

# Housing Policy Committee

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**Thursday 14 September 2023 at 10.00  
am**

**Town Hall, Sheffield, S1 2HH**

**The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend**

## **Membership**

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Councillor Douglas Johnson  
Councillor Penny Baker  
Councillor Nabeela Mowlana  
Councillor Terry Fox  
Councillor Barbara Masters  
Councillor Alison Norris  
Councillor Paul Turpin  
Councillor Paul Wood  
Councillor Alan Woodcock

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## PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

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The Housing Policy Committee discusses and takes decisions on Housing matters:

- Public sector
- Private sector
- Homelessness
- Refugee resettlement programmes
- Gypsy and traveller sites

Meetings are chaired by Councillor Douglas Johnson.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at [www.sheffield.gov.uk](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk) . You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked \* on the agenda. Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Policy Committee meetings and recording is allowed under the direction of the Chair. Please see the [Council's Webpage](#) or contact Democratic Services for further information regarding public questions and petitions and details of the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at council meetings.

Policy Committee meetings are normally open to the public but sometimes the Committee may have to discuss an item in private. If this happens, you will be asked to leave. Any private items are normally left until last on the agenda.

Meetings of the Policy Committee have to be held as physical meetings. If you would like to attend the meeting, please report to an Attendant in the Foyer at the Town Hall where you will be directed to the meeting room. However, it would be appreciated if you could register to attend, in advance of the meeting, by emailing [committee@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:committee@sheffield.gov.uk), as this will assist with the management of attendance at the meeting. The meeting rooms in the Town Hall have a limited capacity. We are unable to guarantee entrance to the meeting room for observers, as priority will be given to registered speakers and those that have registered to attend.

Alternatively, you can observe the meeting remotely by clicking on the 'view the webcast' link provided on the meeting page of the [website](#).

If you wish to attend a meeting and ask a question or present a petition, you must submit the question/petition in writing by 9.00 a.m. at least 2 clear working days in advance of the date of the meeting, by email to the following address: [committee@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:committee@sheffield.gov.uk).

In order to ensure safe access and to protect all attendees, you will be recommended to wear a face covering (unless you have an exemption) at all times within the venue. Please do not attend the meeting if you have COVID-19 symptoms. It is also recommended that you undertake a Covid-19 Rapid Lateral Flow Test within two days of the meeting.

If you require any further information please email [committee@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:committee@sheffield.gov.uk).

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## FACILITIES

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There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall. Induction loop facilities are available in meeting rooms. Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

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**HOUSING POLICY COMMITTEE AGENDA  
14 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**Order of Business**

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**Welcome and Housekeeping**

The Chair to welcome attendees to the meeting and outline basic housekeeping and fire safety arrangements.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

**2. Exclusion of Press and Public**

To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public

**3. Declarations of Interest**

Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting

(Pages 7 - 10)

**4. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

To approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on

(Pages 11 - 16)

**5. Public Questions and Petitions**

To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public.

(NOTE: There is a time limit of up to 30 minutes for the above item of business. In accordance with the arrangements published on the Council's website, questions/petitions at the meeting are required to be submitted in writing, to [committee@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:committee@sheffield.gov.uk), by 9.00 a.m. on \*\*\*\*\* 2023).

**6. Members' Questions**

To receive any questions from Members of the committee on issues which are not already the subject of an item of business on the Committee agenda – Council Procedure Rule 16.8.

(NOTE: a period of up to 10 minutes shall be allocated for Members' supplementary questions).

**7. Work Programme**

Report of Director, Policy and Democratic Engagement

(Pages 17 - 34)

**Formal Decisions**

8. **Council Housing Disrepair** (Pages 35 - 44)  
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
9. **Damp and Mould Update** (Pages 45 - 66)  
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
10. **HMO Licensing Fee Review** (Pages 67 - 94)  
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
11. **Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code - Annual Self-Assessment** (Pages 95 - 114)  
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
12. **HNS and Repairs Performance Reports** (Pages 115 - 140)  
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
13. **2023/24 Q2 Budget Monitoring Report** (Pages 141 - 154)  
Report of Director, Finance and Commercial Services
14. **Capital Finance Monitoring Report** (Pages 155 - 166)  
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services

**NOTE: The next meeting of Housing Policy Committee will be held on Thursday 2 November 2023 at 10.00 am**

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## ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

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If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its Policy Committees, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** (DPI) relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must not:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You **must**:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner undertakes.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period\* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

\*The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority –
  - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
  - which has not been fully discharged.

- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) –
  - the landlord is your council or authority; and
  - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
  - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
  - (b) either -
    - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
    - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership).

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPIs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.



Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously.

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from David Hollis, Interim Director of Legal and Governance by emailing [david.hollis@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:david.hollis@sheffield.gov.uk).

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## Housing Policy Committee

### Meeting held 8 June 2023

**PRESENT:** Councillors Douglas Johnson (Chair), Penny Baker (Deputy Chair), Nabeela Mowlana (Group Spokesperson), Barbara Masters, Alison Norris, Paul Turpin, Paul Wood, Mike Chaplin (Substitute Member) and Robert Reiss (Substitute Member)

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bryan Lodge and Councillor Alan Woodcock.

#### **2. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

2.1 There were no items on the agenda to which the press and public should be excluded.

#### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

#### **4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

4.1 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 May 2023 were approved as a correct record.

#### **5. APPOINTMENT TO URGENCY SUB-COMMITTEE**

5.1 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Housing Policy Committee:-

(a) agrees to appoint Cllr Alison Norris to serve on the Housing Urgency Sub-Committee.

(b) as respects the appointment of Members to serve on the Urgency Sub-Committee or other Sub-Committees of the Housing Policy Committee, where vacancies exist or in cases of urgency to ensure quoracy or representation, the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the relevant political group whip, be authorised to appoint Members to serve on such Sub-Committees, as necessary, on the understanding that details of such appointments will be reported to the next or subsequent meetings of the Policy Committee.

#### **6. HOUSING STRATEGY TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

6.1 The Chair introduced the report which sought approval to reconstitute and reappoint the Task and Finish Group overseeing work to develop a new Housing Strategy. Membership will be drawn from the Housing Policy Committee. The

Terms of Reference of the Group was appended to the report.

It was agreed unanimously that the Task and Finish Group would comprise of Cllrs Barbars Masters, Douglas Johnson, Penny Baker, Paul Turpin, Nabeela Mowlana and Alison Norris.

6.2 **RESOLVED:** That the **Housing** Policy Committee:-

1. Reconstitute and reappoint a Task and Finish Group to oversee work to develop a new Housing Strategy and report on progress against the work programme.

6.3 **Reasons for Decision**

6.3.1 The Task and Finish Group will bring together a small, focused group of members to examine key housing policy issues and provide clear advice to officers developing the strategy. Cross party representation will mean that political agreement is reached at an early stage of the process allowing the strategy to progress. This has been a significant barrier to the Strategy's development in the past. The group will feedback advice given, and progress on the work programme to the Housing Policy Committee, so the Committee can make informed decisions on the Housing Strategy.

6.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

6.4.1 An alternative would be to deliver a series of knowledge briefings for the Housing Policy Committee. This was rejected as it would not enable constructive debate and advice to be provided to officers.

## 7. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

7.1 A petition was received from Mahara Haque regarding the change of a property to flats as opposed to a 19 bedroom HMO.

The Chair explained that as it was a live planning application that the Housing Committee could not express a view and that comments should be logged through the planning portal. It was advised to formally refer the petition onto the Planning Committee.

7.2 Two questions were received from Derek Martin:

In 2019 Sheffield City Council declared a Climate Emergency working towards Sheffield becoming a zero-carbon City by the start of the next decade. It's now 2023 ,4 years latter, ample time for departments to aline their investment programmes with this declared objective.

The City Council will have recently approved the Housing Capital Programme and 30 year business plan for Council owned homes,

It is great that Sheffield City Council is committed to building much needed new social rented homes. Any homes being built now will need to last at least 100 years ,at a minimum , considerably longer at the present rate of renewal. So these homes will have a minimum 95% of their life whilst Sheffield is planning to be zero

carbon.

The 30 year Business Plan for Housing also contains the Councils Investment programme for Council homes in the City. Again this investment plan will mainly be in the period when Sheffield is planning to be zero carbon 80%.

The planet is facing a real emergency now and actions need to be taken now, a we can't afford it or going part of the way, approach is simply not acceptable anymore , the planet can't afford us not to take actions now.

Putting off actions, talk of retro fitting the new homes , will only make them considerably more expensive in the future , a stitch in time saves nine, as the saying goes

So

Q1. of the new build Council homes programme how many will be zero carbon.

Q2. how many council homes are programmed to be zero carbon at the end of the 30 year business plan.

The Chair responded with:

A1. Currently, no directly delivered new build council houses have been built to net zero operational carbon output.

Before the June 2022 update to the Building Regulations, all new housing units have been delivered to standards above the minimum requirements in terms of thermal performance and air permeability, leading to a carbon emissions reduction of 6% and reduction in energy use of 21% against Building Regulations requirements. To upgrade the specification of these units to make them net-zero would have significantly exceeded the available budget.

The new Building Regulations in June 2022 have improved the thermal efficiency requirements of new builds, reduced CO2 emissions and improved ventilation. This upgrade to the Building Regulations, along with the proposed further Future Homes Standard Building Regulations upgrade in 2025, will ensure new build properties are "net-zero ready" post-2025 – i.e., the properties will achieve net-zero operational carbon when the electricity grid decarbonises.

Sheffield also requires all new builds to achieve net-zero by 2030. In line with all of these requirements, the SCC new build specification will be upgraded accordingly, culminating in net-zero by 2030. Unfortunately, SCC has not so far identified the budget to meet these requirements on an earlier trajectory than is required by these requirements.

Nevertheless, in winter 2023, it is proposed to deliver 6 council new-build units of Move-on Accommodation that will be net-zero operational carbon as a feature inherent in the type of modular unit being used to deliver this project. This is not a system that is relevant for all types of development under the building programme.

All proposed properties to be delivered after 2025 will be "net-zero ready" and further specification upgrades will be made to deliver net-zero properties by 2030.

At the moment, the current Stock Increase Programme (incorporating the SCC new build projects) is only approved to deliver up to 2028/29 and so it is unlikely that any further new-build properties within the current programme will reach total net-zero unless delivered as an inherent feature of a system used or if any net-zero properties are purchased under the new build acquisition element of the Stock Increase Programme. The future delivery of the programme is also subject to the recently approved HRA Business Plan amendments. The impact of the amendments on the programme is still being analysed, including the delivery rate and timescales of future projects. Therefore, it is not possible at this moment to estimate how many units will be delivered by SCC at net-zero ready standard after 2025. Once the revised future new build programme has been established and approved, these estimates will become available.

A2. The Council's current plans include bringing the estimated 6,900 homes that are below EPC level C up to a minimum of EPC level C by 2030. The Net Zero Carbon Road Map is currently being finalized and this will inform the council of the investment options and solutions available to, together with an estimate of the likely costs. The implications of the roadmap will feed into the Council's Climate Change 10-point Plan. Sheffield is going beyond the government guidance on this, which states that all social housing must meet this standard by 2035.

Within the approved 5-year capital programme, the council is targeting properties that are below EPC level C. Over the next 18 months, the council will have improved over 377 properties to EPC C or better.

Sheffield City Council has sought to maximise all government grant funding available in the realm of housing energy efficiency improvements & the pursuit of carbon neutrality. To date we have secured over £5m contributing toward the cost of these works to Council homes and will continue to seek out all other future funding opportunities. For this reason, it is not possible to say what the position will be by 2030.

## **8. INTRODUCTION TO THE REMIT OF THE HPC**

- 8.1 The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services introduced the item and alluded to the presentation that was published in the agenda pack.

Members gave comments and asked questions. Responses were provided around empty properties, repair challenges, improvement plans, steering group focus, improvements, turnaround rate, improvement notices, civil penalties, disrepair, selective licensing scheme, damp and mould task force, triaging of vulnerable individuals, prioritisation, strategy for tackling issues, level of resources and impact to the renter/s was also discussed.

## **9. HNS AND REPAIRS PERFORMANCE REPORTS**

- 9.1 The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services introduced the item which provided the Committee with an overview of housing performance for a range of

services within the remit of the Committee. The report covered the period up to quarter 4 (January – March) of 2022/2023. The first part of the report provided an analysis of the performance, setting this within both the national and local context in which services are delivered. More detailed appendices were included with comparative data against other landlords and regulatory performance. The report allows the Committee to understand and comment on the performance delivery of housing services to both tenants and citizens. A presentation was also shown on screen and referred to.

9.2 **RESOLVED:** That the **Housing** Policy Committee:-

1. Notes the Performance Report update provided for up to quarter 4 of 2022/2023
2. Highlights any issues of concern that they may wish to discuss in future performance reports

9.3 **Reasons for Decision**

9.3.1 The Housing Policy Committee has delegated authority to monitor the performance of Housing services to ensure that:

- The service is delivering for tenants, and that tenant satisfaction is closely monitored
- Limited resources are maximised due to budgetary pressures
- The Council is delivering on corporate priorities
- Performance information is shared with external organisations such as the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman for scrutiny

9.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

9.4.1 No other options were considered. The Housing Policy Committee has delegated responsibility for the regular monitoring of data including performance and financial information, and the performance monitoring of Housing (public sector, private sector, and related functions) services. Therefore, no alternative options to the production of this report have been considered.

**10. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - MONTH 12**

10.1 The Head of Accounting introduced the report which brought the Committee up to date with the Council's final outturn position for 2022/23 including General Fund revenue position and Housing Revenue Account.

10.2 **RESOLVED:** That the **Housing** Policy Committee:-

1. Note the updated information and management actions provided by this report on the 2022/23 Revenue Budget Outturn.

10.3 **Reasons for Decision**

10.3.1 To record formally changes to the Revenue Budget.

**10.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

10.4.1 The Council is required to both set a balance budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.

**11. NET-ZERO VERBAL UPDATE**

11.1 The Service Manager for Housing Decarbonisation gave a presentation which updated the committee on Housing Decarbonisation and included information of achievements

**12. WORK PROGRAMME**

12.1 The Principal Democratic Services Officer presented the Work Programme.

12.2 There was some discussion around the work programme items and it was suggested and agreed to bring Homelessness as an item to the November 2023 meeting and Selective Licensing to the December 2023 meeting.

12.3 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:-

1. The Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including any additions and amendments identified in Part 1;
2. Consideration be given to the further additions or adjustments to the work programme presented at Part 2 of Appendix 1;
3. Members give consideration to any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion in Part 2 of Appendix 1 of the next work programme report, for potential addition to the work programme





## Report to Housing Committee

14 September 2023

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**Report of:** Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement

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**Subject:** Committee Work Programme

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**Author of Report:** Rachel Marshall, Principal Democratic Services Officer

### Summary:

The Committee's Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration and discussion. This aims to show all known, substantive agenda items for forthcoming meetings of the Committee, to enable this committee, other committees, officers, partners and the public to plan their work with and for the Committee.

Any changes since the Committee's last meeting, including any new items, have been made in consultation with the Chair, and the document is always considered at the regular pre-meetings to which all Group Spokespersons are invited.

The following potential sources of new items are included in this report, where applicable:

- Questions and petitions from the public, including those referred from Council
- References from Council or other committees (statements formally sent for this committee's attention)
- A list of issues, each with a short summary, which have been identified by the Committee or officers as potential items but which have not yet been scheduled (See Appendix 1)

The Work Programme will remain a live document and will be brought to each Committee meeting.

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**Recommendations:**

1. That the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including any additions and amendments identified in Part 1;
2. That consideration be given to the further additions or adjustments to the work programme presented at Part 2 of Appendix 1;
3. That Members give consideration to any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion in Part 2 of Appendix 1 of the next work programme report, for potential addition to the work programme;

**Background Papers:** None**Category of Report:** Open

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**COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME****1.0 Prioritisation**

1.1 For practical reasons this committee has a limited amount of time each year in which to conduct its formal business. The Committee will need to prioritise firmly in order that formal meetings are used primarily for business requiring formal decisions, or which for other reasons it is felt must be conducted in a formal setting.

1.2 In order to ensure that prioritisation is effectively done, on the basis of evidence and informed advice, Members should usually avoid adding items to the work programme which do not already appear:

- In the draft work programme in Appendix 1 due to the discretion of the chair; or
- within the body of this report accompanied by a suitable amount of information

**2.0 References from Council or other Committees**

2.1 Any references sent to this Committee by Council, including any public questions, petitions and motions, or other committees since the last meeting are listed here, with commentary and a proposed course of action, as appropriate:

Issue 1	Reaffirming Sheffield as a City of Sanctuary (Council Motion 5/7/23)
Referred from	Full Council 5 July 2023
Details	"Request that the Housing Policy Committee considers adding to its work programme an item on Council powers and resources to protect migrants from discriminatory housing regulations, upholding locally defined standards and inspection processes"
Commentary/ Action Proposed	Added to the Jan 2024 workplan – Lorraine Wood and Beth Storm are the officers to bring a report.

### **3.0 Member engagement, learning and policy development outside of Committee**

3.1 Subject to the capacity and availability of councillors and officers, there are a range of ways in which Members can explore subjects, monitor information and develop their ideas about forthcoming decisions outside of formal meetings. Appendix 2 is an example 'menu' of some of the ways this could be done. It is entirely appropriate that member development, exploration and policy development should in many cases take place in a private setting, to allow members to learn and formulate a position in a neutral space before bringing the issue into the public domain at a formal meeting.

#### **2.2 Training & Skills Development - Induction programme for this committee.**

Title	Description & Format	Date

## Appendix 1 – Work Programme

### Part 1: Proposed additions and amendments to the work programme since the last meeting:

Item	Proposed Date	Note
<b>NEW:</b> Commission of a new Furnished Accommodation Framework.	Nov 2023	The purpose of the report is to obtain approval for Sheffield City Council to commission a new Furnished Accommodation goods Framework.
Damp and Mould Taskforce Update	Sept 2023	Item brought forward from November to September 2023
<b>NEW:</b> Powers and resources to protect migrants from discriminatory housing conditions	Jan 2024	Housing Policy Committee response to Council Resolution
<b>NEW:</b> 2024 to 2027 Revenue & Capital Budget	Nov 2023	A joint reports with the DoF and relevant Exec/Strategic Directors
<b>NEW:</b> SCC Response to Regulatory Consultations	Nov 2023	Report added to November agenda – For Information Only
<b>NEW:</b> Update on Conditions of Tenancy	Nov 2023	An update on minor changes to the current Conditions of Tenancy
<b>MOVED:</b> Net Zero Roadmap	Nov 2023	Item moved from September to November 2023
<b>MOVED:</b> Customer Engagement Strategy	Dec 2023	Item moved from November to December 2023

### Part 2: List of other potential items not yet included in the work programme

Issues that have recently been identified by the Committee, its Chair or officers as potential items but have not yet been added to the proposed work programme. If a Councillor raises an idea in a meeting and the committee agrees under recommendation 3 that this should be explored, it will appear either in the work programme or in this section of the report at the committee's next meeting, at the discretion of the Chair.

<b>Topic</b>	
<b>Description</b>	
<b>Lead Officer/s</b>	

<b>Item suggested by</b>	<i>Officer, Member, Committee, partners, public question, petition etc</i>
<b>Type of item</b>	<i>Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i>
<b>Prior member engagement/ development required</b> <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 2)</i>	
<b>Public Participation/ Engagement approach</b> <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)</i>	
<b>Lead Officer Commentary/Proposed Action(s)</b>	

### Part 3: Agenda Items for Forthcoming Meetings

Meeting 2 2023	14 September 2023	Time				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision</li> <li>Referral to decision-maker</li> <li>Pre-decision (policy development)</li> <li>Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</li> </ul>	<i>(re: decisions)</i> <b>Prior member engagement/ development required</b> <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 2)</i>	<i>(re: decisions)</i> <b>Public Participation/ Engagement approach</b> <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)</i>	<b>Final decision-maker (&amp; date)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Cttee</li> <li>Another Cttee (eg S&amp;R)</li> <li>Full Council</li> <li>Officer</li> </ul>
Council housing disrepair	Approval of Early Resolution Improvement plan, including position statement on council housing disrepair cases.	Dean Butterworth	Decision	Yes	TBC	This Committee (referred from Full Council)
Damp and Mould Update	Update on improvements to Damp, Mould, and	Janet Sharpe	Decision	TBC	TBC	This Committee

	Condensation in Council Housing (including Damp and Mould Policy, Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment and Damp and Mould Task Force Action Plan Progress Update).					
HMO Licensing Fee Review	Approve the revised HMO License Fee and Charging Structure	Darryl Smedley	Decision	Yes		This Committee
Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code – Annual Self-Assessment	Approve the outcomes of annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code	Darryl Smedley	Decision	Yes		This Committee
HNS and Repairs Performance Reports	Quarterly overview of HNS and Repairs Service performance (including Capital Programme and Stock Increase Programme updates)	Janet Sharpe Tom Smith	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	Performance is shared with tenants through newsletters, the website and tenant meetings	This Committee
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i></li> <li>• <i>Work Programme</i></li> <li>• <i>National Policy and Regulation responses</i></li> <li>• <i>[any other committee-specific standing items eg finance or service monitoring]</i></li> </ul>					

2023/24 Q1 Budget Monitoring	Approval of Budget Monitoring Report	Jane Wilby	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Capital Finance Monitoring Report	Final approval of the 2022/23 Outturn, Quarter 1 Performance of the Approved 23/24 Housing Investment Programme (Capital) and the Forward 5 Year Housing Investment Programme	Janet Sharpe	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Meeting 3 2023	2 November 2023	Time				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item	(re: decisions) <b>Prior member engagement/ development required</b> <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 2)</i>	(re: decisions) <b>Public Participation/ Engagement approach</b> <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision</li> <li>Referral to decision-maker</li> <li>Pre-decision (policy development)</li> <li>Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Cttee</li> <li>Another Cttee (eg S&amp;R)</li> <li>Full Council</li> <li>Officer</li> </ul>
2024 to 2027 Revenue & Capital Budget	A joint report with the DoF and relevant Exec/Strategic Directors	Liz Gough	Decision			This cttee
Housing Revenue Account Business Plan	Consideration of proposal for achieving a balanced Plan	Janet Sharpe	Referral to decision-maker	Prior work with Members through briefings	Consultation with tenants on Business Plan options	Strategy and Resources

	HRA Business Plan for 24/25					
Housing General Fund savings proposals	Consideration of proposal to mitigate Housing General Fund pressures in 24/25	Janet Sharpe	Referral to decision-maker	Prior work with Members through briefings	Consultation with tenants on options	Strategy and Resources
Net-Zero Roadmap - for existing public and private homes	Consideration of plans for achieving Net Zero across SCC homes	Nathan Robinson	Decision	Yes	TBC	This Committee
Housing Regulation	Overview of new legislative requirements around Consumer and Building Safety Regulations	Janet Sharpe Tom Smith	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	TBC	TBC	This Committee
Conditions of Tenancy	An update on minor changes to the current Conditions of Tenancy	Janet Sharpe	Decision	Prior work with Members through briefings	Through a range of tenant consultation	This Committee
Commission of a new Furnished Accommodation Framework.	The purpose of the report is to obtain approval for Sheffield City Council to commission a new Furnished Accommodation goods Framework.  This new framework will be used to purchase all furnished items for Sheffield and Rotherham's furnished service,	Jonathan South	Decision	Briefings will be offered and more information provided at pre agenda meetings.		This Committee



	replacing the current agreement.					
NEW: SCC Response to Regulatory Consultations	Report sharing the Council's response to recent Government consultations on regulatory reforms	Janet Sharpe	For information only			
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i></li> <li>• <i>Work Programme</i></li> <li>• <i>National Policy and Regulation responses</i></li> <li>• <i>[any other committee-specific standing items eg finance or service monitoring]</i></li> </ul>					
Revenue Finance Monitoring Report	Approval of Revenue Finance Monitoring Report	Jane Wilby	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Capital Finance Monitoring Report	Approval of Capital Finance Monitoring Report	Janet Sharpe	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Meeting 5 2023	14 December 2023	Time				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision</li> <li>Referral to decision-maker</li> <li>Pre-decision (policy development)</li> <li>Post-decision (service performance/monitoring)</li> </ul>	(re: decisions) Prior member engagement/development required (with reference to options in Appendix 2)	(re: decisions) Public Participation/Engagement approach (with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)	Final decision-maker (& date) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Cttee</li> <li>Another Cttee (eg S&amp;R)</li> <li>Full Council</li> <li>Officer</li> </ul>
<b>NEW:</b> Housing Revenue Account Business Plan	Consideration of planned financial pressures to achieve a balanced Business Plan for 2024/25	Janet Sharpe	Referral to decision-maker	Prior work with Members through briefings	Consultation with tenants on Business Plan options	Strategy and Resources
<b>NEW:</b> Housing General Fund savings proposals	Consideration of planned financial pressures to achieve a balanced Business Plan for 2024/25	Janet Sharpe	Referral to decision-maker	Prior work with Members through briefings	Consultation with tenants on Business Plan options	Strategy and Resources
<b>NEW:</b> Asset Management Strategy	Approval of the Council Housing Asset Management Strategy	Janet Sharpe	Decision	Through Knowledge Briefings and LACs	Through a range of tenant consultation	This Committee
Customer Engagement Strategy 2023-25	Report updating Committee on arrangements for tenant involvement and empowerment and approval of revised strategy	Janet Sharpe	Decision	Through Knowledge Briefings and LACs	Through a range of tenant consultation	This Committee
<b>NEW:</b> HNS and Repairs Performance Reports	Quarterly overview of HNS and Repairs Service performance (including Capital Programme and Stock Increase Programme updates)	Janet Sharpe Tom Smith	Post-decision (service performance/monitoring)	N/A	Performance is shared with tenants through newsletters, the website and tenant meetings	This Committee

Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i></li> <li>• <i>Work Programme</i></li> <li>• <i>National Policy and Regulation responses</i></li> <li>• <i>[any other committee-specific standing items eg finance or service monitoring]</i></li> </ul>					
2023/34 Q3 Budget Monitoring Report	Approval of Budget Monitoring Report	Jane Wilby	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Capital Finance Monitoring Report	Approval of Capital Finance Monitoring Report	Janet Sharpe	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Meeting 5 2023	29 January 2024	Time				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item	(re: decisions) <b>Prior member engagement/ development required</b> <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 2)</i>	(re: decisions) <b>Public Participation/ Engagement approach</b> <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date)
Older Persons Independent Housing Living Strategy	5-year strategy setting out Sheffield's strategic approaches for helping our growing older	Suzanne Allen	Decision	Yes; written briefings, all member briefings	Creative use of online engagement channels; working with VCF networks;	This Committee

	population to live independently in their own homes across all housing tenures.				stakeholder reference groups; formal and informal discussion groups	
<b>NEW:</b> Powers and resources to protect migrants from discriminatory housing conditions	Housing Policy Committee are asked to reaffirm Sheffield as a City of Sanctuary and review the powers and resources to in place to protect migrants from discriminatory housing conditions	Janet Sharpe and Beth Storm	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	Yes; written briefings, all member briefings	N/A	This Committee
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i></li> <li>• <i>Work Programme</i></li> <li>• <i>National Policy and Regulation responses</i></li> <li>• <i>[any other committee-specific standing items eg finance or service monitoring]</i></li> </ul>					
Revenue Finance Monitoring Report	Approval of Revenue Finance Monitoring Report	Jane Wilby	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Capital Finance Monitoring Report	Approval of Capital Finance Monitoring Report	Janet Sharpe	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A

<b>Meeting 6 2023</b>	<b>21 March 2024</b>	Time				
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Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	<b>Type of item</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Decision</i></li> <li>• <i>Referral to decision-maker</i></li> <li>• <i>Pre-decision (policy development)</i></li> <li>• <i>Post-decision (service performance/monitoring)</i></li> </ul>	<i>(re: decisions)</i> <b>Prior member engagement/development required</b> <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 2)</i>	<i>(re: decisions)</i> <b>Public Participation/Engagement approach</b> <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)</i>	<b>Final decision-maker (&amp; date)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This Cttee</li> <li>• Another Cttee (eg S&amp;R)</li> <li>• Full Council</li> <li>• Officer</li> </ul>
Approval of a new Housing Strategy for the City	Consideration of a new Housing Strategy for the City following significant consultation and policy development	Georgina Parkin	Decision	Significant engagement with Members through Task and Finish	Creative use of online engagement channels; working with VCF networks; stakeholder reference groups; formal and informal discussion groups	This Committee
<b>NEW:</b> HNS and Repairs Performance Reports	Quarterly overview of HNS and Repairs Service performance (including Capital Programme and Stock Increase Programme updates)	Janet Sharpe Tom Smith	Post-decision (service performance/monitoring)	N/A	Performance is shared with tenants through newsletters, the website and tenant meetings	This Committee
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Public Questions/Petitions</i></li> <li>• <i>Work Programme</i></li> <li>• <i>National Policy and Regulation responses</i></li> <li>• <i>[any other committee-specific standing items eg finance or service monitoring]</i></li> </ul>					

2023/34 Q4 Budget Monitoring Report	Approval of Budget Monitoring Report	Jane Wilby	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Capital Finance Monitoring Report	Approval of Capital Finance Monitoring Report	Janet Sharpe	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Items which the committee have agreed to add to an agenda, but for which no date is yet set.						
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision</li> <li>Referral to decision-maker</li> <li>Pre-decision (policy development)</li> <li>Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</li> </ul>	(re: decisions) Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 2)</i>	(re: decisions) Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Cttee</li> <li>Another Cttee (eg S&amp;R)</li> <li>Full Council</li> <li>Officer</li> </ul>



## **Appendix 2 – Menu of options for member engagement, learning and development prior to formal Committee consideration**

Members should give early consideration to the degree of pre-work needed before an item appears on a formal agenda.

All agenda items will anyway be supported by the following:

- Discussion well in advance as part of the work programme item at Pre-agenda meetings. These take place in advance of each formal meeting, before the agenda is published and they consider the full work programme, not just the immediate forthcoming meeting. They include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers
- Discussion and, where required, briefing by officers at pre-committee meetings in advance of each formal meeting, after the agenda is published. These include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers.
- Work Programming items on each formal agenda, as part of an annual and ongoing work programming exercise
- Full officer report on a public agenda, with time for a public discussion in committee
- Officer meetings with Chair & VC as representatives of the committee, to consider addition to the draft work programme, and later to inform the overall development of the issue and report, for the committee's consideration.

The following are examples of some of the optional ways in which the committee may wish to ensure that they are sufficiently engaged and informed prior to taking a public decision on a matter. In all cases the presumption is that these will take place in private, however some meetings could happen in public or eg be reported to the public committee at a later date.

These options are presented in approximately ascending order of the amount of resources needed to deliver them. Members must prioritise carefully, in consultation with officers, which items require what degree of involvement and information in advance of committee meetings, in order that this can be delivered within the officer capacity available.

The majority of items cannot be subject to the more involved options on this list, for reasons of officer capacity.

- Written briefing for the committee or all members (email)
- All-member newsletter (email)
- Requests for information from specific outside bodies etc.
- All-committee briefings (private or, in exceptional cases, in-committee)
- All-member briefing (virtual meeting)
- Facilitated policy development workshop (potential to invite external experts / public, see appendix 2)
- Site visits (including to services of the council)
- Task and Finish group (one at a time, one per cttee)

Furthermore, a range of public participation and engagement options are available to inform Councillors, see appendix 3.

## **Appendix 3 – Public engagement and participation toolkit**



## **Public Engagement Toolkit**

On 23 March 2022 Full Council agreed the following:

A toolkit to be developed for each committee to use when considering its 'menu of options' for ensuring the voice of the public has been central to their policy development work. Building on the developing advice from communities and Involve, committees should make sure they have a clear purpose for engagement; actively support diverse communities to engage; match methods to the audience and use a range of methods; build on what's worked and existing intelligence (SCC and elsewhere); and be very clear to participants on the impact that engagement will have.

The list below builds on the experiences of Scrutiny Committees and latterly the Transitional Committees and will continue to develop. The toolkit includes (but is not be limited to):

- a. Public calls for evidence
- b. Issue-focused workshops with attendees from multiple backgrounds (sometimes known as 'hackathons') led by committees
- c. Creative use of online engagement channels
- d. Working with VCF networks (eg including the Sheffield Equality Partnership) to seek views of communities
- e. Co-design events on specific challenges or to support policy development
- f. Citizens assembly style activities
- g. Stakeholder reference groups (standing or one-off)
- h. Committee / small group visits to services
- i. Formal and informal discussion groups
- j. Facilitated communities of interest around each committee (eg a mailing list of self-identified stakeholders and interested parties with regular information about forthcoming decisions and requests for contributions or volunteers for temporary co-option)
- k. Facility for medium-term or issue-by-issue co-option from outside the Council onto Committees or Task and Finish Groups. Co-optees of this sort at Policy Committees would be non-voting.

This public engagement toolkit is intended to be a quick 'how-to' guide for Members and officers to use when undertaking participatory activity through committees.

It will provide an overview of the options available, including the above list, and cover:

- How to focus on purpose and who we are trying to reach
- When to use and when not to use different methods
- How to plan well and be clear to citizens what impact their voice will have
- How to manage costs, timescales, scale.

**There is an expectation that Members and Officers will be giving strong consideration to the public participation and engagement options for each item on a committee's work programme, with reference to the above list a-k.**

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## Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report:** Alison Charlesworth, Service Manager (Author) / Dean Butterworth, Head of Service (Lead Officer)

**Tel:** 0114 293 0000

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**Report of:** *Ajman Ali (Executive Director, Operational Services)*

**Report to:** *Housing Policy Committee*

**Date of Decision:** *14<sup>th</sup> September 2023*

**Subject:** *Council Housing Disrepair – position statement*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(Insert reference number)</i>				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **Purpose of Report:**

*This report provides an update on Council Housing disrepair cases and an update on our early resolution implementation plan.*

**Recommendations:**

- That the Housing Policy Committee notes the report

**Background Papers:**

*(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)*

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: <i>Helen Damon</i>
	Legal: <i>Andrew Smith</i>
	Equalities & Consultation: <i>Louise Nunn</i>
	Climate: <i>N/A – no climate-related implications within this update</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>
2	<b>EMT member who approved submission:</b> <i>Ajman Ali</i>
3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b> <i>Cllr Douglas Johnson</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> <i>Dean Butterworth</i>
	<b>Job Title:</b> <i>Head of Service, Housing and Neighbourhoods Service</i>
<b>Date:</b> <i>21<sup>st</sup> August 2023</i>	

## 1. PROPOSAL

1.1 This report outlines the historic and current caseload for disrepair case management and outlines the current position with regards to case numbers, legal costs and performance. It also provides a summary of the ongoing improvement targets and actions agreed by the Disrepair Strategy Group.

### 1.2 Caseloads

Caseloads for disrepair have steadily increased since 2018. Disrepair cases have increased not only due to a pause of non-urgent repair work in 2020 due to COVID19 but also due to changes in legalisation. Our Legal Team advised us back in 2021 that in their professional opinion we will continue to see cases increase.

1.3 There are several reasons why they feel we have seen a large increase in the volume of Disrepair cases. These include:

- a) **The Homes (Fitness for Habitation) Act 2018** – this applies to all tenancies since 20 March 2020. It places additional repairing obligations on landlords to keep its properties ‘fit for human habitation’ and free from hazards. There is only an actual breach, and the Council are liable, if the property is uninhabitable.
- b) **Changes to funding of Personal Injury (PI) claims** – under court reforms solicitors can now only claim fixed fees for PI cases. This makes that area of works less attractive. Claims Farmers view Disrepair as ‘the new PPI’ and an area where social landlords are vulnerable. As there is not currently a fixed fee regime, Claims Farmers can claim disproportionately high costs in relation to damages.
- c) **Pandemic** – tenants have spent an unprecedented amount of time at home during the pandemic and noticed areas of their property where there is disrepair. In addition, we ceased responsive repair works to properties during the pandemic resulting in a backlog of responsive repair works to properties.

This is a national picture with many housing providers seeing similar patterns in relation to the numbers of disrepair cases being received.

1.4

Disrepair caseload levels since 2018 are as follows:

Year	Number of new cases received (as at April of each financial year)
April 2018	117
April 2019	170

April 2020	286
April 2021	392
April 2022	932
April 2023	1970
Up to end of July 23	210

1.5 Caseloads have continued to increase over the last three years but we feel that as we commence the new financial year, we may have reached the peak case numbers. We do not feel that case numbers will return to pre covid levels of 117 – 200 cases per annum however we forecast that it is likely that we will see new monthly cases of around 50 – 70 per month so around 500 – 840 new cases per annum moving forwards.

1.6 **Triage process**

We have recently introduced a new triage process for all disrepair cases.

The aim of the triage process is to –

- a) Improve the customer service provided to customers making a claim. We aim to ensure that a staff member from the Council speaks directly with the customer to ensure that they have regular contact with us.
- b) To carry out the diagnosing of repair work to properties back in house and utilise our existing Repairs and Maintenance Officers to carry out the pre inspection of our properties. These officers are technical officers who have experience of dealing with repair work and assessing properties and producing work schedules for the Repairs Service.
- c) Where customers have never reported repair work to us to signpost them through to the Council's complaints process so that their repairs can be logged and dealt with. We also explain that we will not deal with these cases as disrepair claims but as customer complaints.

1.7 **Legal fees and costs associated with disrepair works.**

1.8 As part of managing disrepair work, we incur legal fees. There are three parts to this –

- a) Legal charges – this is the charge for our Legal and Governance Service at managing and defending the claims on behalf of the Council.
- b) Disbursements – these are the fees incurred in cases for items such as engaging a barrister to represent the Council at court, court fees, expert fees.
- c) Damages and costs paid out to the customer in their case.

1.9 When a customer is successful in a disrepair case then the Council will

pay damages and costs in the case. We have reviewed the amount we pay in these cases and compared this over the last few years since 2019. The average amount paid out has remained constant for each case but there has been a shift in the split between the percentage of damages paid to the customer in cases. In general, this has decreased from 52% to 30% in each case with a greater share going to the tenant's solicitor.

1.10 A summary of the legal fees incurred over the last five years is summarised below. This covers both damages and costs and legal resources. We have also tried to log the average cost of responsive repair works to properties to reflect that this is low value works.

1.11

Year	Number of new cases	Total payments / expenditure	Average cost per case	Average cost of repair works	Average payment in compensation to customers
18/19	102	<b>£292,655.60</b>	£2,869.17	Not recorded	£576.28
19/20	139	<b>£348,802.43</b>	£2,509.37	Not recorded	£761.71
20/21	301	<b>£573,413.41</b>	£1,905.03	Not recorded	£631.73
21/22	660	<b>£1,751,918.22</b>	£2,654.42	£663.89	£364.99
22/23	1045	<b>£2,986,269.25</b>	£2,857.67	£1,283.54	£397.76
23/24 (up to end of July 23)	210	<b>£1,309,324.07</b>	£6,234.88	£1,260.65	£858.88

1.12 **Completion of work**

1.13 Over the last 12 – 18 months we have worked hard to complete as many disrepair works orders as possible. Our aim is to complete work within our repairing obligations. Due to the large volume of cases this is difficult with our current resourcing levels within the Repairs Service. Works orders vary in nature and content of work, some are complex and contain a large amount of repair works which affect several rooms within a property. Work can take anything from 1 – 2 weeks to complete and sometimes longer if follow on work needs to be completed in a sequential order such as painting after plastering works.

1.14 Below is a summary of the work orders completed per month against the

number of new claims received by the Council over the last 9 months.

	Oct 23	Nov 23	Dec 23	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	June 23
New claims received	61	97	65	75	69	57	37	46	65
Works orders completed	35	58	27	38	40	45	39	43	27

- 1.15 As can be seen in the table above, we are still receiving more disrepair claims than we are resolving. It is clear that we need to invest in further repair teams to ensure that we can complete a higher number of works orders per month and part of our early resolution plan is to review the number of teams working on disrepair to deliver a overall reduction in cases and a reduction in the level of compensation paid.
- 1.16 Whilst we currently do not have sufficient capacity to complete repair work within our repairing categories this leads to further cost and expense for the Council. If disrepair repair work is not completed within a maximum of 55 days our liability increases. As soon as a claim is made we are put on notice until repair work is completed and damages are calculated from the notice date to work completion date. If we can complete 95% of repair work within 55 days this is likely to save an estimated £4,200 per claim, which if we receive an average of 804 new claims per annum would be a saving of £3.5m. We are currently only completing 6.5% of disrepair repairs within the 55 day target, this is due to prioritising cases from our backlog. It should be noted that we have increased the number of cases completed per month over the last four months in the main, however in June we completed some large scale and complex cases.
- 1.17 Within the early resolution improvement plan we are looking to engage a third team of operatives to manage completion of disrepair works orders. Engaging this third team will help to support our ability to complete the number of new cases we receive each month but will not address reducing the backlog of cases. We have looked at resources required to start to reduce the backlog and we are modelling options as part of our HRA Business Planning process. Realistically it is anticipated that we will require an additional four teams of operatives on a temporary basis over a 12-month period to complete all backlog cases. Once the backlog cases are complete only then can we operate on a basis of all new cases coming to the Council being completed within our 55 day repairing category. The other challenge for us is the availability of skilled labour being available in what is currently a highly competitive market for the construction sector not only within Yorkshire but across the whole of the UK.



## 1.18 **Early Resolution Improvement Plan**

The Disrepair Strategy Meeting has committed to delivering a number of ongoing targets and improvement items that we are currently working on, and a summary of those key items is as follows –

- We continue to improve performance of Repairs and Maintenance Officers to ensure that we can complete 20 disrepair pre inspections per week so that we can achieve our financial saving of £1.2m within the Housing Revenue Account budget for 23-24.
- We recruit to a surveyor who can deal with more complex cases to support the pre inspection regime ensuring that 100% of all cases are surveyed by Council staff to avoid using external agencies.
- Our Repairs Service currently have two teams engaged on disrepair activity and are looking to engage additional resources to support completion of repair orders in excess of new disrepair claims coming into the Council. It is business critical that we drive a monthly reduction in disrepair cases completed within the 55 day repair category.
- Continuing to support the triage process to divert claims via the complaint process for repairs not previously reported.
- We have started to log all new disrepair cases and will analyse these into property type, archetype, housing estate and 3 simple repair headings so that this data can be analysed to establish trend and asset intelligence.
- We are researching use of environmental sensors to properties experiencing damp / mould so that we can specify this as a standard item on all properties reporting disrepair.
- Our Repairs Service is working to review communications we have for customers to provide a better customer experience in understanding the disrepair process.
- We are improving quality of pre inspection reports by using an electronic system called Housemark photobook to standardise reports for disrepair cases which will be rolled out shortly.
- We have many people who are advised by their legal representative not to allow us to enter a property until they have agreed the works/claim level. We will deal with these cases more robustly in future and will be clear with legal companies that we have a legal right to enter the property and mitigate a claim and to ensure that all repair work is completed as quickly and efficiently as possible.

## **2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?**

- 2.1 By reviewing our internal processes this has given us the opportunity to look at areas for improvement in managing any disrepair cases that are made against the Council. The improvement plans in place to resolve cases early will ensure that customers see repair work completed quicker and they are kept updated throughout the process. This contributes to

the primary goal in the Council's Delivery Plan to *"be a good council and ensure high quality services for all."* and allows for a better customer experience.

- 2.2 Managing disrepair is one of the key priorities for the Housing and Neighbourhood Service in our service plan for 2023-2025.

### **3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?**

- 3.1 Officers from the Housing and Neighbourhood Service, Repairs and Maintenance Service and Legal and Governance team have worked together to draft the early resolution plan.

### **4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

#### 4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report, and the Equalities team have confirmed that no Equalities Impact Assessment is required.

#### 4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 There are some financial costs associated with the targets and improvements that have been set by the Disrepair Strategy Board. To date in 2023/24, the actions and improvements taken have been managed within existing resources and it is anticipated that for the remainder of 2023/24 any additional costs will continue to be managed with current budgets.

Any additional costs for 2024/25, to implement the targets and improvements for housing disrepair, will be included in the 2024/25 Housing Revenue Account Business Planning process, along with any potential savings from driving the improvements forward, reducing cases and costs per claim.

#### 4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

#### 4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 There are no climate implications arising from this report.

#### 4.4 Other Implications

4.4.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

## **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 Managing disrepair claims made against the Council is a legal and landlord responsibility. Therefore, in this respect there were no other alternatives considered.

## **6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 Housing Policy Committee note the report and its contents.

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## Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report:** Dean Butterworth: Head of Housing Investment and Maintenance

**Tel:** 07947701796

**Report of:** *Ajman Ali*

**Report to:** *Housing Policy Committee*

**Date of Decision:** *14 September 2023*

**Subject:** *Damp and Mould Update*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2318				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<p><i>“The (<b>report/appendix</b>) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (<b>insert relevant paragraph number</b>) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i></p>				

### Purpose of Report:

Following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak who died nearly three years ago from a respiratory condition caused by damp and mould in his home, the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to the 15 December 2022 Housing Policy Committee outlining the establishment of a Damp and Mould Task Group and the work required to meet the recommendations within the Ombudsman’s 26-point Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould.

This report will highlight progress in meeting the requirements of the Ombudsman’s report and will also seek approval of the Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy.

**Recommendations:**

The Members of the Housing Policy Committee are recommended to:

- Note the contents of this report.
- Note the progress made in complying with the Housing Ombudsman's Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould
- Approve the Sheffield City Council Damp, Mould, and Condensation Policy

**Background Papers:**

*Appendix 1 - Self-assessment against the 26 recommendations within the Housing Ombudsman's October 2021 Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould.*

*Appendix 2 - Sheffield City Council Damp and Mould Policy.*

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: <i>Helen Damon</i>
		Legal: <i>Rebecca Lambert</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>Louise Nunn</i>
		Climate: <i>Nathan Robinson</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	<b>EMT member who approved submission:</b>	<i>Ajman Ali</i>
3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b>	<i>Douglas Johnson</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> <i>Dean Butterworth</i>	<b>Job Title:</b> <i>Head of Housing Investment and Maintenance</i>
	<b>Date:</b> <i>14 September 2023</i>	

## **1. PROPOSAL**

- 1.1 Following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak who died nearly three years ago from a respiratory condition caused by damp and mould in his home, the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to the 15 December 2022 Housing Policy Committee outlining the establishment of a Damp and Mould Task Group and the work required to meet the recommendations within the Ombudsman's 26-point Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould.
- 1.2 The key elements of the report were to set out Sheffield City Council's ('the Council's') approach to embedding a zero-tolerance approach to damp, mould and condensation in both the council housing and private rented sectors and would establish a Damp and Mould Task Group to review all aspects of damp, mould and condensation in order to reduce the impact on the health and wellbeing of residents living in affected properties.
- 1.3 This report will highlight the progress that the Damp and Mould Task Group have made in responding to the key elements within the Ombudsman's 26-point Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould and will seek approval for a Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy which will set out the Council's approach to dealing with this challenging and complex service.

## **2. LEGAL AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS**

- 2.1 In relation to the issue of the existence and management of damp and mould in the City's rented accommodation, Sheffield City Council ('the Council') has separate responsibilities.

### **1. As regulator of housing standards for private sector rented properties in the city:**

In its capacity as regulator of housing standards the Council has statutory powers and duties of investigation and enforcement under the Housing Act 2004.

### **2. In its role as a social landlord providing rented homes to Council tenants:**

In its capacity as a social landlord the Council is subject to the same legal requirements as private landlords (although it cannot regulate itself) and its obligations to its tenants in relation to damp and mould are set out in the tenancy agreement, Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 (the latter of which essentially incorporates the same housing standards required under the Housing Act 2004 into the provisions of Landlord and Tenant Act 1985) and the Defective Property Act 1972

- 2.2 In its capacity both as a Social Landlord and as a regulator the Council is required to comply with the requirements of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System ('HHSRS'), it is also necessary for the Council to satisfy the Regulator of Social Housing's ('RSH') 'Home Standard' and the Decent Home Standard.
- 2.3 To meet these statutory and regulatory requirements all local authorities and registered providers are required to have systems in place to ensure that both private rented and social housing homes are free from hazardous levels of damp and mould, and to identify and deal with cases promptly and efficiently.

### **3. THE DAMP AND MOULD TASK FORCE**

- 3.1 The Damp and Mould Task Force is now established, and the group is chaired by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods. The group is a cross functional team looking at both private rented homes and council housing. The Group reports into the Housing Improvement Board chaired by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services and to the Housing Policy Committee.
- 3.2 The Damp and Mould Task Force established sub-groups consisting of council wide officers from Adult and Childrens Social Care, Public Health, Housing, Repairs and Maintenance, Customer and Digital Services and Organisational Strategy, Performance & Delivery. In addition to multi-agency partners in the National Health Service and Local Primary Care Networks. The sub-groups are:
- Operational Group
  - Performance and Data Group
  - Communications and Engagement Group

The purpose of each sub-group is to drive forward key workstreams, taking a lead role on discharging the actions identified through our self-assessment against the 26 recommendations within the Housing Ombudsman's October 2021 Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould and to ultimately improve our maturity and approach to tackling the prevalence of damp and mould in the homes we provide.

Each sub-group has a detailed operational action plan which have a clear focus on complying with all Housing Ombudsman recommendations in dealing with damp, mould and condensation, developing a zero-tolerance approach in relation to damp, mould and condensation and to learn from best practice across the wider housing sector.



#### **4. HOUSING OMBUDSMAN SELF-ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 We have undertaken a self-assessment against the 26 recommendations within the Housing Ombudsman's October 2021 Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould.

Of the 26 recommendations we assessed that we are fully compliant against 11 of the 26 and are partially compliant against the remaining 15. Where we do not feel we are fully compliant, we have developed a series of actions to further improve our approach to damp and mould. These actions have been allocated to the Damp and Mould Task Force sub-groups as appropriate to take the lead on moving actions forward in agreed timescales. In addition to the Housing Ombudsman self-assessment, we have also undertaken a full review of the lessons learned from the Awaab Ishak case at Rochdale Boroughwide Homes and incorporated learning into our improvement plans.

- 4.2 It is anticipated that the Council will be fully compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould by the end of the current 2023/24 financial year.

Details of our self-assessment can be found at **Appendix 1**.

#### **5. DAMP AND MOULD POLICY**

- 5.1 It is critically important that we are clear with our tenants, residents and stakeholders what our approach is to managing damp and mould in our homes. To ensure that this message is clear and consistently communicated we have developed a policy that explains how the Council will manage reports of damp and mould in council homes. Our approach includes a risk assessment of the report, creation of plan to remedy the issue and support tenants to live well in decent quality homes through the provision of advice on mould and condensation. This policy has been developed in partnership with key internal and external stakeholder.

The aim of the policy is to reduce the likelihood of damp, mould and condensation occurring in council homes in the first instance through effective use of stock condition data and to prioritise future investment decisions based on priority need. This will form a key strand of future capital investment programmes.

The policy also provides clarity about what steps we will take to resolve issues and how we will listen to tenants and their concerns. We will ensure that we offer non-judgemental guidance, advice, and assistance throughout this process to all customers living in council properties to avoid the inference of blame and to be upfront and clear about our responsibility.

Our aim is that no council tenant in Sheffield will suffer from any damp, mould or condensation that affects their overall health and well-being. A copy of the Sheffield City Council Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy is attached at **Appendix 2**.

## **6. PERFORMANCE DATA**

- 6.1 A key function of the Damp and Mould Task Group is to develop a robust performance framework to identify the number of damp mould and condensation cases being reported, how many of these cases are being resolved at the first report and how many require further intervention. This performance report will also help identify areas of the city where under reporting of damp, mould and condensation is occurring to enable officers to target the appropriate interventions in these areas.
- 6.2 The key function of the performance report is to allow for a detailed analysis of trends across the city, to identify challenging property archetypes and to promote our zero approach to dealing with damp, mould, and condensation through timely and effective interventions. This performance report is currently being finalised and will be shared with Housing Policy Committee Members as part of routine housing performance reporting.

## **7. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

### 7.1 Equality Implications

- 7.1.1 A full equalities impact assessment of how the Council deals with damp and mould cases is currently being undertaken in respect of the development of the Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy and will focus specifically on the issues highlighted in the Awaab Ishak case in Rochdale where racism was identified as a primary concern.

### 7.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 7.2.1 A review of the five-year Capital Programme will to be undertaken to ensure the required resources are available to meet the Council's zero tolerance approach to this service area. Future spending requirements will be included within the HRA Business Plan and shared with the Housing Policy Committee.

### 7.3 Legal Implications

- 7.3.1 On the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022, following the conclusion of the inquest into the death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale, the Senior Coroner of the Coroner Area of Manchester North issued a Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths under paragraph 7, Schedule 5, of the Coroner's and Justice Act 2009 and Regulation 28 and 29 of the

Coroner's (Investigations) Regulations 2013. This Regulation 28 Report was sent to the Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the Secretary of State for Health stating that they each have the power to prevent future deaths and asking for their response and a plan of action. In response to this DLUHC and the Regulator of Social Housing wrote to each Local Authority and Registered Social Landlord to get reassurances that each landlord and Council is meeting its legal and regulatory requirements in relation to damp and mould, and if not, to outline how it intends to become fully compliant (as previously detailed in Appendix A and B to the Housing Policy Committee Report in December 2022). The Regulation 28 Report and abovementioned letters have prompted and shaped the Council's continuing work in seeking to address Damp and Mould as detailed in this report.

- 7.3.2 Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 places duties and powers on the Council as a regulator to review the conditions of the housing in their district (under section 3) and to inspect residential premises within its area to identify whether Damp and Mould or any other Category 1 or 2 Hazard exists at the premises (under section 4). Where a Category 1 or 2 Hazard such as Damp and Mould has been identified the Council also has duties and powers to take enforcement action (under sections 5 – 9).
- 7.3.3 Under section 9A of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 as amended by the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 all social and private landlords must ensure that their property, including any common parts of the building, is fit for human habitation at the beginning of the tenancy and throughout its duration. In order to achieve this the Council in its capacity as a social landlord will need to make sure that each Council Property is free of hazards which are so serious that the dwelling is not reasonably suitable for occupation in that condition. The criteria for determining whether a property is unfit for human habitation is set out in section 10 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, '*freedom from damp*' is one of the items which will be considered when establishing if a property is not reasonably suitable for occupation in that condition. Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 sets out the Landlords repairing covenants which are to (a) *to keep in repair the structure and exterior of the dwelling-house*, (b) *to keep in repair and proper working order the installations in the dwelling-house for the supply of water, gas and electricity and for sanitation*, and (c) *to keep in repair and proper working order the installations in the dwelling-house for space heating and heating water*.
- 7.3.4 The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/3208) which establishes the HHSRS came into force in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 2, 4 and 250(2)(a) of the Housing Act 2004 on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2006. The HHSRS prescribes the

categories of hazard and the approach to be adopted by Local Authorities in assessing the seriousness of each hazard. It replaces the fitness standard as the statutory element of the Decent Home Standard. By focusing on potential hazards, it places emphasis directly on the risk to health and safety. The HHSRS uses a formula to generate a numerical score which allows comparison of the full range of hazards. This, together with the simple but logical approach of assessing both the likelihood and harm outcome allows the comparison of highly likely minor hazards and very unlikely major ones. The Council has a duty to comply with the requirements of the HHSRS both in its capacity as a regulator and as social landlord.

7.3.5 All Local Authorities and Social Landlords must ensure the Housing they provide meets the minimum requirements of the Decent Home Standard as defined by Government's June 2006 guidance entitled 'A Decent Home: Definition and Guidance for implementation'. A Decent Home must meet the following 4 criteria:

- (a) It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing - *(To be decent home a dwelling should be free of category 1 hazards under the HHSRS, and the existence of such hazards should be a trigger for remedial action unless practical steps cannot be taken without disproportionate expense or disruption)*
- (b) It is in a reasonable state of repair
- (c) It has reasonably modern facilities and services
- (d) It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

7.3.6 The general power of management of its housing is vested in the Council by virtue of section 21 of the Housing Act 1985. The Council can use the powers under this section, in conjunction with the other statutory and regulatory provisions detailed above, to undertake the proposals set out in this report.

#### 7.4 Climate Implications

7.4.1 Improving the thermal efficiency of homes is one of the main remedies in dealing with damp and mould. SCC will include any recommendations from the Damp and Mould Task Group in the work being undertaken to become Net Zero and the roadmap to decarbonisation.

#### 7.5 Other Implications

7.5.1 None

### 8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

8.1 None

**9. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 To update the Housing Policy Committee on the work being undertaken by Officers and the Damp and Mould Task Force in response to the challenges of damp and mould in both private sector rented and Council Housing in Sheffield.

9.2 To update the Housing Policy Committee on the progress being made in complying with the Housing Ombudsman's Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould.

9.3 To formalise Sheffield City Council's approach for dealing with Damp and Mould issues in Council Properties by adopting a Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy.

## Appendix 1 – Damp, Mould, and Condensation Self-Assessment

Ref No	Housing Ombudsman recommendation	Evidence / explanation	Are we compliant? (yes/no /partially)	Owner	Next Steps
1	Landlords should adopt a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould interventions. Landlords should review their current strategy and consider whether their approach will achieve this.	<p>We have reviewed and changed our approach to condensation, damp and mould (CDM) and further changes are being explored as part of our ongoing engagement with customers. SCC has established a Damp and Mould Task Group to oversee both its operational and strategic approach to CDM with overall oversight and scrutiny being provided by SCC's Housing Policy Committee. SCC has responded quickly to the recent focus placed on damp and mould. Immediate activity has included alterations to the process for receiving and handling customer enquiries about damp and mould most significantly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All reports of damp/mould are triaged by asking questions (via the contact centre)</li> <li>• SCC is also looking to expand its stock condition survey process to maximise opportunities to have data driven strategies in place to identify the root causes of CDM and target future investment decisions.</li> <li>• Offer advice on how to reduce levels of condensation.</li> <li>• Carry out inspections to identify the cause of damp and mould and appoint our specialist damp contractor to carry out specialist surveys.</li> <li>• Prioritise cases with children and households with known respiratory conditions.</li> </ul> <p>The work of the Damp and Mould Task Group will drive a continuous improvement approach to how SCC deals with CDM.</p>	Yes	Damp and Mould Task Group	Take a full report to the Housing Policy Committee in September 2023 outlining the progress in responding to the challenges of CDM in SCC stock and the Private Rented Sector.

2	Landlords should consider whether they require an overall framework, or policy, to address damp and mould which would cover each area where the landlord may be required to act. This would include any proactive interventions, its approach to diagnosis, actions it considers appropriate in different circumstances, effective communication, and aftercare.	SCC is developing a policy and framework to sit alongside our new approach this will be developed in partnership with council tenants and private rented tenants and in collaboration with a wide network of key internal and external stakeholders. There will also supporting be a suite of supporting policies and procedures that we will review namely, No-access policy, decant policy, disrepair policy and allocations policy.	Partially	Damp and Mould Operational Subgroup	Condensation, Damp and Mould Policy to be tabled at the Sept 2023 HPC for approval.
3	Landlords should review the accessibility and use of their systems for reporting repairs and making complaints to 'find their silence'.	SCC has opened a dedicated phone line for both private rented tenants and council tenants, email address and digital channels to report CDM cases. SCC has written to every customer to remind them how to report LCDM, repairs, complaints and to the Housing Ombudsman. We are developing a robust Equalities Impact process to identify 'hidden customers' and will develop appropriate strategies for reducing levels of under reporting. SCC will work with external partners such as the NHS and local GP consortia to identify cases that would not traditionally be reported to the council and will review performance and feedback to make additional changes.	Partially	Performance and Data Subgroup	Produce a performance dashboard for the Damp and Mould Task Group by November 2023
4	Landlords should identify opportunities for extending the scope of their diagnosis within buildings, for example by examining neighbouring properties, to ensure the response early on is as effective as possible.	SCC we will use our repairs data, stock condition data, remote monitoring, and staff/contractor visits to more holistically tackle LCDM issues. We have also started a program of Annual Tenancy Visits which will target high priority properties. As previously noted, SCC is moving to individual property stock condition data to allow for a review of all properties not just cloned data.	Yes	Damp and Mould Operational Subgroup	85% individual stock condition data in place by Spring 2024.

5	Landlords should implement a data driven, risk-based approach with respect to damp and mould. This will reduce over reliance on residents to report issues, help landlords identify hidden issues and support landlords to anticipate and prioritise interventions before a complaint or disrepair claim is made.	Building on the answer above, we will create an CDM case database. We will use this to prioritise investment, interventions and proactive customer support linked to the councils 5 Year Capital Investment Programme. SCC will also put in place a similar data base that monitors and tracks performance in the private rented sector.	Partially	Performance and Data Subgroup	Systems in place by Spring 2024
6	Where properties are identified for future disposal or are within an area marked for regeneration, landlords should proactively satisfy themselves that residents do not receive a poorer standard of service or lower living conditions, that steps are taken to avoid homes degrading to an unacceptable condition and that they regularly engage and communicate with these residents.	SCC is developing an Asset Management Strategy that will set out its approach to investment, regeneration, demolition, and new build. This approach, linked with its CDM objectives will set out investment opportunities for the 5 Year Capital Programme and the 30 Year Business Plan. SCC is developing a Customer First approach to CDM and will be communicating this approach to residents setting out clear expectations and service standards.	Partially	Communications Subgroup	Asset Management Strategy in place by Spring 2024
7	Landlords should avoid taking actions that solely place the onus on the resident. They should evaluate what mitigations they can put in place to support residents in cases where structural interventions are not appropriate and satisfy themselves, they are taking all reasonable steps.	We will provide support and guidance to all our residents. Some general guidance is provided on our website, but we will also create bespoke LCDM management plans for customers where required	Partially	Communications Sub Group	Communications Plan in place by November 2023 focusing on communications, training and guidance and customer support.



8	Together with residents, landlords should review the information, materials and support provided to residents to ensure that these strike the right tone and are effective in helping residents to avoid damp and mould in their properties.	In line with the above SCC will have completed this review and produced new materials, which we will have consulted with residents on, incorporating their views into the final versions.	Partially	Communications Subgroup	Communications Plan in place by November 2023 focusing on communications, training and guidance and customer support.
9	Landlords should be more transparent with residents involved in mutual exchanges and make the most of every opportunity to identify and address damp and mould, including visits and void periods.	SCC will check for damp at mutual exchange home inspections before approving the exchange and will strengthen this to specify a room by room check and advise the incoming tenants of our findings and any required action. SCC is also developing a 'make every visit count' principles of reporting concerns and more proactively asking about damp and mould. Each void property will also be resolved of any damp and mould before reletting in council housing.	Partially	Damp and Mould Operational Subgroup	All revised processed in place by November 2023
10	Landlords should ensure their strategy for delivering net zero carbon homes consider and plans for how they can identify and respond to potential unintended consequences around damp and mould.	All SCC council homes will be EPC C by 2030 with a robust asset programme in place. SCC has also carried out a Roadmap to Net Zero and this will be reported to the Housing Policy Committee in September 2023. This Along with the planned Asset Management Strategy for council housing stock will align property conditions and warmth. SCC has adopted a fabric first approach to net zero.	Yes	Damp and Mould Operational Subgroup	Ensure EPC and Asset Management Plans delivered by timescale.
11	Landlords should review, alongside residents, their initial response to reports of damp and mould to ensure they avoid automatically apportioning blame or using language that leaves residents feeling blamed.	SCC are completing this review and we have created an internal communication stream which will review all communications, training, and guidance. Our CDM action plan includes looking at holding regular focus groups for residents to have some discussions around causes of damp and mould, how SCC deals with them and feedback on how we could improve or adapt our approach based on lessons learned. This could also include exploratory questions around what they learnt about their own behaviours and what they did to help make things more manageable.	Partially	Communications Subgroup	All revised processed in place by November 2023

12	Landlords should consider their current approach to record keeping and satisfy themselves it is sufficiently accurate and robust. We would encourage landlords to go further and consider whether their record keeping systems and processes support a risk-based approach to damp and mould.	SCC has a Housing Management System that records all activity around tenancies and investment. Clear standards of recording are in place. The Repairs and Maintenance Service has a different IT system, Total Mobile system so interfacing with Repairs and Maintenance information is critical. SCC is also investing £10m in a new Integrated Housing IT solution to ensure that information is managed robustly, phase 1 will be implemented in December 2023. The introduction of the new IT system in Housing will improve asset data and read across with repairs information to ensure a robust CDM dashboard can be developed.	Partially	Performance and Data Subgroup	Comprehensive CDM Dashboard in place by April 2024
13	Landlords should ensure that their responses to reports of damp and mould are timely and reflect the urgency of the issue.	This is one of SCCs guiding principles for CDM. We are introducing a new faster response time for new CDM repairs cases. SCC will ensure effective pre and post work engagement with all residents is robust and timely and that ongoing satisfaction levels with both our customer service and quality of work is measured and reviewed.	Yes	Damp and Mould Task Group	New framework in place by November 2023
14	Landlords should review the number of missed appointments in relation to damp and mould cases and, depending on the outcome of any review, consider what steps may be required to reduce them.	The Repairs and Maintenance Service's IT system allows for the reporting of performance in relation to missed appointments by job type. This together with improve communications with customers is improving access and communications. This, together with our new technology and, Damp and Mould Communications and, improvements by the Repairs and Maintenance Services will improve this area during 2023. Any missed appointment will be immediately followed up with an appropriate action plan for completion.	Partially	Damp and Mould Operational Subgroup	All revised processed in place by November 2023
15	Landlords should ensure that their staff, whether in-house or contractors, can identify and report early signs of damp and mould.	An 'every visit counts' campaign will be run aimed at any member of staff/supply chain that visits our homes as part of their remit. We will make it easy for staff/suppliers to report concerns.	Partially	Communications Subgroup	All revised processed in place by November 2023

16	Landlords should take steps to identify and resolve any skills gaps they may have, ensuring their staff and contractors have appropriate expertise to properly diagnose and respond to reports of damp and mould.	We have already trained all our staff and we are developing a robust training framework for all staff and contractors relating to CDM.	Partially	Communications Subgroup	Robust training plan in place by November 2023
17	Landlords should ensure that they clearly and regularly communicate with their residents regarding actions taken or otherwise to resolve reports of damp and mould. Landlords should review and update any associated processes and policies accordingly.	SCC has provided information to customers regarding the process to be adopted in tackling reports of damp and mould and a full communication strategy will be produced. As noted above all associated policies and procedures will be reviewed in line with CDM requirements and these will include the Compensation Policy, Disrepair Policy, Allocations Policy, and No Access Policy	Partially	Damp and Mould Operational Subgroup	All associated policies reviewed by Sprin 2024
18	Landlords must ensure there is effective internal communication between their teams and departments and ensure that one individual or team has overall responsibility for ensuring complaints or reports are resolved, including follow up or aftercare.	We will communicate our new approach to the organisation, including roles and responsibilities. A Damp and Mould Task Force has been established by the Council. This has membership from Housing, Repairs and Maintenance, Childrens, Adult Social Care, Public Health, Council Communications, Private Sector Housing Regulation Teams, Environmental Health, RP's and NHS. The aim of this Task Force is to bring together activity for this priority area, communications and support from organisations and a performance improvement plan. There are several key workstreams in place that will bring further improvements – Operations, Data and Data Modelling, Communications and Engagement with the Sector.	yes	Damp and Mould Task Group	Review the effectiveness of the communications bimonthly at the Damp and Mould Task Group meetings.

19	Landlords should ensure that their complaints policy is effective and in line with the Complaint Handling Code, with clear compensation and redress guidance. Remedies should be commensurate to the distress and inconvenience caused to the resident, whilst recognising that each case is individual and should be considered on its own merits.	Our complaints policy is compliant with the Complaints Handling Code and a copy of this is on our website. We treat each individually and ensure we keep our customers informed, manage their expectations, and provide a fair and reasonable resolution. We will consider additional resolutions and compensation if things go wrong and will ensure action plans are in place to put things right.	Yes	Damp and Mould Operational Subgroup	Review in line with the Policy Review Framework
20	Landlords need to ensure they can identify complex cases at an early stage, and have a strategy for keeping residents informed and effective resolution	See response to recommendation 1. The new process steps to handle reports of damp and mould allow for identification of complex cases. Further work may be required to check that the loops of communication with customers are closed and achieve resolution.	yes	Damp and Mould Task Group	Review the effectiveness of the communications bimonthly at the Damp and Mould Task Group meetings.
21	Landlords should identify where an independent, mutually agreed and suitably qualified surveyor should be used, share the outcomes of all surveys and inspections with residents to help them understand the findings and be clear on next steps. Landlords should then act on accepted survey recommendations in a timely manner.	SCC have good internal expertise but from time to time we will engage with third party experts, where specific expertise is required or because we require a second opinion. For disrepair cases SCC use a mix of internal and external surveyors to ensure we get the right solution for both simple and complex cases. For both CDM and disrepair cases the complainant is informed of the action to be taken, the next steps and follow up actions.	Yes	Damp and Mould Operational Subgroup	
22	Where extensive works may be required, landlords should consider the individual circumstances of the household, including any vulnerabilities, and whether it is appropriate to move resident(s) out of their home at an early stage.	This is one of our principles and we are currently reviewing our decant policy. Our decant policy has always been to move people temporarily where extensive works are required but we will make it explicit in relation to CDM	Partially	Damp and Mould Operational Subgroup	To be approved by the Housing Policy Committee by January 2024

23	Landlords should promote the benefits of their complaints process and the Ombudsman to their residents as an appropriate and effective route to resolving disputes.	Understanding is that the Complaints Process is promoted as the appropriate route for resolving disputes. The Council's Complaints process is embedded with the Council, the Council also reports on performance relating to complaints handling, access to complaints process and, customer satisfaction. This information is reported to Council Leadership and, Housing Policy Committee.	Yes	Communications Subgroup	Routine review of message and communication via the Communications Plan due November 2023
24	Landlords should continue to use the complaints procedure when the pre-action protocol has commenced and until legal proceedings have been issued to maximise the opportunities to resolve disputes outside of court. Landlords should ensure their approach is consistent with our jurisdiction guidance and their legal and complaint teams work together effectively where an issue is being pursued through the complaints process and protocol.	We have clearly set out in our complaints policy that we will progress and resolve customer enquiries and complaints until court proceedings have been initiated. We work with our legal team to ensure our approach is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman and their jurisdiction guidance.	yes	Communications Subgroup	Routine review of message and communication via the Communications Plan due November 2023
25	Landlords should consider how best to share learning from complaints and the positive impact of changes made as a result within the organisation and externally. Systems should allow the landlord to analyse their complaints data effectively and identify themes, trends and learning opportunities.	We have completed a complaints review and one of the recommendations is to develop our systems to improve learnings. The development will provide real time and retrospective learnings. We provide learnings on all cases that are determined by the Housing Ombudsman currently including, reasonable redress. A Tenants Complaints Panel is also being introduced in 2023 to ensure customer views are being represented in all case reviews.	Yes	Communications Subgroup	Routine review of message and communication via the Communications Plan due November 2023

26	Landlords should ensure they treat residents reporting damp and mould with respect and empathy. The distress and inconvenience experienced by residents in this area is some of the most profound we have seen, and this needs to be reflected in the tone and approach of the complaint handling.	SCC are undertaking this review and we are creating an internal and external communication plan, for training and guidance for all staff and contractors.	Partially	Communications Subgroup	Routine review of message and communication via the Communications Plan due November 2023
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## Appendix 2

### Sheffield City Council Damp, Mould, and Condensation Policy

<b>Author</b>	Dean Butterworth
<b>Date compiled</b>	August 2023
<b>Date for document update</b>	August 2025 (unless subject to regulatory change)
<b>Document version</b>	1.0
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Dean Butterworth (Head of Service)

#### Contents

1. Introduction
2. Aims
3. Legislation and guidance
4. Scope of the policy
5. Policy Commitments
6. Quality control and monitoring

#### Introduction (1)

**1.1** This policy explains how Sheffield City Council will manage reports of damp, mould, and condensation in council homes. This approach includes a risk assessment of the report, creation of plan to remedy the issue and support tenants to live well in decent quality homes through the provision of advice on mould and condensation. It also covers the monitoring of this policy to ensure that it remains effective. This policy aims to deliver a zero-tolerance approach to condensation damp and mould and support the health and wellbeing of all residents of Sheffield City Council.

#### Aims (2)

**2.1** This policy aims to reduce the likelihood of damp, mould and condensation occurring in council homes and resolve instances when they do. We will:

- Manage our homes to ensure that we proactively identify and react to instances of damp and mould to minimise risk.
- Ensure that the fabric of the property is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from damp and condensation.
- Comply with statutory requirements and regulatory good practice.
- Work in partnership with tenants ensuring that a safe and healthy home is provided.
- Undertake effective investigations and implement remedial repair solutions and improvements to remove damp.

- Ensure that tenants have access to and/or are provided with comprehensive support, advice, and guidance on managing and minimising the risk of damp, mould, and condensation.
- Be supportive and responsive to customer vulnerabilities to ensure all customer needs are considered, addressed and solutions are agreed with customers.
- Consider temporary rehousing and/or longer-term rehousing in circumstances where this offers the most effective solution to the damp, mould, or condensation issue.
- Make effective use of data to guide investment decisions and take proactive steps to the creation of decent homes for our tenants.
- Be decisive in commissioning external contractors to ensure complex cases are resolved as soon as possible to safeguard tenants.

**2.2** Our aim is that no council tenant in Sheffield will suffer from any damp, mould or condensation that affects their overall health and well-being.

### **Legislation and guidance (3)**

**3.1** Sheffield City Council will meet its obligations under the following legislation and guidance through this policy:

- Social Housing Regulation Act 2023
- Housing Act 2004 - Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018

**3.2** Our policy is also aligned with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards and the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code

### **Scope of the policy (4)**

**4.1** This policy covers the following types of damp, mould, condensation, and related issues set out below:

- **Rising Damp** - the movement of moisture from the ground rising through the structure of the building through capillary action.
- **Penetrating Damp** - water penetrating the external structure of the building or internal leaks causing damp, rot and damage to internal surfaces and structure.
- **Condensation Damp** - moisture held in warm air contacting a cold surface, condensing, and then producing water droplets.
- **Mould** - a natural organic compound that develops in damp conditions and often present in situations where condensation damp is present.
- **Dust Mites** – whilst common in all homes, these can thrive in environments associated with some of the issues above.



## **Policy commitments (5)**

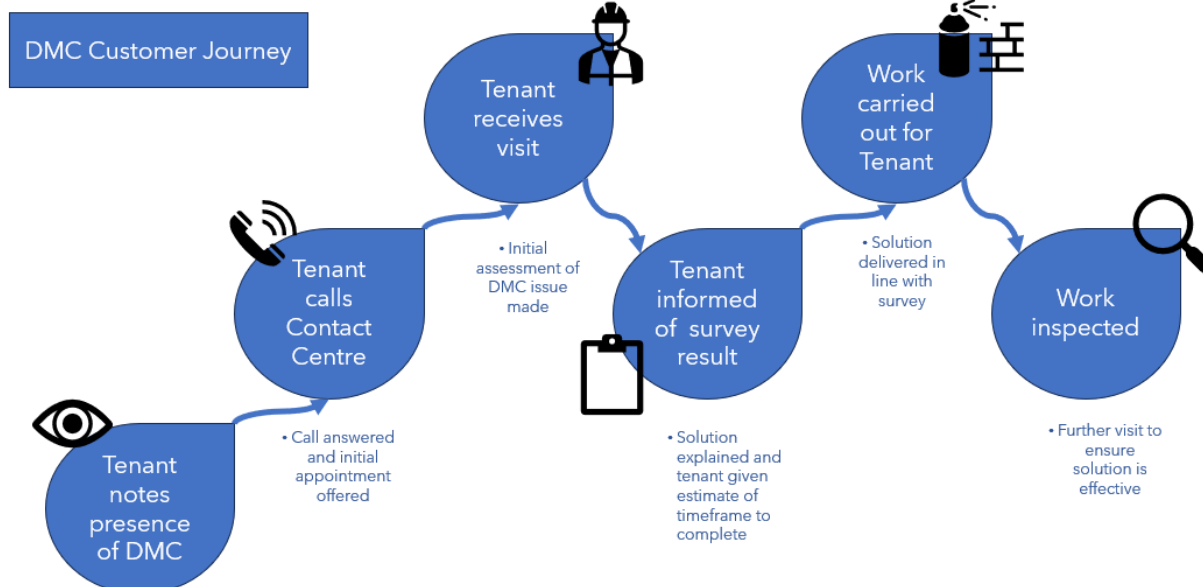
**5.1** Our policy commitments explain how the council will work to eradicate damp and mould in its homes and support its council housing tenants and leaseholders. We will:

- Identify the types of damp: rising, penetrating and condensation damp present in our homes as well as the presence of dust mites owing to damp conditions.
- Proactively review all SAP energy ratings of D/E/F and below for our properties to identify those at risk of damp, mould, and condensation as part of its annual Stock Condition Surveys, HHSRS and EPC data collection.
- Use our data to review, prioritise and target those properties and archetypes at highest risk, as well as identifying any damp, mould, and condensation issues on the annual property review to all council homes.
- Use data intelligently to inform our approach to risk-assessing customer vulnerabilities and needs. We will offer reasonable adjustments within our processes to support households and use risk assessments to prioritise remedies.
- Develop investment strategies and projects to tackle identified priority properties and areas for improvement.
- Share a plan with individual tenants setting out how the council will work with them to remedy any specific issues identified within their home. This may include the offer of temporary or permanent rehousing where there is an evident mismatch between the property and the household.
- Act non-judgmentally when offering guidance, advice, and assistance throughout this process to all customers living in council properties to avoid the inference of blame and to be upfront and clear about our responsibility.

**5.2** We will involve tenants in developing our procedures and overall approach to dealing with damp, mould, and condensation in their homes. We will do this through our existing involvement framework and ensure that we maintain wide-ranging and effective communications with tenants around these issues.

**5.3** Individual household needs will be central to resolving damp, mould, and condensation in council homes. All interactions with the tenant, along with any proposed solutions, will be delivered in line with the Council's Corporate Plan, Complaints Framework, the Housing Ombudsman Code of Practice, and related best practice guidance as well as the Consumer Standards and related guidance from the Regulator of Social Housing.

**5.4** Our customer journey for the most common reports of damp, mould and condensation is set out below:



**5.5** We recognise that tenants come from diverse backgrounds, with varying experiences, needs and expectations in relation to damp, mould and condensation. We are committed to promoting equality and fairness in our approach to supporting customers. This applies to everyone, regardless of gender, racial or ethnic background, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation gender reassignment, age, marital or parental status. We are committed to taking forward the recommendations from the Sheffield City Council Race Equality Commission Report 2022 in improving services.

### Quality control and monitoring (6)

**6.1** We will monitor the application of this policy both internally and through external reporting to Members and customers. We will establish a consistent set of performance information that demonstrates the success of our approach to dealing with damp, mould, and condensation. We will report performance monthly to the Housing and Repairs Improvement Board chaired by the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods. Performance will also be included on our quarterly reports to the Housing Policy Committee which are also shared with customers.

**6.2** We will ensure that our staff are appropriately trained to investigate the cause of damp, mould, and condensation to avoid misdiagnosis and to support the customer. All investigations will be carried out using the appropriate tools and monitoring equipment. We will monitor this through regular 121s, team meetings and toolbox talks.

**6.3** The overall effectiveness of this policy in meeting our commitments will be reviewed at least annually.



## Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report: Catherine Hughes,  
Service Manager, Private Housing Standards  
Tel: 0114 273 4257**

**Report of:** *Janet Sharpe*  
**Report to:** *Housing Policy Committee*  
**Date of Decision:** *14<sup>th</sup> September 2023*  
**Subject:** *Review of HMO Fees and Charging Structure*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2286				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				

### **Purpose of Report:**

Cabinet first approved a mandatory licensing scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in April 2006, as prescribed within the Housing Act 2004. Substantial changes to the scheme were approved in 2018 when the definition of licensable HMO properties was expanded, and new building standards were imposed.

Following a detailed review of current fees and charging arrangements, we are asking Committee to approve increases to the HMO licence fees and amendments to the charging structure.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Housing Policy Committee:

1. Approve the changes to the HMO licence fees and charging structure as detailed
2. Agree to implement the revised fees and new charging structure for new applications from 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 and renewals from 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

**Background Papers:**

*UK Guidance on the Provision of Services Regulations*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/975587/provision-of-services-guidance-march-2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/975587/provision-of-services-guidance-march-2021.pdf)

*Open for business - LGA guidance on locally set licence fees*

[https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/5%2013%20%20OpenForBusiness\\_02\\_web.pdf](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/5%2013%20%20OpenForBusiness_02_web.pdf)

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> <i>Helen Damon</i>
		Legal: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> <i>Catherine Ferguson</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> <i>Louise Nunn</i>
		Climate: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> <i>Darryl Smedley</i>
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	<b>EMT member who approved submission:</b>	<i>Ajman Ali, Executive Director, Neighbourhood Services Directorate</i>
3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b>	<i>Councillor Douglas Johnston</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> <b>Catherine Hughes</b>	<b>Job Title:</b> <b>Service Manager</b>
	<b>Date:</b> <i>1<sup>st</sup> September 2023</i>	

## Introduction

1. Sheffield City Council operates a mandatory licencing scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) occupied by five or more unrelated people who share amenities, a duty under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004. There are currently around 12,000 people living in around 2000 licenced HMOs within Sheffield. Market data suggests that several hundred properties may be operating illegally as unlicensed HMOs.
2. The majority of Sheffield's licensed HMOs offer a good standard of accommodation and HMO landlords should be acknowledged for their role in contributing to the diversity of housing stock within the City. HMOs meet the housing needs of the workforces in many industries, in health and other front-line services, also accommodating many students from colleges and universities. This form of housing is also accessed by a higher proportion of migrant workers and vulnerable younger adults.
3. People living in HMOs can encounter a range of problems relating to their accommodation, including overcrowding, inadequate access and exit routes, damp and cold, trip hazards, unsafe gas and electrical installations, lack of fire protection, lack of natural light and ventilation, all of which are known to have a significant impact on the health, wellbeing, and safety of occupants. The inspection and licencing of HMOs, together with the imposition and enforcement of licencing conditions, benefits the tenants by addressing these problems, and by ensuring that landlords are 'fit and proper' and competent to manage their properties.
4. Sheffield City Council has exercised its powers to charge mandatory HMO licence fees under Part 2 Sections 63(3) and (7) of the Housing Act 2004. The Act empowers local authorities to charge a fee in relation to the granting of a licence, and it is for each authority to determine the level of fee payable.
5. Fees should be charged in accordance with the Hemming and Gaskin court judgements in relation to the European Provision of Services Directive 2006, implemented in the UK Provision of Services Regulations 2009. The effect of these judgements is that the licence fees must be charged in two parts. The costs of processing the licence application (Part 1) should be charged separately to the costs associated with the ongoing administration and enforcement of the licensing scheme (Part 2). Extracts from the relevant statutory guidance are given in **Appendix 1**.
6. Local authorities are not allowed to demand fees in the Part 1 charge for anything other than the costs of administering and processing the licence application. The Part 1 application fee is non-refundable should the application be unsuccessful. Local authorities are not permitted to make a profit from the licensing scheme and any surplus will be ring-fenced for use on the scheme. Fees and charges should be reviewed periodically and adjusted to reflect changes in operating costs. The licensing scheme should be operated on a full cost recovery basis with all the costs for the scheme to be borne by the licence-holding beneficiaries and no additional burden to be placed on the public purse.

## **Background to the review of fees and charging structure**

7. In Sheffield, mandatory HMO fees have not been increased for eleven years, having last been reviewed in 2012. Over the past five years a combination of recruitment difficulties, staffing shortages and the Covid pandemic have thus far prevented a full-scale review of scheme income, outgoings and fee levels. The standstill in fee levels has gradually led to a significant shortfall in income, with the costs of administering the scheme not being met and increasing reliance on the General Fund. More crucially, the licence fees continue to be charged as one single amount, contrary to the requirement set out in case law for fees to be charged in two parts.
8. The main priorities for the review carried out this year were:
  - to conform with the legal requirements regarding the charging of fees in two parts, making a fair apportionment of costs between the new Part 1 and Part 2 charges;
  - to set fees using a five-year budgeting exercise to achieve a self-funding, cost-neutral licencing scheme with sufficient staffing resources not only to administer HMO licence applications but to take a range of pro-active enforcement measures to tackle poor landlord practice and illegal HMOs operating in the City;
  - to consider the introduction of additional penalty charges which will pass on the costs of managing non-compliant landlords to this minority directly, rather than spreading the costs across the whole licensing scheme;
  - to improve the efficiency of the licensing scheme administration and the quality of guidance offered throughout the process; and
  - to consult with landlord partners about proposed fee structure changes and about where to focus efforts on service improvement.
9. The new fee levels have been developed to comply with European Directive principles on locally set licensing fees: that they are *non-discriminatory; justified; proportionate; clear; objective; made public in advance; transparent and accessible*.
10. As part of the budgeting exercise, a fee review mechanism has been built into the annual work programme for the licensing team such that costs will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the licencing scheme continues to operate on a cost-neutral basis.
11. Current licence fee levels set in 2012 were based on an estimated 1000 HMOs requiring licencing over the following five years and a desktop-based approach to the assessment of applications rather than full property inspections. There are now nearly 2000 licenced HMOs in Sheffield; this increase partly a result of licencing reforms in October 2018 which broadened the definition of licensable HMOs. A more extensive assessment process now takes place with over 80% of applicant properties being inspected prior to issue of licence. In 2012 the projected costs of the licensing scheme over five years were estimated at £1m, whereas in 2023 this has risen to just over £2.66m.

## Review outcomes – new fee levels and charging structure

12. One central budgeting assumption is that the number of licensed HMOs in Sheffield will continue at around 2000 properties for the next five years. There are a number of market factors which may impact on overall numbers of licensed properties:
- recent mortgage rate increases which affect the affordability and availability of financing for HMO portfolios;
  - increased availability of purpose-built student accommodation in the City centre, which may draw away some of the demand for more traditional terraced HMO properties in popular student areas in the southwest of the City;
  - predicted increases in the student populations for the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University; and
  - continued population growth within Sheffield including an increase of migration into the City.

The proposed annual fee review mechanism will continue to examine HMO market trends and allow for future adjustments to account for significant changes in HMO stock numbers.

13. The review undertook a detailed time and cost analysis of the tasks carried out by the licensing team to administer each application, including checks and chasing for valid and correctly completed forms, the inspection and assessment of properties, the 'fit and proper' and competency tests for landlords and managers, the setting of various licence conditions, further compliance visits and other aspects relating to the management and enforcement of the scheme.
14. Using this analysis, a breakdown of costings has been produced to determine fee levels for new and renewal licence applications, also to determine the amounts to be divided between Part 1 (61% of the fee has been apportioned to Application costs) and Part 2 (39% of the fee has been apportioned to Scheme Administration and Enforcement costs). **Appendix 2** gives a breakdown of the how the fee is divided between Part 1 and Part 2 activities.
15. Analysis of costs revealed that although renewals are currently charged considerably less than new applications, each renewal takes almost as long to process as a new application. This is because all aspects of the property ownership and management arrangements have to be rechecked and verified as if they were with a new application, also property changes can occur during the term of a licence, for instance changes to room layouts, the provision of shared cooking or bathroom facilities, fire safety equipment, hazards following deterioration in the fabric of the building, all become evident through the renewal assessment process.
16. The analysis of costs also revealed that much more time is spent administering licence applications for larger HMOs with many more bedrooms. The current fee model does not fairly reflect the considerable added administrative burden

in licensing larger HMOs. In effect larger HMO have benefited from comparatively low licence fees when considering a fair apportionment of the scheme administrative costs as a whole.

17. **Table 1** below gives details of the proposed new fee levels. There are seven new cost bands based on the number of licensable bedrooms in each HMO property. This differs from the current fee structure which adds a small increase in licence fee per extra person housed in the HMO.
18. The second and third columns on **Table 1** show the charge for Part 1 of the fee, payable with the application form, and for Part 2 of the fee, payable at the point when a draft licence has been issued. The total new fee is given in column four, with a comparison in column five to the current fee charged for an equivalent size of HMO (the current fee is based on a midpoint comparison with new bedroom banding cost).
19. The sixth column on **Table 1** shows the percentage increase of the new fee compared to the current fee, and the seventh column shows an estimate of how many properties will fall into each of the new fee bands based on the current licensable HMO stock profile.

<b>New applications</b>						
<b>Bedrooms</b>	<b>Part 1</b> (Application processing)	<b>Part 2</b> (Licence scheme management and enforcement)	<b>Total New Fee</b>	<b>Current Fee</b>	<b>Percentage increase on Current Fee</b>	<b>Forecast number of HMO properties</b>
5	£725	£460	<b>£1,185</b>	<b>£750</b>	58%	346
6-9	£850	£540	<b>£1,390</b>	<b>£825</b>	68%	414
10-14	£1,030	£660	<b>£1,690</b>	<b>£925</b>	83%	27
15-19	£1,275	£815	<b>£2,090</b>	<b>£1,050</b>	99%	6
20-24	£1,580	£1,010	<b>£2,590</b>	<b>£1,175</b>	120%	2
25-49	£1,945	£1,245	<b>£3,190</b>	<b>£1,550</b>	106%	2
50	£2,375	£1,515	<b>£3,890</b>	<b>£1,875</b>	107%	0
<b>Renewal applications</b>						
<b>Bedrooms</b>	<b>Part 1</b>	<b>Part 2</b>	<b>Total New Fee</b>	<b>Current Fee</b>	<b>Percentage increase on Current Fee</b>	<b>Forecast number of HMO properties</b>
5	£675	£460	<b>£1,135</b>	<b>£430</b>	164%	518
6-9	£800	£540	<b>£1,340</b>	<b>£460</b>	191%	622
10-14	£980	£660	<b>£1,640</b>	<b>£500</b>	228%	42
15-19	£1,225	£815	<b>£2,040</b>	<b>£550</b>	271%	10
20-24	£1,530	£1,010	<b>£2,540</b>	<b>£600</b>	323%	3
25-49	£1,895	£1,245	<b>£3,140</b>	<b>£750</b>	319%	4
50	£2,325	£1,515	<b>£3,840</b>	<b>£880</b>	336%	1

Table 1 – New HMO Fees



20. The scale of increase in fees is undeniable, however the review in fees was also considerably overdue, and it is worth putting in context that since fees were last increased in 2012, the Retail Price Index which measures the costs of goods and services, including housing costs, rose by 55.2% until June 2023. The new distribution of charges across different property sizes and between renewal and new applications creates a fairer apportionment of licence administration costs, and the total projected scheme income will provide sufficient funding to manage an effective, adequately resourced licensing team for the City without further recourse to public funds. The increase in fees is also necessary to fund improvements already made to the licensing process whereby pre-licence property inspections have become a routine component of licensing.
21. Market data and SCC's licensing data suggest there may be several hundred unlicensed HMOs operating illegally within the city. With the adequate resources in place, it will be possible to detect and pursue many of the landlords concerned, either to bring them inside the licensing regime or prosecute unfit landlords. The fee increases build in the costs of providing the staffing resources necessary to carry out this essential pro-active detection and enforcement work which will be a key facet of the service in future.

**Benchmarking other local authority HMO fee levels**

22. The proposed new fee rate has been compared with neighbouring authorities in Yorkshire and Humber Region and with other Core Cities in England – see **Figure 1** below.

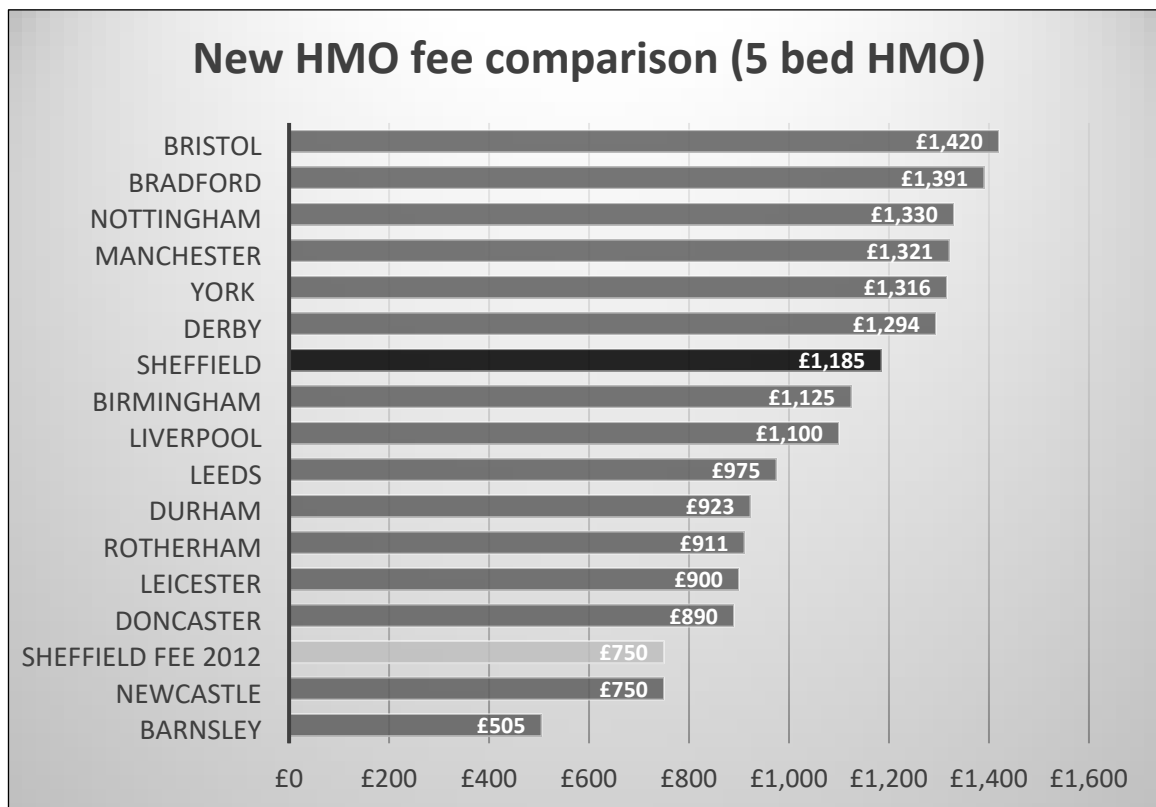


Figure 1 – Comparison with other local authority licence fees

23. The new fee is higher than in several neighbouring authorities, e.g., Rotherham, Barnsley, and Doncaster but lower than in York, Derby and Bradford. In comparison with the Core Cities of Nottingham, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Bristol, Newcastle and Leeds, most of whom share a similar scale and complexity of licensing activity to ours, Sheffield's new fee is only slightly above the Core City average level of £1,151.
24. There are many reasons for variations in fee levels between authorities: in several cases the fees have not been reviewed recently, also licensing processes vary considerably, with some authorities not inspecting properties as a matter of course. SCC officers aim to carry out pre-licence assessments for all licence applications and will carry out at least one compliance inspection for every licenced property, as this is the most effective way to ensure adequate property standards and management arrangements are in place.
25. There are approximately 12,000 bedspaces within HMO licencing and the various forms of interventions taken by the HMO licensing team achieve tangible benefits for tenants. At licence renewal, some form of improvement is required to 80% of those bedspaces, so around 10,000 bedspaces for young people, those on lower incomes and many categorised as belonging to vulnerable groups are benefiting from the compliance and enforcement work carried out by the HMO licensing team. In addition to this, licensing officers have imposed fines of £360k over the last five years in civil penalties – sending an important message that non-compliant landlords will be found out and will be punished.

#### **Other proposed changes within the charging structure**

26. The overall cost of administering the HMO licencing scheme is greatly impacted by the willingness of landlords to engage with the Council, meet appointment times and comply with the requirements for submitting a valid application and the conditions of licence.
27. The revised fee structure will introduce additional charges to penalise *non-compliant* landlords, such as charges for invalid applications where there is a repeat failure to submit the required documentation; charges for failing to attend for on-site inspections or for cancelling at short notice; and a charge added to the cost of a licence where landlords are found to have been operating an unlicenced HMO. The additional charges will help to pay for the time spent chasing non-compliance and fund pro-active work to detect and manage unlicenced HMO landlords.
28. The new charging structure offers a green incentive for landlords to prioritise action to improve the energy efficiency of HMO accommodation by offering a fee discount for all new or renewal applications which meet a higher energy efficiency standard than the minimum required under the Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard Regulations (MEES) - level C or above rated on their Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) from September 2023 and level B or above from 2025.

29. A comparison table showing differences between the current and new fee charging structure is provided in **Appendix 3**.
30. Alongside fee and charging structure changes, we propose to introduce reduced-term licences, typically of one-year duration. They will be used in two separate circumstances:
- Where the licence applicant requires planning permission to operate the HMO and had either not applied or is awaiting a planning decision
  - Where the management practices, competency or certain 'fit and proper' concerns regarding the licence holder or manager exist to the extent that a five-year licence should not be granted

The reduced-term licences will be charged the same fee as for a five-year licence and part of this extra income generated will cover the costs of increased monitoring to ensure standards are being met.

31. The proposals also include removing the licence application fee for applicants whose property has been signed over to the Council to assist Sheffield City Council in providing accommodation to meet its homelessness duties. Application processing costs will be met by Sheffield City Council where licence applicants are signatories to the Private Rented Solutions Scheme.
32. The current paper licence application process typically uses dozens of sheets of paper. The review consultation suggested that the majority of landlords would prefer to move to an all-digital application process, therefore the proposal includes ending paper licence applications entirely and moving to an all-digital application – to increase efficiency and to protect the environment by reducing the use of paper and other resources wherever possible. A new charge for providing duplicate paper copies of licences will be levied.
33. New optional charged-for services for landlords will be introduced to assist with HMO licensing. This will include a pre-application advice visit to assist landlords who might be considering the suitability of a property for use as an HMO. Officers will also provide assistance with online applications, charged at an hourly rate.
34. The review has underlined the requirement for SCC to improve the quality of information and guidance provided alongside the application process. This measure should help to improve acceptance rates for applications and reduce the number of follow-up compliance issues generated, ultimately helping to reduce licencing costs for compliant landlords who present good quality, well-managed properties to add to the stock of licenced HMOs across the City.

#### **HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?**

35. The proposed changes to HMO fees and charging structure will ensure that the licensing scheme continues to build a strong presence within the City, protecting tenants from poor practice and unsafe properties; making it harder for people in need of housing to be exploited by unscrupulous landlords, targeting illegal and unlicensed HMOs across Sheffield.

36. The move to an all-digital application process and the green discount for properties with higher energy performance ratings will contribute to efforts to combat climate change.
37. The economic impact of the revised fees will be applicable mostly to HMO landlords and possibly their tenants if some or all the additional fee costs are passed on in rental charges. We would maintain that the wider protections offered by the licencing scheme more than outbalance the additional costs involved.
38. Links to the City-wide objectives in SCC's Corporate Plan 2022-23 can be illustrated as follows:
- ***fair, inclusive and empowered communities*** - HMO licensing protects HMO tenants by imposing minimum standards for their accommodation, and by giving them a means to raise concerns about the condition of their housing or the management practices of their landlords;
  - ***strong and connected neighbourhoods*** – Working in partnership with many of Sheffield's excellent HMO landlords, a well-resourced HMO licensing team will be able to respond to reports of illegal HMOs and take action against them;
  - ***tackling inequalities and supporting people through the cost of living crisis*** The availability of good quality HMO accommodation is an important contributor to the diversity of Sheffield's housing stock, and offers a relatively low-cost housing option for workers in key industries, students and others on low incomes;
  - ***healthy lives*** Amongst the property conditions which are checked by HMO inspectors, issues which could directly impact on the health and wellbeing of tenants, such as damp and mould, inadequate heating will be detected and addressed;
  - ***clean economic growth*** – incentives for greener properties with higher energy performance; and
  - ***happy young people, safe and opportunities to reach potential*** - The large number of students occupying high quality licenced HMOs in Sheffield illustrates the importance of the HMO sector in meeting the needs of young people and helping them to succeed in their studies.

## HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

39. The Council is not required to consult on the revised fee and charging structure, however following Local Government Association best practice guidance on the setting of licensing fees, the Private Housing Standards team carried out a consultation exercise with landlords and managing agents over May and June 2023, including an online survey which achieved responses from a significant proportion of HMO landlords and managing agents. A summary of the consultation survey responses is given in **Appendix 3**.
40. In addition to this, the proposed policy and charging structure changes were presented for discussion at the SNUG University and Landlords Partnership

meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023. A further meeting organised with landlords' representative organisation NRLA, scheduled for July, will now be taking place at the beginning of October.

## **RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

### **Equality Implications**

41. The effect of the move to all-digital applications on older or disabled licence holders should be considered. These groups are known to have less access to the internet and to be less digitally enabled. Many current HMO landlords are from older generations, and HMO property ownership is commonly used to replace or augment pension income. Less is known about any levels of disability amongst this group as this information is not gathered on the licence application.
42. We have a reasonable expectation that people will only access the licensing scheme as part of their business of letting and managing HMOs, therefore that they will take a businesslike approach, having the capability and resources to either complete the digital application themselves or to employ someone else to do this on their behalf. Many landlords already employ a property manager or a letting agent, who carries out licence renewals as part of their service. Our proposed revisions to service also include charged-for assistance from an SCC officer to complete an online application, which should ensure that the accessibility of the service is not compromised.

### **Financial and Commercial Implications**

43. By increasing the fees charged for the License, the Service will be covering all costs associated with it and therefore other budgets and services will not have to subsidise this area. The financial implications of not approving the increase in fees would be a continued adverse effect on the General Fund budget for this and future years. The shortfall in income would put pressure on other services to maintain a balanced position overall.

### **Legal Implications**

44. The Council as local housing authority has power under section 63 of the Housing Act 2004 to fix a fee for applications for licences for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). The Council may take account of all its costs of running the licensing scheme (costs under Part 2 and Chapter 1 of Part 4 of the Housing Act 2004) when setting the licensing fee. The fee should be transparent, accountable and reflect the actual cost of licensing and this determination can be potentially legally challenged by way of Judicial Review in the High Court.
45. The case of R (on the application of Gaskin) v Richmond upon Thames LBC [2019] is authority for the principle that in letting and managing property for profit, an HMO landlord provides a service for the purposes of the Provision of Services Regulations 2009. As such, in operating a regime of HMO licensing in

accordance with Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004, local housing authorities will be running an authorisation scheme for the purposes of the Services Regulations 2009. As a result, the practice of charging a single fee for administering and enforcing an HMO licensing regime in accordance with Part 2 of the Act may infringe the Provision of Services Regulations 2009, on the basis that it is not limited to the costs of the procedures and formalities of the authorisation scheme. However, charging a separate fee upon grant of an HMO licence, following payment of an initial fee for consideration of the licence application, which is limited to the costs of enforcing the authorisation scheme would not infringe the Provision of Services Regulations 2009.

46. The HMO licence can be granted for a period not exceeding 5 years. The Council may choose to grant a licence for less than 5 years in certain circumstances and can specify such a criterion subject to compliance with Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004.

### **Climate Implications**

47. There will be a limited positive environmental benefit resulting from the changes to the fee charging structure. Firstly the green incentive of £50 discount for properties with a higher EPC rating than that of the legal minimum will provide encouragement to landlords to prioritise energy efficiency improvements across their HMO housing stock. When promoting the incentive, Council officers will emphasise the benefits derived from reducing carbon emissions from domestic dwellings.
48. Secondly, the move to an all-digital application process will reduce the use of paper and other office consumables for both applicants and SCC. The aim is to move to a fully online service where landlords will be able to access digital copies of all the current licences, avoiding need for hard copy storage and retrieval. Vehicle use to carry out property inspections is the most significant contributor to carbon emissions for the scheme, and this is expected to continue at the same level following the review of HMO fees and remains an essential element of the licensing scheme.

### **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Health Impact**

49. HMO licensing improves living conditions in some of the highest risk properties that are often occupied by some of the most vulnerable people, by ensuring licensed HMO's provide safe accommodation which is maintained and provides appropriate amenities. HMO licensing helps drive up standards in the private sector, as it requires properties to be maintained to the required standard throughout the licence period. Proactive enforcement of the scheme will bring more properties into the licensing regime which would otherwise go undetected.
50. Mandatory HMO Licensing was introduced to address health and safety standards in high-risk HMO properties. Many high risk hazards are identified, removed or reduced in licensed HMOs because of the routine inspection

programme operated as part of the scheme. Compliance monitoring helps mitigate accidents in the home and supports improved health outcomes by addressing inadequate property management standards, which may otherwise go undetected.

### **Stakeholder and Community Impact**

51. The change in the approach to fee payment would apply to all owners of licensable properties. There should be no adverse impact on any group of individuals with a protected characteristic. The change will however affect unsuccessful applicants as their initial application fee will not be returned if the application is unsuccessful.
52. It is difficult to assess the likely impact of this rise in fees on the market of HMO landlords and properties across the City, however the new fee levels still represent a small proportion of the typical rental income from HMO properties; a proportion which reduces again for larger size properties which can achieve much higher rental yields. HMO landlords may seek to pass on the cost of licence fee increases to tenants, however a well-regulated and self-sustaining licensing scheme which adds significantly to the safety, security and wellbeing of tenants might be considered good value for the extra cost of at most £30 per tenant per year.
53. Adequate resourcing of HMO licensing will help SCC enforce the requirements of the scheme, ensuring landlords of licensable HMOs exercise appropriate management and supervision of HMOs under their control to help reduce any adverse impact on the neighbourhood and local community. This includes the expectation that licence holders follow protocols for dealing with complaints of anti-social behaviour occurring within the HMO by tenants and their visitors.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

54. **Do nothing.** This would result in the Council continuing to charge the current lower HMO licence fees, preventing full cost recovery for the licensing scheme, and reducing the Council's capacity for detecting and enforcing against landlords operating illegally. This puts the Council at risk of legal challenge for charging in advance for costs other than those directly associated to the authorisation of a licence application. The fees are intended to off-set the cost to the Authority of administering the licensing scheme and must be split between costs incurred before and after deciding to issue a licence. There is no safe legal alternative to a split fee regime, therefore the option to do nothing has been ruled out on that basis.
55. **Split the fee charges to conform to case law precedent but leave fee levels unaltered.** This would be the most straightforward option to remove the risk of challenge to the single part licence fee, however our review of the costs incurred by the Council in running the Mandatory HMO licensing scheme revealed that the current HMO licensing fees are not achieving full cost recovery. The proposed revised fees given in **Table 1** have been calculated to achieve full cost recovery in performing HMO licensing activities. The local

authority has a duty to administer funds in such a way as to protect the interests of council taxpayers, with the accepted principle that licensed activities should be funded by those benefitting from them, rather than council taxpayers. This option was ruled out on that basis.

56. **Split the fee charges and apportion the increased costs equally across all licence holders.** This option would require a further increase in licence fees as the anticipated costs for managing non-compliance would need to be incorporated into the fee income generated from all licences, rather than additional charges being applied when non-compliance is detected. Our fee review included consideration of officer time spent assessing applications, inspecting properties and detailing licence conditions, and it was both clear and unsurprising that larger properties took proportionately greater amounts of officer time throughout the licensing process. To apportion costs equally across all licence holders would not be *fair* or *reasonable* and would put the Council at risk from legal challenge, so this option was also ruled out.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

57. The services provided by the City Council's Private Sector Housing Service detailed in this report have been reviewed and determined not to be achieving full cost recovery at their current levels. To achieve full cost recovery, new fee and charging structures are presented for decision by committee members.
58. The implications of the two landmark rulings R (Gaskin) and R (Hemming) are significant for any local authority that does not currently operate a Directive-compliant licencing fee regime. The report advises recommended changes to SCC's HMO licence fees and charging structure are approved to ensure compliance.



## Appendix 1 – Relevant Statutory Guidance on the setting of licensing fees

### Provision 18 of UK Statutory Instruments: The Provision of Services Regulations 2009

#### Authorisation schemes: general requirements

**18.**—(1) Authorisation procedures and formalities provided for by a competent authority under an authorisation scheme must—

- (a) be clear,
- (b) be made public in advance, and
- (c) secure that applications for authorisation are dealt with objectively and impartially.

(2) Authorisation procedures and formalities provided for by a competent authority under an authorisation scheme must not—

- (a) be dissuasive, or
- (b) unduly complicate or delay the provision of the service.

(3) Authorisation procedures and formalities provided for by a competent authority under an authorisation scheme must be easily accessible.

(4) Any charges provided for by a competent authority which applicants may incur under an authorisation scheme must be reasonable and proportionate to the cost of the procedures and formalities under the scheme and must not exceed the cost of those procedures and formalities.

### UK Guidance on the Provision of Services Regulations

Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (March 2021)

(Extract from pages 18 & 19)

#### Fees

Fees charged by a competent authority under an authorisation scheme must be reasonable and proportionate to the cost of the procedures and formalities under the scheme, and must not exceed the cost of those procedures and formalities. See regulation 18(4) of the Regulations.

#### **Fees should not be used as an economic deterrent to certain activities or to raise funds.**

If a business believes the fee to be disproportionate, they can contest it with the competent authority concerned. Enforcement costs should not be assimilated with the application fee. This is to forestall the possibility of an unsuccessful applicant seeking legal remedy due to part of its fees having been used to subsidise successful competitors.

#### **Court judgments to reinforce regulation 18(4)**

Competent authorities should take note of two judgments where fees charged at the point of application were found to be unlawful because of non-compliance.

The UK court ruled in the case of *Gaskin v London Borough of Richmond*, that the owner of a house in multiple occupation (HMO) was providing a “service” for the purposes of the Regulations. The licensing provisions of the Housing Act 2004 Part 2 were acting as an authorisation scheme for the purposes of the Regulations. The competent authority was not entitled to demand that the owner pay an application fee of £1,799 when applying to renew his licence for the HMO which encompassed the costs of enforcing the licensing scheme. This fee infringed regulation 18(4) as it was not limited to the costs of the procedures and formalities of the authorisation scheme under Part 2 of the Act.

The UK court ruled in the case of *Hemming v Westminster City Council* that the Council could not include the costs relating to the management and enforcement of the authorisation scheme within the payment of a fee, even if the enforcement part of the fee is refundable should the application be refused.

## Appendix 2

### Breakdown of new fee elements between Part 1 and Part 2 based on a five-bedroom HMO

Description of cost element (Average costs per licence)	Part 1 Charge	Part 2 Charge	Total
Checks for correctly completed application with required documentation, guidance and support given	£107		
Assessment of property and of landlord/managing agent competency	£180		
Cost of producing licence	£291		
Property inspection including HHSRS assessment		£97	
Compliance costs, detection and enforcement, scheme management		£268	
Transport, supplies and services, hardware, IT licences, telephones	£53	£34	
Central costs – Finance, IT, HR and Legal Services	£94	£61	
<b>Total Licence Fee cost</b>	<b>£725</b>	<b>£460</b>	<b>£1,185</b>

## Appendix 3

### Current and new charging structure comparison

Description	Current	New
New application licence fee	£750 (for a 5 person HMO)  £25 per additional person on a licence	Part 1 application fee £725 payable with application Part 2 licence fee £460 payable within 14 days of issue of draft licence Total fee £1,185 (for a 5-bedroom HMO) Seven fee bands based on licensable number of bedrooms
Renewal application licence fee	£430  £10 fee for each additional person on a licence	Part 1 application fee £675 Part 2 licence fee £460 payable within 14 days of issue of draft licence Total fee £1,135 (for a 5-bedroom HMO) Seven fee bands based on licensable number of bedrooms
Transfer fee – where a licence is taken over by another property owner or family member mid-term	£360	Removed. New application required.
Refunds	50% refund	Full refund if duplicate fee or property falls outside of mandatory licensing 82% of Part 1 fee for new applications or 86% for renewals refunded if application withdrawn prior to property assessment Part 2 not charged if withdrawn prior to issue of draft licence. Part 1 retained.
<b>Discounts</b>		
Discretionary Discount for Higher EPC ratings	Not applied	£50 applied to Part 2 fee
<b>Other Applicable Fees</b>		
Late application fee	£150 charge where renewals are over 2 months late	Other sanctions applied
Invalid application	Not applied	£150 where valid application not submitted at point of application, applied to Part 1 fee
Additional Compliance Monitoring Fee	Not applied	£500 applied to Part 2 fee on failure to apply to the local authority for a licence
Missed appointment	Not applied	£100 per instance, applied to Part 2 fee
Appointment cancelled within 24 hrs	Not applied	£100 per instance, applied to Part 2 fee
<b>Optional Services subject to resource availability</b>		
Pre-application advice visit with floorplan drawing	Not available	£350
Officer assistance with online application	Not available	£40 per hour/ part hour
Copy of paper licence	No charge	£50

## Appendix 4

# HMO Licensing Review 2023

## Private Housing Standards

### Summary of findings from the Survey of Landlords and Managing Agents

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. As part of the Sheffield City Council's review of HMO Licensing, landlords and managing agents were contacted by email at the beginning of May 2023 and invited to complete a short online survey. A small number of landlords with no email address were sent a paper copy of the survey. In total, emails were sent to 921 recipients and 25 hard copies were posted out. Fifty-one survey responses were received during the five-week consultation period.
- 1.2. Based on answers given on numbers of properties owned or managed, we estimate that the responses account for between 200 and 500 licenced properties – which equates to 10% - 25% of all licensed HMO properties in Sheffield.

#### 2. Application process

- 2.1. Three quarters of respondents reported that they had made a licence application in the last two years. Sixty percent of respondents said they found the application process to be straightforward. When asked about difficulties using the current application process, 21% had difficulties with application form, 21% also reported difficulties adding the correct signatures, 16% had a problem with adding the correct supporting documentation and 6% had trouble working out the correct fee.
- 2.2. We asked for further details of any kind of difficulty with the application process, and a representative selection of answers is given below:

*"Form was unclear in places"*

*"Can the application be made digital?"*

*"We had difficulty with the payment ... we expected to pay at the end of the application process but the process had been set up so that you pay separately and somehow have to link evidence of payment to the application"*

*"We had to seek assistance as we did not know whether to renew the licence or start again, due to the significant changes"*

*"The forms are confusing"*

*“Response timescale was a problem”*

*“Process is cumbersome with multiple repetitive tasks. Seems long drawn out particularly for smaller 5-6 bed HMO’s”*

*“The review needs to consider how to make the whole application process more user friendly ...Please look at everything from the point of view of the applicant”*

### **3. Training and Guidance**

3.1. The survey asked about how landlords and managing agents keep up to date with changes in law and regulations affecting HMOs. Ninety-two percent responded that they accessed online newsletters, training or webinars, while 52% said they used the SCC website, and 16% advice from letting agents and 18% word of mouth from other landlords.

3.2. Asked about preferred format for training, respondents were asked to rank three alternatives:

- E-classroom with live facilitator – ranked highest with a score of **1.75**
- Online self-directed learning with exercises to be submitted as part of course validation – ranked nearly as high with a score of **1.80**
- In-person training with a facilitator in a city centre location ranked lowest with a score of **2.25**

3.3. Asked which areas they would like guidance about on the SCC website, their choices are ranked by the percentage of respondents who selected each area:

- Required standards for different types of HMO properties – **88%**
- Duties and responsibilities of an HMO licence holder and/or manager – **82%**
- Explanation of rules relating to planning permission and HMOs – **74%**
- Examples of HMO property defects which require immediate or urgent action – **66%**
- Examples of poor management practices which have resulted in improvement notices, civil penalties or prosecutions – **54%**

3.4. A further comment was made regarding other areas where guidance would be useful:

*“A section online where we can quickly see the changes that have been made to standards, expectations and application process with dates so it's easier for us to determine what's changed since our last application. An evolving facility online which is updated regularly where FAQ's from HMO landlords have been answered so that we can see the council responses to queries they may be receiving again and again to save everyone time but also so we can get the approved council view rather than an inspector's opinion which can sometimes vary”*

### **4. Policy changes**

4.1. When asked, 92% of respondents indicated that they would be happy to change to an all-electronic licence application process, while 8% said they

preferred to use a paper-based application even if there was a small additional charge for this.

- 4.2. We asked if respondents agreed that it was right to pass on additional costs to non-compliant landlords to offset the additional officer time spent dealing with enforcement or checking compliance. Eighty percent of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this. Asked to give a reason for their answer, the following comments were given:

*“Why should I subsidise these landlords?”*

*“We need a better reporting system to crack down on Landlords who do not comply, tied in with higher fees and a 3-strike system, and penalties that remain on their record for 10 years.”*

*“While it is much fairer to charge compliant landlords less and impose extra charges on non-compliant landlords, this may lead to the less scrupulous landlords simply not registering their properties as HMOs”*

*“At the moment there doesn’t appear to be any upside to being a compliant good landlord, prosecution of or penalties for rogue landlords would tip this in the right direction.”*

*“Clear warnings about additional fees and the action needed to avoid these would need to be given.”*

## **5. Optional Services**

- 5.1. The survey asked for feedback on a number of proposed optional services. The following list ranks the numbers of respondents who “somewhat agreed” or “definitely agreed” that these would be of interest:

- Check and send - **80%**
- Pre-application advice visit - **68%**
- Floorplan drawing - **55%**
- Virtual inspection - **55%**

- 5.2. Replies were also posted asking for ideas on other services to be provided:

*“Online FAQs with real queries and responses”*

*“A more thorough check between planning and HMO regulations”*

*“Advice about regulation, for example if property requires licence or not”*

*“The licence is every five years and every time there are changes that have to be implemented which incur costs. Can the HMO official give us some guidance about these changes beforehand?”*

## **6. General Comments about HMO Licencing Review**

- 6.1. Twelve responses were made when the survey asked for further comment on any aspect of the HMO Licencing Review, a selection of these giving the main themes as follows:

*“The department need to put its own house in order and become more landlord friendly and officers more standardised in their approach to implementing legislation”*

*“I would like to praise the efforts of the licensing team. I found them to be helpful, professional and willing to give advice”*

*“Inspectors need to focus on important issues to ensure safety e.g. fire exits rather than petty issues which appear to change from inspection to inspection”*

*“The current time scales from renewal application to receiving the licence is currently outrageously long.”*

*“It would be good to see the ongoing status of an application / renewal with indicative target timescales, especially where there are any delays”*

*“There needs to be definite criteria that the inspectors work to. I find inspections vary from inspector to inspector.”*

## **7. Conclusions**

7.1. The survey responses provide useful information about the perceptions of the HMO licensing service from its customers. Comments have focussed attention on:

- the mechanics of the application process,
- consistency of approach by inspecting officer,
- the availability of guidance on changes to HMO standards,
- requests for FAQs featuring real questions and answers provided by the inspecting team,
- clarity on timescales for each stage of the process, and
- keeping customers well informed throughout the process.

All these areas will be examined as part of the HMO licensing review.

7.2. The survey responses also indicate broad support for new policy initiatives - a move to all-electronic applications, passing on the additional costs incurred where possible to non-compliant landlords, and the proposed introduction of optional services to assist with HMO licensing.

7.3. A number of responses bore witness to the significant ‘stakeholder’ role that many multi- HMO landlords and managing agents have assumed through successive cycles of licencing activity and engagement with the Council’s Private Housing Standards team. Several expressed a wish to develop a more partnership-based approach to working with the licencing team to help drive up standards in HMO provision across the City. Having established a communication channel with this group, there is now an opportunity to build on this by planning more regular sector engagement, and SCC officers will be looking at ways to achieve this.

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## PART A - Initial Impact Assessment

**Proposal Name:** Review of HMO Fees and Charging Structure

**EIA ID:** 2286

**EIA Author:** Malcolm Ramsay

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**Proposal Outline:** Cabinet first approved a mandatory licensing scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in April 2006, as prescribed within the Housing Act 2004. Substantial changes to the scheme were approved in 2018 when the definition of licensable HMO properties was expanded, and new building standards were imposed. Following a detailed review of current fees and charging arrangements, we are asking Committee to approve increases to the HMO licence fees and amendments to the charging structure.

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**Proposal Type:**

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**Year Of Proposal:** 23/24

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**Lead Director for proposal:** Catherine Hughes

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**Service Area:** Private Housing Standards

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**EIA Start Date:** 8/1/2023

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**Lead Equality Objective:** Understanding Communities

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**Equality Lead Officer:** Louise Nunn

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**Committees:**

Policy Committees

- Housing

**Portfolio****Primary Portfolio:**

Neighbourhood Services

**EIA is cross portfolio:**

No

**EIA is joint with another organisation:**

No

**Overview of Impact****Overview Summery:**

The proposed changes to HMO fees and charging structure will ensure that the licensing scheme covers its costs, and complies with case law precedents regarding the charging of fees for licence schemes in two separate parts. HMO licensing needs to maintain strong presence within the City, protecting tenants from poor practice and unsafe properties; making it harder for people in need of housing to be exploited by unscrupulous landlords, targeting illegal and unlicensed HMOs across Sheffield. The move to an all-digital application process and the green discount for properties with higher energy performance ratings will make a contribution to efforts to combat climate change. The effect of the move to all-digital applications on older or disabled licence holders should be considered. These groups are known to have less access to the internet and to be less digitally enabled. Many current HMO landlords are from older generations, but less is known about any levels of disability as this information is not gathered on the licence application. HMO property ownership is commonly used as a form of income to replace or augment pension income. We have a reasonable expectation that people will only access the licensing scheme as part of their business of letting and managing HMOs, therefore that they will take a businesslike approach, having the capability and resources to either complete the digital application

themselves or to employ someone else to do this on their behalf. Many landlords already employ a property manager or letting agent who does this work on their behalf. To mitigate the change and ensure that access to the service is kept as open as possible, we will offer assistance from Council officers to complete the digital application form (over the phone rather than in person) which should address the needs of existing landlords who are renewing their licence and struggling to use the digital form. A charge of £40 per hour or part hour will be made for this service. The economic impact of the revised fees will be applicable mostly to HMO landlords and possibly their tenants if some or all of the additional fee costs are passed on in rental charges. We would maintain that the wider protections offered by the licencing scheme more than outbalance the additional costs involved. Links to the City-wide objectives in SCC's Corporate Plan 2022-23 can be illustrated as follows:

- Fair, inclusive and empowered communities - HMO licencing protects HMO tenants by imposing minimum standards for their accommodation, and by giving them a means to raise concerns about the condition of their housing or the management practices of their landlords
- Strong and connected neighbourhoods – Working in partnership with many of Sheffield's excellent HMO landlords, a well-resourced HMO licencing team will be able to respond to reports of illegal HMOs and take action against them
- Tackling inequalities and supporting people through the cost of living crisis The availability of good quality HMO accommodation is an important contributor to the diversity of Sheffield's housing stock, and offers a relatively low-cost housing option for workers in key industries, students and others on low incomes
- Healthy lives Amongst the property conditions which are checked by HMO inspectors, issues which could directly impact on the health and wellbeing of tenants, such as damp and mould, inadequate heating will be detected and addressed.
- Clean economic growth – incentives for greener properties with higher energy performance
- Happy young people, safe and opportunities to reach potential - The large number of students occupying high quality licenced HMOs in Sheffield illustrates the importance of the HMO sector in meeting the needs of young people and helping them to succeed in their studies.

## Consultation and other engagement

## Cumulative Impact

**Does the proposal have a cumulative impact:** No

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**Impact areas:** Across a Community of Identity/Interest

## Initial Sign-Off

**Full impact assessment required:** No

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**Review Date:** 8/1/2023

## Action Plan & Supporting Evidence

**Outline of action plan:**

**Action plan evidence:**

**Changes made as a result of action plan:**

## Mitigation

**Significant risk after mitigation measures:**

**Outline of impact and risks:**

## Review Date

**Review Date:**

8/1/2023

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## Report to Policy Committee:

**Author/Lead Officer of Report:** Vicky Kennedy, Operational Team Manager (Author) / Darryl Smedley, Head of Service (Lead Officer)

**Tel:** 0114 474 2736

**Report of:** *Ajman Ali (Executive Director, Operational Services)*

**Report to:** *Housing Policy Committee*

**Date of Decision:** *14<sup>th</sup> September 2023*

**Subject:** ***Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code - Self-Assessment***

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(Insert reference number)</i>				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **Purpose of Report:**

The Complaint Handling Code was introduced in July 2020 by the Housing Ombudsman and updated further in April 2022. It sets out how the Housing Ombudsman expects social landlords to manage customer complaints, describes best practice and supports landlords in responding to complaints effectively and fairly.

A requirement of the Code is that social landlords assess their complaints handling against the Code annually, using a standard template provided by the Housing Ombudsman. Also, that social landlords report the outcomes of the assessment to Elected Members and publish the assessment on their website and in their annual report.

An assessment against the code was undertaken in July 2023 and the purpose of this report is to:

- Inform Housing Policy Committee of the outcomes of the assessment, and of the actions agreed to address any areas of non-compliance.
- Seek the Housing Policy Committee's approval to publish the outcomes of the assessment.

**Recommendations:****The Housing Policy Committee is recommended to:**

- Note the outcomes of the self-assessment against the Code.
- Approve the publication of the outcomes of the assessment.
- Request an update in 6 months' time on complaints-handling performance, to support compliance with the Code

**Background Papers:**

*(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)*

## Appendix A - SCC's Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code Self-Assessment Form

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: <i>Helen Damon</i>
		Legal: <i>Rebecca Lambert</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>Louise Nunn</i>
		Climate: <i>N/A – no climate-related implications of the proposals</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	<b>EMT member who approved submission:</b>	<i>Ajman Ali</i>
3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b>	Cllr Douglas Johnson
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	<b>Lead Officer Name: Darryl Smedley</b> <i>(Insert name)</i>	<b>Job Title: Head of Service, Housing and Neighbourhoods Service</b> <i>(Insert job title)</i>
	<b>Date: 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023</b>	



## 1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 In July 2020, the Housing Ombudsman introduced its Complaint Handling Code, with which all social landlords are expected to comply. Updated further in April 2022, the Code sets out how the Housing Ombudsman expects social landlords to manage customer complaints. It also requires social landlords to assess their handling of complaints against the Code annually and publicly share the outcomes.
- 1.2 Most of the elements within the Code are ‘must do’ requirements and all social landlords are expected to comply with these. A smaller number of requirements are given as ‘best practice guidance’ and, whilst these are not mandatory, social landlords should aim to comply with these wherever possible. The Code hasn’t changed since our last self-assessment was presented to Housing Policy Committee in September 2022.
- 1.3 Officers from the Housing and Neighbourhoods Service, Repairs and Maintenance Service and Customer Services have undertaken this year’s self-assessment over the last 3 months. This has involved reviewing policies, procedures, information provided to customers, training materials, customer satisfaction data and performance information – to assess how well we comply with each element of the Code.
- 1.4 In total, there are 70 elements within the Code and overall, we measure well against the requirements and are compliant with the vast majority. Our complaints policies, procedures and principles are in line with the Code, our tenants have access to clear and comprehensive complaints information, staff are suitably trained in handling complaints, and we put things right.
- 1.5 In 2022, there were 2 ‘best practice’ elements against which we were non-compliant, and a further 10 against which we could demonstrate only partial compliance (4 of which were mandatory elements).
- 1.6 Significant progress has been made over the last 12 months to address these gaps, and this year there are only 2 elements where we can only demonstrate partial compliance. These relate to:

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
<b>7.2</b>	Accountability and transparency are integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints in their annual report and more frequently to their residents, staff and scrutiny panels.	<b>Partially</b>	We do report on learning from complaints in our annual report, but we need to do this more frequently through other communication channels. Plans are in place for a ‘You Said We Did’ process which will enable us to routinely capture and report on the learning from complaints. This sharing of outcomes will be done via well-established tenant communication channels such as Facebook and our monthly tenant e-bulletin.
<b>7.6</b>	Landlords should have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all employees that reflects the	<b>Partially</b>	Training emphasises how complaints are ‘everyone’s business’. However, this is not yet embedded through annual

	<p>need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments.</li> <li>• take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints rather than blaming others.</li> <li>• act within the Professional Standards for engaging with complaints as set by the Chartered Institute of Housing.</li> </ul>		<p>performance reviews and one-to-ones with staff.</p>
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1.7 An action plan is in place which not only addresses the gaps identified by the self-assessment, but also aims to further improve our complaints handling performance. The focus of the action plan is to:

- (i) Improve the time taken to respond to complaints.
- (ii) Improve how we capture, report, and utilise the wider learning from complaints.
- (iii) Improve customer satisfaction with how we handle their complaints.

1.8 A Customer Services Improvement Group – consisting of key officers from Housing and Neighbourhoods, Repairs and Maintenance Service and Customer Services – is responsible for overseeing the action plan and ensuring / supporting its implementation.

## 2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

2.1 By completing the self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman’s code, sharing the outcomes, and taking actions to address the gaps identified, we are demonstrating a clear commitment to effectively handling and learning from housing-related complaints. This contributes to the primary goal in the Council’s Delivery Plan to *“be a good council and ensure high quality services for all.”*

2.2 This work is also important in terms of the new Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards and will contribute to us meeting the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard. It also helps us achieve our aim of ensuring that complaints are addressed fairly, effectively, and promptly.

## 3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

3.1 Officers from the Housing and Neighbourhood Service, Repairs and Maintenance Service and Customer Services team have worked together to draft the self-assessment.

3.2 Once the self-assessment has been approved by Housing Policy Committee, it will be published on the Council’s website and to residents via our usual communications channels (e.g., tenant newsletters and our Facebook page). We will consult with the Housing and Neighbourhoods Advisory Panel (a group which consists of tenant representatives from across the city) on the action plan and seek their views on how we can improve, how we manage and learn from complaints.

## 4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report, and the Equalities team have confirmed that no Equalities Impact Assessment is required. A key requirement of the Housing Ombudsman’s Code is that all complaints are handled consistently and fairly, regardless of who has submitted them. The Code requires us to facilitate reasonable adjustments in how we deal with complaints where the customer requires this. Therefore, adherence to the code promotes equality and fairness in how we deal with complaints.

#### 4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 There are no financial or commercial implications arising from this report.

#### 4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 The Housing Ombudsman Scheme is approved by the Secretary of State under section 51 of, and Schedule 2 to, the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011 and the Building Safety Act 2022). The Act requires social landlords, as defined by section 51(2) of the Act, to be members of an approved scheme. It is mandatory for all local authorities and registered social housing providers to be members of the Ombudsman Scheme. The current revised version of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme came into effect on 1 October 2022 and replaces the previous Scheme which was in operation from 1 September 2020.

4.3.2 A new version of the Housing Ombudsman “Complaint Handling Code” came into effect on 1 April 2022, but landlords were given until 1 October 2022 to become compliant. Landlords were able to do their self-assessment on the new version of the Code at a time that assisted with auditing compliance and/or the work they were intending to do to achieve compliance by 1 October 2022. Sheffield City Council submitted the 2022 self-assessment using the new version of the Code and continue to use this version for the 2023 self-assessment.

#### 4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 There are no climate implications arising from this report.

#### 4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

### **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 Self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman’s Code and publication of the outcomes, are a requirement of all social landlords. Therefore, in this respect there were no other alternatives considered.

### **6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 Housing Policy Committee is being asked to note the self-assessment and to give its approval for publication of the assessment on the Council website because this will help us achieve transparency and accountability in how we manage with housing-related complaints. It is also a requirement of the Housing Ombudsman for all social landlords that we do so.

6.2 It is also being asked to request an update report on complaints handling in 6 months’ time (March 2024) as this will support our compliance with the Complaints Handling Code. The Code (section 7.4) requires that landlords provide the ‘governing body’ with regular complaints reports. A 6-monthly update will supplement the bi-monthly performance updates which Committee receive which include summary complaints performance data.

## Appendix A – Self-Assessment Form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and discussed at the landlord's governing body annually.

Evidence should be included to support all statements with additional commentary as necessary.

Explanations must also be provided where a mandatory 'must' requirement is not met to set out the rationale for the alternative approach adopted and why this delivers a better outcome.

### Section 1 – Definition of a complaint Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
<b>1.2</b>	A complaint must be defined as: <i>'An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.'</i>	Yes	Our definition is <b>"Any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not. This could be about a service that the Council delivers or is responsible for (e.g. a service delivered on behalf of the council by a contractor)."</b>  This definition is comparable, this is evidenced by the policy itself which demonstrates that we will accept a complaint whatever channel is used.  Evidence: Sheffield City Council Complaints Policy (herein referred to as 'Policy') 1.4, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1
<b>1.3</b>	The resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must still be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	We are compliant.  Evidence: Policy 9.3
<b>1.6</b>	... if further enquiries are needed to resolve the matter, or if the resident requests it, the issue must be logged as a complaint.	Yes	Our procedure says that we ask the individual if they want their issue treating as a complaint. If a customer has to chase a request for service this would be logged as a complaint.
<b>1.7</b>	A landlord must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so.	Yes	Our policy is clear that we will deal with all complaints through the agreed process unless certain conditions apply.  Evidence: Policy section 3
<b>1.8</b>	A complaints policy must clearly set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered, and these circumstances should be fair and reasonable	Yes	Paragraphs 3.8 – 3.11 of the Policy outline matters that have other dedicated routes for consideration; matters that fall outside of the scope of the policy or situations where we would not consider a complaint under the complaints policy. Exclusions exist where

	to residents.		there are legitimate and justifiable reasons. Page 11 “Best Practice” of the Sheffield City Council Corporate Complaints Procedure (herein referred to as Procedure) requires us to always explain to the customer our reasons for rejecting.
1.9	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, a detailed explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman.	Yes	We rarely reject a complaint – at times we may refer to other routes where this is applicable, and the reasons for this explained to the customer. We include Housing Ombudsman details in all complaints responses.

### Best practice ‘should’ requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
1.4	Landlords should recognise the difference between a service request, where a resident may be unhappy with a situation that they wish to have rectified, and a complaint about the service they have/have not received.	Yes	We are compliant – if any doubt we will log a complaint
1.5	Survey feedback may not necessarily need to be treated as a complaint, though, where possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue their dissatisfaction as a complaint if they wish to.	Yes	Automated responses for completed text surveys signpost to complaints info, and this info has now also been added to our telephone surveys.

### Section 2 - Accessibility and awareness Mandatory ‘must’ requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
2.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which residents can make a complaint such as in person, over the telephone, in writing, by email and digitally. While the Ombudsman recognises that it may not be feasible for a landlord to use all of the potential channels, there must be more than one route of access into the complaints system.	Yes	Customers can make a complaint through our website (on-line form), by email, by telephone, in writing or in person. We do not require customers to make their complaint in writing.  Evidence: Policy 1.4

2.3	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the number of stages involved, what will happen at each stage and the timeframes for responding.	Yes	Evidence: <a href="https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints">https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints</a>  The Policy and Procedure are both published on the website and cover all the required elements. (Links to 2.6 below)
2.4	Landlord websites, if they exist, must include information on how to raise a complaint. The complaints policy and process must be easy to find on the website.	Yes	Evidence: <a href="https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints">https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints</a>  There is a dedicated page on the website, which comes up at the top of the search results if a customer searches for 'complaints.'
2.5	Landlords must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and may need to adapt normal policies, procedures, or processes to accommodate an individual's needs. Landlords must satisfy themselves that their policy sets out how they will respond to reasonable adjustments requests in line with the Equality Act and that complaints handlers have had appropriate training to deal with such requests.	Yes	Evidence: <a href="https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/access-disabled-people">https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/access-disabled-people</a>  The above link outlines the Council's general approach to equalities and reasonable adjustments. The Policy states that we will aim to ensure that individual needs are considered when dealing with complaints. The complaints info on the website also signposts customers to our policy on reasonable adjustments. The Procedure refers to reasonable adjustments and gives guidance on how to deal with them, and tells staff to "Consider whether the complainant needs support understanding your decision. This may be a meeting to discuss the findings" Equalities training is mandatory for all staff to ensure equalities are considered in all aspects of our work.
2.6	Landlords must publicise the complaints policy and process, the Complaint Handling Code and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme in leaflets, posters, newsletters, online and as part of regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	Complaints information is clearly published on the website, and complaints correspondence to customers references the Housing Ombudsman. We also included info on how to make a complaint, and on the Housing Ombudsman, in the annual rent increase letters to all tenants, and have put articles in our tenant e-bulletin.
2.7	Landlords must provide residents with contact information for the Ombudsman as part of its regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	This information is available on the SCC website and our templates have been amended to ensure complainants are advised that they have this right of access on at all stages of the process. Also included in the info referenced above in 2.7.
2.8	Landlords must provide early advice to residents regarding	Yes	All relevant templates have this info included.



	their right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service throughout their complaint, not only when the landlord's complaints process is exhausted.		
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### Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
2.2	Where a landlord has set up channels to communicate with its residents via social media, then it should expect to receive complaints via those channels. Policies should contain details of the steps that will be taken when a complaint is received via social media and how confidentiality and privacy will be maintained	Yes	We do accept complaints via our Face Book page. And complaints received this way are subject to the same handling as all other complaints.

### Section 3 - Complaint handling personnel Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
3.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling to ensure complaints receive the necessary attention, and that these are reported to the governing body. This Code will refer to that person or team as the "complaints officer."	Yes	There are two Complaints Managers within the Customer Services Team which provide this support. There are a number of Complaints Investigating/ Accountable Managers in Housing and Neighbourhood Service (H&NS) and Repairs and Maintenance Service (R&M).
3.2	...the complaint handler appointed must have appropriate complaint handling skills and no conflicts of interest.	Yes	There are no conflicts of interest and staff do not investigate complaints relating to themselves. Complaints handlers are required to attend the corporate training. Corporate HR policy requires all staff to sign and complete the 'declaration of interest' form annually.

### Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
3.3	Complaint handlers should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be able to act sensitively and fairly</li> <li>be trained to handle complaints and deal with distressed and upset residents</li> </ul>	Yes	We are compliant and all these requirements are covered in complaints training.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have access to staff at all levels to facilitate quick resolution of complaints</li> <li>• have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly.</li> </ul>		
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## Section 4 - Complaint handling principles

### Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
4.1	Any decision to try and resolve a concern must be taken in agreement with the resident and a landlord's audit trail/records should be able to demonstrate this. Landlords must ensure that efforts to resolve a resident's concerns do not obstruct access to the complaints procedure or result in any unreasonable delay. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'pre-complaint stage') as this causes unnecessary confusion for residents. When a complaint is made, it must be acknowledged and logged at stage one of the complaints procedure within five days of receipt.	Yes	Our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has a dedicated complaints module, where all complaints at all stages are logged and tracked. All 'problem solved complaints' are recorded as Stage One complaints. Acknowledgment letters are sent within 3-5 days, and page 8 of the Procedure confirms this. If complaints are 'problem solved' this is done within 3 working days, so still compliant and recorded as Stage One.
4.2	Within the complaint acknowledgement, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Yes	Page 11 of the Procedure explains how staff will define / verify the complaint with the individual. Our acknowledgement letter-templates have been amended to include a description of outcomes wanted by the customer. And quality assurance checks look at whether initial contact was made with the customer to verify.
4.6	A complaint investigation must be conducted in an impartial manner.	Yes	Our Policy ensures that this is the case: <a href="https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints">https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints</a>  2.4 in the Policy describes our overall approach to handling complaints.
4.7	The complaint handler must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deal with complaints on their merits</li> <li>• act independently and have an open mind</li> <li>• take measures to address</li> </ul>	Yes	Our Procedure ensures that this is the case: <a href="https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints">Corporate Complaints Procedure: Effective Complaint Handling Guide (sheffield.gov.uk)</a>  Section 9 of the Procedure explains how we



	<p>any actual or perceived conflict of interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider all information and evidence carefully</li> <li>• keep the complaint confidential as far as possible, with information only disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter.</li> </ul>		maintain confidentiality
<b>4.11</b>	Landlords must adhere to any reasonable arrangements agreed with residents in terms of frequency and method of communication	Yes	Our Policy states that we will keep customers regularly updated on the progress of their complaints. Page 4 of the Procedure references giving 'regular updates'
<b>4.12</b>	The resident, and if applicable any staff member who is the subject of the complaint, must also be given a fair chance to set out their position comment on any adverse findings before a final decision is made.	Yes	<p>Investigation responses inform resident of landlord's position and gives the customer the right to respond and request a review of the complaint investigation by a more senior manager. Where the complaint is about a particular staff member, the Investigating Officer will talk to that person as part of their investigation.</p> <p>From October, managers will also be required to telephone the complainant before the response is sent, to discuss the outcome of their complaint and explain the findings of the investigation.</p>
<b>4.13</b>	A landlord must include in its complaints policy its timescales for a resident to request escalation of a complaint	Yes	<p><a href="#">Our Policy makes this clear.</a></p> <p>Evidence: <a href="https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints">https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints</a></p>
<b>4.14</b>	A landlord must not unreasonably refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure and must have clear and valid reasons for taking that course of action. Reasons for declining to escalate a complaint must be clearly set out in a landlord's complaints policy and must be the same as the reasons for not accepting a complaint.	Yes	Paragraphs 3.8 – 3.11 of the Policy clearly outline the circumstances in which we would not accept a complaint.
<b>4.15</b>	A full record must be kept of the complaint, any review and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the	Yes	We have a CRM system on which all complaints and associated documents are logged and managed.

	resident, correspondence with other parties and any reports or surveys prepared.		
<b>4.18</b>	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives when pursuing a complaint.	Yes	This is included in the Policy: <a href="https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints">https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints</a> Section 11 of the Policy covers this, as does page 18 of the Procedure.

### Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
<b>4.3</b>	Landlords should manage residents' expectations from the outset, being clear where a desired outcome is unreasonable or unrealistic	Yes	Page 11 of the Procedure references the requirement on staff to 'manage expectations' and this is also made clear in the guidance for effective complaints handling.
<b>4.4</b>	A complaint should be resolved at the earliest possible opportunity, having assessed what evidence is needed to fully consider the issues, what outcome would resolve the matter for the resident and whether there are any urgent actions required.	Yes	The problem-solving stage gives us this opportunity and our process is designed to do exactly this. (4.2 – 4.3 of the Policy).
<b>4.5</b>	Landlords should give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord where this is reasonable.	Yes	We are compliant, as long as we have the authority to discuss with a representative. 9.3 of the Policy covers this in part
<b>4.8</b>	Where a key issue of a complaint relates to the parties' legal obligations landlords should clearly set out their understanding of the obligations of both parties.	Yes	We do engage our Legal Team in complaints responses where necessary to ensure the correct wording is used and that the legal positions are clear.
<b>4.9</b>	Communication with the resident should not generally identify individual members of staff or contractors.	Yes	We are compliant unless the complaint is about a staff member.
<b>4.10</b>	Landlords should keep residents regularly updated about the progress of the investigation.	Yes	Page 12 of the Procedure requires staff to "Keep the complainant informed at all stages of the investigation, especially if there is a delay"
<b>4.16</b>	Landlords should seek feedback from residents in relation to the landlord's complaint handling as part of the drive to encourage a	Yes	We include complaints-related questions as part of our regular 'Neighbourhood Survey' (as required by the regulator). Corporate complaints team also undertake their own satisfaction surveys via text messaging.

	positive complaint and learning culture.		
<b>4.17</b>	Landlords should recognise the impact that being complained about can have on future service delivery. Landlords should ensure that staff are supported and engaged in the complaints process, including the learning that can be gained.	Yes	Recent changes to the CRM system will support us to capture the learning gained from complaints. Performance reports will be circulated to Directors to enable them to identify key issues / trends, etc. All staff are offered training on complaints – this emphasises that complaints are valuable feedback to be learned from.
<b>4.19</b>	Any restrictions placed on a resident's contact due to unacceptable behaviour should be appropriate to their needs and should demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010	Yes	Section 11 of the Policy and Page 18 of the Procedure explain our policy re unacceptable behaviour. Also clearly covers how any special needs / equalities issues should be considered.

## Section 5 - Complaint stages

### Mandatory 'must' requirements - Stage 1

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
<b>5.1</b>	Landlords must respond to the complaint <b><u>within 10 working days</u></b> of the complaint being logged. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	The timescales set down in our complaints process are compliant with this.
<b>5.5</b>	A complaint response must be sent to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue, are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned expeditiously with regular updates provided to the resident.	Yes	<a href="#">Our timescales are set out in the Policy and we are compliant with this.</a>
<b>5.6</b>	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	We are compliant and have letter templates for staff to use and refer to.
<b>5.8</b>	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage one in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the complaint stage</li> <li>the decision on the complaint</li> <li>the reasons for any decisions</li> </ul>	Yes	We are compliant and have letter templates for staff to use and refer to which cover all of these points.

	<p>made</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the details of any remedy offered to put things right</li> <li>• details of any outstanding actions</li> <li>• details of how to escalate the matter to stage two if the resident is not satisfied with the answer</li> </ul>		
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## Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
<b>5.9</b>	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage one it must be progressed to stage two of the landlord's procedure unless an exclusion ground now applies. In instances where a landlord declines to escalate a complaint it must clearly communicate in writing its reasons for not escalating as well as the resident's right to approach the Ombudsman about its decision.	Yes	Our Policy and Procedure demonstrate compliance.
<b>5.10</b>	On receipt of the escalation request, landlords must set out their understanding of issues outstanding and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Yes	Our Policy is compliant with this
<b>5.11</b>	Landlords must only escalate a complaint to stage two once it has completed stage one and at the request of the resident.	Yes	We are compliant. The Policy and Procedure both demonstrate this.
<b>5.12</b>	The person considering the complaint at stage two, must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage one.	Yes	We are compliant. The Policy and Procedure both demonstrate this.
<b>5.13</b>	Landlords must respond to the stage two complaint within 20 working days of the complaint being escalated. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be	Yes	The timescales set out in our Policy and Procedure.

	received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.		
<b>5.16</b>	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage two in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· the complaint stage</li> <li>· the complaint definition</li> <li>· the decision on the complaint</li> <li>· the reasons for any decisions made</li> <li>· the details of any remedy offered to put things right</li> <li>· details of any outstanding actions and</li> <li>· if the landlord has a third stage, details of how to escalate the matter to stage three</li> <li>· if this was the final stage, details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied</li> </ul>	Yes	We are compliant, and managers use letter templates which cover all of these points.

**Best practice ‘should’ requirements  
Stage 1**

<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Comply: Yes/No</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary and any explanations</b>
<b>5.2</b>	If an extension beyond 20 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	We do this as part of our agreed corporate process.
<b>5.3</b>	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman’s contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord’s plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord’s response.	Yes	All complaints letter templates include the Housing Ombudsman’s contact details.
<b>5.4</b>	Where the problem is a recurring issue, the landlord should consider any older reports as part of the background to the complaint if this will help to resolve the issue for the resident.	Yes	Investigating Managers will review all the history of a case as part of their investigation.
<b>5.7</b>	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these should	Yes	We are compliant

	be incorporated into the stage one response if they are relevant, and the stage one response has not been issued. Where the stage one response has been issued, or it would unreasonably delay the response, the complaint should be logged as a new complaint.		
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## Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.14	If an extension beyond 10 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	We are compliant and is covered by our Policy and Procedure
5.15	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response	Yes	All complaints letter templates include the Housing Ombudsman's contact details.

## Section 6 - Putting things right Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
6.1	Effective dispute resolution requires a process designed to resolve complaints. Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right.	Yes	Our Policy and Procedure cover this – see: <a href="https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/corporate-complaints-procedure-effective-complaint-handling-guide">Corporate Complaints Procedure: Effective Complaint Handling Guide (sheffield.gov.uk)</a> , page 11 Letter templates also demonstrate this
6.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the resident as a result. A landlord must carefully manage the expectations of residents and not promise anything that cannot be delivered or would cause unfairness to other residents.	Yes	Section 5 of the Policy outlines approach to "Putting things right and learning". Our approach to remedies are consistent with the key principles used by the Housing Ombudsman. Page 15 of the Procedure explains in more detail our approach.
6.5	The remedy offer must clearly		Our templates evidence this.



	set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	
<b>6.6</b>	In awarding compensation, a landlord must consider whether any statutory payments are due, if any quantifiable losses have been incurred, the time and trouble a resident has been put to as well as any distress and inconvenience caused.	Yes	Our guidance on putting things right is clear and detailed (pg. 15 of the Procedure). It states that we should 'put the complainant back in the position they would have been had the fault not occurred'. It also incorporates the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's 'Guidance on Remedies' to ensure we are adhering to those principles, and requires officers to take into account the distress and / or inconvenience caused.

### Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
<b>6.3</b>	Landlords should look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether anything needs to be 'put right' in terms of process or systems to the benefit of all residents.	Yes	A new 'Learning Dashboard' is to be introduced in 2023. Currently complaints information is shared regularly with managers so that improvements and learning can be identified. Arrangements are now in place for 'Complaints Surgeries' at which HoS will have sight of all complaints in their areas and discuss the emerging issues with managers. Complaints will now be reported quarterly to Performance Delivery Board (attended by Senior Managers) and a key focus will be emerging trends and service-wide learning.
<b>6.7</b>	In some cases, a resident may have a legal entitlement to redress. The landlord should still offer a resolution where possible, obtaining legal advice as to how any offer of resolution should be worded.	Yes	We are compliant and we do this, where there is a legal element to a complaint.

### Section 7 - Continuous learning and improvement Mandatory 'must' requirement

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
<b>7.2</b>	Accountability and transparency are integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints in their annual report and more frequently to their residents,	<b>Partially</b>	We do report on learning from complaints in our annual report, but we need to do this more frequently through other communication channels. Plans are in place for a 'You Said We Did' process which will enable us to routinely capture and report on the learning from complaints. This sharing of outcomes will be done via well-established tenant

	staff and scrutiny panels.		communication channels such as Facebook and our monthly tenant e-bulletin.
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### Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
7.3	A member of the governing body should be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This role will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight to the governing body on the landlord's complaint handling performance.	Yes	Darryl Smedley is the Head of Service and oversee complaints, taking reports to meetings with managers and tenant representatives. This self-assessment is being reported to Housing Policy Committee.
7.4	<p>As a minimum, governing bodies should receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular updates on the volume, categories and outcome of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance including compliance with the Ombudsman's orders</li> <li>• Regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling,</li> <li>• The annual performance report produced by the Ombudsman, where applicable</li> <li>• Individual complaint outcomes where necessary, including where the Ombudsman made findings of severe maladministration or referrals to regulatory bodies. The implementation of management responses should be tracked to ensure they are delivered to agreed timescales.</li> <li>• The annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code for scrutiny and challenge.</li> </ul>	Yes	The annual self-assessment is taken to the Housing Policy Committee and also a detailed mid-year update. Also, performance reports – including on complaints – are taken to Committee bi-monthly.
7.5	Any themes or trends should be assessed by senior management to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks or policies and procedures that require revision. They should also be	Yes	As per 6.3



	used to inform staff and contractor training.		
<b>7.6</b>	<p>Landlords should have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all employees that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments</li> <li>• take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints rather than blaming others</li> <li>• act within the Professional Standards for engaging with complaints as set by the Chartered Institute of Housing.</li> </ul>	<b>Partially</b>	Training emphasises how complaints are 'everyone's business'. However, this is not yet embedded through annual performance reviews and one-to-ones with staff.

## Section 8 - Self-assessment and compliance

### Mandatory 'must' requirements

<b>Code section</b>	<b>Code requirement</b>	<b>Comply: Yes/No</b>	<b>Evidence, commentary and any explanations</b>
<b>8.1</b>	Landlords must carry out an annual self-assessment against the Code to ensure their complaint handling remains in line with its requirements.	Yes	We do a self-assessment every year
<b>8.2</b>	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure and/or change in procedures.	Yes	Not applicable currently, but we would do this if a change in circumstances required it.
<b>8.3</b>	<p>Following each self-assessment, a landlord must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• report the outcome of their self-assessment to their governing body. In the case of local authorities, self-assessment outcomes should be reported to elected members</li> <li>• publish the outcome of their assessment on their website if they have one, or otherwise make accessible to residents</li> <li>• include the self-assessment in their annual report section on complaints handling performance</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>This assessment is to be published once approved by the Housing Policy Committee. The previous assessment undertaken in 2022 is on the website.</p> <p>We also include information about complaints performance in our annual report to tenants.</p>

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## Report to Policy Committee

### Author/Lead Officer of Report:

Janet Sharpe, Director of Housing  
Tom Smith, Director of Direct Services

**Tel:** 0114 2735493

**Report of:** Executive Director, Neighbourhood Services

**Report to:** Housing Policy Committee

**Date of Decision:** 14 September 2023

**Subject:** Housing & Repairs Performance Report (Quarter 1) 2023/24

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(Insert reference number)</i>				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Purpose of Report:

This report provides the Committee with an overview of housing and repairs performance for a range of services within the remit of the Committee. This report covers the period up to quarter 1 (April – June) of 2023/2024. The first part of the report provides an analysis of the performance, setting this within both the national and local context in which services are delivered.

A detailed appendix report is included with comparative data against other landlords and regulatory performance. The report allows the Committee to understand and comment on the performance delivery of housing and repairs services to both tenants and citizens.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Housing Policy Committee:

1. Notes the Performance Report update provided for up to quarter 1 of 2023/2024
2. Highlights any issues of concern that they may wish to discuss in future performance reports

**Background Papers:**

Appendix 1 – Housing and Repairs Performance Report Quarter 1 2023/24

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Helen Damon
		Legal: Meurig Tiley
		Equalities & Consultation: n/a
		Climate: n/a
<p><i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i></p>		
2	<b>EMT member who approved submission:</b>	Ajman Ali
3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b>	Cllr Douglas Johnson
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> Janet Sharpe  Tom Smith	<b>Job Title:</b> Director of Housing  Director of Direct Services
	<b>Date:</b>	

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## 1. Proposal

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### 1.1 Housing Committee is responsible for regularly monitoring performance

The Constitution of Sheffield City Council delegates to Housing Policy Committee the responsibility for regular monitoring of data including performance and financial information. This includes monitoring the performance for both housing repairs and maintenance service and housing (public sector, private sector, and related functions) services.

This report summarises the performance information for the Housing and Neighbourhoods Service (HNS) and the Repairs and Maintenance Service (RMS) up to the end of quarter 1 (April to June) 2023/2024. The report highlights areas of note, providing explanation where possible, to facilitate the Committee in monitoring housing and repairs performance.

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### 1.2 The report highlights several key housing and repairs related performance areas

This report highlights several key areas for the Committee to consider. The key performance areas reflect our [Landlord Commitments](#), Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) as required by the [Regulator of Social Housing \(RSH\)](#) and other key housing and repairs performance measures.

The performance report has therefore been structured around the 3 main Landlord Commitments. An additional section about other housing support such as homelessness and private rented homes is also included :-

#### 1. Offering a range of quality homes

- Repairs
- Health and Safety Compliance
- Fire and Building Safety
- Delivery of New Homes

#### 2. Take care of our neighbourhoods

- How we are managing our neighbourhoods and how tenants feel about where they live

#### 3. Providing a good service

- Tenant contact and how tenants feel about their interactions with us

#### 4. Other housing support

- Helping to prevent homelessness
  - Making private rented homes safe
-

1.3	<b>The appendix report includes additional performance information</b>	<p>Additional information can be found in the appendix that accompanies this report.</p> <p>This is also shared with our tenant-led Housing and Neighbourhoods Advisory Panel (HANAP) and the Customer Repairs Focus Group. This provides the opportunity for tenants to scrutinise our performance and provide feedback and thoughts. The appendix report also captures all the performance measures we are required to collate and submit to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH).</p>
<b>2. We will offer a range of quality homes</b>		
<b>2.1 Repair Volumes</b>		
2.1.1	<b>The repairs service continues to experience significant demand pressures</b>	<p>Demand for our responsive repairs service has increased by 30% - 40% compared to pre-pandemic levels. For the first time the volume of responsive repairs exceeded an average of over 2,600 new repairs each week in quarter 1 of 2023-24. In previous years they averaged around 2,000 new responsive repairs per week.</p> <p>As a consequence, the proportion of responsive repairs completed on time has reduced from 91.05% in quarter 4 2022-2023, to 83.61% in quarter 1 2023-2024. We have also seen a slight reduction in overall customer satisfaction following a responsive repair being carried out, from 81% in quarter 4 to 79.21% in quarter 1 (see 2.3.2 below).</p> <p>It should be noted that the service is currently reviewing its approach to responsive repairs, given the continued demand and performance issues. In the process of that review we have identified some potential issues with the way in which responsive repairs completion is being reported and analysed, which may mean that performance has been reported as higher than it should have been. This will be rectified and reported as part of the quarter 2 update.</p>
2.1.2	<b>Overdue repairs have increased due to high demand</b>	<p>Despite improvements in productivity the number of overdue responsive and planned repairs has increased during Quarter 1. This will remain a challenge whilst the service continues to experience significantly higher demand than was historically the case.</p>

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Whilst we have recently attempted to recruit additional resources into responsive repairs, recruitment is very challenging given the construction labour market. The service is therefore highly reliant on the use of sub-contractors, who have had similar recruitment and resourcing issues, to deal with the additional demand in the short-term.

In terms of planned repairs, volumes have remained in line with last year, however the council has experienced a steep increase in the number of disrepair claims over the last few years in line with the nationwide trend. This has severely impacted upon our ability to complete planned works.

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<b>2.1.3 Reported performance for emergency repairs is not currently accurate</b>	The figure reported for emergency repairs completed on time is well below target. However, we have identified an issue with the way in which the operational ICT system records and reports emergency repairs. This is being rectified and reported performance is expected to improve significantly in the latter part of 2023-2024.
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## **2.2 Right First Time**

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<b>2.2.1 Right First Time is a key indicator for the repairs service</b>	<p>We continue to drive productivity in the workforce through a focus on 'Right First Time' repairs and customer excellence.</p> <p>'Right First Time' performance stands at 84% at the end of quarter one, the highest performance achieved by the service to date and an improvement from 80% in the same period last year.</p> <p>The service continues to focus on achieving improved performance during thorough analysis of incorrect diagnosis of repairs and remedying under performance in relation to parts, materials, and standard of work.</p>
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## **2.3 Customer Satisfaction with Repairs**

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<b>2.3.1 Repairs satisfaction is measured using transactional and perception surveys</b>	<p>Customer satisfaction with the repairs service is measured using both transactional and perception surveys.</p> <p>The Council are required to submit satisfaction information to the RSH in the form of a perception survey. Requirements have been set out by the RSH for this, therefore the survey asks a random sample of tenants about their satisfaction with the repairs service</p>
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if they had received a repair within the last 12 months. These perception survey scores are the ones that will be made public by the Regulator of Social Housing in 2024.

In addition, RMS also measure satisfaction with repairs after each 'transaction', meaning customers who have recently used the service and had a repair completed, are contacted, and asked about their experience. The nature of a transactional survey means that the tenant is being asked if they are happy with a service, or transaction, (in this case a repair), when it has been completed. This provides a different perspective on our satisfaction levels.

Perception and transactional surveys do however generate different results which is reflected as part of the performance reporting in 2022/23 and as part of this report for quarter 1 2023/24.

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**2.3.2 As a result, there is disparity in repairs customer satisfaction depending on the type of survey**

Repairs satisfaction as part of the RSH requirements has shown slight improvements in quarter 1 in comparison to 2022/23 performing at around 64%. Quarter 1 performance in this area highlights the gap in satisfaction levels when we compare satisfaction reported through the housing tenant satisfaction survey and the transactional repairs service survey.

Customer satisfaction measured via transactional surveys has slightly reduced from 81% in quarter 4 to 79% in quarter 1 using our transactional surveys. Every case where a customer expresses dissatisfaction is rectified, and lessons learnt. The main drivers of dissatisfaction include waiting times at the contact centre and communication with customers.

Housemark (the leading data and insight company for the UK housing sector), have reported that results from transactional surveys are typically around 15% higher than perception survey results. Our challenge in 2023/24 is to close the gap, building upon recent performance improvement.

As part of the RSH's requirements, we will also report on satisfaction with the time taken to complete the most recent repair. Tenant satisfaction with the time taken to complete the most recent repair fell from 59% (2022-2023 overall) to 55% in quarter1. Falling satisfaction in this area likely reflects the continuing high demand for repairs, level of overdue jobs and difficulties in sourcing materials and labour shortages.

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In April 2023, Housemark forecasted that during 2023/24 the pressure on repairs services will continue, as landlords take action to tackle damp and mould alongside other work on homes. Housemark also commented, “While there have been some positive signs in the construction industry of lower inflation and increased labour supply, the real-terms financial situation for many landlords will mean that they cannot achieve better service delivery by spending more money, as resources and capacity are already stretched.”

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## **2.4 Disrepairs**

### **2.4.1 The service is completing more disrepair cases against a backdrop of increased claims**

Disrepair case completions per quarter have remained above 100 cases for quarter 1. The repairs service is increasing capacity to respond to the volume of cases and (during quarter 1, 148 new claims were received) to improve performance during the remainder of 2023-2024.

The service continues to prioritise completing the oldest cases first, resulting in a drop in cases completed within time. (N.B. This relates to jobs completed within the Council’s timescale of 55 days rather than a legal timescale).

A position statement on disrepairs which provides an update on Council Housing disrepair cases and an update on the early resolution implementation plan will be presented at the same Housing Policy Committee as this report.

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## **2.5 Health and Safety Compliance**

### **2.5.1 Gas safety performance has been sustained and we are striving for 100% compliance**

Gas safety remains a top priority for the service and performance has remained around the 98% mark.

A new Gas Action Team has been established to focus on cases which have listed no response after 3 letters and failed visits. A Rapid Improvement Event was held in June 2023 and the recommendations from this exercise are being implemented with the intention of sustaining the current trend of improved access. This will include the identification of properties which have proved to be problematic in previous years and targeting them for intensive activity.

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### **2.5.2 Improvements**    The percentage of homes with EICR (Electrical

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**needed around electrical safety certificates**

Installation Condition Report) certificates up to five-years-old remains at 66% in quarter 1. In line with updated guidance, we have moved from a ten-year to a five-year cycle and have been targeting properties with EICR's older than 5 years first. Gaining access to some properties has been problematic, however we are following a robust access procedure to enable us to carry out this work.

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**2.5.3 We continue to be compliant with other health and safety measures**

For quarter 1, we continue report 100% on other key health and safety compliance areas such as legionella, asbestos and communal passenger lift safety.

Satisfaction that our tenants feel safe in their home remains one of our higher satisfaction scores at over 70% in quarter 1.

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**2.6 Fire Safety**

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**2.6.1 We are compliant with our fire risk assessments**

Fire risk assessments are carried out on our high-rise tower blocks, Older People's Independent Living (OPIL) schemes and our low rise flat and maisonette blocks. All fire risk assessments due for quarter 1 have been completed. Following the assessment, any repairs or any further non repair actions that are required are then reported and to be actioned.

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**2.6.2 Fire stopping performance is below target due to access and supply issues**

Performance on completing repairs identified through Fire Risk Assessments remains an area of focus.

Performance has significantly improved in low rise and older person's accommodation with 94% and 93% of fire risk assessment repairs completed in target during Quarter 1. The challenge lies with improving performance in high rise accommodation where the service is experiencing significant access and supply chain issues.

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**2.7 Damp and Mould**

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**2.7.1 We are responding sector-wide damp and mould concerns**

We continue to see high levels of damp, mould and condensation reported in line with the national trend. Our dedicated damp and mould team is being expanded to ensure we can respond to all issues within our five-day target.

We are building our intelligence of damp and mould cases across the city so we can develop the most appropriate response and interventions to resolve any issues that are identified.

A new Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy and self-assessment against Housing Ombudsman recommendations will also be presented to the same Housing Policy Committee as this report.

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## **2.8 Delivery of new council homes**

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### **2.8.1 We are continuing to deliver new council homes in 2023/24**

Our target for the stock increase programme in 2023/24 is to deliver 164 homes (114 acquisitions and 50 new builds). In quarter 1 we have acquired 19 new homes (15 being general acquisitions located across the city) and 4 new build acquisitions at Owlthorpe.

The 50 new build sites expected to be delivered in 2023/24 include 44 units at Daresbury and Berners (Park & Arbourthorne area) and 6 units at Fraser Road (Woodseats). In quarter 1 12 new homes at the Daresbury and Berners sites have been built and handed over to the HNS. A further 10 new homes at these sites are expected to be ready in quarter 2. The remaining units will be delivered in 2023/24, with the 6 units at Fraser Road expected to be ready in quarter 4.

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## **3. We will take care of your neighbourhood**

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### **3.1 Shared living spaces**

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#### **3.1.1 Improvements still needed to boost satisfaction with communal cleaning**

It is important that we provide and maintain good quality communal facilities for the over 45% of tenant households who live in flats and maisonettes. We ask tenants living in our flats and maisonette blocks specifically about communal cleaning, shared green spaced and waste management. Satisfaction levels around communal cleaning in quarter 1 have remained consistent with those reported in 2022/23. We are continuing to work our neighbourhood teams to make improvements in this area especially around cleaning standards.

#### **3.1.2 Satisfaction with housing waste management is improving**

Satisfaction with communal waste management and recycling facilities have continued to perform well in quarter 1. Satisfaction in these areas have improved since 2022/23 suggesting the work of our Estates and Environmental team are carrying out in these areas is having a sustained positive impact.

#### **3.1.3 Perceptions about shared green space and how we**

Tenant perceptions of our maintenance of shared green areas and positive contribution to their neighbourhoods have both fallen in quarter 1. Tenants may view the services they receive as council wide,

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<b>contribute to the neighbourhood still needs improvement</b>	rather than housing specific and this impacts on the satisfaction levels and our response. We are reviewing the comments to help identify issues that are housing specific so these can be fed-back to the neighbourhoods and estate teams and actioned. Where is identified that dissatisfaction is associated with wider council services, then we will need to work with those services to address the issues raised.
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### **3.2 Anti-social behaviour**

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<b>3.2.1 Tenants perception of how we deal with anti-social behaviour remains a challenge</b>	Tenant satisfaction with our approach to handling anti-social behaviour remained consistent in quarter 1 with our performance during 2022/23. This is a perception question so will include responses from tenants who may have never formally reported anti-social behaviour to us. Scores last year were particularly low amongst tenants who had quit a tenancy and a similar trend remains in quarter 1. It will be important for us to continue to monitor these comments and survey response information to further identify themes and trends and to help pin point key areas that could help to prevent this.
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### **3.3 Managing tenant arrears**

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<b>3.3.1 We continue to prioritise supportive income collection</b>	<p>At the end of quarter 1, total arrears stood at around £16.3 million. Former tenants arrears has reduced to £5.06 million and current arrears stood at around £11.4 million. The increase in current arrears is not unexpected. We are seeing increasing debt levels for tenants due to the cost-of-living crisis that continues to affect tenants ability to pay. Staff are taking a proactive approach to income collection and therefore helping to reduce rent loss.</p> <p>We are active in area officers working collaboratively with neighbourhood teams to resolve complex tenant issues and therefore reduce arrears. We are proactively visiting tenants to ensure that they are receiving quality advice and can make rent payments. We also now have a presence in a number of foodbanks, offering advice and support to tenants who present at foodbanks. The reduction in former tenant arrears is due the proactive approach we are taking with statute barred debt which is leading to an increase in write offs.</p>
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### **3.4 Improving vacants**

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**3.4.1 Properties still remain empty for too long** The demand for council homes remains high and therefore it is important that we can have as many of our council homes available to be re-let once vacated. There can be several reasons why an empty property has not been let. Some homes require extensive repairs for them to be ready for a new tenant to move in or certain types of properties may be harder to let.

Work is continuing to take place to improve this process and to improve the number of days it takes from a tenant handing in the keys to a new tenant moving in. We know improvements are needed in this area as for every property that stands empty there is a loss of income into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). A new Housing Vacants Team has been set up and is currently being recruited to. The team is expected to be operational from November- December 2023. The team will be focusing initially on 3 main areas to improve performance - reduction in key safe fitting times; process improvements with temporary accommodation relets and reclassifying new acquisitions, with further savings that will start to be realised in 2024/25, by further streamlining processes and driving efficiencies.

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#### **4. We will provide a good service to you**

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##### **4.1 Overall Satisfaction**

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**4.1.1 Overall satisfaction remains consistent but still performing under target** For quarter 1 we have asked nearly 1,400 council tenants how satisfied they are with several aspects of the services as part of our Neighbourhood Tenant Satisfaction survey. The survey includes TSMs that align with requirements from the RSH. Satisfaction with the overall service in quarter 1 has performed consistently with 2022/23 performance. The main reasons for tenant dissatisfaction in quarter 1 are also consistent with 2022/23. This includes long waiting times for repairs and getting through on the phone. More work will need to take place in 2023/24 to ensure that we are feeding back what our tenants are telling us and to work with the relevant teams and departments if we are going to improve our satisfaction scores.

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##### **4.2 Complaints**

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**4.2.1 Complaints satisfaction has fallen** Overall satisfaction with how we deal with complaints was 45% in 2022/23, however this included some changes mid-year by the RSH to how this question

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was to be asked (only tenants who have made a formal complaint in the last year are now asked this in line with RSH requirements). Quarter 4 performance in 2022/23 therefore dropped as a result and performance into quarter 1 2023/24 has continued to perform at a similar level.

We continue to work to the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code to ensure we are compliant with how we are expected as a social landlord to manage customer complaints. We have undertaken a self-assessment over the last 3 months to review our policies, procedures, information provided to customers, training materials, customer satisfaction data and performance information – to assess how well we comply with each element of the Code. As a result we have an action plan in place to help us make any necessary improvements and to address any gaps as a result of the self-assessment.

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#### **4.3 Contacting the service**

<b>4.3.1 Contacting us remains frustrating for tenants</b>	Tenants remain frustrated with getting through to us on the phone as reflected by the low satisfaction score for how easy it is to contact us. There has been an 8% drop in performance in this area in quarter 1. Some of this is due to avoidable contact, for example, chasing up existing requests. We are working with the contact centre to try and reduce this which would help to reduce call waiting times. Call waiting times have reduced in quarter 1 but we will continue to monitor customer feedback as we know this is an area that is contributing highly to dissatisfaction with the overall service.
<b>4.3.2 Tenants feel they are treated fairly and with respect when they do get through to us</b>	Tenants are telling us they are very satisfied with how well they are treated when they do contact us, however. This is our highest performance tenant satisfaction area, with a score of 79% for quarter 1. This indicates that a vast majority of interactions between tenants and council officers are positive and that staff continue to be helpful and professional under sometimes challenging circumstances.
<b>4.3.3 Communicating and finding new ways of engaging with tenants is important</b>	We continue to develop a variety of ways for tenants to engage with us and have started to make improvements around how we share housing and repairs information. Our monthly ebulletin <i>Your Home Your Neighbourhood</i> is sent out to over 28,500 subscribers providing useful information about

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developments within the service as well as sharing our performance information and how we are responding to it. Our Facebook page continues to grow with over 5,000 followers at the end of quarter 1. This is another way of keeping our tenants informed.

Earlier this year, HNS launched two new engagement platforms “[Engagement Pitstop](#)” – which enables tenants to find out and have their say on current consultations within the service and find out about ways they can get involved. Also a [Tenants and Residents Virtual Community](#) - which is a page designed for tenants, residents and community groups to connect with one another.

There are also plans in 2023/24 to refresh our tenant engagement activities, with the relaunch of a tenant scrutiny panel and other ways for tenants to get involved such as mystery shopping. A full report will be brought to the Housing Policy Committee about this in November 2023. These will be tenant-led and will help to drive performance in areas that matter most to tenants. By being more open and transparent, satisfaction levels will hopefully improve around how we keep tenants informed about things that matter to them and that we are listening to tenant views and acting upon them.

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## **5. Providing wider housing support**

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### **5.1 Helping to prevent homelessness**

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#### **5.1.1 There continues to be an increase in demand for our homelessness services**

Our homelessness services continue to experience high demand into 2023/24. There has been a national increase in homelessness and with the continued impact of the cost of living crisis, this remains a major challenge for us as well as for other core cities. Increasing numbers in temporary accommodation are reflective of the increasing number of those who present as homeless who are eligible and will be provided with emergency housing pending a decision on their case.

The number of successful prevention outcomes has reduced in quarter 1, however a Homeless Prevention Team is now in place and improvements to triage arrangements to identify prevention cases and act on them earlier should help to drive improvements in this area.

We are continuing to work with partners to improve the earlier help and system wide improvements. We are also working with other social housing providers to address homelessness prevention and expand the number of homes available where we can.

Rough sleeping remains at a relatively low level and improvements in the service offer for those with entrenched patterns of rough sleeping are planned for this year.

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## **5.2 Making private rented homes safer**

### **5.2.1 We continue to support private rented tenants to live safely**

We are responsible for monitoring the health and safety standards of private rented homes across the city, ensuring that we are supporting private rented tenants to live safely in their homes.

During quarter 1, we helped to make homes safer for 365 private rented tenants through the removal of Category 1 hazards or high scoring Category 2 hazards. Category 1 hazards are defined as a hazard that is a serious and immediate risk to a person's health and safety. Category 2 hazards are defined as less serious or less urgent but still required attention to resolve. In addition, 31 fire safety hazards in the private sector have also been resolved in quarter 1.

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## **6. How does this decision contribute?**

### **6.1 Housing and Repairs performance feeds into the broader corporate priorities in several areas**

#### **Our Sheffield – Priorities and Delivery Plan 2022-23**

The Council have developed a new set of strategic priorities for 2023/2024 (Our Sheffield – Administration Priorities) with the intention for these priorities to form the basis of the new medium term Corporate Plan which is currently in development. To help support this, the Our Sheffield Delivery Plan 2022-23 has been developed. The plan focuses on some of the key challenges the Council need to address before more longer-term strategic goals can be achieved. There are several areas in which housing performance feeds into broader corporate priorities, and as the new Corporate Plan emerges from the administration priorities, we will continue to monitor and report on how we are performing against broader corporate priorities.

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## **7. Has there been any consultation?**

### **7.1 Consultation**

There has been no consultation on this report,



	<b>may be undertaken in response to issues documented in this report</b>	however, it is anticipated that the Committee's response to issues documented in the report may necessitate future consultation. We do regularly report to the Housing and Neighbourhoods Advisory Panel (HANAP) and the Repairs Customer Focus Group wherein we seek input and feedback from our tenants on our performance reporting, and our targets for performance.
<b>7.2</b>	<b>We will look at other ways we can share performance information</b>	As part of our Engagement Strategy, we will look at other ways we can involve tenants and share our performance information more widely.
<b>8.</b>	<b>Risk analysis and implications of the decision</b>	
<b>8.1</b>	<b>No new equality implications but some may arise from our response to highlighted issues</b>	<b>Equality Implications</b>  There are no direct equality implications arising from this report. There are likely to be equality implications arising from the Council's response to many of the issues documented in this report equality impact assessments will be undertaken for these as needed.
<b>8.2</b>	<b>No new financial implications but some may arise from our response to highlighted issues</b>	<b>Financial and Commercial Implications</b>  There are no direct financial and commercial implications arising from this report. There may be financial and commercial implications arising from the Council's response to many of the issues documented in this report. Any budgetary implications that arise will need Member approval and decisions around this may need to be made at a future Housing Policy Committee.
<b>8.3</b>	<b>No new legal implications but some may arise from our response to highlighted issues</b>	<b>Legal Implications</b>  As this report is for noting, there are no direct legal implications arising from this report, but the report does provide an overview of the achievement of targets in the past quarter and highlights risk management considerations where appropriate.  Any further legal implications will be considered in any future reports to the Housing Policy Committee.
<b>8.4</b>	<b>No new climate implications</b>	<b>Climate implications</b>

	<b>but some may arise from our response to highlighted issues</b>	There are no direct climate implications arising from this report. There are likely to be climate implications arising from the Council's response to many of the issues documented in the first part of this report: climate impact assessments will be undertaken for these as needed.
<b>8.5</b>	<b>No other new implications but some may arise from our response to highlighted issues</b>	<b>Other Implications</b> There are no other direct implications of this report. There may be other implications arising from the Council's response to many of the issues documented in this report.
<b>9.</b>	<b>Alternative options considered</b>	
<b>9.1</b>	<b>No other options were considered</b>	The Housing Policy Committee has delegated responsibility for the regular monitoring of data including performance and financial information, and the performance monitoring of Housing (public sector, private sector, and related functions) services. Therefore, no alternative options to the production of this report have been considered.
<b>10.</b>	<b>Reasons for recommendations</b>	
<b>10.1</b>	<b>Housing Policy Committee has delegated authority to monitor performance</b>	The Housing Policy Committee has delegated authority to monitor the performance of Housing and Repairs services to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The service is delivering for tenants, and that tenant satisfaction is closely monitored</li> <li>• Limited resources are maximised due to budgetary pressures</li> <li>• The Council is delivering on corporate priorities</li> <li>• Performance information is shared with external organisations such as the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman for scrutiny</li> </ul>



# Housing & Repairs Performance Report 2023/24

## Quarter 1 (April 23 - June 23)

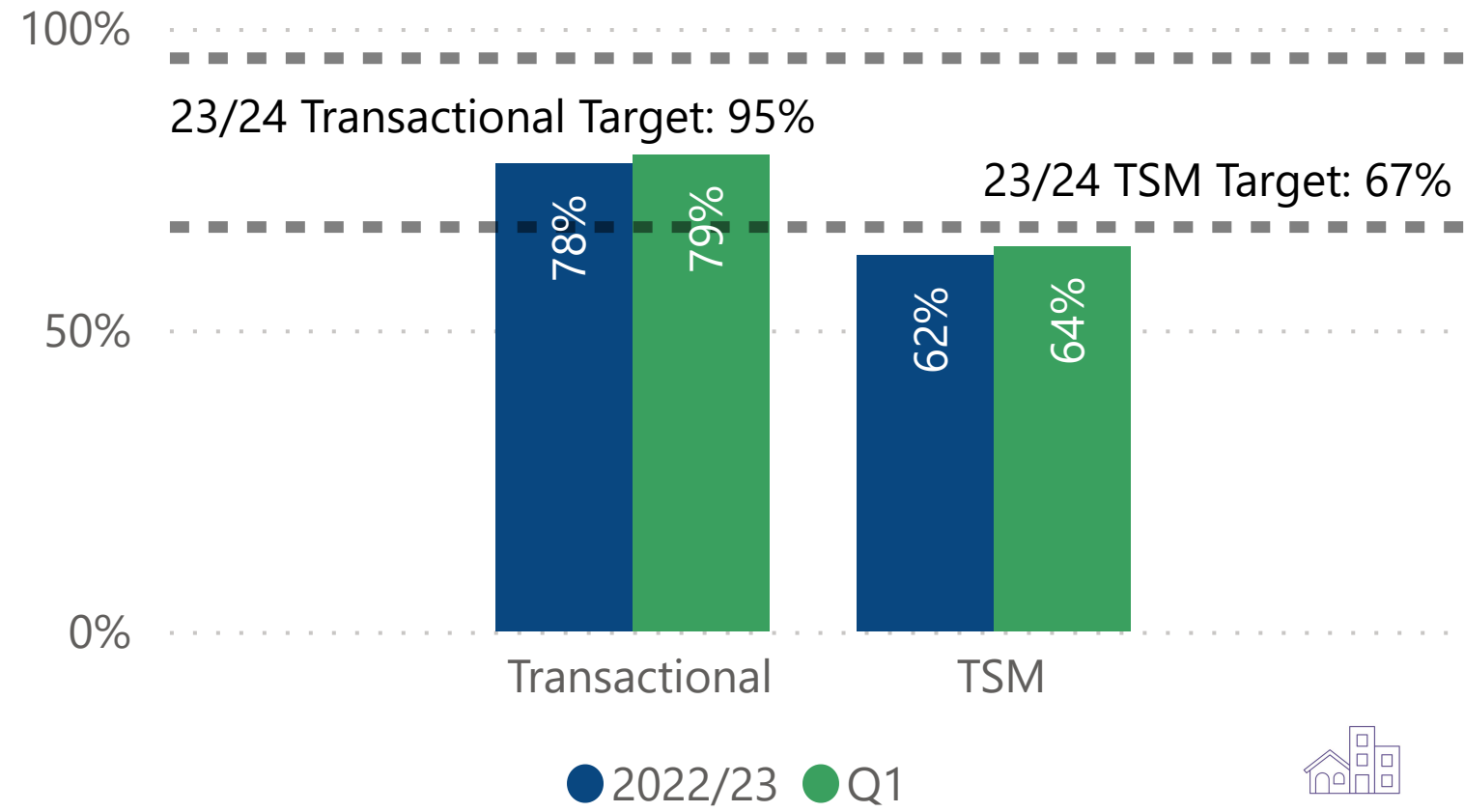
Performance measures included within this report align with Sheffield City Council's Landlord Commitments and the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). This report also includes other key performance indicators for the Housing & Neighbourhoods and Repairs & Maintenance Services.

TSMs can be identified by this icon

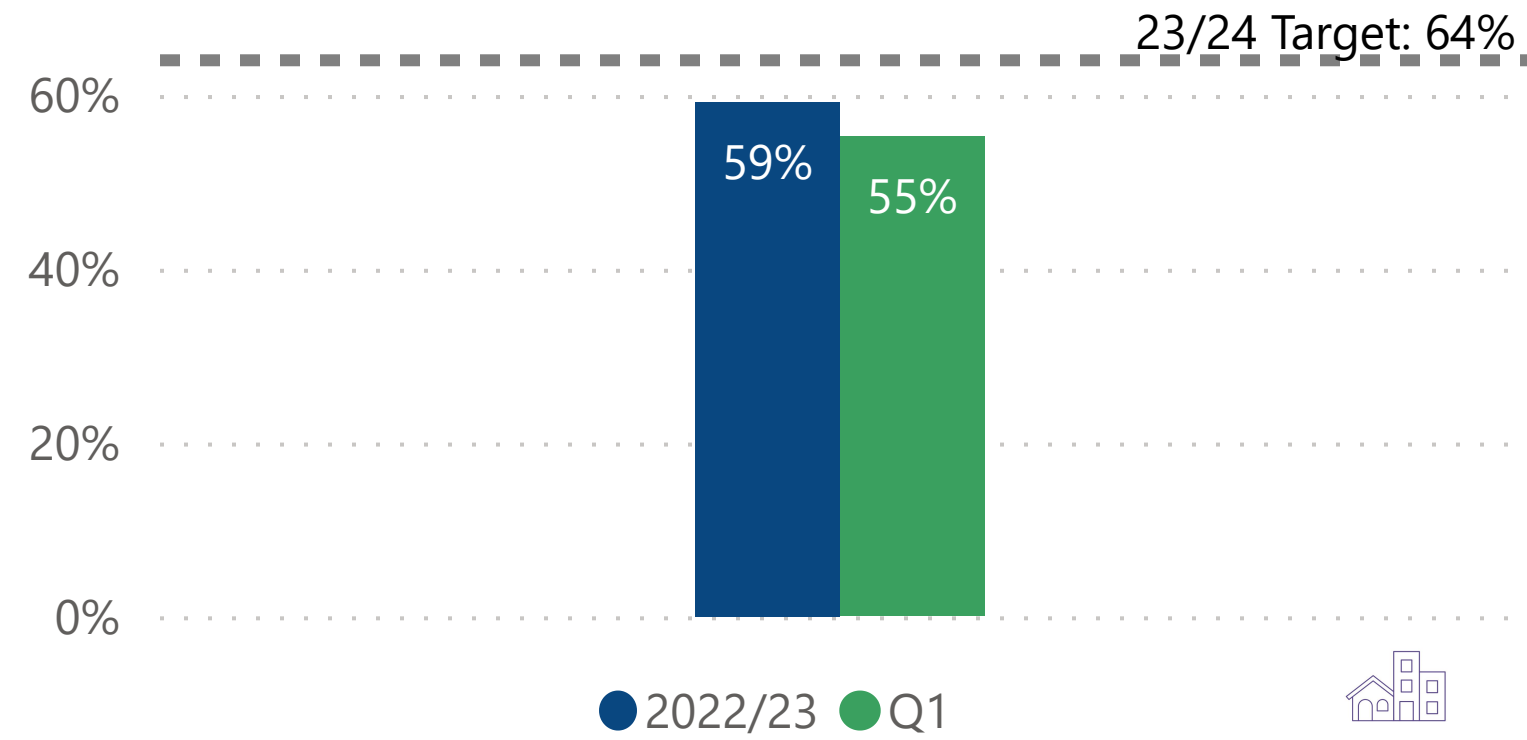


# We will offer a range of quality homes

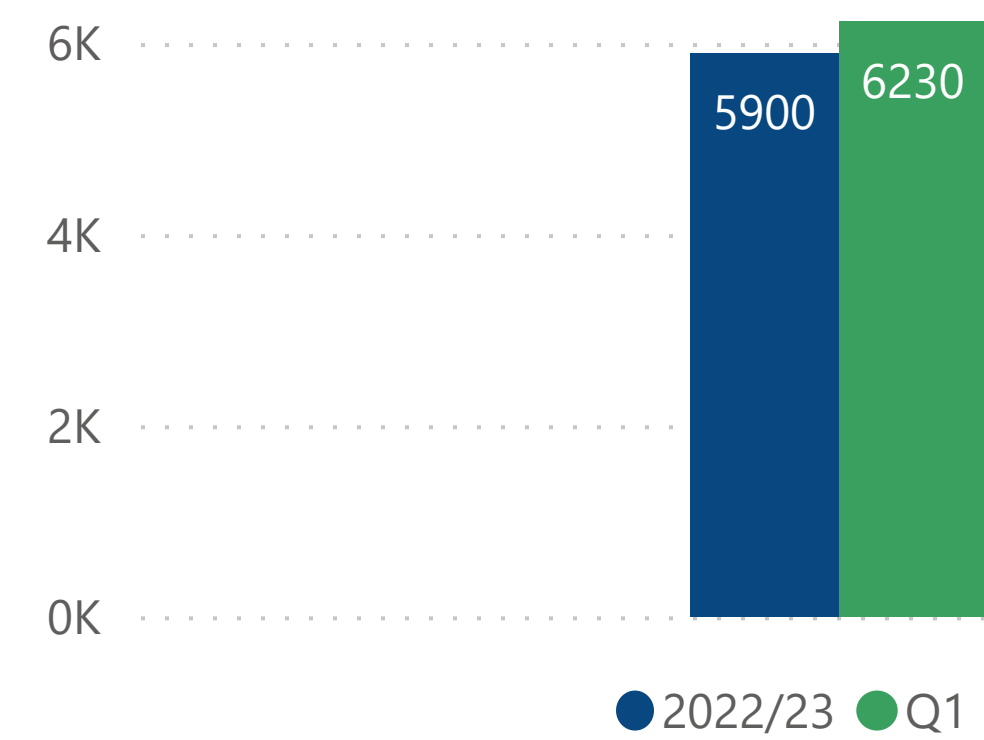
### Satisfaction with Repairs Service



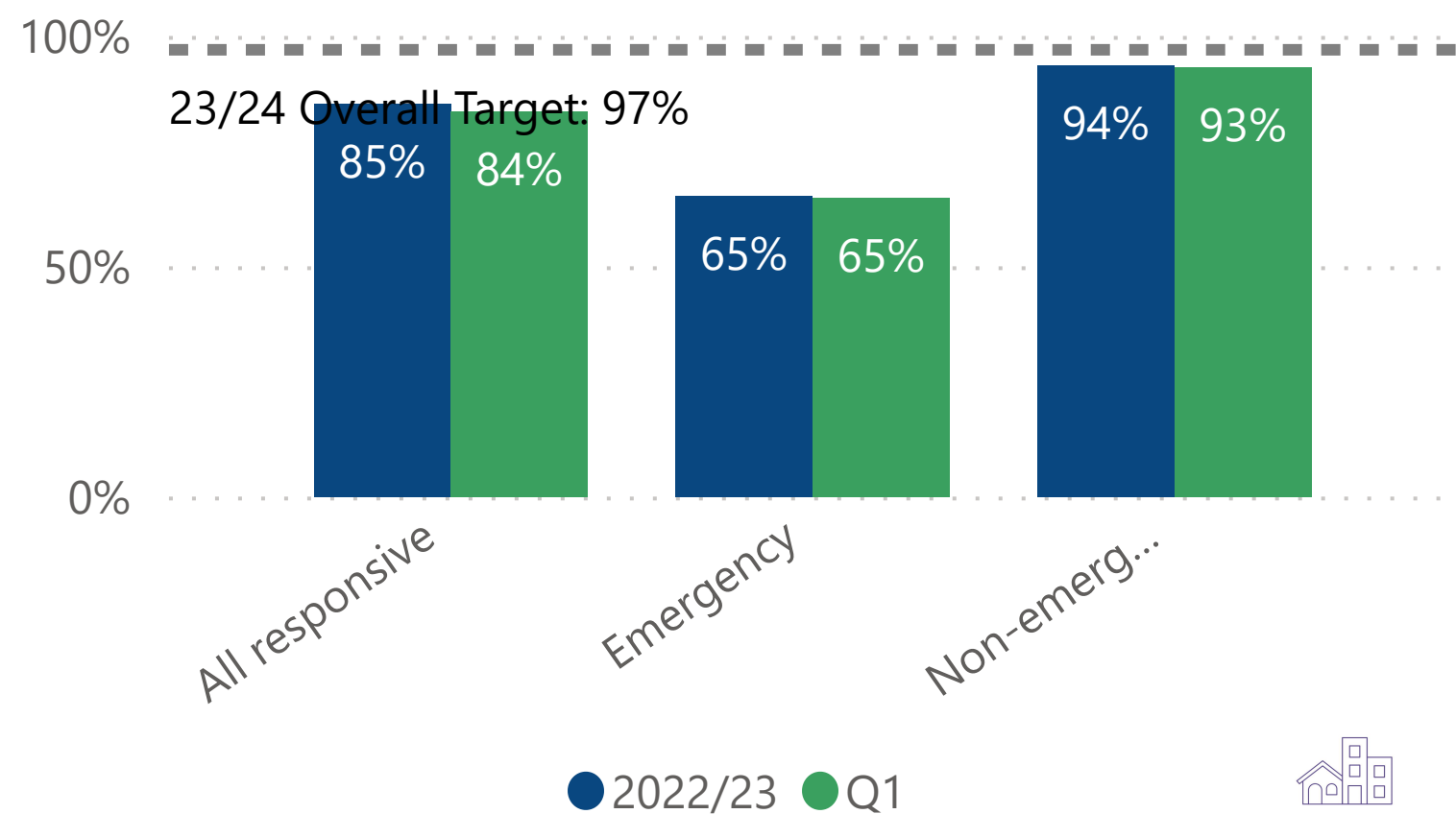
### Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair



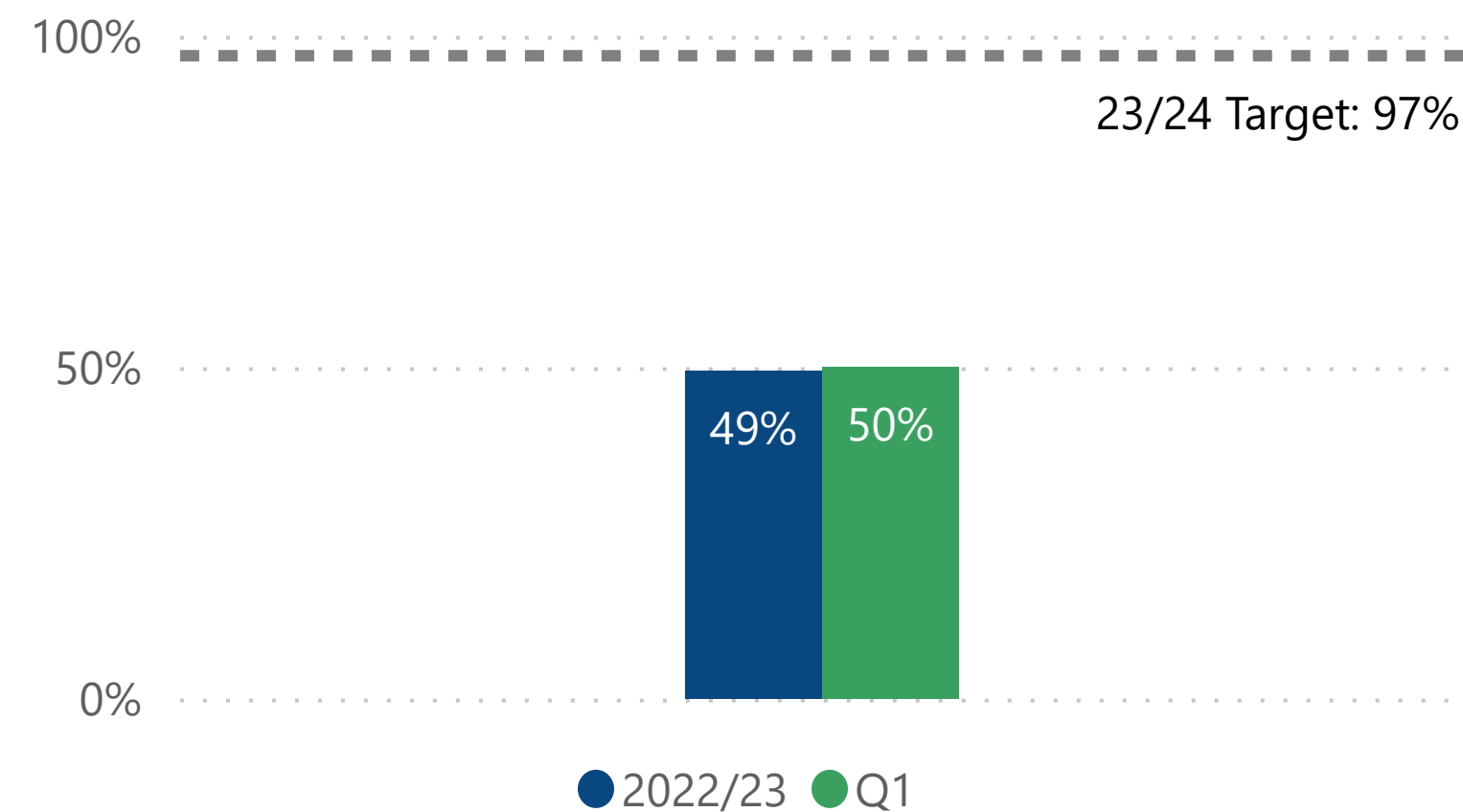
### Number of repairs overdue



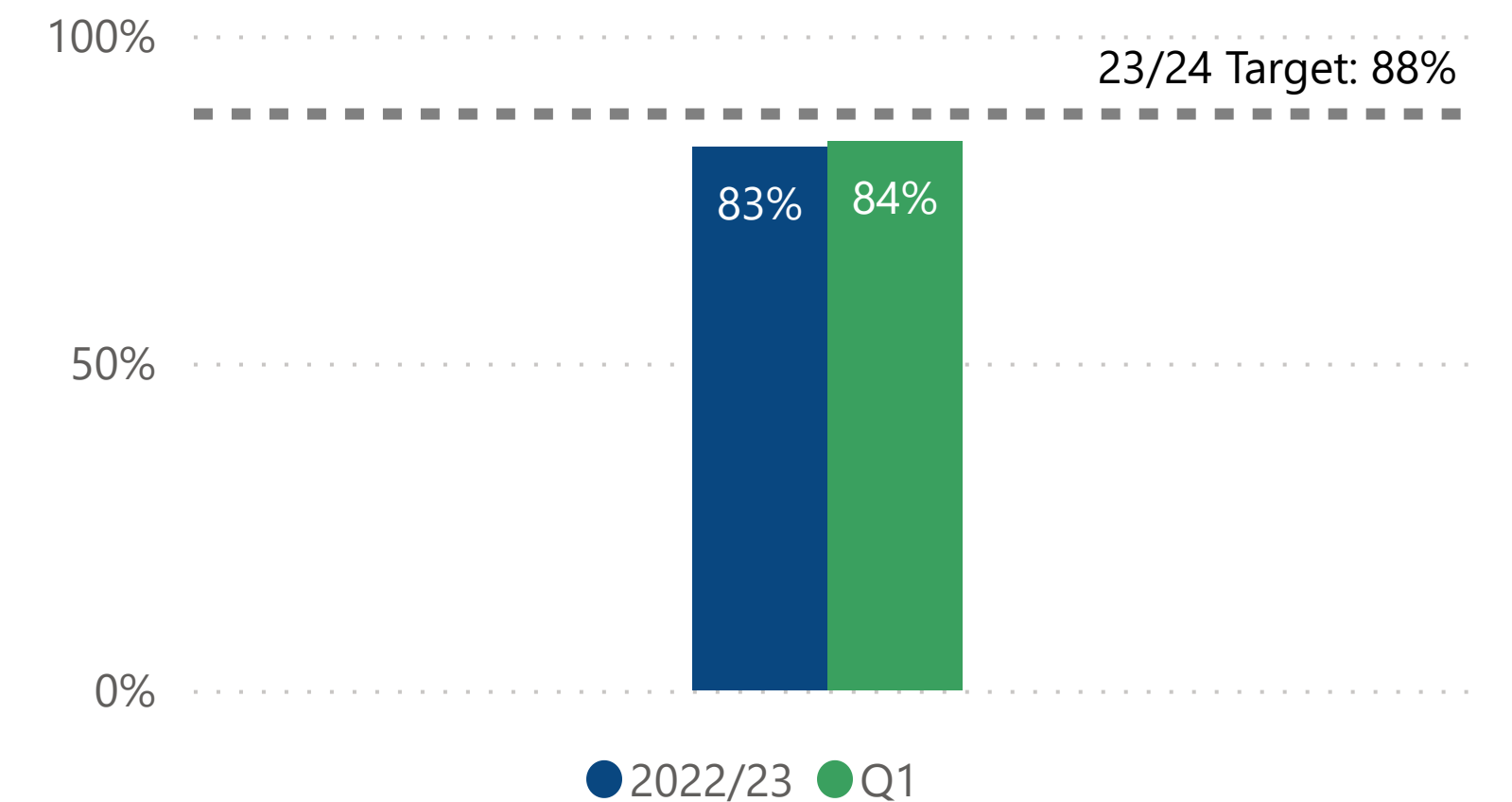
### Percentage of responsive repairs completed on time



### Percentage of planned repairs completed on time

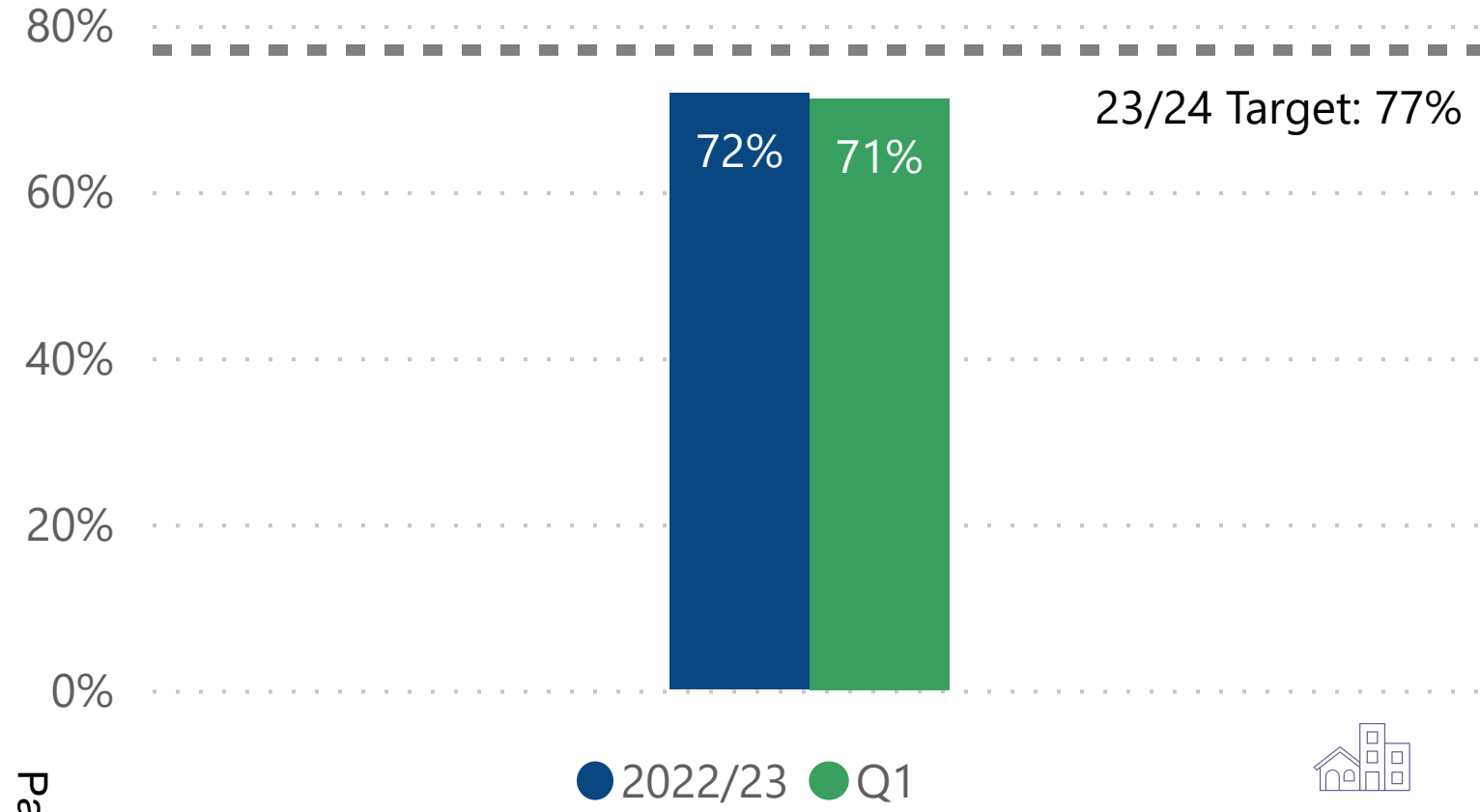


### Percentage of repairs completed right first time

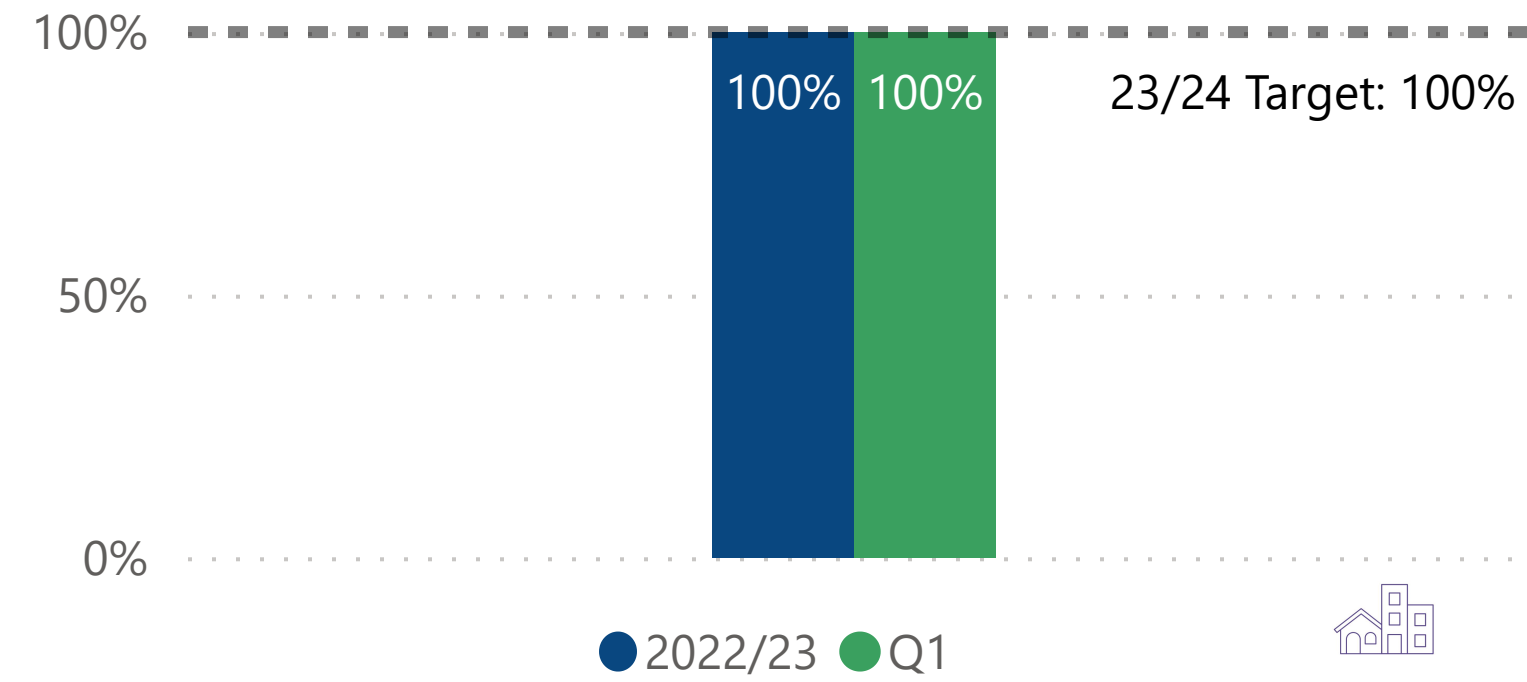


# We will offer a range of quality homes

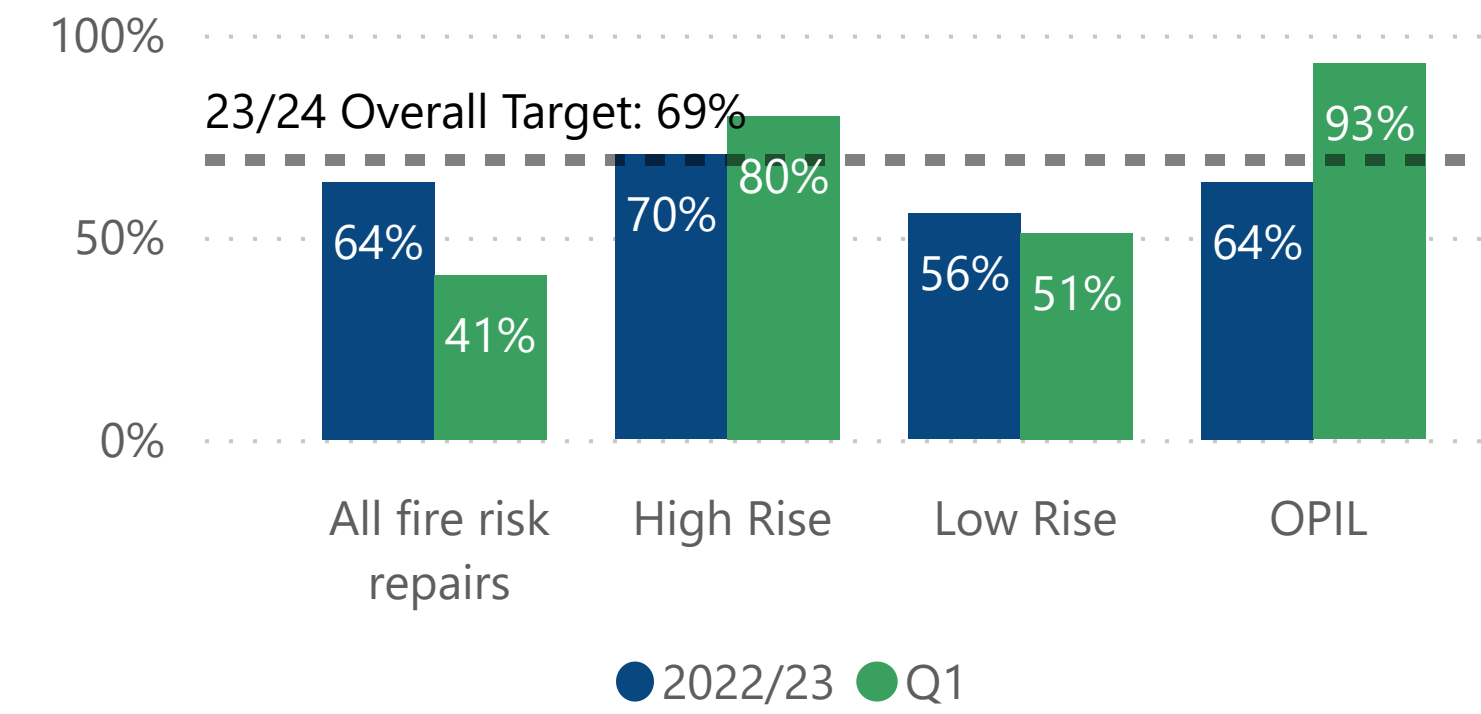
Satisfaction the home is safe



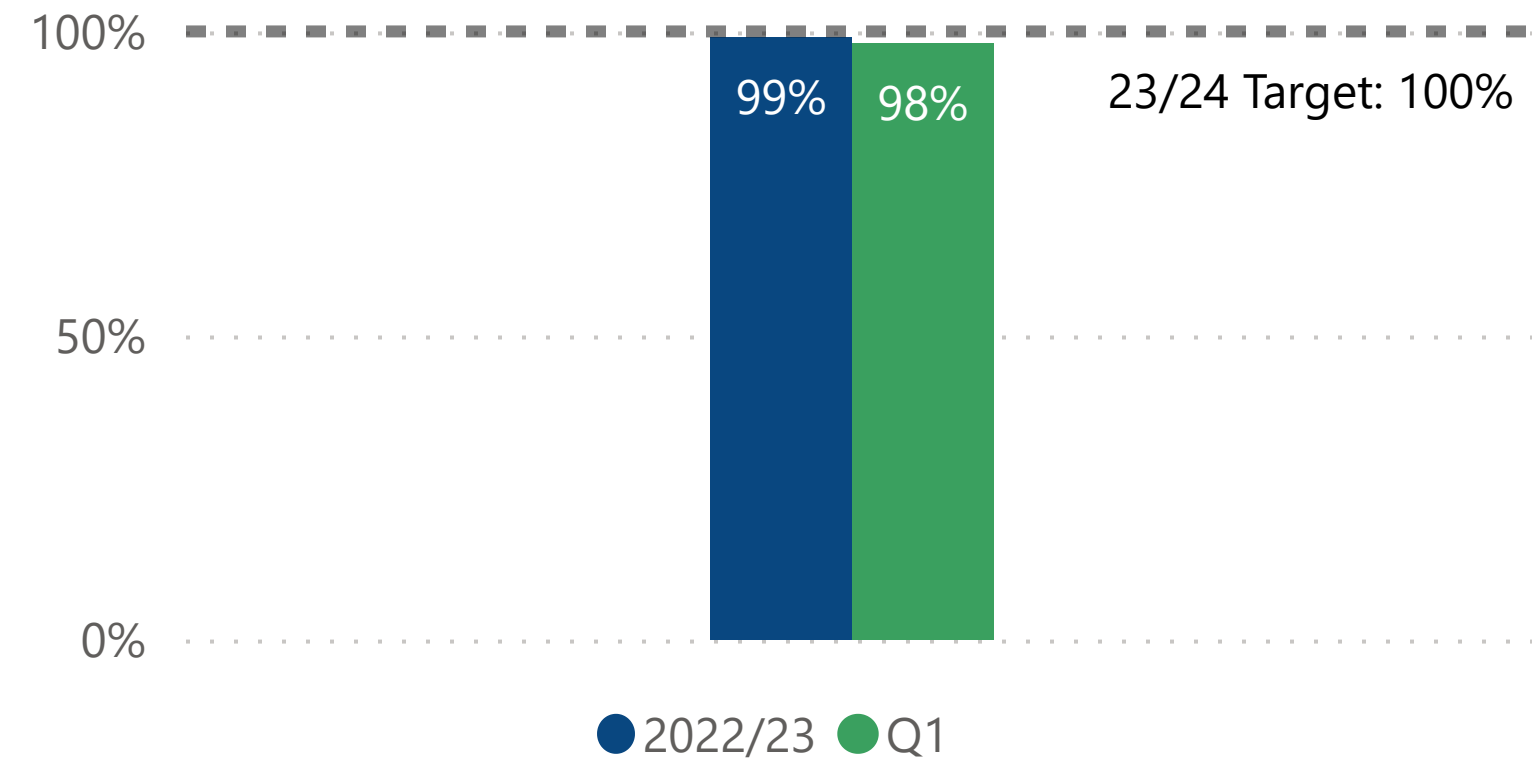
Percentage of homes in buildings that have had all the necessary fire risk assessments



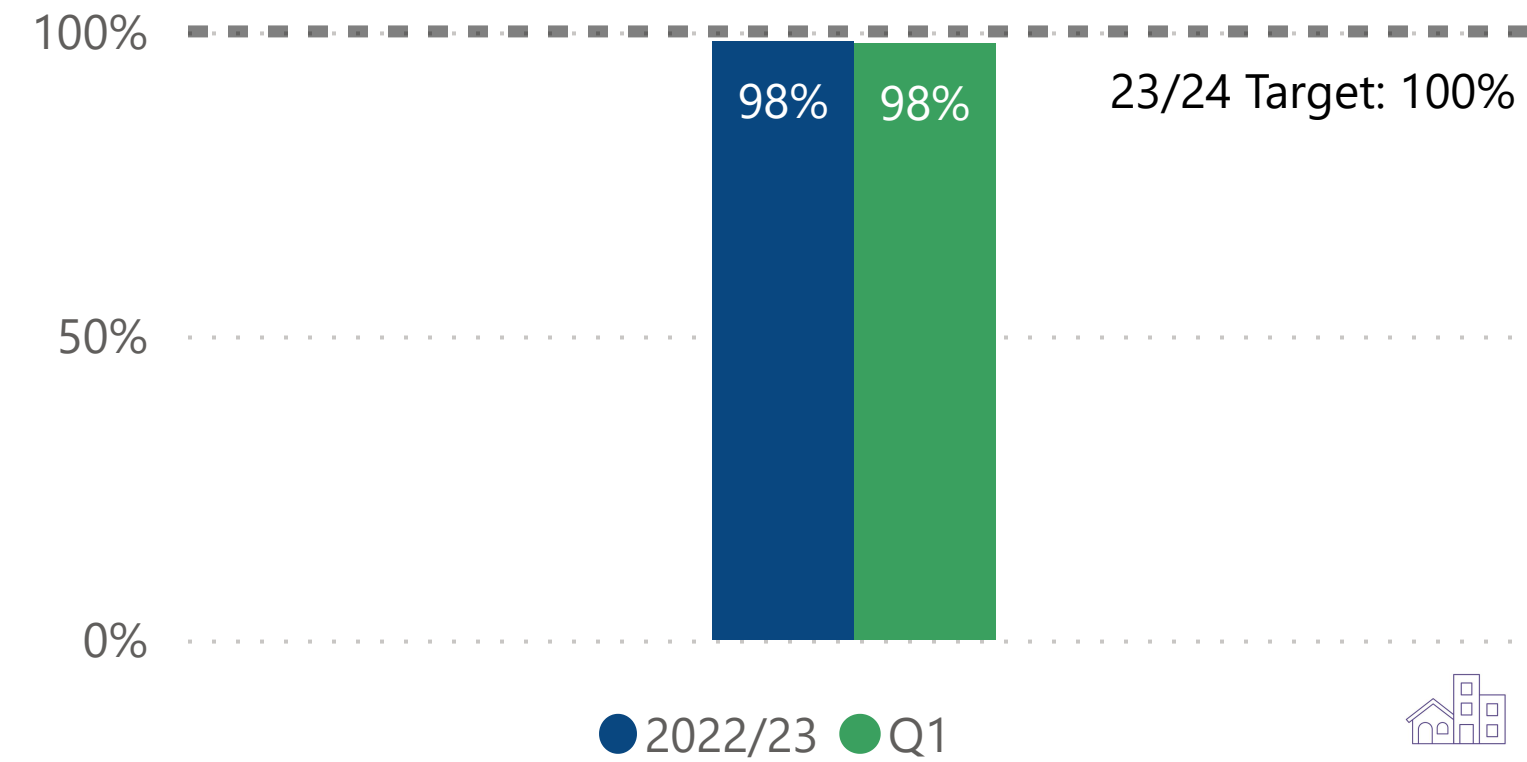
Percentage of fire risk assessment repairs completed within target time



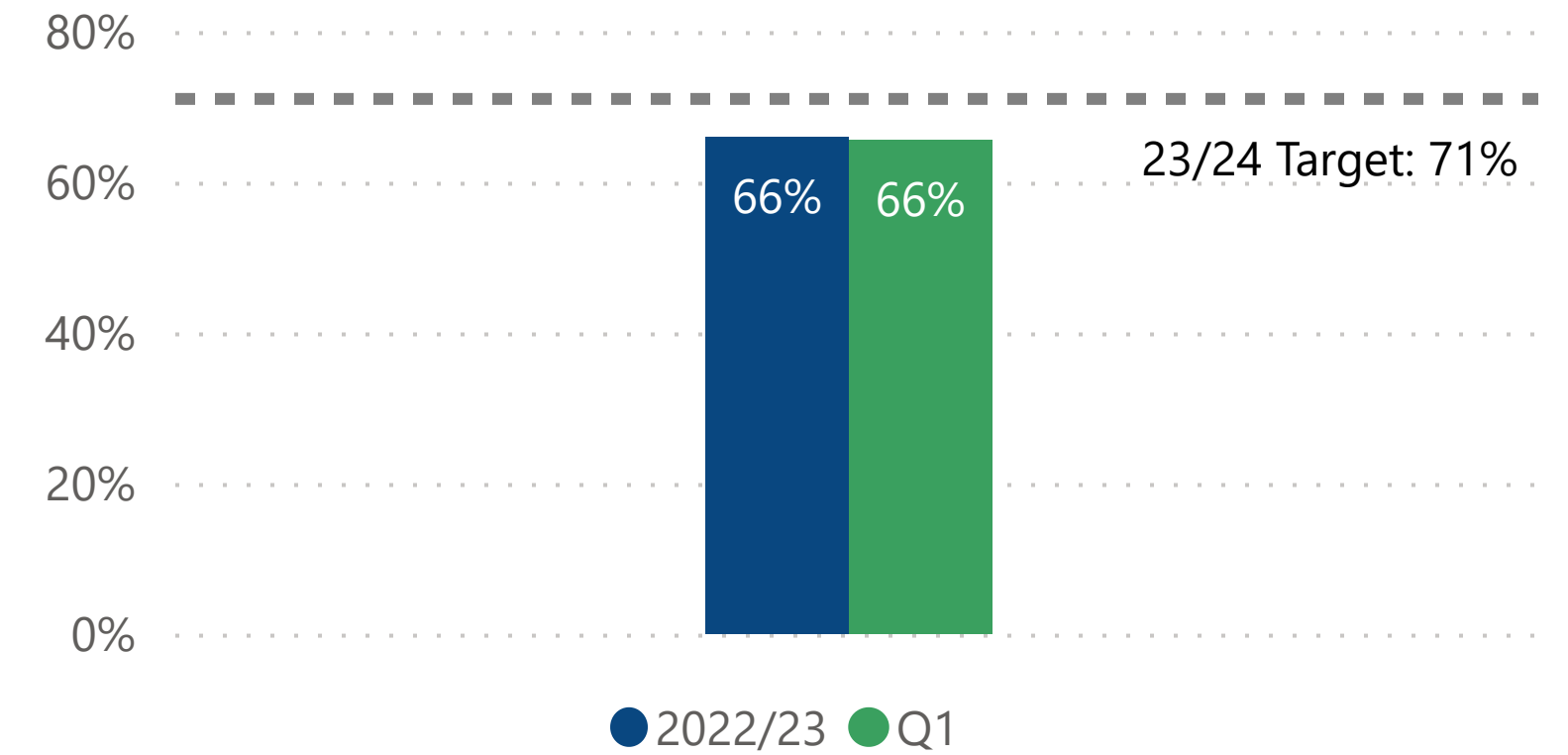
Percentage of properties with a valid gas certificate



Percentage of homes that have had all the necessary gas safety checks

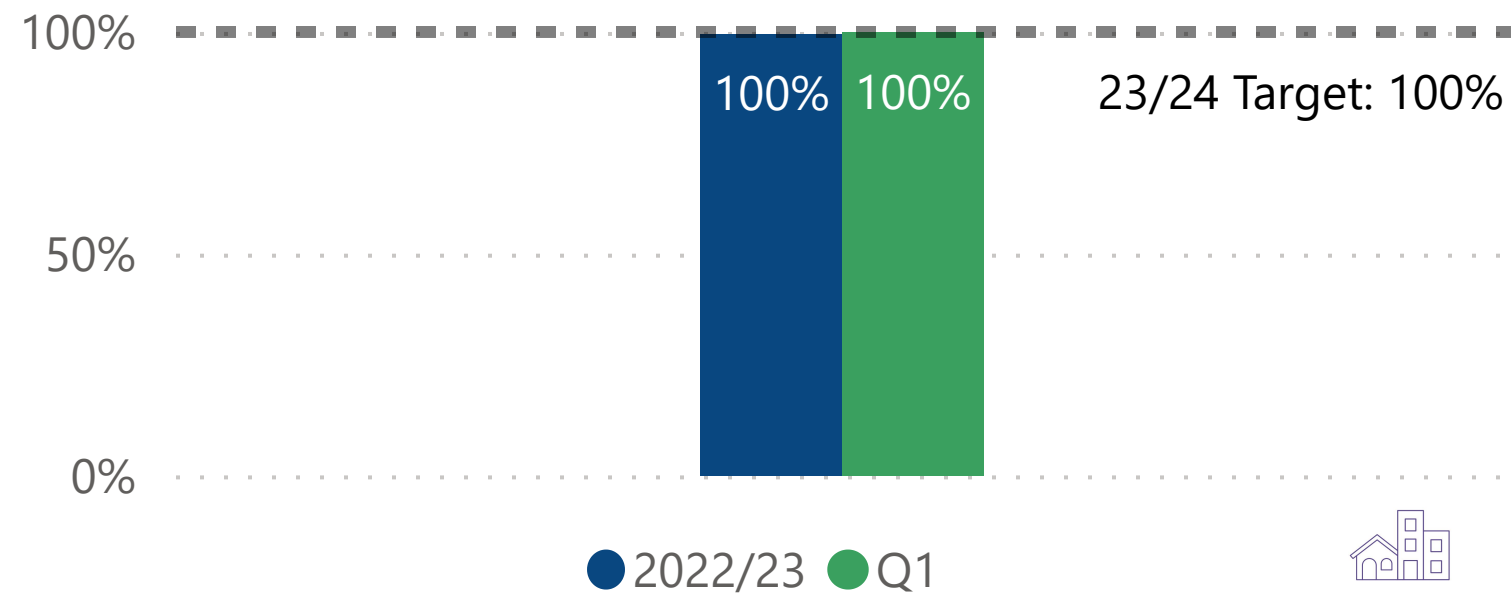


Percentage of domestic properties with EICR certificates up to five years old

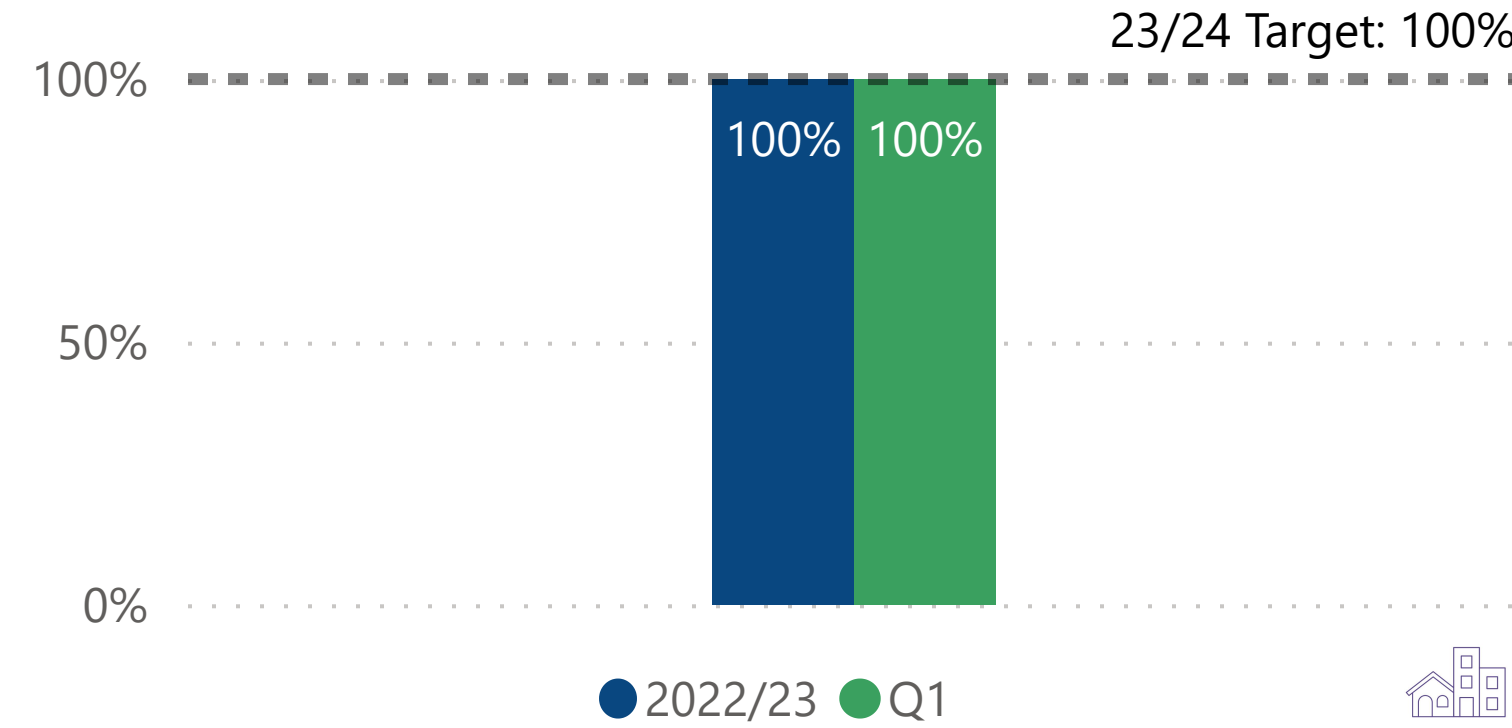


# We will offer a range of quality homes

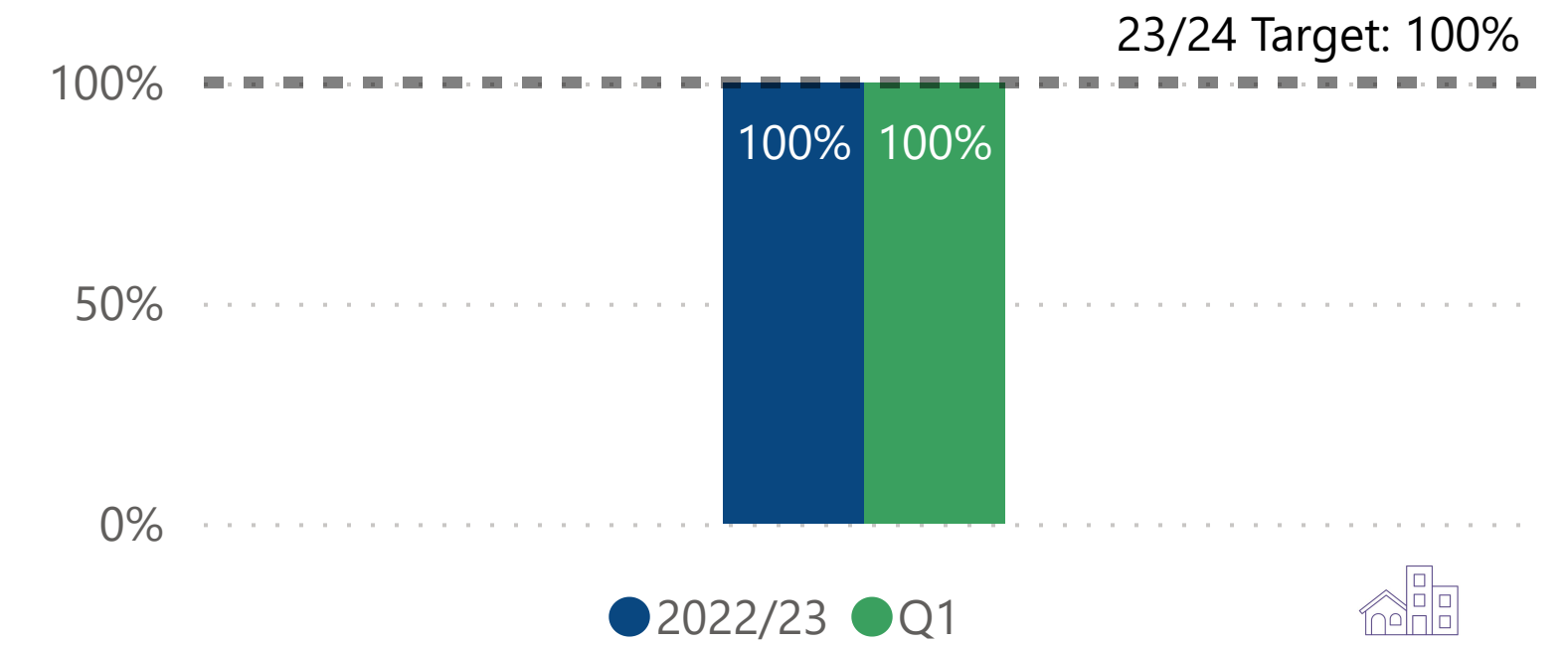
Percentage of homes in buildings that have had all the necessary asbestos management surveys or re-inspections



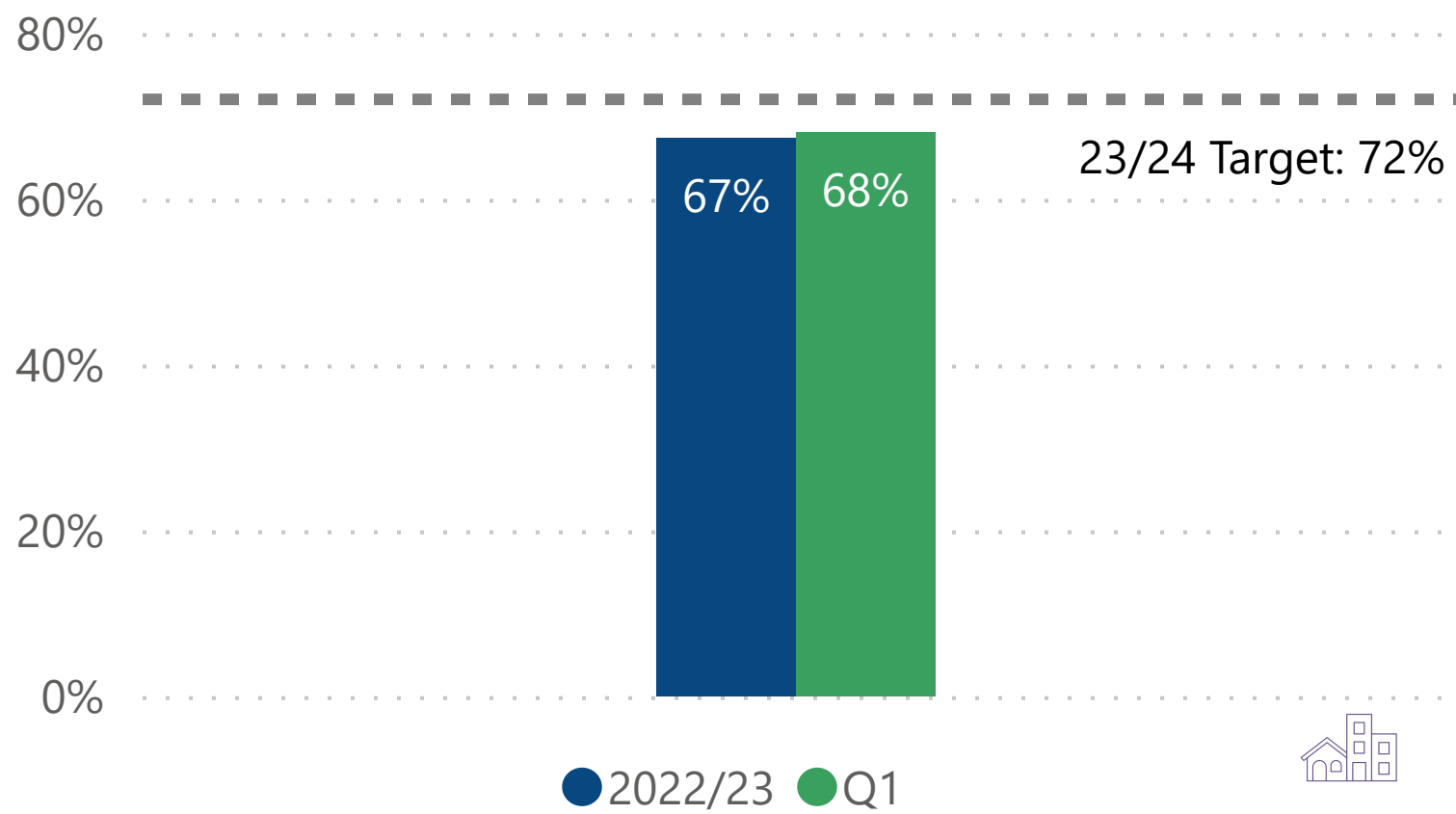
Percentage of homes that have had all the necessary legionella risk assessments



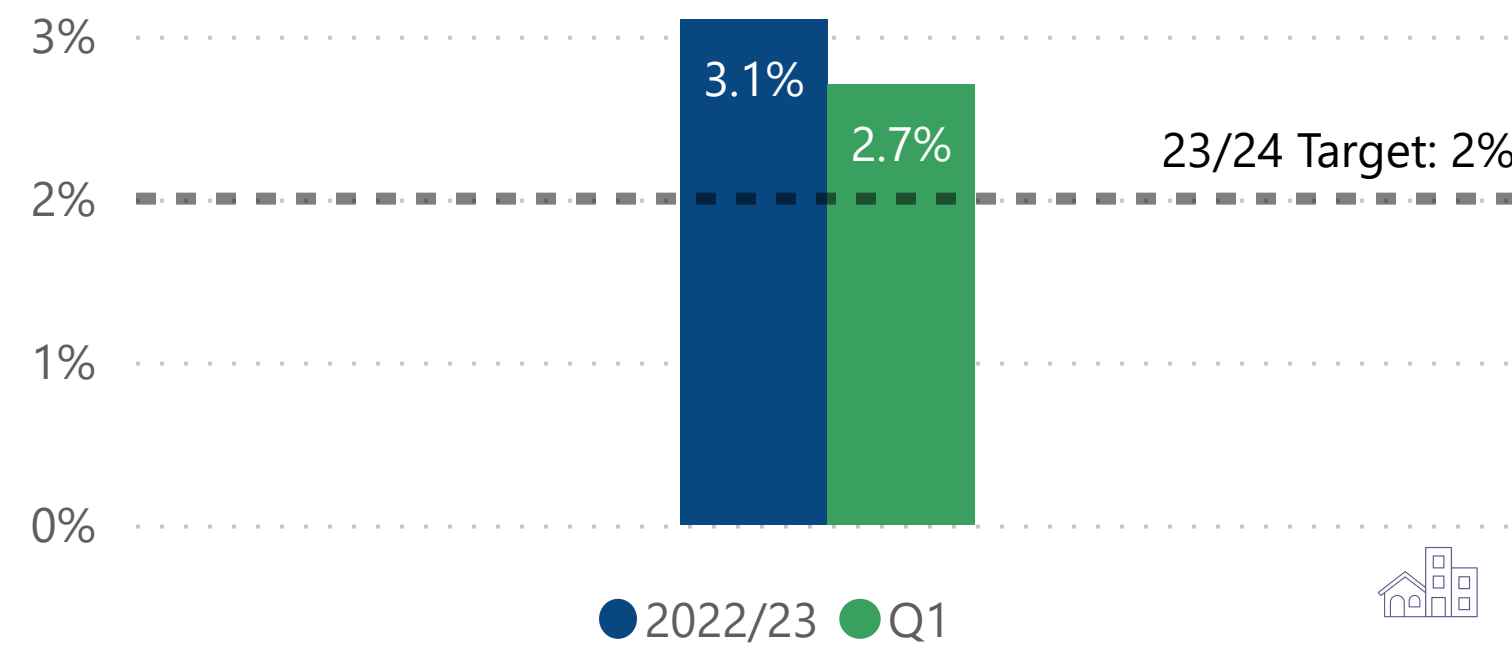
Percentage of homes in buildings where the communal passenger lifts have had all the necessary safety checks



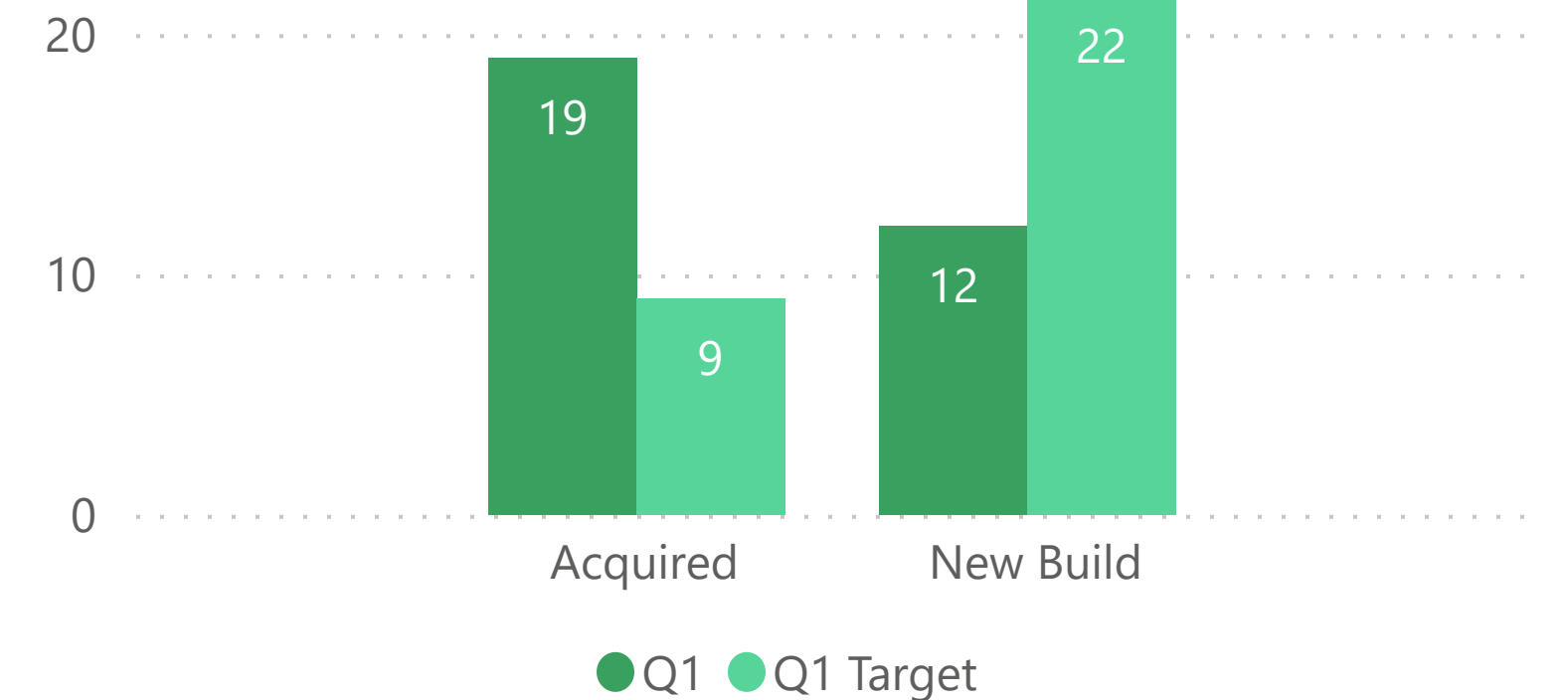
Satisfaction the home is well maintained



Percentage of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard

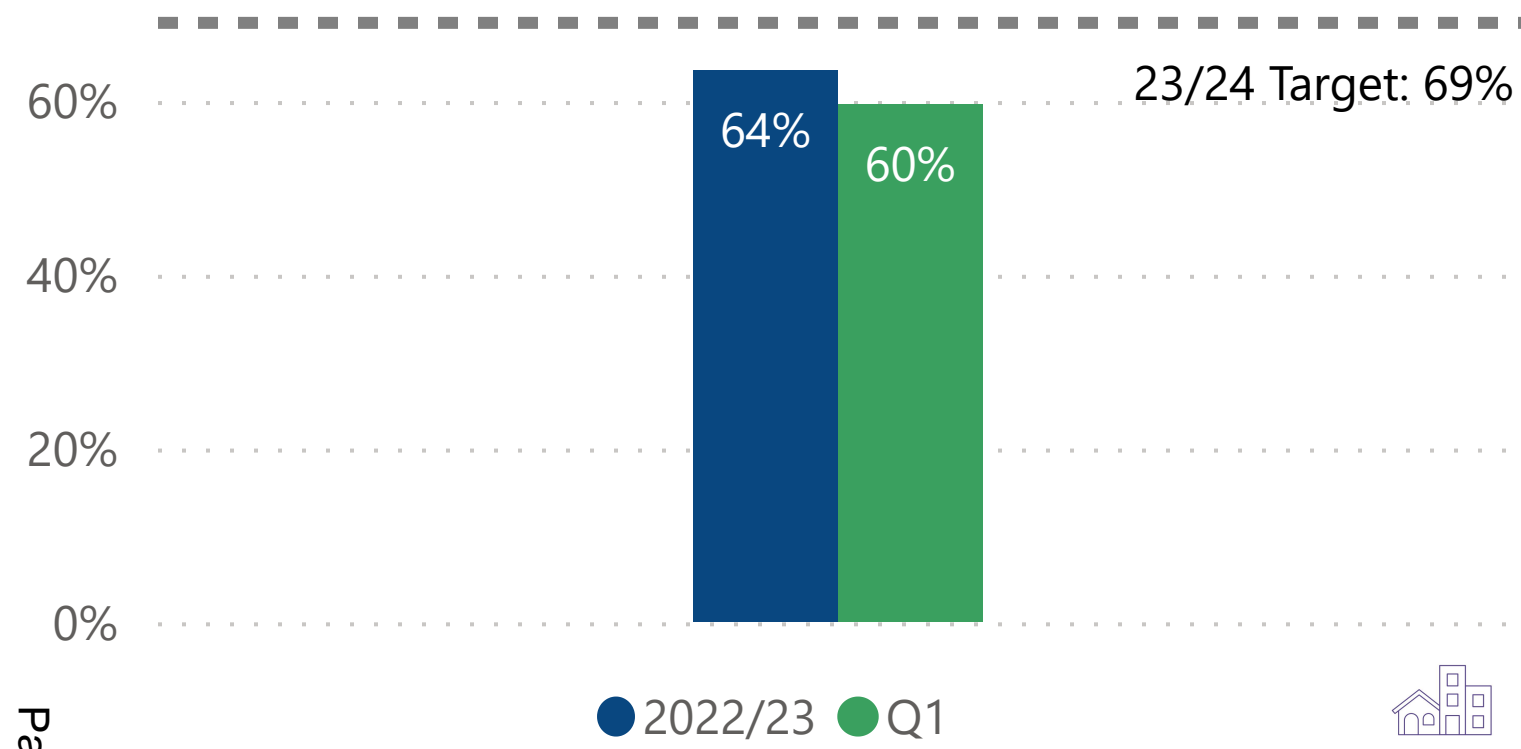


Number of new council homes

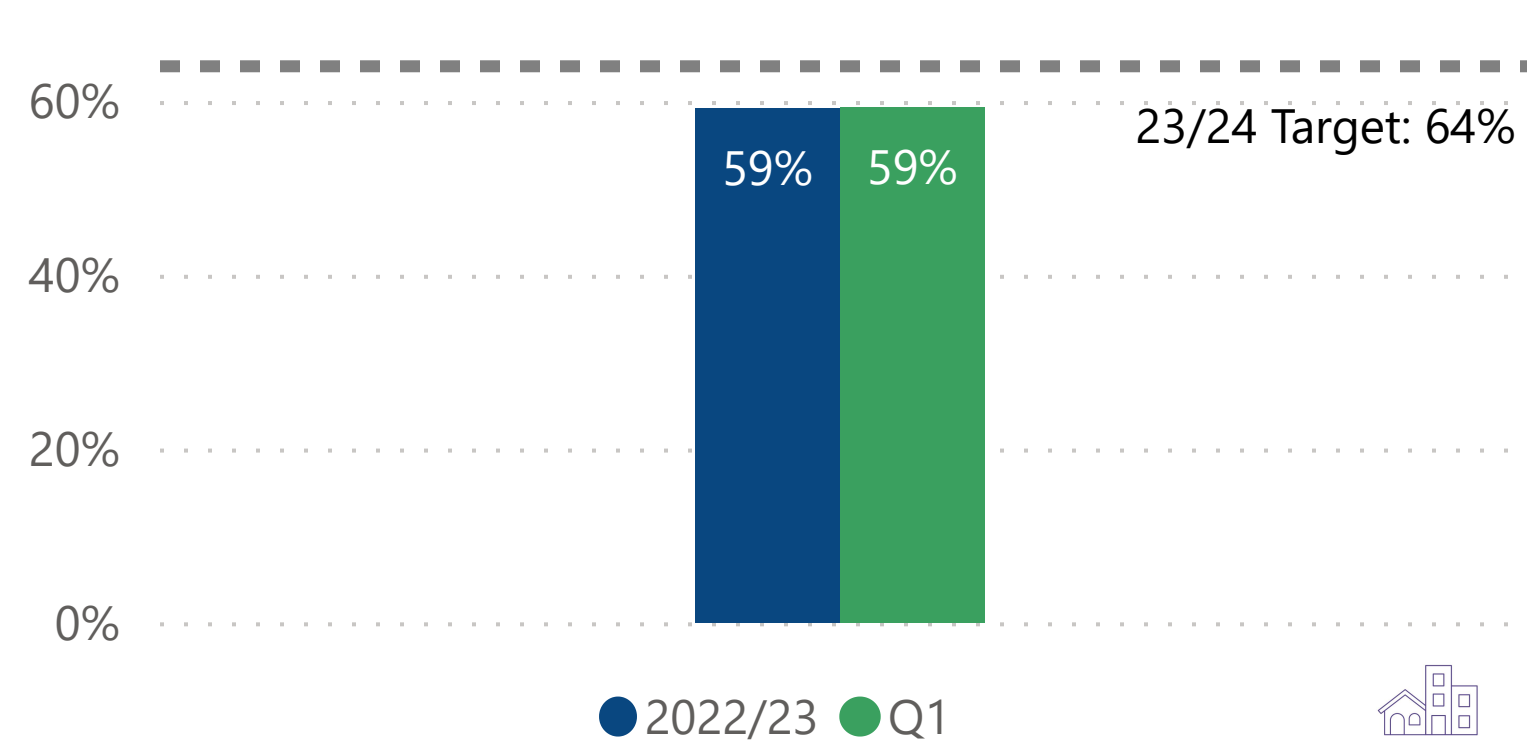


# We will take care of your neighbourhood

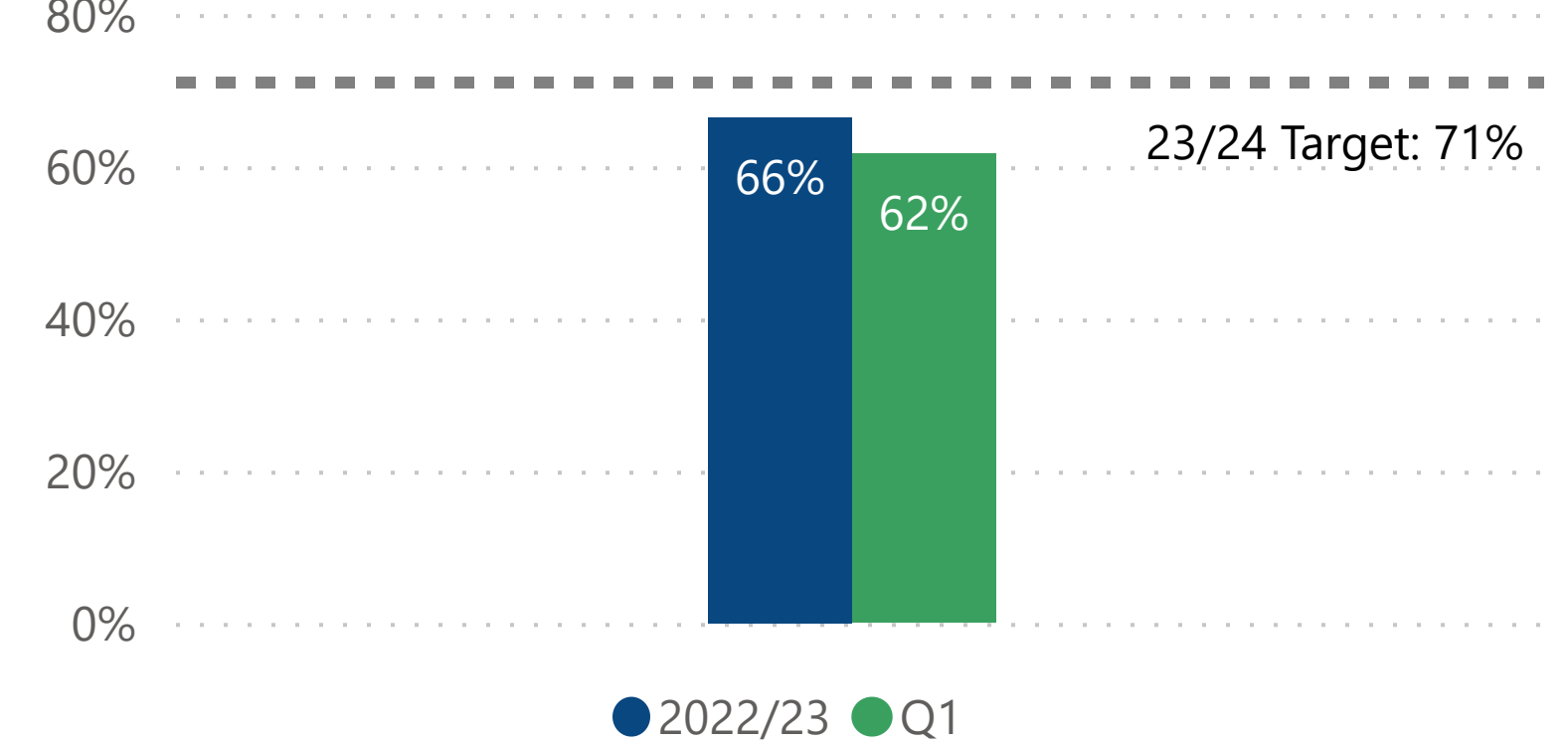
Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods



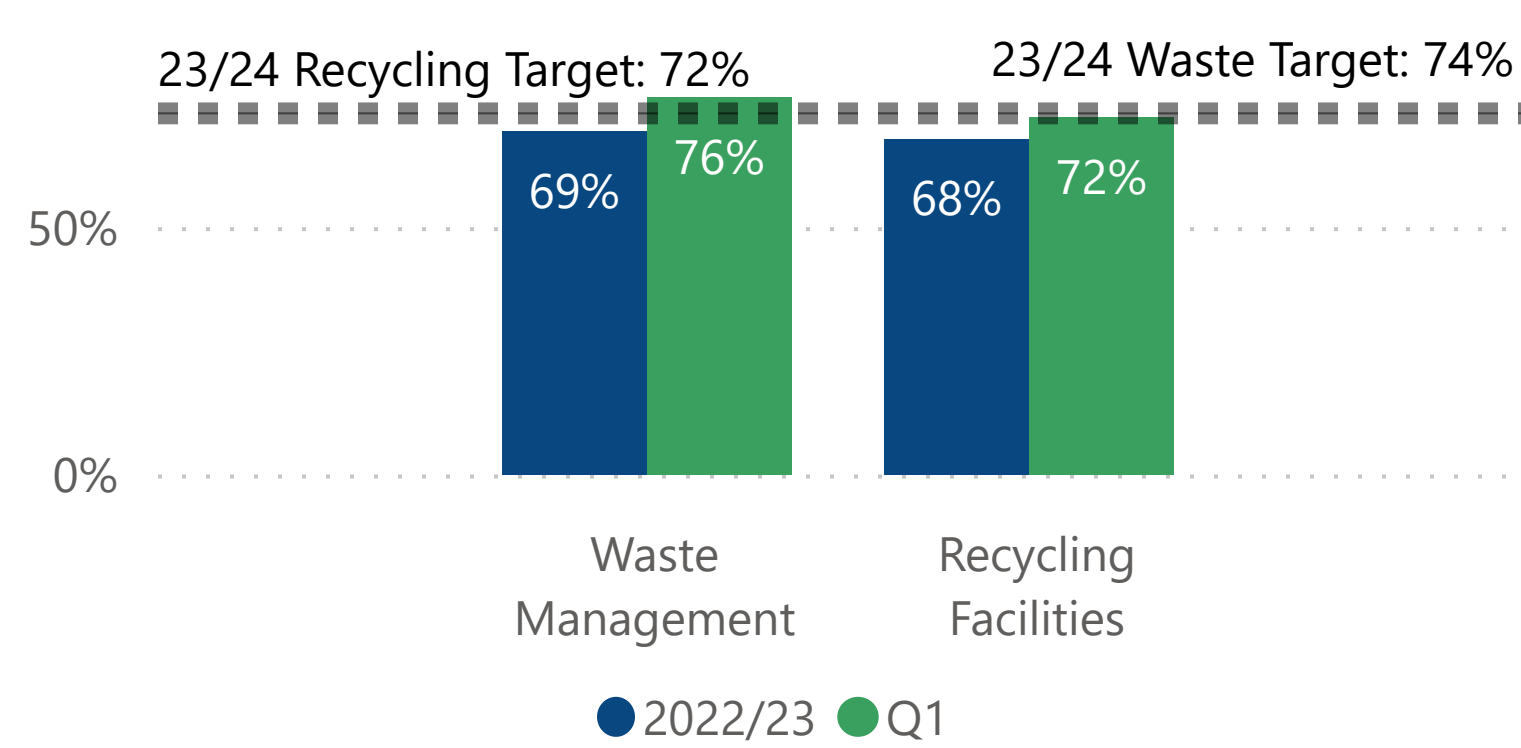
Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well-maintained



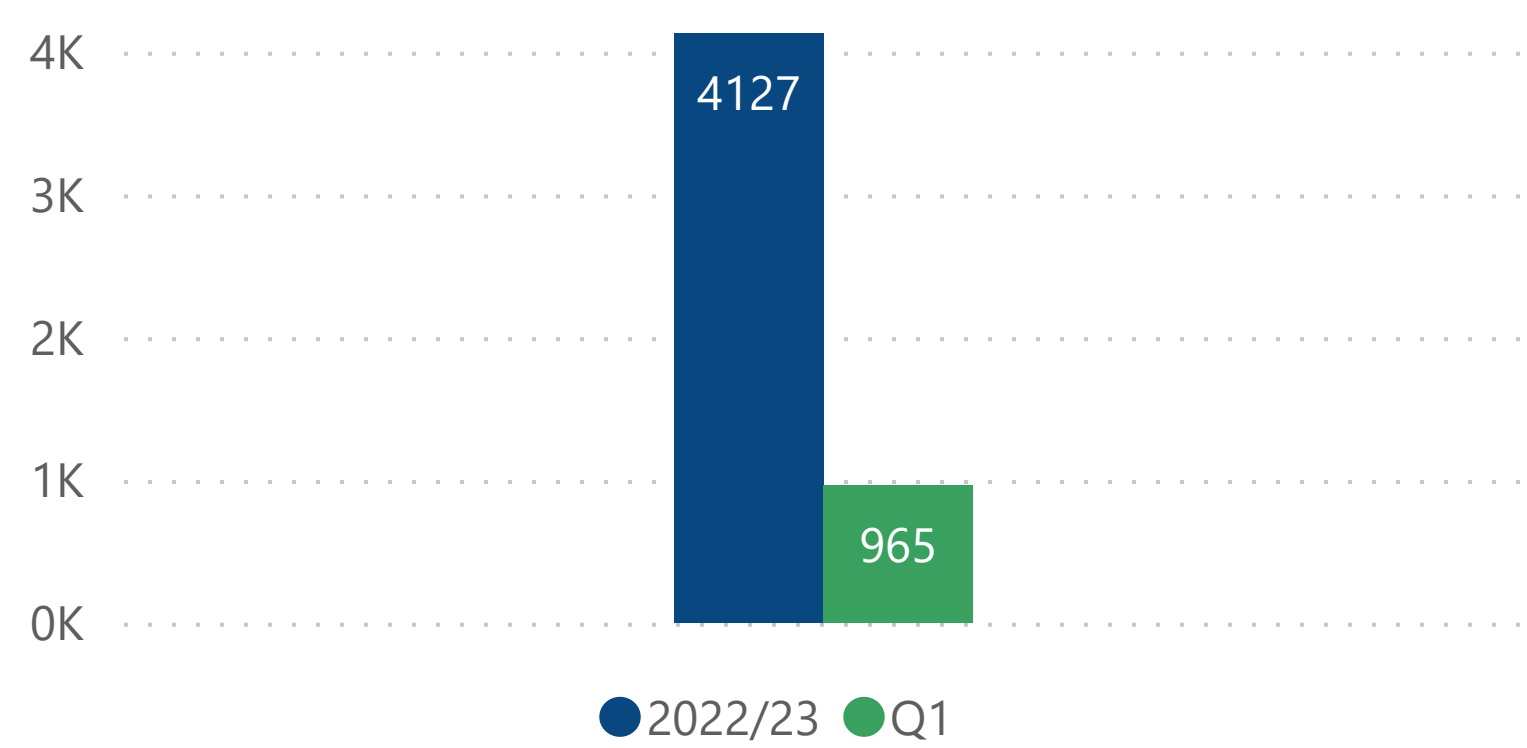
Satisfaction with the shared green areas around my home are well maintained



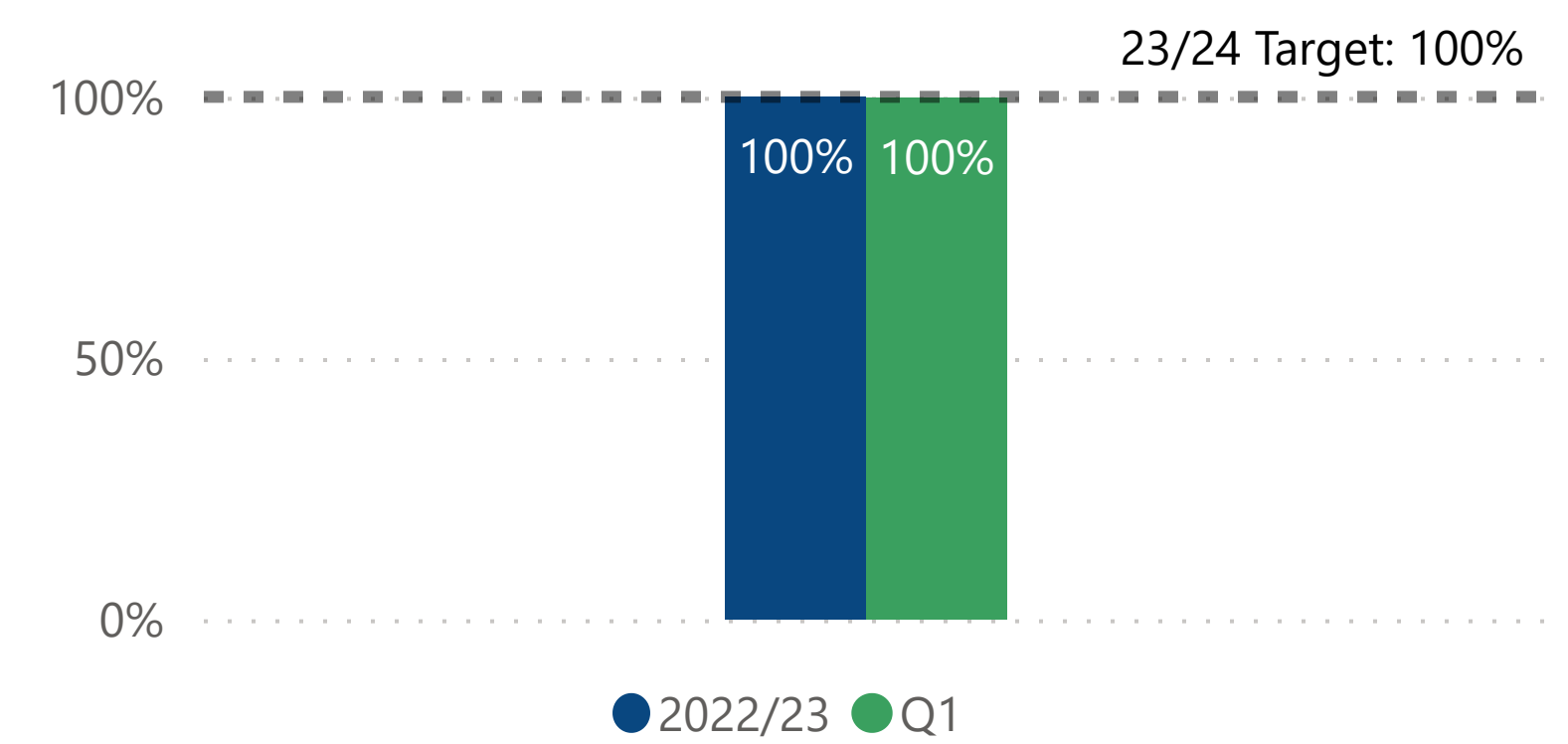
Satisfaction with communal waste management & recycling facilities



Number of flytipping reports



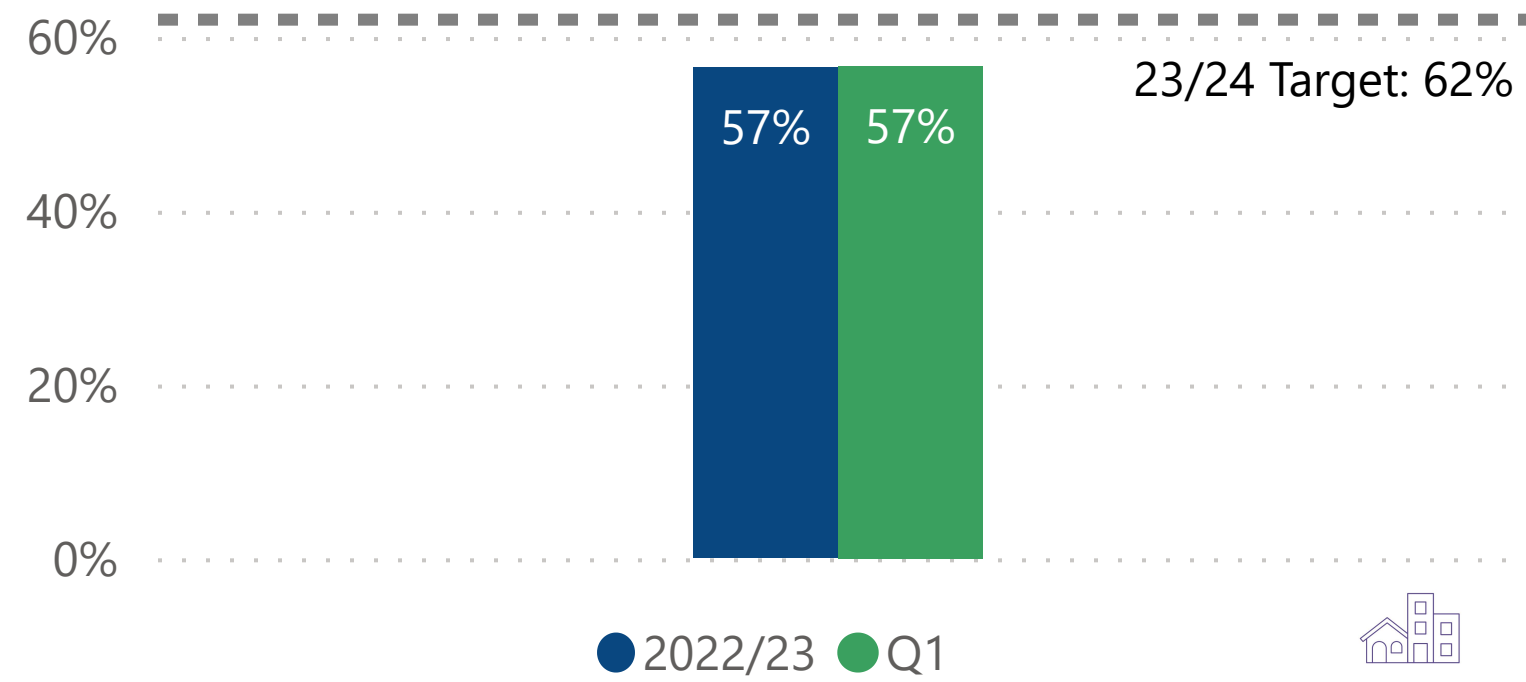
Percentage of fly-tipping removed within 24 hours



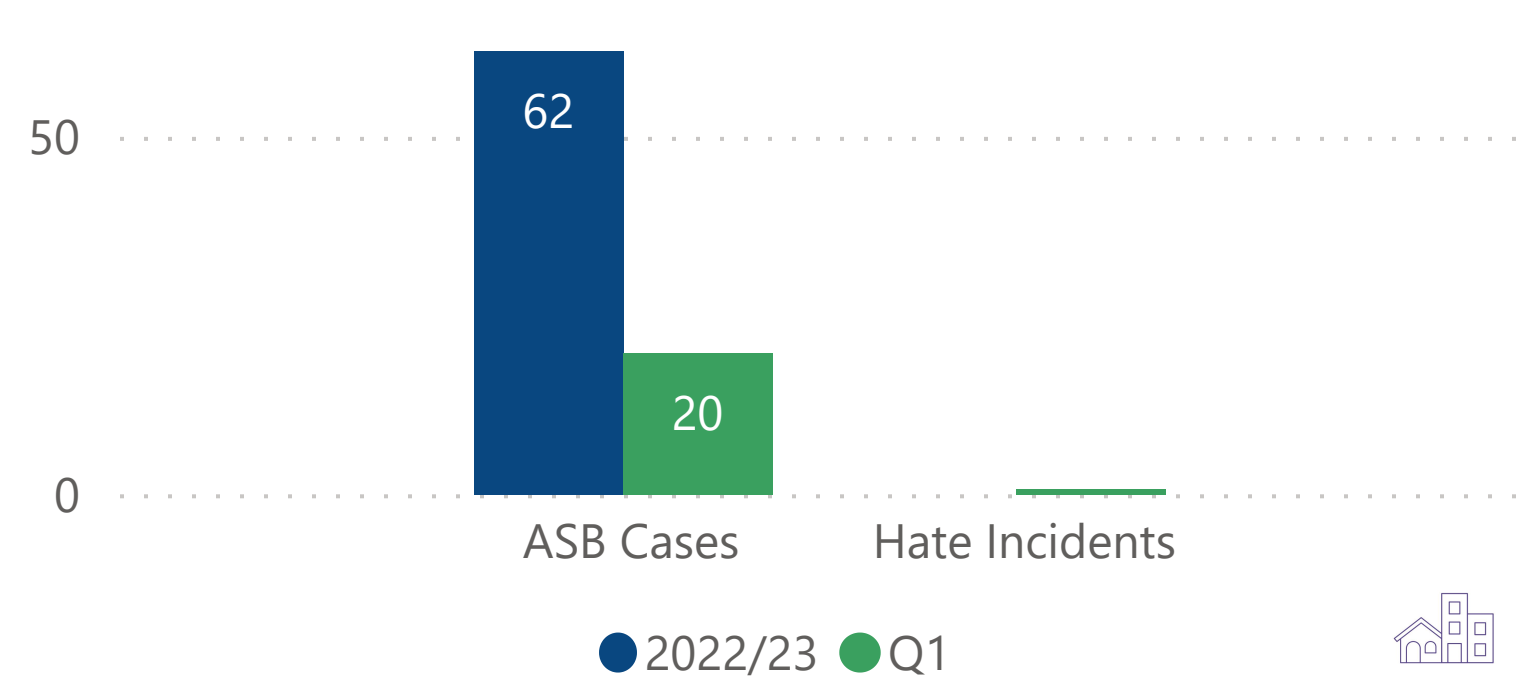


# We will take care of your neighbourhood

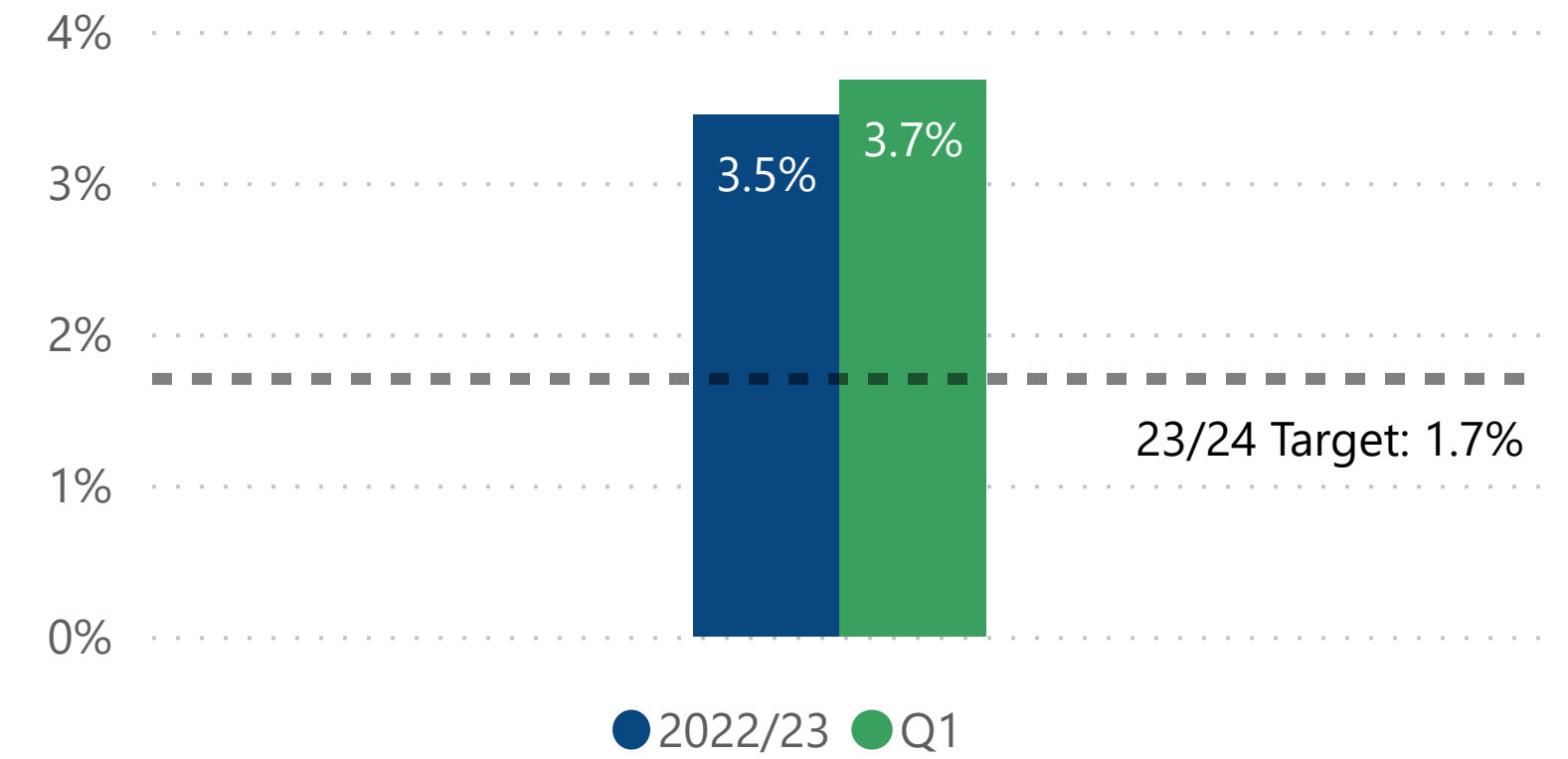
Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling of anti-social behaviour



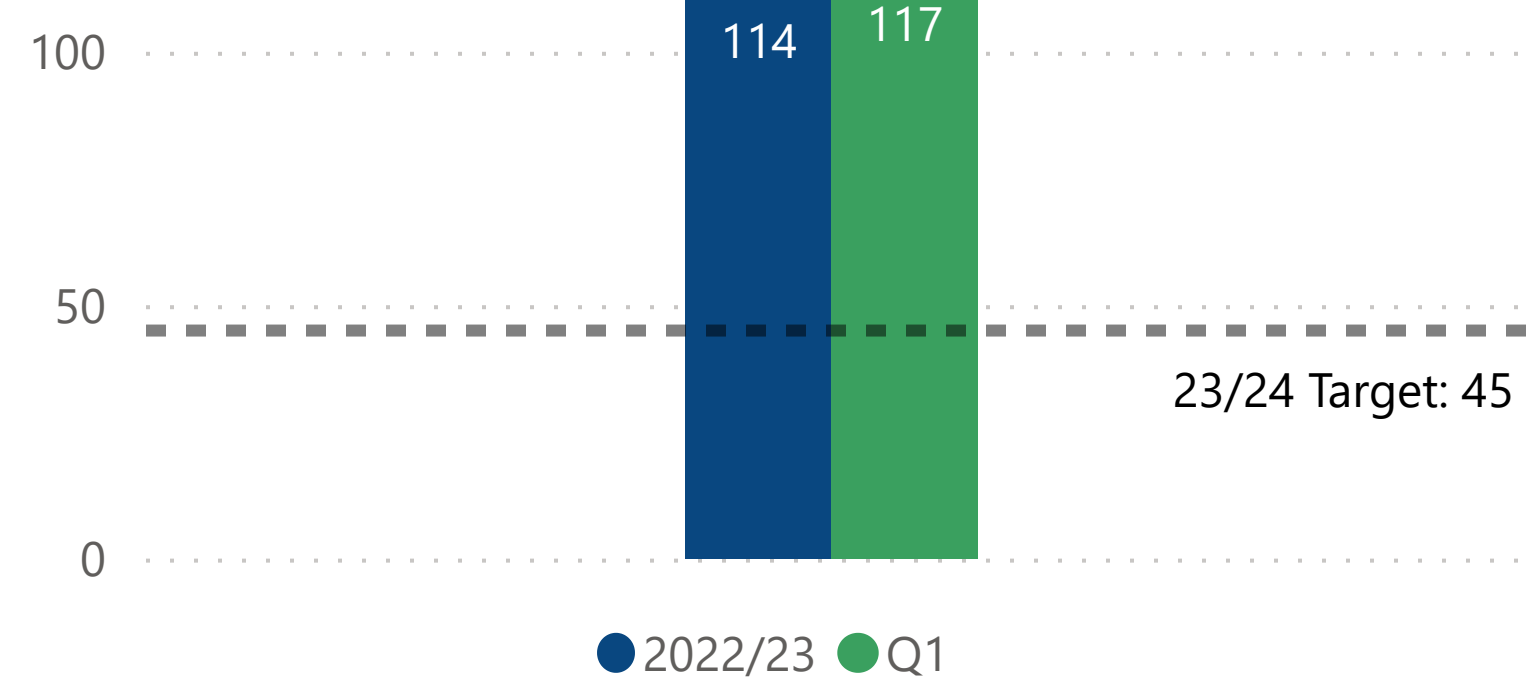
Number of anti-social behaviour cases opened per 1,000 homes



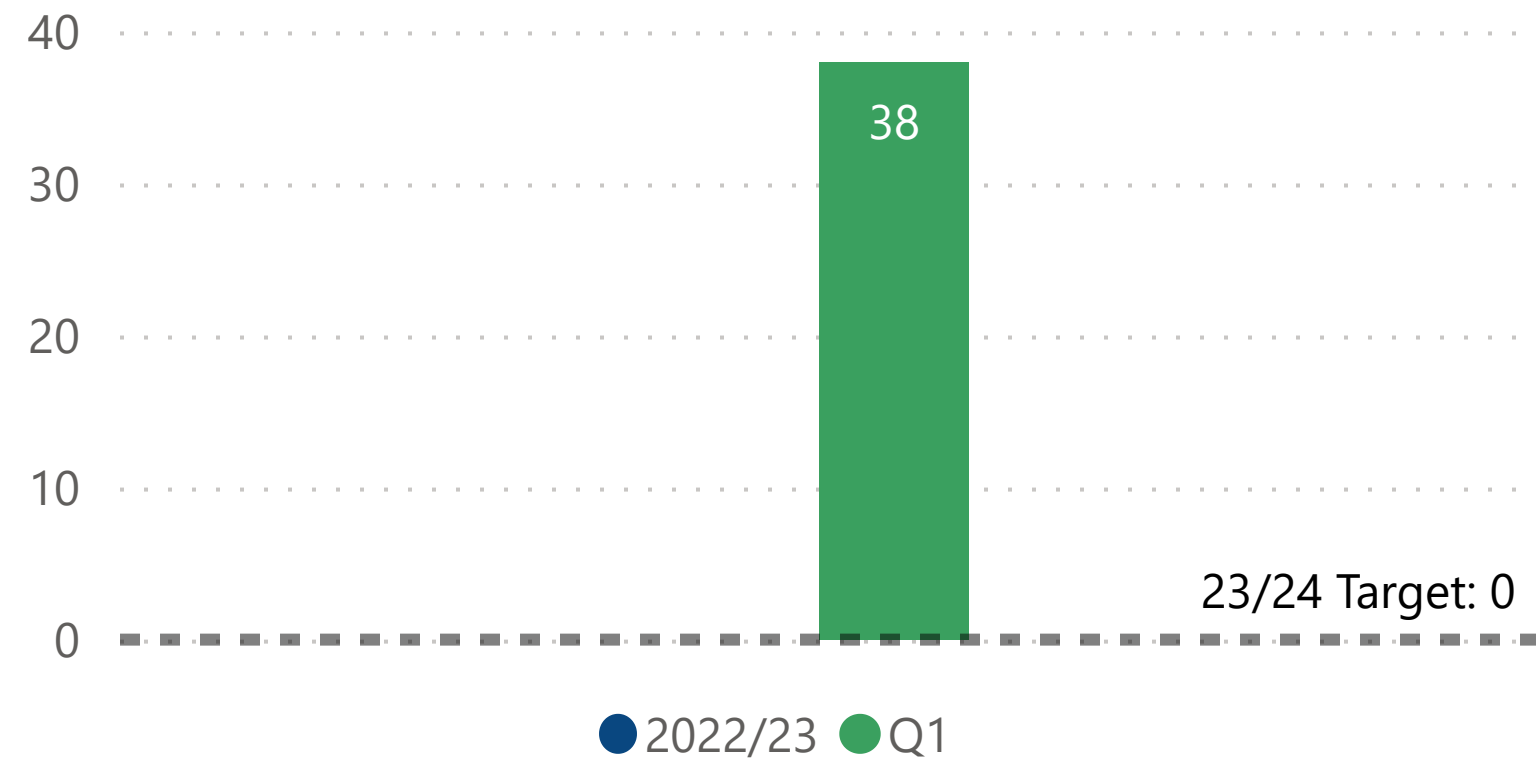
Percentage of rent loss from all vacant properties



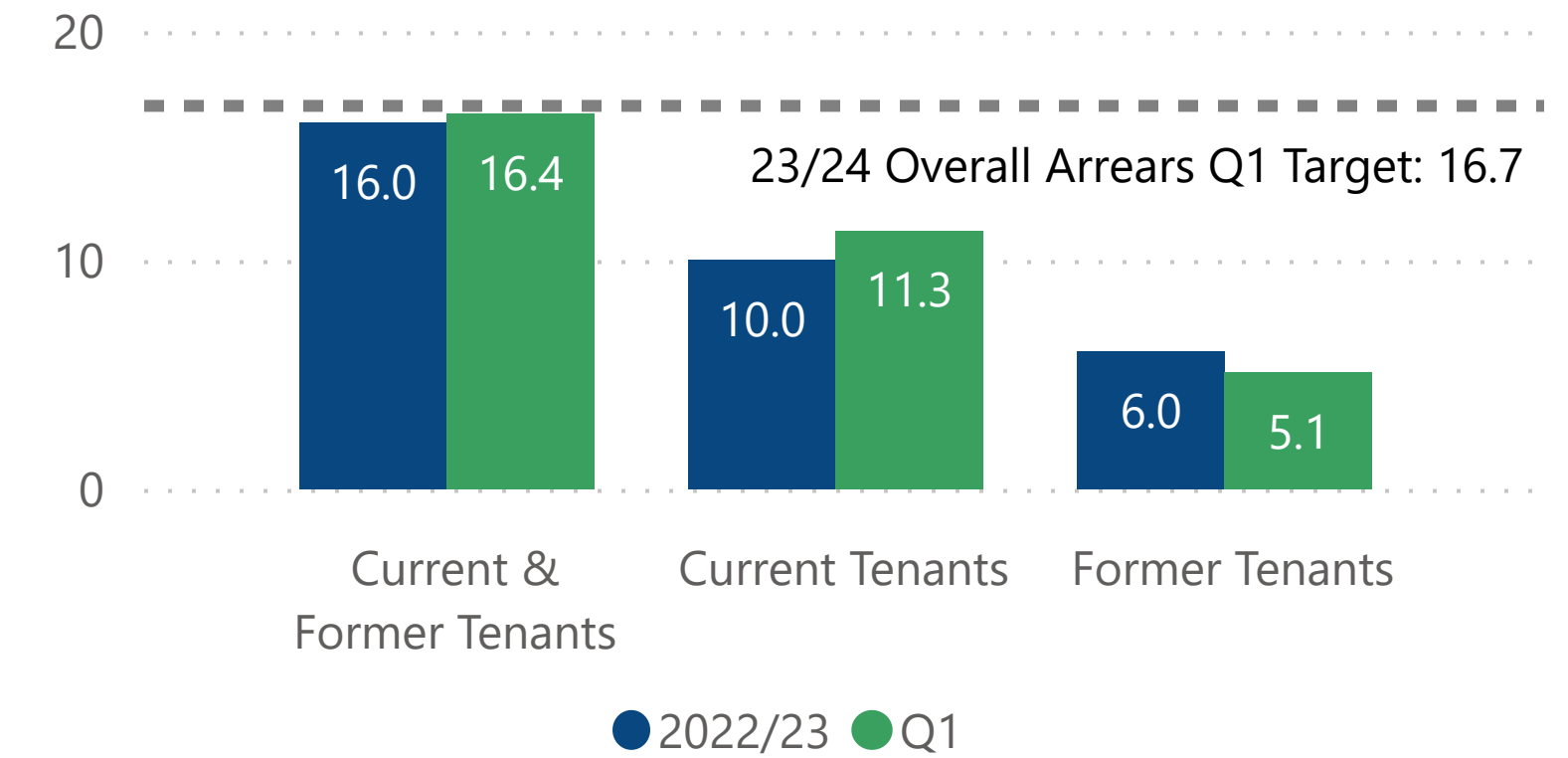
Average calendar days taken to re-let all empty properties



Average time take to complete void property repairs (days)



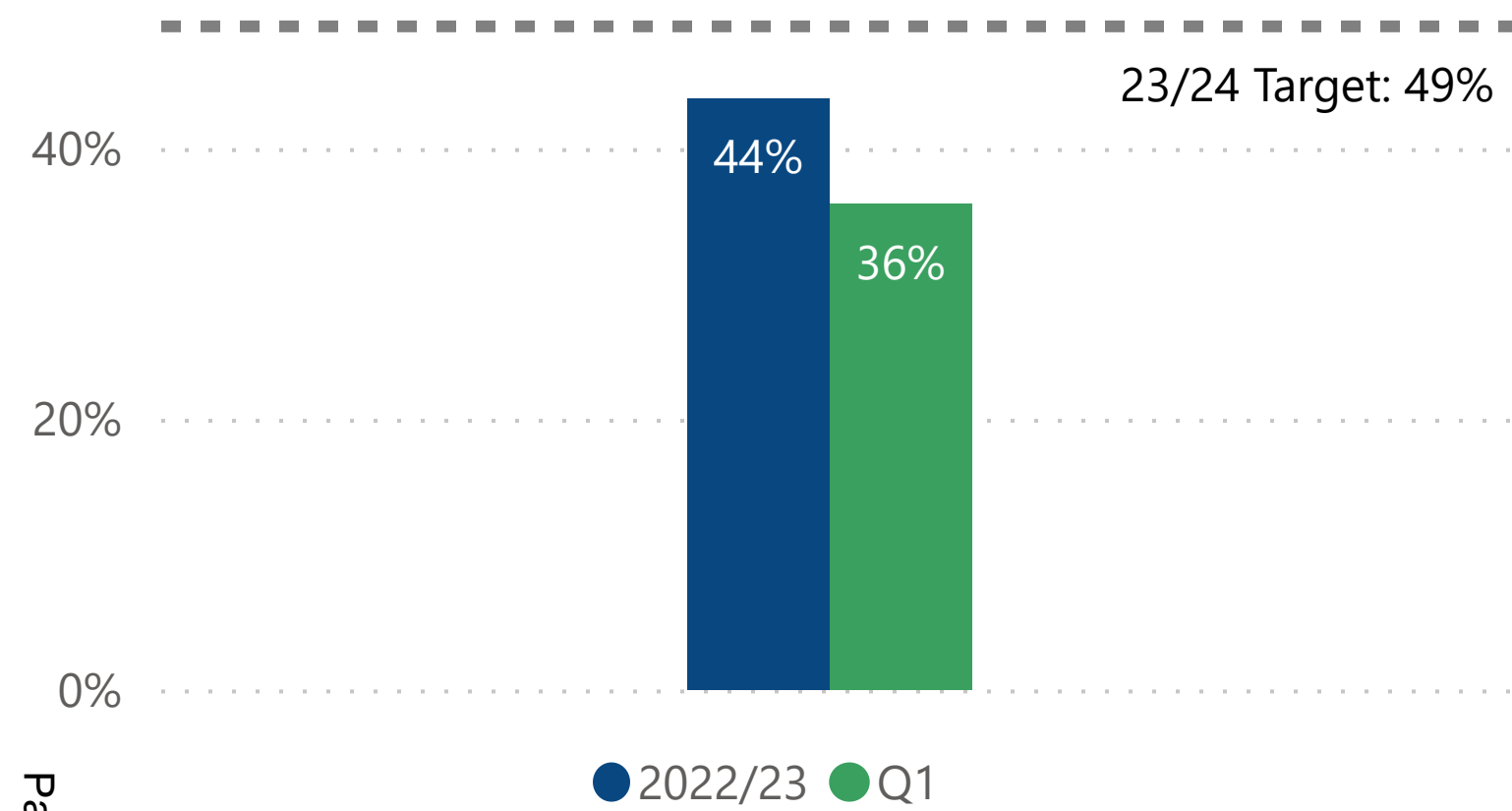
Total rent arrears owed by current and former tenants (£m)



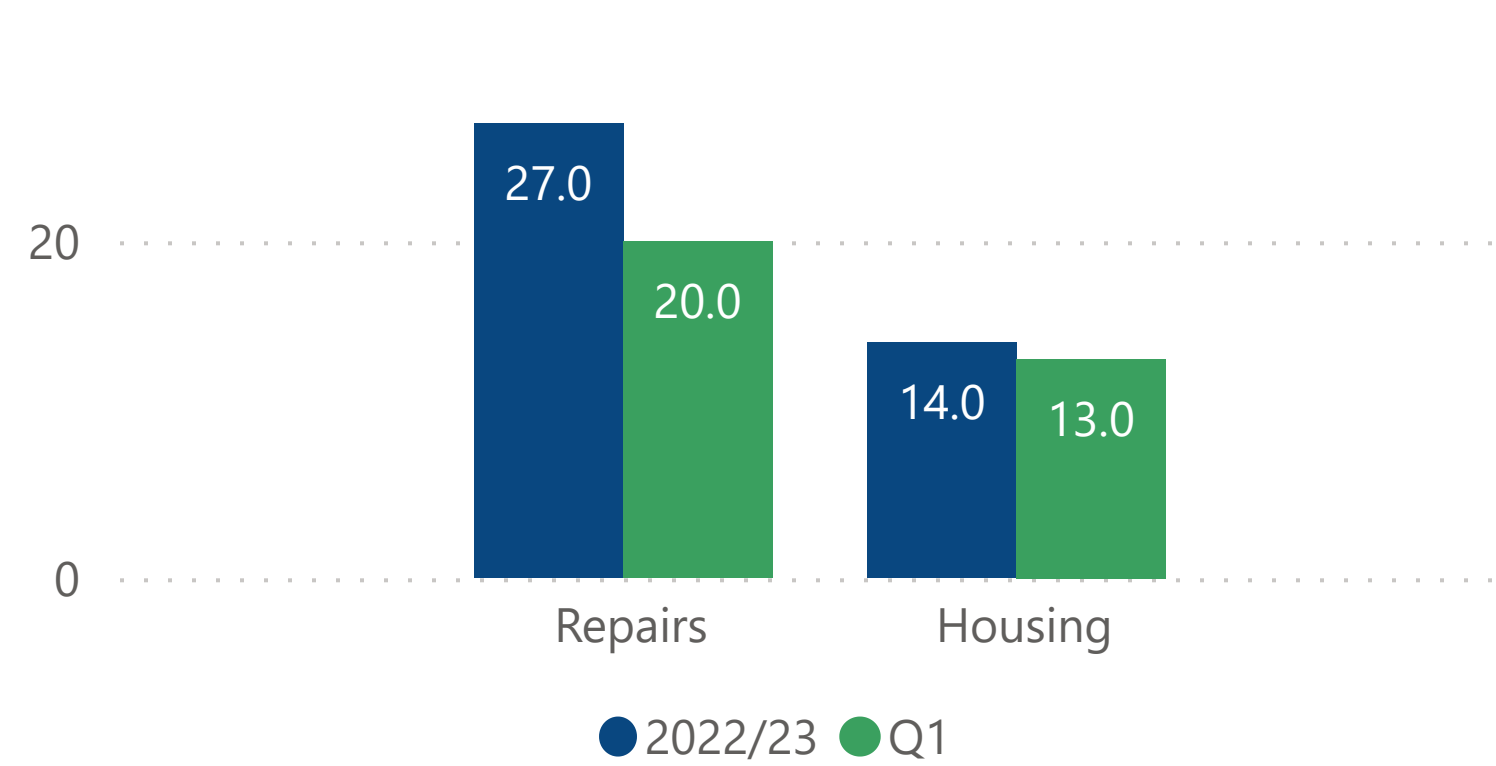


# We will provide a good service to you

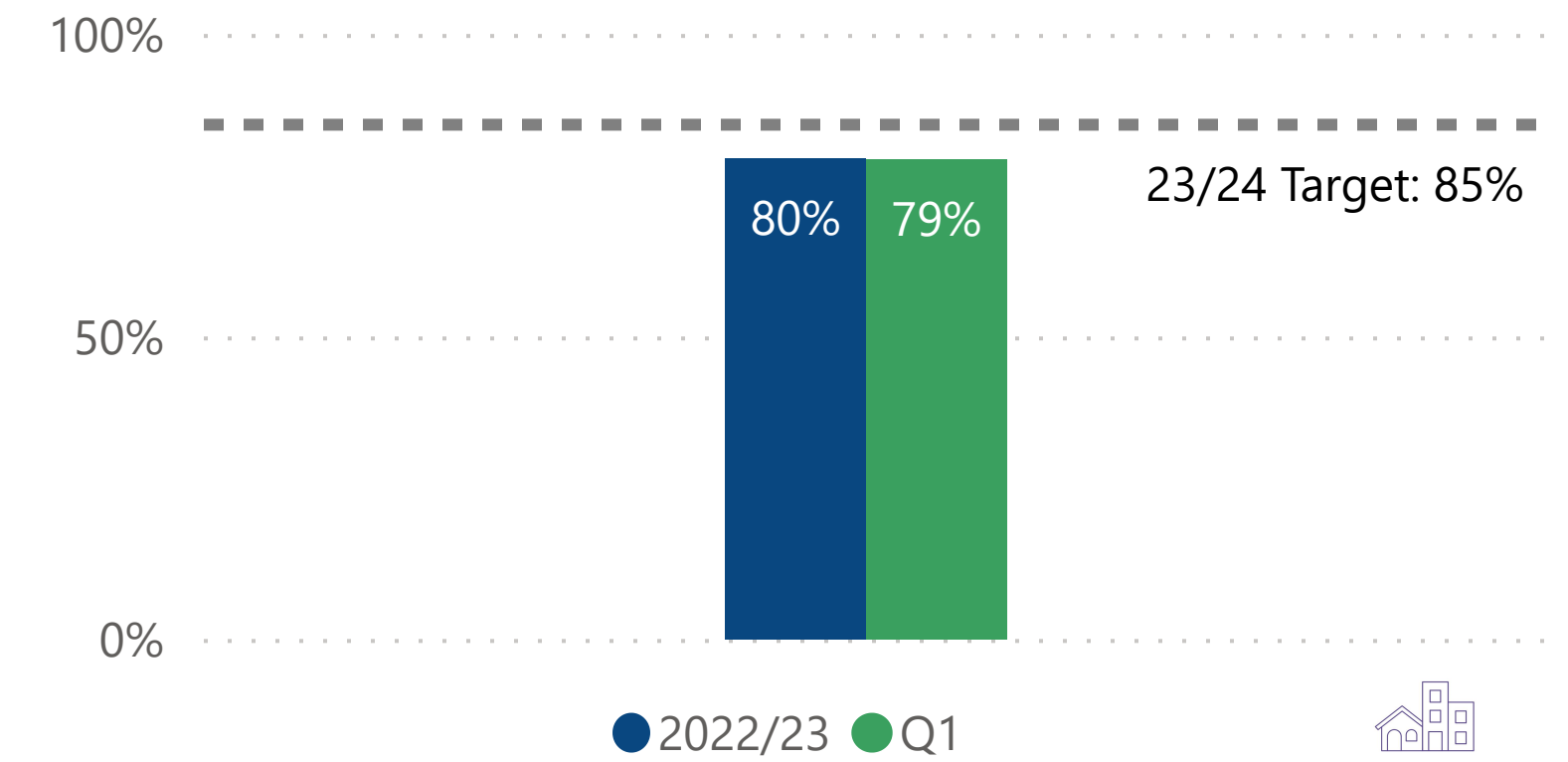
Satisfaction with how easy it is to contact us



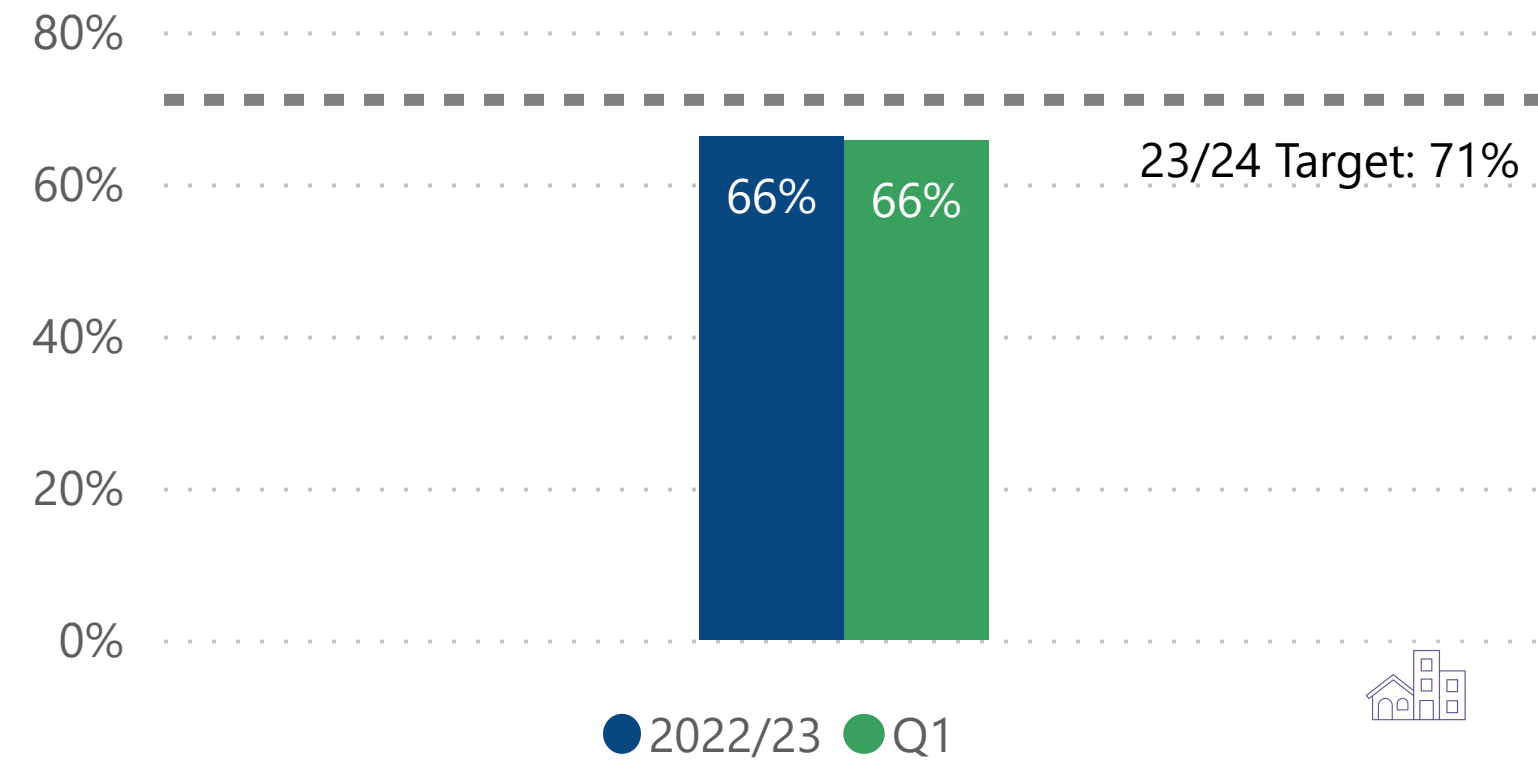
Average call waiting times for housing and repairs (minutes.seconds)



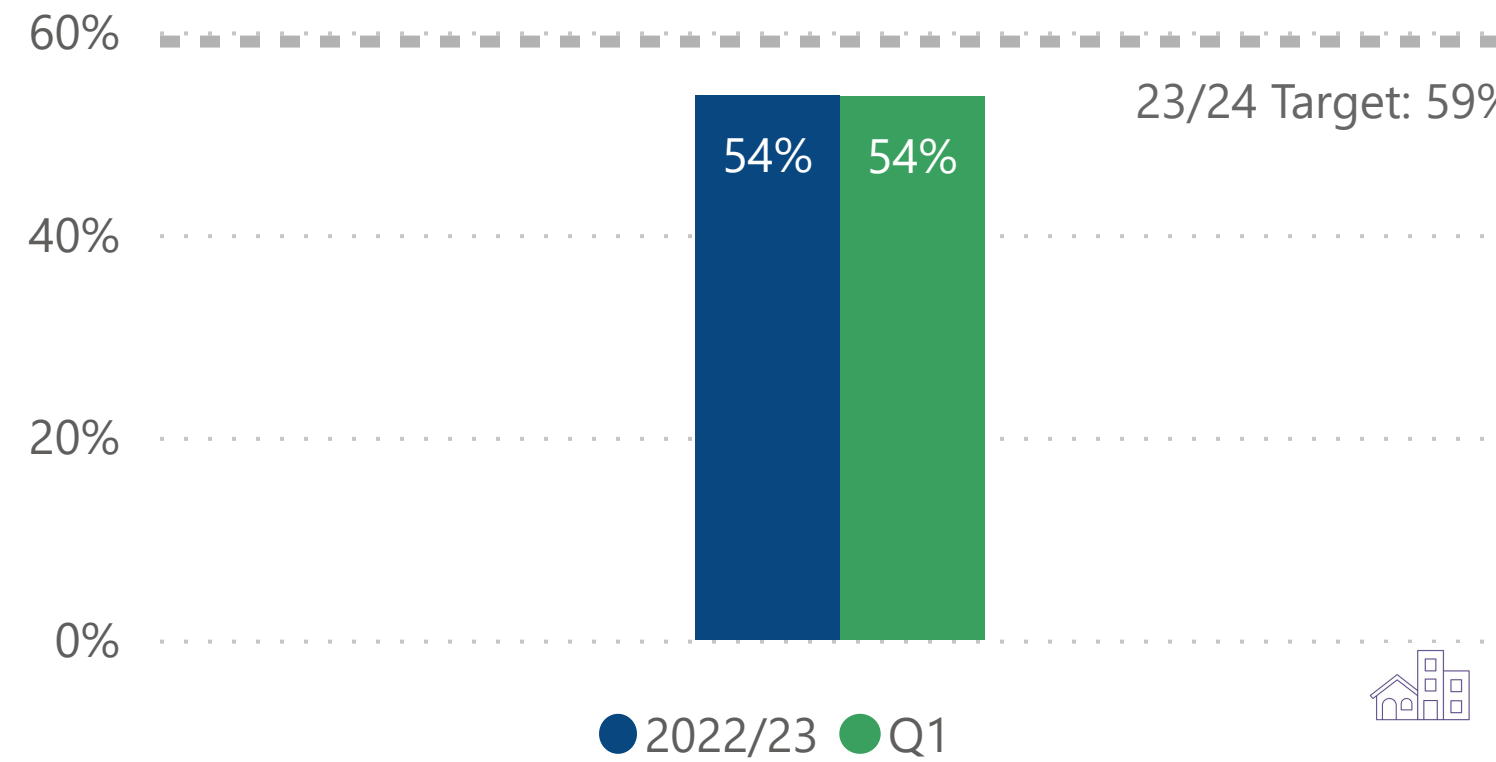
Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect



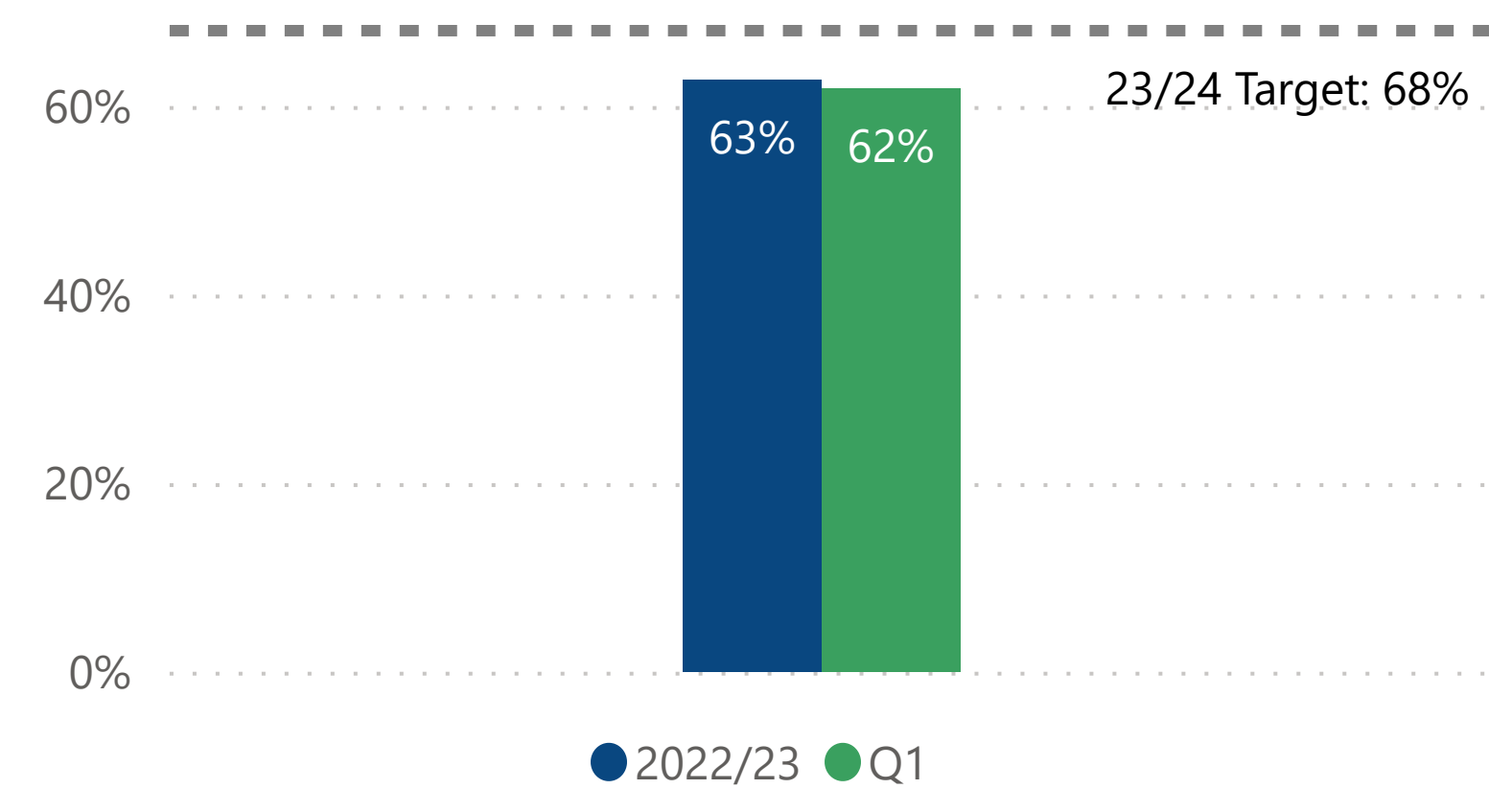
Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them



Satisfaction that the landlord listens to your views and acts upon them

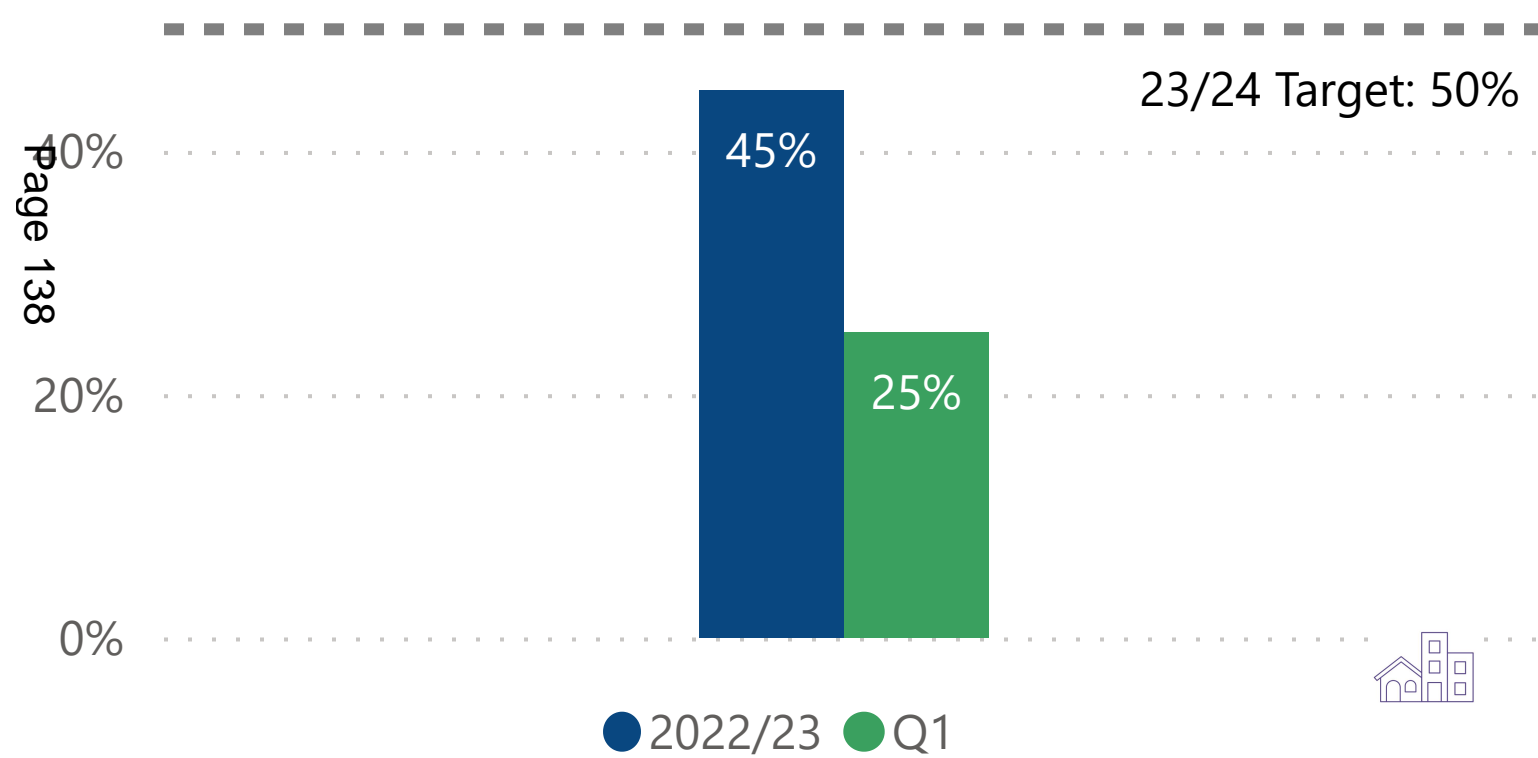


Satisfaction with the overall service

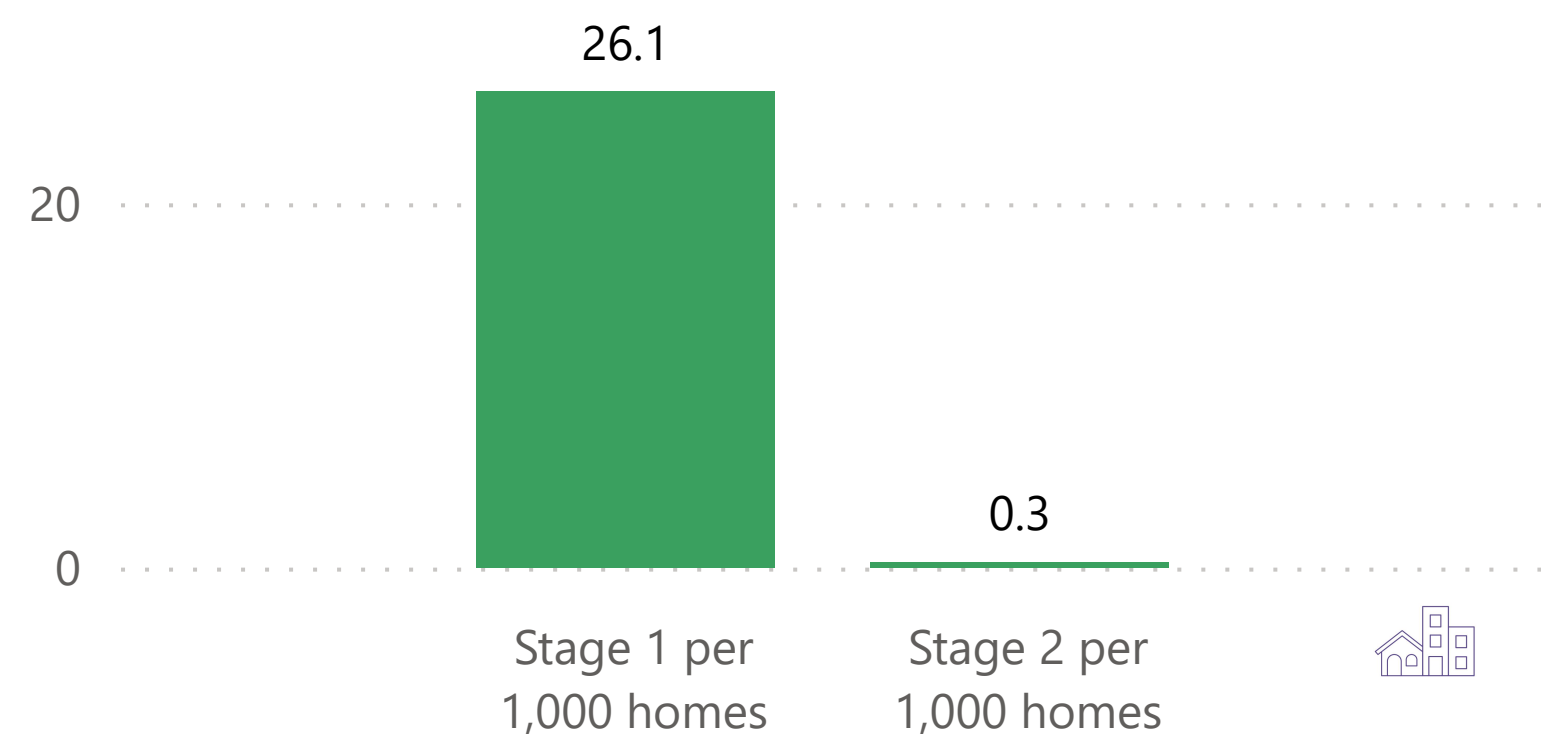


# We will provide a good service to you

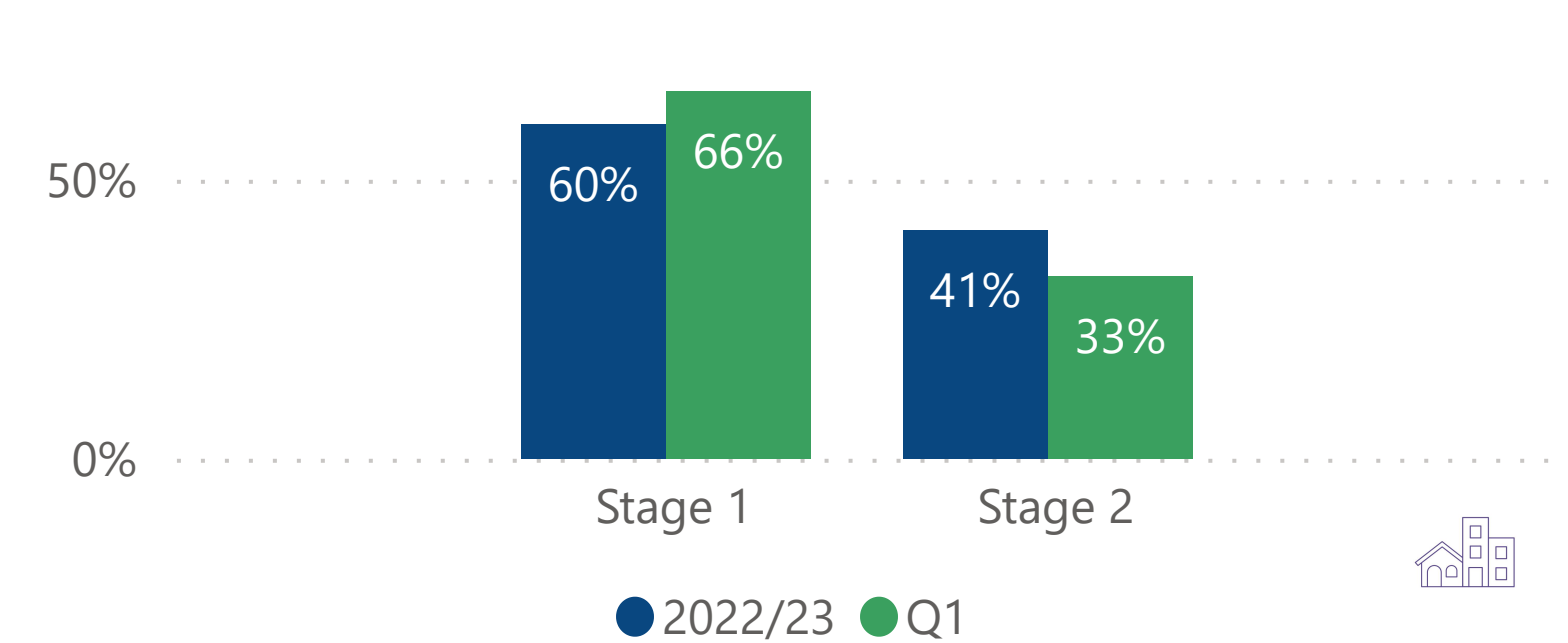
Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling of complaints



Number of stage 1 & 2 complaints received per 1,000 homes

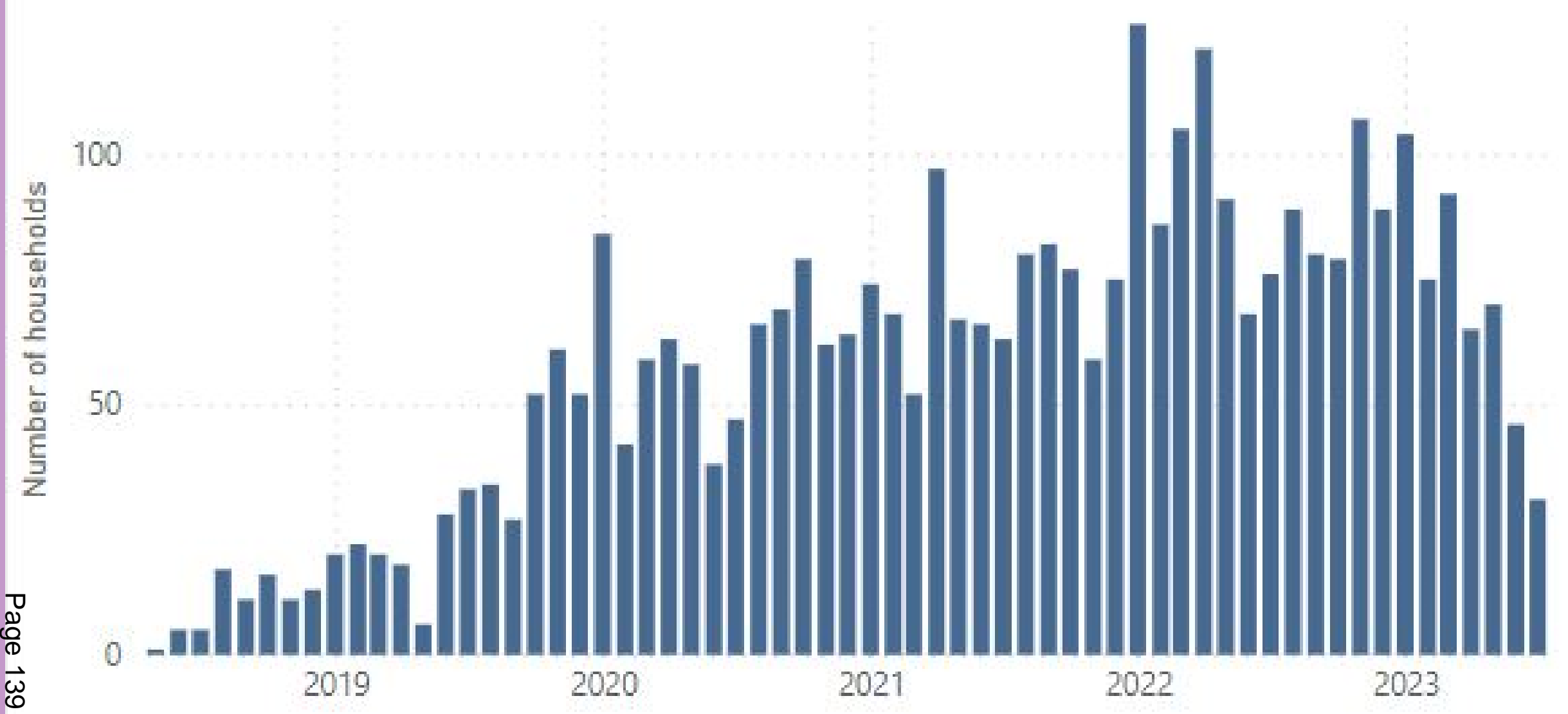


Percentage of stage 1 & 2 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman timescales

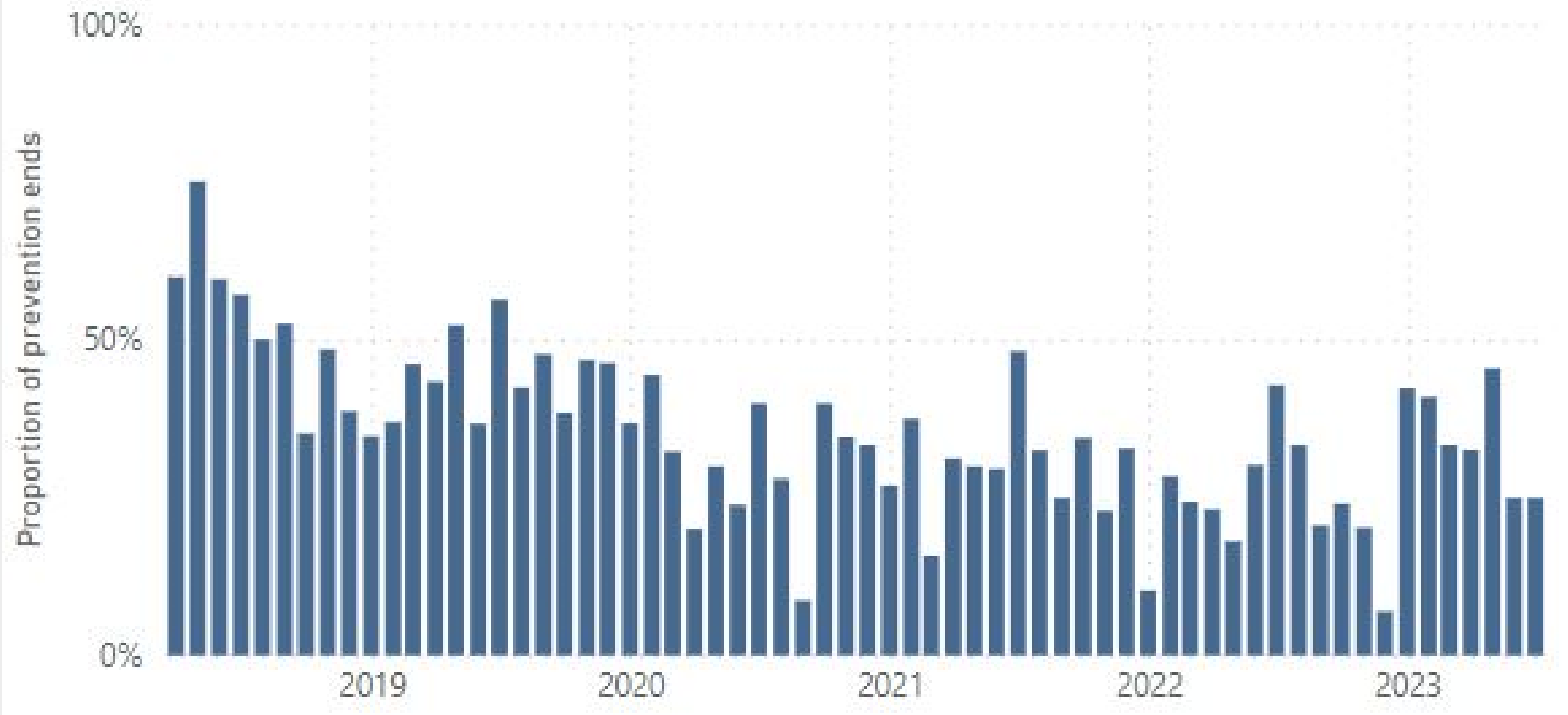


# Helping to prevent homelessness

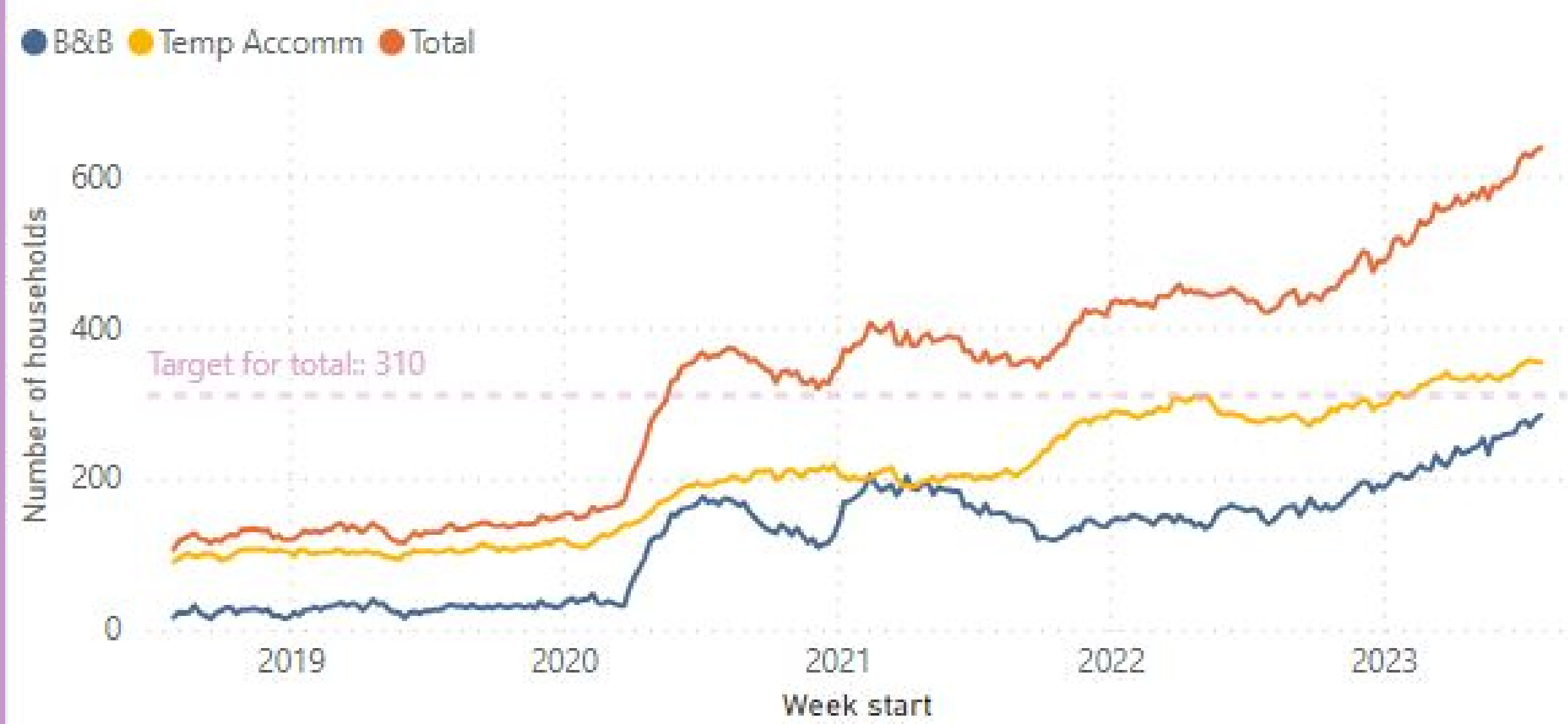
Homelessness duty acceptances



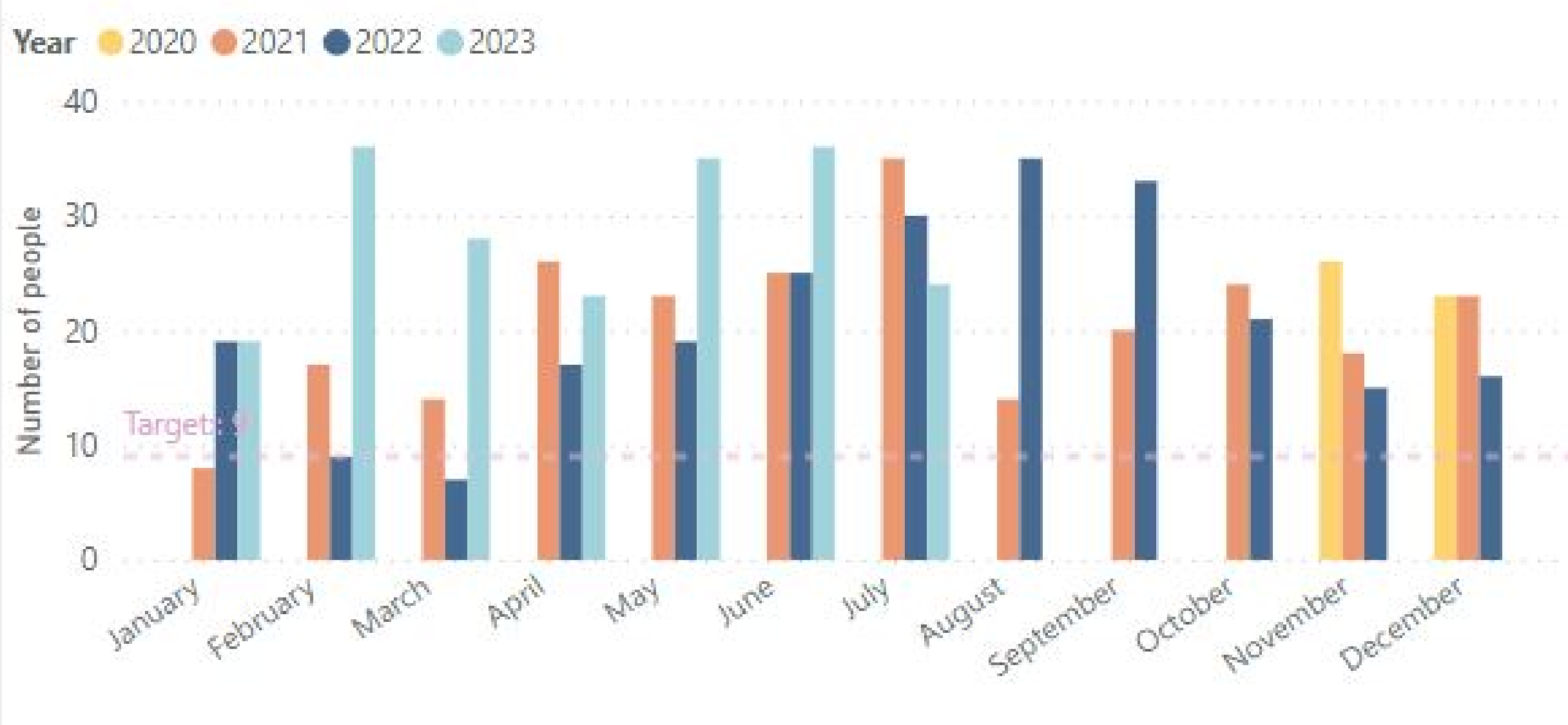
Successful prevention outcomes



Number of households in temporary accommodation or bed and breakfast

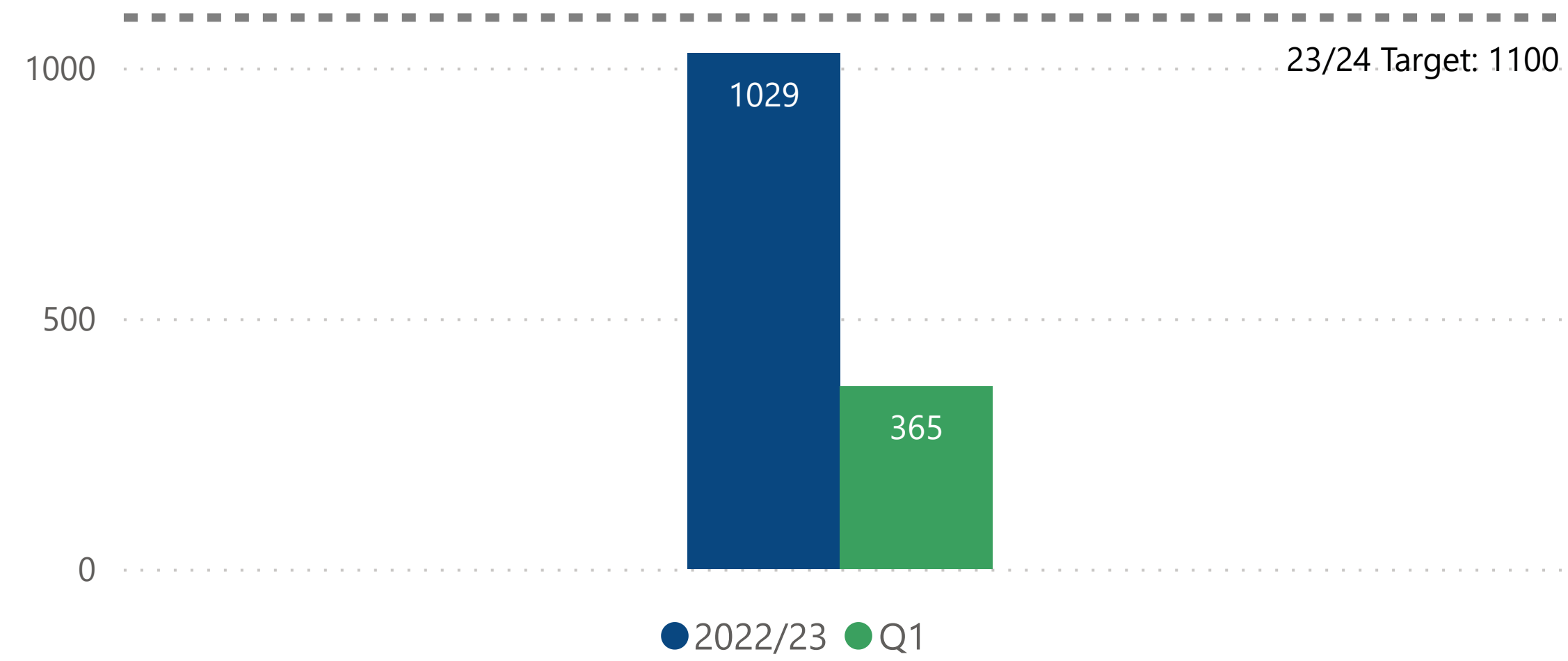


Number of rough sleepers identified at monthly count

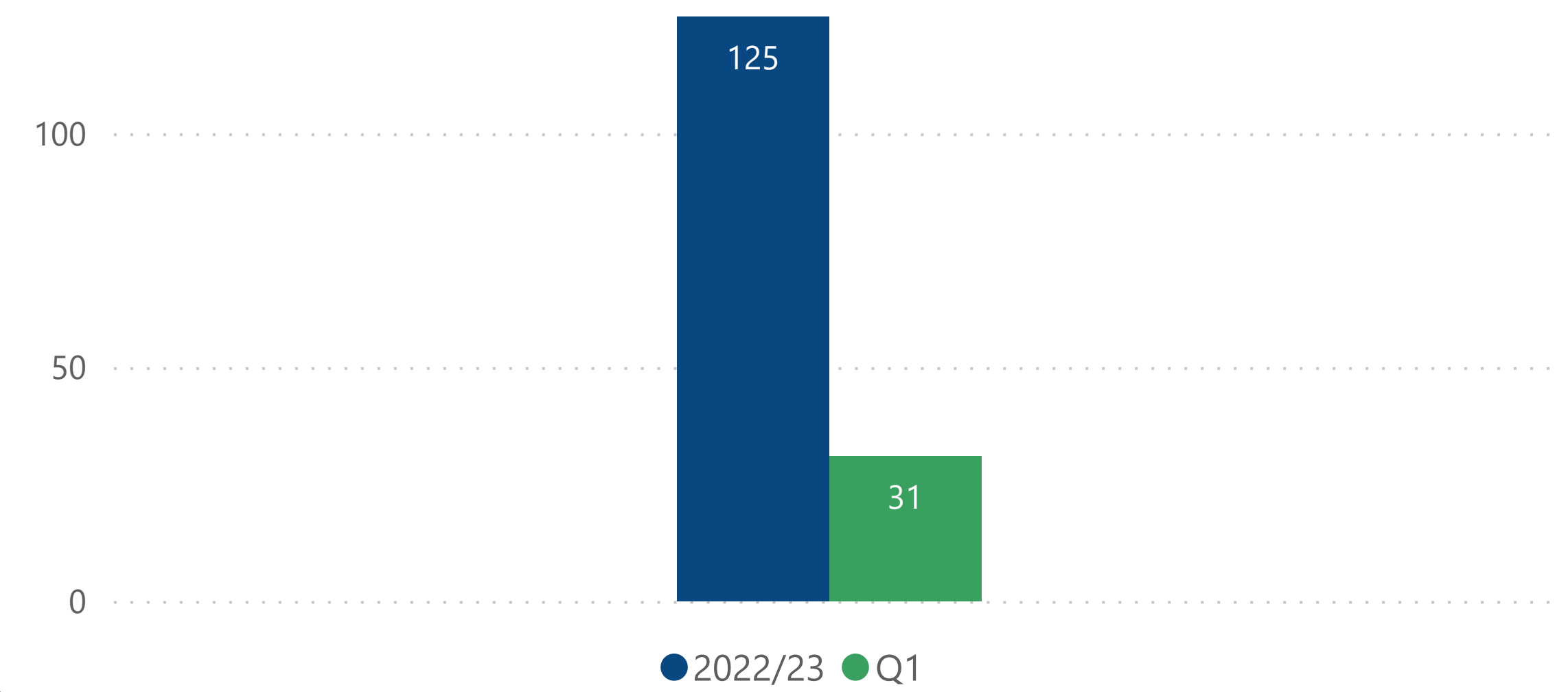


# Making private rented homes safer

Number of people living in private rented homes made safe by the removal of category 1 hazards, high scoring category 2 and statutory nuisances



Number of category 1 / high category 2 issues relating to fire safety that have been resolved





## Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report:** Philip Gregory,  
Director of Finance and Commercial Services

**Tel:** +44 114 474 1438

**Report of:** *Philip Gregory, Director of Finance & Commercial Services*

**Report to:** *Housing Policy Committee*

**Date of Decision:** *14<sup>th</sup> September 2023*

**Subject:** *2023-24 Q1 Budget Monitoring Report*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(Insert reference number)</i>				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>				

### Purpose of Report:

*This report brings the Committee up to date with the Council's outturn position for Q1 2023/24 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account position.*

### Recommendations:

#### The Housing Policy Committee is recommended to:

Note the updated information and management actions provided by this report on the Q1 2023/24 Revenue Budget Outturn as described in this report.

### Background Papers:

## 2023/24 Revenue Budget

Lead Officer to complete: -		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Philip Gregory, <i>Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i>
		Legal: Sarah Bennett, <i>Assistant Director, Legal and Governance</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: Adele Robinson, <i>Equalities and Engagement Manager, Policy, and Performance.</i>
		Climate: n/a
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	<b>SLB member who approved submission:</b>	<i>Philip Gregory, Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i>
3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b>	<i>Cllr Zahira Naz, Chair of the Finance Committee</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> <i>Philip Gregory</i>  <i>Jane Wilby</i>	<b>Job Title:</b> <i>Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i>  <i>Head of Accounting</i>
	<b>Date:</b> 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2023	

## 1. PROPOSAL

1.1. This report provides an update on the current outturn position for Sheffield City Council's revenue and capital budget for 2023/24.

### 2023-24 Q1 Financial Position by Directorate

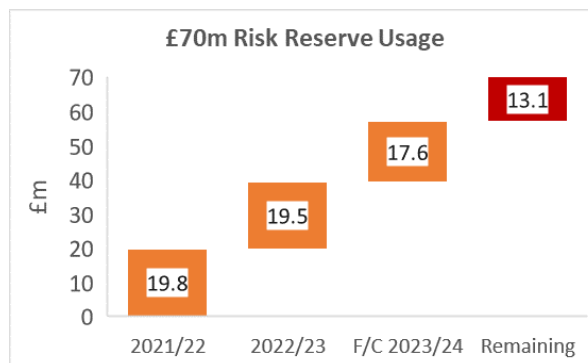
1.2. At the end of the first quarter of 2023-24, the Council's revenue budget shows a forecast overspend of £17.6m.

Full Year £m	Outturn	Budget	Variance
Neighbourhood Services	138.2	135.0	3.2
Adults	138.3	134.8	3.5
Children's	124.0	115.3	8.7
Strategic Support	52.4	47.7	4.7
City Futures	44.0	43.4	0.6
Public Health & Integrated Commissioning	10.7	10.9	(0.2)
Corporate	(490.1)	(487.1)	(3.0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>(0.0)</b>	<b>17.6</b>

1.3. This overspend is due to a combination of factors. Agreed Budget Improvement Plans ("BIPs") are not forecast to fully deliver within the year. There are underlying cost and demand pressures faced by services that are partially offset by one-off items. These "one-offs" consist of grant income, draws from specific reserves or provisions and income from central government or external sources.

Full Year Variance £m	One-off	BIPs	Trend	Total Variance
Neighbourhood Services	(4.1)	2.5	4.8	3.2
Adults	(9.9)	3.9	9.5	3.5
Children's	(3.9)	3.7	8.9	8.7
Strategic Support	0.0	0.0	4.7	4.7
City Futures	0.0	0.4	0.2	0.6
Public Health & Integrated Commissioning	0.0	0.0	(0.2)	(0.2)
Corporate	0.0	0.0	(3.0)	(3.0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(17.9)</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>17.6</b>

1.4. In 2021/22, the Council set aside £70m of reserves to manage the financial risks associated with delivering a balanced budget position. Overspends against budgets in 2021/22 and 2022/23 have meant we have drawn almost £40m from this reserve already leaving just over £30m to manage any future budget deficits. If we overspent by £17.6m as this current forecast outturn position suggests, just £13m would be left to mitigate future budget pressures.



## 1.5. 2023-24 Q1 Financial Position by Committee

1.5.1. The major budget risk areas are in Childrens & Adults Social Care and in Homelessness services

Full Year £m	Outturn	Budget	Variance
Adult Health & Social Care	146.9	143.7	3.2
Education, Children & Families	124.7	115.8	8.9
Housing	10.2	7.0	3.2
Transport, Regeneration & Climate	39.6	40.0	(0.4)
Economic Development & Skills	9.5	9.4	0.1
Waste & Street Scene	63.5	64.2	(0.8)
Communities Parks and Leisure	41.7	41.3	0.3
Strategy & Resources	(418.4)	(421.5)	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>(0.0)</b>	<b>17.6</b>

1.5.2. In 22/23, the Council's forecast overspend improved by over £14m from the first quarter's forecasts to final outturn. This was mainly due to additional income received rather than underlying improvements in budgets and cost reductions. A big contributor to this was the Government's £500m discharge fund announced in November 2022, the sustainability of this income source and other mitigations from the last financial year are still unclear and cannot be relied upon.

Many underlying budget issues in social care services still remain and this is reflected in the current forecast position.

1.5.3. Most of the overspend is due to underlying cost and demand pressures in services. We estimate that £25m is embedded in the baseline costs but is somewhat mitigated by one-off income:

Full Year Variance £m	One-off	BIPs	Trend	Total Variance
Adult Health & Social Care	(9.9)	3.9	9.1	3.2
Education, Children & Families	(3.9)	3.7	9.1	8.9
Housing	(1.7)	0.2	4.7	3.2
Transport, Regen & Climate	0.0	0.1	(0.5)	(0.4)
Economic Development & Skills	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Waste & Street Scene	(0.5)	0.2	(0.4)	(0.8)
Communities Parks and Leisure	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.3
Strategy & Resources	(1.8)	2.2	2.7	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>(17.9)</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>17.6</b>

1.5.4. Balancing the General Fund 2023/24 budget was only possible because the Council identified £47.7m of savings:

### General Fund Budget Improvement Plans (in £m)

Committee	Total Savings	Financial Savings Deliverable in Year	In Year Gap	Financial Savings Deliverable Next Year	Undeliverable Savings
Adult Health & Social Care	31.6	27.6	3.9	2.3	1.6
Communities, Parks & Leisure	2.0	1.9	0.2		0.2
Economic Devt & Skills	0.5	0.5	0.0		0.0
Education, Children & Families	6.9	3.2	3.7	0.3	3.4



Housing	0.6	0.5	0.2		0.2
Strategy & Resources	4.1	1.9	2.2	2.2	0.1
Transport, Regen & Climate	0.8	0.7	0.1		0.1
Waste & Street Scene	1.1	0.9	0.2		0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>47.7</b>	<b>37.1</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>5.7</b>

The current forecasts show £10.6m savings plans are undeliverable this year. This represents a delivery rate of 78% against target. In 22/23, less than 65% of savings targets were delivered. Whilst we are improving upon overall delivery performance, we are still falling short of targets meaning further draws could be required from our reserves to meet these overspends if they are not managed and mitigated. Delivering in year budgets must be a key focus for all services for the Council to retain financial sustainability.

1.5.5. Whilst inflation is beginning to fall, costs incurred are very unlikely to fall significantly resulting in these increased costs now being embedded in our cost base. There is an increased demand for services alongside cost pressures in social care, home to school transport and homelessness services.

### 1.6. Key Committee Overspends:

1.6.1. **Adult Health and Social Care are forecast to overspend by £3.2m** The high cost of packages of care put in place during covid increased our baseline costs and this carries into 23/24. A huge amount of work has been done as part of an investment plan to tackle the underlying issues. One off funding has mitigated the position this year leaving a £0.7m overspend in the purchasing budgets. Work continues on the package reviews to reduce the baseline costs for the future. Recovery work is underway including establishment of Task & Finish groups and the development of business cases around invest to saves including focus on enablement, day services, reviewing high cost 1 to 1 support and maximising income. The main area of overspend in the service now sits in staffing budgets. Service improvements in the Short -Term Intervention Team (STIT) are underway to deliver a stable position.

1.6.2. **Education, Children and Families are forecast to overspend by £8.9m** The key overspends in the service relate to placements with external residential placements a particular issue which are forecast to exceed the previous year's costs by £4.8m. This sits alongside undelivered targets from the previous year of £2m. The average placement cost is £5,400 per week. However due to a limited number of places in the city, placements for the most complex children can cost a great deal more. Actions are being taken to ensure that the right costs for placements are being met by all elements including education and where possible health. High-cost placements are also being reviewed.

The savings proposal for £1.6m to increase fostering placements this year is forecast to not be delivered. Marketing is taking place, but our number of foster carers remains static. Nationally this has been an issue since the pandemic as older foster carers decided to exit the market and there has not been the like for like recruitment to new foster carers.

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Further demand in home to school transport costs are forecast to create a £3m overspend against budgets this year. This has the potential to increase in October when we know exactly how many children require transportation to school. An overarching review of this area will commence in 2024.

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- 1.6.3. **Homelessness support in temporary and exempt accommodation is forecast to cost the Council £8.4m** The Government does not fully subsidise all housing benefit payments made by the Council even though it sets the rules that determine the amount the Council has to pay. In 2022/23, the Council incurred a loss of £5.9m as a result of the legislation relating to temporary homelessness and supported accommodation. The Council is essentially bridging the gap between the amount the accommodation costs to procure and the amount we are able to recover via housing benefits.

In 2023-24, this is forecast to cost the Council £4.9m for temporary accommodation and £3.5m for supported accommodation. The shortfalls are split between the Housing General Fund and Strategy and Resources budgets respectively.

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### **The Budget Implementation Group**

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- 1.6.4. **A subgroup has been set up to drive improvements in Budget delivery** A senior officer working group has been established to help drive delivery of the budget. The purpose of the Budget Improvement Group (BIG) is to improve the delivery of the Council's annual Revenue Budget (both General Fund and Housing Revenue Account) and in particular the delivery of the Budget Improvement Plans (BIPs). It will look to facilitate Council wide learning. The group is jointly chaired by the Director of Finance and Commercial Services and the Chief Operating Officer. The group has a nominated core member from each Directorate: Adults, Children's, City Futures, Neighbourhoods and Strategic Support Services.

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### **Transformation Funding**

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- 1.6.5. **We identified £4m to support transformation activity** As part of 2023-24 budget setting, the Council identified a £4m fund that would be used to support programmes of change in the organisation, expedite the delivery of savings plans or support where delivery of savings has become "stuck". The "BIG" group has provided advice, challenge, and recommendations for allocation of the transformation funding to the Council's Performance and Delivery Board.

In August 2023, the Performance & Delivery board approved bids to support delivery of programmes in Adult Social Care, Housing, Children's services, ICT, HR, and Organisational Strategy to build upon the Future Sheffield programme. These key projects will help stabilise the organisation and bring budgets back to a steady footing for the future. Each programme of work will be monitored, and progress reported to the Council's Performance & Delivery board to ensure activity remains on track. Overall performance will be reported to S&R committee and finance committee as part of in-year budget monitoring, with relevant policy committees overseeing progress on programmes in their areas.

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## Medium Term Financial Analysis (MTFA)

- 1.6.6. **The MTFA presented to S&R Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> September detailed committee budget savings targets** An updated medium term financial analysis is due to be presented to Strategy & Resources committee on 7<sup>th</sup> September to give members an early view of the forecast financial position for the Council for the next 4 years and to set the financial constraints within which the budgeting and business planning process will need to work to achieve a balanced budget position over the medium term. The analysis forecasts a budget gap of £18m for 24/25 that will need to be bridged by services in order to set a balanced budget for 2024/25.

- 1.6.7. The below table outlines the proposed committee savings targets following an equitable application of funds resulting in a deliverable outcome for all Committees:

Committee	Original Pressures	Remaining Income Allocations				Other Funding (split based on NRB)	Target to Find	Savings Identified	Sales, Fees and Charges Income	New Pressures	Adjusted Target To Find
		Pay award Funded	ASC Precept	Social Care Grant	Significant RPIX contracts and Housing Benefits						
Adult Health & Social Care	27.0	(1.9)	(5.4)	(10.9)		(0.9)	7.8	(4.6)	(4.5)	2.7	1.5
Education, Children & Families	12.4	(2.7)		(5.0)		(0.7)	4.1	0.0	(0.2)	4.4	8.3
Housing General Fund	3.6	(0.4)			(2.5)	(0.0)	0.7	0.0	(0.0)	2.9	3.5
Transport, Regeneration & Climate	1.0	(0.4)				(0.2)	0.5	0.0	(0.1)	(0.1)	0.3
Economic Development & Skills	0.9	(0.2)				(0.1)	0.7	0.0	(0.0)	0.1	0.7
Waste & Street Scene	9.8	(0.6)			(6.4)	(0.4)	2.5	0.0	(0.5)	0.5	2.5
Communities Parks and Leisure	1.5	(1.2)				(0.2)	0.0	0.0	(0.2)	0.5	0.4
Strategy & Resources (Corporate)	9.9	0.0				0.0	6.9	(6.2)	0.0	0.0	0.7
Strategy & Resources (Committee)	4.7	(2.7)			(0.8)	(0.4)	0.8	(0.4)	(0.1)	(0.0)	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>70.8</b>	<b>(10.0)</b>	<b>(5.4)</b>	<b>(15.9)</b>	<b>(12.7)</b>	<b>(2.9)</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>(11.1)</b>	<b>(5.6)</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>18.1</b>

### Key points to note:

- The proposal will cover the anticipated 2024/25 pay awards for all Committees.
- The Adult Social Care Precept is applied to the AHSC Committee.
- The Social Care grant is split between Adult Social Care & Education, Children & Families based on their relative shares of the original social care pressures for 2024/25.
- £7.2m has been allocated towards contract inflation pressures which are out of the control of the relevant committee. Examples include the waste contract, highways, and Microsoft licencing.
- £5.5m has also been set aside to cover the significant increase in Housing Benefit subsidy losses for Exempt Properties (S&R £3m) and £2.5m contribution to support the large increase in Homelessness accommodation costs around housing benefits support.

- 1.6.8. Services are required to develop solutions to bridge the budget gap for 2024/25 and bring forward proposals to the November policy committee meetings. At the same time working hard to bring the in-year overspend down through ongoing work on recovery plans and additional support to deliver budget implementation plans (BIPs).

This current forecast in-year overspend must be urgently managed and mitigated to avoid the risk that the Council has to look to our available Budget Contingency Reserve (£30m) to balance at year end. Maintenance of a prudent level of contingency reserves is critical to ensure stability and sustainability for 2024/25 onwards.

1.7. **Housing Committee - General Fund Overspend of £3.2m & Housing Revenue Account overspend of £0.5m**

1.7.1.	The Housing General Fund is forecast to overspend by £3.2m against budget.	Full Year £m	Outturn	Budget	Variance
		Housing General Fund Regeneration And Development (Housing Growth - General)	10.1	7.0	3.2
			0.1	0.1	0.0
		<b>Total</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>3.2</b>

The majority of the overspend in the Housing General Fund relates to homeless temporary accommodation and the loss the Council incurs as a result of Government subsidy rules.

1.7.2. **An increase in demand for Supported Accommodation & Housing Benefit Regulations have created a budget problem for the Council**

The Government does not fully subsidise all housing benefit payments made by the Council even though it sets the rules that determine the amount the Council has to pay.

In 2022/23, the Council incurred a loss of £2.8m as a result of the legislation relating to temporary homelessness accommodation. The Council is essentially bridging the gap between the amount the accommodation costs, in this case using hotels and B&Bs, and the amount we are able to recover via housing benefits from DWP, "subsidy loss".

In 2023/24 based on current demand and costs, the forecast subsidy loss is expected to reach £4.9m. There is no budget to support this. The in-year position has been mitigated by the use of prior year Homelessness grants totalling £1.7m, the team are working through the detail to ensure we are maximising use of grant funding towards the issue and clarifying eligibility on a number of other funding streams. Use of this funding could create pressures on staffing budgets in the next 2 years, but teams are looking for ways to resolve this. This particular mitigation is a one-off and is not an option for future years. Urgent action must be taken to reduce the loss incurred by the Council in this area.

1.7.3. **The Housing Solutions team are developing short- and long-term strategies to deal with the problems**

A report will be brought to the November Housing Policy committee to give further detail on the issues faced by the Authority and details actions to help bring this overspend down. Ultimately, we need to stop using hotels and B&Bs as Temporary Accommodation for a variety of reasons, not just because of the financial cost. The service is developing a Temporary Accommodation strategy that will set out our approach, and options including commissioning models or recommendations for policy decisions.

The situation has arisen post lockdown and following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in 2017 coupled with the shortage of affordable housing in the city and a limited range of options, our use of hotel and B&B accommodation has reached an unsustainable and unaffordable level. The increase in Homelessness is a national issue and there are now more than 100,000 households in Temporary Accommodation which is the highest level for 20 years.

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Some of the immediate measures in place to contain the problem include:

- **VOIDS** – working with the recently established team in housing to ensure we are utilising our stock to maximum effectiveness,
- Investigating **private sector** capacity and alternative delivery models to better use private sector rental as interim housing options
- Introduction of temporary **new management** resource in the housing solutions team focussing on strengthening process and challenge
- Recruiting **additional temporary staff** to deal with backlogs of cases and increasing the number of staff in the prevention team,
- Encouraging **partnering** of exempt supported accommodation providers with registered providers and social landlords to maximise claim eligibility.
- Commissioned end-to-end independent **process reviews** of placements to ensure rapid re-housing is taking place and challenging the robustness process and placement decisions,
- Reviewing, and moving on, **longer term placements in temporary and supported accommodation** to provide more cost effective options to those at immediate risk of hotel accommodation,
- Developing business cases to strengthen the bolster resource in the **claims review team**,
- Working with **other Authorities** to understand potential localised solutions within the sub-region.

In the longer term, other actions are also underway:

- Current construction costs have made planned new TA schemes unaffordable in their current form. **Value engineering** work on capital investment opportunities for Temporary Accommodation are underway to find ways to make investments financially viable.
- Becoming more **creative** with our acquisition approach including repurposing alternative accommodation or leasing opportunities
- Working with **partner organisations**, including the South Yorkshire Housing Partnership to expand housing that is available
- Focus towards improving earlier **prevention** levels and focus on prevention activities including supporting residents to maintain tenancies and better targeted support.
- Our work with the **Royal Foundation** offers greater opportunities and access to resources with the aspiration to eliminate family homelessness.

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1.7.4.	<b>There is further demand risk to</b>	The Home Office are accelerating decisions on backlogs of asylum cases, and this is likely to start being felt in the next month. This will mean more people will be presenting as
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**Housing General Fund budgets**

homeless following positive decisions in addition to the usual flow. This would result in a higher than usual number of people who have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) with negative decisions. Partner organisations are signposting to Supported Exempt Accommodation (SEA). Both are likely to add pressures to the use of hotels and SEA. We are working with Migration Yorkshire and Home Office to try and understand the scale of the issue and what the impact will be and looking for any alternative options.

1.7.5.	<b>The Housing Revenue Account is forecast to overspent by £0.5m</b>	<b>Full Year £m</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Variance</b>
		Net Income – Dwellings	(160.2)	(161.6)	1.4
		Other income	(7.7)	(6.9)	(0.8)
		Repairs & Maintenance	50.2	48.8	1.4
		Depreciation	25.0	25.0	0.0
		Tenant Services	54.1	55.5	(1.4)
		-Council Tax	1.9	1.9	0.0
		-Disrepairs	4.4	3.9	0.5
		Interest on borrowing	12.9	13.6	(0.7)
		Contribution to Capital Programme	19.3	19.7	(0.5)
		<b>Total</b>	<b>(0.0)</b>	<b>(0.0)</b>	<b>(0.0)</b>
1.7.6.	<b>The key variance is rent loss of £1.6m from vacant properties</b>	£1,590k of the variance relates to an undelivered BIP saving to implement measures to improve void rent loss, however a multi-functional voids team is now in place to address this. This is offset by (£334k) lower bad debt provision than budget.			
1.7.7.	<b>Other income is £800k higher than anticipated</b>	Furnished accommodation service charges have overachieved by over £430k against budgeted levels and the service has benefitted from additional interest of £470k			
1.7.8.	<b>Repairs and maintenance costs are £1.4m over budget</b>	There are overspends in responsive repairs of over £1m in the service. Key variances include overspends of £3.9m in subcontractor costs due to workflow increases in voids and working at height, £758k on equipment and materials, £540k employee costs, and an under recovery on the obsolete heating programme of £276k, offset by (£4.6m) forecast capital income recharges mainly relating to firestopping, voids and working at height. The total overspend is largely represented by the unachieved BIP as show in 1.11.11.			
1.7.9.	<b>Tenant Services is forecast to underspend by £1.4m</b>	There are a variety of overspends in tenant services largely offset by lower recharges, additional capital management fee income £346k and vacancies in fire safety £329k, Tenancy enforcement team £294k and communal areas £241k.			
1.7.10.	<b>Disrepair claims are continuing to cause overspends</b>	Legal fees on disrepair cases are still high, partly due to an unachieved BIP, though an improvement plan is in place to reduce claims and further cost escalations.			

1.7.11. **Capital financing costs are lower than budget** HRA capital financing costs i.e., the interest payable on debt are lower than budget by £700k.

1.7.12. **Budget Savings (BIPS) £m**

Service	Financial RAG	Total Savings	Savings Deliverable in Year	In Year Gap	Savings Deliverable Next Year	Undeliverable Savings
HOUSING GENERAL FUND	Red	0.2		0.2		0.2
	Green	0.3	0.3	0.0		0.0
<b>HOUSING GENERAL FUND Total</b>		<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.2</b>		<b>0.2</b>
REGENERATION & DEVELOP	Green	0.2	0.2	0.0		0.0
<b>REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT Total</b>		<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>		<b>0.0</b>
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	Red	5.0	1.8	3.1		3.1
	Green	17.8	17.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>HOUSING REVENUE ACC Total</b>		<b>22.8</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>3.1</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>23.5</b>	<b>20.2</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>3.3</b>

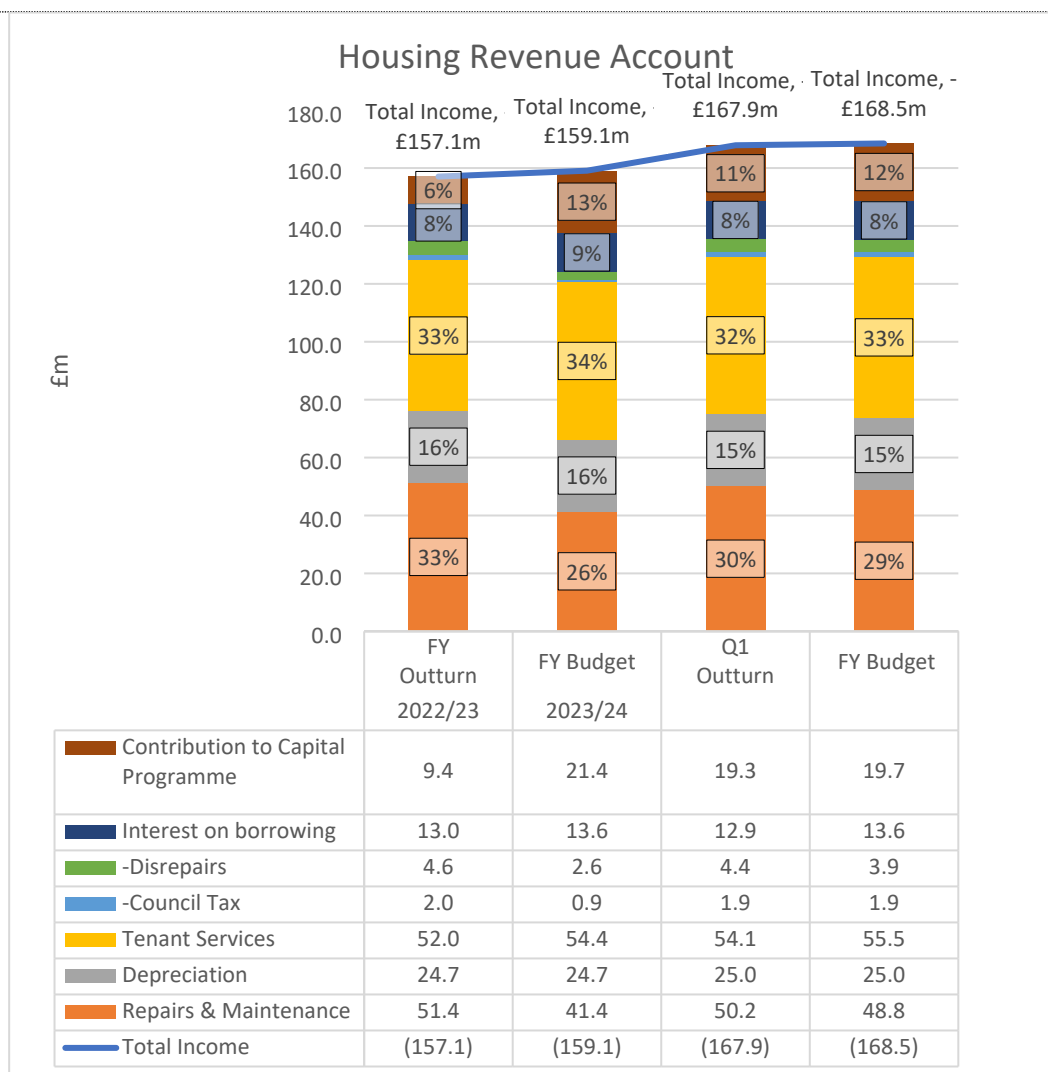
Of the £23.5m savings targets in place for 2023/24, £20.2m are forecast to be delivered. The £0.2m saving in the Housing General Fund relates to temporary accommodation which given the context of current budget pressures is not achievable this year.

Other red rated savings relate to the HRA, the main shortfall with repairs & maintenance:

Description	Total Savings	Savings Deliverable in Year	In Year Gap
Improvement in disrepair management	1.2	0.9	0.3
Improvement in void rent loss	1.8	0.3	1.5
Introduce recharges to tenants	0.3	0.2	0.2
Reduction in sub-contractor usage and a review of overheads in (RMS)	1.5	0.5	1.0
Review of Community Buildings	0.2		0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>3.1</b>

1.7.13. The below chart shows the breakdown of the HRA in comparison to the prior year.

Uplifts to budgets in disrepairs, council tax, tenant services and most significantly repairs and maintenance should make contributing to the capital programme more achievable this financial year.



1.7.14.	<b>Community heating account underspent by £0.4m</b>	<b>Full Year £m</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Variance</b>
		Income	(5.0)	(4.4)	(0.6)
		Expenditure	4.5	4.3	0.2
		<b>Total</b>	<b>(0.5)</b>	<b>(0.1)</b>	<b>(0.4)</b>

1.7.15. **Overspends in the HRA impact the capital programme** The forecast outturn position results in a reduced contribution to the future programme. A sustained improvement in revenue budgets in 2023/24 must be delivered to ensure the long-term capital programme and HRA business plan remains affordable.



## **2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?**

- 2.1 The recommendations in this report are that the committee notes their 2023/24 budget forecast position and takes action on overspends.

## **3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?**

- 3.1 There has been no consultation on this report, however, it is anticipated that the budget process itself will involve significant consultation as the Policy Committees develop their budget proposals

## **4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

### 4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from this report. It is expected that individual Committees will use equality impact analyses as a basis for the development of their budget proposals in due course.

### 4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 The primary purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the City Council's revenue budget monitoring position for 2023/24.

### 4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 Under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Chief Finance Officer of an authority is required to report on the following matters:

- the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of determining its budget requirement for the forthcoming year; and
- the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

- 4.3.2 There is also a requirement for the authority to have regard to the report of the Chief Finance Officer when making decisions on its budget requirement and level of financial reserves.

- 4.3.3 By the law, the Council must set and deliver a balanced budget, which is a financial plan based on sound assumptions which shows how income will equal spend over the short- and medium-term. This can take into account deliverable cost savings and/or local income growth strategies as well as useable reserves. However, a budget will not be balanced where it reduces reserves to unacceptably low levels and regard must be had to any report of the Chief Finance Officer on the required level of reserves under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, which sets obligations of adequacy on controlled reserves.

### 4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 There are no direct climate implications arising from this report. It is expected that individual Committees will consider climate implications as they develop their budget proposals in due course.

### 4.4 Other Implications

- 4.4.1 No direct implication

**5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 The Council is required to both set a balance budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.

**6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 To record formally changes to the Revenue Budget



## Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report: Nesreen  
Lowson / Janet Sharpe**

**Tel: 0114 2735493**

**Report of:** Ajman Ali (Executive Director – Neighbourhood Services)

**Report to:** Housing Policy Committee

**Date of Decision:** 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**Subject:** Housing Capital Programme Finance Report

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(Insert reference number)</i>		
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Purpose of Report:**

The Housing Capital Programme brings together the 30-year Asset Management and Housing Growth Strategy for Council Housing setting out the priorities for current and future investment, to ensure that homes meet the Government’s Decent Homes Standard and the delivery of tenants’ priorities in improving the quality of homes and neighbourhoods. Investment priorities are formulated from detailed stock condition and other surveys to ensure effective planning of works, utilising available repairs intelligence, life-cycle modelling and, feedback from tenants.

The Housing Investment Programme is co-designed and agreed with tenants for the Council housing stock.

The Housing Capital Programme is split into three distinct areas of activity; Council Housing Investment (existing stock and assets) and the Council’s Stock Increase Programme, funded from the Council’s Housing Revenue Account, as described in the annual HRA Business Plan. There is also the Non-HRA Capital Programme which includes the Programme Management, Homes & Loans to private homes and investment in private homes. The table at 1.9 show the overall Housing Capital Programme split between Council Housing Investment, Stock Increase and Non-HRA areas of the programme.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update of the progress against the approved 2023/24 Housing Capital Programme, this is reported regularly as part of

the Council’s Corporate Capital Programme to the Finance Committee. This report will focus on providing an update about spend and progress against the 2023/24 Housing Capital Programme at end of June 2023 (Quarter 1). The report also provides an update of the 5-year Housing Capital Programme and the final approval of the 2022/23 Housing Capital Programme outturn.

**Recommendations:**

The Housing Policy Committee members are recommended to:

- Note the 2022-23 Housing Capital Programme final approved outturn.
- Note the 2023-24 Housing Capital Programme forecasting and budget position at the end of quarter 1.
- Note the update provided for the 5-year capital programme.
- Note and agree the frequency of the Housing Capital Programme quarterly reports presented at future meetings.

**Background Papers:**

Appendix 1 – Approved 5-year Housing Capital Programme

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: <i>Damian Watkinson</i>
	Legal: <i>Rebecca Lambert</i>
	Equalities & Consultation: <i>N/A</i>
	Climate: <i>N/A</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>
2	<b>EMT member who approved submission:</b> Ajman Ali
3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b> Douglas Johnson
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> Janet Sharpe
	<b>Job Title:</b> Director of Housing Housing and Neighbourhood Service
<b>Date:</b> 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	

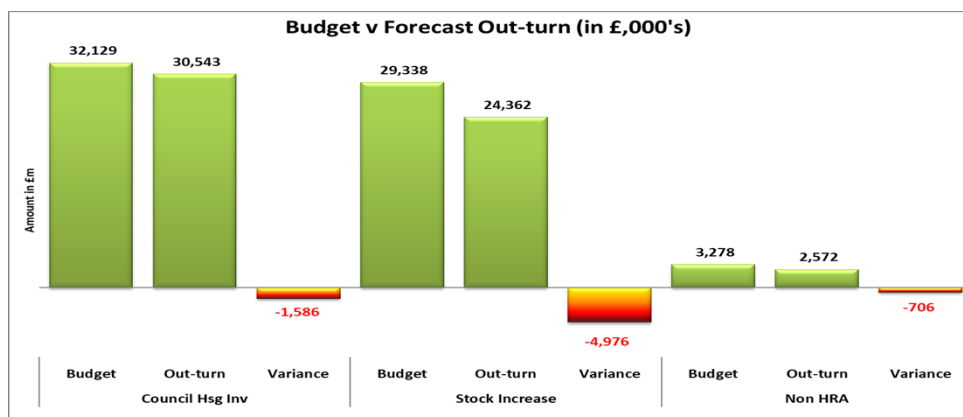
# 1. PROPOSAL

1.1 The Housing Capital Programme was approved in February 2023 as part of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan and, was also included in the Council’s Corporate Capital Programme that brings together all Capital Programmes together for formal approval.

1.2 The Housing Capital Programme has a rolling 5-year programme which is part of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30-year Business Plan and includes the 30-year housing investment plans. The HRA Housing Investment Programme is co-produced with tenants and regularly consulted on to ensure stock is compliant with current regulations (including the new Fire and Building Safety Regulations, Gas, Electrical, Asbestos etc) and the Decent Homes Standards.

1.3 The Housing Capital Investment Strategy focuses on a ‘fabric first’ approach to protect council housing assets, to reduce our ongoing and long-term repairs and maintenance obligations and increase tenants’ satisfactions with their homes. We have now commenced an area-based investment approach to reflect local priorities that are important to residents and tenants. Close working arrangements are in place with the Council’s Repairs Services to ensure alignment across Capital and Revenue investment.

1.4 The final Housing Capital Programme out-turn position at the end of March 2023 (period 12) was £57.477m. This is (£7.268m) under the final approved programme budget of £64.745m.



The above chart shows the final forecast out-turn for the Council Housing Investment, Stock Increase and Non HRA Programmes. The variances for each section of the programme are a combination of slippage/underspends and accelerations/overspends at the year-end position.

1.5 Appendix 1 is a summary of the approved 5-Year Housing Capital Programme.

1.6 Each year a review of the 5- and 30-year Housing Investment Programme is undertaken and any profile changes are approved as

part of the Council's HRA Business Plan. Each year additional years are added so that we always have a 5- and 30-year programme. The capital budgets for 2028/29 (year 6) are currently being worked through and will be presented as part of the 5-year programme for approval by the Housing Policy Committee and full Council as part of the HRA business plan and the capital programme.

1.7 The last annual review for the Housing Capital Programme took place in November / December 2022. The full HRA Business Plan including the Capital Programme was approved at Full Council on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023. A total 5-year programme of £556.478m including a programme of £106.935m in 2023-24.

1.8 Further variations to the programme have been approved since February 2023, following detailed reviews on the HRA capital finance budget available for the 5-year approved capital programme during February 2023 – June 2023 to reflect current market conditions. The total variations following approval re-set the approved Housing Capital Investment Programme total to £124.351m for 2023/24 and £64.409m in 2023/24 for the HRA Investment in Council Housing, that is detailed below within the HRA Programme position table.

1.8 The Q1 2023-24 Housing Capital Programme position is shown in the table below: -

2023-24 Housing Capital Programme Position	Approved	Changes	Proposed
HRA Investment in Council Housing (Themes)	64.409	0.00	64.409
HRA Stock Increase Programme	56.623	0.23	56.646
<b>HRA Programme Subtotal</b>	<b>121.032</b>	<b>0.23</b>	<b>121.055</b>
Non-HRA Programme	3.319	0.00	3.319
<b>TOTAL Housing Capital Investment Programme</b>	<b>124.351</b>	<b>0.23</b>	<b>124.374</b>

1.9 The table below sets out the total approved budget for the 2023/24 Investment Programme for Council Housing budget of £64.409m at the end of Q1 broken down by theme. This is split into different stages of project and programme delivery setting out the total amount that is currently allocated within the approved housing capital programme.

HRA PROGRAMME POSITION - PERIOD 3 APPROVED BUDGET £64,409M	STAGES OF HRA FULL YEAR 23/24 PROGRAMME			
	Planning/Survey/Feasibility	Design/Procurement	Contract Award/Delivery	Other/Q Number
HEATING, ENERGY & CARBON REDUCTION TOTAL	£1,640	£2,083,868	£23,223,398	£2,073,826
H & S ESSENTIAL WORK TOTAL	£781,647	£0	£8,515,732	£2,030,436
ADAPTATIONS & ACCESS TOTAL	£0	£0	£2,946,501	£4,370
HRA PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT TOTAL	£0	£0	£0	£3,100,000
WASTE MANAGEMENT & ESTATE ENV TOTAL	£0	£0	£0	£805,127
ENVELOPING & EXTERNAL WORK TOTAL	£0	£0	£1,344,900	£11,000,000
COMMUNAL AREA INVESTMENT TOTAL	£0	£0	£0	£500,000
INTERNAL WORKS TOTAL	£0	£0	£3,835,995	£0
OTHER PLANNED ELEMENTALS TOTAL	£0	£0	£436,080	£1,145,562
GARAGES & OUTHOUSES TOTAL	£0	£0	£197,812	£132,627
IT UPGRADE TOTAL	£0	£0	£0	£0
GV MASTERPLAN DELIVERY TOTAL	£0	£0	£48,837	£200,580
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>£783,287</b>	<b>£2,083,868</b>	<b>£40,549,255</b>	<b>£20,992,528</b>

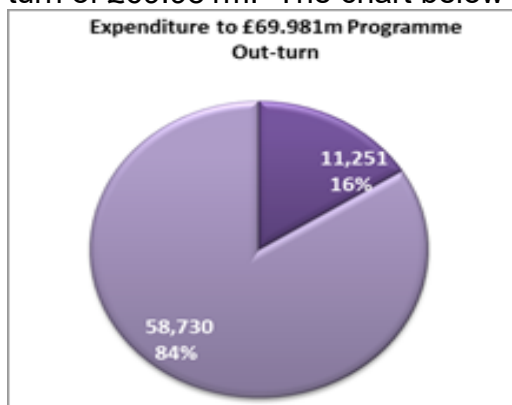
The following 'pipeline' projects are currently under development and

fall within the investment needs programme. Due to these being at development stage, project business cases have yet to be submitted, however are anticipated to be so within this financial year. Funding provision for several projects is within the 'Other/Q numbers' category above.

- Edward Street Flats: This project aims to address the ongoing issues with the condition of the roof, gutters, concrete repairs to the communal areas, fire safety, bin chutes and waste management and window replacement. Energy efficiency and decarbonisation measures are currently being explored to incorporate potential options and solutions into the project scope.
- Damp and Mould; work is currently ongoing with the Repairs and Maintenance service to develop a programme of works to address properties that are the most vulnerable to damp and mould due to structural types, condition of external fabric, insulation, and energy efficiency status.
- Waste and Pest Control Prevention Programme; A number of our low-rise blocks of flats in the city centre are currently suffering from excessive exposure to vermin and pests. This programme will support measures to address improved waste management measures including chutes closures and the provision of improved waste and recycling facilities.
- 'Ranch Style' flats at Stannington; this project will look to address damp and mould concerns reported by local residents in these flats.
- Fire safety doors to flats; work has commenced on developing a planned approach for the replacement of fire safety doors for all flat doors that are not to current required standards.

## 1.10 Expenditure to Date on Budget for 2023/24

1.10.1 The total 2023-24 Housing Capital Programme expenditure to the end of June is £11.251m. This is 16% of the total forecast programme out-turn of £69.981m. The chart below illustrates this representation.

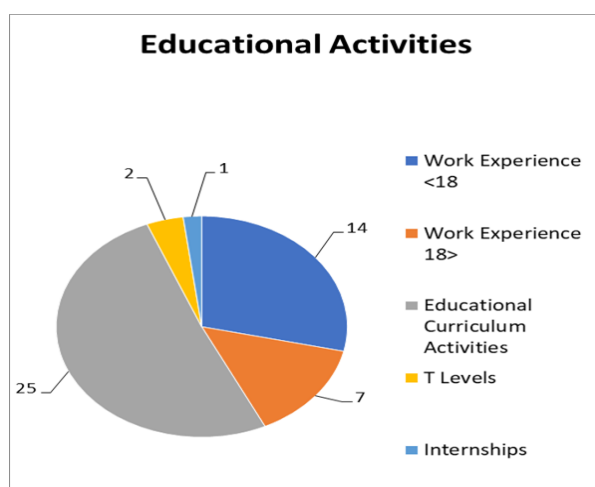


## 1.11 Forecast Out-turn Position.

- 1.11.1 The Housing Capital Programme forecasted out-turn position at the end of June 2023 was £69.981m. This is (£54.393m) under the proposed programme budget of £124.374m. Over half of the slippage in the programme is related to the ongoing review of the stock increase programme.
- 1.11.2 The variances for each section of the programme are a combination of procurement (tender savings), programme changes, slippage and updated financial spend profiles.
- 1.11.3 The total within Council Housing Investment, the forecast variance is (£24.337m) and mostly related to EWI Non-Traditional (Airey Properties) Phase 2, EWI Non-Traditional 3, Demolition Programme and Lift Replacements, which have experienced project changes and delays. Also, within the Council Housing Investment a full review has taken place to reprofile all the block allocation budgets in line with the revised forecasts during June 2023.

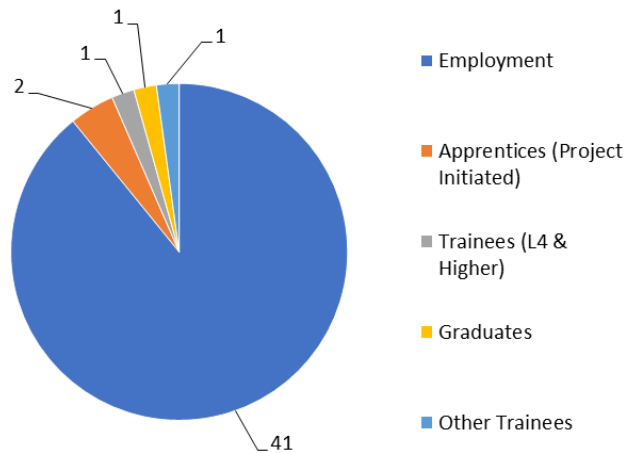
## 1.12 Employment and Social Value

- 1.12.1 The Housing Investment Programme is achieving significant wider social value from contractors. This information is captured by the Council and published periodically. As part of the procurement of the capital programme contracts, a set of requirements are included during the procurement and contract stages for delivering against social value requirements which include supporting local employment and upskilling opportunities (through work experience and apprenticeships). The charts below report on these for the periods April – June 2023.



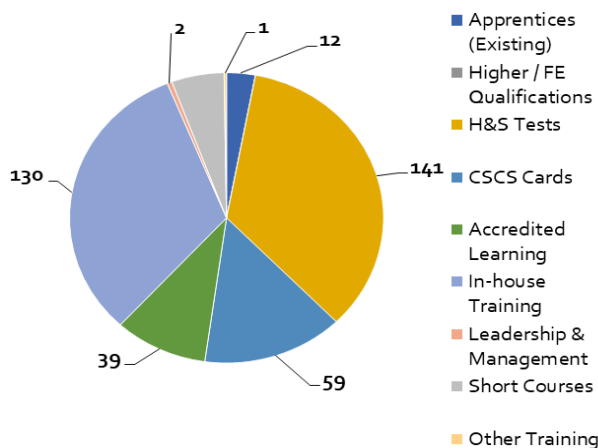


## New Employment



To date during 2022/23, the chart below illustrates the report on local employment upskilling opportunities.

## Upskilling



### 1.13 Customer Engagement

1.13.1 The Housing Investment Programme (Capital) is made up of work areas to ensure we are compliant with regulations, works that will protect the life of our assets and make areas great places to live. Consulting on and planning the capital programme with tenants is a priority for the Council, so it includes tenants' priorities. Scrutiny on the delivery of the Housing Investment Programme is managed through tenant governance boards and performance reports.

1.13.2 Engagement with key stakeholders including significant consultation with residents and local members is anticipated to take place as part of developing each project proposal contained with the programme

through written communication, workshops, and consultation events throughout the lifetime of the programme.

Meetings are currently taking place with each of the individual Neighbourhood Teams to identify the main work priorities within each Neighbourhood Area. Once all information is collated and agreed it will then be presented to Local Area Committees and Local Tenant Forums that are currently in place. We will report this to Housing Policy Committee on an annual basis as part of the HRA business planning process.

## 1.14 **Improvements to properties – Summary outputs**

1.14.1 By the end of June 2023, the following outputs were achieved:

- 630 Asbestos Surveys to various council properties across the city
- 730 homes received electrical upgrades and are now compliant with the Electrical Safety regulations.
- 116 adaptations were delivered including 21 installations of stairlifts to properties with vulnerable customers.
- The elementals programme had a slow start due to issues reported previously but will deliver new kitchens, bathrooms, and electrical upgrades to hundreds of properties.
- High rise reroofing work started on 4 tower blocks - Cornhill, Crawshaw, Wentworth & Adelphi and are to be completed by August 2023. Work is currently progressing as expected and aims to complete the remaining 14 high rise blocks by end of March 2025.
- Fire Safety works to the 3 high rise blocks at Stannington and at Hanover is nearing completion with an anticipated finish in September 2023. Fire safety works to the remaining 20 high rise blocks across the city is in design stage and scoping of the works is currently ongoing. This programme has been slower than originally planned due to the complexity of the project and project lead resourcing issues.
- The external wall insulation phase 2 (EWI 2 Airey repair and insulation) has progressed to contract award with a start on site agreed for September 2023. It is anticipated that the first lot of outputs of the project will be reported at the end of quarter 3 of 2023.
- The external wall insulation phase 3 (EWI 3 – system build properties) commenced on site during June. This is anticipated to complete on site in April 2024 delivering 267 improved and insulated properties to PAS 2035 standards.

1.14.2 The Gleadless Valley masterplan recently launched with circa £90m of investment to be delivered including 221 new homes, 72 homes remodelled and the remaining stock on the estate being refurbished over the next 10 years as part of a comprehensive programme of regeneration improvements. The Gleadless Valley project team is currently reviewing the overall delivery programme and any significant

- 1.14.3 changes will be subject to further member and tenant scrutiny. This will be reported separately.

The next updated quarterly report (Q2) presented to Housing Policy Committee will for the November 2023 meeting and the Quarter 3 report will be presented at the March 2024 meeting with the final quarter of 2023/24 and year end report in early 2024/25 (Committee dates to be confirmed).

## **2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?**

- 2.1 That the Housing Policy Committee is to note the progress made within Q1 of 2023/24 against the approved position on the Housing Investment Programme.

## **3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?**

- 3.1 There has been no consultation on this report other than tenant scrutiny performance reporting. The budget approval process itself for each project/programme contained within the Housing Investment Programme do involve significant consultation and engagement with tenants, residents, local members and with key stakeholders.

## **4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

### 4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from this report. It is expected that each individual project will use an equality impact assessment as a basis for the development of their project and budget proposals.

### 4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 The report sets out the current year position of the Housing Capital Programme, as such there are no direct financial implications.

### 4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The report is a financial updating report that sets out the current year position of the Housing Capital Programme. There are no new or additional legal implications arising from the report for consideration. Individual reports on each of the three component parts of the Housing Capital Programme being (1) Council Housing Investment, (2) Stock Increase Programme and (3) the Non-HRA Capital Programme should set out any relevant legal implications.

### 4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 There are no direct climate implications arising from this report. It is expected that individual projects will consider climate implications as they develop their project and budget proposals in due course.

4.4 Other Implications

4.4.1 There are no other implications to consider

**5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 No alternative options are considered as part of this update report.

**6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 This report is to provide the Housing Policy Committee members with an update on progress against the approved 5-year approved Capital programme.

## Appendix 1 – Approved 5-year Housing Capital Programme

### HRA Capital Programme Position - Period 3

HRA Programme Position	2023/24 Full Year	2024-28 Programme				5 Year Total FY Budget
	2023/24 FY Budget	2024/25 FY Budget	2025/26 FY Budget	2026/27 FY Budget	2027/28 FY Budget	
HEATING, ENERGY & CARBON REDUCTION TOTAL	£27,382,732	£7,432,256	£9,390,305	£13,450,000	£0	£57,655,293
H & S ESSENTIAL WORK TOTAL	£11,525,627	£18,331,145	£21,880,321	£18,240,654	£0	£69,977,747
ADAPTATIONS & ACCESS TOTAL	£2,950,871	£3,304,730	£5,455,879	£682,553	£0	£12,394,033
HRA PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT TOTAL	£3,100,000	£3,150,000	£3,200,000	£3,250,000	£0	£12,700,000
WASTE MANAGEMENT & ESTATE ENV TOTAL	£805,127	£2,770,000	£3,365,000	£3,515,000	£0	£10,455,127
ENVELOPING & EXTERNAL WORK TOTAL	£12,344,900	£9,826,044	£13,315,419	£3,682,118	£0	£39,168,481
COMMUNAL AREA INVESTMENT TOTAL	£500,000	£2,500,000	£2,500,000	£2,927,200	£0	£8,427,200
INTERNAL WORKS TOTAL	£3,835,995	£3,733,747	£4,144,146	£5,906,272	£0	£17,620,160
OTHER PLANNED ELEMENTALS TOTAL	£1,581,642	£1,332,000	£1,332,000	£1,482,000	£0	£5,727,642
GARAGES & OUTHOUSES TOTAL	£132,627	£250,000	£250,000	£250,000	£0	£882,627
IT UPGRADE TOTAL	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
GV MASTERPLAN DELIVERY TOTAL	£249,417	£9,200,690	£10,963,000	£20,162,399	£0	£40,575,506
HRA INVESTMENT NEED 2027/28	£0	£0	£0	£0	£33,525,000	£33,525,000
<b>COUNCIL HOUSING INVESTMENT TOTAL</b>	<b>£64,408,938</b>	<b>£61,830,612</b>	<b>£75,796,070</b>	<b>£73,548,196</b>	<b>£33,525,000</b>	<b>£309,108,816</b>
Stock Increase Programme Position	2023/24 Full Year	2024-28 Programme				5 Year Total FY Budget
	2023/24 FY Budget	2024/25 FY Budget	2025/26 FY Budget	2026/27 FY Budget	2027/28 FY Budget	
ASSET MANAGEMENT DELIVERY TOTAL	£10,899,644	£2,272,090	£2,332,780	£2,396,940	£2,462,840	£20,364,294
HOUSING GROWTH DELIVERY TOTAL	£45,746,389	£52,171,243	£63,024,767	£42,903,206	£4,644,888	£208,490,493
<b>STOCK INCREASE PROGRAMME TOTAL</b>	<b>£56,646,032</b>	<b>£54,443,333</b>	<b>£65,357,547</b>	<b>£45,300,146</b>	<b>£7,107,728</b>	<b>£228,854,786</b>
Non HRA Programme Position	2023/24 Full Year	2024-28 Programme				5 Year Total FY Budget
	2023/24 FY Budget	2024/25 FY Budget	2025/26 FY Budget	2026/27 FY Budget	2027/28 FY Budget	
Non-HRA REGENERATION TOTAL	£18,000	£18,000	£18,000	£18,000	£18,000	£90,000
Non-HRA PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT TOTAL	£377,000	£377,000	£377,000	£377,000	£377,000	£1,885,000
HOMES & LOANS TOTAL	£534,758	£0	£0	£0	£0	£534,758
PRIVATE HOUSING STANDARDS TOTAL	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
OTHER CAPITAL WORKS TOTAL	£2,388,915	£2,308,625	£0	£0	£0	£4,697,540
<b>NON-HRA SUMMARY TOTAL</b>	<b>£3,318,673</b>	<b>£2,703,625</b>	<b>£395,000</b>	<b>£395,000</b>	<b>£395,000</b>	<b>£7,207,298</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>£124,373,644</b>	<b>£118,977,570</b>	<b>£141,548,617</b>	<b>£119,243,342</b>	<b>£74,552,728</b>	<b>£545,170,901</b>

\*Please note the £33.525m identified as "HRA Investment Need 27/28" is not yet part of formally approved program in the Finance System.

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