

Non-Executive Report of the: Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee 13 th May 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of. Paul Patterson Interim Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration	Classification: Unrestricted
Social Housing Landlords Performance Report – Quarter 3 2023	

Originating Officer(s)	Mubin Choudhury – Performance Improvement Analyst (Strategy, Policy and Improvement)
Wards affected	All wards

Executive Summary

Social Landlords in the borough produce quarterly performance data for key customer facing performance indicators subsequently, tenants and residents can be assured they are delivering effective and customer focused services. The performance report attached at **Appendix 1** provides performance data for quarter three of the Social Landlords with homes in the borough. The KPIs are now in line with the Housing Regulators' Tenant Satisfaction Measures, this was done to ensure the RPs can report on the measures effectively whilst ensuring there is synergy between the borough's requests and those of the Housing Regulator.

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 Registered Provider (RP) Social Landlord performance twice a year during quarter two and end of year period of quarter four. This is to oversee trends specific to frontline delivery of social housing services such as repair response times and complaint handing to name a few. moreover, this allows the scrutiny group to discuss other salient matters during the sessions which otherwise would be time constrained.

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 RPs who manage social rented stock in the borough. 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 (KPI's). Quarterly performance information is presented to the Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing and the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee. Good performance from RPs supports the Council in ensuring the borough is one where residents are proud to live.
- 3.3 Each RP has their own governance arrangements for the scrutiny of performance. Targets are set and scrutinised by their respective RP Boards.
- 3.4 Performance for the third quarter is listed in **Appendix 1**. The ability and commitment to supply borough-specific statistics is shared by all members of the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum and majority stock holding RPs. In addition, three landlords solely operate and manage housing stock in Tower Hamlets.
- 3.5 The KPIs currently compiled and authorised by THHF (Tower Hamlets Housing Forum) are shown in the table below and are aligned to metrics with housing providers are required to report to the Housing Regulator on an annual basis. THHF members unanimously decided as of April 2023, the group will adopt the following indicators in place of the preceding 17 KPIs. Additionally Housing Forum members consented to supply borough specific data and guarantee that stock owned in a different location was excluded from the LBTH statistical returns.

<u>Indicator</u>	<u>Format captured</u>
Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	%
Non-emergency repairs completed within target timescale	%
Emergency repairs completed within target timescale	%
Homes that have had necessary Gas safety checks	%
Homes that have had necessary fire risk assessments	%
Homes that have had necessary asbestos management surveys	%

Homes that have had all necessary water checks	%
Homes that have had necessary lift checks	%
Number of complaints received	Number
Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales	Number
Anti-social Behaviour cases	Number
Average Re-let time in days (standard Re-lets)	Days
Average Re-let time in days (major works Re-lets)	Days
Number of units vacant but unavailable for letting at period end	Number

- 3.6** RPs work to enhance every facet of the provision of services. Numerous factors influence performance, not all of which are under the RP's control. For instance, repair timeframes are negatively impacted by contractor capacity and the sparsity of specific parts.
- 3.7** While the sector is gradually adjusting to the TSM reporting procedures, forum members are undergoing an experimental phase of data collection in advance of their first annual submission to the Housing Regulator (published in the autumn of 2024).
- 3.8** Tower Hamlets Homes have now come in-house and have now been listed in this report as 'Tower Hamlets Council'.

Please see below quarter 3 observations for the committee's oversight.

4. Quarter 3 items for observation

Decent Homes and Repairs

4.1 Decent home standards.

Peabody Housing Association were unable to provide complete details for decent-homes and safety checks pertaining to Tower Hamlets stock specifically and have given company-wide details in its place. This is marked with an asterisk in the appendix where this is the case.

All homes managed by One Housing Riverside, Spitalfields, Poplar HARCA, Gateway and Providence Row meet the decent homes standard, making a total of five RPs with a non-decency rate of 0%. This is an improvement from last quarter where only Poplar HARCA, providence Row and Spitalfields met the standard, 3 in total. There has been an improvement seen in Eastend Homes, Swan and Clarion's non-decency numbers in comparison to previous quarter. There has been a slight increase in non-decency numbers for Notting Hill Genesis going from 0.1% non-decent in quarter 2 to 0.26% in quarter 3. To give context to the 14.13% non-decency rate given by Tower Hamlets

Council, in 2012 the level of non-decency across Tower Hamlets housing stock was 66%. Following on from the Grenfell fire, the funding from the capital programme has gone in large part to ensuring fire safety conditions are being met. Whilst they are still aiming to carry out some works each year that will tackle non decency, the bulk of the current programme is focused on building and fire safety as well as essential renewal of M&E equipment i.e. new boilers, lifts etc. This means that at current funding levels non decency will inevitably increase over the next few years.

4.2 Number of complaints received.

London & Quadrant received the fewest complaints per 100 properties, followed by Notting Hill Genesis and Clarion who all achieved under 1 complaint per 100 properties. The number of complaints per 100 properties was similar for all RPs. The only outlier to receive more than 4 complaints per 100 properties was Swan Housing with 6.83 complaints. Swan have outlined that the high figure was due to 29 complaints related to one block where the lift was out of service.

4.3 Emergency and non-emergency repairs.

In quarter 3, Peabody Housing had the lowest percentage of emergency repairs completed within the allotted period (44.6%), followed by One Housing (77.93%), Tower Hamlets Council (75.6%), and Gateway Housing (82.05%). All other RPs (8) achieved over 90%, with 6 of the 8 achieving over 98.8%.

Four RPs achieved over 92% repairs on time. All other RPs completed over 75% of non-emergency repairs within the target timeframe in quarter 3, however, failed to get over 90% of non-emergency repairs complete on time. A contributing factor mentioned by Tower Hamlets Council could be some severe weather conditions that were experienced in the borough during this period.

Relets/ Voids and vacant units.

4.4 Standard Relets time/s.

London and Quadrant had the highest figure with 287 days for average relet time with Clarion also achieving a lengthy time for 1179 days for standard relets for quarter 3. London & Quadrant and Clarion also had similar figures in quarter 1 and quarter 2.

4.5 Major works

L&Q had the highest figure (316 days). All other RPs were under 126 days.

4.6 Vacant units

Tower Hamlets Council has the highest number of vacant units (111) in quarter 3, but also has the largest stock in the borough. Tower Hamlets reported that the figure reported here includes blocks being decanted, undergoing major works or block strengthening works as well as properties being used as temporary respite accommodation. One Housing has the second highest number of vacant units (58). 7 RPs have fewer than 10 vacant units in the borough.

Safety Checks.

4.7 Water Checks

L&Q did not submit any data for quarter 3. The landlord commented saying conducting the checks was challenging and they were not required by law to provide the information to the council. According to RPs in general, it can be challenging to enter properties frequently enough to carry out inspections as tenants may repeatedly decline admission or fail to remain home for scheduled site visits. Ten of the 12 RPs recorded 100% of homes have had all water checks, with Peabody with 99.8% and Tower Hamlets Council at 71.03%. In the commentary, Tower Hamlets mentioned that Performance here is reported against our policy of re-inspecting on a 3-yearly frequency. The current re-assessment programme runs until November 2024. The TSM checks are supplemented by other monthly and annual water safety checks.

4.8 Lift checks.

Five of the 12 RPs reported that 100% of lifts have had all necessary safety checks in quarter 3. 4 other RPs achieved over 94%. One Housing (89.7%), Gateway (89.19%) and Tower Hamlets Council (67.14) were the only exception to this. Within the commentary Tower Hamlets Council explained they carry out their own monthly inspections of all their lifts. The TSM relates to LOLER regulations with inspections carried out on LBTH's behalf by insurance inspection contractors, and until recently not monitored. Resources have now been identified to track and monitor the LOLER inspections. The figure reported here is as of 30th September 2023 as the LOLER regulations stipulate each lift should receive 2 inspections a year.

4.9 Fire Safety Risk Assessments

Nine RPs succeeded in reaching the goal of 100%, while Clarion, Gateway and Peabody achieved over 99.4%. Tower Hamlets Council achieved 93.6% but mentioned that 18 blocks had been inspected but they had not received the finalised reports at the time of reporting.

4.10 Gas checks

Six RPs reached the target of 100% compliance, while six others reached over 99% compliance. Only One Housing achieved below this (98.4%)

4.11 ASB cases

All RPs had fewer than 2 ASB cases per 100 properties. Tower Hamlets Council and Poplar HARCA had the most with 1.94 cases per 100. Eastend Homes (0.09) and Spitalfields (0.12) had the fewest.

5. Areas of progression

5.1 Decent homes

One Housing Riverside achieved a decent- homes rate of 100% This is an improvement from last quarter where 0.5% of their stock was still non-decent.

5.2 Emergency repairs

Notting Hill Genesis went from 96% of emergency repairs completed on time in quarter 2 to 100% in quarter 3. Eastend Homes went from 96% to 98.95%.

5.3 Non-emergency repairs

Poplar HARCA went from 98% to 99.25% of non-emergency repairs completed within the target timeframe.

5.4 Safety checks

Swan Housing went from 99% in quarter 2 to 100% in quarter 3 for both gas and water checks completed. Clarion went from 98% in asbestos checks to 100% and 99% in water checks to 100% in quarter 3.

Gateway also improved their figures for asbestos checks going from 99% compliance in quarter 2 to 100% compliance in quarter 3. One Housing went from 99% compliance in quarter 2 to 100% compliance in quarter 3 for fire safety checks.

5.5 Re-let times for standard re-lets and major works.

For major work re-let's, Tower Hamlets Community Housing were able to reduce the average number of days it takes to re-let a property by 20 days, going from an average on 53 days in quarter 2 to an average of 33 days in quarter 3.

For standard re-lets Gateway managed to reduce the average number of days by 5, going from 74 days in quarter 2 to 69 days in quarter 3.

Overall, there has been a decrease in the average waiting time for standard re-lets and major work re-lets across all RPs. From 67 days to 60 days for standard re-lets and from 97 days to 80 days for major work re-lets.

6. General updates

6.1 The Tenant Satisfaction Measures requires all RPs of social housing to collect and report annually on their performance on a core set of defined measures to provide tenants with greater transparency about their landlord's performance. The data provided by the RPs must meet the methodology set by the regulator and be one submission for all stock rather than be broken down by borough. Currently RPs are in the process of collating the measures for their first submission to the regulator who will thereon publish the results in Autumn 2024. The THHF partners will submit data as shown in the above indicator table (3.5) for the interim to the council and scrutiny board.

6.2 As the current Asset Management subgroup Chair leaves her position at One Housing, the subgroup will be seeking to appoint a new chair to lead the group for the forthcoming year.

7 Equalities implications

7.1 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.

8 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 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.

8.2 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.

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

8.4 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.

8.5 The percentage of tall buildings (over 18m) owned RPs 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.

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

9. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

9.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report which 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, including the Council's own housing stock.

10 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

10.1 This report is recommending that the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee review the performance of individual Social Landlords during quarter 3 of 2022-2023.

10.2 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.

10.3 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.

10.4 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.

10.5 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. Social landlords (including local authorities) are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. The Regulator sets the standards which providers of social housing must meet. The regulatory framework includes regulatory requirements; codes of practice in relation to certain standards and regulatory guidance in relation to the requirements and how they will be regulated. The Regulator has enforcement powers in relation

to consumer and economic standards; can carry out surveys and inspections of properties and can require a provider to prepare a performance improvement plan if certain conditions are not met or will not be met if no action is taken. The Regulator can also issue enforcement notices if a standard has been breached. The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 has also introduced new provisions to strengthen the respective roles of the Regulator and the Housing Ombudsman and improve the relationship between these bodies to ensure a more joined up approach to regulation and the handling of complaints.

- 10.6** 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.
- 10.7** 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

- Quarter 3 2023/4 Register Provider Performance Detail

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:** Mubin Choudhury – Performance Improvement Analyst (Strategy, Policy and Improvement)