

Tenant Board Meeting

Wednesday 26th November 2025

Attendees:

Liz Perryman	Tenant Board Member (Chair)
Gerry Crease	Tenant Board Member
Stella Morris	Tenant Board Member
Sara Szczepanski	Tenant Board Member
Tony Cole	Tenant Board Member
Kathy Nixon	Deputy Chief Executive
David White	Head of Housing Transformation and Regulation
Vicky Freer	Tenant Insight and Improvement Manager
Jez Robins	Housing Management Lead- Income and Sustainment
Georgia Mecoy	Tenant Engagement Co-ordinator
Kerry Lecomber	Tenant Engagement Co-ordinator
Cllr Ruth Hendry	Housing Portfolio Holder (Babergh)
Louise Bird	Community Housing Manager

Apologies

Cllr Winch, Paula Warren, Tim Riach

1. Declarations of interest

None

2. Action(s) from last meeting

- Remind Overview and Scrutiny members to speak clearly into microphones at meetings.
- Investigate and inform the Board around how the council tender for contracts and if they are rolling contracts. Officer from Procurement will join a future Board meeting. We are currently investigating training opportunities for the board around this

3. De-sheltered update (10 mins)

- Nationwide, there is a move from sheltered to independent schemes.
- This was brought closer due to the public subscription telephone network is being digitalised. All sheltered schemes would have needed new technology to continue having pull chords with an alarm system.
- Most schemes up for decommissioning were individual bungalows. High cost to put in new alarm systems, and a lot of the residents in these schemes were not using the daily call facilities.
- After we consulted with the residents, a report was sent to cabinet where there was a unanimous vote to decommission the 8 schemes.
- We had two briefing sessions for each council and actual decision was taken on the 11th November. The cabinet commented on how thorough the consultation with residents was.
- For residents going forward, each resident will be responded to in 28 days, there is a short questionnaire, on what this means for them and the support they might need. For example, moving to another sheltered scheme.
- Information will be shared on how to get a new personal alarm supplier. We will ensure we have assisted the tenants in every avenue we can, having 1-2-1 meeting with tenant.

- From the 1st April making sure Apello (our out of hours contact centre) are aware of the situation. We will also ensure allocations are not advertised as sheltered.
- Tenants service charges will reflect the new service they receive from April 2026

Questions

Liz: what will happen with the maintenance of communal gardens?

Jez: Communal areas will still be looked after as our other general needs communal areas. Communal lounges and laundry areas will need more work to understand how these are utilised.

David: We will be consulting with residents on what isn't communal alongside the work we are doing with public realm.

Gerry: One scheme was in the East Anglian Daily Times.

David: I don't think it's a bad thing, it's a way that people are sharing their voice. I believe we have given enough consultation to ensure we will be supporting residents going through this change.

4. Tenant Satisfaction Measures Mid Year Review 25/26

Slides were shared before the meeting, and Vicky Freer presented the update.

Repairs:

- 80% of homes meet the Decent Homes Standard; aiming for 100%. Any safety issues flagged were fixed immediately.
- Job management system shows more jobs completed and higher satisfaction.

Discussion:

- Liz asked why Babergh scores are lower than Mid Suffolk.
Vicky explained both areas have the same service, so reasons are unclear.
- Tony asked if dissatisfaction is about delays in repairs completed.
Vicky noted transactional scores are high (90+), but perception scores are lower- likely due to past experiences or booking delays. Changes take about 18 months to show impact.
- Kathy Nixon confirmed meetings with senior leaders and portfolio members are planned to address non decent homes.

Building Safety

- Nearly 100% of safety inspections completed.
- Gas checks are the highest ever achieved, exceeding targets.
- Tenant satisfaction with safety remains steady.
- Kathy stressed maintaining good performance is as important as improving it.

Customer Services

- Complaints and stage 2 escalations have decreased.
- Response times improved: 90% Babergh, 84% Mid Suffolk (target 85%).
- Complaint handling satisfaction remains low—common across the sector. Many tenants think they've raised a complaint when they have raised a service request.

- Positive trends: more tenants feel that they are treated fairly and with respect, possibly linked to the work around the Stop the Social Housing Stigma Campaign. “Listened and kept informed” scores also improved.

Discussion:

- Liz said complaint categories can be confusing. David explained this will be reviewed by the complaints task force. Wrong routing causes delays, issues only become complaints if we fail to act.

Neighbourhoods

- Less ASB and hate crime reported.
- Satisfaction with neighbourhood contribution has increased.
- Big difference in communal area satisfaction between Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

Discussion:

Kathy asked the Tenant Board why they think ASB satisfaction is low.

Liz said communication and managing expectations.

Gerry noted police involvement can slow progress.

David said better partnership working is needed.

Stella added tenants expect instant action, but building a case takes time, and some fear backlash from reporting evidence.

Overall Satisfaction

- Slight increase overall.
- Common themes: timeliness, responsiveness, listening and acting.
- Callback programme helps gather feedback and address urgent risks quickly.

Discussion:

- Liz raised frustration about promised callbacks not happening. David advised raising complaints so issues can be investigated. CRM improvements should help track actions.

5. Transactional Survey Mid Year Review 25/26

Key Areas

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB):

Satisfaction for “kept informed” has dropped to 29%. Other areas- ease of dealing, outcome, prompt acknowledgment, and time taken have also declined.

This may be due to the tenancy services restructure. Once ASB scrutiny recommendations are implemented, we expect improvement.

New Lettings:

Overall feedback is positive, but scores for staff helpfulness, being kept informed, and property condition at let have decreased. Our Voids contractor reviews these stats to identify improvements.

Repairs:

All tenants who have had a repair now receive a text with 5 quick questions.

If anyone scores below 7/10, they get a call-back to understand why.

Action: Tony raised concerns about poor communication regarding external staircases at Cavendish and Minden. David will escalate this to the Head of Housing Compliance.

Gas Transactional Survey:

Gas Transactional survey started recently which will monitor checking contractor accountability (e.g., showing ID, notifying of appointments). Immediate tenant feedback is being collected and will be reported in the next review.

Upcoming Surveys:

Electrical and planned maintenance surveys will launch soon, giving us more feedback in these areas.

7. Aids and Adaptations Survey

Survey carried out to inform the production of an Aids and Adaptation Procedure. We surveyed 200 people who had used the service within past 2 years. We received responses 51 answering questions on all aspects of process.

Key findings:

- 94% of respondents were satisfied with how long the process took
- 33% said the process was very simple, with 39% saying it was quite simple and 28% said it was complicated
- When asked about the Helpfulness of staff during application, 67% rated 5 stars, 23% rated 4 stars and 10% rated 1-3 stars.
- When asked about the helpfulness of the contractor, 80% rated 5 stars, 14% rated 4 stars and 6% rated 1-3

Suggestions for improvements to process

- Fourteen of the respondents reported that nothing could be done to improve, with a couple reporting it as being a very positive experience.
- There were mentions that the process was stressful and that perhaps part of the process should be making tenants aware of this in advance. However, the rest of the comments can be separated into themes:
 - Council process simplification
 - Better communication
 - Reduce waiting time
 - Check finished work
 - Accessibility enhancements

This report has been passed on to the Head of Housing Solutions to inform the new Aids and Adaptation Procedure.

8. Scrutiny Project - Communication

Communication scrutiny documents will be sent to all participants by the end of the week. This includes:

- 1x Complaint and complaint response
- 1x Email Chain
- 1x Live Chat
- 1x Call Transcript

All involved will need to complete a survey to give their views by the 17th December. Results will be shared with the Tenant Board in January, and at the board meeting we will discuss recommendations based off the data.

There is also the potential for an Ipswich Borough Council and East Suffolk Council meet up In February to discuss a county wide scrutiny project.

Action: results to be shared with the board prior to January meeting

9. Any other business

- Christmas meal – travel arrangements, please car share where possible
- Tenant Board 1-2-1's – please book in if you haven't already
- Annual Report to Tenants to be finalized in December
- Colchester Borough Homes meet up- 3rd December, 09:30-11:30 @ Endeavour House
- Christmas Meal- 10th December, 18:00 @ Last Anchor, Ipswich
- HQN inspection Briefing- 11th December, 18:00-19:30 on Teams

-----meeting closed 19:36-----