

Non-Executive Report of the: Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee 12 th January 2023	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of Ann Sutcliffe, Corporate Director, Place Directorate	Classification: Unrestricted
Social Housing Landlords Performance Report – Q1/Q2, 2022/3	

Originating Officer(s)	Shalim Uddin Partnerships Officer (Strategy and Policy)
Wards affected	All wards

Executive Summary

Social Landlords in the borough produce quarterly performance data for key customer facing performance indicators subsequently tenants and local residents can be assured they are delivering effective and customer focused services. The performance report attached at **Appendix 1** provides cumulative performance data for quarters One and Two of the Social Landlords with homes in the borough.

Recommendations:

The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee is recommended to:

To review and note progress in the performance outturns achieved by individual Social Landlords and the overall performance trend.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Committee Chair has requested social landlord performance data to every meeting. This is to oversee trends specific to frontline delivery of services such as repair response times and resident satisfaction to name a few.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Members review of Social Landlord performance to remain exclusively with the Cabinet Member for Housing.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 Through the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum (THHF), the Council works with key registered providers who manage social rented stock in the borough.

Quarterly performance information is presented to the Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing along with the Housing scrutiny Sub Committee for information purposes.

- 3.2 The agreed Performance Management Framework is a set of key performance indicators (KPIs). Quarterly performance information is presented to the Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing and the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee. Good performance from housing landlords supports the Council in ensuring the borough is one where residents are proud to live.
- 3.3 Each social landlord has its own governance arrangements for the scrutiny of performance. Targets are set by individual landlords and scrutinised through their own governance structure. Each and every RP captures performance data via their own agreed mechanisms and methods.
- 3.4 Appendix 1 outlines cumulative performance for quarters One and Two. Six of the fourteen key registered providers who operate in the borough can produce borough specific data (Gateway, Poplar HARCA, Tower Hamlets Homes, Tower Hamlets Community Housing, Eastend Homes and Spitalfields). Borough specific data is currently not inevitably possible for the remaining RPs as they hold housing stock on a regional /national scale. Landlords that operate in multiple borough's or hold stock nationally do their best to provide data they judiciously extract to display borough-specific performance.
- 3.5 Where applicable, RP's have been requested to provide targets they already have in place for their individual organisation/s. These measures will remain in effect until the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) are introduced standardising reporting measures for all social Landlords. The TSM's are anticipated to come into effect from April 2023 with RP's capturing data and a full performance report being available from the Housing Regulator due in 2024.
- 3.6 The table below shows the current KPI's requested from each RP as devised by the Benchmarking subgroup (no longer in operation) and current format and method of reporting requested.

Indicator	Format
Number of stage 1 complaints received	Number
% Of complaints responded to within target time	%
Number of stage 2 complaints received	Number
Number of ME/MP enquiries received	Number
Total number of re-lets	Number
Average re-let time in days (standard re-lets)	Number
Average re-let time in days (major works units, including time spent in works)	Number

Number of units vacant but unavailable for letting at period end	Number
Total number of emergency repairs completed year-to-date	Number
Total number of non-emergency repairs completed year-to-date	Number
% Of repairs appointments made	%
% Of repairs appointments kept	%
% Satisfaction with repairs	%
The number of properties which had their gas safety record renewed by their anniversary date	Number
FRA on number of buildings over 18 metres	Number
General Needs Stock Number	Number

3.7 The RPs continue to pursue improvement in all aspects of housing delivery and customer services. However, many variables affect this from being achievable especially where external parties contribute to the success of delivery. For example, whereby an RP outsources their repairs to an external contractor invariably the performance and quality of work can bode either incredibly well for the RP or on the contrary. Below are some strengths and observations throughout the two quarter submissions for the Committee to note.

4 Areas of Strength

4.1 Q1 and Q2 observations

- Nottingham Genesis managed to half the number of stage one complaints received going from 40 to 20 in quarter two. In addition, Poplar Harca also witnessed a considerable drop in stage one complaints going from 138 to 76 in quarter two. Four RPs (THH, Swan, One HR and Harca) achieved between 90-100% in responding to complaints within the target time for quarter two.
- Out of fourteen RP's nine had less than ten stage two complaints for quarter two, Providence Row and Peabody Housing Association had no Member enquiries or complaints to report for quarter two.
- Twelve RPs had less than 20 properties vacant and unavailable for letting which bodes well in terms of ensuring units aren't left vacant given the demand for social housing remains consistently high as ever. Furthermore, for the KPI of standard relets six RPs managed to stay within the 28 days turn around period for quarter two. Whilst RPs do their utmost to fill void properties, factors such as missing paperwork, lack of tenant information viewing refusals and or works required to the property cause delays in re-letting. Nevertheless, the Common Housing Register subgroup continue to pursue ways to counteract this issue by exploring methods exploring A.I alongside Amazon and other databases which can be onboarded to streamline processes and pathways benefiting residents and our Housing Options Team.
- All RPs managed to achieve 100% in terms of their FRA compliance for quarters one and two.

- For repair satisfaction levels 5 RPs managed to achieve 90% and above, and 7 RPs achieving between 80-90% improving from their figure in quarter one for repairs kept when made. A number of landlords saw complaints increase, a seasonal trend reflecting heating and hot water issues when the weather gets colder.
- RPs had 20 or lower member enquiries which equates to just over 6 per calendar month. Seven RPs achieved 80% or lower for the KPI for responding to percentage of complaints within target time for quarter two.
- In quarter one Clarion were unable to submit Key Performance Information due to suffering a cyber-attack on June 18th causing extensive damage to their business IT infrastructure. Consequently, residents were left unable to access repairs, escalate, lodge or process complaints and in some cases pay their rent. Following on from the attack Clarion input temporary measures to support residents and updated their website of any progress made. They have worked tirelessly to restore, rebuild systems whilst ensuring they are strengthened to reduce the likelihood of further attacks occurring. Majority of systems are now up and running again however, there's a backlog which needs to be cleared and will no doubt be further affected as a result of the Christmas period on the horizon.
- **Further key points.**
- Gateway HA saw a rise in stage one complaints for quarter two an increase in 12 in total. Whilst THH saw their quarter one figure go from 418 – 482 an increase of 64 additional complaints.
- Seven RPs fell below the 80% mark of trying to respond to complaints within the time period which is half of the THHF member RPs.
- The following table below shows the RPs who had the highest number of days for average relets inclusive of those in major works. Having said this some of these properties require FRA remedial works which has caused further delays.

<u>RP</u>	<u>Number of Days</u>
Eastend Homes	146.3
London and Quadrant (L&Q)	374
Poplar Harca	162
Providence Row HA	108

- Seven RPs achieved below 90% in satisfaction with repairs although the grade to surpass generally is around 85%-90 most RP's aim to exceed this, furthermore, the three RPs that had the highest figure of Member enquiries and complaints were the following: Poplar Harca (114) THH (312) and Clarion (102).

5 General Updates

5.1 TSM's (Tenant Satisfaction Measures)

The definitive set of 22 Tenant satisfaction measure was released by the RSH in October 2022. Collection of the first year's data will commence on 1 April 2023 concluding on 31st March 2024.

10 of the measures are landlord produced; 12 based on tenant perception Information is to be submitted by social landlords annually from April 2024 and published in the following year by the RSH.

RPs with less than 1000 units will not be required to submit information on an annual basis. There is no expressed requirement to provide local data – although social landlords are expected to consider whether this is necessary based on tenant knowledge.

The method of collecting tenant perceptions survey information is not prescriptive – landlords are to outline the approach they've used, and any major changes justified.

The RSH will collect the data throughout the period of 23-24 and stated upon receipt of the first submissions will most likely implement changes and tweak where it deems necessary. The regulator has asked all RP's to not only collect data for the sake of collecting but to rather do more to understand the demographic. A prerequisite for Rps to pay more attention on stock quality as well as a focus on vulnerable tenants. Vigorously shift from being reactive to proactive in management of resident's needs and overall quality of services wholistically.

A series of discussions will be held with THHF members regarding how the organisations are planning on implementing the TSM's. Furthermore, with the regulator requesting data be provided annually, discussions need to be had between the council and RPs on agreement to continue providing KPI's type and the frequency these KPI's will be submitted to the council.

5.2 RSH letter to RP's regarding Damp and Mould.

The RSH (Regulator of Social Housing) is 'seeking assurance from all providers that they have a clear understanding and strong grip on damp and mould issues in their homes and are addressing risks to tenants' and residents' health. Where they consider providers are not meeting the standards, including the Decent Homes Standard, they will take appropriate action'.

Consequently, from the announcement and tragedy surrounding Awaab Ishaak the RSH has requested all social housing landlords provide the following data back to them by the 19th of December.

- Their approach to assessing the extent of damp and mould issues affecting their properties, including how they assess the prevalence of categories 1 and 2 damp and mould hazards.
- The context of that approach, their most recent assessment of the extent of damp and mould hazards in their homes, including the prevalence of categories 1 and 2 damp and mould hazards

- The action they are taking to remedy any issues and hazards, and ensure that their homes meet the Decent Homes Standard
- Lastly, to inform the RSH how they will ensure that individual damp and mould cases are identified and dealt with promptly and effectively when raised by tenants and residents.

The RPs are currently collating data to respond within the deadline period and will all look to place greater focus on this salient matter.

5.2 Tower Hamlets Housing Forum

5 Subgroups.

The THHF subgroups have commenced meeting for the year and assigning tasks and outcomes which also correlate to Manifesto pledges made by the mayor. A number of subgroups have identified actions within their individual subgroup action plans and will endeavour to complete these tasks within the forthcoming year. Focussing on tasks such as tackling damp and mould, focus on decent homes standards, as well as encouraging and promoting events which celebrate the cultural diversity of our borough to name a few.

The Asset Management subgroup had previously identified Damp and Mould as one of its Action Plan items for 2022-23 aligning it with the mayor's manifesto pledge as well as Decent homes standard. With the recent focus from the RSH and Ombudsman, the group have decided to keep a record of their damp and mould data. Therefore, allowing them and the council to take stock of the most recent figures and being able to monitor figures throughout the seasons to note any peaks and troughs. The subgroup will collectively discuss and explore ways to counteract damp and mould concerns by using the forum to promote best practice and vehemently seek ways to limit cases and improve overall stock condition.

5.1 THHF Exec.

The executive group held their annual AGM on the 28th of September to launch the THHF Annual report for 2021-22. The report captures the boundless work carried out by the forum over the past year as well as information on what each subgroup focuses on. Through collaborative work and partnerships, the exec has been able to hand out £395,000 worth of food vouchers and supported 177 people with food and fuel. As well as offer support, guidance, and information to residents on coping with the cost of living and fuel crisis. Swan alongside Street Doctors helped train 74 young people in life saving first Aid to combat knife crime and reduce the likelihood of knife related fatalities in the borough. RP organisational changes are also taking place with RP's seeking new innovative ways to reduce their carbon footprint, improve repair services by having them locality based and setting up more community gardens to encourage residents to grow their own food and heighten community spirit.

6 Equalities implications

- 6.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report. The measuring tools used to capture feedback such as texts survey's phone calls are carried out to all residents irrespective of their age, gender, status, social, economic, and ethnic background.

7 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.2 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.

- 7.3 There are no direct Best Value implications arising from these reports, although if performance is further improved for performance indicators 1, 2 and 3 which relate to repairs, this may lead to improvements in working practices that will in turn improve efficiency and potentially reduce costs for Social Landlords.

- 7.4 Another indirect Best Value Implication is a landlord's ability to ensure its general needs income target (rent collection) is achieved.

- 7.5 The percentage of properties with a valid gas safety certificate directly relates to health and safety risks to residents. It is important that statutory compliance of 100% is achieved, and that landlord performance in this area shows continued improvements.

- 7.6 The percentage of tall buildings (over 18m) owned by Registered Providers that have an up-to-date Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) in place also has a direct health and safety impact. It is a statutory requirement to ensure an FRA has been completed and is up to date.

- 7.7 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the report or recommendations.

8. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 8.1 This report provides an update to the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee on the performance of various providers of social housing (Social Landlords) that operate within the borough. This includes the comparative data for Tower Hamlets Homes which manages the Council's housing stock. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

9 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 9.1 This report is recommending that the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee review the performance of individual Social Landlords during Q1&Q2 of 2022-2023.
- 9.2 Regeneration agency Homes England and the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) focus their regulatory activity on governance, financial viability, and financial value for money as the basis for robust economic regulation. The objectives of the social housing regulator are set out in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.
- 9.3 The regulatory framework for social housing in England from the 1st of April 2005 is made up of: Regulatory requirements (i.e., what Social Landlords need to comply with); Codes of practice; and Regulatory guidance. There are nine (9) categories of regulatory requirements, and these are:
1. Regulatory standards – Economic (i.e., Governance and Financial Viability Standard; Value for Money Standard; and Rent Standard)
 2. Regulatory standards – Consumer (i.e., Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard; Home Standard; Tenancy Standard; and Neighbourhood and Community Standard)
 3. Registration requirements
 4. De-registration requirements
 5. Information submission requirements
 6. The accounting direction for social housing in England from April 2012
 7. Disposal Proceeds Fund requirements
 8. Requirement to obtain regulator’s consent to disposals
 9. Requirement to obtain regulator’s consent to changes to constitutions
- 9.4 In addition to RSH regulation, there is a Performance Management Framework (‘PMF’) agreed with the Council which also reviews the performance of the Social Landlords in key customer facing areas. These are monitored cumulatively every three months against 8 key areas that are important to residents. This has a direct bearing on the Council’s priority to ensure that Social Landlords are delivering effective services to their residents who are also, at the same time, residents in the local authority area. This provides re-assurance for the Council that the main Social Landlords in the Borough are delivering effective services to their residents.
- 9.5 The Council has no power to act against any Social Landlord (other than THH which it monitors already) but one of its Community Plan aspirations is for Tower Hamlets to be a place where people live in a quality affordable housing with a commitment to ensuring that more and better-quality homes are provided for the community.

- 9.6 The review of the Social Landlords performance though not a legal requirement fits in with the above Community Plan objective and the regulatory standards as stated above. The standards require Social Landlords to co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental, and economic wellbeing in the area where they own properties.
- 9.7 The review of housing matters affecting the area or the inhabitants in the borough fall within remit of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee and are accordingly authorised by the Council's Constitution.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- Social Housing Landlords Performance KPI Sheet quarters one and two (2022)
- Supporting commentary and explanations from social landlords as submitted alongside their KPI submissions.

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

- Shalim Uddin Partnerships Officer (Strategy & Policy / Place directorate)