

## **National Consumer Standards Housing Regulatory Framework Self-Assessment and Gap Analysis**

**These standards apply to all registered providers. Providers' boards and councillors are responsible for ensuring their organisation meets the consumer standards. The regulator's role is limited to setting the consumer standards and intervening only where failure of the standard could lead to risk of serious harm to tenants (the 'serious detriment test').**

**This document lists all the elements of the four Consumer Standards and provides for each a performance 'position statement' and an independent assessment of the degree to which SBC is currently compliant**

**The independent assessment was based on a desktop review based on simple scans for key documents, both internal and external, Service Plans, the KPI Framework, and online information. The rationale for this was to simulate the accessibility to relevant information on the part of both residents and staff.**

## Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard

= Inadequate compliance with the standard      = Partial compliance and/or good prospects for improvement

= met to a satisfactory or higher degree

Required Outcome/Specific Expectation	Self Assessment 2016/17	RAG
<p>Registered providers shall provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants in the delivery of all standards.</p> <p>Registered providers shall provide tenants with accessible, relevant and timely information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how tenants access services</li> <li>• the standards of housing services their tenants can expect and how they are performing against those standards</li> <li>• the service choices available to tenants, including any additional costs that are relevant to specific choices</li> <li>• progress of any repairs work</li> <li>• how tenants can communicate</li> </ul>	<p>There are no resident information leaflets and information on the website is patchy. Whilst this has been factored into the review of policies and procedures, this area has not been a priority for the service. The customer services system is scripted and the scripts have been updated to ensure that information is up to date and correct. However, in general, residents are aware of how to access services and the MyCouncil approach appears to work fairly well.</p> <p>‘Specialist’ services such as Tenancy Sustainment and the Handyperson Service are promoted in the bi-monthly tenants’ newsletter, Streets Ahead. Officers are pro-active in referring residents to services to support them to sustain their tenancy.</p> <p>Following a tenant conference held in 2010, some basic service standards were developed which broadly reflect the Regulatory Framework. However these standards have not been updated nor published for tenants to understand what they can expect or how the service is performing against those standards.</p> <p>The council currently provides a standard cleaning specification across all of its housing blocks. It has discussed with resident representatives the potential for offering tiered services, with costs relative to the number of visits required or carried out. This is planned for implementation with the re-commission of estate services through the repairs and maintenance service. Additionally, the council will be offering tenants access to the repairs service partner’s workforce to carry out tenant-responsibility repairs. The cost of</p>	

<p>with them and provide feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the responsibilities of the tenant and provider</li></ul>	<p>using these services will be clearly set at the outset of the request. Additional services such as gas safety inspections, repairs and other maintenance/inspection visits will also be made available to leaseholders.</p> <p>There are no other services provided to tenants in addition to our standard housing management and tenancy support services.</p> <p>Fail. Residents are able to call Interserve to check the progress of any repairs work. This will be a feature of the re-commissioning of the repairs and maintenance service and the digital transformation programme. The new contract specification is explicit in that residents will be able to request information and have access to information through digital means. Residents will therefore be able to book and track repairs as well as being able to give feedback on their satisfaction with the service.</p> <p>The MyCouncil approach means that tenants are aware of how to communicate with Neighbourhood Services, although there is a level of dissatisfaction with residents being able to contact the correct person and/or having their calls returned. This was the subject of mystery shopping in 2015/16 which confirmed telephone communication as being problematic. The front of house and call centre are outsourced to Arvato. Neighbourhood Managers are in the process of developing an SLA with Arvato to drive improvement in these service areas.</p> <p>Tenants' right and responsibilities are published on the website and have also been published in the tenant newsletter, Streets Ahead. That said, the number and level of rechargeable repairs reported that are due to the tenant's wilful neglect or damage, would suggest that residents are not aware of their responsibilities. The introduction of re-charges in 2016/17 will aim to resolve this. The implementation of the new repairs module and a stronger rechargeable repairs process will be a priority for the new repairs, maintenance and investment Service Partner to focus on. This new process will ensure that any rechargeable repairs identified within a property, whether they are landlord or tenant responsibility, are checked to ensure they are completed to a satisfactory standard with tenancy enforcement action considered for those that are not attended to or for tenancies with regular damage or neglect to the property.</p>
---	--

	<p>The tenancy agreement is currently under review and is due to be completed in late 2017. The Tenants' Handbook is also significantly out of date and will be reviewed in 2016/17 to provide residents with the information they need to manage their tenancy.</p> <p><b>Actions</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Implement Mystery Shopping recommendations and Board monitor</b></li> <li><b>2. Consider how best to publicise information about the service including information leaflets and website</b></li> <li><b>3. Consider new set of service standards with resident input for Board and councillor approval</b></li> <li><b>4. Review Tenancy Agreement by end of 2017 for Board and councillor approval</b></li> <li><b>5. Review Tenants Handbook by April 2017 for Board and councillor approval</b></li> <li><b>6. R&amp;M Panel monitor impact of introduction of recharges</b></li> <li><b>7. Consideration of introduction of tiered services by set date</b></li> </ol>	
<p>Registered providers shall have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible, that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly</p> <p>Providers shall offer a range of ways for tenants to express a complaint and set out clear service standards for responding to complaints, including complaints about performance against the standards, and details of what to do if they are unhappy with the outcome of a complaint. Providers shall inform tenants how they use complaints to improve their services. Registered</p>	<p>Neighbourhood Services' follow the corporate complaints process up to Stage 2. Team Leaders respond to complaints at Stage 1 and Neighbourhood Managers review complaints and respond at Stage 2.</p> <p>At Stage 3 of the process, residents have the choice (in most cases) to have their complaint reviewed by the resident led Complaints Panel who are registered with the Ombudsman as the Designated Person in Slough. The Panel review the complaint and make recommendations to remedy the situation (where appropriate) or to uphold the Council's response prior to the complainant approaching the Ombudsman.</p> <p>Resident awareness and satisfaction with the complaints service has been consistently low, as demonstrated by feedback from the 2013 and 2014 resident satisfaction surveys. This is despite routinely meeting 100% of targets. In December 2014, residents completed a review of complaints to test the quality of the responses to see if this was the cause of the low satisfaction. Residents determined that the quality of responses was variable and, in some cases, very poor. Work therefore needs to be done to improve the quality of responses.</p>	

<p>providers shall publish information about complaints each year, including their number and nature, and the outcome of the complaints. Providers shall accept complaints made by advocates authorised to act on a tenant's/tenants' behalf.</p>	<p>A process is in place to ensure that learning from complaints is routinely shared and publicised to residents, however due to workload and changes in staff over the course of the year, the spreadsheet has not been updated to record quarter 4 complaints. Work to update the spreadsheet is currently underway and the process will be re-launched with the new managers as soon as this has been completed.</p> <p>Due to staffing issues, performance in relation to complaints has fallen considerably over the past 5 months. The situation is now being considered by the Strategic Director to determine a way forward.</p> <p><b>8. Introduce a new approach to complaints drawing on 2014 review and 2015 satisfaction survey results. NCP to monitor progress.</b></p>	
<p>Registered providers shall ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in:</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the formulation of their landlord's housing related policies and strategic priorities</li> </ul>	<p>In 2014, a dedicated resource was recruited to undertake a comprehensive review and redevelopment of all Neighbourhood Services' operational policies and procedures. This work is now underway and residents have been engaged and involved in the development and sign off of the over-arching policy document.</p> <p>In 2014/15, the Neighbourhood Services Transition Board approved the Gas Safety, Tenancy Management Policy and the Keeping Animals Policy which now bear the "Resident Approved" stamp.</p> <p>Residents have not been involved in the annual service planning process. This year, all plans had to set out actions and objectives based purely on achieving the council-wide 5 Year Plan, rather than service specific objectives.</p> <p>In terms of workstream priorities, these are very much led by legislation and regulation</p>	

	<p>as well as local pressures and demands. Residents are, however, involved in the re-commissioning of the repairs and maintenance service which is a strategic, longer term project.</p> <p><b>9. Involve residents in the annual service planning process</b>  <b>10. Cycle of policy and procedure reviews through Board and Panels</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the making of decisions about how housing related services are delivered, including the setting of service standards</li> </ul>	<p>The Panels and Board were involved in developing and approving the Slough Lettable Standard (for voids) and the Slough Standard for repairs, maintenance and investment services. A 'Resident Approved' stamp is used to indicate residents' approval and involvement.</p> <p>An area of weakness is the lack of engagement at a local level to determine service standards. This is being addressed through the re-commissioning of the repairs, maintenance and investment services where resident involvement and engagement is built into the governance arrangements of the new contract. This includes local Forums who will work with officers and the new Service Partner to determine local priorities and investment works. It is anticipated that the local Forums will set and monitor service standards and performance will then feed up to the resident Board and the appropriate Panel.</p> <p><b>11. Development of Local Forums alongside new Repairs and Maintenance contract</b>  <b>12. Terms of Reference for Local Forums to reflect route to Repairs and Maintenance Panel and Board</b>  <b>Also see 3 earlier</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the scrutiny of their landlord's performance and the making of recommendations to their landlord about how performance might be improved</li> <li>arrangements for tenant involvement and scrutiny</li> <li>supporting the formation and</li> </ul>	<p>The Resident Board, Repairs &amp; Maintenance Panel and the Neighbourhoods and Complaints Panel have been operating for 18 months now following the implementation of the revised approach to co-regulation and resident led scrutiny. Exception reporting is used (at residents' request) to highlight areas of concern and to prioritise training and agenda items. The division of service areas between the Panels has enabled residents to focus on aspects of the service without over-burdening them.</p> <p>The high level scrutiny of performance is working well. The Service Area Panels have</p>	

<p>activities of tenant panels or equivalent groups and responding in a constructive and timely manner to them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the provision of timely and relevant performance information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in a form which registered providers seek to agree with their tenants.</li> </ul>	<p>delegated authority to monitor performance and make recommendations for improvements which are then signed off by the Resident Board. Residents have chosen to receive exception reports to highlight areas of concern, however the full management Performance Reports are circulated at meetings should residents wish to see them. Reference is made to the full reports when presenting exception reports to familiarise residents with the reports and how to read/analyse them.</p> <p>In 2015/16, residents were made aware of a drop in performance relating to gas safety. They then worked with officers to review the approach to gaining access which resulted in a change in policy. Injunctions are now sought to gain access when it is denied and performance is now at 100%.</p> <p>The Board and Panels have access to the 'Service Improvement Team' which consists of 200+ tenants who have registered their e-mail address with the service as being interested in getting involved. In response to feedback from the annual satisfaction surveys, this approach allows residents to dip in and out of involvement activities without having to commit to attending meetings.</p> <p>It is envisaged that the Council will continue to develop digital media solutions to engaging with residents as part of its 'Digital Transformation' programme. In 2015/16, residents were able to test the quality of responses to complaints and carry out mystery shopping exercises to test Customer Service by communicating with the Council via e-mail.</p> <p>The over-arching tenant led group responsible for co-regulating and scrutinising the Council's landlord function is the Resident Board. The Board consists of tenants, leaseholders and the three Neighbourhood Managers and meets quarterly to monitor and oversee the work of the Service Area Panels. The Repairs &amp; Maintenance Panel consists of 5 leaseholders and 1 tenant and has delegated responsibility for scrutinising repairs and maintenance services. The Panel is currently scrutinising the capital works programme which is proving problematic. The Neighbourhood &amp; Complaints Panel scrutinises housing and neighbourhood management services. Both the Board and Panels are able to commission scrutiny activity (mystery shopping, quality testing) from</p>
---	---

	<p>the 'Service Improvement Team' which consists of 200+ residents who have registered their e-mail addresses with the service. The team receives regular e-newsletters promoting involvement activities as well as news on how their feedback has been used to improve services.</p> <p>Full management performance reports are made available to the Board and Panels who have chosen to receive exception reports highlighting areas of concern. Performance information is not routinely published in newsletters or the website, however members have asked that a Working Group be established to facilitate performance monitoring by members and residents. This idea was discussed at the recent Repairs &amp; Maintenance Panel meeting and residents were asked to volunteer to be a part of the Working Group, however there was little appetite for this on the night.</p> <p><b>13. Need for clear terms of reference for Board and Panels</b>  <b>14. Need for clarity around roles for new Working Group to monitor KPIs. May also be a conduit for Board to Councillors.</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supporting their tenants to exercise their Right to Manage or otherwise exercise housing management functions, where appropriate (the management of their homes, where applicable)</li> </ul>	N/A. No applications or expressions of interest were received from residents wishing to manage their own homes.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the management of repair and maintenance services, such as commissioning and undertaking a range of repair tasks, as agreed with landlords, and the sharing in savings made</li> </ul>	<p>The Repairs &amp; Maintenance Panel co-regulate and scrutinise the repairs, maintenance and investment services. They have recently received a report in terms of service issues relating to capital and investment works where officers have concerns. The current contract is a fixed-price contract, managed by Property Services whereby the contractor is paid the same amount each month regardless of the number of repairs undertaken. As such there has been no appetite to encourage residents to undertake their own repairs. Presently we are now in a period where we are looking to demobilise the current contractor whilst procuring a new Service Partner and contract. We have been in discussion (through Competitive Dialogue) regarding training and information for residents regarding their rights and responsibilities in terms of repair and improvements which will, potentially, be built into the new contract.</p>	



	<b>see 13. above</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>agreeing local offers for service delivery</li> <li>Registered providers shall consult with tenants on the scope of local offers for service delivery. This shall include how performance will be monitored, reported to and scrutinised by tenants and arrangements for reviewing these on a periodic basis.</li> </ul>	<p>Attempts at developing local offers were made in 2011, however the outcome merely replicated the Regulatory Framework and added in the corporate customer service targets.</p> <p>Area Panels were created in 2012/13 for the purpose of developing and monitoring local offers, however this was never clearly understood and, as such, the Panels failed.</p> <p>In 2016/17 Neighbourhood Forums will be created to offer residents the opportunity to influence service delivery locally. These arrangements have been built into the contract for the new Service Partner to deliver repairs, maintenance and investment services. Residents have been consulted and engaged in the procurement process and developing the specification for the new contract.</p> <p><b>see 13. above</b></p>	
<p>Registered providers shall treat all tenants with fairness and respect. Registered providers shall demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs.</p> <p>Registered providers shall demonstrate how they respond to tenants' needs in the way they provide services and communicate with tenants.</p>	<p>The 2015 annual satisfaction survey indicated that 73% of tenants and 72% of leaseholders felt that they are treated fairly and with respect. 28% of tenants and 30% of leaseholders indicated they were very satisfied that they were treated fairly and with respect whilst 7% of tenants and 6% of leaseholders were very dissatisfied with this aspect of the service. Our analysis of the quality of our response to complaints as well as learning from complaints will be used to drive improvement in this area.</p> <p>There are a range of language skills amongst officers to provide telephone or face to face translation and interpretation services for residents. There are no records of any requests from residents for written translation services, however the council has commissioned TheBigWord to provide these services if required.</p> <p>The council's website does not provide information in other languages, this must be requested by the person or their advocate. However, the website does contain information to help people with visual impairments to adjust their computer display.</p>	T L

Expectations in terms of translation and interpretation services is hazy. The latest guidance suggests minimising these services in order to encourage non-English speakers to learn to speak English, which is the general rule, however there are occasions when important information must be given and it would be impossible to do this without providing translation and interpretation services. Where this is the case, we have been able to meet these requirements in-house.

A pro-active approach is not taken to routinely producing information in different formats, eg large print. More could also be done to improve writing skills and to encourage the use of Plain English.

Previous attempts have been made at profiling residents, however recording and using the information has proved problematic. The CAPITA IT system does not flag up personal information that would assist in meeting this standard. Caution Before Contact markers are held on a corporate system, making the process somewhat disjointed.

Officers' awareness and understanding of residents is good on the whole. Residents with specific needs tend to be well known to officers who are then able to respond to their particular needs.

Equality Impact Assessments are not routinely used to mitigate the risk of actual or potential discrimination, however no complaints were received from residents who felt that they had been discriminated against.

Officers routinely adapt their approach to residents based on their individual needs. This can be evidenced through our response to complaints and, in particular, the service's response to a particular tenant who had complex health needs. The resident was fully supported to move out of their home and into hotel accommodation that could cater to her specific needs and supported throughout the process of repairing and cleaning her home to a very specific standard.

**15. Review current % of profiling and methods to improve this.**

	<b>16. Consider use of Equality Impact Assessments</b>		
Registered providers shall support their tenants to develop and implement opportunities for involvement and empowerment, including by:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supporting their tenants to exercise their Right to Manage or otherwise exercise housing management functions, where appropriate</li> </ul>	No applications or expressions of interest were received from residents who want to exercise their Right to Manage.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>providing support to tenants to build their capacity to be more effectively involved</li> </ul>	<p>The Board and Panels are working well and residents have attended training sessions to empower them to participate in discussions on the more technical aspects of housing management, eg Introductory Tenancies.</p> <p>Training and learning needs will now be factored into all involvement opportunities. Having officers as Subject Matter Experts on each of the Panels and the Board will support this aim. Training sessions are held prior to meetings to increase residents' understanding of the more technical aspects of housing management to enable them to participate in and understand discussions.</p> <p><b>17. Clear training plan in place, monitored by the Board.</b></p>		
Registered providers shall consult with tenants, setting out clearly the costs and benefits of options, if they are proposing to change their landlord or when proposing a significant change in their management arrangements.	Not applicable.		
Registered providers shall consult tenants at least once every 3 years on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the	The service carries out an annual satisfaction survey which has contained questions about involvement opportunities each year. The feedback has been used to trigger a review of the involvement framework which was redeveloped in 2014. This review also constitutes consultation.		

organisation's housing management service.		
Such provision must include the publication of an annual report which should include information on repairs and maintenance budgets	Annual Report published in Streets Ahead. 2 page version with very basic facts around service and size of Repairs and Maintenance budget. Adequate cover of requirement but some way behind the best Housing Association reports.	

## Neighbourhood & Community Standard

Registered providers shall keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes that they own clean and safe. They shall work in partnership with their tenants and other providers and public bodies where it is effective to do so.

Registered providers shall consult with tenants in developing a published policy for maintaining and improving the neighbourhoods associated with their homes. This applies where the registered provider has a responsibility (either exclusively or in part) for the condition of that neighbourhood. The policy shall include any communal areas associated with the registered provider's homes.

Cleaning services for blocks and communal areas are delivered by a combination of Interserve and the in-house caretaking service. The current caretaking standard was developed with resident representatives. It is intended to be displayed in each block, along with the attendance schedule and signing-in sheets; however, for a number of reasons this is not consistently in place in all blocks. Consultation about changes to the caretaking service, including changes to the delivery schedule and the caretaking and cleaning standard was carried out in February 2016. These changes were implemented in April 2016. Prior to these changes, satisfaction with the caretaking service was variable, with 71% of tenants indicating they are satisfied with the standard of the service, but only 54% of leaseholders agreed.

Estate inspections are carried out, but the frequency of these inspections is variable across teams and dependent on the weather/time of year. Whilst all front line staff are now trained in the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS), more needs to be done to improve the estate inspection regime. This will be picked up as part of the programme for reviewing and redeveloping the operational policy suite.

The Estate Services Policy is a considered and detailed policy but dates from 2012. It covers the basis for estate inspections (in KPIs), Health and Safety and monitoring.

The Neighbourhood & Community Panel was developed to address this gap. The creation of Neighbourhood Services was triggered by the increasing need to take a tenure blind approach to managing neighbourhoods that are now multi-tenure, largely due to the Right to Buy. This will also be factored into the programme of operational policy development.

**18. Display Caretaking standard in all blocks. Neighbourhood and Complaints Panel to monitor.**

	<b>19. Review estate inspection approach and Policy. Neighbourhood and Complaints Panel to monitor.</b>	
<p>Registered providers shall co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas where they own properties.</p> <p>Registered providers, having taken account of their presence and impact within the areas where they own properties, shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> identify and publish the roles they are able to play within the areas where they have properties</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> co-operate with local partnership arrangements and strategic housing functions of local authorities where they are able to assist them in achieving their objectives</li> </ul>	<p>We routinely work with a range of council colleagues, partners and third sector organisations to promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing. We work closely with the police and fire service, attending regular meetings to take a joined up approach to managing neighbourhoods. The Tenancy Sustainment Officers work with charities and third sector organisations to develop support packages for vulnerable residents.</p> <p>We work in partnership with Interserve to deliver free caretaking services to vulnerable residents.</p> <p>Following a period of high staff turnover, patch updates that include details of the staffing changes were published in the November edition of Streets Ahead (the residents' newsletter). The newsletter contains information about the role that Neighbourhood Services plays in areas where the Council owns properties.</p> <p>This is applicable to housing associations.</p>	
<p>Registered providers shall work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where they own homes.</p> <p>Registered providers shall publish a policy on how they work with relevant partners to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) in areas where they own properties.</p>	<p>As above. Neighbourhood Managers attend regular meetings with the police and fire service to tackle anti-social behaviour. This has become a particular problem at two of the tower blocks in the centre of Slough. A dedicated team was created to focus on managing these blocks and close links have been built with the police to respond to these issues.</p> <p>However, the 2014 satisfaction survey revealed that although just 63% of tenants and 54% of leaseholders being satisfied with our response to anti-social behaviour, 84% of tenants and 86% of leaseholders said that they felt safe in their neighbourhood.</p> <p>The Crime &amp; Policing Act introduced a raft of changes to the way that anti-social behaviour should/could be tackled in 2014. Dedicated resources are now in place to update and refresh the anti-social behaviour policies and procedures to ensure</p>	

In their work to prevent and address ASB, registered providers shall demonstrate:

- that tenants are made aware of their responsibilities and rights in relation to ASB strong leadership,
- commitment and accountability on preventing and tackling ASB that reflects a shared understanding of responsibilities with other local agencies
- a strong focus exists on preventative measures tailored towards the needs of tenants and their families
- prompt, appropriate and decisive action is taken to deal with ASB before it escalates, which focuses on resolving the problem having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available
- all tenants and residents can easily report ASB, are kept informed about the status of their case where responsibility rests with the organisation and are appropriately sign-posted where it does not.

that we comply with the new legislation and take effective and proportionate action to tackle anti-social behaviour. ASB Policy is up to date (July 2016) and covered by an impressive list of documents. Reviewed annually with Service standards, monitoring by staff and link to involvement strategy. ASB Manual also in place. Series of Fact Sheets covering legislation.

Streets Ahead is routinely used to publish information about the work of the Neighbourhood Teams in relation to ASB and enviro-crime. The Resident Board and Panels receive detailed information on ASB, including presentations from Thames Valley Police on crime and ASB hotspot mapping and the work of the Enforcement and Resilience Team.

The creation of Neighbourhood Services bringing housing and enforcement teams together demonstrates the commitment of senior managers to tackling anti-social behaviour. Service Plans clearly communicate our aim of supporting residents to be accountable and responsible for their behaviour. All tenants are asked to sign a Good Neighbour Agreement at the start of their tenancy.

Tenants are assessed at the start of their tenancy to identify any support needs. The use of Introductory Tenancies offers opportunities to provide support, where necessary or to take action to address any anti-social behaviour. The opportunity of extending the probationary period allows additional time for tenants to change their behaviour and sustain their tenancy.

The creation of Neighbourhood Services brought together housing and enforcement officers to embrace the full range of powers available to the council to respond to anti-social behaviour. All officers have achieved a BTech Level 5 qualification in managing anti-social behaviour and focus on early intervention to resolve problems before they escalate.

Neighbourhood Services are responsible for monitoring the Anti-Social Behaviour Hotline and responding to Community Triggers. Residents are not always kept as informed as they would like whilst cases are being managed. This may be for a

	<p>variety of reasons, including Data Protection issues or service failure.</p> <p><b>20.ASB Policy 2017 review for Neighbourhood and Complaints Panel input and Board approval.</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of support to victims and witnesses</li> </ul>	<p>The Tenancy Sustainment Service offers support to victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour. Additional security measures are routinely offered to victims, eg fire proof letter boxes and panic buttons. Managers and officers work with the police and other agencies to ensure that appropriate support is given to victims and witness and that information is shared to support this.</p>	

## Tenancy Standard

<p>Registered providers shall let their homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way. They shall take into account the housing needs and aspirations of tenants and potential tenants. They shall demonstrate how their lettings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> make the best use of available housing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> are compatible with the purpose of the housing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> contribute to local authorities' strategic housing function and sustainable communities</li> </ul> <p>There should be clear application, decision-making and appeals processes.</p> <p>Registered providers shall publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions, and tackling tenancy fraud, and set out:</p>	<p>An updated Tenancy Management Policy was implemented in 2015 and all officers received training (or an overview depending on their role). The policy document (not the detailed procedures) was approved by the Neighbourhood &amp; Complaints Panel and then ratified by the Board. Resident approved document.</p>	
--	---	--



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The type of tenancies they will grant</li> </ul>	<p>The Tenancy Strategy clearly sets out the type of tenancies we will grant. All new tenants are offered a 12 month Introductory Tenancy which, if completed satisfactorily, will convert to a 5 year, fixed term tenancy. Transferring tenants will be offered tenancies in line with legal requirements. The tenancy agreement is currently being reviewed and updated to reflect emerging legislation arising from the Housing &amp; Planning Act 2016.</p> <p><b>21. Review tenancy agreement for approval by the Neighbourhood &amp; Complaints Panel and then ratified by the Board</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where they grant tenancies for a fixed term, the length of those terms</li> </ul>	<p>New tenants are given a letter setting out the terms of their fixed term tenancy at sign-up. However it is unclear whether or not they understand the type of tenancy they have been granted.</p> <p><b>22. Check new tenants awareness of terms of fixed term tenancy during new tenancy visits. Neighbourhood and Complaints Panel to monitor.</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The circumstances in which they will grant tenancies of a particular type.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any exceptional circumstances in which they will grant fixed term tenancies for a term of less than five years in general needs housing following any probationary period.</li> </ul>	<p>The tenancy strategy sets out the circumstances under which we will grant a 2 year fixed term.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The circumstances in which they may or may not grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term</li> </ul>	<p>5 Year Flexible Tenancies were introduced in 2014 when all new tenants were given a 12 month Introductory Tenancy. The new fixed term tenancies will expire in 2019, whilst the policy and procedures for managing fixed term tenancies</p>	

	<p>when they expire is in place, further training will need to be delivered to ensure that officers are aware of how to manage the process.</p> <p><b>23. Begin process for policy and procedures for managing fixed term tenancies in 2017. Neighbourhood and Complaints Panel to monitor.</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The way in which a tenant or prospective tenant may appeal against or complain about the length of fixed term tenancy offered and the type of tenancy offered, and against a decision not to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term</li> </ul>	See 23.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Their policy on taking into account the needs of those households who are vulnerable by reason of age, disability or illness and households with children, including through the provision of tenancies which provide a reasonable degree of stability</li> </ul>	<p>Information is regularly published in the residents' newsletter, Streets Ahead, to promote tenancy sustainment and services available to vulnerable residents. Vulnerability criteria are set to provide clarity on eligibility criteria for these services.</p> <p><b>24. An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out as part of the policy review process. Neighbourhood and Complaints Panel to monitor.</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>their policy on granting discretionary succession rights, taking account of the needs of vulnerable household members</li> </ul>	We do not grant discretionary successions, however we will take the opportunity to fully assess failed successor's housing options.	
Registered providers must grant general needs tenants a periodic secure or assured (excluding periodic assured shorthold) tenancy, or a tenancy for a minimum fixed term of five years or exceptionally, a tenancy for a minimum fixed term of no less than two years, in addition to any probationary tenancy period.	This is our policy in relation to Flexible (fixed term) tenancies.	
Before a fixed term ends, registered providers shall provide notice in writing to the tenant stating either that they propose to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the existing fixed term or	We are currently testing our IT system to make sure that it prompts officers to take action at this trigger point. The first Flexible (fixed term) tenancy will not reach this trigger point	

that they propose to end the tenancy.	until 2019. This is a risk for the service that we are looking to mitigate.	
Where registered providers use probationary tenancies, these shall be for a maximum of 12 months, or a maximum of 18 months where reasons for extending the probationary period have been given and where the tenant has the opportunity to request a review.	<p>We currently offer 12 month Introductory Tenancies to new tenants, however we are aware that we have not always managed these well. The new Tenancy Management Policy was introduced in 2015 and sets out clear procedures for managing Introductory Tenancies. The policy is currently being reviewed to reflect legislation emerging from the Housing &amp; Planning Act 2016.</p> <p><b>See 21. above</b></p>	
Where registered providers choose to let homes on fixed term tenancies (including under Affordable Rent terms), they shall offer reasonable advice and assistance to those tenants where that tenancy ends.	This won't be tested until the first Flexible (fixed term) tenancies reach the trigger point in 2019.	
Registered providers shall make sure that the home continues to be occupied by the tenant they let the home to in accordance with the requirements of the relevant tenancy agreement, for the duration of the tenancy, allowing for regulatory requirements about participation in mutual exchange schemes.	<p>A dedicated Fraud Officer responds to all concerns or suspicions of unlawful sub-letting and takes appropriate action to regain possession of properties where it is proved to be unlawfully occupied. Neighbourhood Services subscribes to Homeswapper to support residents who want to move to mutually exchange their tenancy. However, resident satisfaction with the way that we manage exchanges remains low.</p> <p>A fraud hub service is in place with Call Credit in order to proactively check for fraud and subletting. Mutual Exchange policy dates from 2012 and is out of date.</p> <p><b>25. Review Mutual Exchange policy. Neighbourhood and Complaints Panel to monitor.</b></p>	
Registered providers shall develop and provide services that will support tenants to maintain their tenancy and prevent	The Tenancy Sustainment Service was introduced in 2011 and resources increased in 2012. The service was enhanced	

unnecessary evictions.	in 2013 with the introduction of a free handyperson service for vulnerable residents. We also offer assisted gardening and decorating services to vulnerable residents. The service was reviewed in 2015 and recommendations made to the Head of Neighbourhood Service as to potential changes that could be made, including the recruitment of additional resources to support private tenants and the Income Recovery Team.	
Registered providers shall grant those who were social housing tenants on the day on which section 154 of the Localism Act 2011 came into force and have remained social housing tenants since that date, a tenancy with no less security where they choose to move to another social rented home, whether with the same or another landlord. (This requirement does not apply where tenants choose to move to accommodation let on Affordable Rent terms).	We fully comply with this, however this will change as details of the Housing & Planning Act legislation emerge.	
Registered providers shall grant tenants who have been moved into alternative accommodation during any redevelopment or other works a tenancy with no less security of tenure on their return to settled accommodation.	We are in the process of decanting two tower blocks in Central Slough with a view to redeveloping the land. The process has seen all secure tenants being moved to new, secure, tenancies. Lessons learned from any complaints received in relation to the decant process, will be collated once the blocks are empty.	
Registered providers shall co-operate with local authorities' strategic housing function, and their duties to meet identified local housing needs. This includes assistance with local authorities' homelessness duties, and through meeting obligations in nominations agreements Registered providers shall develop and deliver services to address under-occupation and overcrowding in their homes, within the resources available to them. These services should be focused on the needs of their tenants, and will offer choices to them. Registered providers' published policies shall include how they		

<p>have made use of common housing registers, common allocations policies and local letting policies. Registered providers shall clearly set out, and be able to give reasons for, the criteria they use for excluding actual and potential tenants from consideration for allocations, mobility or mutual exchange schemes.</p> <p>Registered providers shall provide tenants wishing to move with access to clear and relevant advice about their housing options</p>		
<p>Registered providers shall enable their tenants to gain access to opportunities to exchange their tenancy with that of another tenant, by way of internet-based mutual exchange services. Registered providers shall subscribe to an internet based mutual exchange service (or pay the subscriptions of individual tenants who wish to exchange), allowing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a tenant to register an interest in arranging a mutual exchange through the mutual exchange service without payment of a fee</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> the tenant to enter their current property details and the tenant's requirements for the mutual exchange property they hope to obtain</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> the tenant to be provided with the property details of those properties where a match occurs</li> </ul> <p>Registered providers shall ensure the provider of the internet based mutual exchange service to which they subscribe is a signatory to an agreement, such as HomeSwap Direct, under which tenants can access matches across all (or the greatest practicable number of) internet based mutual exchange services. Registered providers shall take reasonable steps to publicise the availability of any mutual exchange service(s) to which it subscribes to its tenants.</p> <p>Registered providers shall provide reasonable support in using the service to tenants who do not have access to the internet</p>		

Registered providers shall develop and deliver allocations processes in a way which supports their effective use by the full range of actual and potential tenants, including those with support needs, those who do not speak English as a first language and others who have difficulties with written English	See earlier section of diversity	
Registered providers shall minimise the time that properties are empty between each letting. When doing this, they shall take into account the circumstances of the tenants who have been offered the properties.	<p><b>Voids process</b> is covered by a two-page diagram. No policy and procedures.</p> <p><b>26. Voids process to be updated with the Neighbourhood and Complaints Panel.</b></p>	
Registered providers shall record all lettings and sales as required by the Continuous Recording of Lettings (CORE) system.	No evidence as yet.	

# Home Standard

Registered provider shall:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard</li> </ul> <p>Registered providers may agree with the regulator a period of noncompliance with the Decent Homes Standard, where this is reasonable. Providers shall ensure their tenants are aware of the reasons for any period of non-compliance, their plan to achieve compliance and then report on progress delivering this plan</p>	<p>The Decent Homes programme was completed in 2012. All council owned homes now meet that standard. However, it is acknowledged that the Decent Homes Standard is very basic, however our investment works programme will continue to improve the quality of homes and neighbourhoods</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>meet the standards of design and quality that applied when the home was built and were required as a condition of publicly funded financial assistance, if these standards are higher than the Decent Homes Standard</li> </ul>	<p>A full Stock Condition Survey is currently underway and due to conclude in January 2017. The outcome of the survey will be used to update the HRA Business Plan and inform repair, maintenance and investment priorities ahead of the commencement of the new contract.</p> <p><b>27. Stock condition survey report to Neighbourhood and Complaints Panel? in January 2017.</b></p> <p><b>28. Implications of survey on HRA Business Plan to be discussed with Board in 2017.</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in agreeing a local offer, ensure that it is set at a level not less than these standards and have regard to section six of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance</li> </ul>	<p>Local offers will be developed once the Service Area Panels and Resident Board are confident that they have a good understanding of current performance against the regulatory standards, together with the outcome of the Stock Condition Survey.</p> <p><b>29. Local offers to be part of Local Forum remit.</b></p>	
Registered providers shall:		

<p>provide a cost effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of and offers choices to tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time</p> <p>Registered providers shall ensure a prudent, planned approach to repairs and maintenance of homes and communal areas. This should demonstrate an appropriate balance of planned and responsive repairs, and value for money. The approach should include: responsive and cyclical repairs, planned and capital work, work on empty properties, and adaptations.</p>	<p>The payment mechanism built into the new contract will introduce a performance related payment method. Residents will be able to influence this by completing satisfaction surveys.</p>	
<p>meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes</p>	<p>KPIs monitored by Resident Board. Also in Repairs and Maintenance Terms of Reference.</p> <p><b>Health and Safety Policy</b> is covered by the Health and Safety Policy Statement from 2011, one page and out of date and the Health and Safety Policy from 2013, due for review October 2015.</p> <p><b>Fire Safety</b> is handled by Property Services Team which is a different Directorate. There are 300 fire risk assessment reports. KPIs show 100% in-date fire assessment report. Neighbourhood Services will be procuring the new contract and ensure central records</p> <p><b>Gas Safety Policy</b> is in date and resident approved. Comprehensive and shows enforcement powers.</p> <p><b>30. Review Health and Safety Policy as matter of urgency.</b></p>	



Registered providers shall co-operate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets tenants' needs.	<p><b>Aids and Adaptations</b> policy is loosely captured in a Service Level Agreement 2011/21 between Slough Council and the Slough Home Improvement Agency.</p> <p><b>31.Review Aids and Adaptations Policy for Neighbourhood and Complaints Panel consideration and Board approval.</b></p>	