we recognise the jurisdiction of the Housing Ombudsman Service and will implement recommendations resulting from its investigations.
- 2.2.5 This policy does not apply where a resident has made a claim for compensation via the Housing Ombudsman. In such cases, the council, where appropriate, will pay compensation as directed by the Ombudsman.

3. Policy statement

3.1 Our commitments

- 3.1.1 Offering compensation can sometimes help to reduce dissatisfaction and resolve complaints. However, other options and outcomes must also be considered. The consideration of whether compensation is appropriate, and the decision made, will be recorded with each complaint received.
- 3.1.2 To put things right we will:

- Take all expressions of dissatisfaction seriously.
- Communicate in a courteous, timely and accurate manner.
- Recognise the impact(s) the issue has had.
- Provide reassurance that the breakdown or failure will not happen again.
- Initiate a rapid, appropriate and acceptable operational response to the issue.
- Offer a negotiated remedy and timescale for delivery.
- Deliver promises with clear implications should we fail to do so.
- Where appropriate, offer payment that compensates the complainant for any harm, costs incurred or inconvenience.
- Learn from complaints and put in place actions to make sure that we don't fail again in future.

3.2 Types of compensation

3.2.1 There are different circumstances under which compensation may be paid. These are:

- **Mandatory** (such as statutory home loss or disturbance payments, and payments made under the Right to Repair scheme). Compensation will be paid in accordance with the relevant statutory guidelines and our related policies.
- **Quantifiable loss payments** (where people can demonstrate actual loss) such as having to pay for alternative accommodation, additional heating bills or the cost of repairs where we have failed to meet our obligations. We will want to make sure that any costs have been reasonably incurred and will require evidence of actual loss.
- **Other financial redress** (for time and trouble/distress and inconvenience or as a gesture of goodwill). This could include things like poor complaint handling, delays in providing a service, e.g., in undertaking a repair, failure to provide a service that has been charged for, temporary loss of amenity, failure to follow policy and procedure or unreasonable time taken to resolve a situation.

Quantifiable loss payments

3.2.2 We will consider if there has been an actual, evidenced financial loss incurred as a direct result of service failure. Circumstances in which we may decide that as a landlord we should compensate a resident for a quantifiable financial loss could include (but are not limited to):

- where money is due to a resident but has not been paid – for example, rent overpayments or works which we had previously agreed to pay for.
- costs which have been reasonably incurred by a resident, which would not have been necessary if the service failure had not occurred.

3.2.3 We will not pay costs incurred by a resident where we have not been given the opportunity to rectify matters first.

- 3.2.4 Residents may incur other costs where they have chosen to use a solicitor or other professional to help them to pursue their complaint with us. We have a complaints process that is fair and accessible to all, and residents should not need to seek such advice in order to make or progress a complaint. We would not reimburse a resident for such fees, unless we considered that there were exceptional circumstances.
- 3.2.5 Residents seeking reimbursement for loss or damage to personal belongings which are considered to be caused by the Council will be supported to complete an Insurance Claim form. These will be assessed by Kirklees Council Risk and Insurance Team.
- 3.2.6 In the first instance, where reimbursement is requested for loss or damage, we will direct residents to make an insurance claim rather than pursue all or part of their concerns as a formal complaint.

Other financial redress

- 3.2.7 A framework (Appendix A – Other Financial Redress) will be used by staff to decide the level of compensation to be awarded when a service failure occurs. Decisions about the impact on a customer will take into account the household's specific circumstances such as vulnerabilities or the presence of young children.

Distress and inconvenience

- 3.2.8 Residents may describe how they have been affected by the situation that has led to their complaint, for example in terms of the impact on their family life, use of their home, impact on their employment, or on their health and emotional wellbeing. Some residents will set this within the context of their mental and/or physical health and explain how our actions or inactions have affected them or exacerbated existing health conditions.
- 3.2.9 We recognise that the overall distress and inconvenience caused to a resident by a particular service failure can include:
- stress, anxiety, worry, frustration, and uncertainty
 - raised expectations – where our actions or inactions resulted in a resident reasonably believing that something would, or would not, happen
 - inconvenience
 - a strong sense of having been treated differently to others for no apparent reason
 - problems caused by delays in us resolving matters or poor complaint handling
- 3.2.10 When assessing the impact of the distress, we will take into account:
- the severity of the situation
 - the length of time involved
 - any disabilities or particular vulnerabilities of the resident
 - any other relevant factors

3.2.11 The amount of compensation we decide upon will not reflect a definitive loss, as we will not be able to quantify this. The intention is recognition of the overall distress and inconvenience caused to the resident by the particular circumstances of the complaint.

Time and trouble

3.2.12 We recognise that any resident pursuing a complaint with us will incur a certain amount of time, trouble and minor costs (such as phone calls). We would not usually compensate residents for their time and trouble in making a complaint in these circumstances.

3.2.13 However, a remedy of financial compensation may be appropriate if we failed to progress or escalate a complaint on repeated occasions, failed to respond to reasonable contacts from the resident or demonstrated overall poor complaint handling.

Loss of a room

3.2.14 We will pay you compensation if we have not carried out work that is needed and your room is unsuitable for living in. This will only apply if you have not caused damage to the room yourself, and you have allowed us to carry out the required work. The payment will be calculated by dividing the number of rooms in your home by the amount of full rent you pay. For example, if your rent is £50 a week and you have five rooms in total, we would divide £50 by 5, giving £10 a room for every week that it is not usable. We may offer you temporary housing instead of compensation.

Failure to provide a service where a service charge has been paid

3.2.16 If we fail to provide a service for more than 14 days (or the number of days appropriate for a particular service) the level of the compensation will be the same amount that you paid for the service for the length of time that we failed to provide it, plus a single payment of £10.

3.3 Residents' actions and circumstances - mitigating and aggravating factors

Mitigating factors

3.3.1 When assessing a redress claim, we will consider the extent to which a resident's actions might have contributed to the situation in which they found themselves. Considerations will include whether the resident was proactive in seeking to minimise the impact of the situation on them or, conversely, whether the resident exacerbated or failed to minimise the impacts. These factors may mitigate or minimise the level of award ('mitigating factors').

3.3.2 Examples of when the resident's own actions mitigate the extent of the compensation being considered might include:

- Failing to bring individual matters to our attention within a reasonable timeframe.
- Failing to communicate clearly with us.
- Refusing help to make a coherent complaint.
- Failing to respond to contact from us.
- Repeatedly refusing to allow us access to inspect the property and assess the extent of works needed (where relevant).
- Pursuing a complaint in an unreasonable or excessive way.

Aggravating factors

3.3.3 We recognise the fact that the emotional impact experienced by an individual resident is unique to them. Not all residents will experience the same emotional impact in response to the same instance of service failure. This might be due to their particular circumstances, or as a result of a vulnerability ('aggravating factors'). Consideration of any aggravating factors could justify an increased award to reflect the specific impact on the resident.

3.3.4 Examples of aggravating factors might include:

- A resident's mental health condition (for example, mishandling of ASB aggravates an existing condition).
- A resident with young children (for example, an extended period in temporary accommodation as a result of repair delays causes significant inconvenience and upset).
- A resident's disability (for example, the daily impact of an emergency decant as a result of failure to comply with repairing obligations).
- A resident with responsibility for a dependent with a disability (for example, a delayed repair response could have a disproportionate impact).
- Any previous history of mishandling by us of the resident's tenancy.
- The above lists are not exhaustive, and complaints may include elements from more than one category.

3.4 Payments of compensation and arrears

3.1.1 Compensation payments will be paid by bank transfer; these will be processed by the Customer Experience Team.

3.1.2 A complainant will usually be expected to accept an offer of compensation within 28 days of the offer being made.

3.1.3 An individual can within 28 days acknowledge the offer but defer the acceptance of the offer should they wish to pursue their complaint further through the Housing Ombudsman.

3.1.4 Our commitment to pay compensation will be honoured until three months after the completion of the Housing Ombudsman investigation. The final sum of compensation

will be determined by the Housing Ombudsman but will not be less than the amount offered by us in the first instance.

- 3.4.5 In most circumstances, where there is an outstanding debt owed to the council, including but not limited to rent or service charge arrears, any compensation payment will be made against the debt and any remaining monies will then be forwarded to the claimant. This will not apply in cases where compensation has been ordered by the Housing Ombudsman Service in cases of maladministration findings.
- 3.4.6 In some circumstances where there has been quantifiable loss e.g. ‘out of pocket’ expenses as a result of our actions or inactions we may seek to pay compensation direct to the resident and we will not offset against any housing debt owed to the Council.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Homes & Neighbourhoods’ responsibilities

- 4.1.1 This policy will be delivered by all service areas within Homes & Neighbourhoods and coordinated by the Customer Experience Team.
- 4.1.2 Training and procedures will be made available to staff and officers to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities.
- 4.1.3 Supervisors, team leaders and managers will be responsible for ensuring that their staff are aware of and comply with the provisions of this policy through supervisions and appraisals.
- 4.1.4 All complaints will be treated with confidence. Personal information about the complainant will only be shared internally when strictly necessary to deliver the agreed remedy. Details of the complaint will only be shared externally with the complainant’s consent.

5. Monitoring and review

5.1 Monitoring and improvement

- 5.1.1 We are committed to creating a positive complaint handling culture in Homes & Neighbourhoods. We provide annual and quarterly reports on learning and service improvement to Senior Managers, the Member Responsible for Complaints and relevant governing bodies and staff. We publish an Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report to Cabinet and publish this on the [complaints and compliments page](#) of the council’s website.

5.1.2 These reports include details of compensation awarded and service failures that led to compensation being awarded.

5.2 Policy review

5.2.1 The policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years, or in response to relevant changes in legislation, regulation or organisational structures.

5.2.2 Any significant changes will be consulted on prior to implementation and relevant approvals sought from Homes and Neighbourhoods Senior Management Team and the Portfolio Holder for Highways & Housing (MRC).

5.2.3 This policy and future updates will be published on <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/council-housing/complaints-and-compliments.aspx>

6. Associated policies and procedures

6.1 Associated council policies

6.1.1 The following Homes & Neighbourhoods strategies and policies are relevant:

- [Homes & Neighbourhoods Service Standards](#)
- [Complaints Policy](#) [link is to existing policy - update once approved]
- [Anti-Social Behaviour \(ASB\) Policy](#)
- [Redress Policy](#)
- [Repairs & Maintenance Policy](#)
- Vulnerable Tenant Policy (update to link once approved)

Appendix A – Other Financial Redress

This framework reflects the [Housing Ombudsman Remedies Guidance](#) and will be used by staff to decide the level of compensation to be awarded when a service failure occurs. Decisions about the impact on a resident will take into account the household's specific circumstances such as vulnerabilities or the presence of young children.

Summary Title	Circumstances	Impact on Resident	Level of Redress
Low Impact	<p>Where there has been a service failure which has caused inconvenience and/or distress to the customer.</p> <p>Excludes: Industrial action, failure by a third party, (that is not working on the landlords behalf), failure of statutory services Other circumstances beyond the control of Homes and Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Minimal</p> <p>Short duration</p> <p>Might include distress and inconvenience, time and trouble, disappointment, loss of confidence, and delays in getting matters resolved</p>	£50 to £100
Medium Impact	Succession of failures and/or not resolved within reasonable timescales	<p>A failure that adversely affected the resident</p> <p>No permanent impact</p>	£100 to £600
High Impact	A succession of service failures and/or not resolved within reasonable timescales	<p>Significant impact</p> <p>Physical and/or emotional impact</p>	£600 to £1,000
Service Failure	Serious or prolonged service failure resulting in severe stress, disruption or inconvenience	<p>Severe long-term impact</p> <p>Physical and/or emotional impact</p>	£1,000 +
Loss of use of part of a property		<p>Use of part of property is lost for a minimum of 1 week</p> <p>Exceptions: Does not apply to gardens or outhouses. Does not apply where Homes and Neighbourhoods arrange alternative temporary accommodation. Does not apply where evacuation is ordered by</p>	<p>Payment will be calculated by dividing the number of rooms in your home by the amount of full rent you pay</p>

Summary Title	Circumstances	Impact on Resident	Level of Redress
Failure to provide a service where a service charge has been paid	If we fail to provide a service for more than 14 days (or the number of days appropriate for a particular service)	statutory authorities on public safety ground e.g., police incident	Payment will be the same amount that you paid for the service for the length of time that we failed to provide it, plus a single payment of £10.

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Estate Buildings: Residential Development Update and Delivery approach

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	10 th June
Cabinet Member (if applicable)	Graham Turner
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	Yes – published 2 nd May 2025 Yes
Purpose of Report	
To provide an update on Estate Buildings and seek approval for a proposed delivery approach with a development partner	
Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet to approve the proposed delivery approach for Estate Buildings • Cabinet to give their approval to dispose of the site at ‘less than best consideration’ to the preferred partner when appointed in accordance with the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003. • Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director, Place, in consultation with the Service Director, Legal, Governance and Commissioning and Cabinet Member, Finance and Regeneration, to negotiate and agree the terms of disposal for the site with the preferred development partner (“Preferred Partner”); and determine the appropriate level of discount for the site following a comprehensive assessment of the appointed partner’s development viability appraisal reflecting the housing mix which receives planning consent (which may likely be market housing only but could include some affordable housing). • Cabinet delegate authority to the Service Director, Legal, Governance and Commissioning to enter into and execute any agreement and other ancillary documents necessary to dispose of the site to the Preferred Partner for housing reflecting the housing mix which receives planning consent. 	
Reasons for Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will aid the development of this landmark building which is in a strategic location at the start of the Station to Stadium gateway in Huddersfield town centre, supporting the delivery of the Huddersfield Blueprint. • It will bring in resource and expertise from the private sector by appointing an organisation who is experienced in conversion of listed buildings. • There is a need for 1,730 new homes to be built each year in Kirklees and homes within the town centre can provide residents access to jobs both in the town centre and via the rail links to Leeds and Manchester. In turn, people living in the town centre support the leisure and retail offer within the town centre. 	
Resource Implications:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The competitive sale process and the delivery of the Estate Buildings will be managed by the Housing Growth and Regeneration team. 	

- This work will be delivered with staffing support from Procurement, Risk and Legal Services.
- This is being supplied from within existing resources.
- Previously the Council and Historic England worked in partnership to deliver the Kirklees' Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) programme, of which Estate Buildings forms part. This included £1,92 million external funding from Historic England, £7.95 million from the Council capital programme and an additional £1.365 million of external funding from the Getting Building Fund. Nearly £5 million of this was spent delivering essential repairs to Estate Buildings and restoring its heritage features to make the buildings safe, watertight, and investment ready. This work complete at end of 2023.
- Cabinet recently approved the expenditure of £1.25m of external grant funding from One Public Estate (OPE) which is to be spent on enabling works which will reduce costs for a future developer, making the building more marketable and attractive to potential investors. £60,000 of West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) Housing Revenue Funding was secured to cover revenue costs associated with OPE funded works. This work is due to start imminently.
- No Council capital or revenue is required to deliver the project. However, the council will continue to be responsible for any ongoing management and maintenance responsibilities for the building until it is transferred to the Preferred Partner once the development is complete.

Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> & name	David Shepherd
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	Kevin Mulvaney Send to this officer on every occasion*
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?	Samantha Lawton Send to this officer on every occasion*

Electoral wards affected: Newsome

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes – there is no personal data in this report.

1. Executive Summary

- Estate Buildings is a landmark Grade II* listed building in Huddersfield, strategically located near the train station and the George Hotel.
- Part of the Blueprint vision for the regeneration of Huddersfield town centre is to increase the number of people living in the town centre.
- Estate Buildings has been identified as a Council asset to provide a high-quality housing product that will appeal to a new and different market from those currently living in the town centre.
- Due to its heritage value, the cost of development will be significant and there will be a viability gap which will need to be filled with external funding to bring this site forward.

- Cabinet previously gave approval for the Council to enter into an exclusivity agreement with Thirteen Group, a Homes England Strategic Partner. However, Thirteen Group has since withdrawn from this agreement and the Council is left without a delivery partner.
- Thirteen’s withdrawal from the scheme was due to a changed appetite for risk, reflected in the Registered Provider sector as a whole. Registered Providers currently have limited risk appetite and are not willing to take the risk on refurbishment projects.
- Since their withdrawal, an assessment of all disposal options has been undertaken.
- The recommended approach is to conduct a competitive sale exercise to appoint a delivery partner.
- The reason for this recommendation is that it allows the Council to retain a level of control over the pace and quality of the development, whilst also benefitting from the resources and funding of a private sector delivery partner.
- The proposed disposal approach will support the transfer of an asset out of Council ownership, and into the private sector, and contribute to savings by reducing the costs associated with holding this asset.
- It will also generate up to an additional c. £95,000 of Council tax per annum once complete (based on an assumed development of 53 units on a B valuation banding).
- Evaluation criteria for submissions will place an emphasis on high-quality design as well as on housing mix and sustainability of the scheme.
- Due to the significant viability gap associated with bringing this site forward, it is likely that the Council will be required to dispose of the site at ‘less than best consideration’.
- The extent of the viability gap will not be known until we have engaged with the market via this competitive sale exercise.

2. Information required to take a decision

Background

The Huddersfield Blueprint is a ten-year vision to create a thriving, modern-day town centre. The vision for Huddersfield is that it will be a busy, family-friendly town centre that stays open for longer with a unique culture, arts and leisure offer and a variety of thriving businesses. The scale of investment and transformation, including high quality, innovative culture, arts and leisure offers will improve the attractiveness of the town centre as a place to live, providing new opportunities for residential development. In turn, new residents and new residential spending will help to sustain culture, arts and leisure developments within the town centre.

There is a need for 1,730 new homes to be built each year in Kirklees and homes within the town centre can help local people easily access jobs and support enjoyable lifestyles. The Blueprint vision for Huddersfield town centre living is:

“To create a vibrant community in Huddersfield Town Centre, attractive to young professionals, with strong connections to neighbouring cities and the Pennines.”

The Huddersfield Town Centre Living Plan has been developed to set out the vision, objectives, opportunities and actions to encourage more people to live in the town centre and contribute to the wider aspirations of the Huddersfield Blueprint. See appendix 1.

It has been previously agreed by Cabinet that proposals for residential development in Huddersfield Town Centre would focus on Council owned assets. In July 2022, Cabinet gave approval for the Council to enter into an eighteen-month exclusivity agreement with Thirteen Group, a Registered Provider, at the end of which they would have the option to purchase both Somerset Buildings and Estate Buildings at market value.

The Council worked closely with Thirteen throughout this period and progress was regularly reported to Housing Growth Board and Huddersfield Blueprint Board. However, Thirteen Group withdrew from their exclusivity agreement with the Council due to the significant viability gaps associated with both buildings, which would need to be filled with external funding, and the risk of development costs increasing further during the construction process. This is reflective of a wider trend within the Registered Provider market of a reduced risk appetite for conversion work, particularly for listed buildings, due to the rising costs associated with their existing stock, and tackling issues with damp/mould, cladding and retrofitting to meet new environmental standards.

Since Thirteen Group withdrew from the exclusivity agreement, work has been undertaken to analyse all the potential delivery options for Estate Buildings.

Thirteen Group's design and appraisal work showed more significant viability challenges with Somerset Buildings due to lower unit numbers and more complex fire safety issues and therefore, a decision has been made to focus only on the disposal of Estate Buildings at this time.

The proposed approach is to conduct a competitive sale exercise to obtain a delivery partner. The appointed delivery partner will bring resources and expertise to support the Council in delivering its housing growth ambition. Such partnerships, led by the Housing Growth team, already exist and are working effectively to deliver affordable and low carbon homes on five sites across the district as part of the Registered Providers programme. The Council has also recently successfully appointed a Homes England Strategic Provider through a similar exercise to develop Fenay Lane, Almondbury.

The focus will be on the delivery of high-quality homes which raise the standard of development within the town centre. Evaluation criteria for submissions will place an emphasis on high-quality design as well as on housing mix and sustainability of the scheme. Submissions will also be evaluated on the extent to which they maximise social value, such as utilisation of local supply chain and offer of apprenticeships.

The Council will seek proposals which deliver both market and affordable homes. However, given the viability challenges associated with this building and the application of Vacant Building Credit which is a national planning policy that reduces the affordable housing provision on vacant brownfield land, there is likely to be no or little affordable housing included within the final scheme.

The Council previously converted part of Estate Buildings for 15 apartments for council tenants to rent, through its Empty Clusters Programme. Through this competitive sale, the rest of the building will be brought forward creating a sustainable and mixed development.

Once appointed, the Preferred Partner will enter into an option agreement with the Council. During this time the Preferred Partner will use all reasonable endeavours to secure satisfactory planning permission and listed building consent for the Development as well as secure the necessary funding to meet any viability gap.

Once the option has been exercised, the Council will grant a building lease to the Preferred Partner for the duration of the construction period. Upon completion of the development, the freehold of the building will be acquired by the Preferred Partner.

Due to the significant viability gap associated with bringing this site forward, it is likely that the Council will be required to dispose of the site at 'less than best consideration'. The General Disposal Content (England) 2003 allows the Council to dispose of land at an undervalue not exceeding £2 million where the disposal will help secure the promotion or improvement of the

economic, social or environmental well-being of an area. The provision of high quality, sustainable housing which will meet the aims of the Huddersfield Blueprint is considered to fall within this definition.

Cost Breakdown

Whilst heritage buildings provide an opportunity for residential development, they also come with significant costs which make them challenging to develop, particularly in areas like Huddersfield town centre where the market for residential development is untested.

The extent of the viability gap will not be known until we have engaged with the market via this competitive sale exercise. However, all modelling undertaken to date has indicated that there will be a significant gap which will need to be filled with external funding.

The Council continues to explore all funding opportunities to minimise this gap. Work previously undertaken has been funded by money allocated to the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) surrounding St George's Square to make Estate Buildings wind and watertight and minimise further degradation of his significant historical building.

Cabinet also recently approved the expenditure of £1.25m of external grant funding from One Public Estate (OPE) which is to be spent on enabling works which will reduce costs for a future developer, making the building more marketable and attractive to potential investors. £60,000 of West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) Housing Revenue Funding was secured to cover revenue costs associated with OPE funded works.

There is no budget allocated for further work on this site. The council also is looking to reduce its ongoing management and maintenance of its Assets base. In 23/24 Financial Year, Estate Building cost the council c. £29,000 spent on gas, electric, intruder and fire alarms, rodent control among other things. The proposed disposal route provides the opportunity to bring in a well-resourced delivery partner to deliver homes on the site.

Timescales

The proposed next steps are as follows:

Prepare competitive sale pack	May – June 2025
Soft market testing	June 2025
Finalise competitive sale pack and supporting documents	July 2025
Competitive sale “Tender” period	August - November 2025
Period for clarifying interviews	Nov / December 2025
Evaluation	Jan / February 2026
Appointment of Preferred Partner	February 2026

It is a condition of the OPE funding that once the enabling works are complete, the Council must be in a contract to deliver homes by 31st March 2028 otherwise some or all of the grant may have to be repaid.

Expected impact / outcomes, benefits and risks (how they will be managed)

Impact and Outcomes

Benefits

- There is a need for 1,730 new homes to be built each year in Kirklees. Delivery of Estate Buildings will make a meaningful contribution to this annual requirement in a high demand, town centre location.
- Utilising existing buildings provides an opportunity for the Council to use its own assets to create a high-quality housing product in the town centre and provide an exemplar to the wider development market of the quality which can be achieved using Huddersfield's heritage assets.
- Estate Buildings would appeal to a new and different market from those currently living in the town centre, such as graduates from the University wishing to remain in this area.
- This will bring a currently degrading and historically significant building back into use and enhance the public realm outside of the train station, one of the six key regeneration areas identified in the Huddersfield Blueprint.
- Estate Buildings vacancy represents a financial and reputational liability for the Council which has a negative impact on perceptions of the town centre given its prominent position. Partnering with the private sector will speed up the pace of delivery.
- In addition, as part of the construction process, the benefits of the local supply chain and opportunities for apprenticeships and training will be maximised at every opportunity.
- This project will also complement other public sector funding streams in the town centre including Levelling Up Funding, West Yorkshire Combined Authority Funding, Historic England Funding and the Trans Pennine Route Update.

Risks and Mitigations:

- **Sufficient funding cannot be secured** – Development costs will be significant. The delivery partner will initially enter into a 24-month option period with the Council during which time both parties will work together to secure the necessary funding. There is a risk that sufficient funding cannot be secured in time to be able to progress the scheme.
Mitigation – The Council and the Preferred Partner working in partnership will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure all funding opportunities are explored, including applying for funding together. The Council is already utilising £1.25 million of OPE funding to help reduce any funding gap.
- **Limited or no market interest** – The residential market in Huddersfield is relatively untested. This development will set a new standard and provide an exemplar of what can be achieved. There is, however, a risk that market interest may be limited as the relatively small size, and town (as opposed to city) location does reduce the market.
Mitigation – Market engagement with developers has already been undertaken and there are interested parties. Further soft market testing will also be undertaken before the opportunity is advertised to confirm that our requirements and proposed disposal approach is acceptable to the private sector.

- **Delivery partner withdraws** – There is a risk that the Preferred Partner will withdraw during or at the end of the option period leaving the Council with a listed building that it has ongoing maintenance and management costs for without any budget and without a delivery partner. This will significantly delay delivery and possibly result in the Council not meeting the funding deadlines associated with the OPE grant. In this event, OPE could require us to repay some or all of the monies.

Mitigation - The exercise of the option is conditional upon gaining all necessary approvals, including Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent, securing sufficient funding to meet any viability gap and on securing the delivery partner’s internal approvals. Other than this, it will be made clear that the Preferred Partner is expected to complete the development. The Housing Growth team will support the Preferred Partner during the option period wherever possible to work with Planning to secure the necessary permissions and reduce the risk of them withdrawing.

- **Homes are built or managed to a poor standard** – If homes are built to a poor standard or are managed poorly by the landlord / management company once complete, this could result in reputational damage to the Council and will have negative impact on perceptions of Huddersfield town centre as a place to live.

Mitigation – The proposed disposal approach will allow the Council to retain some level of control over the design and quality of the buildings. The submissions from competitive sale exercise will be evaluated partly on the quality of the proposed schemes, with emphasis being placed on homes that exceed Nationally Described Space Standards and celebrate the heritage features of the building.

- **Delivery partner stops operating or is unable to proceed for financial reasons** – If delivery partner goes into liquidation or has significant financial challenges that mean it cannot complete the development, Estate Buildings will continue to be vacant and degrade over time. The Council will be left with a building that it has ongoing maintenance and management responsibilities for, with no budget allocated to this.

Mitigation – Rigorous due diligence will be done during competitive sale exercise to ensure that the Preferred Partner has sufficient financial standing and capability to undertake the project throughout its lifetime. The recommended disposal approach proposes that the Council enters into a building lease with the delivery partner. In the event of unforeseen circumstances that mean the delivery partner cannot proceed, the lease can be forfeited and the Council retains control of the building. A decision on how to proceed can then be made.

- **Sustainability**

The conversion of Estate Buildings will bring a currently vacant building back into active use. Reuse of existing assets on brownfield land to facilitate housing growth is more environmentally sustainable than new build, by reusing existing materials, maximising land efficiency and alleviating urban sprawl.

Due to its location, Estate Buildings will create a sustainable community where residents will be within walking distance of town centre facilities and well-connected to employment opportunities via the train and bus, reducing car dependency.

Proposed schemes which will be submitted as part of the competitive sale exercise will be evaluated based on their sustainability, the extent to which they improve the energy efficiency of the building and reduce fuel poverty for its residents.

Services and agencies involved

The redevelopment of Estate Buildings is being led by the Housing Growth and Regeneration team. The preparation of the specification, tendering and evaluation of bids will be led by the Housing Growth and Regeneration team with support from Procurement colleagues. Legal Services will also assist with the disposal to the Preferred Partner and with the preparation of a legal pack.

The Housing Growth and Regeneration team also works closely with the Town Centres team on the delivery of this project as part of the wider Huddersfield Blueprint.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Council Plan

Local economic growth, working with regional and national partners – The proposed disposal approach will make the most of partnership working by appointing a private sector organisation with the resources and expertise to ensure the building's conversion is complete to a high standard whilst preserving its heritage features.

The building's redevelopment will create skilled jobs during the construction period and provide the opportunity to train local people in the specialist construction methods required when working with heritage assets. The Council will seek to maximise benefits to the local supply chain and opportunities for apprenticeships and training at every opportunity.

Once complete, Estate Buildings will boost the desirability of Huddersfield's housing market and attract further inward investment. Estate Buildings will diversify the people living in the town centre, increase footfall and generate greater income for local businesses, and support other capital projects around the town centre including Our Cultural Heart.

Thriving people and communities – now and over the longer-term – Estate Buildings will create homes in a sustainable location, close to the railway station and the facilities of the town centre. The homes will be energy efficient and built to a high standard, helping to keep residents safe, warm and minimise fuel poverty.

3.2 Financial Implications

The proposed disposal of Estate Buildings to a suitable delivery partner will help to meet the Council's priorities set out in the Medium-Term Financial Plan, reported to Council in September 2024, and the Council Budget for 2025/26 and 2026/27.

One of the ways that the Council will ensure financial stability over the upcoming years is by growing the Kirklees economy. This is achieved by delivering new housing, making sure its infrastructure attracts further investment and working with partners in sectors to make the most of the boroughs economic potential. The conversion of Estate Buildings will support the regeneration ambitions for Huddersfield Town Centre. Increasing the number of people living in the town centre will help to ensure the success of other key schemes in the Capital Plan, including Cultural Heart and Huddersfield Open Market Regeneration.

Currently, the Council has no allocated budget for the ongoing management and maintenance of Estate Buildings. The proposed disposal approach will support the transfer of an asset out of Council ownership, and to the private sector, and contribute to savings by reducing the costs associated with holding this asset. It will also generate up to an additional c. £95,000 of Council

tax per annum once complete (based on an assumed development of 53 units on a B valuation banding).

Previously the Council and Historic England worked in partnership to deliver the Kirklees' Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) programme, of which Estate Buildings forms part. This included £1.92 million external funding from Historic England, £7.95 million from the Council capital programme and an additional £1.365 million external funding from the Getting Building Fund. Nearly £5 million of this was spent delivering essential repairs to Estate Buildings and restoring its heritage features to make the buildings safe, watertight, and investment ready. This work complete at end of 2023.

Cabinet recently approved £1.25 million of One Public Estate (OPE) Brownfield Land Release Funding to facilitate enabling works. £60,000 of West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) Housing Revenue Funding was secured to cover revenue costs associated with OPE funded works. This work is due to start imminently.

This funding will help to reduce gap funding required for a future developer. The Housing Growth and Regeneration team continue to explore all external funding opportunities to reduce this gap and make the development more attractive to potential delivery partners, who will also have access to their own funding too.

No Council capital or revenue is required to deliver the project. However, the council will continue to be responsible for any ongoing management and maintenance responsibilities for the building until it is transferred to the Preferred Partner once the development is complete.

There are no financial impacts on wider residents of Kirklees. The focus is to deliver well-designed energy efficient homes. This will result in sustainable places to live, with cost effective active travel and public transport connections along with savings on energy costs for tenants and residents living in the new homes when compared to other, less energy efficient properties.

3.3 Legal Implications

The Council has the legal power to dispose of assets generally under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The General Disposal Content (England) 2003 allows the Council to dispose of land at an undervalue not exceeding £2 million where the disposal will help secure the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of an area. The provision of high quality, sustainable housing which will meet the aims of the Huddersfield Blueprint is considered to fall within this definition.

Disposal of land at less than best consideration involves the conferring of an economic advantage on the appointed partner, because the land has an open market value but will be transferred to the successful partner at less than this value due to the reasons set out in this report.

From 31st December 2020, the then existing State Aid law, as it applied to the UK, was repealed and replaced by Subsidy Control, the requirements of which are set out in the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement and detailed in the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Under State Aid law, aid provided to support certain types of public services are deemed to be "Services in the General Economic Interest" and therefore subject to a far less restrictive regime. The same is true under the new regime of Subsidy Control.

As part of the process of agreeing legal contracts, arrangements will be put in place with the appointed partner to ensure compliance with the Subsidy Control regime, and to ensure repayment of subsidy in the case of any overcompensation.

The Council will comply with its Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Procedure Rules; and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and/or the Procurement Act 2023.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

Residential development in our town centres provides an opportunity to repurpose existing vacant buildings, which is more carbon efficient than undertaking new build on greenfield land.

Estate Buildings will also provide homes in a sustainable location, close to the railway station, bus station and within walking distance of town centre's facilities and employment opportunities, reducing residents' reliance on the private car.

The evaluation process of the competitive sale exercise will also place emphasis on achieving energy efficient homes with low running costs for occupiers and tenants.

Other (eg Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)

The Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) for Estate Buildings has been published on the Kirklees Council website and can be found via this link: [Integrated Impact Assessments | Kirklees Council](#)

The Integrated Impact Assessment indicates that there will be a neutral impact on communities including people identified as having a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and satisfies the public sector equality duty imposed on the Council. The IIA also sets out that there will be a neutral impact on the environment.

4. Consultation

In 2024, Cushman and Wakefield were instructed to undertake a feasibility and financial assessment of a range of different disposal and delivery approaches for Estate Buildings. This work included a soft market testing exercise in which several Registered Providers (RPs), developers and contractors who operate within the West Yorkshire region were consulted. This market engagement exercise informed our recommended disposal approach set out in Section 6 of this report.

The outcomes of this feasibility and options analysis work were reported to Housing Growth Board in October 2024. Board agreed with the recommended approach to undertake a competitive process to appoint a development partner in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Procedure Rules.

The recommended approach was presented to Senior Leadership Team for Place Directorate in November 2024. No changes to the proposed approach were requested.

The future development partner of Estate Buildings will submit a detailed pre-application to the Local Planning Authority to ensure any planning matters are fully resolved ahead of submission of the full planning application. This will include consultation with local residents. The results of pre-application consultation will be included in a Statement of Community Involvement to be submitted with the forthcoming planning application.

The future development partner for the site will also be responsible for submitting the planning application and listed building consent for the building, during which consultation with local residents and other stakeholders will again take place in accordance with paragraph 40 of the NPPF.

5. Engagement

Portfolio holders are informed of progress of Estate Buildings via their regular briefing sessions, and specific, strategic issues and decisions in relation to each site are taken to them for a decision.

There is no impact on service delivery, process or policy.

As set out above, more formal consultation and engagement as part of the planning and development process would be initiated when the project progresses further.

6. Options

6.1 Options considered

Following Thirteen Group's withdrawal from the exclusivity agreement, several delivery routes were considered to bring the building forward for housing. These included:

- i) **Open Market Sale (Leasehold Disposal)** – The Council disposes of the leasehold of the building on the open market. Development led entirely by third party who would be responsible for obtaining necessary consents and identifying sufficient funding to undertake the work themselves.
 - Strengths – This option would allow for immediate disposal of building which could increase pace of delivery. It provides opportunity for market led delivery with minimal funding and resource input from the Council after disposal. The Council could transfer liability for maintaining the building from which it currently has no budget for from the point of leasehold disposal. In event of non-delivery or poor performance, a buyback clause could allow the Council to regain ownership of building.
 - Weaknesses – The Council would have very limited control over the pace, design or quality of the development over and above planning policy requirements. There is limited ability to provide public sector funding or support. There is a risk that building is acquired by a developer who constructs poor quality homes which are managed badly with a resultant risk of reputational damage to the Council. There is a risk, given the viability issues, that there is no demand from the market or the building is left undeveloped once acquired leading to further degradation of listed building. There is a risk that the building is developed for a different use which does not meet the town centre living ambitions set out in the Huddersfield Blueprint.
- ii) **Development Partnering (via Competitive Sale)** – The Council undertakes a competitive sale exercise to appoint a developer to bring forward the site. Once appointed, the development partner would enter into an option agreement with the Council during which time they would obtain planning and listed building consents and secure the necessary funding. The development partner would then enter into a building lease with the Council for the duration of the construction period after which the freehold of the building would be transferred to them.
 - Strengths – This option provides more control over delivery than disposal to the market. It brings in expertise and resource from the private sector reducing the resource and cost input required from the Council. The Council

and development partner can work together to access funding to bridge the viability gap. It also reduces the risk exposure to the Council compared with direct delivery.

- Weaknesses – Some cost and resource input are required from the Council. If there was a non-delivery event, the Council would be left responsible for the building. There is a risk that building is acquired by a developer who constructs poor quality homes which are managed badly with a resultant risk of reputational damage to the Council. However, this is less of risk that Option (i) as the Council will have some control over who development partner is. Until the building is transferred to development partner, the Council would continue to have ongoing liability and maintenance costs for the building which it currently has no budget for.

iii) Council direct delivery - The Council appoints a contractor to design and build homes based on the Council’s requirements which are either sold or rented on the open market (with any affordable units being transferred to an RP). The Council would retain freehold ownership of the building. Depending upon the tenure of the properties, it could either appoint an external company to manage the building or manage them itself.

- Strengths – This would give us the greatest input and control over quality and pace of the development. There is an option to either hold on to the asset or sell once the asset is stabilised which could release a capital receipt, subject to viability gap being addressed.
- Weaknesses – This would require a significant amount of cost and resource input from the Council. The Council would also retain responsibility to manage the building itself or appoint an operator.

6.2 Reasons for recommended option

The recommended option is to undertake a competitive sale exercise to appoint a development partner who will enter into a building lease with the Council to bring forward Estate Building for residential use.

As set out in 6.1 above, the reason for this recommendation is that it allows the Council to retain a level of control over the pace and quality of the development, whilst also benefitting from the resources and funding of a private sector delivery partner.

6.3 Next steps and timelines

The proposed next steps are as follows:

Prepare competitive sale pack	May - June 2025
Soft market testing	June 2025
Finalise competitive sale pack and supporting documents	July 2025
Competitive sale “Tender” period	August - November 2025
Period for clarifying interviews	Nov / December 2025

Evaluation	Jan / February 2026
Appointment of Preferred Partner	February 2026

It is a condition of the OPE funding that once the enabling works are complete, the Council must be in a contract to deliver homes by 31st March 2028 otherwise some or all of the grant would have to be repaid.

7. Contact officer

Liz Jefferson
Acting Head of Housing Growth and Regeneration
liz.jefferson@kirklees.gov.uk

8. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Cabinet report 26 July 2022, item 7:

<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/documents/s47252/220714%20cabinet%20report%20Estates%20FINALv2.pdf>

Ad-hoc Scrutiny Panel report, 22nd September 2022, item 8:

[220907Scrutiny report Estate Buildings.pdf](#)

Cabinet report 21 January 2025, item 11:

[250109 Estate Buildings Cabinet report FINAL revA.pdf](#)

Huddersfield Blueprint

[The Huddersfield Blueprint | Kirklees Council](#)

9. Appendices

Appendix 1. Huddersfield Town Centre Living Plan.

10. Service Director responsible

Joanne Bartholomew
Service Director: Place - Development

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The
Huddersfield
Blueprint
A decade of ambition

HUDDERSFIELD TOWN CENTRE Living Plan



 Kirklees
COUNCIL

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Our Blueprint vision for Huddersfield town centre living is:

“To create a vibrant community in Huddersfield town centre, attractive to young professionals, with strong connections to neighbouring cities and the Pennines.”

The Huddersfield Town Centre Living Plan is a document that sets out the vision, objectives, opportunities and actions to encourage more people to live in the town centre and contribute to the wider aspirations of the Huddersfield Blueprint.

The Huddersfield Blueprint

The Huddersfield Blueprint is a ten-year vision to create a thriving, modern-day town centre. Huddersfield will be a busy, family-friendly town centre that stays open for longer with a unique culture, arts and leisure offer and a variety of thriving businesses. The scale of investment and transformation will improve the desirability of the town centre as a place to live, providing new opportunities for residential development.

This document outlines our vision for town centre living: it identifies sites and actions that can and will deliver real change in Huddersfield.

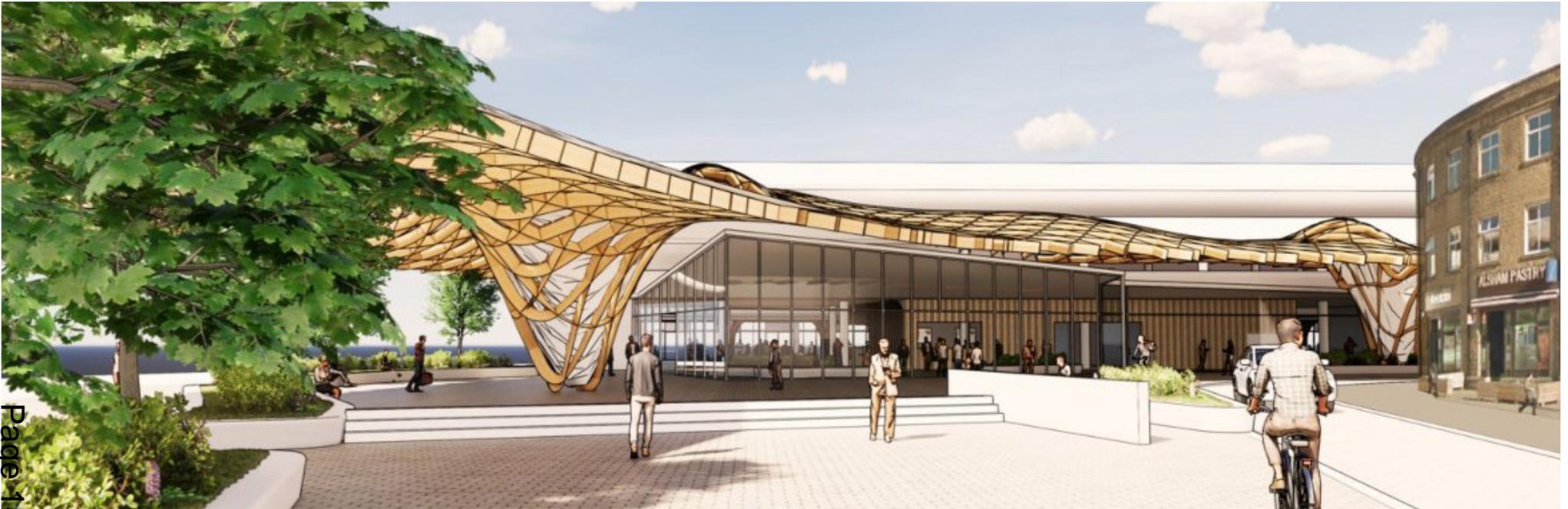
The Blueprint supports town centre living

High quality, inclusive and innovative culture, arts and leisure offers will improve the attractiveness of Huddersfield as a place to live. The reputation of the town centre as a culturally rich and aspirational living option will enhance the offer for prospective residents and businesses alike.

Town centre living supports the Blueprint

In turn, new residents and new residential spending will help to sustain planned development, and shape future culture, arts and leisure developments.





To make our vision a reality, we will deliver on these key objectives:

- 1** Increase opportunities to deliver a mix of town centre residential developments, including making best use of heritage buildings.
- 2** Deliver and support schemes that provide opportunities to buy and rent, improving the quality of accommodation across the town centre.
- 3** Boost the desirability of Huddersfield's housing market to potential residents and ensure affordable homes are built in the right places, based on housing market demand and needs.
- 4** Improve how the town centre looks, how accessible it is and enhance the quality of public spaces.
- 5** Deliver and support schemes that provide access to an attractive lifestyle with leisure, culture, shopping and dining at the heart of town centre living.





Opportunities: What does Huddersfield have to offer?

Excellent location

Huddersfield town centre is located centrally within the North of England, providing unrivalled access to the natural beauty of the Pennine uplands, as well as surrounding, cosmopolitan urban centres.

Huddersfield is the tenth largest town in the UK and plays an important regional role for business, retail, culture, industry, and education.

By train, you can reach Leeds in 24 minutes and Manchester in 35, with six trains an hour in each direction.

Recent upgrades to state-of-the-art rolling stock will see further investment with Network Rail's Transpennine Route Upgrade and Integrated Rail Plan, making Huddersfield even more attractive as a base for businesses or to commute from.

By car, Huddersfield is located close to the M62 for connections across the North of England and further afield. The town's bus station is one of the busiest and best served in West Yorkshire.

The Northern Powerhouse

NEWCASTLE



LEEDS



HULL



HUDDERSFIELD



LIVERPOOL



MANCHESTER



SHEFFIELD



What's unique about Huddersfield?

A place to work and study

Huddersfield is a significant commercial centre with major public and private sector employers including Kirklees Council, Huddersfield University, Brook Compton Motors, Cummins Turbo Technologies, Huddersfield Fine Worsteds, and LV Insurance.

Kirklees is home to 14,655 businesses, operating in sectors including advanced manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, medical technologies, and creative/digital industries. The borough was recently named the second-best place in the UK to set up and run a business, and as one of the largest concentrations of advanced manufacturing in the UK, Kirklees has a global reputation for excellence in innovation.

The University of Huddersfield also has over 17,000 students on its campus, which has received £250m investment in recent years.

A place to enjoy leisure time

The town's rich variety of independent and big-name retail draws shoppers from across the district and surrounding areas.

Huddersfield has been named in the top ten towns for post-pandemic spending with a 43% increase in offline sales compared to before the pandemic (Centre for Cities, Oct 2021).

Well-known retailers include: The Body Shop, House of Fraser, Swarovski, Next, Boots, Primark, Office and Pandora. Independent retailers include Crafty Praxis craft suppliers, Kapow Comics and Vinyl Tap record store.

Retail is changing and the need for variety in our town centres has never been more apparent. The council is committed to supporting the town centre economy by encouraging culture, leisure and residential development.

The spaces

Huddersfield, nestled in the stunning landscape of the Pennines, with its wealth of York stone listed buildings has the potential to create a town centre with a special sense of place.

Stand out areas include: St Peter's Gardens and St George's Square, outside the Grade I Listed Huddersfield Rail Station, will make for unrivalled leisure and residential development. Byram Arcade is a hub for independent retail and hosts exhibitions and craft fairs.

Open spaces and impressive landmarks such as Castle Hill and Greenhead Park are just a short distance from the town centre. Further afield, the Pennine Way and country walks from Marsden and Holmfirth, represent the best of the English countryside.



The lifestyle

The town centre offers a vibrant mix of culture, heritage, dining, and nightlife.

From Shakespeare to panto at The Lawrence Batley Theatre and exhibitions in the art gallery and library, Huddersfield is rich in culture all year round. Add this to, annual events such as the Huddersfield Carnival, Literature, Contemporary Music and Food and Drink festivals, and the calendar of events at the University of Huddersfield to make the town a destination of choice. Creatives share activities and events in Huddersfield and the wider borough via Creative Kirklees.

The planned Cultural Heart project, part of the Huddersfield Blueprint, will function as a cultural hub for the town where families, visitors and residents can gather and enjoy leisure, arts, and music, with activities spilling out into high-quality public spaces. Crucially, this will bring new people into the town centre.

There is a thriving night-time scene in the town centre with restaurants and bars, many hosting live music events. A planned new cinema in the Kingsgate Centre will further enhance the range of leisure in the town centre.

Our Key Partners

Kirklees Council is committed to bringing high-quality, affordable residential development to the town centre.

Kirklees Council are not the only investors in the town centre. Partners such as the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Network Rail and National Highways are bringing forward investment proposals and collaborating with the council to support our ambitions.

Opportunities exist to attract further investment from private/institutional investors and registered providers.

Opportunities to increase demand for residential growth:

- Graduate retention.
- Opportunity for better value, town centre living for commuters to Leeds/Manchester.
- Growth in demand for retirement living.
- Growth in appetite for rental.
- Quantity and quality of characterful buildings with repurposing potential.
- Huddersfield Blueprint - strong public sector support for public sector led schemes.
- Surplus properties with no council debt/lease costs.

Why is town centre living important to the council?

A vibrant and thriving town centre living scene, not only contributes to sustaining local economies, but also helps the council to achieve its wider aims including ensuring resident access to local services.

Urban sites also allow for higher densities, facilitating more sustainable travel and efficient use of highways capacity while promoting low-carbon development. Encouraging more people to walk or cycle promotes physical activity and social connectedness.

The restoration and re-use of heritage buildings within the town centre can help protect the character and distinctiveness of Huddersfield, while being efficient, low-carbon developments.

What is the Huddersfield Blueprint and why does it matter?

The Huddersfield Blueprint sets out a clear vision for positive change in Huddersfield town centre.

An improved lifestyle and visitor offer will be supported by focusing on the key objectives:

- **Thriving:** pride in its culture and heritage, creative and vibrant. Increased evening economy, music venues, arts, food offers, a varied retail offer.
- **Quality environment:** enjoyable green spaces, fewer cars, and improved walking/cycling links.
- **Inclusive:** family friendly, safe and welcoming. Affordable, intergenerational homes in pleasant, well-connected areas.
- **Reuse of historic buildings:** to promote and celebrate heritage.
- **Supporting professionals and businesses:** Retention of graduates. Well connected, attractive to investors and companies.

Housing within the Blueprint

A key element of the Blueprint is the vision of a town that is a home for all. We want quality, affordable homes in pleasant and convenient areas at the centre of our town. Building strong and healthy communities is at the heart of everything we do, and we believe that homes within the town centre can help locals easily access their jobs and support enjoyable lifestyles.

We will encourage more town centre living to bring an energy to the town centre. We want to celebrate our rich diversity and see Huddersfield as a shared home that is welcoming and inclusive.

We want to explore all opportunities to increase living in the town centre including the use of upper floors and the reuse of the town's heritage stock. Opportunities to appeal to the creative industries are also being explored. The 'Creative Lofts' is one example of innovative live-work units, with 21 units housed in the former Mechanics Institute building, managed by The Media Centre for Places for People Group.



A decade of ambition

Cultural Heart

Huddersfield's new vibrant Cultural Heart will be a catalyst for change in the town and is the most iconic vision within the Blueprint.

The Cultural Heart, with its town park, will be built around the Queensgate and library buildings. It will include a library, art gallery, museum and live entertainment venue.

This will be supported by restaurants, bars, cafés, and the Lawrence Batley Theatre. The removal of buildings around the Piazza area will create a large, family-friendly open space for people to gather with lawns, water features and seating steps.

Huddersfield residential market

Huddersfield provides numerous opportunities to create a mix of town centre living opportunities through both conversion and new build developments, with support from Kirklees Council to see the project through.

The town is primed to become the location of choice for anyone looking for an affordable but well-connected alternative to Leeds or Manchester.

Young professionals will have the option of commuting to larger centres whilst benefitting from the culture, heritage and natural beauty of Huddersfield and Kirklees.

The lifestyle that Huddersfield town centre living can offer will be desirable to our target market and others including students and downsizers.

Appendix A contains specific market data of sales and rental figures achieved from recent residential development in and around Huddersfield town centre.

Viability challenges and funding opportunities

It is acknowledged that the historic and sometimes challenging nature of some of the building and areas within Huddersfield town centre pose potential viability issues for some development.

The council is committed to working with partners at Homes England, West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Historic England to unlock the potential of town centre living.





Opportunities: Development sites and opportunity areas

Kirklees Council and partners are committed to supporting town centre residential development and delivery of the wider Blueprint plans.

Some town centre land and assets have already been identified, while other opportunities are expected to come forward in the near future.

These fall into two broad categories:

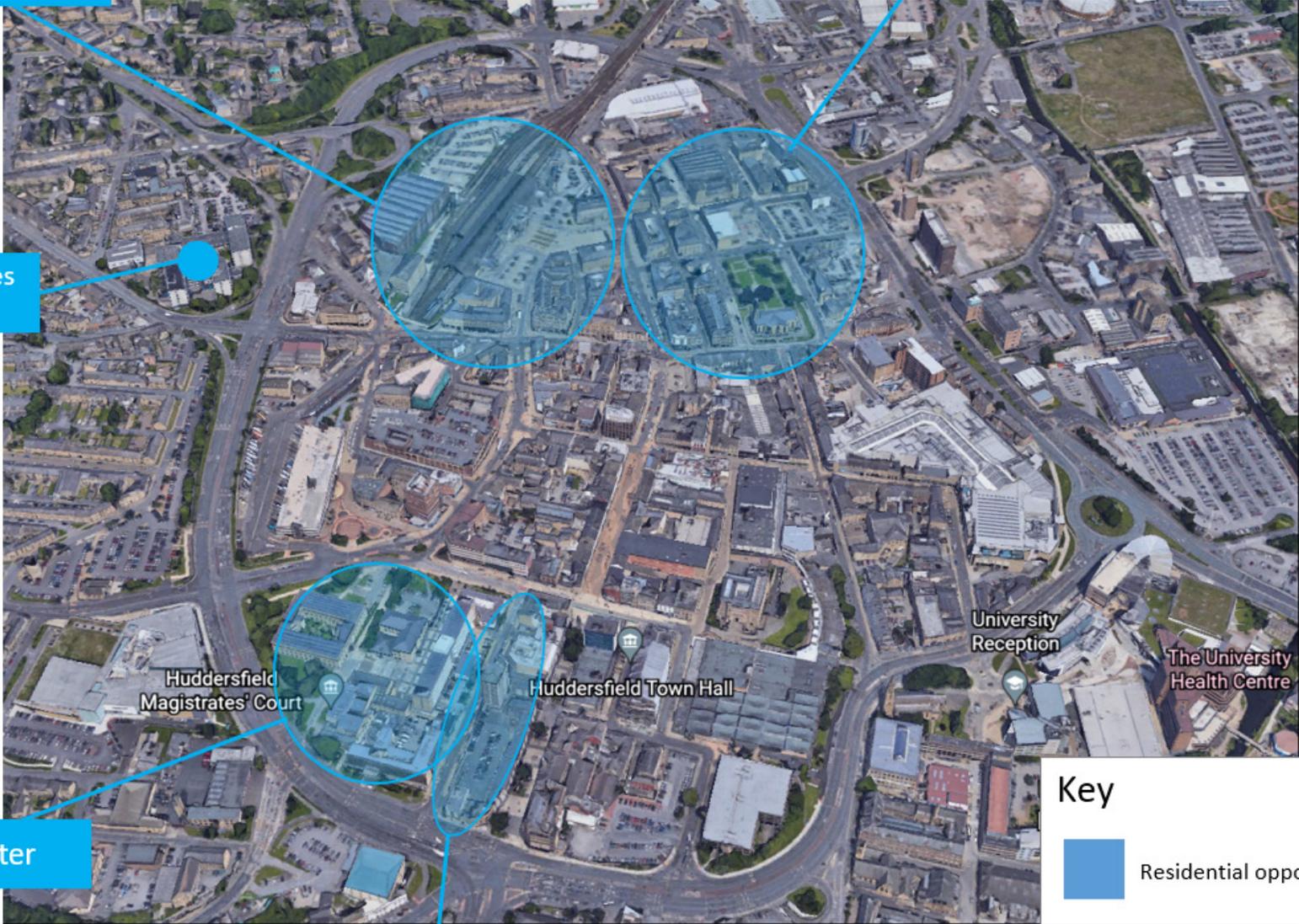
Development sites are more likely to come forward first and in early phases due to being either council owned, identified as surplus or having potential for development in the near future.

Opportunity areas are where opportunities may exist beyond the identified development sites. A mixture of council and privately owned sites where there is a strong potential market area, but less certainty at present.

Station Gateway

St Peter's Area

Former Kirklees College Site



Key



Residential opportunity areas



Station Gateway

The Station Gateway area encapsulates the railway station and St George's Square, as well as St George's Warehouse to the west.

In days gone by, the station building and surrounding offices, shops, and the iconic George Hotel, were the most elegant of destinations. These proud buildings and their history remain, but time has moved on and new opportunities may exist in this area.

Restored to its former glory, this area of the town centre has the potential to be the jewel in the crown again and attract today's discerning residents, businesses, and visitors.

St Peter's

The area surrounding St Peter's Church is where the 19th century layout and architecture of Huddersfield is most preserved and apparent.

Independent retail units are located along Wood Street, whilst cafes and restaurants have adopted a pavement café culture. The open market has a traditional appeal and the detailing and architecture in the area gives it a community feel.

The area is already a favourite of creatives due to the unspoilt nature of the buildings and neighbourhood appeal of the area. Thoughtful developments and improvements to enhance the historic charm would allow this area to thrive as a town centre community.

The Huddersfield Blueprint identifies the likelihood that the post office and sorting depot could come forward for future residential development to offer the opportunity to develop contemporary living in the short to medium term.





New Street

New Street is split into two distinct halves, both physically and economically. New Street (north) is pedestrianised with a variety of small to medium shops. New Street (south) is fronted by larger, more monolithic buildings, but is more enclosed with trees and planters, and is already a 'greener' street.

The Blueprint envisages New Street (south) to be leafy and green, with pleasant spots to stop and enjoy the fresh air. Long views to the open countryside will be maintained and a welcoming space, with cafes and communal areas for locals to enjoy will be added.

In 2021, Kirklees Council committed to the upgrade of Buxton House, a local authority housing block. There are residential possibilities on New Street (south), for example, there are some 1970s buildings which, in the longer term, could provide an interesting split level residential development. The 1930s Co-Operative building at 103 New Street, is a large-scale conversion that is taking place in this area.



Civic Quarter

The Civic Quarter is at the northern end of the ring road near Huddersfield Leisure Centre, Kirklees College and the University. In the 1960s, Huddersfield underwent the biggest redevelopment in recent history, with the introduction of several civic buildings including the council and municipal buildings off Castlegate.

Over time, the site has been further developed, setting newer buildings in a mature setting. Though there are no current intentions to vacate or redevelop the site, in the long term it is acknowledged that changes could be made that bring forward land which could be used to deliver residential development, alongside remodelled council buildings.

Actions: What is being done to achieve the vision?

To achieve the vision and objectives set out in this document, specific actions are set out below to demonstrate what has already been done, what is planned, and the opportunities for investors to get involved in working with the council on delivery.

Key Contacts

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Regeneration
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Objective 1

Increase opportunities to deliver a mix of town centre residential developments, including making best use of heritage buildings.

Actions/Opportunities

We will continue to work with our funder partners to invest in our town centre. Working with Historic England, our HAZ programme is supporting remedial works on projects in St. George's Square, such as the George Hotel. Council assets, such as Buxton House, will be used to attract residential investment.

The council is using its own grant programmes and HiHAZ funding to support small scale investment in shops and hospitality to support the redevelopment of heritage buildings and make the town centre a better place to live, work, and play.

Objective 2

Deliver and support schemes that provide opportunities to buy and rent, improving the quality of accommodation across the town centre.

Actions/Opportunities

Refurbishment of council owned residential buildings and scoping potential sites within the opportunity areas.

Objective 3

Boost the desirability of Huddersfield's housing market to potential residents and ensure affordable homes are built in the right places based on housing market demand and needs.

Actions/Opportunities

Build on the foundations laid by this plan through attracting investment, supporting partners and marketing the town centre living opportunities.

Objective 4

Improve how the town centre looks, how accessible it is and enhance the quality of public spaces.

Actions/Opportunities

- Significant investment is already underway to improve the attractiveness of the town centre. Funding from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority will support public realm improvements in New Street and other central locations to create a cleaner and greener town centre.
- Investment in new 'golden routes' will safely link key areas of the town, such as the railway station, the university, John Smith's stadium, and the proposed Cultural Heart. Cycling and active travel will be promoted, with new, safe pedestrian and cycling routes on key roads such as Northumberland Street.
- New, safe, and green open spaces will be established, including a new town centre park, creating a new, space for families to gather and enjoy the town centre.

Objective 5

Deliver and support schemes that provide access to an attractive lifestyle with leisure, culture, shopping and dining at the heart of town centre living.

Actions/Opportunities

- The Huddersfield Blueprint will guide investment of over £250 million in Huddersfield town centre. The centre piece of the Blueprint is the creation of a new Cultural Heart.
- New retail and hospitality opportunities will focus on local, high-quality provision, with local businesses supported by the council's business team through grants and advice.

Appendix A:

Huddersfield Housing Market Data

Information taken from a recent report commissioned by Kirklees Council.

Residential market context

- The national housing market remains generally strong at the end of 2020 however, the outlook for 2021 is uncertain due to economic volatility and the removal of the Stamp Duty Land Tax holiday and Help to Buy from the end March 2021.
- The Build to Rent sector is enjoying significant growth in the regions outside London, which is forecast to continue, supported by funds diversifying product into new locations and new accommodation types.
- There are indications of residents seeking to move out of city centre locations into more spacious areas given the reduced dependency on daily commuting resulting from remote working practices.

The Huddersfield residential market

- According to the council's recent Arc4 town centre housing market assessment, there are 1,387 households in the town centre area, 55.1% of which are private rented, 23% owner occupied and the rest, affordable housing.
- 67% of dwellings are flats and over 50% of all properties have only one bedroom.
- The age profile shows an above average representation of young people – 76.7% are under 40 years compared with 50.7% for Kirklees.
- Cameo market segmentation profiles show 87.7% of residents are categorised as young couples/singles living in rented accommodation.
- Students have a substantial influence on the Huddersfield housing market.
- Most households are below average income.

Sales analysis

- The average price for an apartment in Huddersfield town centre over the last 12-month period was £126,600, 10 sales were recorded.
- The apartment market is relatively small with only 127 apartment sales across the wider Huddersfield housing market, representing just 6% of all sales.
- Analysis of new build and re-sale transactions on purpose built or renovated properties indicates a range of revenues from £75 per square foot to £288 per square foot.
- The Melting Point is a scheme which is close to the town centre and has achieved average revenues of £240 psf, with many of these properties having been purchased by private landlords and let to tenants.

Appendix A: Continued...

Rental analysis

- There is a significant private rented market within Huddersfield town centre, reinforced by the student population.
- The quality of accommodation is varied although mostly second hand with limited new/purpose built or refurbished properties, one exception being the Melting Point which offers a high specification with generous grounds and parking.
- Average asking rents for one-bedroom flats range from £352 pcm at Egerton Grove to £789 pcm at the Melting Point. Values for two-bedroom flats range from £420 at Henry Street to £850 at the Melting Point.
- There are several schemes in the pipeline for the town centre including a 45-unit scheme by Threadneedle.

Key projects for comparison

There are a wide range of examples of recent, successful residential repurposing projects across the North of England in similar location / markets. A key feature on all of these was the high-quality specification of the accommodation. Another theme was the prevalent role of the public sector working alongside developers to address viability gaps and deliver the added value and quality that is sought.

Many schemes were developed in fragile markets where the viability and risk issues necessitated public sector backing. Examples of this are Conditioning House in Bradford, delivered with no affordable housing (despite the prevailing policy target of 15%), and a grant from West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Vimto Gardens in Salford was delivered by Muse Developments under an innovative structure that enabled cross subsidy from the more viable New Bailey development on the fringe of Manchester City Centre. Weir Mill in Stockport, renovated by Capital and Centric was delivered with a Homes England funding commitment of £7million alongside local authority investment via borrowing.

Land Registry House Price Index Data

POSTCODE	DETACHED	SEMI DETACHED	TERRACED	FLAT/MAISONETTE	OVERALL AVERAGE
HD	£318,478 (553 sales)	£178,171 (633 sales)	£132,746 (835 sales)	£113,499 (127 sales)	£192,811 (2148 sales)
HD1	£226,650 (13 sales)	£181,405 (21 sales)	£96,787 (51 sales)	£126,600 (10 sales)	£136,401 (95 sales)
HD2	£286,693 (63 sales)	£143,604 (58 sales)	£102,645 (66 sales)	£121,200 (10 sales)	£174,504 (197 sales)
HD3	£273,157 (66 sales)	£185,372 (83 sales)	£134,034 (113 sales)	£102,968 (25 sales)	£178,168 (287 sales)
HD4	£325,206 (31 sales)	£166,684 (71 sales)	£111,442 (89 sales)	£72,556 (9 sales)	£162,436 (200 sales)
HD5	£249,432 (38 sales)	£155,601 (106 sales)	£106,189 (79 sales)	£91,250 (2 sales)	£153,527 (225 sales)
HX3	£380,372 (43 sales)	£187,002 (96 sales)	£132,517 (177 sales)	£131,159 (22 sales)	£179,435 (338 sales)
HX4	£334,250 (18 sales)	£224,071 (21 sales)	£166,337 (49 sales)	£157,500 (4 sales)	£211,984 (92 sales)
HX5	£314,832 (14 sales)	£181,750 (20 sales)	£104,063 (34 sales)	£117,889 (9 sales)	£164,179 (77 sales)
BD19	£290,608 (57 sales)	£158,541 (59 sales)	£123,435 (61 sales)	£118,933 (12 sales)	£184,526 (189 sales)
WF14	£350,781 (53 sales)	£189,590 (79 sales)	£138,125 (40 sales)	£198,000 (9 sales)	£225,834 (181 sales)
WF15	£273,179 (27 sales)	£156,336 (37 sales)	£125,734 (64 sales)	£112,250 (2 sales)	£165,852 (130 sales)

The table shows the average house prices for each house type in the HD, HD1, HD2, HD3, HD4, HD5 postcode sectors of Huddersfield and surrounding post code areas of HX3, HX4, HX5, BD14, WF14 and WF15.

The areas covered by these postcode sectors are shown on the map in Figure 1.



Figure 1 Postcode Areas on a map. Source: gbmmaps (2018).



Resale Prices on Apartment Schemes



The Melting Point, HD1

Average sold price - £125,792

Average price per sq ft - £240

Average price per sq m - £2,115

Sizes range from 35 sqm to 65 sqm
(377 sq ft to 700 sq ft)

Designated parking space



Kings Court, Kings Mill Lane, HD1

Average sold price - £128,107

Average price per sq ft - £168

Average price per sq m - £1,812

Sizes range from 62 sqm to 82 sqm
(667 sq ft to 883 sq ft)

Designated parking space and
communal gardens



Parkwood Mills, Longwood, HD3

Average sold price - £85,167

Average price per sq ft - £152

Average price per sq m - £1,638

Sizes of properties are 52 sqm
(560 sq ft)

Designated parking space

Resale Prices on Apartment Schemes



Waterside Mill, Longwood, HD3

Average sold price - £129,279

Average price per sq ft - £186

Average price per sq m - £2,002

Sizes range from 66 sqm to 69 sqm
(710 sq ft to 743 sq ft)

Designated parking space



Equilibrium, Lindley, HD3

Average sold price - £89,213

Average price per sq ft - £158

Average price per sq m - £1,698

Sizes range from 44 sqm to 59 sqm
(474 sq ft to 635 sq ft)

Designated parking space



The Mill Apartments, Almondbury, HD4

Average sold price - £195,800

Average price per sq ft - £228

Average price per sq m - £2,455

Sizes range from 67 sqm to 89 sqm
(721 sq ft to 958 sq ft)

Designated parking space

Resale Prices on Apartment Schemes



The Ironworks, Birkhouse Lane, HD4

Average sold price - £70,333

Average price per sq ft - £115

Average price per sq m - £1,240

Sizes range from 61 sqm to 68 sqm
(657 sq ft to 732 sq ft)

Designated parking space



Mills, Linthwaite, HD7

Average sold price - £100,419

Average price per sq ft - £127

Average price per sq m - £1,366

Sizes range from 47 sqm to 126 sqm
(506 sq ft to 1,356 sq ft)

Designated parking space



Heritage Mills, Golcar, HD7

Average sold price - £87,474

Average price per sq ft - £132

Average price per sq m - £1,424

Sizes range from 49 sqm to 107 sqm
(527 sq ft to 1,152 sq ft)

Designated parking space

Rental Market

According to evidence produced by Home, the average market rent in Huddersfield is £735 per calendar month, and the median market rent is £594 per calendar month.

The table below benchmarks Huddersfield's rental performance against other towns and cities in West Yorkshire, suggesting that after Leeds, Huddersfield is broadly comparable to the other West Yorkshire centres in terms of median rents.

Target values

Based on research and consultation with agents and developers, it is considered that sales values of between £90,000 - £100,000 would be achievable in the town centre for 1-bed apartments and £110,000 - £130,000 for 2-bed apartments.

For rental values £500-£550 would be achievable for 1-bed apartments and £700-£800 pcm for 2-bed apartments in Huddersfield town centre.

These values reflect the upper end of what is currently being achieved in Huddersfield and are substantially below the average levels in the nearby city centres of Leeds and Manchester, offering a distinct price advantage, even allowing for likely commuting costs.

AREA	NUMBER OF FLATS	AVERAGE RENT	MEDIUM RENT
Huddersfield	149	£735	£594
Halifax	40	£463	£451
Wakefield	37	£557	£589
Leeds	1,799	£910	£793
Bradford	223	£540	£524
Dewsbury	21	£463	£587

Table 2 – Average rents for flats in West Yorkshire towns.

Source: Home (https://www.home.co.uk/for_rent/current_rents_by_town.htm),

Appendix B:

The Planning Context

Planning policy context

The Huddersfield Town Centre Living Plan is supported by national and local planning policies as well as other council strategies and plans aiming to shape development and growth in the district.

At national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012, revised 2021) aims to simplify and streamline the planning process and facilitate development and growth with an emphasis on sustainability, with the creation of thriving town centres as a key aspect underpinning these intentions.

Certain types of development are also determined in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. This statutory instrument allows for a range of developments that are assessed against the regulations rather than local planning

policies. These can include significant changes such as the conversion of office buildings to residential.

At the local level, development within Huddersfield town centre is guided by a number of planning documents that make up the development plan, including the Local Plan (adopted 2019) which allocated specific sites for development and sets out overall targets and requirements on a number of key areas including housing, employment, and the environment, as well as setting out policies that will be used to guide planning applications to ensure proposals meet these targets and requirements.

To supplement the local plan on key areas there are several Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) that provide more focused guidance on specific topics such as affordable housing, house building, highways design and open spaces.

These local planning policies interlink with other council strategies including the Kirklees Council Plan 2021/23; Kirklees Housing Strategy 2018-23; Kirklees Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS); and Kirklees Economic Strategy, which underpin future development of the district.

Planning policy will be used as a tool to shape the development of Huddersfield town centre, supporting our vision and the key objectives which have been identified.

Appendix B:

The Planning Context

OBJECTIVE	Increase opportunities for town centre residential
OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver new housing sites within the town centre • Support the reuse of heritage buildings • Support the growing student population
POLICY CONTEXT	<p>NPPF Chapter 2 underpins the importance of the planning system in achieving sustainable development by meeting economic, social, and environmental objectives. Chapter 5 sets out the importance of delivering sufficient housing in line with identified needs. Chapter 7 recognises that residential development can play an important role in ensuring vitality of centres and residential development should be encouraged. Chapter 11 states that strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs in a way that makes use of previously developed land.</p> <p>Local Plan Spatial Development Strategy sets out annual housing requirements of 1,730 dwellings per annum for the district. Policy LP1 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF. Policy LP3 directs growth to the most sustainable locations. Policy LP7 encourages reuse of vacant or underused properties and supports higher densities in principal town centres and areas benefiting from greater public transport infrastructure. Policy LP35 seeks to preserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets.</p>

Appendix B:

The Planning Context

OBJECTIVE	Diversify and improve local housing offering
OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a greater diversity of housing tenure to support needs • Improve the quality of housing in the town centre • Improve accessibility and affordability of housing
POLICY CONTEXT	<p>NPPF Chapter 5 states that the size, type, and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies including housing need of students, older people and those requiring affordable housing.</p> <p>Local Plan Policy LP11 sets out the need for housing proposals to provide a mix (size and tenure) of housing suitable for different household types which reflect changes in household composition in Kirklees in the types of dwelling they provide, considering the latest evidence of the need for different types of housing.</p> <p>The Interim Affordable Housing Policy (2020) supplements Local Plan Policy LP11 and sets out that the Council will negotiate for the inclusion of affordable homes on developments of more than 10 units with a minimum target of 20% subject to viability. Affordable housing should cater to the identified affordable need in terms of type, tenure, size, and suitability.</p> <p>The Housebuilders Design Guide SPD provides further guidance on what constitutes good residential design and seeks to raise the quality of housing that is delivered in the district. The primary aim is to ensure that the district's future housing development has the required high-quality and socially inclusive design to help deliver quality places.</p>

Appendix B: The Planning Context

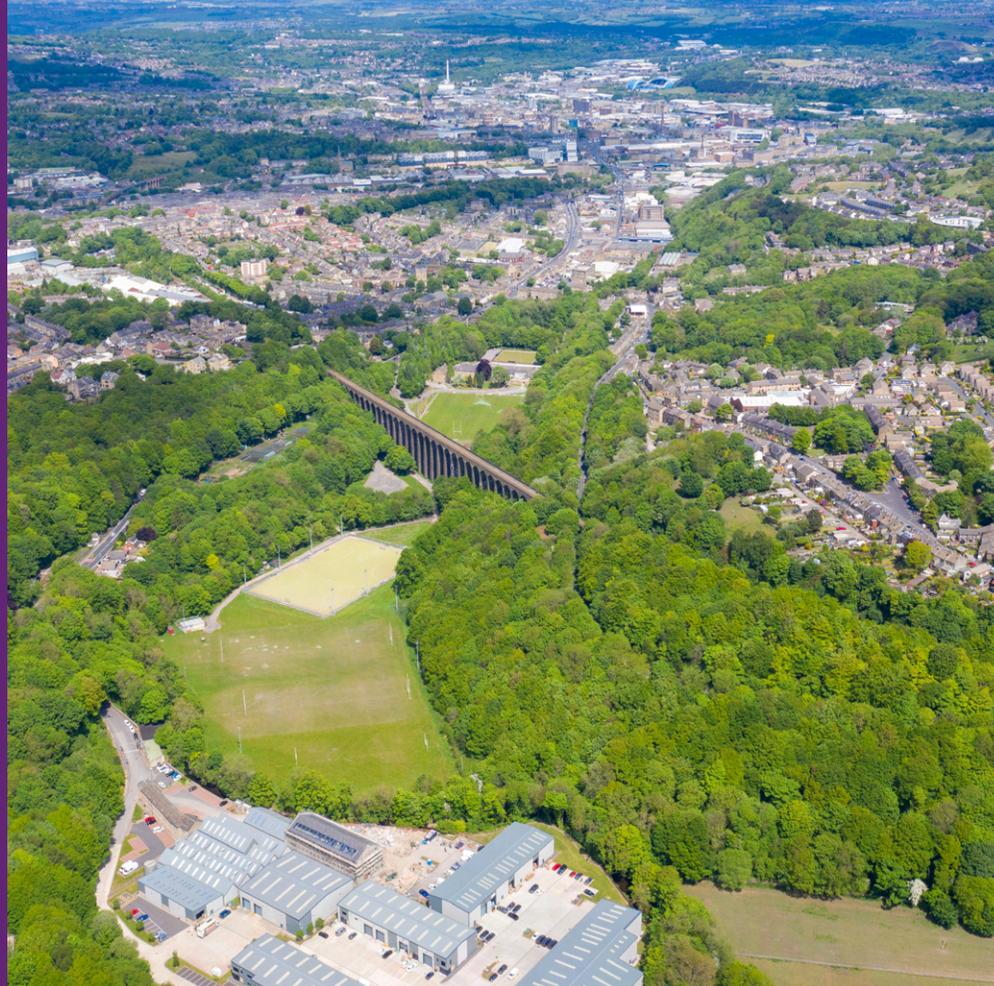
OBJECTIVE	<p>Improve the quality and accessibility of the townscape</p>
OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a livable town centre • Improve the public realm
POLICY CONTEXT	<p>NPPF Chapter 8 encourages the creation of healthy, inclusive, and safe communities which promote social interaction, are accessible and enable and support healthy lifestyles. Chapter 12 supports the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings, and places through good design. Chapter 16 seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment including heritage assets</p> <p>Local Plan Policy LP17 supports development within Huddersfield town centre on the basis that it preserves and enhances the towns cultural and architectural heritage and open spaces and connections to them; provides a safe, welcoming, inclusive destination for people of all ages to visit throughout the day; and provides space for town centre residential living. Edge of centre proposals shall include enhanced connections to the town centre. Policy LP20 promotes sustainable travel and a reduced reliance on private car use. Policy LP22 seeks to reduce long stay town centre parking in favour of sustainable transport opportunities. Policy LP24 underlines the importance of good quality design in providing high quality developments which respect the character of the local environment and deliver good standards of amenity. Developments should reduce the risk of crime by good design and ensure needs of different users are met including disabled people, older people, and families.</p>

Appendix B:

The Planning Context

OBJECTIVE	Support access to leisure, culture, and retail
OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve the attractiveness of living in the town centre
POLICY CONTEXT	<p>NPPF Chapter 8 seeks to ensure appropriate social, recreational, and cultural facilities and services are delivered through the planning system.</p> <p>Local Plan Policy LP15 supports residential development in the town centre on the basis that the retail offering and commercial character of the centre is preserved. Development should retain and enhance the design and heritage of buildings whilst providing good amenity to existing and future residents. Policy LP48 supports provision of community facilities in accessible locations where they can minimise the need to travel or they can be made accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. This will normally be in town, district, or local centres.</p>





Contact Us

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Kingsgate Property Investment Fund – Loan Extension

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	10th June 2025
Cabinet Member (if applicable)	Cllr Graham Turner
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	Yes Yes
<p>Purpose of Report</p> <p>To request a one year extension of the previously approved Property Investment Fund loan for the Kingsgate centre.</p>	
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That Cabinet agrees to an extension of the loan from the Property Investment Fund, previously given for the remodelling of the Kingsgate Centre, for a period of one year until July 2026, in accordance with the details set out in the private appendix. • That the Service Director Legal, Governance and Commissioning be given delegated authority to enter into any documentation required to agree the extension of the Property Investment Fund loan and to protect the Council’s position as lender. <p>Reasons for Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the Huddersfield Blueprint vision for the continued revitalisation of Huddersfield Town Centre. 	
<p>Resource Implications:</p> <p>(Refer to private appendix)</p>	
<p>Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> & name</p> <p>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</p> <p>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?</p>	<p>David Shepherd (23/05/25)</p> <p>Kevin Mulvaney (23/05/25)</p> <p>Samantha Lawton (22/05/25)</p>

Electoral wards affected: Newsome

Ward councillors consulted: Not applicable

Public or private: Public report with a private appendix

Reason for private appendix – Contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Executive Summary

Cabinet are requested to extend the loan for Kingsgate, previously agreed by Cabinet in 2021, from the Property Investment Fund. The loan extension request is for one year, until July 2026.

2. Information required to take a decision

Full Council at its meeting held on 15 November 2017, agreed to support the creation of a Property Investment Fund (PIF) of £25m, the intention of which was to allow the Council to support redevelopment schemes with loan funding. Such schemes would be focussed on supporting proposals which provided wider benefits to support the Council's regeneration objectives. Loan funding would be provided on equivalent commercial terms on a scheme by scheme basis, that would ensure the Council at least covered its own cost of borrowing inclusive of an appropriate risk contingency. The nature of the PIF means that the Council would be prepared to fund priority capital schemes that meet wider strategic regeneration benefits in a way which a purely commercial lender may not be prepared to do as part of their overall risk assessment of proposals.

Cabinet previously approved a request for a PIF loan for the Kingsgate centre in 2019 and reconfirmed this in 2021. The loan was agreed to support a scheme to remodel the Kingsgate shopping centre to provide a cinema, food and leisure facilities within the former House of Fraser unit.

The remodelling scheme has now been delivered, and the Light cinema and leisure complex opened to the public on 11th April 2025.

The Kingsgate Centre is a key focus of the retail offer for Huddersfield Town Centre and the remodelling to bring the Light to Huddersfield is a key part in the delivery of the Blueprint vision for the revitalisation of Huddersfield town centre.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Council Plan

Thriving People and Communities – Having a vibrant town centre is a key part of having a safe and flourishing community. The investment in Kingsgate supports the wider health of the town centre, the Huddersfield Blueprint and increases the number of people in the town centre, which in turns supports other businesses.

Local Economic Growth – investment in the Kingsgate centre has created jobs for local people, and will help to support and sustain existing retail businesses in Kingsgate and the wider town centre by providing a reason for people to visit.

3.2 Financial Implications

The financial implications are set out in the private appendix to this report.

3.3 Legal Implications

The legal implications are set out in the private appendix to this report.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

The Kingsgate Centre is in a sustainable location in the town centre, which can be accessed via public transport, avoiding the need for customers to travel to out of town locations by car.

As part of the Huddersfield Blueprint vision of developing living town centres, it's sustainability will be increased by the proposed development of residential uses within the town centre, which will enable people to live, shop and enjoy leisure opportunities without relying on the car for transportation.

It has been more energy efficient to redevelop the existing centre for leisure use, than start a brand new development with the associated call on construction materials.

3.5 Other (eg Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)

Any loan represents a risk to some degree.

4. Consultation

Consultation has taken place with other relevant parties. The detail of this is provided in the private appendix.

5. Engagement

Not applicable.

6. Options

The options considered are set out in the private appendix.

7. Next steps and timelines

If Cabinet agree to extend the loan, the next steps will be to update the legal documents prior to the current loan expiry date of July 2025.

The loan will then run until July 2026.

8. Contact officer

Liz Jefferson
Acting Head of Housing Growth
liz.jefferson@kirklees.gov.uk

9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Full Council – 15th November 2017
[Decisions 15th-Nov-2017 17.30 Council.pdf](#)

Cabinet 22 January 2019 -
<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/documents/s26744/Item%2016%20CAB%20-%2019%20-%20002%20b%20-%20190110%20Kingsgate%20Cabinet%20Cabinet%20report%20public%20rep.pdf>

Cabinet 19 January 2021 -
<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/documents/g6593/Public%20reports%20pack%2019th-Jan-2021%2015.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

Cabinet 9 July 2024
[Decisions 09th-Jul-2024 13.30 Cabinet.pdf](#)

10. Appendices

Private appendix

11. Service Director responsible

Joanne Bartholomew
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