AGENDA FOR

HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

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To: All Members of Housing Advisory Board

Councillors : D Green, B Ibrahim, E FitzGerald, A Arif, J Roith and M Walsh

Dear Member/Colleague

Housing Advisory Board

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Housing Advisory Board which will be held as follows:-

Date:	Thursday, 10 September 2026
Place:	Committee Rooms A&B
Time:	5.00 pm
Briefing Facilities:	If Opposition Members and Co-opted Members require briefing on any particular item on the Agenda, the appropriate Director/Senior Officer originating the related report should be contacted.
Notes:	

AGENDA

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

3 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** *(Pages 3 - 8)*

4 **ACTION TRACKER** *(Pages 9 - 12)*

Action tracker is attached, along with actions due for the September meeting.

5 **TENANT VOICE REPORT** *(Pages 13 - 14)*

Report Attached

6 **TENANT PARTICIPATION ADVISORY SERVICE UPDATE** *(Pages 15 - 26)*

Report from Claire Rogan, Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement attached.

7 **ANNUAL TENANT VOICE REPORT** *(Pages 27 - 46)*

Report from Claire Rogan, Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement attached.

8 **SPRING TMO ANNUAL ASSURANCE REPORT** *(Pages 47 - 88)*

Report from Claire Rogan, Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement attached.

9 **ASB AND TENANCY MANAGEMENT REPORT** *(Pages 89 - 96)*

Report from Kimberley Partridge, Head of Housing and Neighbourhood Services attached.

10 **ALLOCATIONS POLICY REVIEW** *(Pages 97 - 142)*

Report from Sian Grant Director of Housing is attached

Minutes of: **HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD**

Date of Meeting: 28 July 2026

Present: Councillor A Arif (in the Chair)
Councillors D Green, B Ibrahim, E FitzGerald, J Roith and M Walsh

Also in attendance: Kate Waterhouse, Executive Director (Strategy & Transformation), Boe Haslam, Head of Housing Property, Kimberley Partridge, Head of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, Claire Rogan, Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement, Kimberley Ryan-Dooner, Tenant Engagement Manager, Jackie Summerscales, Strategic Housing Manager. Jo Brown, Vice Chair, Springs TMO, Ella Crookes, Independent Member, Bryan Simpson, Independent Member and Rachel Everitt, Democratic Services

Public Attendance: No members of the public were present at the meeting.

The Chair advised members that the Regulator for Social Housing Team were observing the meeting today as part of the inspection process.

The Chair also advised members that the tenant recruitment process has been successful and two new members will be joining the Housing Advisory Board.

Training will be provided during August, September and October. The new members will observe the September meeting and formally join the Housing Advisory Board in November.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

The Chair advised members that the Regulator for Social Housing Team were observing the meeting today as part of the inspection process.

The Chair also advised members that the tenant recruitment process has been successful and two new members will be joining the Housing Advisory Board.

Training will be provided during August, September and October. The new members will observe the September meeting and formally join the Housing Advisory Board in November.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest

3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

4 ACTION TRACKER

Members noted the action tracker

5 TENANT ENGAGEMENT AND TENANT VOICE REPORT

The Board received an update from the Tenant Engagement Manager regarding the work of the Tenant Voice Forum. Key areas highlighted included:

- Positive progress continues to be mase to strengthen tenant engagement
- Tenant complaint review group met last week and reviewed the current process

Members queried the training involved and was assured that this is being looked into with TPAS. There was also a query around the success of the recent recruitment and how diverse the member are. Members were advised that there are 6-8 tenants who attend with different levels of capability. The Tenant Voice Forum is currently suspended due to not being quorate but once developed, the review group may have some natural progression to the scrutiny panel.

Members noted the report.

6 DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY

The Strategic Housing Manager provided an update on the draft housing strategy highlighting the current context, vision and objectives and how the draft strategy will:

- Reposition town centres for the future
- Support people to live well and independently at home
- Prevent homelessness
- Shape a fair and safe private rented sector
- Create sustainable healthy and thriving neighbourhoods

Members were advised that there will be a consultation on the draft housing strategy with a dedicated website, accessible formats including easy read versions of the strategy. Members were encouraged to share the consultation and draft strategy with residents.

Members queried the contributions up to 2026 and whether the funds have been spent. The Strategic Housing Manager advised that we have 10 years to spend the monies and are monitoring it to ensure it does get spent. Members also queried progress being made towards net zero in our council homes and the Head of Housing Property agreed to bring an item on this back to the board in November.

Members queried the empty homes within the borough and whether they are private or council owned and what collaboration is being done with landlords. Members were advised that around 98% of empty properties are privately owned. The enforcement team are talking to landlords and attempting to find relatives and talking them through the options.

Members questioned whether the council has the capacity to deliver the new homes including the wider teams involved such as planning and were advised that most of the homes will be delivered by private registered providers. The Council doesn’t have the capacity to build properties ourselves so are working with various partners to deliver this ambitious programme.

Members noted the update.

7 ANNUAL COMPLAINT HANDLING REPORT AND SELF ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE COMPLAINT HANDLING CODE

The Head of Performance Improvement and Assurance provided an overview of the complaint handling report between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026. This report is being reviewed by tenants who have their own page for listing their identified priorities.

Key highlights include:

- 190 Stage 1 complaints received
- 54 Stage 2 reviews requested
- No complaints were refused
- 71.58% of complaints were resolved at Stage 1, an improvement from 50% in the previous year
- Complaint volumes equate to approximately 25 complaints per 1,000 homes
- 61.13% of Stage 1 complaints were fully or partially upheld
- 53.70% of Stage 2 complaints were fully or partially upheld
- Compliments to the service have increased

Key complaint themes identified were:

- Failure to follow policy.
- Delays in taking action.
- Poor communication and customer service.

Members discussed the report and noted that tenants with disabilities are overrepresented within the complaints figures and whether this means other people who aren’t happy with their property are not contacting us. Members were advised that a deeper dive is being carried out including doing roadshows and work on estates.

Members also noted that there were lots of complaints about ASB and whether there were any common areas that were being complained about. Members were advised it was mainly around case management and getting back to residents in a timely way and providing updates. There have been a few cases that have been escalated around noise so the team are reviewing what can be done to soundproof properties from not necessarily intentional noise.

Members noted the report.

8 DECENT HOMES AND STOCK CONDITION ASSURANCE

The Head of Property Housing provided an update on the report highlighting:

- Process for reporting issues has been revised
- Training has been put in place for stock condition surveyors
- Shift away from the monthly reactive process as it fails to provide a full view of DHS fails at the start of the new financial year, it is more reactive and is less efficient planning wise.
- Improved stock condition survey offer this year including a new booking system for tenants to book their survey

Members queried the poor condition of some returned properties and what can be done to improve this moving forwards. Members were advised that we are increasing tenancy visits to allow us to review properties, monthly walkabouts are taking place where we can be proactive about messy gardens, closed curtains. The team are also increasing their termination visits to view the property before the tenancy ends.

Members raised concerns about what happens when properties are identified as being of a low standard and whether there was enough budget to manage this. Members were advised that when properties that need work are identified, housing colleagues will provide additional support. Urgent repairs will be passed to the team and any whole house repairs added to the programme.

Members noted the report

9 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement provided an overview of the report highlighting:

- Q1 results indicate that Bury's overall tenant satisfaction remains below both organisational targets and the Housemark benchmarking median.
- The team is behind in the delivery of surveys required in 2026/27 due to capacity but should be able to make up the difference by the end of the year with full recruitment achieved this quarter and temporary agency stock condition surveyor joining the team for 6 months
- Ongoing and planned investment in energy efficiency improvements is expected to increase performance during 2026/27
- Q1 performance remains above target, with average re-let times at 54 days.
- 18 Bury Council-owned and managed properties had an overdue Landlord's Gas Safety Record (LGSR)exceeding the statutory 12-month compliance period. Of the overdue properties:
    - 11 properties are less than one month overdue.
    - 7 properties are between one and four months overdue.
- Arrears as a percentage of rent roll continue to sit below internal targets and sector benchmarks
- Q1 2026/27 routine repairs performance fell to 56.98% from 59.08% in Q4, remaining well below the 90% target due to high demand, aged repairs, capacity constraints, and complex follow-on works.

Members requested more details round repairs and maintenance figures and officers agreed to provide this moving forwards.

Officers also agreed that the Head of Service covering rent performance would be attending the September meeting to update on current performance and provide assurances.

Members noted the report.

10 REPAIRS REVIEW UPDATE

The Head of Repairs and Maintenance provided an overview of the report highlighting:

- Encouraging progress had been made during the quarter
- Recovery actions implemented by the service were beginning to have a positive impact.

Members noted the following performance against targets:

- Emergency repairs completed within target timescales: 98.48% against a target of 100%.
- Repairs completed right first time: 90.01% against a target of 85%, exceeding the target.
- Average appointable repair completion time: 21 days against a target of 20 days.
- Repairs Work in Progress (WIP): 1,585 against a target of 1,500.

The Committee was advised that a number of performance challenges remained, including:

- Non-emergency repairs completed within target timescales stood at 57%, against a target of 90%.
- Overdue repairs within the Work in Progress backlog remained high at 39.62%, compared to a target of 5%.

Members were advised that work was continuing to prepare for the implementation of Awaab's Law, including the introduction of improved systems to support compliance and case management.

Members were also advised that:

- Customer communications were improving.
- A new platform was being introduced to enhance customer engagement.
- The service had achieved a full complement of back-office staff.
- Further focus was required on the recruitment and retention of operational staff to support service delivery.

Members queried phase two of preparing for Awaab’s law and were advised that the senior leadership team are working on plans for implementation to ensure it is a joint effort across all departments using learning from phase 1.

Members queried whether damp and mould was due to overcrowding or the condition of the property. Members were advised that there has been some detailed review of this and that the detail will be shared with members.

Members noted the report.

COUNCILLOR A ARIF
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 7.00 pm)

Housing Advisory Board Action Tracker

Meeting date	Agenda item	Action	Owner	Date by	Update
9th June 2026	5 TVF update	Support further work on tenant communications and reporting	Head of Performance, Improvement and Assurance	30th October 2026	Communication review group established
9th June 2026	8 Compliance Assurance Report	Head of Compliance to meet with Head of Customer Support and Collections to discuss communications with residents regarding compliance work	Head of Housing Compliance	30th September 2026	Head of Housing Compliance has left Bury. New Head of Housing Compliance has been recruited. Action being followed up the Compliance Managers in the interim.
28th July 2026	6 Draft Housing Strategy	Bring paper on Net Zero and Sustainability plans to a future meeting	Head of Property	7th January 2027	On HAB agenda for January meeting
28th July 2026	9 Quarterly performance report	A deeper dive on repairs and maintenance figures	Head of Repairs	7th Janaury	Repairs review update on agenda for January meeting and will include a deeper dive on performance
28th July 2026	9 Quarterly Performance report	Head of service covering rent performance to attend September meeting to update on current performance	Head of Revenues and Benefits	10th September 2026	Included on the agenda for September HAB
28th July 2026	10 Repairs review update	Provide a brief update on the actions being taken to prepare for Awaab's law	Head of Repairs	10th September 2026	Update attached to action tracker

28th July 2026	10 Repairs review update	Provide information on whether there is any link between damp and mould and overcrowding in a property	Head of Repairs	10th September 2026	Update attached to action tracker

Housing Advisory Board– Actions

1. **Provide a brief update on the actions being taken to prepare for Awaab's law (Phase 2)**

Awaab's Law Phase 2 extends the current legal requirements for damp and mould to a wider range of housing hazards, including fire safety, electrical hazards, excess cold and heat, structural risks, falls hazards and hygiene-related issues. The new requirements come into force on 30 November 2026 and will require landlords to identify, investigate and resolve significant hazards within prescribed timescales, further strengthening tenant safety and regulatory compliance.

Our focus will continue ensuring that hazards are identified quickly, appropriately risk assessed and managed within clear timescales, with particular attention given to emergency and significant-risk cases. We are currently reviewing the staffing resources we have available to ensure we are adequately resourced to meet the extension of Awaab's law to further hazards. We are also investigating the new QL upgrade to support with case management of the law.

These actions will help ensure the service is well prepared to meet the new requirements and continue to prioritise tenant safety and regulatory compliance.

Whilst further guidance and implementation details are still emerging nationally, the service is taking a proactive approach to ensure systems, processes, resources and governance arrangements are in place ahead of Phase 2, with tenant safety and regulatory compliance remaining the key priorities.

2. **Provide information on whether there is any link between damp and mould and overcrowding in a property**

At present, we do not hold sufficient data to quantify or demonstrate a direct relationship between overcrowding and damp and mould within our housing stock.

However, national housing and public health guidance recognises that overcrowding can be a contributing factor in some cases. Higher occupancy levels can increase moisture generation through everyday activities such as cooking, bathing and clothes drying. Where ventilation is inadequate, this additional moisture can contribute to condensation and mould growth. Equally, damp and mould can arise from a range of other factors, including building defects, leaks, inadequate heating, poor insulation and ventilation issues.

As a result, overcrowding should be considered as one of several potential contributing factors rather than a sole cause of damp and mould. Our current assessment processes focus on identifying and addressing the underlying causes of each case on an individual basis, regardless of occupancy levels.

We are reviewing the data requirements associated with Awaab's Law Phase 2 preparations and will consider whether additional information should be collected to better understand any local correlation between occupancy levels, property conditions and damp and mould cases.

Bury Council

Briefing Note

Housing Services

To	Housing Advisory Board
From	Kimberley Ryan-Dooner Tenant Engagement Manager
Subject	Tenant Engagement Update
Purpose	To provide an overview of Tenant Engagement Activities and Updates
Decision required	For information
Status	Not confidential

Key Achievements since July 2026

- 3 tenant review groups established (Repairs, Complaints and ASB)
- 2 tenant HAB members recruited
- Progress being made in exploring training opportunities, with three providers invited to present training packages to support tenant scrutiny, influence and governance
- Tenants continuing to influence policy reviews and service improvements
- Easy Read Complaints Guide co-produced with tenants
- TPAS review over 50% complete, with recommendations being developed to strengthen tenant influence and scrutiny arrangements

Complaints Group: Reviewed complaint themes and recurring service issues, challenging how easy it is for tenants to access services and raise complaints. The group has helped shape improvements to complaint information and communication, including co-producing an Easy Read Complaints Guide. The next review will focus on Compensation Guidance.

Repairs Group: Influenced the Repairs Policy and challenged issues relating to missed appointments, right-first-time repairs, contractor communication and support for vulnerable tenants. The next review will focus on the Lettable Standard.

ASB Group: Reviewed the ASB Policy and Improvement Action Plan, focusing on communication, support for victims, reporting processes and Housing Officer visibility. Feedback will be used to improve tenant information and understanding of responsibilities. The next review will co-design a tenant-friendly ASB guide.

The same messages are consistently being raised across all review groups: better communication, easier access to services, more visibility to Housing Officers, clearer information for tenants, better updates and learnings from complaints and feedback.

Over 50 recommendations received from the review groups, with over 12 tenants involved and continual promotion to get involved

Bury Council

Wider Engagement Activities

Alongside the review groups, tenants continue to influence services and neighbourhoods through estate walkabouts, action days, community events and consultations. Recent engagement has informed priorities for the £20 million Radcliffe Pride of Place investment, identified local environmental issues, and highlighted ongoing priorities around communication, access to services, digital inclusion and community learning opportunities.

TPAS Tenant Engagement Review

The TPAS review is now over 50% complete and has included document reviews, staff interviews and tenant discussions. Early findings suggest opportunities to strengthen the links between tenant influence, scrutiny, complaints, performance information and customer insight. Further tenant engagement will take place before recommendations are developed. Key areas of focus include refreshing the engagement approach, strengthening scrutiny arrangements, and clarifying governance and accountability.

Agenda Item 6

Classification: Open	Decision Type:

Report to:	Housing Advisory Board	Date: 10 September 2026
Subject:	Tenant Participation Advisory Service update	
Report of	Claire Rogan Head of Performance Improvement and Assurance	

Summary

1. This report provides an update on the progress of the TPAS consultancy commission to strengthen tenant influence, engagement, and scrutiny arrangements within Bury Housing. The review aims to support the organisation in moving from local engagement activities to demonstrable tenant influence and better outcomes for tenants, whilst developing a robust and effective scrutiny framework

Recommendation(s)

2. Members are asked to note the progress made to date, acknowledge that further tenant engagement is required before final conclusions are reached, and support completion of the remaining phases of the review during September and October 2026. An updated position will be timely for the next HAB meeting.

Alternative options considered and rejected

3. No alternative options have been considered.

Report Author and Contact Details:

Name: Claire Rogan
Position: Head of Performance Improvement and Assurance
Department: Housing
E-mail: c.rogan@bury.gov.uk

Background

4. The consultancy was originally designed as a four-month programme across four phases: Discovery and Insight, Facilitated Workshops, Strategy and Framework Development, and Scrutiny Recruitment and Development.

5. As of the end of August 2026:

- Six of the nine consultancy days have been completed.
- A desktop review has been undertaken, although this was delayed due to the phased sharing of documentation and the timing of the regulatory inspection.
- Discussions have taken place with key stakeholders including service leads, managers, frontline staff and elected members
- Cross-service staff workshops have been completed, generating a range of findings and potential actions to strengthen resident influence across services.
- Initial resident engagement has taken place; however, feedback has so far been obtained from only two engaged residents.

  NB – a further 6 tenants met with TPAS as of 02/0926 .

6. The following activities have been delivered:

- Desktop review of engagement, scrutiny and governance documentation.
- Meeting with Portfolio Holder to obtain strategic insight.
- Focus group with Heads of Service and senior leaders.
- Workshops with managers and frontline colleagues to explore barriers, opportunities and expectations relating to tenants engagement.
- Initial focus group with engaged tenants .

Current Position

7. TPAS has provided initial verbal feedback and a draft report to support inspection requirements. However, TPAS has advised that the findings should be considered preliminary until the reality-checking phase has been completed and tested with a wider range of residents and stakeholders.

8. The consultant has advised that additional tenant engagement has now taken place and a final meeting with the Engagement Team is scheduled to complete the agreed reality-checking process. Following this, an overall review of the findings will be undertaken before final recommendations are confirmed.

9. The review has highlighted the importance of:

   - Embedding engagement across all service areas rather than within a single team.

- Strengthening links between engagement, complaints, performance information and tenants' insight.
- Developing a stronger scrutiny framework supported by appropriately trained residents and staff.
- Establishing clear ownership, reporting arrangements and accountability for resident influence.

Next Steps

10. The next steps are;

    1. Complete the final reality-checking discussions with tenants and the Engagement Team.
    2. Undertake a comprehensive review of findings from all engagement activity completed throughout the consultancy.
    3. Receive the consultant's final recommendations and proposed next steps.
    4. Consider recommendations and develop an implementation plan, including ownership, reporting arrangements and timescales.
    5. Progress the refresh of the Tenant Engagement Strategy, scrutiny framework and resident influence arrangements

Conclusion

11. The TPAS review is nearing completion, with most planned activities now delivered, including engagement with staff, managers, senior leaders and tenants. The review has provided valuable insight into how tenant influence, engagement and scrutiny can be strengthened across Bury Housing Services.

12. The consultant has recently undertaken further tenant engagement activity and is completing the final reality-checking stage with the Engagement Team. Following a final review of all findings, recommendations and proposed next steps are expected by mid-September. These will inform a future action plan to strengthen resident influence and ensure engagement drives meaningful service improvement.

13. The Housing Advisory Board is asked to note the progress made and await the final report and recommendations before considering the next phase of implementation.

Links with the Housing and Corporate Priorities:

Please summarise how this links to Let's Do It Strategy and Let's Do Housing.

This review supports the Council's *Let's Do It* ambitions by strengthening the tenant voice, increasing opportunities for tenants to influence decisions, and improving transparency, accountability and service improvement across Bury Housing. The TIA consumer standards – regulatory compliance) The work will help ensure that services are shaped by tenant feedback and that tenant engagement leads to meaningful outcomes for tenants and communities.

Tenant voice

Tenant feedback has been central to this review, with tenant engagement and reality-checking activities helping to validate findings and shape the final recommendations. The review aims to strengthen tenant influence by ensuring tenants have meaningful opportunities to contribute to decision-making, scrutiny and service improvement.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

No Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed as this report is for information only and does not propose any policy or service changes. Any recommendations arising from the final TPAS review will be assessed separately to determine whether an EIA is required before implementation

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Environmental Impact and Considerations:

Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both ***Carbon emissions*** *(contact climate@bury.gov.uk for advice) and* ***Biodiversity*** *(contact S.Tinsley@bury.gov.uk and Dennis.whittle@bury.gov.uk for advice)*

The report itself has no direct environmental impact

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Link to Housing Strategic risk register = make sure you use risks that are on the housing strategic risk register

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Failure to meet Consumer Standards and regulatory expectations	Ongoing assurance reviews via HAB

Procurement Implications:

There are no direct procurement implications arising from this report

Legal/ Regulatory Implications:

The report supports compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards primarily the Transparency Influence and Accountability Standard.

Financial Implications:

There are no direct financial implications arising from acceptance of this report.

Appendices:

Please list any appended documents (please save these as clearly labelled separate documents in the Teams folder).

TPAS Bury Housing - plan and timeline - updated 24.8.26 (003).docx

Background papers:

Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.

TPAS Bury Housing - plan and timeline - updated 24.8.26 (003).docx

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning
TPAS	Tenant Participation Advisory Board

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Bury – Strengthening Tenant Influence and engagement – updated August 2026

Overview:

This consultancy is made up from different elements with a focus of moving engagement to impact and ensuring a robust scrutiny model which is working effectively.

It is initially proposed to take place over a four month timescale.

Proposed timetable:

Action	Requirements	Timescale
Phase 1 – Discovery & Insight		
Light touch desktop review	Bury to share all relevent engagement documents which includes • tenant engagement strategy • documents relevent to Tenants Voice Forum • scrutiny policy and framework • Any other engagement/scrutiny related documents – minutes and agendas of meetings etc. • Review recruitment materials for housing panel as per Kim's email	Information to be shared by 8.5.2026 Desktop review to be completed by end of May 2026 Deadline extended as document share not completed. Various guidance given i.e. HAB and recruitment in the meantime. Met with Cllr Cummings as she was shortly due to leave role to get views from that perspective Inspection was announced which has set timescales back for the review.

		Initial feedback given in July to Kim and Claire verbally and then draft report shared as inspectors had asked to see it.
Focus group with key service leads (new leadership cohort where possible): e.g. complaints/insight lead, compliance/property safety, repairs, housing management/neighbourhoods, asset, customer access.	Each session = 60 mins Teams	This was delivered 10.7.2026 with most Heads of Service present. Also due to meet Sian on 26.8.26
Phase 2 - Facilitated workshops To explore: **• What good engagement looks like?** **• What scrutiny should look like in practice?** **• Barriers to involvement and how to remove them** **• How teams should build engagement into their role**		
Staff – cross-service focus groups	Teams meeting – 60 mins for each one	This was delivered across two focus groups – workshop with managers across teams on 7th August and with frontline staff on 5th August 2026.

Focus Group with engaged residents	Teams meeting – 60 mins	Two residents attended meeting on 10th August 2026. These are the only two residents that have been involved with the review to date.
Focus group with non-engaged residents	Teams meeting – 60 mins	Late July – this has not yet been arranged (24.8.26)
Phase 3 - Strategy & Framework Development		
Set out elements for refreshed engagement strategy Strengthen scrutiny framework Provide guidance and support on: o Linking engagement, complaints, performance and insight o Embedding engagement/scrutiny into service planning • Develop a simple Tenant Influence Tracker template		September – subject to meeting with residents to get more of a view from a residents' perspective.

Facilitate a final workshop with key service leads to agree ownership, reporting routes and how to embed across team	Teams meeting – 1 hour We will book this when other elements are complete and ready to be shared	September
Phase 4 – Scrutiny recruitment and development		
Agree the right model for Bury based on capacity/diversity.		September
Recruitment plan and messaging (including timing options beyond daytime meetings).		September – however due to circumstances some of this has happened in June/July due to the need to have resident representation on HAB. Guidance given on HAB recruitment.
Development session(s) for tenant scrutiny members and staff to build confidence in: • asking the right questions • using insight/complaints/TSMs • Writing scrutiny recommendations and tracking impact		Late September? Would advise a delay on this to enable recruitment of more residents as trust builds with the review groups and enable Heads of Service to devise plans around influence and priorities. Consider booking tpas scrutiny conference places – 14th October Northampton – suggest sending staff and tenants together not just engagement team.

Light-touch mentoring for engagement team on effectively supporting scrutiny		September/October

End of August – Six of nine days completed so review more than halfway through. There are findings and actions from meeting with staff including Heads of Service, managers and frontline staff. The draft report has only been initially shared as the inspectors wished to see it – this would not usually happen until fully informed by resident feedback.

Initial feedback from two residents only to date and it would be good to get a broader perspective from other residents.

Meetings

Meet with Cllr Cummings – 10.4.26
Initial meeting with Kim – 15.4.26
Meeting with Kim and Claire about desktop review queries – 26.6.26
Initial findings following HOS meeting (Kim and Clare) - 17.7.26
Heads of Service meeting – 10.7.2026
Focus group with staff – 5.8.26
Focus group with managers – 7.8.26
Focus group with two engaged residents – 10.8.26

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Classification: Open	Decision Type:

Report to:	Housing Advisory Board	Date: 10 September 2026
Subject:	Draft Tenant Engagement annual report	
Report of	Claire Rogan Head of Performance Improvement and Assurance	

Summary

1. To present the Housing Advisory Board with the Tenant Engagement Annual Report 2025/26 and provide a review of the evolving tenant involvement, influence and engagement activities throughout the year. The report demonstrates how tenant feedback is beginning to inform service improvements, policy development and governance arrangements, in line with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.

2. Key achievements highlighted within the report include:
    - Strengthening tenant influence through the Tenant Voice Forum and the introduction of Tenant Voice briefing notes to the Housing Advisory Board, creating a more formal route for tenant feedback and challenge to be considered in governance discussions.
    - Increased tenant participation in service reviews, policy development, scrutiny activities, community events and consultation exercises.
    - Tenant-led scrutiny of complaints handling, resulting in improvements to communication, accessibility and customer information.
    - Tenant influence on the development of new policies.
    - Delivery of learning and development opportunities supporting 103 tenants and volunteers through 14 training courses.
    - Investment in community engagement activities, grant funding, estate action days and environmental improvement projects that have strengthened neighbourhoods and community cohesion
    - Positive movement in key tenant satisfaction measures, including overall satisfaction increasing from 70.6% to 73.9%, satisfaction with being treated fairly and with respect increasing from 74.9% to 76%, and satisfaction with being kept informed increasing from 65% to 68.1%.
    - Whilst tenant scrutiny and influence are not yet where we want them to be, a range of engagement activities were delivered throughout 2025/26 to provide tenants with opportunities to contribute to service improvements and local initiatives.

Recommendation(s)

3. To review and note the contents of the report.

4. Acknowledge the contributions made by tenants, tenant's groups, volunteers and community partners throughout the year.

5. Support he continued development of tenant influence arrangements

Reasons for recommendation(s)

6. The report provides evidence that tenant engagement activities are beginning to contribute to service improvement, strengthening accountability which supports compliance with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.

7. It also demonstrates how we are starting to use tenant feedback to shape service delivery, policy development and improvement priorities. Continued Board oversight will help ensure tenant influence remains embedded within governance and decision-making arrangements.

Alternative options considered and rejected

8. None. This report is provided for information, assurance and scrutiny purposes only. No decision is required.

Report Author and Contact Details:

Name: Claire Rogan
Position: Head of Performance Improvement and Assurance
Department: Housing
E-mail: c.rogan@bury.gov.uk

Background

9. Tenant engagement is a key component of delivering accountable, responsive and customer-focused housing services. During 2025/26, Bury Housing Services continued to develop opportunities for tenants to have their voices heard through a range of engagement activities, including the Tenant Voice Forum, consultations, policy reviews, surveys, community events, estate action days and service improvement initiatives.

10. Whilst tenant scrutiny, influence and co-production arrangements are not yet operating at the level the service aspires to achieve, progress has been made in strengthening engagement and creating opportunities for tenants to contribute to service improvements. Throughout the year, tenants helped shape policies, reviewed complaint handling arrangements, influenced communication improvements and contributed to neighbourhood and community projects.

11. A significant development during the year was the introduction of Tenant Voice reporting to the Housing Advisory Board, providing a clearer route for tenant feedback, challenge and recommendations to be considered within governance and decision-making arrangements.

12. The service has also worked closely with TPAS towards the end of the reporting period to review existing engagement arrangements and identify opportunities for improvement. This work will establish the foundations for a more strategic approach to tenant involvement and will support a shift towards stronger tenant influence, scrutiny and co-production and this transformation will be reported in from next year onwards.

13. The Tenant Engagement Annual Report 2025/26 provides an overview of engagement activity undertaken during the year, the outcomes achieved, and the contribution tenant feedback has made to service improvement and community development.

14. The draft Tenant Engagement report is attached at appendix one.

Links with the Housing and Corporate Priorities:

Links to the Council Strategy

The Tenant Engagement Annual Report 2025/26 supports the Council's strategic ambitions by demonstrating how residents are being engaged in shaping services, strengthening communities and improving outcomes across the borough.

The report contributes to the Council's priorities through providing opportunities for tenants to influence services through the Tenant Voice Forum, consultations, policy reviews, scrutiny activities and community engagement initiatives.

Tenant voice

Tenant feedback has influenced the ongoing development of Housing Services by highlighting the need for clearer communications, improved complaints information, greater recognition of individual needs and stronger opportunities for tenant influence. This has resulted in service improvements, increased tenant involvement in policy and service reviews, and the introduction of Tenant Voice reporting to the Housing Advisory Board. Further work throughout this reporting year will strengthen the tenant voice allowing us to demonstrate clear outcomes directly influenced by tenants in the future.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for this report as it is presented for information and assurance purposes only. However, the report demonstrates how tenant engagement activity has supported inclusive service delivery through improved communications, enhanced recording of reasonable adjustments, strengthened support for vulnerable tenants and increased opportunities for diverse tenant groups to influence service improvements and decision-making

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both **Carbon emissions** (contact climate@bury.gov.uk for advice) and **Biodiversity** (contact S.Tinsley@bury.gov.uk and Dennis.whittle@bury.gov.uk for advice)*

None

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Link to Housing Strategic risk register = make sure you use risks that are on the housing strategic risk register

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
H39 Regulatory Compliance (Housing Ombudsman / RSH)- Failure to meet consumer standards and complaint handling requirements.	Work with Tenant Participation Advisory Service has commenced to redesign tenant engagement moving from local engagement activities to more structured approach to tenant influence and decision making
H3 Poor tenant satisfaction resulting	Provide meaningful opportunities for tenants to influence service improvement and demonstrate the impact of changes made. (as above work with TPAS)

Procurement Implications:

None

Legal/ Regulatory Implications:

The report provides assurance to the HAB on the progress we are making towards meeting the regulatory outcomes under the Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard, particularly on required outcomes for engagement with tenants. The standard states that;

'Registered providers must take tenants' views into account in their decision-making about how landlord services are delivered and communicate how tenants' views have been considered.'

Financial Implications:

None

Appendices:

Please list any appended documents (please save these as clearly labelled separate documents in the Teams folder).

Appendix 1 Draft Tenant Engagement report

Background papers:

Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning

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Tenant Engagement Report 2025 - 2026

Bury Council

Housing Services

Our Tenant Engagement Journey

2025/26 was a year of strengthening tenant influence across Bury Housing Services. Through the Tenant Voice Forum, policy review workshops, scrutiny activities, community engagement and everyday conversations, tenants helped shape services, influence decisions and drive improvements that matter to tenants.

This year saw significant progress in moving beyond consultation and creating stronger opportunities for tenants to influence decision-making. A new reporting route through the Housing Advisory Board ensured tenant feedback, recommendations and challenge were more visible in governance discussions, helping strengthen transparency, accountability and oversight.

Tenants played an active role in reviewing services, scrutinising complaint handling arrangements, shaping policies and improving communications. Their feedback led to changes that have improved accessibility, strengthened customer communications and helped ensure services better reflect tenant needs and experiences.

Alongside this, tenants worked with staff and partners to improve neighbourhoods, support community projects, reduce social isolation and create opportunities for tenants to build skills, confidence and community connections.

This report highlights the difference tenant involvement has made during the last year and demonstrates our commitment to ensuring tenant voices help shape the decisions that affect homes, services and communities across Bury.

Thank you to every tenant who attended a meeting, completed a survey, took part in a review group, joined a community event or shared feedback throughout the year. Your voice continues to play an important role in improving services and shaping the future of Bury Housing Services.

Insights into Tenant Engagement

4,450
Tenants engaged with

13
Estate Action Days

45
Community events

709
Tenant Satisfaction Surveys received

38
Walkabouts conducted

99
New volunteers secured

19
Tenant & Residents Groups / Centres

110
Drop-in sessions

52
Community meetings

227,992
Posts viewed on Facebook

12,779
Posts viewed on Instagram

5,435
Newsletter Subscribers

16
Newsletters Sent

134,000
Push messages sent

This insight has helped us better understand tenant needs, vulnerabilities, support requirements and communication preferences.

Tenant Voice & Involvement

Tenant Voice in Action

During 2025/26, tenants played an active role in influencing services, scrutinising performance and shaping housing policies. This work supports the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard by ensuring that tenant views are heard, acted upon, and reflected in decision-making.

The introduction of Tenant Voice briefing notes to the Housing Advisory Board gave tenant feedback a more formal role in decision-making, ensuring tenant views and recommendations help shape service improvements and influence future priorities.

Through the Tenant Voice Forum, consultations and engagement activities, tenants provided challenge, insight and recommendations that informed decision making.

Tenant Satisfaction Survey results told us:

We treat tenants fairly and with respect
76%

We keep tenants informed
68%

We listen and act on tenants views
59%

How Tenant Voice Influenced Change

One of the Tenant Voice Forum's most significant pieces of work during 2025/26 was a detailed review of complaint handling. Tenants reviewed the complaints process and response letters, website information, compared our approach with other housing providers and assessed how accessible our Annual Complaints Report was for tenants.

Through this work, tenants told us they wanted clearer complaint communications, easier-to-understand information, and better updates on the outcomes of their complaints.

Tenant Voice & Involvement

Tenant Influence on Policies

More tenants than ever participated in focus groups to help shape service improvements, including how we communicate with tenants and the development of new policies and service standards. This included a new Pet Policy and Vulnerability Policy. Tenants shared their lived experiences, and their feedback played a key role in developing these documents.

Focus Topic - Communal Cleaning

A Communal Cleaning notice was also reviewed by the Tenant Voice Forum to provide clear information on what cleaning standards are expected.

What tenants told us	What we did	The impact
• Cleaning standards were inconsistent. • Tenants wanted greater visibility of cleaning schedules. • More transparency was needed around service delivery.	• Consulted tenants on the service. • Reviewed cleaning standards and frequencies. • Introduced clearer cleaning schedules within communal areas.	• Greater transparency for tenants. • Improved confidence in the service. • Higher satisfaction levels following implementation. • **Satisfaction with communal areas increased to 69%, compared to 49% last year.**

Tenant Voice & Involvement

Changes Made Through Tenant Influence

Tenant feedback didn't just identify issues. It helped shape changes to how services are delivered:

You told us complaint information could be difficult to understand.
✅ We improved customer information, reviewed communications and strengthened tenant scrutiny of the complaints service.

You asked for clearer communication.
✅ We increased the use of plain English, improved website content and enhanced communications for Independent Living tenants.

You told us services should better recognise individual needs.
✅ We improved the recording of reasonable adjustments and strengthened support for vulnerable tenants, helping deliver more personalised services.

You raised concerns about noise nuisance.
✅ We introduced a soundproofing pilot, enhanced flooring standards and improved pre-let assessments to help prevent recurring issues.

Learning, Skills and Confidence

During 2025/26, we delivered 14 training courses, supporting 103 tenants and community volunteers to develop new skills, gain qualifications and build confidence, to help make a difference in their communities.

Working closely with Bury Adult Learning Centre, we expanded learning opportunities across our communities, making training more accessible and ensuring people could access support closer to home.

The Difference Training Has Made

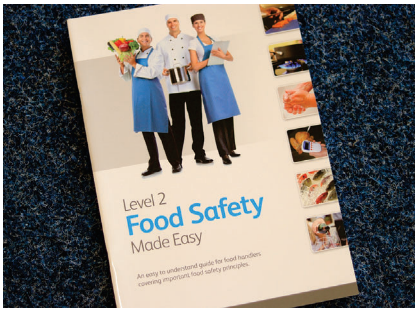
Improving Digital Confidence
Digital Skills courses help tenants build confidence using technology, access online services and stay connected.

Supporting Community Leaders
Training in committee skills and financial management has helps volunteers manage groups, organise activities and support community projects.

Building Safer Communities
Mental Health First Aid and First Aid training equips tenants with practical skills to support others and respond confidently in emergency situations.

Creating New Community Opportunities
Food Safety training enables volunteers to support community initiatives such as breakfast clubs, bringing people together and reducing isolation.

Opening Doors
Many of our courses provide recognised qualifications, helping tenants take steps towards further education, volunteering or employment opportunities.



Learning, Skills and Confidence

"This was a fun and enjoyable course and I have learnt a lot which I can apply to my work and committees that I sit on."

"The courses will be of great help in delivering volunteering for the local community. The Food Safety course has enabled me to run the warm hub at the Jubilee Café already."

14
courses delivered

103
tenants and volunteers supported

Digital Skills programmes expanded

Accredited qualifications achieved

Community leaders developed

Volunteering and employment skills strengthened

Building Stronger Communities

Reduced social isolation by increasing opportunities for community activities, for example VE day celebrations, craft sessions, breakfast club.

Improved shared green spaces and neighbourhood environments, for example community garden tidy events, Gardening Competition.

Strengthened communities by establishing and supporting resident groups, encouraging greater community involvement and local engagement.

Promoted community wellbeing by delivering Community Safety events, distributing Winter Wellbeing Packs, and facilitating community initiatives that supported vulnerable residents.

Together, these activities are helping to create communities where people feel connected, supported and proud to live.

The Difference Funding Has Made

£7,574
Community Grant funding awarded

£15,100
secured through social value and external funding

67
community projects funded

5
tenant-led grant panels held

Our Community Grant funding supported a wide range of local projects, from environmental improvements to community fun days, digital equipment, craft sessions and festive parties. It’s inspiring to see volunteers across our neighbourhoods creating opportunities, strengthening connections and improving the quality of life for residents.

In addition, a number of local community projects were supported through contractors' Social Value commitments and external funding awarded to resident groups. Contributions included vouchers donated by Wheeldons and GGI for competition prizes, Winter Wellbeing Packs provided by WRPS for residents during roof replacement works, and a garden centre voucher donated by BAAS to support a local gardening group. These contributions helped enhance community wellbeing, resident engagement, and neighbourhood pride.

Greener Spaces, Stronger Communities

Estate Action Days

7 Estate Action Days and 6 additional environmental improvement events were held across neighbourhoods identified by local feedback. These events provided opportunities for tenants to raise concerns such as fly tipping, anti social behaviour and environmental appearance of estates, and dispose household and garden waste.

The events helped strengthen relationships between tenants and services, increased community pride and encouraged tenant-led action. Several projects have continued beyond the events themselves, including ongoing gardening groups, environmental improvements and community activities.

31
tonnes of rubbish cleared

169
staff and partners volunteered

207
tenants engaged with

47
Tenant Satisfaction surveys completed

50
young people took part in activities

Greener Spaces, Stronger Communities

Community Impact in Action
Red Bank Garden Tidy Day brought together tenants, staff and local community organisations to completely transform a communal outdoor space, removing unsafe and unused items and creating a fresh start for tenants.

Griffin House and Falcon House tenants worked alongside staff and local partners to revitalise communal gardens, helping create spaces that encourage social interaction, wellbeing and outdoor activity.

Clarks Hill Gardening Club continues to demonstrate the power of tenant-led action, with tenants fundraising and developing long-term plans to improve their outdoor environment.

Seedfield Estate Clean-up Day united residents and volunteers to improve the local environment while supporting vulnerable residents, helping create a cleaner, safer neighbourhood for everyone.

"I would like to thank Bury Council Housing Services for arranging our Garden Tidy day. Thank you to all the housing staff, Radcliffe Rotary, Little Britain Anglers, Radcliffe First, family of Red Bank, Incredible Edible Radcliffe, Radcliffe Litterpickers and Growing Together Radcliffe. You were all amazing and the teamwork was fantastic. You have given Red Bank a fresh start in their garden."

Making a Difference Together

Tenant engagement has contributed to improvements across a range of services. As a result, tenants have greater visibility of service performance and improvement activities, helping to strengthen accountability. Our services are also increasingly shaped by tenant feedback and lived experience, ensuring they better reflect the needs and priorities of our customers.

Overall satisfaction

70.6% → 73.9%

2024-2025 2025-2026

Satisfaction that tenants are treated fairly and with respect

74.9% → 76%

2024-2025 2025-2026

Satisfaction that tenants are kept informed

65% → 68.1%

2024-2025 2025-2026

Thank You

We would like to thank every tenant who has generously volunteered their time and skills to make a positive difference not only within their communities but also to help improve housing services. The achievements within this report demonstrate that tenant engagement is no longer simply about consultation but also plays an important role in helping us create stronger, more connected neighbourhoods and better services.

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Agenda Item 8

Bury Council

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Assurance

Report to:	Housing Advisory Board	**Date:** 10 September 2026
Subject:	Springs Annual Assurance Report	
Report of	Head of Performance, Improvement and Assurance	

Summary

1. Springs Tenant Management Co-operative (TMC) provides services to the 284 homes it manages on behalf of Bury Council. Springs TMC performs well in a number of key areas, including repairs, tenancy management, complaint handling and tenant satisfaction. Most Tenant Satisfaction Measures compare favourably against regulatory benchmarks and locally agreed targets.

2. Safety compliance performance has remained high throughout the year, with gas, fire, asbestos and electrical safety requirements consistently meeting or close to 100%. Reviews undertaken by Bury Housing Services' Compliance Team identified opportunities to further improve property compliance reporting. This will improve oversight, assurance and the quality of management information. Support has been provided to Springs TMC and will continue to support ongoing improvement.

3. The review identified some areas for further development particularly around governance assurance, risk management, audit arrangements and property compliance reporting, monitoring relating to rent arrears and damp and mould cases.

Recommendation(s)

4. It is recommended that the Housing Advisory Board;

   - To note the contents of the report.
   - To consider the findings and areas identified for further development.
   - To support the continued development of the annual assurance framework for Tenant Management Organisations.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

5. This is the first annual review of Springs Tenant Management Co-operative to be presented to the Housing Advisory Board. The report provides information about Springs TMC, an overview of performance, compliance, governance and tenant satisfaction during 2025/26 and establishes a baseline for future annual reporting.

It highlights areas of strong performance and identifies opportunities for improvement and further development of oversight and assurance arrangements.

Alternative options considered and rejected

6. No alternative options have been considered. The annual assurance review forms part of Bury Council Housing Service oversight and assurance arrangements for the Tenant Management Co-operative.

Report Author and Contact Details:

Name: Claire Rogan
Position: Head of Performance Improvement and Assurance
Department: Housing
E-mail: c.rogan@bury.gov.uk

Background

7. Bury Council has delegated the management of 284 properties to Springs Tenant Management Co-operative through a Management Agreement under the Right to Manage. Under the Right to Manage tenants can exercise their statutory Right to Manage and establish a Tenant Management organisation. The Council retains responsibility for ensuring appropriate governance, regulatory compliance and service delivery standards are maintained.

8. Springs Tenant Management Committee (TMC) was established under the Right to Manage arrangements in 1995 following a successful tenant-led initiative and formally assumed management responsibility for the estate on 1 July 1996. The organisation has therefore managed housing services locally on behalf of Bury Council for over 30 years. April 2022, following Cabinet approval, Springs TMC became a self financing tenant management organisation, the first in the Northwest. This means that Springs retains the rents it collects from the homes it manages and uses this to pay for the management and maintenance of the properties.

9. Whilst the council can delegate the management of the homes to Springs TMC it cannot delegate its accountability as a landlord. The council remains responsible for regulatory compliance, consumer standards, health and safety, building safety, complaints oversight and value for money.

10. This annual review of Springs TMC provides Housing Advisory Board with assurance on Springs operational performance, regulatory compliance, governance arrangements, financial performance, tenant satisfaction and risk management throughout 2025/26. The review draws on performance information,

compliance monitoring, tenant satisfaction measures, audit findings and partnership discussions between Bury Council and Springs TMC.

11. Overall, the review found that Springs provides good services to tenants, performs well on repairs, tenancy management, complaints handling and tenant satisfaction. The review identified some areas for further development particularly around governance assurance, risk management, audit arrangements and property compliance reporting, monitoring relating to rent arrears and damp and mould cases.

Modular Management Agreement

12. Springs Tenant Management Co-operative manages 284 homes on behalf of Bury Council under a Modular Management Agreement. The agreement sets out how housing services are shared between Springs TMC and the Council, defining the responsibilities of each. It provides the framework for service delivery, performance monitoring, financial management, governance and compliance, ensuring there is clear accountability for tenants and residents.

13. Under the agreement, Springs TMC is responsible for managing day-to-day housing services and making decisions at a local level, while Bury Council remains the landlord and retains responsibility for strategic oversight, legal and regulatory compliance, and assurance.

14. The services managed by Springs are:

- Repairs reporting and monitoring
- Estate management
- Tenancy management
- Rent collection and arrears management
- Resident engagement and community activities
- Complaint handling
- Anti-social behaviour management
- Lettings and void management

15. The Management Agreement is an important governance document and should be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains up to date and reflects current legislation and regulatory requirements. The periodic review should also ensure that Springs TMC continues to provide clear responsibilities, effective oversight and value for money for tenants. Reviewing the agreement also provides an opportunity to strengthen governance and assurance arrangements and ensure it remains fit for purpose for the future.

16. As the Management Agreement has not been reviewed since 2022 we plan to engage some consultancy support to help us carry out a review of the management agreement and the governance arrangements we currently have in place.

Governance and Oversight Arrangements

17. Bury Council currently receives regular performance reporting from Springs through the quarterly scorecard process. The table below sets out what this covers and the areas of oversight:

Service area	Areas of oversight
Tenant Satisfaction	All tenant satisfaction measures Targets are the same as Bury Housing Services
Asset Management	Decent Homes compliance EPC performance Capital programme delivery Stock condition survey complete and data
Building Safety and Compliance	Gas safety Fire safety Asbestos management Electrical safety Damp and mould monitoring Legionella is not a risk as no shared water spaces.
Financial Management	Rent collection Arrears Void loss
Service delivery	Repairs performance Tenancy management Complaints Anti-social behaviour

18. Performance is reviewed throughout the year and monitored against agreed targets. Scorecards are shared with the Housing Advisory Board (HAB). One Member of HAB is a committee member of Springs TMC Board.

Service delivery

19. Day-to-day services are delivered by a small housing management team led by a Director. The team includes a Housing Officer, Finance Officer, Community Engagement Officer and Handy Person, who work together to provide housing management, tenant support, financial advice, resident engagement and estate-based services for tenants and residents. The local office-based model enables

staff to respond quickly to tenant enquiries, provide personalised support and maintain strong relationships within the community.

Staffing Resilience

20. The Springs local service model is delivered through a small team structure which enables close engagement with tenants and rapid local decision making. However, the size of the team creates a degree of operational dependency on key individuals. Long-term absence, recruitment difficulties or turnover within key posts could impact service continuity. Ongoing succession planning and business continuity arrangements will therefore remain important areas for monitoring.

Governance

21. Springs TMC is governed by a Management Committee made up of tenant representatives, and elected Councillors. The Committee is responsible for overseeing the performance, financial management and operation of the organisation. Decisions require a minimum of three members to be present to ensure meetings are quorate. Current Committee membership includes:

    - Roy Frost – Chair
    - Jill Browne, Vice Chair
    - Janet McKenniffe, Committee Member
    - Jackie Frost, Committee Member
    - Carol Unsworth, Committee Member and Secretary
    - Lea-Ann Brooks, Committee Member
    - Councillor Tamoor Tariq

22. Whilst governance arrangements are established and meetings are held on a regular basis (Meetings are held every 6 weeks. Annual General Meetings take place), Bury Housing Services is responsible for ensuring appropriate oversight and assurance arrangements are in place. Strengthening governance reporting will provide greater visibility of decision making, board effectiveness and the organisation's ability to respond to future regulatory and operational challenges.

Risk Management

23. Springs TMC maintains operational oversight of service risks; however, a formal risk register is not routinely reported through existing Council monitoring arrangements. Introducing regular risk reporting would strengthen assurance by providing visibility of strategic, operational, compliance and financial risks together with mitigating actions. This would align oversight arrangements more closely with the expectations placed upon Bury Housing Services.

The tenant ballot 2026

24. Under the Modular Management Agreement, Springs TMC must periodically consult tenants on whether they want the organisation to continue managing housing services on their behalf. This is called a continuation ballot.

25. The next continuation ballot is due in November 2026. This is an important democratic process that gives tenants the opportunity to review the performance of Springs TMC and decide whether they wish the current management arrangements to continue. A positive vote will provide a renewed mandate for Springs to continue delivering housing services locally under the Management Agreement. The ballot also provides an opportunity for Springs and Bury Council to demonstrate the value of tenant management, highlight achievements and engage with residents on future priorities.

26. As a result, preparation for the ballot will be a key focus during 2026/27 to ensure tenants are fully informed about performance, service delivery and future plans for the organisation.

27. Whilst Springs TMC will lead the resident engagement, the council needs to ensure that it has undertaken its own due diligence and can verify that the ballot has been conducted in accordance with the right to manage regulations and all statutory requirements have been met before it continues the management agreement. We will be working with Spring TMC to ensure that the ballot is conducted fairly and in accordance with the Regulations

Internal Controls

28. The last internal audit was conducted in 2007 and one recommendation made, which was followed up and completed. A full audit of the TMC will need to be conducted this year.

29. Financial accounts are produced by an independent chartered accountant annually with a more in depth audit every 3 years.

30. Springs TMC uses Bury Council Legal Services for issuing any enforcement measures i.e. NSP’s ASB enforcement. During the year, two potential fraud cases were identified and appropriately referred through Council fraud procedures.

31. Springs TNC has appropriate staff training in place. All staff complete the Council’s data protection compliance and GDPR training Council Course). Citation HR (external provider) provides health and safety training and Fire Marshall training to staff. Prevent awareness training was provided Via Bury Council. The staff receive food hygiene and first aid training every 3 years

Regulatory Assurance

32. In reviewing Springs TMC it is found that a self-assessment against the consumer standards would be beneficial and would ensure that Spring TBC fully understood the requirements of the consumer standards in relation to the services they deliver.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

33. Performance against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures remained strong throughout 2025/26, with the majority of indicators exceeding both locally agreed targets and Bury Housing Services benchmark performance. Overall tenant satisfaction was 91.46%, significantly exceeding the target of 74%, whilst measures relating to residents feeling safe in their home, feeling listened to, being kept informed and being treated fairly all achieved consistently high levels of satisfaction.

34. Satisfaction with repairs, neighbourhood management and complaint handling also performed positively. Although some measures experienced a reduction during Quarter 2 and Quarter 3, performance improved significantly during Quarter 4, resulting in a strong year-end position across most indicators.

35. Communal area satisfaction achieved 65.52%, marginally exceeding the target of 65.5%. This demonstrates that Springs continues to deliver positive outcomes for tenants and maintains high levels of resident confidence in the services provided.

36. The detailed Tenant Satisfaction Measure results and year-end performance scorecard are included within Appendix 1.

Complaints and Housing Ombudsman

37. Springs TMC operates in accordance with Bury Housing Services' Complaints Policy and uses complaint handling procedures and templates that align with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

38. Performance during the year was positive, with 100% compliance achieved for both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaint handling timescales. Complaint volumes remained low relative to the size of the landlord.

39. One anti-social behaviour complaint progressed through the complaints process but was not upheld at either Stage 1 or Stage 2.

40. At the time of writing, one anti-social behaviour case remains under consideration by the Housing Ombudsman and the determination is awaited.

Tenant Engagement Activities.

41. Tenant engagement is a key strength of Springs TMC. Springs supports a range of community activities through the New Springs Community Project Group, including the Monday Drop-In Café, Luncheon Club, Craft Group, Community Gardening Group, Kids Club and Summer of Fun programme. These activities help reduce social isolation, improve wellbeing and strengthen community connections. Attendance is recorded through sign-in sheets for all activities.

Support for Tenants

42. Springs also provides a range of support services for tenants who may be vulnerable or experiencing financial difficulties. This includes assistance with Universal Credit and Housing Benefit applications, liaison with social prescribing services, signposting to safeguarding and adult social care services, and referrals to specialist support agencies where required.

43. Tenancy visits are carried out on a targeted basis, informed by tenancy risk, welfare concerns identified through estate walkabouts, referrals from social prescribers and cases where tenants may require additional support due to mental health or other vulnerability-related issues. These visits help ensure tenants receive appropriate support, advice and signposting at an early stage.

44. While participation in community activities is recorded, Springs does not currently measure the reach of these activities or collect information about the diversity of participants. Developing a simple approach to monitoring attendance, engagement levels and equality information would help provide assurance that activities are accessible, inclusive and reaching all sections of the community.

Finance – Audited Accounts.

45. The 2024/25 audited accounts provide assurance that Springs is financially well managed. The external auditors found that the accounts accurately reflect the organisation's financial position and identified no significant concerns about its ability to continue operating. Springs remains financially stable, with substantial cash reserves, a strong balance sheet and a history of generating annual surpluses.

46. Spring TMC is in a strong position to invest in its homes and services, respond to unexpected repairs and compliance requirements, and support future improvement programmes. The audited accounts show cash reserves of £4.59 million and a surplus of £797,501 for the year, demonstrating a high level of financial resilience.

47. While financial sustainability is not a concern, there is an opportunity to consider how reserves can best be used to benefit tenants and the housing stock. In particular, the forthcoming stock condition survey, ongoing boiler replacement programme and future investment priorities should help inform how resources are

used over the coming years. This will ensure that reserves are aligned to future asset management needs, maintaining decent homes standards, improving energy efficiency and reducing long-term repair costs.

Key Priorities for 2026/27

48. The key priorities for Springs TMC during 2026/27 are:
    - **Governance and Assurance** – there is a need to strengthen governance, risk management and assurance arrangements to support effective oversight and regulatory compliance.
    - **Preparing for the Tenant Ballot** - before November 2026 Spring TMC needs to engage with tenants and prepare for the November 2026 tenant management ballot, ensuring residents are informed about performance and future plans
    - **Investment in Homes** - Use the Stock Condition Survey to develop a long-term investment programme that maintains decent homes standards, improves energy efficiency and supports future asset management needs.
    - **Compliance and Tenant & Property Safety reporting** - Continue to maintain strong compliance performance while improving assurance, reporting and record-keeping arrangements.
    - **Supporting Tenants and Communities -** Maintain high levels of tenant satisfaction, strengthen community engagement activities and continue providing support to vulnerable residents.
    - **Financial Sustainability -** Monitor rent arrears, maintain strong rent collection performance and ensure financial resources are aligned to future investment priorities.

Conclusion

49. The available evidence demonstrates that Springs Tenant Management Co-operative delivered strong overall performance during 2025/26. Tenant satisfaction remains high, repairs and tenancy management services continue to perform well, and rent collection exceeds target.

50. The organisation continues to provide effective locally managed services on behalf of Bury Council and remains financially resilient. However, the review has identified opportunities to strengthen governance assurance, risk management, compliance reporting, damp and mould oversight, staffing resilience and long-term asset investment planning. These areas do not currently represent significant weaknesses in service delivery but require further development to ensure the Council can demonstrate robust landlord oversight, regulatory compliance and long-term sustainability of the management arrangements.

Links with the Housing and Corporate Priorities:

This report supports the delivery of the Let’s Do It Strategy and Let’s Do Housing by:

- Ensuring safe, well-maintained homes for tenants.
- Supporting strong and resilient neighbourhoods.
- Promoting effective tenant engagement and influence.
- Providing assurance that housing services are delivered efficiently and effectively.
- Supporting compliance with consumer standards and regulatory requirements.

Tenant voice

Tenant feedback remains a key element of the assurance process. Tenant Satisfaction Measures demonstrate high levels of satisfaction across most service areas, with performance exceeding regulatory benchmarks and locally agreed targets in many areas. Feedback obtained through tenant engagement activities, complaints, service reviews and routine interactions has informed service improvements and performance monitoring arrangements. Tenant feedback will also be captured via the 2026 tenant ballot

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Equality Impact and Considerations:

N/A

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

The report itself has no direct environmental impact. However, assurance activities support compliance programmes which contribute to the safety, sustainability and long-term management of homes. Effective property maintenance, compliance monitoring and asset management help support Bury Council's wider environmental and carbon reduction objectives.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Link to Housing Strategic risk register:

Risk / opportunity	**Mitigation**
Failure to meet Consumer Standards and regulatory expectations	Ongoing performance monitoring, annual assurance reviews and partnership working with Springs TMC.

Weaknesses in governance and risk management arrangements	Continued oversight, action planning and periodic governance reviews.
Non-compliance with Property Safety requirements	Regular compliance monitoring and support from Bury Housing Services Compliance Team.
Absence of capital investment plan	Stock condition survey brought forward to 2026 and results will inform the future improvement plan.
Increasing rent arrears affecting financial resilience	Enhanced monitoring and early intervention arrangements for tenants experiencing financial difficulties.
Reputational risk arising from service failure	Performance scrutiny through contractual monitoring and annual assurance reporting.
Staffing Levels	Segregation of duties and cover in times of sickness and holidays given the small delivery team. X 2 members off long term Sick currently. Temporary Director replacement for 3 months Commencing September. Full recruitment process will need to be explored if anything further than 2 months required

Procurement Implications:

There are no direct procurement implications arising from this report

Legal/ Regulatory Implications:

The report supports compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards and Bury Council's obligations under the Management Agreement with Springs Tenant Management Co-operative.

Financial Implications:

There are no direct financial implications arising from acceptance of this report. Performance and financial risks identified through the assurance process will continue to be monitored through existing governance arrangements.

Appendices:

Please list any appended documents (please save these as clearly labelled separate documents in the Teams folder).

- Springs Annual Financial Audit Spring Audited Accounts 2025.pdf
- Year End Performance Dashboard and Tenant Satisfaction Measures. Springs scorecard Q4'26 V1.1.doc

Background papers:

Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.

- None

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning
TMC	Tenant Management Co-operative
TSM	Tenant Satisfaction Measures
HAB	Housing Advisory Board

Registration number: IP28216R

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE
ANNUAL REPORT AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
31 MARCH 2025

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

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SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

COMPANY INFORMATION

Committee	R Frost - Chair J Smith - Vice-chair C Unsworth Cllr T Tariq Cllr S Haroon L A Brooks J Frost M Soria H Thompson C Poole J Browne J McKenniffe L Smethurst
Company secretary	C Unsworth
Registered office	C/o Springs TMC 55 Dorset Drive Bury Lancashire BL9 9DN
Auditors	Horsfield & Smith Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor Tower House 269 Walmersley Road Bury Lancashire BL9 6NX

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

THE COMMITTEES' REPORT
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The committee members present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Committee

The committee members who held office during the year were as follows:

R Frost - Chair

J Smith - Vice-chair

C Unsworth - Company secretary

Cllr T Tariq

Cllr S Haroon

L A Brooks

J Frost

M Soria

H Thompson

C Poole

J Browne

J McKenniffe

L Smethurst

Business Review

Springs TMC continues to successfully manage a portfolio of just under 300 properties on behalf of Bury Council. We have been carrying out this function since 1996 and have recently become only the second Self-Financing Tenant Management Organisation in the country and the first outside of London. The TMC's accounts continue to look healthy and our performance is excellent on all key aspects of service.

We operate from an estate-based office which is open 5 days a week (Monday-Friday). Our customers also have access to the individual work phone numbers of all our staff (Estate Director, Housing Officer, Community Housing Officer, Finance Officer and Handy Person) so they can still contact us even when the office is closed.

Principle Activities

The company currently manages 284 properties on behalf of Bury Council. This includes rent management, property allocation/letting, anti-social behaviour management, fire risk assessments, electric checks, Energy Performance Certificates. Bury Council looks after certain services including gas, legionella, asbestos and grounds maintenance. The New Springs Community Project Group deliver activities in the community which help tackle food poverty, social isolation, child poverty, loneliness amongst people of all ages. These groups include Kids Club, Monday Drop-In Café, Luncheon Club and Craft Group.

THE COMMITTEES' REPORT
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Financial Risk Management

Our accounts are reviewed on an annual basis by a long established firm of chartered accountants. The TMC's Management Committee recently agreed that we would have a full, in-depth audit every 3 years and a lighter one on the other years to help minimise any financial risk to both the TMC and the Council.

Future Development

The TMC's aim is to continue to deliver a first-class service to our customers. This includes all current and future tenants along with other residents of the Springs area who may benefit from some of our clubs and activities. We always look for new ways to engage people and make a positive change to homes and lives of our residents.

Disclosure of information to the auditors

Each committee member has taken steps that they ought to have taken as a committee member in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Company's auditors are aware of that information. The committee members confirm that there is no relevant information that they know of and of which they know the auditors are unaware.

Approved by the Board on .... and signed on its behalf by:

....
C Unsworth
Company secretary

STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Company law requires the committee members to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the committee members have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the committee members must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the surplus or deficit of the Company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the committee members are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The committee members are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and in accordance with FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Springs Tenant Management Co-Operative (the 'Company') for the year ended 31 March 2025, which comprise the Revenue Account, Statement of Comprehensive Income, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 Section 1A 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its profit for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the committee member's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the original financial statements were authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the committee members with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The committee members are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the The Committees' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the The Committees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the Company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the The Committees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of committee members' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the committee members were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities [set out on page 4], the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor Responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:
• the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
• we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company; and
• we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations through making enquiries of management.

We assessed the susceptibility of the company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud may occur, by:
• making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
• considered the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:
• performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships; and
• tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions.

In response to risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:
• agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation; and
• enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the FRC's website at:
https://www.frc.org.uk/library/standards-codes-policy/audit-assurance-and-ethics/auditors-responsibilities-for-the-audit/
This description forms part of our auditor's report.

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

This report is made solely to the Company's members, as a body, in accordance with section 87 of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Company and the Company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

....
Peter Nicol BSc FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Horsfield & Smith, Statutory Auditor

Tower House
269 Walmersley Road
Bury
Lancashire
BL9 6NX

Date:............................

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

REVENUE ACCOUNT
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Rents		1,342,770	1,173,352
Gross surplus		1,342,770	1,173,352
Administrative expenses		(503,732)	(524,917)
Operating surplus		839,038	648,435
Other interest receivable and similar income		18,065	13,682
Interest payable and similar expenses		(2,291)	(2,280)
		15,774	11,402
Surplus before tax	4	854,812	659,837
Tax on profit		(57,311)	(2,533)
Surplus for the financial year		797,501	657,304

The above results were derived from continuing operations.

The company has no recognised gains or losses for the year other than the results above.

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
Surplus for the year	797,501	657,304
Total comprehensive income for the year	797,501	657,304

The notes on pages 14 to 19 form an integral part of these financial statements.

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

BALANCE SHEET
31 MARCH 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	5	49,414	50,173
Current assets			
Debtors	6	194,215	131,354
Cash at bank and in hand		4,591,088	3,865,004
		4,785,303	3,996,358
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	7	(243,408)	(236,723)
Net current assets		4,541,895	3,759,635
Total assets less current liabilities		4,591,309	3,809,808
Provisions for liabilities		(70,000)	(86,000)
Net assets		4,521,309	3,723,808
Reserves			
Called up share capital	8	644	644
Retained earnings		4,520,665	3,723,164
Surplus		4,521,309	3,723,808

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved and authorised by the Board on .... and signed on its behalf by:

....
R Frost - Chair

....
J McKenniffe
Company Registration Number: IP28216R

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Share capital	Retained earnings	Total
	£	£	£
At 1 April 2024	644	3,723,164	3,723,808
Surplus for the year	-	797,501	797,501
At 31 March 2025	644	4,520,665	4,521,309

	Share capital	Retained earnings	Total
	£	£	£
At 1 April 2023	644	3,065,860	3,066,504
Surplus for the year	-	657,304	657,304
At 31 March 2024	644	3,723,164	3,723,808

The notes on pages 14 to 19 form an integral part of these financial statements.

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 General information

The company is a registered society incorporated in England and Wales.

The address of its registered office is:
C/o Springs TMC
55 Dorset Drive
Bury
Lancashire
BL9 9DN

These financial statements were authorised for issue by the Board on ....

2 Accounting policies

Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates
The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Statement of compliance
These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102 Section 1A - 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' .

Basis of preparation
These financial statements have been prepared using the historical cost convention except that as disclosed in the accounting policies certain items are shown at fair value.

Going concern
The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

Judgements
There are no judgements that would cause a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Key sources of estimation uncertainty
The committee members make estimates concerning the future. At the reporting date there are no estimates that would have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

Revenue recognition
Revenue comprises the fair value of the consideration received or receivable in the ordinary course of the company's activities. Rents are shown net of value added tax, returns, rebates and discounts.

The company recognises revenue when the amount of revenue can be reliably measured; it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to the entity; and specific criteria have been met for each of the company's activities.

Government grants

Government grants in respect of capital expenditure are credited to a deferred income account and are released to profit over the expected useful lives of the relevant assets by equal annual instalments. Grants of a revenue nature are credited to income so as to match them with the expenditure to which they relate.

Tax

The tax expense for the period comprises current tax. Tax is recognised in profit or loss, except that a change attributable to an item of income or expense recognised as other comprehensive income is also recognised directly in other comprehensive income.

The current income tax charge is calculated on the basis of tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the reporting date in the countries where the Company operates and generates taxable income.

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are stated in the balance sheet at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

The cost of tangible assets includes directly attributable incremental costs incurred in their acquisition and installation.

Depreciation

Depreciation is charged so as to write off the cost of assets, other than land and properties under construction over their estimated useful lives, as follows:

Asset class	Depreciation method and rate
Leasehold Property	2% straight line
Fixtures and Fittings	25% reducing balance
Office Equipment	33% straight line

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Debtors

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment. Loans receivable are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment.

Creditors

Short term creditors are measured at the transaction price. Other financial liabilities, including bank loans, are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Company has an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event, it is probable that the Company will be required to settle that obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

Leases

Leases in which substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership are retained by the lessor are classified as operating leases. Payments made under operating leases are charged to profit or loss on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

Share capital

Ordinary shares are classified as equity. Equity instruments are measured at the fair value of the cash or other resources received or receivable, net of the direct costs of issuing the equity instruments. If payment is deferred and the time value of money is material, the initial measurement is on a present value basis.

Multi employer plans

The company participates in a multi-employer scheme which provides benefits to some 500 non-associated employers. The scheme is a defined benefit scheme in the UK. It is not possible for the company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. Therefore it accounts for the scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

The scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore the company is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the scheme.

Where the company has agreed to a deficit funding arrangement, the company recognises a liability for this obligation. The amount recognised is the net present value of the deficit reduction contributions payable under the agreement that relates to the deficit. The present value is calculated using the discount rate. The unwinding of the discount rate is recognised as a finance cost in the profit and loss in the period in which it arises.

3 Staff numbers

The average number of persons employed by the Company (including committee members) during the year, was 5 (2024 - 5).

4 Profit before tax

Arrived at after charging/(crediting)

	2025	2024
	£	£
Depreciation expense	1,651	1,356

5 Tangible assets

	Long leasehold land and buildings £	Fixtures and fittings £	Total £
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2024	67,802	25,815	93,617
Additions	-	890	890
At 31 March 2025	67,802	26,705	94,507
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2024	17,629	25,815	43,444
Charge for the year	1,356	293	1,649
At 31 March 2025	18,985	26,108	45,093
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2025	48,817	597	49,414
At 31 March 2024	50,173	-	50,173

Included within the net book value of land and buildings above is £48,817 (2024 - £50,173) in respect of long leasehold land and buildings.

6 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Current		
Debtors	20,783	23,102
Prepayments	691	674
Other debtors	172,741	107,578
	194,215	131,354

7 Creditors

Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Due within one year		
Creditors	992	31,440
Taxation and social security	103,420	60,246
Accruals and deferred income	111,193	61,587
Other creditors	27,803	83,450
	243,408	236,723

8 Share capital

Allotted, called up and fully paid shares

	2025 No.	2025 £	2024 No.	2024 £
Ordinary of £1 each	644	644	644	644

9 Financial commitments, guarantees and contingencies

Amounts not provided for in the balance sheet

The company participates in a multi-employer defined benefit pension scheme. Should the company choose to withdraw from the scheme the total amount of financial commitments not included in the balance sheet concerning pensions is £160,603 (2024 - £172,336).

Further details of the scheme are to be found in note 10.

10 Pension scheme

The company participates in the TPT Retirement Solutions - Social Housing Pension Scheme (the scheme). The scheme is a multi-employer defined benefit pension scheme.

It is not possible for the company to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for the defined benefit element of the scheme as a defined benefit scheme. Therefore it accounts for the scheme as a defined contribution scheme.

The scheme is subject to the funding legislation outlined in the Pensions Act 2004 which came into force on 30 December 2005. This, together with documents issued by the Pensions Regulator and Technical Actuarial Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, set out the framework for funding defined benefit occupational pension schemes in the UK.

The scheme is classified as a 'last-man standing arrangement'. Therefore the company is potentially liable for other participating employers' obligations if those employers are unable to meet their share of the scheme deficit following withdrawal from the scheme. Participating employers are legally required to meet their share of the Scheme deficit on an annuity purchase basis on withdrawal from the scheme.

A full actuarial valuation for the scheme was carried out with an effective date of 30 September 2017. This actuarial valuation was certified on 28 November 2018 and showed assets of £4,553m, liabilities of £6,075m and a deficit of £1,522m. To eliminate this funding shortfall, the Trustees and the participating employers have agreed a new recovery plan which replaces the tiered approach.

Under the terms of the recovery plan, the deficit contributions payable are £12,602 per annum from 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2026 (payable monthly and increasing by 5% in the first year, then 2% each year on 1st April thereafter).

Where the company has agreed to a deficit funding arrangement the company recognise a liability for this obligation. The amount recognised is the net present value of the deficit attributable to the company. The present value is calculated using key assumptions (below). Any remeasurement of the pension provision is recognised as a finance cost.

	2025	2024
	£	£
The present value of provision at 31st March was:	70,000	86,000

	2025	2024
	% p.a.	% p.a.
Key assumptions		
Discount rate	5.77	4.87
Inflation (RPI)	3.11	3.19
Inflation (CPI)	2.78	2.76
Salary growth	3.78	3.76

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

DETAILED REVENUE ACCOUNT
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
Rents (analysed below)	1,342,770	1,173,352
Gross surplus (%)	100%	100%
Administrative expenses		
Employment costs (analysed below)	(240,259)	(213,419)
Establishment costs (analysed below)	(237,923)	(260,970)
General administrative expenses (analysed below)	(34,003)	(20,940)
Finance charges (analysed below)	(6,092)	(5,612)
Depreciation costs (analysed below)	(1,651)	(1,356)
Other expenses (analysed below)	16,196	(22,620)
	(503,732)	(524,917)
Operating surplus	839,038	648,435
Other interest receivable and similar income (analysed below)	18,065	13,682
Interest payable and similar expenses (analysed below)	(2,291)	(2,280)
	15,774	11,402
Surplus before tax	854,812	659,837

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

DETAILED REVENUE ACCOUNT
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
Rents		
Sales, UK	1,342,770	1,173,352
Employment costs		
Wages and salaries	163,468	151,383
Staff NIC (Employers)	16,531	15,256
Staff pensions (Defined contribution)	60,260	46,780
	240,259	213,419
Establishment costs		
Rent and rates	3,474	3,475
Water rates	368	157
Light, heat and power	5,119	2,433
Insurance	3,293	2,842
Repairs and maintenance	225,669	252,063
	237,923	260,970
General administrative expenses		
Telephone and fax	2,080	2,226
Computer software and maintenance costs	3,210	440
Printing, postage and stationery	6,342	7,603
Trade subscriptions	2,098	310
Charitable donations	-	50
Hire of plant and machinery (Operating leases)	4,445	-
Sundry expenses	2,868	1,351
Cleaning	151	-
Advertising	755	115
Accountancy fees	8,080	2,350
Legal and professional fees	3,974	5,694
Bad debts written off	-	801
	34,003	20,940
Finance charges		
Bank charges	6,092	5,612
Depreciation costs		
Depreciation of long leasehold property	1,651	1,356

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements.

SPRINGS TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

DETAILED REVENUE ACCOUNT
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
Other expenses		
Remeasurement of pension provision	(16,196)	22,620
Other interest receivable and similar income		
Bank interest receivable	18,065	13,682
Interest payable and similar expenses		
Pension scheme finance income/costs	(2,291)	(2,280)

Springs Tenant Management Co-operative Performance Scorecard

Springs Tenant Management Co-operative continue to manage 284 properties on behalf of Bury Council in the Redvales area of Bury. This scorecard outlines the performance of the co-operative on a quarterly basis

Arrows are based on last quarter's out turn:

- Performance trend improving
- Performance trend static
- Performance trend deteriorating

Current performance colour based on current annual target:

- Excellence (Target achieved or exceeded)
- Performance not on track but within 10% of green
- Performance not on track by more than 10%

Tenant Satisfaction Measures	2024/25 Value	Q1 2025/26 Value	Q2 2025/26 Value	Q3 2025/26 Value	Q4 2025/26 Value	Quarterly trend	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	BM Owner
Springs_TP01 - Percentage of tenants who report that they are satisfied with the overall service from their landlord	100%	95%	90.48%	87.5%	94.12%	⇧	91.46%	74%	RW
Springs_TP02 - Percentage of tenants who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the overall repair service	97.06%	75%	80.95%	62.5%	94.12%	⇧	76.83%	80%	RW
Springs_TP03 - Percentage of tenants who have received repair in the last 12 months who reported that they are satisfied with the time taken to complete the most recent repair	93.75%	75%	80.95%	70.83%	88.24%	⇧	78.05%	75.5%	RW
Springs_TP04 - Percentage of tenants who report that they are satisfied that the home is well maintained	100%	85%	80.95%	83.33%	91.67%	⇧	84.42%	69.4%	RW
Springs_TP05 - Percentage of tenants who report they are satisfied that their home is safe	97.14%	85%	85.71%	83.33%	100%	⇧	87.8%	76%	RW
Springs_TP06 - Percentage of tenants who report that they are satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	97.14%	90%	80.95%	79.17%	93.75%	⇧	85.19%	58.9%	RW
Springs_TP07 - Percentage of tenants who are satisfied that the landlord keeps them informed about things that matter to them	97.22%	90%	90.48%	83.33%	100%	⇧	90.24%	76%	RW
Springs_TP08 - Percentage of tenants who report that they agree their landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	100%	90%	90.48%	83.33%	100%	⇧	90.24%	76.3%	RW
Springs_TP09 - Percentage of tenants who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are are satisfied with their landlord's approach to complaints handling	93.75%	70%	57.14%	62.5%	92.86%	⇧	68.35%	50%	RW
Springs_TP10 - Percentage of tenants with communal areas who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	96.67%	80%	81.82%	45.83%	76.92%	⇧	65.52%	65.5%	RW
Springs_TP11 - Percentage of tenants who report that they are satisfied that their landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods	94.12%	85%	76.19%	75%	100%	⇧	82.5%	62.5%	RW
Springs_TP12 - Percentage of tenants who report they are satisfied with their landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour	96.88%	75%	75%	66.67%	81.82%	⇧	73.24%	60.4%	RW

Asset Management	2024/25 Value	Q1 2025/26 Value	Q2 2025/26 Value	Q3 2025/26 Value	Q4 2025/26 Value	Quarterly trend	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	BM Owner
Springs_AM01 - Percentage of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		0%	0%	RW
Springs_AM08 - % of homes with an EPC rating of C or above.	96.05%	68.55%	68.55%	68.55%	68.79%		68.61%	60%	RW
Springs_AM09 - Delivery of capital programme (percentage measure)	No Data	No planned works	No planned works	No planned works	No planned works		No Data	0%	RW

Compliance	2024/25 Value	Q1 2025/26 Value	Q2 2025/26 Value	Q3 2025/26 Value	Q4 2025/26 Value	Quarterly trend	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	BM Owner
Springs_BS01 - Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	100%	CS
Springs_BS02 - Percentage of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out (communal)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	100%	RW
Springs_BS03 - Percentage of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out (communal)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	100%	RW
Springs_BS04 - Percentage of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out	No Data	No shared water tanks	No shared water tanks	No shared water tanks	No shared water tanks		No Data		RW
Springs_CM06 - Periodic electrical testing (domestic properties) compliance		97.88%	100%	100%	100%		99.47%	100%	CS
Springs_CM07 - Fire Safety -percentage of Schemes fully compliant		100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	100%	RW
Springs_CM08 - Percentage of fire-safety follow-up actions completed within timescale per Fire Risk Assessment	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data		No Data	100%	RW

Compliance	2024/25 Value	Q1 2025/26 Value	Q2 2025/26 Value	Q3 2025/26 Value	Q4 2025/26 Value	Quarterly trend	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	BM Owner
Springs_CM09 - Number of Active Disrepair Claims Received Relating to Damp		2	0	0	3	↓	5		RW
Springs_CM09a - Total Cost of Disrepair Claims Received Relating to Damp and Mould		£9,725	£0	£0	£0	–	£9,725		RW
Springs_CM10 - Number of properties where damp identified	3	2	0	0	0	↓	2		RW
Springs_CM11 - Number of properties that STH have been notified as capped and due for intervention with tenant to verify they have the means to heat and eat.	0	0	1	1	3	↓	3		RW

Finance (Rents)	2024/25 Value	Q1 2025/26 Value	Q2 2025/26 Value	Q3 2025/26 Value	Q4 2025/26 Value	Quarterly trend	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	BM Owner
Springs_FM1 - Total rent arrears (Springs Stock) Current and former tenants	£50,822	£42,920	£47,055	£59,146	£54,741	↑	£50,966		RW
Springs_FM2 - Total rent arrears	£34,937.29	£34,360.8	£38,003.27	£50,094.47	£47,715.15	↑	£42,543.42		RW
Springs_FM3 - Cash Collected	106.41%	105.84%	100.04%	103.17%	104.29%	↑	103.22%	100%	RW
Springs_FM4 - % of rent arrears of current tenants	2.65%	2.66%	3.17%	3.88%	2.91%	↓	3.7%	3.38%	RW
Springs_FM5 - Proportion of rent collected	105.46%	104.62%	105.17%	103%	104.09%	↑	104.04%	99.5%	RW
Springs_FM6 - True rent arrears.	107.06%	109.76%	107.52%	106.57%	105.69%	↓	106.74%	98.15%	RW
Springs_FM7 - Cumulative rent loss from vacant LA homes	0.17%	0.13%	0.12%	0.12%	0.11%	↑	0.11%	1.07%	RW
Springs_FM7a - Quarterly rent loss from vacant LA dwellings	£2,278.82	£436.77	£74.75	£352.16	£258.23	↑	£1,121.91		RW

Repairs & Maintenance	2023/24 Value	Q1 2025/26 Value	Q2 2025/26 Value	Q3 2025/26 Value	Q4 2025/26 Value	Quarterly trend	2024/25 Value	2025/26 target	BM Owner
Springs_RM02a - Percentage of non emergency repairs completed within landlord's target timescale	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	–	100%	100%	RW
Springs_RM02b - Percentage of emergency repairs completed within landlord's target timescale	100%	100%	100%	100%	No emergency repairs	?	100%	100%	RW
Springs_RM03 - Repairs completed right first time	99.6%	100%	100%	100%	100%	–	100%	95%	RW
Springs_RM04 - Average time taken to complete non-urgent responsive repairs	9	9	11	10	11	↓	10	17	RW
Springs_RM05 - Repairs - proportion of planned to responsive	11%	3%	4%	97%	99%	↑	2%	20%	RW
Springs_RM06 - Number of emergency repairs completed in the quarter	6.25	2	4	3	0	↓	1.5		RW
Springs_RM07 - Number of non-emergency repairs completed in the quarter	55.75	63	97	87	68	↓	271		RW

Tenancy Management	2024/25 Value	Q1 2025/26 Value	Q2 2025/26 Value	Q3 2025/26 Value	Q4 2025/26 Value	Quarterly trend	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	BM Owner
Springs_TM1 - Number of Tenancies Failing within the first 6 months	0	0	0	0	0	–	0		RW
Springs_TM2 - Number of tenancies failing in first 12mths	0	0	0	0	0	–	0		RW
Springs_TM3 - Average Re-let Times	11	19	19	12	5	↑	14	39	RW
Springs_TM4 - Average Re-let Times (General Needs only)	11	19	19	12	5	↑	14	24	RW
Springs_TM7 - Number of evictions any reason	0	0	0	0	0	–	0		RW

Complaint Handling	2024/25 Value	Q1 2025/26 Value	Q2 2025/26 Value	Q3 2025/26 Value	Q4 2025/26 Value	Quarterly trend	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	BM Owner
Springs_CH01a - Complaints relative to the size of the landlord - formal Stage 1	0.04	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07		0.07	3.6	RW
Springs_CH01b - Complaints relative to the size of the landlord - formal Stage 2	0	0	0.07	0	0		0.02		RW
Springs_CH02a - Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales - Stage 1	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	100%	RW
Springs_CH02b - Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales - Stage 2	100%	No Data	100%	No complaints logged	No complaints logged		100%	100%	RW
Springs_CH05 - Number of Housing Ombudsman determinations received, regardless of outcome				1	0		1		CR

Neighbourhood Management	2024/25 Value	Q1 2025/26 Value	Q2 2025/26 Value	Q3 2025/26 Value	Q4 2025/26 Value	Quarterly trend	2025/26 Value	2024/25 target	BM Owner
Springs_NM01a - Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord	0.45	0	0.14	0.07	0		0.05	2.58	RW
Springs_NM01b - Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord that involve hate incidents	0	0	0	0	0		0		RW

Bury Council

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Assurance

Report to:	Housing Advisory Board	**Date:** 10 September 2026
Subject:	Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Tenancy Management Report	
Report of	Kimberley Partridge, Head of Housing and Neighbourhood Services	

Summary

1. This report provides a overview of ASB demand, performance, and case management activity. It highlights the main drivers of the current caseload, identifies areas with the highest levels of ASB, reviews enforcement and intervention activity undertaken during the quarter, and outlines the actions being taken to improve service performance and outcomes for residents.

2. The report also includes tenancy management performance, highlighting service improvements achieved during the period, as well as areas of concern that require ongoing attention and action.

Recommendation(s)

3. To note the contents of Performance Report.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

4. The report provides an update on Anti-Social Behaviour and tenancy management performance, progress against the Housemark Improvement Action Plan, key areas of demand and the actions being taken to improve services and support tenants.

Alternative options considered and rejected

5. None. This report is provided for information, assurance and scrutiny purposes only. No decision is required.

Report Author and Contact Details:

Name: Kimberley Partridge
Position: Head of Housing and Neighbourhood Services
Department: Corporate Core, Housing Services
E-mail: k.partridge@bury.gov.uk

Background

6. Following the Housemark review of Housing Services Anti-Social Behaviour service, an improvement action plan was developed to strengthen governance, case management, performance monitoring and customer experience. This report provides an overview of both ASB and tenancy management performance, progress against the improvement plan, current demand, enforcement activity and planned actions to support continuous service improvement.

Performance Highlights

7. We have continued to increase our visibility on estates through action days, targeted events and regular walkabouts. We engaged tenants through our ASB Forum and developed an action plan to improve our cleaning and grounds maintenance service following feedback from the recent tenant survey.

8. We also began engaging with tenants in our sheltered schemes to identify service improvements, including the installation of passive infrared (PIR) sensors to help support tenant wellbeing and safety.

9. We achieved positive outcomes in several complex cases, including securing the eviction of a tenant following years of ongoing issues and rehousing a tenant with significant hoarding needs into supported accommodation, enabling us to regain possession of the property.

10. In Radcliffe, we introduced weekly walkabouts and worked with partner agencies to address high levels of ASB and criminal activity through targeted interventions and enforcement action.

Housemark Action Plan

11. We made strong progress during Quarter 1 (April to June 2026) in delivering the ASB Improvement Action Plan following the Housemark review. We completed all 56 Quarter 1 actions, together with five Quarter 2 actions and one Quarter 4 action.

12. Our work has focused on strengthening governance, improving case management, enhancing performance monitoring and improving communication with tenants.

13. During the quarter we introduced end-of-case satisfaction surveys, strengthened management oversight through regular audits and case reviews, and improved performance reporting. We also launched a new "You Said, We Did" approach to demonstrate how tenant feedback and complaint learning are shaping service improvements.

14. To improve consistency and accountability, we introduced new Housing Officer checklists, management audits and revised case management processes. These changes are helping officers follow procedures consistently and maintain compliance throughout the life of a case.

ASB Performance

15. We continue to monitor all ASB cases closely. Managers review new cases each week to ensure officers complete the required actions when opening a case. Monthly review meetings also take place between managers, the Enforcement Team and Housing Officers to review case progress and address any issues. This approach has led to a clear improvement in compliance and case management standards.

16. In Quarter 4 2025/26, only 32% of cases had a completed risk assessment. During Quarter 1 2026/27, completion rates improved significantly to 83%. Action plan compliance remained strong at 85%.

17. Contact arrangements were not previously monitored. During Quarter 1 there were 89 live ASB cases. Officers agreed contact arrangements in 50% of cases. While this represents progress, further work is required to ensure a contact arrangement is agreed with every tenant when a case is opened.

ASB Transactional Surveys

18. Between April and June 2026, we closed 65 ASB cases. We attempted to contact 38 tenants, representing 58% of closed cases, and completed surveys with 11 tenants.

19. Customer satisfaction was 73% across all three measures: handling of the case, communication throughout the case and the final outcome.

20. Although satisfaction has fallen slightly from Quarter 4 2025/26, the number of completed surveys remains too low to draw firm conclusions. To improve response rates, we introduced telephone surveys in March 2026. We will continue to review our approach to ensure we receive enough feedback to provide a representative picture of customer experience.

21. The most common criticism related to communication. Two complainants felt they had not received sufficient updates during their case. One stated they was dissatisfied with the outcome after enforcement action was taken against them.

Enforcement Activity

22. We have continued to take firm action where serious or persistent anti-social behaviour affects residents and cannot be resolved through informal interventions.

23. Over the last 12 months we have secured:

- One Possession Order for persistent anti-social behaviour involving loud music and threats towards neighbours.
- Two active injunctions relating to assaults and serious threats of violence.
- Two further injunction applications involving threats towards staff and incidents of physical violence.
- Five Community Protection Warnings covering harassment, dangerous parking and poor garden maintenance.
- Two Community Protection Notices following breaches of earlier warnings. One of these cases is now being supported by Greater Manchester Police through a Criminal Behaviour Order application.
- Three Absolute Ground Possession cases that resulted in tenants surrendering their tenancy before court proceedings. Two further cases are progressing.

24. We have also taken legal action to gain access for essential gas safety inspections. This included eight Letters Before Action, four injunction requests and one case progressing to a court hearing.

25. These results demonstrate our commitment to protecting residents and addressing serious breaches of tenancy conditions. During Quarter 2, we will increase communication about enforcement outcomes to reassure residents and encourage reporting where issues arise

Tenancy Support

26. During Quarter 1, we managed 103 tenancy support cases, with 12 cases successfully closed following positive outcomes for tenants. Support provided included helping tenants to sustain their tenancies, assisting with furnished tenancy arrangements, and delivering additional support to care leavers during the early stages of their tenancies. New tenancies involving care leavers are closely monitored to ensure appropriate support is in place, helping to promote tenancy stability and successful independent living.

Annual Tenancy Visits

27. Over the last 12 months, we have completed or attempted 2,609 tenancy visits**,** helping us maintain visibility within our neighbourhoods and build relationships with tenants.

28. In Quarter 1, we achieved 81% of our tenancy visit target**,** completing 789 visits against a target of 969. This is a reduction from the previous quarter, when we exceeded our target, achieving 975 visits**.**

29. This decline is largely due to ongoing sickness absence within the team. On average, we have around four full-time equivalent officers absent at any one time, which continues to impact our capacity and service delivery this is impacted further by the increase in leave over the school holidays. We are working closely with our HR colleagues to provide the right support to employees and take appropriate action to minimise the impact on performance.

Actions Moving Forward

30. We will continue to strengthen performance management, improve data quality, and target resources where they are most needed. Our key priorities are to:

    - Continue regular case audits and Head of Service reviews to improve compliance, case progression, and quality assurance.
    - Improve the quality of equality, diversity, vulnerability, and customer profile data.
    - Ensure risk assessments are completed and reviewed throughout the life of every case.
    - Continue to focus our resources and interventions in identified hotspot locations, including Ribble Drive and areas of Radcliffe.
    - Strengthen customer insight by improving survey response rates and reviewing feedback, complaints, and outcomes to identify service improvements.
    - Continue to communicate enforcement outcomes to residents, providing reassurance and encouraging reporting.
    - Deliver and monitor the Housemark Improvement Action Plan through regular performance reviews.
    - Further develop the ASB Tenant Forum and use resident feedback to shape service delivery and policy development.
    - Increase tenant engagement and visibility through additional housing drop-ins, action days, tenancy visits, and targeted door-knocking activities.

Links with the Housing and Corporate Priorities:

This report supports the Let's Do It! Strategy by helping to create safer communities and improve tenants' quality of life through effective management of anti-social behaviour.

It also supports Let's Do Housing by promoting safe and sustainable tenancies, protecting vulnerable residents, and improving the quality and responsiveness of housing services.

Tenant voice

Tenant feedback has helped shape improvements to the ASB service during Quarter 1. Feedback from satisfaction surveys, complaints and case reviews has highlighted the importance of timely communication and regular updates. In response, we have strengthened case management processes, introduced end-of-case satisfaction surveys, launched a "You Said, We Did" approach, and established an ASB Tenant Forum to help inform future service improvements and policy development.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is for information only and does not propose any change to policy or service delivery. No adverse equality impacts have been identified.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both ***Carbon emissions*** *(contact climate@bury.gov.uk for advice) and* ***Biodiversity*** *(contact S.Tinsley@bury.gov.uk and Dennis.whittle@bury.gov.uk for advice)*

This report is for information only and does not propose any changes to policy, services or assets. As such, there are no direct impacts on carbon emissions or biodiversity arising from the recommendations within this report.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Link to Housing Strategic risk register = make sure you use risks that are on the housing strategic risk register

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation

Failure to effectively manage Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) cases in a timely manner. Poor case management could increase risk to tenants and staff, reduce customer satisfaction and result in complaints, Housing Ombudsman findings and reputational damage.	Regular case audits, monthly performance reviews and management oversight are in place to ensure compliance with policy and procedures. The Housemark Improvement Action Plan has strengthened governance, case management and performance monitoring. Risk assessments, action plans and customer contact arrangements are routinely reviewed, and the forthcoming QL system upgrade will further improve performance reporting and case oversight.
Failure to support vulnerable tenants at risk of, or experiencing, ASB. Failure to identify and support vulnerable residents could lead to increased harm, tenancy failure, reduced trust in the service and poorer outcomes for affected tenants.	Officers complete risk assessments and work closely with safeguarding services, Adult Social Care, Greater Manchester Police and other partner agencies to identify and support vulnerable tenants. Regular case reviews and management oversight help ensure appropriate support and interventions are put in place at the earliest opportunity.
Email and call retention and reliance on manual recording of customer interactions. Failure to record contacts and evidence on QL could result in information being unavailable after retention periods expire, affecting legal cases, complaints investigations and regulatory compliance.	Housing Services continues to reinforce the requirement for officers to record all customer contacts and case activity on QL. Retention arrangements and staff awareness help mitigate the risk, while system improvements will strengthen record keeping and case management.

Procurement Implications:

None

Legal/ Regulatory Implications:

The report provides assurance to the HAB on the progress we are making towards meeting the regulatory outcomes under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard. The required outcomes for ASB are;

‘Registered providers must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.’

Financial Implications:

None

Appendices:

Please list any appended documents (please save these as clearly labelled separate documents in the Teams folder).

None

Background papers:

Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.

None

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

None identified

Term	Meaning

Agenda Item 10

	Classification: Open	Decision Type: Approval and recommendation to Cabinet

Report to:	Housing Advisory Board	**Date:** 10 September 2026
Subject:	Review and amendments to Bury Council's Housing Allocations Policy	
Report of	Director of Housing	

Summary

1. The council is required under Section 167 of the Housing Act 1996 to have an allocations policy for determining the priorities and procedures to be followed in allocating housing accommodation.

2. The council last reviewed its in September 2025 and following consultation published the Allocations Policy in May 2025. The policy states it will be reviewed every year or earlier if new legislation requires major amendments to be made.

3. We have reviewed the Allocations Policy and propose two minor changes;

   a. The policy makes no provision for retiring service tenants whose accommodation is a condition of their employment and who will lose their service accommodation on retirement to be rehoused by the council through a direct let. The paper proposes amending the Allocations Policy to take account of such circumstances.
   b. The policy does not currently allow for direct lets at the discretion of the Director of Housing. It is proposed that the policy is amended to enable this is expectation circumstances.

4. No further changes are proposed as part of the review.

Recommendation(s)

5. **It is recommended that Housing Advisory Board review the proposed changes and recommend their approval to Cabinet.**

Reasons for recommendation(s)

6. The council has properties it lets to employees such as caretakers or park wardens as part of their employment contract. When these employees retire they lose their service tenancy and as at risk of becoming homeless. In order to prevent them becoming homeless and to ensure a planned moved it is

recommended that the Allocations Policy is amended to allow for a direct let to a council tenancy at the point of retirement.

Alternative options considered and rejected

7. Do nothing and not amend the Allocations Policy. This option has been rejected as it would leave long standing employees at risk of homelessness.

Report Author and Contact Details:

Name: Sian Grant
Position: Director of Housing
Department: Corporate Core
E-mail: sian.grant@bury.gov.uk

Background

8. The Council is required under Section 167 of the Housing Act 1996 to have an allocation policy for determining the priorities and procedure to be followed in allocating housing accommodation. It is also good practice to publish details of the process, eligibility criteria and the key factors that will be considered when determining applications.

9. The Allocations Policy aims to provide a consistent approach to dealing with the housing needs and aspirations of the local population. The council also understands that a small number of people have complex needs and so the policy allows for some management discretion to achieve positive outcomes for those individuals who do not easily fit the mainstream.

10. The council carried out a full review of its Allocations Policy in 2024 and the draft for consultation was signed off by Cabinet at its meeting on 4th September 2024. Cabinet also delegated any post consultation amendments to the Cabinet member for Housing in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance. Following consultation the Allocations Policy was published in May 2025.

Allocations policy aims and objectives

11. The general aim of the policy is to assist as many people as possible into settled accommodation by offering applicants a choice of quality housing, whilst continuing to give reasonable preference of those in the most urgent housing need.

12. The objectives of the policy are;

- Meet housing need and support the most vulnerable
- Create sustainable tenancies

- Balance housing needs as far as possible with customer aspirations
- Make best use of the Councill's housing stock
- Make best use of the Council's nominations rights to housing associations/ private registered provider properties
- Ensure a quality lettings service that embraces equality and diversity

13. Demand for social housing continues to outstrip the number of properties available and it is up the council to ensure that there remains fair and equitable access to what has become a scarce resource. The law requires the council to give 'reasonable preference' to certain groups of people and this is reflected in the policy.

14. At the end of March 2026 we had 2052 applicants on the housing register. The breakdown of their housing need by bedroom is shown in the table below. The table also shows the average waiting time in days for each property size.

Bedroom requirement	**Number of applicants as at 31st March 2026**	**Average waiting time in days as at 31st March 2026**
One bed	1040	449
Two bed	517	624
Three bed	415	754
Four bed	72	693
More than four beds	14	1199
Total	2052	

15. The table below shows the number of people on the housing register in each band;

Band	**Number of applicants at 31st March 2026**
Band 1	344
Band 2	489
Band 3	669
Band 4	436
Band 5	192
Total	2130

16. In 2025/26 we allocated 567 properties. The table below shows the number properties advertised on choice based lettings.

Bedroom size	Advertised
One bed	223
Two bed	171
Three bed	35
Four bed	0
More than four beds	0
	429

17. We also approved 138 direct lets, 95 of which were made to applicants in band 1. Direct lets made up 24% of all lets. A breakdown of the reasons for direct lets are shown below;

- 57 Homeless applicants
- 45 Managed moves
- 36 Care leavers

18. 36% of allocations were to applicants in band one in 2025/26 showing that a significant proportion of available homes need to be prioritised to meet statutory duties.

Allocating properties and direct let

19. The Allocations Policy applies to all available homes for let which are owned by the Council and housing associations that are subject to Council nomination rights. Most properties are allocated through the Councill's choice based lettings scheme. The policy also recognises that there may be some exceptional circumstances that are not suitable for Choice Based Lettings. In these instances the Director of Housing is authorised to let a property directly based on the merits of the case.

20. The circumstances where are direct let may be appropriate are set out in section 7 of the Allocations Policy. These are;

- The safeguarding and protection of applicants and existing tenants for reasons of domestic violence, harassment or hate crime or where Multi Agency Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) or National Witness Mobility Scheme has recommended that an applicant should not bid for fear of being identified.
- The accommodation of applicants who present with complex needs.
- Households recommended for, or subject to, A Family Intervention Tenancy (FIT).
- Applicants that have been under occupying and requiring rehousing to a smaller property due to hardship or affordability issues.
- Allocating homeless households to temporary accommodation through the Housing Options Service.
- Applicants requiring specially adapted properties.

- Rehousing tenants who are vacating a specially adapted property or large family homes in favour of an applicant on the Housing Register to whom the property is more suited.
- Retirement living accommodation, in extra care units or properties designated for elderly applicants.
- Civil contingency emergencies, meeting the Council's obligations (such as refugee crisis) and the allocation of properties that fail to attract bids.

21. In reviewing the Allocations Policy, it has been identified that the policy makes no provision to enable a direct let for retiring service tenants whose accommodation is a condition of their employment and who will lose their service accommodation on retirement.

22. It is proposed to add an additional provision to the list above that states;

    - Retiring service tenants whose current accommodation is a condition fo their contract of employment and who will lose their accommodation when they retire.

23. The review of the policy also highlighted that the current policy does not allow for direct lets at the discretion of the Director of Housing outside these list above. It is proposed to add the following amendment to the Section 7 of the policy. The proposed text is in bold italics;

    'The council reserves the power to make as many direct let offers as it thinks fit to meet the needs outlined above, ***and in other similar circumstances at the discretion of the Director of Housing*****.** The council will, however, ensure that the number of offers under direct lets remains a fraction of the total lettings. The majority of properties will continue to be let through Choice Based Lettings.'

24. The rest of the Allocations Policy remains unchanged.

Links with the Housing and Corporate Priorities:

Please summarise how this links to Let's Do It Strategy and Let's Do Housing.

Tenant voice

Please summarise how the tenants voice has influenced the recommendation or approach where applicable

Equality Impact and Considerations:

Please provide an explanation of the outcome(s) of an initial or full EIA. There must be a signed off EIA template appended with a full analysis or explanation as to why an analysis is not needed for the report to be put forward to HAB.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both ***Carbon emissions*** *(contact climate@bury.gov.uk for advice) and* ***Biodiversity*** *(contact S.Tinsley@bury.gov.uk and Dennis.whittle@bury.gov.uk for advice)*

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Link to Housing Strategic risk register

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation

Procurement Implications:

Legal/ Regulatory Implications:

Financial Implications:

Appendices:

Please list any appended documents (please save these as clearly labelled separate documents in the Teams folder).

Background papers:

Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning

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Bury Council

Housing Allocation Policy

May 2025

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Housing Allocation Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. The Council is required under Section 167 of the Housing Act 1996 to have an allocation policy for determining the priorities and procedure to be followed in allocating housing accommodation. It is also good practice to publish details of the process, eligibility criteria and the key factors that will be considered when determining applications. Transparency in the process is important, so that everybody is aware of what to expect. A simple flow chart to help explain the process is attached at Appendix 1.

1.2. An allocation is when a housing authority allocates accommodation by:

- selecting a person to be a secure or introductory tenant of accommodation held by that authority;
- nominating a person to be a secure or introductory tenant of accommodation held by another housing authority;
- nominating a person to be an assured tenant of accommodation held by a Private Registered Provider.

1.3. This document meets those requirements and sets out the Allocation Policy of Bury Council. It aims to provide a consistent approach to dealing with the housing needs and aspirations of the local population. However, the Council also understands that a small number of people have complex needs. Accordingly, the policy allows some management discretion to achieve positive outcomes for those individuals, who do not easily fit within the mainstream.

1.4. In preparing the Housing Allocation Policy the Council has had regard to its current Homelessness Strategy and Strategic Tenancy Policy in accordance with s 166A (12) of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by s 147 of the Localism Act 2011.

1.5. The general aim of this policy is to assist as many people as possible into settled accommodation, by offering applicants real choice of quality housing, whilst continuing to give reasonable preference to those in the most urgent housing need. In keeping with this aim, the policy's key objectives are to:

- Meet housing need and support the most vulnerable;
- Create sustainable communities;
- Balance housing needs as far as possible with customer aspirations;
- Make best use of the Council's social housing stock;
- Make best use of the Council's nominations rights to housing association/private registered provider properties;
- Ensure a quality lettings service that embraces equality and diversity.

1.6 All housing applications must be made in accordance with the procedural requirements of the Allocations Policy. In considering applications, the Council must establish:

- If the applicant is eligible for accommodation (see Section 3.3); and
- If the applicant qualifies for accommodation (see Section 3.4).

Eligibility and qualification will be assessed at the time of the initial application and rechecked as and when consideration is given to allocating a property to the applicant(s).

1.7. Demand for social housing continues to outstrip the number of properties available and it is up to the Council to ensure that there remains fair and equitable access to what has become a scarce resource. The law requires the Council to give 'reasonable preference' to certain groups of people and this is reflected in this policy. Unfortunately, because social rented housing is in limited supply, some individuals with limited or no housing need may face a long wait. In recognition of this, the Council actively encourages alternative housing options which are both affordable and offer local people the widest choice of quality housing.

1.11. The Council is committed to ensuring openness and fairness in its procedure for allocating housing accommodation. This policy contains a right for applicants who are dissatisfied to request an internal review of decisions that go against them. Such reviews give an opportunity for applicants to challenge the Council if they can show that the initial decision was wrong or that the policy was misapplied.

2. Application of the Allocation Policy

2.1. The Policy applies to all available homes for let which are owned by the Council and housing associations that are subject to Council nomination rights. The allocation of housing will be in accordance with the provisions of this Policy. These provisions apply to all applicants on the Housing Register at the time this Policy is approved, as well as to all new applicants.

2.2. Most properties will be allocated in accordance with the Choice Based Lettings Scheme (Section 6). However the Council recognises that there may be some exceptional situations not suitable for Choice Based Lettings. In such instances the Council's Director of Housing is authorised to let a property directly based on the merits of the case (see Section 7 - Direct Lettings).

2.3. The Allocation Policy will not apply to tenants covered by Section 160 of the Housing Act 1996. The most common circumstances are:

(a) Where a tenant succeeds a secure tenancy on the death of a tenant;

(b) Where a tenancy is assigned to a person who would qualify to succeed a secure tenant;

(c) Where a tenancy is assigned by mutual exchange to an existing secure tenant;

(d) Where an introductory tenant becomes a secure tenant.

3. Housing Register

3.1. Introduction

The Council is not legally required to maintain a Housing Register, but has chosen to do so to assist in assessing housing need in the Borough. This contains details of all applicants for social housing and is often known as the 'housing waiting list'. It is a single reference point for both new customers who need social housing and those who are existing tenants seeking to transfer.

Responsibility for maintaining and updating the Housing Register lies with the Housing Options Service.

The full Register is not open to the public due to data protection restrictions. Applicants can however check their own details, to ensure the accuracy of information held.

Entitlement to join the Housing Register will be assessed at the date of application and at any subsequent periodic review of an application, or at the time of any offer. An applicant may become “Ineligible” or cease to be a “qualifying person” if any of the criteria below applies to them while they are on the Register.

3.2. Who can register?

Anyone aged 16 or over except those described as 'Ineligible' in Section 3.3 below or who do not meet the qualifying criteria in Section 3.4.

The Law of Property Act, 1925 prevents people under 18 from being legal tenants in their own right. It will therefore be a requirement for a third party (which maybe the local authority, a voluntary organisation or an individual over 18) to be a trustee of the tenancy until the young person attains majority. As regards payment for the rent, unless the young person can satisfy the Council, for example by proof of earnings, that she or he can pay it, an adult guarantor will be required. The guarantee covers rent and any other expenses for which a tenant would be responsible. It must be in writing, and must be in place until the young person reaches the age of 18.

Where a young person is deemed to be vulnerable and is in need of support to sustain their tenancy, a written support agreement must be in place until the young person reaches the age of 18. This will include a commitment on the part of an identified supporting agency to make regular visits and also detail how they will provide support to the young person to sustain their tenancy and develop independent living skills.

The Council will accept joint applications - although tenancies will only be granted to persons who are eligible and qualify for social housing. Cohabiting couples will be treated in the same way as married applicants and civil partnerships; except that evidence of an abiding relationship will be required before a joint tenancy is awarded.

British Forces Posted Overseas (these will be treated as if resident in the UK).

3.3. Eligibility - Ineligible applicants

Under Housing Law, the Council **must not** allocate housing to anyone (or jointly with someone) that is not eligible to join the Housing Register. Those ineligible are outlined in Section 160ZA of the Housing Act 1996 as persons:

- who are subject to immigration control, or who do not satisfy resident requirements as detailed in the Code of Guidance on allocations
- prescribed by the Secretary of State as being ineligible.

Where two or more people apply and one of them is eligible, the Council may grant a tenancy to the person that is eligible providing the qualification criteria is met (paragraph 3.4). In addition, while ineligible family members cannot be granted a tenancy, they may be taken into account when determining the size of property, for which they can bid (see Section 5.5).

3.4. Qualification – “qualifying persons”.

The law allows that the Council may further restrict the allocation of accommodation to 'qualifying persons'.

The law requires that the Council must treat the following classes of applicants as “qualifying persons”:

I. Certain members of the Armed and Reserve Forces (as per relevant regulations), and
II. Certain social housing tenants who need to move into the district for work related reasons (as per relevant regulations).

Subject to the above and to the “exclusion from qualification” below this Allocation Policy, defines a 'qualifying person' as a person the Council must give “**reasonable preference**” to, because of their housing need, pursuant to s.166A(3) of the Housing Act 1996. These are people:

- who are homeless (within the meaning of Housing Act 1996 Part 7),
- who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under Section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) Housing Act 1996 (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3) Housing Act 1996.
- who are occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
- who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including any grounds relating to disability)

- who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or others)

3.5. Exclusion from Qualification

Individual applicants who satisfy the “reasonable preference” criteria may nevertheless be disqualified due to their previous behaviour. The Council will exclude from qualification individuals with a history of failing to meet reasonable standards expected of tenants.

The Council's policy objectives are:

- to ensure that bad behaviour is not rewarded, by the allocation of a valuable and scare resource
- to prevent those who have a prior history of not properly maintaining a tenancy from accessing social housing
- to ensure that no-one is set up to fail. Anyone who needs support to manage a tenancy must have that in place before they are granted a tenancy
- not to penalize those who have a good previous track record as a tenant.

With those principles in mind, the following persons will be deemed excluded from qualification (including registration on the housing waiting list):

- Those with a history of rent arrears (with the Council or any other landlord) of, or exceeding, two calendar months
- Those with a history of unacceptable behaviour, (by the applicant or a member of the household) which would, if the applicant were a secure tenant of the Council, entitle the Council to an order for possession.
- Those who have been evicted from previous accommodation because of their behaviour, or that of members of their household or who have had any form of injunction relating to anti-social behaviour imposed on them
- People who have previously failed to maintain accommodation offered to them, or who have caused deliberate damage to any such property
- Persons incapable of managing a tenancy. This may include:
    - Children aged below 16
    - Applicants aged between 16 and 18 who are considered vulnerable, unless they are engaging in a suitable care and support package
    - People who require extensive social or medical care/package in order to manage a tenancy, unless a suitable care and support package is in place
- House owners - unless they can demonstrate health or support needs that would be best met by social housing through, for example, retirement living or extra care.

In deciding whether an applicant with extensive social or medical/care needs can manage a tenancy, the Housing Options Service will be advised by medical professionals and other relevant agencies as appropriate. Where such applicants need support to sustain their tenancy and/or live independently, the Housing Options Service must be assured that a suitable care package is in place before the applicant can be considered for registration on the housing waiting list.

Where an older applicant applies for retirement living options, there will be a presumption against accepting applications from individuals already living in a sheltered housing scheme or property designated for older people unless it can be shown that the existing accommodation is no longer suitable for their needs.

It will be at the discretion of the Director of Housing as to whether to accept such applications.

During the period of exclusion from qualification, the applicant will be disqualified from joining the housing register (or disqualified from being able to bid or be allocated a home if they are already registered) until such time as any relevant debt is cleared and/or they can demonstrate that the behaviour that has rendered them excluded from qualification has improved sufficiently for the Council to be confident that they can now meet the reasonable standards expected of a tenant.

Note that being disqualified from being allocated a home under this Policy does not stop an applicant receiving housing advice or support to find alternative accommodation.

Where an applicant is, or becomes ineligible, or deemed not to be a qualifying person, they will be notified in writing of the decision, the grounds for it and their right to a review. All decisions will be subject to the provisions outlined in Appendix 4 - Appeals, Reviews and Complaints.

If a person is found to be ineligible to join the Register, they may make a new application if and when the grounds for ineligibility no longer apply.

Individuals who do not qualify for social housing can still be offered advice by the Housing Options service to access an alternative housing solution. This could include private rented accommodation, supported housing, low cost home ownership, or help to remain in their current home.

3.6. Exceptions from being excluded from qualifying

i. Care Leavers

The “Exclusion from Qualification” shall not apply to Care Leavers.[1] All Care Leavers shall qualify for entry onto the Housing Register and for an allocation under this Policy.

In the event a Care Leaver applicant has a history of behaviour that would have rendered a non-Care Leaver disqualified then any offer of accommodation and

[1] As referenced in the joint letter To Local Authority Chief Executives in England from Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities and the Department of Education in May 2024 this applies to Care Leavers under the age of 25
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/663389a34d8bb7378fb6c149/Letter_to_LAs_on_intentional_homelessness_for_care_leavers.pdf

tenancy agreement may be subject to special conditions aimed to address that behaviour and support the applicant to maintain and enjoy their tenancy.

Improving the lives of children in our care is one of the Council's top priorities. This means making available safe and suitable accommodation and reducing/ending homelessness of care experienced young people. To achieve this the Council has:

- bolstered its Joint Housing Protocol to strengthen ways of working between Housing and Children's Services

- recognised and acknowledges that a well-functioning Housing Service and Children's Service will ensure that the instances of Care Leavers being deemed "intentional homeless" should be very rare and exceptional. (The effect of this meaning that the need to invoke the "Exception from being excluded from qualifying" of this Policy should be equally rare and exceptional).

- strengthened its governance around housing support for Care Leavers through the Council's Corporate Parenting Board which is attended by the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Director of Housing.

ii. Exceptional circumstances

The "Exclusion from Qualification" may not apply if the Council's Director of Housing determines that:

- there is an urgent need to move because of a critical medical or welfare need, including emergencies and situations where there are serious safeguarding implications
- an emergency transfer has been approved because of harassment, domestic violence or hate crime. Under these circumstances any application will be dealt with under the Direct Let provision (see Section 7)
- the applicant needs to move out of their home (temporarily or permanently) in order to allow repairs, or redevelopment to take place
- an applicant affected by welfare reform is under-occupying a family home that has three or more bedrooms and they are willing to transfer to a home with fewer bedrooms
- the applicant is occupying an adapted home and is required to transfer to a home that is more appropriate to their needs.

Such "exceptional circumstances" cases will be assessed on their merits to avoid inconsistency with the wider aims of the Allocation Policy.

4. Applying to join the Housing Register

4.1. The Application process

All applications will be internet based using the online application form provided by the Council. The applicant will need to provide clear answers to questions raised by the Council, to enable a proper assessment of their circumstances.

It is recognised that certain applicants will have difficulties using the 'digital by default' option. Applicants and potential applicants that cannot use technology will be offered support, appropriate to their needs to avoid exclusion. Free and confidential advice on applying for housing will remain available on request from the Housing Options Service.

Applications should contain details of all members of the household to be rehoused.

A household is defined as any person who normally lives with the applicant(s) or might reasonably be expected to reside with them. Such cases may include children who are being fostered or live-in carers.

Two forms of documentary evidence will also be required from the applicant (or all named individuals in the case of joint applications) to confirm:

- (a) Their identity
- (b) Their current residence.

All applicants must provide a current correspondence address at the time of application. In the case of individuals who have no fixed abode, they may visit the office to collect any correspondence. Failure to attend on two consecutive weeks, without prior notice may result in removal from the Register.

Acceptable evidence for (a) and (b) above includes passports (or a driving licence with photograph), birth certificates, a current tenancy agreement, utility bills, or official correspondence (Council tax bill, proof of welfare benefits), which is dated within the last 3 months and states the applicant's name.

Where an applicant is unable to submit proof of identity or residence electronically, they will be required to attend in person, or post in the required documents to the Housing Options Service before their application is processed.

In exceptional cases, if the readily acceptable documentary evidence cannot be produced, a manager within the Housing Options Service may authorise acceptance of other documentation.

In order to establish the accuracy of an application, further documentary evidence may be required to verify claims.

Applications not properly completed, made by ineligible individuals, or not supported by the necessary documentary proof of identification and residence, will not be processed.

The Council undertakes a review process every six months to ensure that all of the information provided is up to date. Eligibility to be registered for housing and the priority afforded under this scheme are kept under constant review. It is up to the applicant to notify the Council of any change in circumstances, such as someone joining or leaving the household, change of address, the purchase or acquisition of a property, or a change in the health or welfare of the applicant and/or a member of their household.

Making a false statement on an application form will result in the application being cancelled and any offers made withdrawn. If an applicant secures a tenancy as a result of false information, the Council will be entitled to seek possession of the property. Failure to disclose a material change in circumstances could result in an application being excluded from qualification or cancelled.

Failure to bid on properties during any six month period may also result in the applicant being removed from the register.

4.2. Access to information

Registration will be based on the information supplied by the applicant on-line. Upon registration, the applicant will receive an acknowledgement together with:

- information about their position on the Housing Register (banding) and how that was calculated.
- whether preferred accommodation is likely to be available and an indicative waiting time based on the average for that band over the past year.

General information such as banding criteria, changes in legislation/guidance will be made available through a number of sources, for example; the Bury Council website, newsletters and other publications.

Applicants can however request in writing from the Housing Options Service, access to more specific information held in connection with their application including:

- their details on the Housing Register
- the documentation provided by them
- any other information held about them on file
- decisions made on the facts of their case. This does not affect their right to appeal, or request a review.

The Council's Allocation Policy, Strategic Tenancy Policy and Homelessness Strategy are also available to applicants on the Council's website.

4.3. Cancellation of housing applications

Except in exceptional circumstances, a housing application will be removed from the Housing Register if:

- the applicant requests it
- the applicant becomes ineligible for housing or ceases to be a qualifying person
- the applicant is housed through the Allocation Policy
- a tenant of any social housing completes a mutual exchange

- an applicant wilfully submits false information regarding their eligibility, or household circumstances to gain advantage
- an applicant fails to maintain their housing application (through the renewal process), or they move home and fail to provide the Council with a contact address
- an applicant fails to respond to a request for further information, within a reasonable time. The local authority has defined an appropriate time as 2 weeks, after which time a cancellation letter will be sent to the applicant.

Any decision that an application has been cancelled will be notified in writing and the applicant will be told the grounds for it and their right to a review. All decisions will be subject to the provisions outlined in Appendix 4 - Appeals, Reviews and Complaints.

5. Assessment of priorities and need

5.1. Applying priority need

Once an applicant has been deemed to be eligible and a 'qualifying person', the Council will determine the applicant's need and priority. This involves a number of stages:

(i) Assessment of need. The Council will decide what, if any, further information or follow up action is required to determine the priority of individual cases. This may include seeking further advice from medical or other professional agencies (Section 5.2)

(ii) Ascertaining local connection. The Council will consider whether the applicant has a local connection with Bury (Section 5.3)

(iii) Banding. Persons accepted onto the Housing Register will be allocated a band according to the information provided (Section 5.4). The banding system is detailed in Appendix 2

(iv) Property size. The Council will determine, based on the household composition, the size of property for which the applicant is entitled to bid (Section 5.5).

Following those assessments, an applicant will be registered, notified of their priority and of the property size they have been assessed as requiring. An applicant is then entitled to bid for suitable properties that become available (Section 6).

5.2. Assessment of needs

5.2.1 Assessment of medical needs

Assessment of medical needs will only be considered for applicants, or a member(s) of their household, where current housing arrangements adversely impact on health, the ability to access basic amenities, or if the applicant is homeless and requires a particular type of housing due to their medical need. In these cases, evidence from a relevant health professional must be provided to substantiate this. Categories of people to whom this may apply are illustrated in Appendix 2.

The Council will assess priority initially on the declaration made as part of the application and completed medical self assessment submitted by the applicant.

If the self assessment shows a high (or overwhelming) medical need for rehousing, the applicant will be required to provide corroborating evidence from a medical professional (Occupational Therapy, Psychiatric reports, Specialist or Hospital Consultant letters/reports). It is not necessary to obtain a letter from a GP.

In some cases, the Council may seek further information from the applicant's GP or other health professionals. The Council may also conduct a home visit, to assess housing conditions and verify statements made in the application before awarding a banding for the Housing Register.

If an applicant or a member of their household has a substantial or permanent physical disability, which place them in Category 1, 2 or 3 as listed below, the Housing Options Team will seek advice from an Occupational Therapist as regards to specific housing needs:

Category 1: applicants who require wheelchair accessible property (such as; a property that is already adapted for a wheelchair or is suitable for adaptation to the level required). Facilities will include:

- ramped or level access in and out of the property
- adequate wheelchair circulation space in hallways and main rooms occupied by wheelchair user
- widened doorways
- level wheelchair access to all basic amenities or access via wheelchair lift
- accessible kitchen
- adequate circulation space for wheelchair in bathroom.

Category 2: applicants who require accessible property (such as; a property which is already adapted to mobility standards, or is suitable for adaptation to the level required). Facilities will include:

- ramped or level access in and out of the property
- adequate circulation space for mobility aids in hallways and main rooms occupied by applicant
- level access to all basic amenities or access via stair-lift/through floor lift
- adequate circulation space in bathroom for mobility aids or for assistance from carer if needed.

Category 3: applicants who have low level mobility needs (such as; they require a general let property where potential for further adaptations is restricted). Facilities will include:

- level access or shallow steps

- bathroom may have been adapted with level access shower or shower over the bath which is not accessible for a wheelchair user or applicant with significant mobility problems
- doorways may not be suitable for widening and circulation space in hallways is restricted.

To make best use of resources, the Council will, in the first instance, seek to match applicants with specific needs to properties that have already been adapted for that purpose.

Tenancies will be granted for as long as the applicant (or the member of the household for whom the adaptation is intended) continues to live at that property. The Council reserves the right to work towards relocating households from adapted properties when the intended recipient no longer requires the adaptation or no longer lives at that address.

Applications from people with mental health needs will be referred to a multidisciplinary panel for assessment. This panel will include a Mental Health professional and other housing support agencies in the borough as appropriate.

5.2.2 Assessment of welfare or social needs

If the applicant or someone in their household has to move home because of multiple welfare or social needs, which are not covered by the banding categories, the Council's Director of Housing has discretion to award a higher banding priority for that application. The applicant must however be able to demonstrate the presence of multiple needs. Examples may include:

- a family member with multiple welfare or care needs, for example; an individual with disabilities suffering harassment in their current location
- living with a long term medical condition in an overcrowded property that has damp problems
- single frail, elderly person with mobility problems facing eviction
- more than one family member with welfare or care needs.

Where an applicant's needs are assessed, the results will be notified in writing, together with the grounds for the decision and notification of the right to a review. All decisions will be subject to the provisions outlined in Appendix 4 - Appeals, Reviews and Complaints.

5.3 Local connection

The Council aims to give local people priority for homes. Those who meet the local connection criteria will be placed in Bands 1 - 4 according to their level of housing need. If the applicant does not have a local connection, their application will be placed in Band 5. To have a local connection, the applicant or a member of their household must demonstrate one or more of the following:

- have been living in Bury (through choice) for the previous 24 months or at least 3 out of the last 5 years

- currently have permanent employment within the Borough
- have close family living in the Borough for the last 5 years (for example parents or children)
- have special reason for needing to live in the Borough (for example to care for a relative or receive care from their family).

In exceptional circumstances, an applicant who does not currently reside in Bury may be placed in Bands 1-4 according to the level of housing need provided one or more of the four conditions listed above also apply.

The local connection criteria will not apply to persons for whom the Council has a legal duty to re-house.

The local connection criteria will not apply to members of the Armed Forces, who are serving away and wish to re-establish their link with Bury, or to certain persons who need to move to the district to work.

5.4 Banding

In line with the qualification criteria (Section 3.4), the banding has been designed to give reasonable preference to those with housing needs as outlined by S.166A (3) of the Housing Act 1996:

- People who are homeless (within the meaning of Part 7)
- People who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under Section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3)
- People occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including any grounds relating to disability) or
- People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or others).

Persons accepted onto the Housing Register will be allocated a band according to the information provided and this may change over time in line with changing circumstances. The Council will also seek to recognise multiple needs. Applicants who match three or more factors in any one band (except for Band 5) will be automatically moved to the next band up to reflect cumulative housing need.

Where a household could arguably be placed in different bands, the higher of the two bands will apply.

The Council may move to Band 5 any applicant (or household member) who behaves in a way that would affect their suitability as a tenant. This is likely to be applied where applicants act in a way (or conversely fail to do something) that results in a worsening of their personal or housing circumstances but may also be applied as a sanction in relation to:

- housing related debt (rent arrears, current or former arrears of service charges/recharge payments) owed to the Council or other landlord)
- applicants under a possession order or subject to sanctions under anti social behaviour legislation
- vandalism, deliberate damage or neglect of property and neighbourhood amenities
- breaches of tenancy or licence conditions.

An applicant will be notified in writing of the band in which the application is placed, together with the grounds for the decision and notification of the right to a review. All decisions will be subject to the provisions outlined in Appendix 4 - Appeals, Reviews and Complaints.

Details of the banding structure are attached at Appendix 3.

5.5 Assessment of property size

The following table sets out the size of property that a person on the Housing Register is entitled to bid for. Generally two children of the same gender will be expected to share a bedroom.

Household and property sizes

Household size	Property size
Single person	Bedsit or 1 bed
Single person with staying access to child or children	1 or 2 bed
Single person over 55	Bedsit, 1 bed, bungalow, ground floor flat, retirement living or extra care housing
Couple no children	1 bed
Couple with at least one partner over 55	1 bed, bungalow, ground floor flat, retirement living or extra care
2 person household with special needs (includes single person with resident carer)	2 bed, bungalow, ground floor flat, retirement living or extra care
Couple or single parent with 1 child	2 bed
Couple or single parent with 2 children	2 or 3 bed (depending on age and sex of children)
Couple or single parent with 3 children	3 bed or more (depending on age and sex of children)
Couple or single parent with 4 or more children	3 or more (depending on age and sex of children)

Notes:

1. Bungalows will be allocated to applicants who are either aged 55 or over, or who have a proven medical need for ground floor accommodation. Bungalows adapted to meet the needs of wheelchair users or severe mobility problems will be offered to those who have been assessed as needing that type of property
2. Retirement living units will only be allocated to applicants aged 55 or over
3. There are very few homes with 4 beds or more and these are only available in certain parts of the Borough. Larger families can bid for anything above 3

beds but are advised to work with the Council to explore all their housing options
4. Where a child has 2 principal homes due to joint custody arrangements, the Council may allow the applicant on receipt of written evidence to this effect to bid for homes with one more bed than they would otherwise be eligible for
5. Where official joint custody has not been decided, but an applicant has requested an extra bedroom, a decision will be based on which parent receives Child Benefit. If that parent is not the applicant then a bedroom for that child will not be awarded. Proof of who received the Child Benefit will be required to facilitate this
6. Separate space for a resident carer will only be considered where there is clear evidence that the care is not provided by a member of the household (or someone who would otherwise live with the applicant)
7. Separate space for potential foster children will be considered from applicants who have been approved as foster parents by the Council.

An applicant will be notified in writing of the property size for which they have been assessed as eligible, together with the grounds for the decision and notification of the right to a review. All decisions will be subject to the provisions outlined in Appendix 4 - Appeals, Reviews and Complaints.

5.6 Under Occupancy

The Council has a limited supply of family sized accommodation and adapted properties. In order to free up these properties to meet expressed demand, this policy allows for the Director of Housing to identify under occupied properties and agree, in consultation with the housing provider and tenant, a property exchange. This is subject to the under occupying household vacating the property when an allocation has been made to them. The Council will provide options to encourage residents to downsize, but will not force them to move if they do not wish to.

These provisions will apply to secure tenants who:

- occupy a general needs family property with two or more bedrooms
- occupy a property that has been adapted for disabled access (Category 1 or 2)
- agree to transfer to smaller accommodation (or a non-adapted property) in line with their needs and provide vacant possession of their present home.

Discretion will be applied to allow downsizing to smaller properties, but with flexibility to allow down-sizers to obtain properties, technically larger than their needs. For example, a single tenant living alone in a four bedroom house may be unwilling to downsize to the one bedroom property which they would ordinarily qualify for under the assessment of property size (see Section 5.5 above). In such cases, it will be at the discretion of the Director of Housing to allow an additional bedroom to be awarded, particularly where the tenant has the need to accommodate dependent children or live-in carers. However, the tenant must appreciate the implications on their welfare benefit and any change must be accompanied by a test of affordability.

Tenants affected by the changes of the Welfare Reform Act 2012, will be given priority to downsize their accommodation.

6. The lettings process

6.1. Bury Choice Base Lettings

In accordance with Section 167(1A), the majority of properties will be made available through a system of Choice Based Lettings (CBL) offering people on the Housing Register:

- a choice of housing accommodation;
- the opportunity to express preferences about the housing accommodation to be allocated to them, which are appropriate to their housing need as set out in the assessment of property size.

Under CBL, applicants express an interest or 'bid' for properties that they are interested in.

6.2. Process for property allocation

1. The Housing Options Service will assess empty properties available for letting
2. each property will be advertised weekly on the Bury Council Housing website and other media throughout the borough
3. applicants express an interest on advertised properties on-line (or through a key/support worker where appropriate). There is no restriction on the number of bids that an applicant can make
4. where a person or household has been accepted as homeless and is resident in temporary accommodation but fails to bid on suitable properties that become available, the Council reserves the right to bid on their behalf
5. the expression of interest is registered by the Council
6. at the close of each weekly cycle, successful bidders will be determined in accordance with priority (see Section 5.1). Where there is more than one successful bidder for the same property based on priority need, the Council will take into consideration the following factors to identify the preferred bidder:
    - length of time on the waiting list
    - medical conditions
7. the housing provider will contact the successful bidder
8. references are taken and the applicant's information updated.

6.3. Suitable offer

A successful bid made through the CBL system will be counted as one suitable offer. "Suitable", for the purposes of this policy, means:

- fit and available to live in
- suitable in relation to affordability
- suitable for any specific needs relating to medical conditions or disability

- of adequate size without causing statutory overcrowding.

Where a bid has been successful and the applicant declines a suitable offer of accommodation their application will be reassessed. This may result in removal from the Housing Register.

Homeless applicants have a statutory right to request a review of the suitability of accommodation offered to them, regardless as to whether they accept the offer or not although any such review is outside of the review procedures under this policy. Pending a review of the decision their application will be placed in Band 5.

6.4. Withdrawing an offer of accommodation

Any offer of accommodation may be withdrawn where:

- the applicant has made a false declaration, or failed to provide the Council with up-to-date information on their circumstances; a false declaration will also result in their application being cancelled
- the property details at the time that the written offer was made were incorrect and it was subsequently discovered that the size and type of the property is not, in fact, suitable to the applicant's needs; this will not affect the applicant's right to bid on future properties
- the applicant's circumstances change between the offer and the signing of the tenancy agreement (resulting for example in a significant reduction or increase in the level of need, or that the applicant has ceased to be eligible or a qualifying person)
- if the references taken at the time of the offer demonstrate that the applicant has ceased to be a qualifying person or has housing related debt, the Council may withdraw the offer and revise the applicant's priority
- the property is no-longer appropriate for that person
- the property is required in an emergency to meet the Council's civil contingency responsibilities.

6.5. Restrictions on bidding for properties

Bids for properties will not be accepted from individuals who:

- have not been accepted onto the Housing Register
- have been removed from the Housing Register
- are not capable of independent living or sustaining a tenancy
- can only sustain a tenancy if they are provided with support, and support is not currently being provided
- are still being assessed. Bids can only be accepted, once eligibility and priority banding has been determined/reviewed
- have had their right to bid suspended by the Council. Circumstances where this may apply includes:

    a) Failure to provide relevant information in their application or subsequent information has come to light that the applicant may no longer be a 'qualifying person' or their housing circumstances have changed

b) Repeated failure to attend viewings of properties for which they have bid and been shortlisted. 'Repeated failure' in this instance is defined as not attending viewings, without good reason, on three consecutive occasions

c) Refusal without good reason, of a formal written offer of property for which the applicant or their representative has made a successful bid.

If the grounds for failing to view properties or refusing an offer are not considered by the Council to be justified, any bids will be rejected and the applicant placed in Band 5 for 12 months, after which period the applicant may request a reassessment of their application under this policy. Where relevant information is missing or has been withheld, suspension from bidding will last until the application is updated and/or reviewed by the Housing Options Service. If the applicant is found to have deliberately misled the Council for personal gain, the applicant will be removed from the Housing Register.

Where the applicant is restricted from bidding, they will be notified in writing together with the grounds for the decision, any conditions that will need to be met before the restriction is lifted, the date when the suspension expires (if appropriate) and notification of the right to a review. All decisions will be subject to the provisions outlined in Appendix 4 - Appeals, Reviews and Complaints.

A restriction on bidding is not the same as disqualification and/or exclusion from qualification from the Housing Register. Applicants restricted from bidding can still count this period as time on the waiting list; persons excluded from qualification from the Housing Register cannot.

6.6. Local Lettings Policies

Local letting policies are there to respond to specific local issues. These may include particular housing concerns on estates or other social issues in the community. Only a small proportion of the housing stock will be affected by these policies.

Government and good practice guidance encourages Councils to aim for the following in developing local letting polices:

- Protecting balanced and mixed communities
- Reducing property void rates and tenancy turnovers
- Improving community stability and cohesion
- Tackling low demand areas and difficult to let estates
- Reducing anti-social behaviour
- Preventing future problems occurring on new estates or recently modernised properties.

Where a local area or estate would significantly benefit from a local lettings policy, the Council will work with the housing provider to develop a clear rationale for its introduction, outline the objectives to be met (together with appropriate measures of success) and ensure that reasonable preference is given to people in priority need. All policies will also be accompanied by an Equality Analysis, to minimise the risk of direct or indirect discrimination against individuals or groups.

A multi agency panel, comprising of all the different partners in Bury will support the development of the local lettings policies.

Each local letting policy will include:

- the scope of the policy such as geographical coverage, housing stock profile turnover rates of tenancies, property void levels, tenant profiles
- the expected review/expiry date of the policy
- a clear rationale for the policy including evidence of the problems/issues that the policy is seeking to resolve
- the methods that will be used to address the problems/issues
- an assessment of any possible negative impacts of the policy
- how the policy links to Bury Council's strategic objectives
- full details of consultations which have taken place in developing the policy
- how the policy will be monitored
- proposals for reporting and reviewing policies.

When a property affected by a local lettings policy is advertised, the details will clearly state the criteria or conditions that apply. Applicants must fulfil these requirements for their bid to be successful.

7. Direct Lets

7.1. Circumstances appropriate to direct lets

There are times when the Choice Based Letting System is unsuitable to meet the needs of certain applicants. To address this situation, the Council reserves the right of direct letting. Circumstances where direct lets could apply include:

- the safeguarding or protection of applicants and existing tenants for reason of domestic violence, harassment or hate crime or where the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) or National Witness Mobility scheme has recommended that an applicant should not bid for fear of being identified
- the accommodation of applicants who present with complex needs
- households recommended for, or subject to, a Family Intervention Tenancy (FIT)
- applicants that have been under-occupying and require re-housing to a smaller property due to hardship or affordability issues
- allocating homeless households to temporary accommodation through the Housing Options Service
- applicants requiring specially adapted properties
- re-housing tenants who are vacating a specially adapted property or large family home in favour of an applicant on the Housing Register to whom the property is more suited

- retirement living accommodation, extra care units or properties designated for elderly applicants
- retiring service tenants whose current accommodation is a condition of their contract of employment and who will lose their accommodation when they retire
- civil contingency emergencies, meeting the Council's obligations (such as refugee crises) and the allocation of properties that fail to attract bids.

The Council reserves the power to make as many direct let offers as it thinks fit to meet the needs outlined above and in other similar circumstances at the discretion of the director of housing. The Council will, however, ensure that the number of offers under direct lets remains a small fraction of total lettings. The majority of properties will continue to be let through Choice Based Lettings.

When direct letting properties, the Council will make one suitable offer which as far as possible matches the size and type of property to the needs of the applicant and is not in an area known to be unsafe for the household. If the applicant decides to refuse the offer, they must give their reasons for refusal in writing.

If the grounds for refusal are not considered by the Council to be reasonable, the offer will be withdrawn and the applicant placed in Band 5 for 12 months, after which period the applicant may request their application to be reassessed under this policy. For the avoidance of doubt, this is not an automatic disqualification from the Housing Register. Applications will remain registered provided the applicant continues to meet the eligibility and qualification criteria; the onus however will shift onto the applicant to bid for properties.

An applicant will be notified in writing of any reduction in banding together with the grounds for the decision and notification of the right to a review. All decisions will be subject to the provisions outlined in Appendix 4 - Appeals, Reviews and Complaints.

Where applicants are not satisfied with the offer, rather than refuse and have their housing need priority removed, they may accept the offer subject to review. Further information about reviews is set out in Appendix 4.

The Allocation Policy aims to ensure that properties are let within a reasonable period of time. However, where substantial adaptations are necessary, properties may have to remain empty for longer than would be desired. Every effort will be made to keep delays to a minimum whilst ensuring the necessary works are carried out to meet the applicant's needs.

There is no fixed number of properties set aside for direct lets, temporary accommodation or other purposes; the level will be based on need and reviewed annually.

7.2. Sensitive Lets

The Council recognises that some groups can have greater difficulty integrating into communities. In the interests of community cohesion, the Council will exercise extra sensitivity where applicants have complex or special needs and may directly let properties in these cases; particularly if anti social behaviour could result. Such decisions will be made on a case by case basis and approved by the Director of Housing.

7.3. Older applicants

The council has traditionally made a small number of direct offers to older applicants, because of their personal circumstances, or other special reason, should in the Council's view receive such an offer. The Council reserves the power to continue to make such offers to extra care and retirement living options where it considers it appropriate to do so. The age at which such allocations are made is 55 years old.

7.4. Succession and discretionary offers

Statutory succession

When a tenant dies, it may be possible for someone living with them to take over the tenancy. This is known as succession and the person who takes on the tenancy is called a 'successor'. To qualify to be a 'successor' the applicant has to meet certain conditions:

- they must live in the property as their only or main home at the time of the tenants death
- they are the tenant's spouse or civil partner
- they are another member of the tenant's family and have been living with the tenant for at least 12 months prior to the tenant's death.

If the property does not meet, or exceeds, the housing needs of the person taking over the tenancy, the Council has the right to offer them another suitable property. A tenancy can only be succeeded to once.

Applications to take over a tenancy must be made in writing within one month of the tenant's death. If no application is received within the timescale, the tenancy will be ended. If more than one person qualifies to take over the tenancy, the housing provider will determine the most suitable person.

If the tenancy is of an introductory or demoted nature, the successor will also become an introductory or demoted tenant with the same conditions. Succession will not be allowed when:

- the deceased tenant had previously succeeded to the tenancy (including a person who was joint tenant and later became a sole tenant after the other joint tenant died)
- the deceased tenant had been living alone
- the deceased tenant had left the property and was not using it as their only home
- the deceased tenant relinquished the property due to being admitted to hospital or a residential home for long-term care or treatment
- there had previously been an assignment of the tenancy or property adjustment order under the Family Law Act
- the person asking for succession is unable to prove their relationship to the deceased tenant, or their period of residence at the address

- the tenancy has been brought to an end by the Court granting the Council a possession order.

If the tenancy is succeeded by the husband, wife or civil partner of the deceased tenant, they will be allowed to stay in the property on a permanent basis subject to the terms and conditions of the tenancy.

Non-statutory succession

If an occupant has no legal right to succeed to a Council tenancy when the tenant dies, they may still be granted a tenancy by the Council (as a non-statutory succession). This will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. To qualify for a non-statutory succession, the applicant must:

- (i) have lived with the former tenant at the time of her/his death
- (ii) have occupied the property as her/his only or principal home for a substantial continuous period prior to the former tenant's death and
- (iii) be a family member of the former tenant, as defined above.

The Council considers it unlikely that anyone will be entitled to a non-statutory succession unless they have lived in the property as their own or principal home for a continuous period of five years prior to the former tenant's death.

Where, however, the applicant for a non-statutory succession gave up their own accommodation and moved into the property in order to provide care for the former tenant, the Council may accept a shorter period of occupancy. Each case will be considered on its merits, but as a guideline a minimum period of twelve months would be expected.

Succession in relation to specially adapted properties, sheltered housing and under occupation

Due to the shortage of specially adapted accommodation, members of the deceased tenant's household (including partners and those applying for a non-statutory succession) will not be allowed to stay in the property if it has been specially adapted and the successor(s) do not require those adaptations.

In the case of sheltered housing or other properties designated for older people, whilst the husband wife or civil partner will be entitled to succeed, this right will not apply to other potential successors if they are under the age of 55.

If any succession has the effect of creating under occupation, the successor(s) will be encouraged to relocate to a property that meets the bedroom standard (Section 5.5)

Where these circumstances apply, the successor(s) will be required to join the Housing Register to enable the Council to assess their needs, apply an appropriate banding and identify alternative accommodation that is more suited to their requirements. If the applicant does not secure a property within six months, the Council will review their situation and bidding history and may decide to make a 'direct let' to another property. If a suitable offer is made and refused, the Council may decide to withdraw its offer and commence possession proceedings.

8. Other provisions

8.1. Equal Opportunities

The Council is committed to equality of opportunity to promote diversity and combat discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation or caring responsibilities. The Allocations Policy strives to ensure that each application is treated on its merits and reasonable preference is given to applications according to housing need.

The Allocation Policy (and any subsequent local lettings policies) will be subject to an Equality Analysis. The Council will monitor the impact of this policy by measuring:

- applications made to join the Housing Register
- lettings made through the Housing Register
- length of time on the Housing Register
- number of current residents downsizing
- number of bids made
- refusal decisions
- review requests.

The equality characteristics of each element will be recorded and analysed to minimise the risk of discrimination against any group.

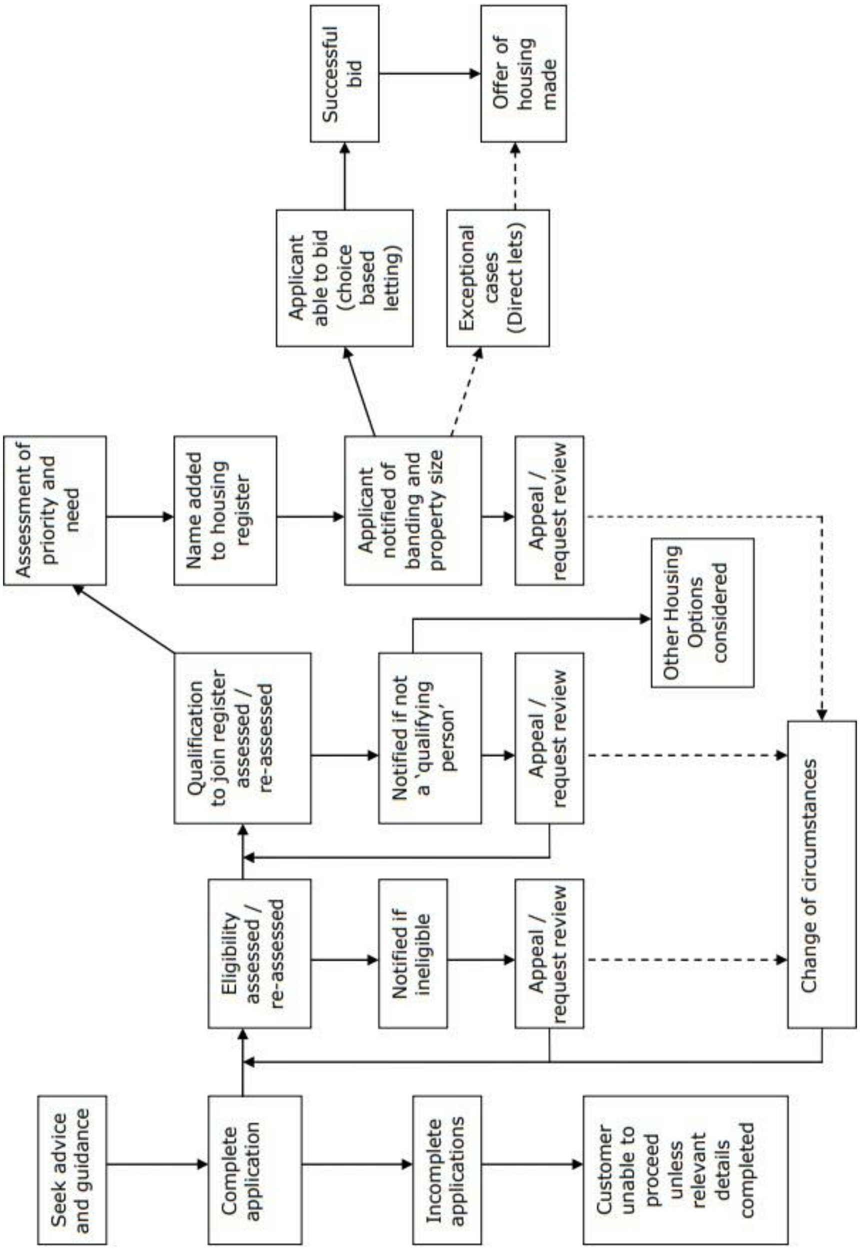
8.2. Information about the Allocation Policy

The Council will publish the Allocations Policy on the Council's website.

8.3. Review of Policy

The Allocations Policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if new legislation requires major amendments to be made.

Appendix 1 Flowchart



Appendix 2: Medical and Welfare Grounds for Reasonable Preference

- A mental illness or disorder
- A physical or learning disability
- Chronic or progressive medical conditions (for example; MS, HIV or AIDS)
- Infirmity due to old age
- The need to give or receive care
- The need to recover from the effects of violence or threats of violence, or physical, emotional or sexual abuse
- Ability to fend for self restricted for other reasons
- Young people at risk
- People with behavioural difficulties
- Need for adapted housing and/or extra facilities, bedroom or bathroom
- Need for improved heating (on medical grounds)
- Need for sheltered housing (on medical grounds)
- Need for ground floor accommodation (on medical grounds)
- Need to be near friends/relatives or medical facility on medical grounds
- Need to move following hospitalisation or long term care

Appendix 3 Priority Banding

Demand for housing in Bury is high. In order to provide a fair system for allocating social rented properties, the Council prioritises applicants on the Housing Register according to housing needs which is reflected in the banding structure.
Within each band all other relevant factors being equal, allocations are made in date order, priority being given to the applicant with the earlier or earliest preference date. To help applicants determine where they may feature in this system, the main factors that apply are set out below for illustration purposes:

Band 1: urgent housing need

- Homeless and in priority need
- Urgent medical or welfare need
- Life threatening circumstances
- The Council has accepted a responsibility to re-house
- Members of the Armed and Reserve Forces
- Care Leavers
- Exceptional cases.

Notes:

1. Homeless and in priority need - the Council will assess whether an applicant is homeless and in priority need under the homelessness provisions in Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. Where an applicant is homeless and in priority need, the duty the Council owe her/him depends on whether the individual became homeless intentionally (i.e. deliberately caused their homelessness).
2. If the applicant is unintentionally homeless and in priority need, the Council are under a duty to secure that accommodation becomes available for occupation (s.193(2), 1996 Act); the applicant will remain in Band 1 until permanent accommodation has been found.
3. Urgent medical or welfare need - the applicant (or member of the household) has been assessed, and accepted, as having a critical need to move on medical or welfare grounds. Examples may include instances where hospital discharge is being delayed, chronic progressive medical conditions, families with children being forced to live apart, children in care being prevented from rejoining their family because of inappropriate housing
4. Life threatening circumstances are where there is serious risk of harm from remaining in the present accommodation. This includes but is not limited to:
    - Victims of domestic violence
    - Serious racial harassment
    - Homophobic attacks
    - Victims of crime

    In these circumstances, properties will be subject to a direct let, for the safety and sustainability of an applicant's tenancy in the future (see Section 7.1)
5. The Council has accepted a responsibility to re-house - specifically where the Council has been instrumental in requiring residents to move (redevelopment projects, Compulsory Purchase Orders, Closing Orders, etc)

6. Additional preference will be given to the following categories of Armed Forces, in line with statutory guidance, who fall within one or more of the reasonable preference categories and have housing needs:
    - Former members of the Armed Forces
    - Serving members of the Armed Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
    - Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner
    - Serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
7. Care Leavers – as explained in the Policy the Council considers the safe and secure permanent rehousing of Care Leavers as a corporate priority for action.
8. Exceptional cases - the Director of Housing may exercise this power, where a household has an exceptional housing need which is not adequately addressed by the Allocations Policy

Band 2: high housing need

- Statutory overcrowding
- Category 1 hazard under the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System
- Leaving supported accommodation
- Right to move
- High medical or welfare need to move

Notes:

1. Statutory overcrowding - where current accommodation does not meet current living space or bedroom standards. This will include cases where families with dependent children are non-householders living with family or friends providing the family knows the householder before they moved into the property and are not paying rent
2. Category 1 hazard under the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System - applies where the Council's Urban Renewal Team (or other Environmental Health Officer) has identified that a household or vulnerable member of that household is at risk from a Category 1 hazard. Examples may include an older person living in a property with inadequate heating, families with young children living with severe dampness, etc
3. Leaving supported accommodation - where the applicant lives in supported accommodation and has been assessed by their Key Worker as ready to move on to independent living. Banding will be backdated to the time the applicant moved into supported accommodation. This banding will be applicable where:
    - The supported housing provider is approved by Supporting People in Bury or the Director of Housing.

- The applicant has a local connection to Bury
- A Ready to Move (RTM) form has been received from a supported housing provider, to detail how the applicant has developed the necessary independent living skills and is ready to live in their own tenancy.

4. Right to move - applies to applicants who have to relocate to take up employment in the Borough. In these cases, applicants will be required to provide evidence that their claim satisfies the criteria set out in the regulations.
5. High medical or welfare need - medical conditions where evidence has been provided by a qualified professional that a move to more suitable accommodation will improve a critical health condition substantially to the benefit of the applicant or a member of their household. This will generally relate to people with life limiting conditions, or severe impairments. Where age is also a factor, people over the age of 55 years can apply to be considered for sheltered or extra care housing

Band 3: medium housing need

- Unintentionally homeless but not in priority need
- Insecure tenants served with a Notice of Seeking Possession
- Households living apart
- Medium medical and/or welfare need
- Under occupancy
- Bedroom Standard overcrowding - 2 bed short

Notes:

1. Unintentionally homeless but not in priority need - where the Council is satisfied that the applicant is unintentionally homeless but does not have a priority need. This is likely to apply mainly to single people/couples without children and could include people who are confirmed as being rough sleepers who are street living.
2. Insecure tenants of a property in the Borough who are served with a Notice of Seeking Possession through no fault of their own or where possession proceedings are being sought against the landlord
3. Households living apart - this will be awarded if the household is living at separate addresses. A household in this context means people:
   - Who would normally live, or would reasonably be expected to live together
   - Who have not chosen to live apart
   - Who have no rights to occupy any other home
   - Who do not have any other housing needs
     This factor does not apply to families with children (see Band 1) who would be treated as having complex needs.
4. Medium medical and/or welfare needs - medical conditions where there is evidence that moving to alternative accommodation will improve a significant health and/or welfare condition substantially (including mobility or mental health issues) to the benefit of the applicant or a member of their household.

This would also apply to older people with some care needs that request sheltered housing

5. Under occupancy - where tenants want to move to a smaller, less costly property. This includes households needing to move because of welfare reform and a requirement to vacate adapted property. Applications may be dealt with through direct lets depending on the urgency and the merits of each case.
6. Bedroom Standard - where the size of the household indicates that two additional bedrooms are required based on the standard allocation of a separate bedroom to each:
    - married or cohabiting couple
    - adult aged 21 years or more
    - pair of dependants aged 0-20 years of the same sex
    - pair of dependants aged under 10 years regardless of sex. Where the dependants are of the opposite sex they will be assessed as requiring an additional bedroom when the eldest reaches the age of 10
    - larger families with 3 or more dependants will be assessed in accordance with the age and sex of the dependants
    - The Director of Housing may apply discretion in exceptional circumstances

Band 4: low housing need

- Low medical and/or welfare need
- Older person living above ground floor level with no lift access
- Bedroom Standard overcrowding
- Intentionally homeless with a priority need (except in the case of Care Leavers)

Notes:

1. Low medical and/or welfare need - the applicant has a moderate need to move to alternative accommodation as determined by the Council's medical/welfare assessment process.
2. Older person living above ground floor level - applies where one of the household is over 55 year of age) and currently lives in a property above ground floor level which is only accessible by climbing one or more flights of stairs.
3. Bedroom Standard - where the size of the household indicates that an additional bedroom is required based on the standard allocation of a separate bedroom to each:
    - married or cohabiting couple
    - adult aged 21 years or more
    - pair of dependants aged 0-20 years of the same sex
    - pair of dependants aged under 10 years regardless of sex. Where the dependants are of the opposite sex they will be assessed as requiring an additional bedroom when the eldest reaches the age of 10
    - larger families with 3 or more dependants will be assessed in accordance with the age and sex of the dependants

- The Director of Housing may apply discretion in exceptional circumstances

4. Intentionally homeless in priority need - where an applicant has been assessed as being in priority need under the provisions of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 but has made themselves intentionally homeless (except in the case of Care Leavers)

Band 5: assessment of need

- Awaiting a decision on a homelessness application
- No local connection
- Unreasonable refusal of a suitable offer
- Not ready to move on from supported accommodation
- Applications for retirement living or extra care
- Sanction for inappropriate behaviour
- Non priority intentional homeless

Notes:

1. No local connection - the applicant may have some or low housing needs but does not satisfy the local connection criteria (Section 5.3)
2. Unreasonable refusal - where suitable offers have been made but is turned down by the applicant and the offer has been withdrawn (Section 6.3, Section 7.1)
3. Not ready to move on from supported accommodation - an applicant who is living in supported accommodation but is not ready to move into their own tenancy, will be placed in this band until it has been ascertained if the applicant has developed the necessary independent living skills.
4. Retirement living - refers to property specifically designed to assist older people with mobility or other support needs. The acceptance of transfer applications from tenants already in a property designated for retirement living will be at the discretion of the Director of Housing based on the merits of each case
5. Non-priority intentional homeless - this banding recognises that the applicant is homeless but is not in priority need for housing.

Appendix 4 Appeals and Review process

Anybody can apply to go on the Council's Housing Register but not everybody is eligible and those that are will be given priority according to assessed need and the rules of the Allocations Policy.

When decisions are made about your application, we will notify you of the outcome and explain the reasons why. If you feel the policy has not been applied correctly or relevant information has been missed, you may request a formal review.

When can I request a review?
You, or an advocate acting on your behalf with your express permission, may request a review if the Council:

- Refuses your application to join the Housing Register or considers you not to be a "qualifying person" (Section 3.3)
- Cancels your housing application and removes you from the Housing Register (Section 4.3)
- The Council reduces your banding (Section 5.4)
- Disagrees with your assessment of medical need (Section 5.2)
- Allocates a banding that is inappropriate to your level of need (Section 5.4)
- Offers you a property that you consider to be unacceptable (Sections 5.5. 7.1)
- Restricts you from bidding for properties (Section 6.5)
- Reduces your banding following refusal of an offer (Section 6.3).

How do I request a review?
You must do this within 21 days of the Council informing you of its decision.
All appeals must be in writing to:
Homeless Manager, Bury Council, Town Hall, Knowsley Street, Bury, BL9 0SW
It is important that you tell us:

- (a) Why the Council should review its original decision
- (b) What outcome you want from the review
- (c) Any new information.

Offences related to information given or withheld by applicants
It is an offence for anyone, in connection with the exercise by a housing authority of its functions to:

- Knowingly or recklessly give false information
- Knowingly withhold information which the housing authority has reasonably required the applicant to give in connection with the exercise of those functions.

The circumstances in which an offence is committed could include providing false information:

- On an application form for social housing
- In response to a request for further information in support of the application
- During review proceedings.

What happens next?
A manager who was not involved in the original decision will carry out a formal review. They will look again at the information supplied and discuss the issues with

the person who made the original decision to understand why that conclusion had been reached.

The person conducting the review may also want to talk to you directly to verify statements or seek additional information. Your cooperation would be appreciated to ensure a speedy resolution of the review.

We will inform of the outcome within 8 weeks of you requesting the review. We will also tell you the reason(s) for that decision.

There is no right to appeal to the county court against the review decision. Any further challenge to the decision must be pursued by judicial review within 3 months.

If you are unhappy about the way the review was handled, this will handled through the Council's formal complaints process.

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