

Report to	Housing Advisory Board
Date	25/06/2025
Agenda No. & Title	Voids and Allocation Report
Purpose of the Report	This report underscores the importance of proactive tenancy sustainment, targeted housing strategies for older tenants, and data-driven decision-making to ensure efficient housing operations and meet future demand.
Status	For information
Author	Simon Farnworth
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Appendices	Housing Services Tenant Demographics
Background Documents	N/a
Recommendation/s	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Enhance succession planning</b> to reduce delays and void periods.</li> <li>2. <b>Invest in accessible housing</b> and review allocation strategies for mobility-adapted and sheltered properties.</li> <li>3. <b>Address bedsit challenges</b> through redesign, repurposing, or marketing, and review local lettings policies.</li> <li>4. <b>Improve data quality</b> on tenant demographics to support strategic planning and equality monitoring.</li> <li>5. <b>Continue reducing re-let times</b> by prioritizing high-demand property types and streamlining processes.</li> </ol>
Corporate Plan Objective	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Satisfied Tenants <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality Homes <input type="checkbox"/> United Communities
Risk Implications	The report highlights risks to service delivery, impact on sustainable tenancies, need for improved data quality and resource implications. These increase the likely of poor performance, increase turnover and potential breaches of GDPR and the Consumer Standards 2024.
Mitigations/Controls	Strategic actions include review of hard to let properties and continue to work through challenges of turnaround properties in within target. A Vulnerable Tenants Policy and digital inclusion initiatives are

	proposed.
Financial and Value for money implications	N/A
Regulatory/ governance and legal implications	The report supports compliance with Consumer Standards 2024. The strategical actions and the action tracker highlight the action we must take to comply.
Assets and Liabilities	N/A
Resource Implications	N/A
Customer Impact	The primary objective is to identify patterns in tenancy terminations to inform strategic planning, resource allocation, and service delivery improvements.
EDI Implications	This report does not have a negative impact from an EDI perspective but does help us to identify how we can be more representative of our tenant demographic.
Sustainability and Environmental Implications	There are no sustainability or environmental impacts of this report.
Privacy/Data Protection	All data used for this report has been anonymised
Colleague Impact	There are no impacts on colleagues.
Stakeholder Communications and Reputational Impact	There are no sustainability or environmental impacts of this report.
Next Steps	To monitor progress against the strategical aims and actions noted in the report.

## Analysis (2019/20– 2024/25)

### Purpose

This report provides a strategic overview of void trends in council-owned housing over six financial years, with a focus on tenancy terminations, demographic patterns, property types, and operational performance. It supports executive decision-making on housing strategy, resource allocation, and service improvement.

### Key Highlights

Total voids decreased by 50%, from 526 in 2019/20 to 266 in 2024/25, indicating improved tenancy sustainment and operational efficiency.

Death of tenants remains the leading cause (31.5%), though numbers have declined significantly. Older tenants (63+) dominate this category, often single or widowed, with limited succession.

Flats (ground and upper) account for the majority of voids. Bedsits show persistent re-letting challenges due to low demand and compliance issues. Semi-detached houses and bungalows show reduced turnover, reflecting sustained tenancies.

Average re-let times improved from 74 to 55 days, with flats and bungalows performing best. Bedsits remain problematic, peaking at 418 days in 2021/22.

Tenant base is predominantly White British (84%). 48% unknown marital status limits demographic analysis. Data gaps hinder strategic planning and equality monitoring.

All five neighbourhood areas show convergence in turnover rates, with deceased-related voids declining across the borough.

General needs and mobility-adapted properties dominate voids, reflecting the aging population. Extra care and wheelchair-adapted properties show minimal turnover.

### Strategic Implications

**Succession Planning:** Strengthen protocols and provide targeted support to reduce delays and void periods.

**Accessible Housing Investment:** Prioritize mobility-adapted and sheltered housing to meet future demand.

**Bedsit Strategy:** Redesign or repurpose low-demand units and review lettings policies to improve uptake.

**Data Quality:** Enhance demographic recording to support evidence-based planning and compliance.

**Operational Focus:** Continue reducing re-let times and monitor void trends by property type and needs category.