Public Document Pack

Solihull Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Strategic Topic

Substantive Items

Committee Reports

Items below this line are for receipt and/or approval, without discussion

Closing Items

SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

BOARD MEETING

Monday 20 February 2023 at 6.00 pm
Endeavour House - Meriden Drive, Kingshust

AGENDA

Ref	Item	Purpose	Lead	Report Type	Report Classification
1	Chair's Welcome and Introduction				
2	Apologies for Absence				
3	Declarations of Interest				
4	Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2022				
5	Action Log				
6	Chief Executive's Update	Fiona Hughes – Chief Executive			
7	Delivery Plan for 2023/24	Martyn Sargeant – Executive Director of Customer Service Transformation and Business Support			
8	Quarter 3 2022/23 Health & Safety Report	Mark Wills – Health, Safety and Risk			

		Manager			
9	Quarter 3 2022/23 Financial Monitoring and Budget Setting for 2023/24	Sam Gilbert – Chief Financial Officer			
10	2023/24 Budget Update	Sam Gilbert – Chief Financial Officer			
11	Chair's Report From Housing Operations Committee Meetings held on 14 November 2022 and 6 February 2023	Phil Hardy – Chair of Housing Operations Committee			
12	Chair's Report from Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 12 December 2022	Mark Thrasher – Chair of Audit and Risk Committee			
13	Chair's Report from Building Safety Task and Finish Group Meeting held on 23 January 2023	Richard Hyde – Chair of Board			
14	Asset Management Strategy	Mike Brymer – Interim Executive Director of Asset Management and Development			
15	Safeguarding, Exploitation and Domestic Abuse Annual Plan	Carol Trappett – Head of Housing and Neighbourhoods			
16	Quarter 3 2022/23 Performance Exception Report	Martyn Sargeant – Executive Director of Customer Service Transformation and Business Support			
17	Forward Plan				
18	Any Other Business				

19	Review of Meeting				
1					
2					

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SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2022

ENDEAVOUR HOUSE

Present: Andrew Kinsey Solicitor to the Council – SMBC

In attendance: Richard Hyde, Nigel Page, April Halpin, Louise Tubbs, Bernie Donnelly, Gail Sleigh, Mark Thrasher, Dave Pinwell

Officers: Fiona Hughes, Martyn Sargeant, Mike Brymer, Carol Trappett, Sam Gilbert, Mark Wills, Alison Clark-Williams, Mary Moroney, Barbara Griffiths (Minutes)

Apologies: Phil Hardy, Mary Morrissey

Annual General Meeting was opened at 6 pm

Andrew Kinsey Solicitor to the Council opened the Annual General Meeting and informed members he was in attendance as the Council's representative to share the views of the shareholder. All items on the agenda were accepted.

DECISION **The Shareholder**

(i) RECEIVED the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022.

(ii) APPOINTED the Auditors, RSM UK Audit LLP and to authorise the Board to fix their remuneration.

(iii) APPOINTED Phil Hardy and Mark Thrasher as Independent Board Members for first term of office (period of three years from the AGM – this being the first AGM since appointment at end of July 2022).

The Annual General Meeting was closed at 6.04 pm.

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SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD MEETING – 08 NOVEMBER 2022
MINUTES

Present: Richard Hyde (Chair), Nigel Page, April Halpin, Louise Tubbs, Dave Pinwell, Bernie Donnelly, Gail Sleigh, Mark Thrasher

Officers: Fiona Hughes, Martyn Sargeant, Mike Brymer, Alison Clark-Williams, Mary Moroney, Mark Wills, Carol Trappett, Sam Gilbert, Barbara Griffiths (Minutes)

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Richard updated the Board on the sad news that Ben Burton had died. The Board stood for a moment of reflection. The Chair has written to Ben's widow.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received for Phil Hardy and Mary Morrissey.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no new declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 25 JULY 2022

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

DECISION THE BOARD

(i) APPROVED the minutes of the meeting held 25 July 2022

5. ACTION LOG

The Action log was noted.

DECISION THE BOARD

(i) NOTED the action log

6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE UPDATE

Collaborative work with the Council continues around the Asset Management Strategy (AMS), with a joint corporate workshop, attended by Richard and Phil looking at the performance of stock and modelling. There will be further corporate workshops including one specifically around high-rise buildings. The Chair advised members of discussions with Nick Page around the long-term future of high-rise blocks. Fiona confirmed that this will form part of the discussion at a future meeting and confirmed that the Council's Chief Executive will be invited to attend.

The installation of sprinklers is going well and work to install Spandrel panels will commence 2023. In terms of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors the

installations should be completed by the end of December 2022. As a result of which, the Executive Team have made a decision that we are not required to make a self-referral to the regulator.

Concerns were noted about regulatory changes and the difficulty in committing expenditure to projects when legislation is continually evolving, in particular around building safety requirements.

DECISION

(i) **NOTED** the contents of the report

(ii) **NOTED** the scheduled timescale for completion of the main programme of works for the installation of smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detection and that ELT have confirmed they will not be making a self-referral to the Regulator.

7. QUARTER 2 2022/23 FINANCIAL MONITORING

The revenue overspend has come down by £10k during the period. The projected overspend is largely due to three factors, the agreed pay increase, extra biomass costs and for increased electricity costs in communal areas. These cost pressures will be funded from the budget strategy reserves.

The Capital underspend is due to two main areas, the Spandrel installation not having commenced and the stock growth element of the Kingshurst Village regeneration. We will have to revisit the HRA capital budgets and will go back to cabinet in December.

Sam asked Board to agree an extension to approve the external audit contract for one further year. She explained that there were concerns about the performance of the auditors in terms of timeliness of report production but given the length of time to retender the contract and the shortage of auditors it is considered the best option to retain RSM.

DECISION

(i) **NOTED** the revenue and capital forecast to the year end for the current financial year 2022/23.

(ii) **NOTED** the current and forecast reserves position.

(iii) **APPROVED** an extension to the External Audit contract for 2023.

8. BUDGET 2023/24

This item is confidential and therefore minutes will be recorded in the confidential section.

9. DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN FOR 2023/24

Martyn introduced the report following on from the work that was carried out during the away day in October. The proposed timetable for approving the Delivery Plan was set out in section 4 of the report. The appendices provide more information about how we might prioritise one objective over another which includes a table setting out where we have statutory or regulatory duties and including customer and Council priorities. It was noted that tenant priorities broadly match those of Board and ELT.

Concerns were raised about the KPIs and the balance between stretch targets and being achievable, particularly in terms of the arrears and void targets. Fiona accepted the point made particularly in terms of arrears, given the current economic climate. Due to the need to confirm KPIs by February Fiona suggested further discussion outside of the meeting before recirculating to Board members.

DECISION

(i) **APPROVED** the timetable for the preparation of the 2023-24 Delivery Plan.
(ii) **APPROVED** the final themes for the Delivery Plan.
(iii) **APPROVED** the proposed priorities for 2023-24.
(iv) **APPROVED** the key performance indicators and associated targets for 2023-24 subject to consideration of comments made by Board members during the meeting.

10. HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT – QUARTER 2 JULY – SEPTEMBER 2022

Smoke and carbon detection regulations are now in force set out in item 4 of the report. There will be secondary regulations to the Building Safety Act introduced over the next couple of years and Board members were urged to use the links in the report to obtain more insight.

Mark drew members' attention to the information contained on page 119 of the pack setting out the Health and Safety Action Plan covering workforce employees and in particular the reference to the Hazard Warning Marker system and an example of the improvements being made.

Appendix 1 of the pack is the new Corporate Health and Safety Policy for SCH which has been out for extensive consultation with staff, managers and trade unions. Mark highlighted a minor amendment to reporting structure as per the CEO update in terms of staffing restructures.

Accident and incident data is contained within Section 16 with a very slight increase this quarter, no RIDDOR reportable incidents involving staff during this period. One incident of note is an attack on a member of staff whilst carrying out OOH visit, the detail is contained within Section 17.

Mike Brymer gave an overview of Building Health and Safety, advising that review of Fire Risk Assessments for low rise blocks has been carried out with a competency rating of 2. Further detailed FRAs for Quarter 3 are underway.

It was agreed that the two tables within the policy on pages 129 and 132 of the pack, would be amended to indicate that the CEO has the overall responsibility for Health and Safety.

In terms of Gas Safety non-compliance, we do not prioritise non-compliance in high rise buildings over other property types as all non-compliance is considered a priority. It was confirmed that there is no legal requirement for leaseholders to have an annual gas service carried out unless they sublet the property. We will look at whether the lease agreement can be amended and possibly offer gas servicing to leaseholders at a reduced cost.

DECISION

(i) **NOTE** the contents of this report.
(ii) **NOTE and APPROVE Appendix 1** – SCH Health and Safety Policy.
(iii) **NOTE Appendix 2** - Report on SCH Compliance with the Home Standard Duty.
(iv) **NOTE Appendix 3** - Accident/Incident Reporting Analysis Q2 2022/23.

11. NFH CODE OF GOVERNANCE COMPLIANCE

Fiona confirmed that we are not obliged to comply with the National Housing Federation Code of Governance but have chosen to do so.

DECISION

(i) **NOTED** the results of the self-assessment against the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance

12. CHAIR'S REPORT FROM HOUSING OPERATIONS COMMITTEE HELD 12 SEPTEMBER 2022

There were no questions or comments arising from the report.

DECISION

(i) **NOTED** the matters considered by the Committee

13. CHAIR'S REPORT FROM AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE HELD 10 OCTOBER 2022.

Mark asked the Board to endorse the recommendations considered by the Committee. He confirmed that he is working with Mary to reschedule the times of the meetings going forward.

DECISION

(i) **NOTED** the actions taken by the Committee

14. CHAIR'S REPORT FROM HUMAN RESOURCES, EQUALITIES AND REMUNERATION COMMMITEE HELD 17 OCTOBER 2022

Louise confirmed that the Committee was advised of progress against the mandatory training which is going well. The Committee considered and approved a policy around support available to staff suffering a loss of pregnancy.

DECISION

(i) **NOTED** the matters considered by the Committee.

15. KINGHSURST VILLAGE CENTRE

Noted without discussion.

DECISION

(i) **NOTED** SCH's role as Development Manager and progress to date.

16. PERFORMANCE EXCEPTION REPORT

Noted without discussion, the Chair advised that this report is below the line as it is going to be considered at the next Housing Operations Committee.

DECISION

(i) **NOTED** those indicators, and the associated narrative, where the target performance has not been achieved.

17. BOARD FORWARD PLAN

Noted without discussion.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 20 February 2023

The meeting ended at 20.05

Signed by chair: ……Date: ……..….

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Solihull Community Housing Board Action Log

Green = completed and will be removed from next log and a record is kept by the Governance Team
Amber = in progress due to be completed by due date
Red = not completed or unlikely to be completed by due date

1. Actions outstanding / pending / in progress

Ref	Action	Responsible Person	Due Date	Comments	Status
1122-1	Tenants Conference suggestions, Board members requested these are shared with them	Martyn Sargeant	February 2023	Draft agenda shared with Board members 13 February 2023	
1122-2	ELT to hold discussions around DP KPI's and discuss with Chair	Fiona Hughes	December 2022	KPI's updated – included in Delivery Plan Report	
1122-3	Changes required to Health & Safety Policy diagrams to include CEO separately within the structure	Mark Wills	November 2022	Updated in final version	
1122-4	Contact Legal Services to determine whether leases can be amended to include the leaseholders to prove annual gas service is undertaken.	Mike Brymer	January 2023	Legal Services have been approached for advice on changing the lease for future sales to include a new covenant about gas safety inspections. Legal opinion has also been sought on feasibility of retrospectively amending leases for properties sold previously.	
1122-5	Budget assumptions 2023/24, further	Sam Gilbert	December 2022	Budget Report on agenda February 2023	

	discussions required if assumptions are way off actuals following rent increase and benefit announcements				

SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

BOARD MEETING: MONDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2023

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Chief Executive's Update

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report sets out key areas of progress delivered through the Chief Executive since the last Board meeting and provides an update to the Board.

2. Recommendation – Item for Noting

2.1 The Board is recommended to:

(i) **NOTE** the content of the report.

3. Executive Team and Organisational Structure

3.1 Board will be aware that there has been an ongoing restructure of the Executive Team and this has included bringing together the Housing and Asset Management operational areas of business under a single Executive Director Operations. In addition, a senior head of service role has been introduced for the roles of Head of Asset Management and Development and Head of Housing. In addition, two new Heads of Service have been introduced - Head of Customer Experience and Head of Building Safety. The two driving principles underpinning the restructure have been:

- integration of Asset Management and Housing to allow greater collaboration across these operational areas of business and improved customer outcomes
- increasing resilience and range in the Executive Team to enable better organisational decision making

A structure chart is included at Appendix 1.

3.2 As we have concluded the Executive Team restructure, we have launched service level restructures which have been designed to deliver the following:

- an approach to tenancy management based on functional specialisms
- a community safety approach to anti-social behaviour and estate services including harm reduction, through more intensive management of complex cases relating to safeguarding, exploitation and domestic abuse

- an integrated approach to home options including the housing allocations function
- a focus on building safety through the creation of a building safety team led by building safety managers
- Increase resilience and capacity within the Responsive Repairs Service to focus on customer service including an improved response to damp and mould
- Creating greater capacity to focus on the strategic asset management challenges regarding decarbonisation and future investment of the housing stock
- a more strategic approach to customer experience through alignment of customer contact, engagement, complaints and service improvement – in particular to prepare for regulation and an evidential link between our customer perception and improving service delivery

3.3 The detail and progress with service level restructures has been reported to Housing Operations Committee and is included in the Housing Operations chair's report.

4. Quarterly Monitoring Board (QMB)

4.1 QMB will be held on 15 February 2023 and the SCH organisational performance dashboard will be presented and is attached at Appendix 2. Full papers are available on request.

5. Strategic Housing Board

5.1 Board will be aware that SMBC has established a Strategic Housing Board which is chaired by the Director of Economy and Infrastructure (Mary Morrissey), and which has a remit to oversee the strategic direction of the provision of housing across the borough. At its last meeting on 30 January, the board considered a report from the SCH Chief Executive about the Housing Delivery Model in Solihull and this report is attached at Appendix 3 for information. Board are asked to note that all recommendations in the report were agreed.

5.2 Other key reports considered at the meeting were:

- the final draft of the Housing Strategy for Solihull
- a paper setting out the approach to the housing of refugees which included the recommendations set out in section 10 below.

6. Staff Conference

6.1 Our next staff conference is planned for 19 April, to take place at the National Conference Centre. All staff and Board members are invited. This will be the first conference for a number of years and the focus will be on both wellbeing,

recognising the difficulties of the recent period and how they have impacted staff, and looking ahead to the challenges on the horizon, including significant regulatory reform, building safety priorities and continuing to improve the customer experience. More details will be circulated to Board members over the coming weeks.

7. Damp and Mould

7.1 The death of Awab Ishak, partially caused by prolonged exposure to damp and mould, should never have happened and all social landlords have been required by the social housing regulator to provide data on the incidence of damp and mould in our stock as well as our approach to treating and eradicating it.

7.2 In terms of the incidence across our stock the table below provides the headlines:

	Number	Completed
Housing Health and Safety Rating System cases involving damp and mould	532 Inspections completed	33 Involving damp and mould
Legal Disrepair cases involving damp and mould	68	52
Inspections raised in response to damp and mould report (12 months to end January 2023)	1,082	826
Repairs raised in response to damp and mould (September 2022)	983	520

7.3 At SCH our approach to addressing damp and mould has focussed on encouraging maximum reporting and visibility of the problem and has included the following:

- consolidating our data
- communication campaign to residents to encourage reporting
- joint work with public health to inform front line health workers (through written briefing and webinar) how to report and identify damp and mould in both social housing and other tenure types
- increased resourcing of the response team in asset management
- submission of return to social housing regulator
- improving communication messages to residents.

8. Kingshurst Village Centre – Regeneration

8.1 Board members will be aware of the regeneration project which SCH and SMBC are leading along with other partners from the health sector. Like many other development projects, there have been significant pricing and cost challenges associated with the delivery of the project and the development team are currently reviewing delivery options.

9. Preparing for Regulation

9.1 Over the last two years, the Regulator of Social Housing and the government have undertaken preparatory work leading towards changes in the regulatory regime for social housing. In particular, this has focused on:

- Changes to the requirements around consumer standards, including proposals to implement a new assurance regime, which is expected to involve an element of inspection.
- Tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs), intended to enable tenants to better understand how their landlord is performing against a set of national benchmarks.
- Increasing professionalisation of the housing sector, supporting employees to develop their skills and qualifications.

9.2 As the landlord, the council is the body which will be regulated and it will therefore be important, to ensure assurance arrangements are in place across the council and SCH. This will be the subject of further reports to the Board in due course, and a small project team will report to SCH Executive Leadership Team (ELT) on regular progress. The Board will be aware of increased regulatory oversight of building safety matters, which is part of the wider operating context for both the council and SCH.

9.3 Key pieces of work over next quarter include:

- Analysis of compliance with consumer standards.
- Continued refinement of the TSM methodology to ensure compliance.
- Development of benchmarking (as more data becomes available) to understand comparative performance.
- Analysis of organisational development priorities against the professional standards (dependent on resourcing, subject to recruitment).
- Review of policies and procedures.

10. Refugee Housing

10.1 In response to the challenge of housing refugee groups, government has made available additional funding by way of support. SCH has worked in

partnership with SMBC to identify opportunities including under-utilised housing stock:

- Four larger properties will be acquired for larger family groups
- Greenhill Way will be taken out of general needs housing use and targeted for refugee housing
- Castle Lane will be taken out of general needs housing use and reconfigured to create 2 bed flats and targeted for refugee housing
- Both Greenhill Way and Castle Lane have been identified as low viability stock through our asset performance assessment tool. In the longer term, as Board will know, it is proposed that Greenhill Way be demolished and the site redeveloped but the above will be a short term use.

10.2 SMBC have provided SCH with funding for a Resettlement Officer who will be the lead person for Ukranian refugee homeless approaches. This role will be considering the full range of housing options to support the refugee challenges, including use of the private rented sector.

11. Allocations Policy

11.1 The proposed changes to the Council Allocations Policy were considered by the Economic Development and Managed Growth Scrutiny Board on 17 January 2023, with an update to Strategic Housing Board on 30 January 2023. The paper outlining the proposals was well received and the policy will return to scrutiny in late 2023.

11 .2 There is a detailed project plan which sets out the next stages including consultation (channels, forums and consultation questions), stress testing of the policy to understand the impact of existing applicants on the housing register, and the operational implementation of the policy upon final approval.

12. Rent Increase

12.1 Board members will be aware that following sector wide consultation, social housing landlords have been afforded the opportunity to increase rents up to 7%. In Solihull, this is a decision for the council as they are the landlord body and SMBC cabinet decided at its meeting on 9 February to increase rents by 5%.

13. Better Social Housing Review

13.1 The Chartered Institute of Housing in partnership with the National Federation of Housing Associations have now published the Better Social Housing Review following extensive discussion across the housing sector. The review has 7 key recommendations and whilst the review refers specifically to housing associations, the review recommendations and wider findings are also relevant for all social landlords including local authorities and ALMO's.

The full review can be found here:
https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwie3dXG6JL9AhUOh1wKHfeHDVEQFnoECAsQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.bettersocialhousingreview.org.uk%2F&usg=AOvVaw1cZO7B_4Nvnh36rkSHbqP2

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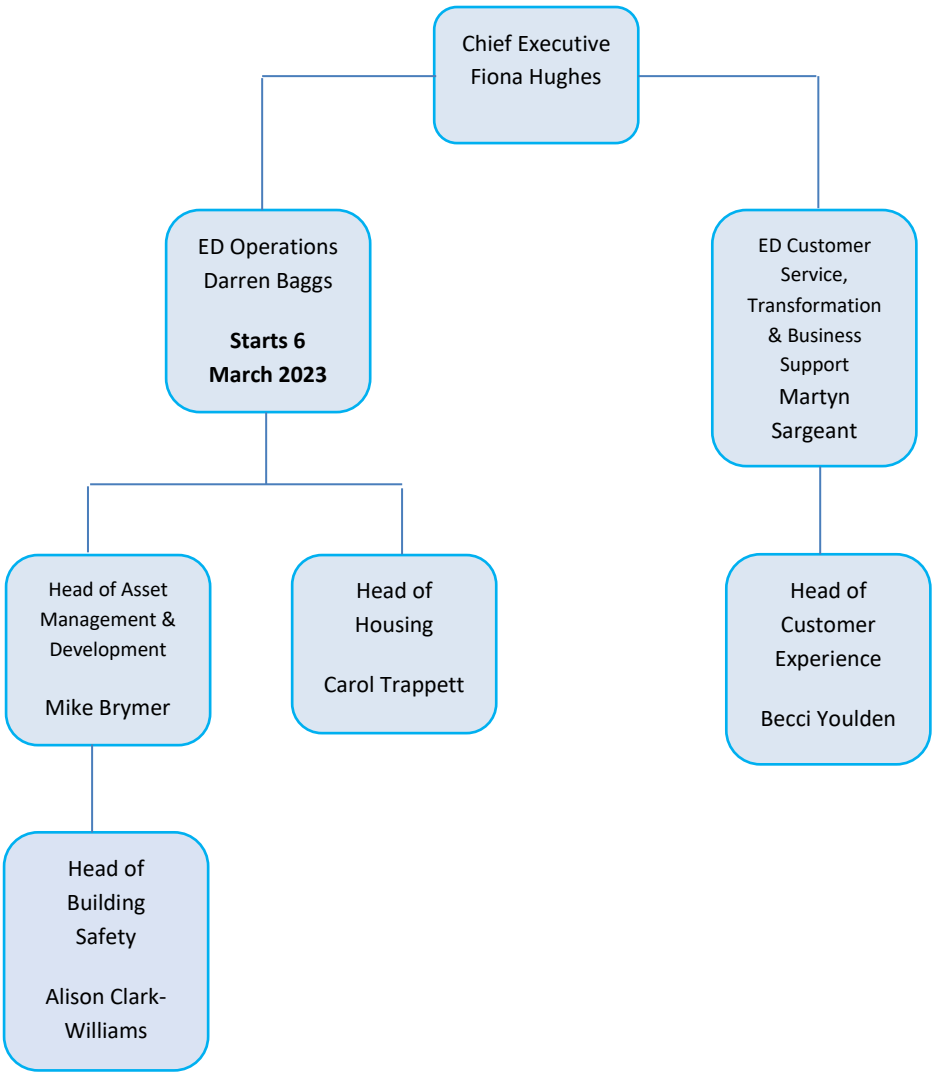
Appendix 1


Chief Executive
Fiona Hughes
ED Operations
Darren Baggs
Starts 6 March 2023
ED Customer Service, Transformation & Business Support
Martyn Sargeant
Head of Asset Management & Development
Mike Brymer
Head of Housing
Carol Trappett
Head of Customer Experience
Becci Youlden
Head of Building Safety
Alison Clark-Williams

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Quarterly Monitoring Board

15 February 2023

Reporting Period: Q3 2022/23

Current Status (Q3):		Previous Status (Q2) :	

Key Activity Summary

Key activities for next quarter

- Finalise SCH delivery plan 23/24 including presentation to EDMG scrutiny on 14 March and Cabinet portfolio on 28 March.
- Induct newly appointed Exec Director Operations into role and establish newly structured executive team.
- Progress financial / efficiency review of housing delivery model following joint SMBC / SCH workshop and follow up discussion at strategic housing board.
- Cabinet reporting 9 Feb HRA Budget report and 9 March – SCH / SMBC Asset Management Strategy and Capital Budget report.
- Preparing for regulation in context of social housing (regulation) bill and building safety legislation – including self assessment against regulatory standards and professional standards as well as review of SCH policies.
- Plan next steps for Kingshurst Village Centre Regeneration in light of financial challenge.
- Preparation for staff conference on April 19th.
- Progress service level restructures.
- Commence procurement of OneSCH customer relationship management and workflow solution.
- Consolidate Safeguarding Exploitation and Domestic Abuse Plan and within that, progress DAHA accreditation.
- Continue joint SMBC / SCH action plan to provide customer and staff support to respond to cost of living crisis.
- Continue action plan to address damp and mould with particular focus on raising customer awareness and follow up inspections / repairs.
- Planning for simulated tower block evacuation exercise with blue light services through CSW Resilience.

Focus highlights

- Board Building Safety Group – establishing comprehensive reporting into board sub-group on building safety including damp and mould.
- Cost of Living:
  - Around 250 proactive wellbeing calls made to vulnerable residents to signpost support. Some food parcels distributed.
  - Supported Here2Help events at The Core/Chelmsley Wood, plus ran local events in Smiths Wood, Marston Green, Kingshurst and Lyndon/Olton.
  - Money Advice Team providing additional support. Benefits secured as a result of advice provided on track to exceed £2m this year.
- Damp and mould:
  - Submission of return to RSH / SCH action plan with focus on raising customer awareness and re-sourcing response / incorporated into board building safety reporting.
  - Raising awareness, including supplementary question in tenant surveys about D&M, which has led to an increased number of cases.
  - Additional temporary resource provided to ensure timely handling of cases.

Performance Report (Summary)

As at Q3 RED 9 AMBER 8 GREEN 17

Ref	Title	Target	Actual YTD	Actual Dec	Position last year	Annual trend	Comment
WR15	Current tenants arrears as percentage of rent debit	3.30%	4.14%	4.14%	3.40%	⇩	Following a successful Christmas rents campaign arrears reduced by £253k during December (as a result of the rent free week and Christmas incentives). At this point last year we were 3.40%. Arrears caseloads are slightly higher than last years with 4,007 cases being reported compared to 3,803 last year = 204 more. Mobysoft is helping to regulate the numbers and weekly recommendations have reduced to 1,222 per week. The Team are now focused on improving the overall arrears position in Quarter 4 as we strive to achieve the best possible position by Year End.
NS38	Harm Reduction Resulting from ASB Intervention	80.00%	77.27%	100%	n/a		One resident responded to the survey in December, and they reported that their situation had improved. Across quarter 3, 75% of respondents stated that the intervention had reduced the harm being caused by ASB.
WB20	Percentage of customers supported with independence to remain in home	95.00%	88.14%	88.14%	n/a		In December, 11 out of 13 respondents reported that the service had helped them stay safe and well in their homes. At the end of the quarter , 91% of those surveyed responded positively.
AM1a	Percentage of properties with valid gas certificate	100.00%	99.86%	99.86%	99.88%	⇩	Snapshot at end of December was 11 properties outstanding. As at 1 Feb, that number reduced to six, of which four are subject to legal action. The oldest dates when the properties became out of compliance are June 2022 (two properties), with one more in 2022 (November), two in January 2023 and one in February. Four are low rise, one high rise and the sixth is a house. Further works between Safer Homes and Neighbourhood Services are ongoing and recruitment of a dedicated compliance neighbourhood officer to progress cases started in Jan 2023.
AM1b	Percentage domestic properties with satisfactory Electrical Installation Condition Report	100.00%	98.70%	98.70%	97.77%	⇧	127 properties with expired or no EICR certificate. The number of overdue tests has remained stable from close at end of November at 127, with the number of 'No Previous Certs' at 20 total. The up and coming tests are being managed with works ongoing to continue to reduce those that are overdue. This process will be further aided by the resourcing of a dedicated Building Safety Neighbourhood Officer.
AM4	Percentage of appointments kept - Response repairs	98.00%	97.67%	96.81%	98.99%	⇩	Close to KPI and in line with last year's performance whilst exceeding the Benchmark and indicative of the steps taken so far to drive performance through a difficult period. MST saw periods of absence driven by Covid throughout the end of the year and this will have undoubtable affected the ability to meet appointments.
AM7	Percentage of repairs completed right first visit	95.00%	92.78%	91.01%	96.03%	⇩	Poor quality initial information (from customer descriptions of jobs) has resulted in the wrong staff being allocated to work, which has reduced the proportion of jobs completed right first time. Work is being undertaken to improve the initial diagnosis. This has been compounded by an increase in damp and mould cases, where the complex nature means it can be difficult to immediately assess the nature of required remedial action.
AM20	Average number of days to complete repairs	7.50	14.4	9.69	10.73	⇩	Whilst the indicator is out of target, the significant decrease in average days is a good indicator that the service continues to move in the right direction and is inline with the performance improvement aspirations.
VL13	Percentage of rent loss due to voids	0.90%	1.92%	1.92%	1.72%	⇩	We currently report the void figure to include properties that are out of management and due for demolition. However, Housemark have confirmed that these properties can be removed from the calculation. To maintain consistency within the financial year, we will remove these properties from Q1 2023. If we were to remove these from the reporting, this brings void loss to 1.59% (£539,019). At present we are not reletting a number of supported units whilst appraisals are undertaken on their future use. If these were removed from the figure, this would reduce the void loss to 1.38% (£429,369).
CR5	Short term staff absence days	4.00	4.57	4.57	4.23	⇩	Absence has decreased to 11.43 days per employee from 11.67 last period. LTS has increased to 6.86 days compared to 6.68 days. STS has decreased to 4.57 days compared to 4.99 days.. SMBC comparator for this period is 12.23 average days lost per FTE, a slight decrease from the previous month of 12.20. Mental Health is still the top reason for absence at 40% (39%) of time lost, which is an increase from last month. SMBC core council is at 33% (36% last month). With leavers taken out the figure is 9.10 (9.35) days per FTE.
NS2	Percentage of leaseholder service charges collected	99.0%	98.21%	99.0%	99.19%	⇧	£5,706.53 short of the 99% target for the year-to-date. Arrears suspended following incorrect balance issues early in Q3, so no action took place for six weeks. Although recovery action has recommenced, the position is still being recovered. Officers are targeting cases to escalate recovery action throughout Q4.
NS4	Percentage of rent paid by digital means including Direct Debit	82.00%	80.28%	80.28%	80.54%	⇩	£13,222,663.37 / £16,471,103.92. 56.1% paid by DD.
NS9	% flatted blocks passing cleaning inspection	98.00%	93.55%	95.72%	97.81%	⇩	We continue to work closely with Pinnacle, weekly and monthly operational meetings Pinnacle still experiencing a churn of staff including supervisors and they have an ongoing recruitment drive. We are now meeting g several times a week, the contract manager is working from our office every week and we are collating all actions on an action tracker.
NS10	Percentage of estate inspections completed	98.00%	73.32%	96.83%	98.91%	⇩	All estate inspections have been completed in accordance with the plan for the year-to-date however, the target is not profiled to reflect this. The work programme is on course to be completed by the end of the year.
HO3a	Average stay in temporary accommodation (Budget hotels) families with children	15	32	37	15	⇩	A confluence of various issues (including issues in the private rented sector and Ukrainian refugees) has caused a c20% increase in demand and pressure on limited stock. Additional arrangements are being implemented to help tackle this, including a recent agreement with a local agency to provide further two and three bedroom properties on a per night basis.
HO5	% successful homeless prevention and relief	55.00%	54.59%	70.0%	51.84%	⇧	Achieved significantly above target with housing solutions through the housing register, securing supported and private rented accommodation, and mediation with friends and family.
CR31	Overall satisfaction (STAR perceptional)	80.00%	79.33%	79.33%	78.35%	⇧	+1.7% vs Q2 and above performance noted at the same time last year.

Delivery Plan 2022/23 Q3 Progress Update

Q3 Headlines

Engaging with our Customers
SCH, working with SMBC and other key partners continue to embed the Kingshurst Village Centre Engagement Strategy. There is a strengthened community offer and work on engaging communities in the development of the governance model for the Community, health and wellness hub continues.

Talking and Listening to our Customers
A number of operational efficiencies have been introduced into the contact centre and these have contributed to reduced customer waiting times.

Responding to and learning from customer complaints
A number of enhancements have been introduced to strengthen the approach to learning from complaints. This includes enhanced online reporting, and the introduction of complaints advocates and reviewers.

Managing the stock portfolio in a proactive, green and environmentally sustainable way
There has been ongoing collaborative activity and planning to achieve net zero carbon targets by 2030 in partnership with SMBC.

Ensuring our homes and customers are safe
First meeting of the SCH Building Safety Sub-committee scheduled for January 2023,. Composite report finalised, New stock condition database manager appointed.

Managing homes and Neighbourhoods
The Money Advice offer has been strengthened as a result of the Cost of Living crisis, including proactive support being offered to the most at risk residents and the strengthening of available resources.

Preventing and reducing homelessness
The co-location of SCH Home Options into Connect has been completed.

Services for vulnerable and older people
The use of data has been expanded. Accuity data being received monthly. Analysed and used to drive marketing and development.

Delivery Plan overview

Directorate	Objectives	Completed	Number to be completed by year end/ rolled over to new DP	Not completed and will not be completed
Customer Service and Business Support	26	12	13	1
Asset Management	17	3	14	0
Housing and neighbourhoods	17	6	10	1

Red indicator narrative

Services for vulnerable and older people
The review service delivery models for minor works, handy person and Disabled Facilities Grant will be moved to the next financial year, as part of a wider project in collaboration with Adult Social Care to look at independent living services.

Talking and Listening to our Customers
The implementation of a Chat AI solution across SCH Contact Centre has been reviewed and the benefits of implementation considered. However, the benefits do not out way the costs and resource involved and a decision has been taken to not implement this financial year.

Completed Delivery Plan Objectives

- Implement key recommendations from the externally led Data Health check to ensure SCH has an accurate and compliant data baseline
- Carry out Quality Assurance reviews, by service priority, across the organisation
- SCH, working with SMBC and other key partners will embed the Kingshurst Village Centre Engagement Strategy
- Working with key stakeholders across SCH, agree and implement internal SLAs to improve and standardise back office responses
- To ensure SCH customers are provided with the best information, right first time, we will Implement a Contact Centre Quality Framework to maintain consistently high standards
- Using Business Intelligence, the Contact Centre Operations Team will identify and reduce repeat customer contact
- Continually evaluate our corporate complaints approach to align with sector requirements such as the Housing Ombudsman Service
- Implement regular complaints 'learning and improvement cycles' around key drivers to reduce service failures at route cause
- Develop the role of customer complaints advocates across SCH to ensure the voice of customers and communities are a fundamental element of the SCH complaints approach, through co-design
- Research digital complaints logging across SCH to broaden access and support internal complaints operations
- Implement quarterly complaints handling satisfaction surveys
- Deliver the 'Thrive at Work' plan
- Invest in community partnerships such as apprenticeships and Kickstart
- Continue to refine the approach of using stock condition data to inform stock investment decisions including Options Appraisal to evaluate the stock we manage.
- Continue collaboration and planning to achieve net zero carbon targets by 2030 in partnership with SMBC, to include contribution to funding bids and associated work stream delivery.
- Identify and complete development appraisals on remaining garage sites identified in the stock options appraisal
- Embed and review outcome of the income analytics tools for rent collection
- Strengthen the Money Advice offer and service to customers
- Improve the service offer to customers through a co-located approach, bringing together SCH Home Options and Solihull Youth Hub in the same location
- Maximise opportunities for access to Wellbeing Service, through improved pathways and partnership work with key agencies/NHS
- Expand the use of data and customer insight to inform service development

Housing Development Update [key: In pipeline = agreed for development; Potential = under discussion]

***Please note that pipeline and potential schemes are all subject to change as they progress through the planning process**

Development	No.	Tenure Type	Stage	Start Date	Completion	Comments
Lakeside	28	Supported accommodation social rent	Pipeline	Estimated Q4 2023/24	Estimated Q1 2025/26	Planning permission granted December 2022. Service disconnections underway and tender process for demolition works to start February 2023. Further five social rent properties (Anglesey Avenue) will be packaged with Lakeside.
Kingshurst Village Centre	78	Mixed, social rent and shared ownership	Pipeline / Early works	Q3 2022/23 Early works Q2 2023/24 Main works (subject to approval)	Q4 2025/26	80% Social Rent / 20% SO. Planning permission obtained. Works to PCSA 90% complete. Demolition works to be completed by end of July 2023. Options for further delivery currently under discussion
Daylesford 1 & 2 & Campden Green garage sites	c18	TBC	Pipeline	TBC	TBC	Daylesford 1 & 2 Awaiting Highway engineer reports on suitability of proposed accessway as requested by Planners. Planning app TBC following completion of highways study. Funding TBC Campden Green Planning application submitted & under consideration. Further detailed discussion with Highways. Funding TBC.

Capital Projects

Sprinklers

The project continues to progress well overall, with 1,475 properties completed, 70% of the programme. The overall programme is planned to be completed during summer 2023:

- Phase 1 (4 high rise blocks) – four blocks completed. Woodbrooke and Redwood House have live systems installed to 2014 British Standard and have been approved by Building Control. Wedgewood and Westham have live systems installed to the 2021 British Standard. Installation remains outstanding at four residences and action is being taken, including legal process if needed.
- Phase 2 (10 high rise blocks) – all ten blocks have live systems installed to the 2021 British Standard :Warwick House, Chester House, Keele House, Banger House, Clare House, Pembroke House, Bedford House, Birbeck House, Kingsgate House and Newnham House. 17 properties (3% of 571) still require access for installation and are being followed up as above.
- Phase 3 (10 high rise blocks) – five of the ten blocks have live systems installed: Selwyn House, Somerville House, Fircroft House, Avoncroft House and Linacre House. The remaining five blocks in this phase (Keble House, Merton House, Oriel House, Balliol House and Richmond House) are progressing well with approximately 80% completion per block.

Work is also commencing on the final phase for Trevylan House, Wadham House, Mansfield House, Cheshunt House and Dillington House. In total, 19 blocks now have a 'live' sprinkler system. This project is likely to be the first in the country to have installed sprinklers to the 2021 British Standard level.

Spandrel Panel Replacement

The procurement phase of the project has been completed. Elhance Limited, a specialist cladding contractor, has been appointed as principal contractor for the project and premobilisation activities have now commenced. Elhance started on-site activities during January 2023 with a proposed 18 month programme of works.

Structural Surveys

The funding for this project from SCH reserves was agreed by SCH Board during Q1. Procurement arrangements for this work have now been completed—structural engineers, Curtins Ltd, have been appointed. Phase 1 of the project is now mobilised and desk top assessments have commenced. It is anticipated that completion of phase 1 for all high rise blocks will be completed March 2023. Following this, phase 2 physical surveys and sampling will commence, expected to be completed within 18 months. Where possible, the plan is to coordinate the work programme so intrusive survey work is synchronised with either the sprinkler or spandrel panel works to minimise both costs to the projects and inconvenience for residents.

Smoke detection and carbon monoxide detection

The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022 came into effect from 1 October 2022 for all social housing properties. The Regulation requires every property to have installed at least one smoke alarm on every storey of the residence and carbon monoxide detectors in every room with a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers). All the 37 high rise blocks have a smoke detector fitted. The seven blocks designated for fire safety purposes as 'specialist blocks' are having smoke alarms fitted in accordance with the LD1 requirements.

CONTINUED OVER…

The position at 31 December 2022 is as below:

Total number of included Properties	Total properties compliant	Total no access properties	% complete
6,800	5,650	1,150	83%

All of the 1,150 no access properties have been contacted on multiple occasions. A strongly worded letter was issued to these residents requesting access on 12 January, generating a positive response. Access attempts will continue until 100% compliance is achieved. The no access properties are split into geographic zones with dedicated resource assigned to continue to make access attempts throughout February 2023. At the end of February, detectors will be issued via recorded delivery to ensure all residents have received the required equipment, however, continued access attempts will be made as part of ongoing building safety service delivery.

Finance Report Q3 2022/23

	Budget Spend	Forecast Spend	Forecast Variance
Management Fee Spend	£20.263m	£21.512m	+£1.249m MORE
Capital Spend	£24.569m	£24.569m	(£0m) SAME

Financial Priorities / Projects

The HRA and the SCH budgets continue to be set on a break-even basis across a number of years thereby smoothing any peaks and troughs that may occur. This continues to allow SCH to plan on a medium to long-term basis for both revenue and capital spend. The forecast revenue variance at Q3 of +£1.249million, will be reported to the SCH Board on 8 February 2023, is predominantly due to global inflationary pressures outside of the control of Management such as utility costs, vehicle fuel and Biomass Pellets. The detailed SCH budget approved by the Board in November 2022 included plans to mitigate these pressures in future years. The capital programme includes final carry forwards from 2021/22 of £1.993million, as approved by Full Cabinet on 10-Jun-22 and a request to carry forward £14.788million into 2023/24 was approved by Full Cabinet as part of the MTFS (Corporate Capital Programme 2022/23) report on 12 January 2023.

10 Year Budget Window (Changes to Assumptions)

No.	Assumption	Impact
1.	The SCH Revenue Budget for the period 2022/23 to 2031/32 was approved by Full Cabinet on 10th February 2022 (following SCH Board approval on 29th November 2021).	Retains a balanced forecast over the 4-year budget window (2021/22 to 2024/25).

Corporate Risk Register: summary of principal risks. There are no (net) level 9 risks.

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Net risk
SCH0207	Inability to prevent or respond effectively to a cyber security incident or ransomware attack*	Amber 8
SCH0198	Failure to meet regulatory obligations (excluding Building Safety/ Heath and Safety compliance)	Amber 7
SCH0203	Failure to ensure Building Safety in line with current and in preparation for future legislation	Amber 7
SCH0202	Failure to ensure health and safety of customers, employees and contractors	Amber 7
SCH0205	Failure to have robust systems and process for data management.	Amber 7
SCH0199	Insufficient capital investment in the Solihull Housing Stock leads to failure to meet national standards	Amber 5
SCH0200	Failure to have robust governance arrangements in place	Green 4
SCH0201	Insufficient or inappropriate use of resources to deliver SCH delivery plan commitments	Green 4
SCH0204	Failure to deliver outcomes defined in the people's strategy	Green 4

*This is the same as the Council's rating for this risk. The Council has commissioned an external agency to evaluate cyber security assurance and the risk will be reviewed in light of the outcome of that assessment.

Strategic Housing Board – 30 January 2023

Council Housing Delivery in Solihull

Fiona Hughes – CX Solihull Community Housing

1.	**Introduction** There are a number of contextual factors, set out below, impacting on the delivery of social housing in general and, more specifically the management of council housing stock, and the delivery of the landlord function. As we consider how to address the challenges we face and our approach to the delivery of the housing service, there is merit in taking the opportunity to stand back and understand national and local factors affecting our current operating context. This paper seeks to start this conversation.
2. 2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5 2.6	**Recommendations** To note the national and local context impacting the delivery of social housing Further explore options for improving operational efficiency and reducing cost set out in 5.1.2 Further explore options for income generation set out in 5.1.3, including the option of an alternative delivery model / vehicle for the repairs and maintenance function Commission a high-level review of the Housing Revenue Account Understand the direct costs associated with the ALMO model and review opportunities for cost reduction where feasible Review governance and assurance arrangements across SCH and SMBC in readiness for regulation
3. 3.1	**National Context** Social Housing (Regulation) Bill The introduction of the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill will apply much greater regulation to social housing. A set of tenant satisfaction measures will be introduced as a key tool to enable regulators to assess tenant views of their landlord service delivery. It is also expected that an inspection regime will be established although the details of this are not yet clear. Regulation will be of the landlord body and, where an ALMO model is in place, careful consideration will need to be given to the development of appropriate arrangements between the landlord body and the ALMO to meet the requirements of the regulatory regime.

3.2	Building Safety and Fire Safety Acts The Building Safety and Fire Safety Acts will establish a robust legal and regulatory framework for building safety. This will have specific implications for the management of occupied buildings which are categorised as high risk – principally high rise accommodation such as the 37 tower blocks in Solihull. In the same way as for the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill, regulation will be of the landlord body and, where an ALMO model is in place, careful consideration will need to be given to the development of appropriate arrangements between the landlord body and the ALMO to meet the requirements of the regulatory regime. In Solihull we have started the process of setting out governance on this and this will be refined going forward.
3.3	Housing Standards and Decent Homes Standard Recent years have seen a number of shocking exposures of poor housing standards in the social housing sector. There has also been tragic loss of life in the Grenfell Tower fire and the more recent death of a child, in part, due to exposure to damp and mould. As a result, the decent homes standard is under review. This will bring a significant funding challenge for social landlords, who will be required to deliver the improved standard in all managed stock. Also in response to these events, the housing ombudsman has taken a more pro-active approach to its investigations and exposure of poor management practice in social landlords.
3.4	Delivering Net Zero Both through national policy and legislation, there is a drive to reduce our carbon footprint and deploy more sustainable technologies in our homes. This creates a challenge for existing and new homes and for landlords, including social / council landlords.
3.5	National Economic Position Inflationary pressure and the associated cost of living increase is impacting both on the cost base of maintaining and managing the housing stock as well as the income base in terms of rent levels and income collection.
3.6	Implications for SMBC and SCH At a headline level, the implications of the above for the council as a landlord and SCH as the ALMO are: - A significant financial challenge, both in terms of capital investment in the housing stock and the revenue costs associated with managing the stock on a day to day basis - The need to consider the governance and assurance framework across the council and the ALMO in order to ensure we are fit for purpose in responding to increased regulation

4.	**Solihull Context**
4.1	Housing Service Delivery Model As an ALMO, Solihull Community Housing was established in 2004. Created and funded to deliver the decent homes standard also introduced in 2004, SCH is a company limited by guarantee with a single shareholder – SMBC. It has a board of non-executive directors who have legal liabilities associated with this role. A rolling 5 year management agreement is in place and generally SMBC and SCH have a mature relationship reflective of the longevity of arrangements.
4.2	ALMO / SMBC Operational Framework Over its, almost 20-year life, SCH has become increasingly operationally connected and integrated with SMBC moving from a long arm in its early days to a short arm in recent years. In 2012 all back office functions to SCH were moved from SCH to SMBC and there is a constant backdrop to explore opportunities for greater joined up working and integration of service delivery to avoid duplication. Alongside the increasing integration across SCH and SMBC, the client function has been strengthened in recent years and current work is ongoing to: - Establish a series of SLA's covering the various elements of service delivery - Review the management agreement
4.3	Solihull Housing Strategy For the first time in some years Solihull will adopt a Housing Strategy in March 2023 which will bring a much improved approach to housing delivery across the board in the borough including opportunities for working more broadly with housing partners.
4.4	Council Housing Asset Management Strategy SMBC and SCH will be adopting a 10 year Asset Management Strategy in March 2023 which will set out a long term vision and approach to asset management and investment in the housing stock. The strategy recognises the importance of good stock data and sets out an approach to ensuring updated stock information as well as understanding stock performance. It also recognises the particular challenges faced in the stock profile in Solihull given the prevalence of high rise stock.
4.5	Financial Framework In the medium term, both the housing revenue account and the general fund in Solihull face challenges. Over the longer term the housing revenue account is required to have a 30 year business plan and this longer term modelling also reveals longer terms financial challenges.
4.6	Implications for SMBC and SCH At a headline level, the implications of the above for the council as a landlord and SCH as the ALMO are:

	- Both the housing strategy and the asset management strategy provide a good platform for better strategic planning in relation to housing management including our council housing assets - In light of national and local context governance and assurance across the council and ALMO need consideration to ensure focus and clarity - Further work is needed to address the financial challenge
5.	**<u>Meeting the Financial Challenge</u>** Looking ahead, it is important to consider a longer-term approach to meeting the financial challenge for housing and, whilst in the main, this will relate to the housing revenue account, there may also be elements relating to the general fund.
5.1	<u>Housing Delivery Service Workshop – Dec 22</u> As an early step to consider our financial challenge in Solihull, a workshop was held with key executive and senior staff across SCH and SMBC with the purpose of looking at where perhaps working practices could be made more effective as well as financial efficiencies. Workshop discussion focussed on: - opportunities to improve operational efficiency (creating possible reduction in expenditure) - opportunities to increase income Following the workshop, SMBC directors of E and I and Resources and the SCH Chief Executive met, and the headlines below reflect the ideas which were felt to merit further exploration.
5.1.2	<u>Improving Operational Efficiency (creating possible reduction in expenditure)</u> a) Greater collaboration in customer contact – in particular through the two contact centres b) Greater collaboration across the broad area of customer and community engagement and development c) Bringing together bulky waste d) Greater collaboration across financial inclusion services e) Reviewing the various elements of the homeless and rough sleeping teams to consider if we have the right delivery model f) Consider developing a more integrated approach to independent living including the wellbeing service g) Greater integration of the anti-social behaviour service h) Look at opportunities for joint and more strategic approach to procurement i) Explore office accommodation options j) Explore greater digital access to services
5.1.3	<u>Increasing Income Generation</u> Underpinning the approach to income generation is a move to operating with a greater commercial mindset – ideas include: - Explore direct delivery of asset management related contracts

- Explore establishment of repairs and maintenance delivery vehicle working on council stock with the potential to expand to other tenures in the private sector
- Explore opportunities to deliver carbon reduction / warmer homes / green technology related projects and services either directly or through a delivery vehicle

5.1.4 Additional broad points to note from the workshop include:

- Service need, and operational delivery requirements need to shape discussions with opportunities for financial efficiencies being a consequence rather than the initial driver
- There are nuances in terms of the financial picture across the housing revenue account / the SCH Budget (which is mainly drawn from the housing revenue account but has general fund elements) / SMBC General Fund – the identification of any savings would need to be the first task with the allocation of savings following from this

5.2 Long Term Health of the Housing Revenue Account

Following the introduction of self-financing for council housing stock, all stock owning authorities produced a 30-year business plan for the Housing Revenue Account in order to establish financial planning to protect the long-term sustainability of its housing stock. The various actions set out above will underpin this long-term financial planning including:

- Increasing efficiency of process and driving cost reductions where possible
- Maximising income generation including opportunities for commerciality
- Strategic asset management as set out in the asset management strategy

In addition, there is also merit in ensuring income maximisation of the HRA through rent and other charges. A review of the HRA would assist in ensuring we are optimising our income in this respect.

5.3 The ALMO Model

There are also direct costs associated with the ALMO model which include the client function as well as an element of SCH management costs. A review to scope whether there are any opportunities to reduce these might be helpful. There may be options around:

- Greater collaboration on the strategic housing function
- Scope of the client role
- Streamlining performance and assurance arrangements across SMBC and SCH

Underpinning the ALMO model is the principal that the benefits of the ALMO approach in terms of both service delivery and efficiency, outweigh the associated direct costs. Part of this equation is the delegation to the ALMO to provide dedicated and transparent housing services at arms-length and the benefit of this approach to the landlord in terms of both delivery expertise and the additional governance which is enabled through an independent vehicle. The dilution of this model through increased integration may provide opportunities to innovate and tailor the model, but of course it may also bring risks. This will need careful consideration as we take stock in Solihull.

5.4	<u>Summary</u> In summary, there are a number of threads of work which will assist to address our financial challenge: - Improving efficiency and reducing cost - Generating income and operating with a greater commercial mindset - Reviewing the long-term health of the HRA including income maximisation through charging arrangements – rent, service charges etc - Understand the direct costs associated with the ALMO model and review opportunities for cost reduction
6.	<u>Housing Development</u> Other authorities have established a more commercial approach to housing development including acquisitions and this has included the establishment of a housing company. For some, it has also included exploration of operating in the private rental market. The current economic landscape may make this a difficult proposition at present but it may be something to be considered in the future.

SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

BOARD MEETING 20 FEBRUARY 2023

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER SERVICE TRANSFORMATION & BUSINESS SUPPORT

Delivery Plan 2023/24

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To share the designed draft of the 2023/24 Delivery Plan (attached as appendix A) with the Board for feedback.

2. Recommendation – Items for Noting / Approval

2.1 The Board is recommended to:

(i) **REVIEW** the draft Delivery Plan and identify any changes required.

(ii) **NOTE** that the Delivery Plan will be shared with the Economic Development and Managed Growth Scrutiny Board, before being considered by the Cabinet Member for Partnerships and Wellbeing, subject to any changes made by the Board.

3. Background

3.1 SCH is required, under its management agreement with the Council, to produce an annual Delivery Plan setting out priorities for the year and the performance indicators against which progress and delivery will be assessed.

3.2 Following recent discussions with the Council, it was agreed that, from 2024, the Delivery Plan would encompass a three-year period. This will tie in with the review of SCH's longer term strategic objectives, currently set out in the Strategic Vision 2020-25.

3.3 The Board shaped the content of the Delivery Plan through its away day in October 2022 and subsequent meeting in November. Following this, consultation was undertaken with SCH staff and key stakeholders, primarily the Council, to refine the content. Customers had an opportunity to identify priorities through the tenant conference in the autumn.

4. Timetable

4.1 Whilst the Board drives and determines the Delivery Plan, its preparation is collaborative, involving consultation with customers, employees and Solihull Council. The final dates for the approval of the 2023/24 Delivery Plan are set out below:

20 Feb 2023	SCH Board reviews final draft Delivery Plan
13 March 2023	Scrutiny Board reviews draft Delivery Plan (Council)
28 March 2023	Cabinet member considers the Delivery Plan for approval (Council)

5. Key performance indicators

5.1 Final data for the suite of indicators was not available when the Delivery Plan was sent to the designers, so this remains to be finalised in the next designed draft that will be shared with the Council.

5.2 The proposals for the indicators have been reviewed in the light of SCH's own quarter 3 data (to December 2022), alongside the emerging comparative picture for the tenant satisfaction measures. This has informed the proposed targets for 2023/24.

5.3 The data to be included in the final designed version is attached as appendix B.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no specific cost implications arising from this report. The budget-setting process takes account of the proposals set out in the Delivery Plan.

7. Equality and Diversity Implications

7.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

8. Risk Management Implications

8.1 The risks arising from failing to meet specific targets such as not collecting income are included within the general risk management framework.

9. Value for Money and Efficiency Considerations/Implications

9.1 The expectation of the Council is that SCH should continue to deliver excellent services whilst delivering efficiencies.

10. Tenant Involvement/Consultation

10.1 Developing the Delivery Plan was a particular focus of the tenant conference at the beginning of October. Tenants were given the opportunity to prioritise potential objectives and offer suggestions for additional or alternative priorities.

11. Consistent with Strategic Vision

11.1 The report is consistent with the refreshed strategic vision for 2020 to 2025.

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Delivery Plan
2023 – 2024

Solihull
Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

24647.01 SCH Delivery Plan A4 Brochure 2023 v4.indd 1 03/02/2023 15:22

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1. Foreword

Welcome to Solihull Community Housing's Delivery Plan for 2023/24. This sets out our priorities for the coming year in the context of our overarching strategic vision of 'creating better homes and thriving communities'. It also supports Solihull Council's ambition to ensure everyone in Solihull 'has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and more prosperous'.

The challenging context brought about by the Covid pandemic continued into 2022/23. The war in Ukraine and general economic situation created significant cost of living pressures for most of our residents. This has been an important focus in recent months and will continue into 2023/24, ensuring residents are signposted towards appropriate assistance as part of a Solihull-wide support package. Alongside this, like many areas, Solihull has experienced increased pressure on its housing stock, as a result of greater incidences of homelessness and the need to support those arriving into the borough from other parts of the world, in particular from Hong Kong, Afghanistan and Ukraine.

Improving building safety continues to be a key priority for SCH, responding to the priorities set out in the new legislation approved in 2022, the Building Safety Act and Fire Safety Regulations. During 2022/23, SCH made significant progress installing sprinklers in most accommodation across its 37 high-rise blocks, which will significantly enhance fire safety in those homes. That work will complete in 2023 and the focus will shift to replacement of the spandrel panels that clad 16 of the high-rise blocks, ensuring compliance with the most recent, post-Grenfell safety regulations.

We have also commissioned structural safety reviews of every high-rise block, which will take place this year. And we continue to conduct hundreds of assessments every month, to ensure that gas and electrical installations are safe, as well as checks on asbestos, water supply, lifts and fire risks.

Tackling damp and mould where it affects our residents was an important focus in 2022 and that will continue in 2023 and beyond. SCH has worked with the Council and other partners to ensure reports of damp and mould are captured however they are reported. The resources supporting this work have been strengthened so action can be taken swiftly.

Embedding a collaborative relationship with tenants and other customers continues to lie at the heart of SCH's approach. One of the highlights of 2022 was the tenant conference, where SCH was the proud recipient of a Tpas landlord accreditation award, recognising the excellent work undertaken to shape services in response to the 'voice of the customer'. Tpas stated that SCH gained:

Richard Hyde, Chair of the SCH Board

Fiona Hughes, Chief Executive

....an overall assessment score of 89%. This is an excellent achievement for the organisation. A standout, trailblazing organisation for engagement and a collaborative culture across all teams.

Ensuring children have the best start in life remains a key priority for Solihull. SCH continues to strengthen its approach to safeguarding both children/young people and vulnerable adults. During 2022/23 we have worked towards forming a dedicated team to lead this work for the organisation, whilst embedding a culture of safeguarding being everybody's responsibility through enhanced training arrangements. Work has started on achieving Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation, which will be completed in 2024.

It is vital that available housing is provided to those most in need, so SCH has collaborated with the Council in a review of the allocations policy, to ensure it reflects best practice and local need. Following public consultation, the revised policy will be implemented during 2023. The amendments include provision for an annual lettings plan, enabling the Council and SCH to respond more rapidly to changing need without full policy alteration.

A standout, trailblazing organisation for engagement and a collaborative culture across all teams.

The SCH Board wishes to thank all those who contributed to the development of this year's Delivery Plan, in particular customers, but also Council colleagues, partners and the SCH staff team.

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2. Executive summary

Next year, 2024, will mark the 20th anniversary of the formation of Solihull Community Housing as the arm's length management organisation for Solihull Council's housing stock. Over this period, the relationship between the Council and SCH has evolved and matured, with opportunities identified for SCH to deliver services beyond its core housing responsibilities where it is best placed to do so. This will be the last annual Delivery Plan – from 2024, the Delivery Plan will cover a three-year period, to allow for longer term planning and prioritisation of resources.

During October's tenant conference, delegates were able to play an early role in shaping the priorities of the plan, highlighting in particular:

- Growing SCH's housing stock through acquisition and new build.
- Completion of key building safety programmes – sprinklers and spandrel panels.
- Supporting vulnerable customers.
- Investing in energy efficiency.
- Improved service delivery and security in communal areas and around garages.

These were drawn together with priorities identified through wider consultation with employees and partners, and this year's Delivery Plan is framed around five key themes, underpinned by three enablers.

The themes focus on SCH's core function of providing safe and affordable housing in pleasant communities, whilst supporting those in need and seeking to drive down environmental impact.

The enablers focus on SCH the organisation and how it operates, further embedding the customer voice, driving improvement through use of technology, and developing employees' ability to deliver effectively.

Delivery Plan Themes 2023-24

Providing accessible, affordable housing solutions for those in need

Investing in existing and new homes: providing quality homes by developing and acquiring new properties, and improving existing stock

Keeping customers safe in their homes: improving building safety and undertaking regular compliance checks

Supporting those in need: a holistic partnership-based approach to wellbeing, combatting financial, mental health and employment challenges

Improving neighbourhoods: investing in our communities, enhancing places where people live, and tackling anti-social behaviour, domestic and other forms of abuse

Green homes and sustainability: reducing the environmental impact of housing stock and SCH's operations, and reducing energy costs for residents

ENABLERS

Engagement: listening to the diverse voice of our customers, so they can shape and improve services

How we work: delivering sustainable, value-for-money services, proactively adopting digital technology to enhance how customers interact with SCH, whilst using robust data to drive evidence–led service improvement

Who we are: cultivating a great place to work, where a collaborative team feels supported, valued, empowered and motivated, equipped with the tools to deliver excellent services

ENABLERS

3. Solihull Community Housing fact file

We manage 9,845 tenanted homes and 1,285 leasehold properties, together with 4,652 garages, 66 shared ownership properties and 163 temporary accommodation units for homeless households in need of urgent housing provision.

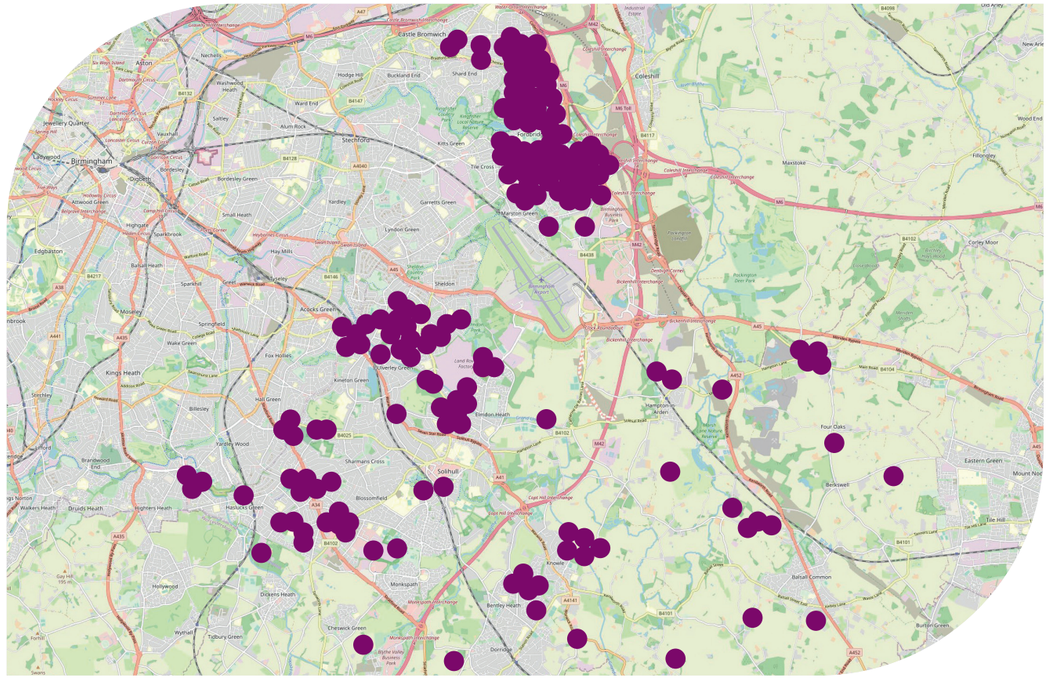
Over two thirds of the homes are located in the north of the borough, with particular concentration in deprived neighbourhoods. Roughly half of the stock is houses/bungalows, with the other half being flats and maisonettes.

There are over 3,000 households on the Council's housing register.

We employ nearly 300 people (261 full-time equivalent).

In the calendar year 2022, we:

- Let 588 Council homes
- Took 30 days on average to relet a home
- Collected 97.1% of rents due
- Carried out 915 adaptations of properties to enable vulnerable people to live independently in their homes
- Responded to 103,257 telephone calls through our Contact Centre
- Carried out 15,344 emergency repairs
- Provided support and advice to 120 households when facing homelessness
- Carried out 8,935 gas services
- Provided money advice support to help tenants reduce arrears by £585,000 and access over £2m of unclaimed benefits
- 112 service improvements driven by tenant engagement
- Carried out 589 housing health and safety inspections
- Responded to 1,279 instances of damp and mould
- Completed energy performance certificates (EPCs) for 565 homes



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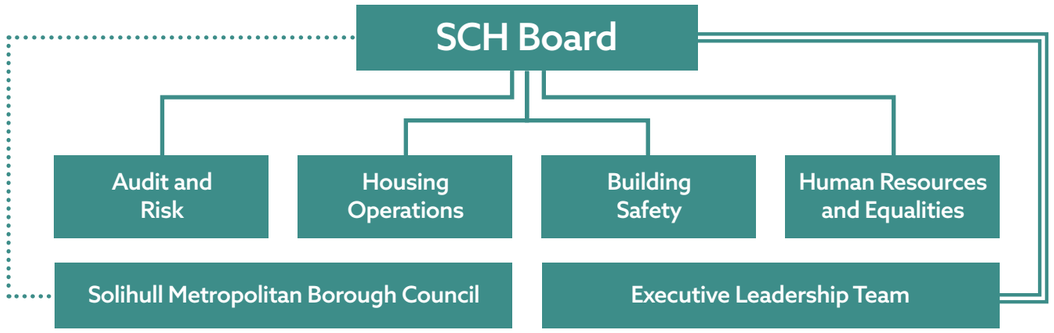
4. Corporate assurance

Company governance

SCH is an Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) established in 2004 to deliver housing services on behalf of Solihull Council, the company's sole shareholder. The running of the company is overseen by the board of directors, comprising the chair plus three tenant members, three independent members and three members nominated by the Council. During 2022/23, the Board strengthened its governance arrangements by recruiting two experienced housing professionals as independent directors who chair the Audit and Risk, and Housing Operations Committees respectively. A further vacancy was also filled to ensure a full tenant complement.



During the year, the Board undertook a self-assessment against the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance. The Board has produced an action plan to address areas where the assessment identified scope for strengthened governance and these will be taken forward during 2023/24.

Safeguarding, exploitation and domestic abuse

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT), reporting to the SCH Board, takes responsibility for ensuring effective safeguarding arrangements are being implemented throughout the organisation.

Safeguarding delivery in SCH is overseen by SEDA (Safeguarding, Exploitation and Domestic Abuse), an internal strategic group that has oversight and assurance responsibilities. It provides regular reporting to ELT on its work and safeguarding outcomes. An annual assurance report is also presented to the SCH Board

Key activities undertaken during 2022/23 included:

- Delivery of mandatory safeguarding training and enhanced training (e.g. on domestic abuse) to front line teams
- Dissemination of key messages and learning identified by the Solihull Children and Adults Partnerships from serious case reviews and audits to improve multi-agency practice
- Contributed to the review of multi-agency procedures around exploitation and the new thresholds guidance
- Showcased best practice, delivering webinars on the role of housing in tackling exploitation and enforcement against perpetrators of domestic abuse

Key priorities for 2022/23 will focus on embedding safeguarding learning and development into SCH's operating processes. Key activities will include:

- Deliver the SEDA performance framework giving assurance across seven themes: governance, safeguarding policy and procedures, partnership working, staff development and training, reporting, communications and best practice
- Undertaking case audits and self-assessments to support learning within single and multi-agency processes
- Progress the SCH Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation supporting the effective response to domestic abuse

Information governance

SCH's approach to information governance is underpinned by policy, guidance and training. This includes a full suite of policies based on the information security standard BS ISO/IEC 27002:2013.

During 2022/23, SCH undertook an exercise to refresh its mandatory training requirements to ensure all employees had completed modules on GDPR and protecting information. In addition, a new requirement to complete cyber security training was introduced, recognising the particular threat that has already afflicted some housing and local government organisations.

SCH is supported by the Council's Information Governance team to ensure it meets all its obligations in relation to Freedom of Information and Subject Access Requests. There is a healthy culture of reporting any data breaches, and investigations identifying future process improvements are reviewed by both the Council and the relevant Executive Director.

Finance

The current economic backdrop is unprecedented and 2023/24 is likely to be one of the most challenging years financially. In particular, this has affected SCH through increased energy costs and inflationary pressure on wages, materials and contract prices. SCH holds reserves to cover financial risks arising from fluctuating markets and these will be utilised to deliver a balanced outturn in 2022/23 too.

SCH has plans in place to deliver a balanced medium-term financial strategy, in the context of a housing revenue account balanced three-year budget agreed with the Council and the government introducing revised legislation to temporarily cap rents for 2023/24. Savings plans for 2023/24 have been agreed by the SCH Board and work will continue through the year to ensure the plans for 2024/25 and onwards are achievable and robust.

Long term financial planning continues to be critical and underpins SCH's approach. This will be vital, as the capping of housing rents by the Government, whilst an important move to protect the most vulnerable, will continue to put pressure on operating budgets. SCH continues to work closely with the Council to ensure financial sustainability.

Risk

During 2022/23, SCH has strengthened its risk management approach, building on the previous year's work to review the corporate risk register. The Executive Leadership Team reviews both the corporate and directorate risk registers on a quarterly basis, which is underpinned by operational monitoring of service and project risks. The Board maintains strategic oversight through the Audit and Risk Committee on a quarterly basis and its own annual risk management report. A particular focus for the Board in the coming year is to evaluate SCH's corporate risk appetite and to consider this in the context of the Council's risk appetite in order to inform strategic priorities.

Health and safety

SCH reviewed its health and safety governance during 2022/23 and the Board agreed to separate out the different responsibilities relating to occupational and building/resident health and safety. Two new health and safety groups, each chaired by an Executive Director, oversee the two areas, and each reports to a new Safety Leadership Group, chaired by the Chief Executive. In line with this, the health and safety policy has been refreshed, setting out the roles and responsibilities throughout the organisation, from members of the Board to individual employees.

The Board receives a quarterly health and safety report from the Council's Health, Safety and Risk Manager, whose team provides professional support to SCH. At the start of 2023, the Board formed a Building Safety Assurance Group, with particular responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Building Safety Act. This is underpinned by an operational building safety delivery group and SCH contributes to the Council's Building Safety Board.

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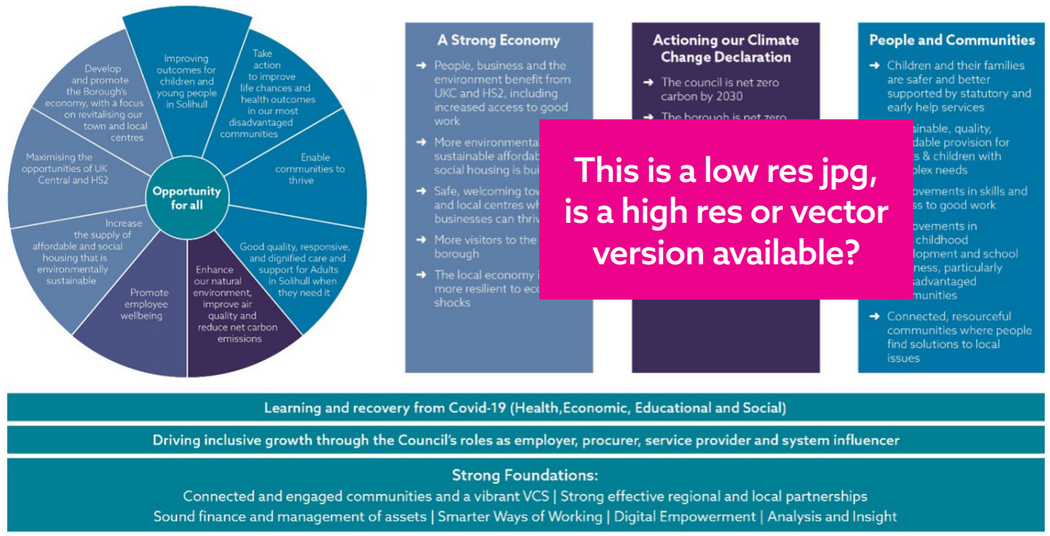
5. SCH support for the Solihull Council Plan

SCH is a key partner of the Council, so it is appropriate that our priorities are aligned to the Solihull Council Plan. At the heart of the plan is the belief that health and well-being economic development and environmental sustainability must go hand in hand. This is reflected in the nine priorities at the heart of the plan (shown in the 'wheel' in the Plan on a Page below) which are intended to secure three outcomes.

SCH will support the delivery of the Council Plan, including specific contributions on:

- Tackling anti-social behaviour across tenures, preventing homelessness and engaging with residents contributes to improving life chances, health outcomes and promoting thriving and engaged communities
- Helping to improve the health and wellbeing of residents through improvements to homes and the environment, with a focus on reducing carbon emissions
- Improving neighbourhoods through partnership working in locality areas to support thriving communities
- Participation in safeguarding arrangements and work to reduce exploitation and improve the response to domestic abuse
- Working with the Council to provide targeted support for young people to move into employment
- Supporting the Council to deliver its housing strategy
- Working with the Council to deliver the regeneration of Kingshurst Village Centre
- Helping the Council to deliver supported accommodation
- Working with the Council on its response to the government's request for assistance with resettlement accommodation for Afghan and Ukraine nationals



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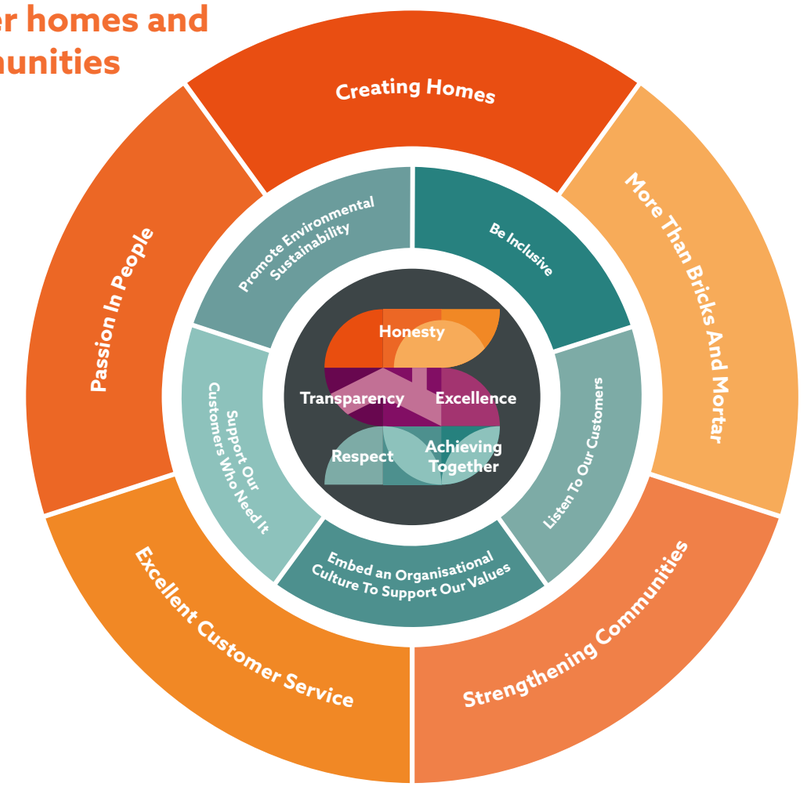
6. Strategic vision, values and equalities

Creating better homes and thriving communities

The annual Delivery Plan sits in the context of SCH's longer term strategic vision, which sets out five strategic aims for 2020-25, underpinned by five commitments:



The five HEART values set the standard for how we work as an organisation and with our customers and partners.

- **H**onesty
- **E**xcellence
- **A**chieving together
- **R**espect
- **T**ransparency

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

SCH has an important role in tackling inequality. Actions relating to fairness and inclusion have a direct relationship with our strategic objectives and operational priorities, whether in relation to our homes, the services we provide, how we treat colleagues, customers and partners or the difference we make in our localities. Embedding equality and diversity helps us assess our performance.

(1) Nurture and strengthen EDI leadership

(2) Know our residents and communities better

(3) Ensure our employees are broadly representative of our locality and region

(4) Enable diverse voices to shape and improve services through their views and opinions

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7. Executive leadership

SCH's executive leadership team is responsible for the day-to-day management of the organisation and delivery against the priorities set out in the subsequent pages.

Fiona Hughes
Chief Executive

Overall strategic and operational management of SCH

Darren Baggs
Executive Director - Operations

Strategic and operational management of all housing operational functions

Samantha Gilbert
Chief Financial Officer

Financial management and procurement

Martyn Sargeant
Executive Director – Business Support

Wellbeing and independent living services, governance and business support, customer experience, Council-provided support services

Mike Brymer
Head of Asset Management and Development

Day-to-day repairs and void properties, capital investment programme, home adaptations to enable independent living, supporting the Council to grow the available stock of affordable homes

Becci Youlden
Head of Customer Experience

Customer engagement, customer services, communications, business intelligence

Alison Clark-Williams
Head of Building Safety

Safety compliance checks, meeting regulatory safety standards

Carol Trappett
Head of Housing

Estate and neighbourhood services, housing options and homelessness, tenancy and income services, safeguarding and anti-social behaviour

8. Themes for 2023/24

Investing in new and existing properties

SCH manages about 10,000 properties on behalf of Solihull Council but the aspiration is to grow this through acquisition and new build to help meet an ever-increasing need for housing. This was identified as a primary priority by tenants. At the same time, SCH will work to improve the quality of existing housing, meeting regulatory standards and ensuring tenants and customers can live in comfortable homes.

Priorities for 2023/24:

- Combat damp and mould
- Complete structural surveys of high-rise blocks as a basis for investment planning
- Meet the Decent Homes standards set by the government
- Implement new aids and adaptations policy to help residents live independently
- Increase stock acquisition to meet housing need and provide community benefits
- Maximise building of new homes through the Council's property assets

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Keeping customers safe in their homes

The Building Safety Act 2022 clearly set out that the number one priority for housing providers should be the safety of their tenants and customers. Building safety is at the heart of everything SCH does as a housing organisation, both routinely ensuring that gas, electric and other installations meet compliance standards, but also investing in properties to improve safety, especially in protecting against fire risks.

Priorities for 2023/24:

- Completing the installation of sprinklers across Solihull's 37 high-rise blocks
- Replacing spandrel panels to improve fire safety across 16 high-rise blocks
- Engage customers to help develop building safety initiatives
- Establish a building safety committee to provide assurance to the Board
- Develop a building safety management strategy
- Ensure regulatory safety compliance checks are in place for gas, electricity, water, asbestos, lifts and fire risk for every property

Supporting those in need

Recent years and, in particular, the last 12 months, have been especially challenging for many of SCH's customers. SCH recognises that its role is broader than simply as a provider of housing, and that it is well-placed to help local residents tackle health and wellbeing, financial, and employment issues. SCH works in partnership with Solihull Council and other stakeholders to provide joined-up support services that will alleviate some of the challenges and pressures faced by its residents.

Priorities for 2023/24:

- Enhance options for independent living through technology, property adaptation and service development
- Work collaboratively to strengthen the employment and skills offer for residents, rolling out the 'Resident Academy'
- Strengthen money advice support, particularly focusing on those affected by fuel poverty and homelessness
- Develop tenancy sustainment initiatives to minimise tenancy breakdowns
- Target vulnerable customers for support during the winter months
- Launch a revised allocations policy to reflect current needs and priorities
- Review the pathways for customers at risk of homelessness
- Work with stakeholders to deliver a package of cost of living support measures

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Improving neighbourhoods

SCH's role is not just to provide accessible, affordable housing solutions but to work collaboratively with local people and organisations to enhance their neighbourhoods. This priority is reflected in the new Tenant Satisfaction Measure, assessing whether a landlord makes a positive contribution to the local area. A core component of this is tackling anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and other safeguarding challenges, ensuring residents feel and are safe.

Priorities for 2023/24:

- Lead the redevelopment of Kingshurst, including new community facilities
- Enhance amenity spaces and tackle neighbourhood challenges to encourage thriving communities
- Ensure the SCH workforce is equipped to deal with safeguarding, domestic abuse and exploitation
- Work towards achievement of Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation by 2024
- Strengthen the tackling of person and place-based anti-social behaviour

Green homes and sustainability

Solihull has an ambitious plan to achieve net zero by 2041 and the Council's aim is to go further by achieving this in its own operations by 2030. Improving environmental sustainability in the housing stock is a key stepping stone to achieving net zero, so SCH has an important role to play in reducing the environmental impact of its homes and its business operations. In the current economic context, improving sustainability will also help residents to reduce their energy costs.

Priorities for 2023/24:

- Prepare future programmes of work to deliver environmental initiatives in readiness for future grant funding sources that are announced
- Secure grant funding from the government to carry out energy efficiency improvements to residents' properties
- Complete external insulation works to property so they are more energy-efficient
- Reduce the amount of carbon SCH emits by delivering its services

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Enablers for 2023/24

SCH's ability to deliver against the themes and priorities set out on the preceding pages is dependent on its ability to evolve as a strong, flexible and well-equipped organisation. The three enablers set out below identify key areas for development growth in the next year, focusing on our people, on customer engagement, and on core systems and business approach.

How we work:

How we work: delivering sustainable, value-for-money services, proactively adopting digital technology to enhance how customers interact with SCH, whilst using robust data to drive evidence–led service improvement.

- Improve data security
- Review and strengthen the policy framework
- Implement digital telephony enhancements to improve the customer experience
- Identify and address causes of repeat customer contact
- Use management information to drive evidence-led service improvement
- Identify and embed digital opportunities to improve customer service and streamline procedures
- Develop a data strategy to ensure a robust and consistent approach to management and use of data

Engagement:

Listening to the diverse voice of our customers, so they can shape and improve services.

- Embed the new customer engagement framework in service delivery and policy development, reflecting new regulatory requirements
- Support the SCHape Panel to review new customers' experiences and other improvement areas
- Develop a holistic customer experience strategy
- Strengthen complaint handling and improve the application of learning from feedback

Who we are:

Cultivating a great place to work, where a collaborative team feels supported, valued, empowered and motivated, equipped with the tools to deliver excellent services.

- Develop digital skills framework
- Review internal communications to improve effectiveness of messaging
- Embed two directorate model of working
- Develop success plan for key roles affected by demographic challenges
- Develop more apprenticeship opportunities for local people

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9. Key performance indicators

The SCH Board uses a range of key performance indicators, shared with the Council, to enable it to monitor performance. These are underpinned by a larger number of operational indicators, used by managers to understand and address performance issues, and drive service improvement. The Social Housing Regulation Bill sets out measures to enhance customer engagement principles, providing for stronger regulation and improved training requirements for housing staff. SCH is well-positioned to respond to those new national Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), which are already built-in to its performance monitoring arrangements. Formal reporting starts from April 2023 and the key performance indicators have been adapted to ensure regular monitoring by the Board.

Indicator	Proposed 23/24 target	Sector benchmark (if available)	22/23 target	TSM
% collected of rent due exc. arrears b/fwd.	**99.0%**	99.5%	99.0%	No
Current tenant arrears as % of rent debit	**3.80%**	2.82%	3.0%	No
Average stay in TA (all) – days	**112**	n/a	112	No
% of homeless approaches where prevention/relief achieved	**55.0%**	n/a	55.0%	No
% of properties with valid gas certificate	**100.0%**	99.85%	100.0%	Yes
% of properties with satisfactory EICR	**100.0%**	85.12%	100.0%	No
% of non-domestic assets covered by valid FRA	**100.0%**	100.0%	100.0%	Yes
% of known asbestos locations re-inspected (communal areas)	**100.0%**	100.0%	100.0%	Yes
% of water installations covered by risk assessment	**100.0%**	100.0%	100.0%	Yes
% of passenger/platform lifts with insurance LOLER inspections completed	**100.0%**	100.0%	100.0%	Yes
Overall satisfaction (transactional)	**85.0%**	n/a	85.0%	No
Overall satisfaction (STAR perceptional)	**78.0%**	81.5%	78.0%	Yes

Indicator	Proposed 23/24 target	Sector benchmark (if available)	22/23 target	TSM
Complaints resolved within timescale	**90.0%**	66.8%	90.0%	Yes
Contact centre average speed of answer	**240 secs**	258 secs	270 secs	No
Rent loss due to voids	**1.35%**	1.80%	0.90%	No
Satisfaction with repairs in last 12 months	**74%**			Yes
Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair	**72%**			Yes
Satisfaction home is well-maintained	**75%**			Yes
Homes not meeting Decent Homes standard	**???**			Yes
Repairs completed within target timescale	**99%**			Yes
Satisfaction home is safe	**85%**			Yes
Satisfaction landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	**70%**			Yes
Satisfaction landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter	**80%**			Yes
Agreement landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	**80%**			Yes
Number of complaints received per 1,000 properties	Waiting more info			Yes
Satisfaction that landlord keeps communal areas clean & well-maintained	**54%**			Yes
Satisfaction landlord makes positive contribution to the neighbourhood	**75%**			Yes
Number of ASB cases per 1,000 properties	Waiting more info			Yes
Satisfaction with ASB case handling	**60%**			Yes
Satisfaction with complaint handling	**70%**			Yes
% of high rise fire safety remedial actions completed to timescale				No

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Appendix B: proposed performance indicator data

Indicator	Proposed 23/24 target	Sector benchmark (if available)	22/23 target	TSM?
% collected of rent due exc. arrears b/fwd	99.5%	99.5%	99.0%	No
Current tenant arrears as % of rent debit	3.95%	2.82%	3.0%	No
Average stay in TA (all) – days	80	n/a	112	No
% of homeless approaches where prevention/relief achieved	60%	n/a	55%	No
% of properties with valid gas certificate	100%	99.85%	100%	Yes
% of properties with satisfactory EICR	100%	85.12%	100%	No
% of non-domestic assets covered by valid FRA	100%	100%	100%	Yes
% of known asbestos locations re-inspected (communal areas)	100%	100%	100%	Yes
% of water installations covered by risk assessment	100%	100%	100%	Yes
% of passenger/platform lifts with insurance LOLER inspections completed	100%	100%	100%	Yes
Overall satisfaction (transactional)	87%	n/a	85%	No
Overall satisfaction (STAR perceptional)	80%	81.5%	78%	Yes
Complaints resolved within timescale	92%	66.8%	90%	Yes
Contact centre average speed of answer	210 secs	258 secs	240 secs	No
Rent loss due to voids	1.35%	1.8%	0.9%	No
Satisfaction with repairs in last 12 months	80%	80%	n/a	Yes

Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair	75%	75.8%	n/a	Yes
Satisfaction home is well-maintained	75%	72%	n/a	Yes
Homes not meeting Decent Homes standard	0%	2.4%	n/a	Yes
Repairs completed within target timescale	85%	85.2%	n/a	Yes
Satisfaction home is safe	80%	82.9%	n/a	Yes
Satisfaction landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	73%	64.2%	n/a	Yes
Satisfaction landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter	80%	75%	n/a	Yes
Agreement landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	85%	82.5%	n/a	Yes
Number of complaints received per 1,000 properties	2.5	2.8	n/a	Yes
Satisfaction that landlord keeps communal areas clean & well-maintained	60%	68%	n/a	Yes
Satisfaction landlord makes positive contribution to the neighbourhood	75%	62.6%	n/a	Yes
Number of ASB cases per 1,000 properties	3	4	n/a	Yes
Satisfaction with ASB case handling	60%	60.4%	n/a	Yes
Satisfaction with complaint handling	60%	55.9%	n/a	Yes
% of high rise fire safety remedial actions completed to timescale	80%	n/a	n/a	No

SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

FULL BOARD MEETING: 20 February 2023

REPORT OF THE HEALTH, SAFETY & RISK SERVICE SMBC

Health and Safety Quarterly Report
October - December 2022 (Quarter 3)

1. Purpose of Report / Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide SCH Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and Board with an update on legislative changes and guidance, corporate health and safety activity, any areas of specific concern and recommendations for improvement.

1.2. The SCH Board, Chief Executive and ELT have overall accountability and responsibility for ensuring the effective management of health and safety within SCH. The success of the Health and Safety Management System in place relies on the commitment, engagement and support from all levels of managers and employees in the organisation.

1.3. The SMBC Health, Safety & Risk Service (HSRS) role is to provide health and safety competent assistance, advice and guidance to help the SCH Leadership Team to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities.

2. Recommendation

2.1. The Board is recommended to:

(i) **NOTE** the contents of this report.

(ii) **NOTE Appendix 1** - Legislative update

(iii) **NOTE Appendix 2** - Accident/Incident Reporting Analysis Q3 2022/23.

3. Regulatory Interventions

3.1. There were no Health and Safety Executive (HSE) visits made to SCH at the time of writing this report or any regulatory interventions this quarter.

4. Legislative / Guidance Updates

4.1. A legislative update has been provided in Appendix 1.

5. Corporate Warning Marker System

5.1. The Corporate Warning Marker (CWM) system is an online recording system used to record information relating to persons and properties in the Borough who may present a risk to staff dealing with them as part of their role. The system is managed by SMBC which SCH also use.

5.2. Following a detailed review in the last year, the system used has been identified as needing further improvement to make it more robust and effective for the organisation. An action plan is in place which is being taken forward by the SMBC Warning Marker Assurance Board. SCH have representation on the Board and have actions to take to ensure their employees are using the system correctly as part of their work. Due to its importance, the Executive Director for Customer Services, Transformation and Business Support is the lead for this work, reporting back to ELT.

6. Health, Safety & Risk Service - SMBC

6.1. The SMBC Health, Safety and Risk Service continue to provide health and safety support to SCH. During this reporting period this has included:

- A robust health and safety improvement plan for Occupational Health and Safety, is being rolled out to managers at the Occupational Health and Safety Group meeting in January 2023. Action progress will be monitored at subsequent Occupational Health and Safety Group meetings. This piece of work is being overseen by the Executive Director for Customer Services, Transformation and Business Support.

- Producing a final draft, ready for approval at ELT in January 2023, of a revised Lone Working and Personal Safety Policy.

- Ongoing support has been provided to SCH to improve their health and safety arrangements, including risk assessments, and reviewing policies and workplace standards.

- Providing ongoing support for audited areas, including Saxon Court, to help managers to complete their audit actions.

- Attending and contributing to the Building and Resident Safety monthly meetings and quarterly Occupational Health and Safety meetings.

- Overseeing the recording of incidents, the quality of incident investigations and production of incident data.
- Attending the West Midlands Social Housing Health and Safety Group meetings and providing feedback on key learning points.
- Providing professional health and safety advice on draft policies produced by SCH.
- Ongoing support and advice on various health and safety work-related related topics and input into revised governance arrangements.

7. Health and Safety Management Audits

7.1. A revised audit process will be presented to ELT in early 2023. Once finalised and agreed, this will then commence in April 2023.

7.2. Community Centre inspections are planned for January 2023.

7.3. Review of audit actions are undertaken at the relevant health and safety group and escalated to the Safety Leadership group as required.

8. Accident/Incident Reporting Analysis Q3 2022/23

8.1. The generic term **incidents** includes all accidents, abuse, near misses, fire and any other health and safety related incident reported on the online system, Assure.

8.2. This quarter saw a considerable increase in the overall number of **incidents** reported, 41 compared to 27 last quarter. The increase appears to be due to an increase in the reporting and recording of tenant related incidents onto the online system.

8.3. Currently all tenant **incidents** reported to SCH are recorded on the online system. This can mean that not all incidents reported involve a fault, or issue caused by SCH. Complex incidents often need investigating to get to the root cause and determine if SCH played a part, or if in fact the incident occurred at all. Further work identifying incidents where SCH played a part will be identified in future statistics, where this is known.

8.4. The majority of the tenant related accidents this quarter continue to involve a slip, trip or fall, 8 involved slipping on wet floors, staircases or water leaking into their property or communal areas, 7 involved faulty equipment / workmanship, 2 involved a lift, 2

were caused due to mobility issues and the rest were due to day-to-day activities. There were no resident RIDDOR reportable accidents.

8.5. There were 12 incidents involving employees, agency staff and others, 8 of these were accidents, 3 were Abuse/Threat/Violent Incidents and only one near miss reported.

8.6. Two of the 8 accidents were over 7-day absence RIDDOR reportable accidents to staff. One of these was as a result of a manual handling and the other was due to working in a cramped space. Appendix 2 provides a summary.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications

9.1. Equality and diversity are routinely considered by SCH when dealing with health and safety issues, for example when inspecting communal areas so that corridors and pathways are clear to ensure safety for people with mobility issues.

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1. Appendix 1 – Health and Safety Legislative / Guidance Updates

1.1. HSE continue to publish various e-Bulletins, weekly digests and latest court cases and prosecutions information. For further information click the link HSE: Latest news on health and safety at work.

2. Building and Resident Safety

2.1. SCH have a detailed Building Safety Implementation Plan in place to respond to the Building Safety Reforms and the emerging changes to fire safety legislation and the actions that SCH will take as relevant to the organisation. The plan is monitored by the SCH Building and Resident Safety Group, SMBC Building Safety Assurance Board and other forums and committees. As part of the governance arrangements in place in SCH a separate Building Safety Task and Finish Group at Board level has also been set-up to oversee the implementation of the plan.

3. Building Safety Act Update

3.1. The Building Safety Act was passed on 28th April 2022. This Act makes ground-breaking reforms to give residents and homeowners more rights, powers, and protections – so homes across the country are safer. It delivers far-reaching protections for qualifying leaseholders from the costs associated with remediating historical building safety defects, and an ambitious toolkit of measures that will allow those responsible for building safety defects to be held to account.

Many of the detailed provisions in the Building Safety Act will be implemented over the next two years through a programme of secondary legislation.

3.2. The **Government has issued the Building Safety Act 2022 (Commencement No. 2) Regulations 2022**, which bring into force sections 126 to 129 of the Building Safety Act from 1 September 2022. These sections relate to the creation of the building industry Scheme, and the ability for prohibitions to be placed on those seeking building control approval or planning permission. In summary, the commencement of these sections allows the Government to begin the process of creating regulations to introduce Building industry Scheme(s) that will require members to remedy defective buildings and/or contribute to the cost of doing so; and to impose

prohibitions on those in the industry as it considers necessary to do so, including those who may choose not to sign up to such schemes. More detail will be known once the regulations are published – it is presently uncertain whether there will be a consultation process in relation to these, but further updates will be given as soon as more information becomes available.

The **Building Safety Act 2022 (Commencement No. 3 and Transitional Provision) Regulations 2022.** The following provisions of the 2022 Act come into force on 1st December 2022:

- sections 4(1), (2), (3) and (4) (regulator's duty to facilitate building safety);
- sections 9(1) and (2) (building advisory committee); and
- section 11 (residents' panel).

3.3. The Building Safety Act 2022 created the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) in England. The new regulator is part of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The Act requires BSR to set up a Statutory Residents' Panel (the panel) to ensure residents are placed at the heart of the new regulatory regime. The BSR have started to recruit residents of high-rise buildings (HRBs) who would like to be considered for a position on the panel.

3.4. In June 2022 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities launched a consultation on the **Higher-Risk Buildings (Descriptions and Supplementary Provisions) Regulations**. The consultation sought views on government's full proposals for the regulations. The results of this consultation have now been published and this has resulted in some changes to the wording in these draft regulations.

The Higher-Risk Buildings (Descriptions and Supplementary Provisions) Regulations complete the definition of a higher-risk building. Higher-risk buildings are buildings which will be required to meet the legal requirements of the new more stringent regime for building safety.

3.5. The Higher-Risk Buildings (Descriptions and Supplementary Provisions) Regulations, in conjunction with the Building Safety Act 2022 (the Act), will define which types of buildings will be required to meet the requirements of

the new regime during design and construction and occupation. The regulations also set other technical definitions. Specifically, the regulations will:

- define which types of buildings are and are not considered higher-risk buildings for design and construction under section 120D of the Building Act 1984 (inserted by section 31 of the Act);
- define which types of buildings are not considered higher-risk buildings for occupation under section 65 of the Act;
- provide an overall definition for building for both parts of the regime under section 120D of the Building Act 1984 (inserted by section 31 of the Act) and under section 65 of the Act; and,
- establish how height and the number of storeys a building has is determined for higher-risk buildings.

3.6. The regulations, alongside the Act, will mean that residential buildings, care homes and hospitals which are at least 18 metres in height, or have at least 7 storeys, are subject to the new requirements during the design and construction of new buildings and during building work. During occupation, residential buildings which are at least 18 metres in height, or have at least 7 storeys, will be subject to the occupation requirements of the new regime.

4. Storing Building Safety Information – golden thread

4.1. The HSE have produced guidance on information needed to manage and keep if you are responsible for high-rise buildings. The ‘golden thread’ is both the information that allows you to understand a building and the steps needed to keep both the building and people safe, now and in the future. The guidance is for anyone responsible for a building’s information throughout its life cycle. This includes, building companies, principal designers and principal contractors, and local authorities.

4.2. The information that will need to be managed must be kept digitally, kept securely, a building’s single source of truth, available to people who need the information to do a job, available when the person needs the information and presented in a way that persons can use.

4.3. The information kept must be proportionate and will depend on what stage the building is at in its life. While the building is being designed and built the information kept must describe the building and show how it complies with building regulations. For buildings that are lived in (occupied), information relating to how risks are being assessed and managed must be retained.

5. Government proposes second staircases to make buildings safer

5.1. In December 2022 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) announced a consultation on its proposals to mandate second staircases in new residential buildings over 30m and sprinkler systems for new care homes.

6. Building Safety High Rise Registration and Certification

6.1. Building Safety High Rise Registration opens in April 2023 and closes October 2023. The Accountable Person has to complete registration online through a portal to the Building Safety Regulator (BSR).

6.2. After registration, the Accountable Person for a high-rise residential building will need to apply for a Building Assessment Certificate at the direction of the BSR. It is likely an email from BSR will be sent to SMBC requesting this information.

7. Mandatory Occurrence Reporting

7.1. Draft regulations are awaited on mandatory occurrence reporting for prescribed fire and structural events. Work is underway to identify the best method of capturing these.

8. Grenfell Tower Inquiry

8.1. The Grenfell Tower Inquiry has concluded the hearings for Phase 2 and is now closed to the public. The Inquiry Panel will continue preparing the final report. The inquiry has its own website for updates at https://www.grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk/.

8.2. Former staff from the social housing body responsible for the management of Grenfell Tower are being investigated by the police for serious criminal offences relating to the fire.

9. Damp and Mould

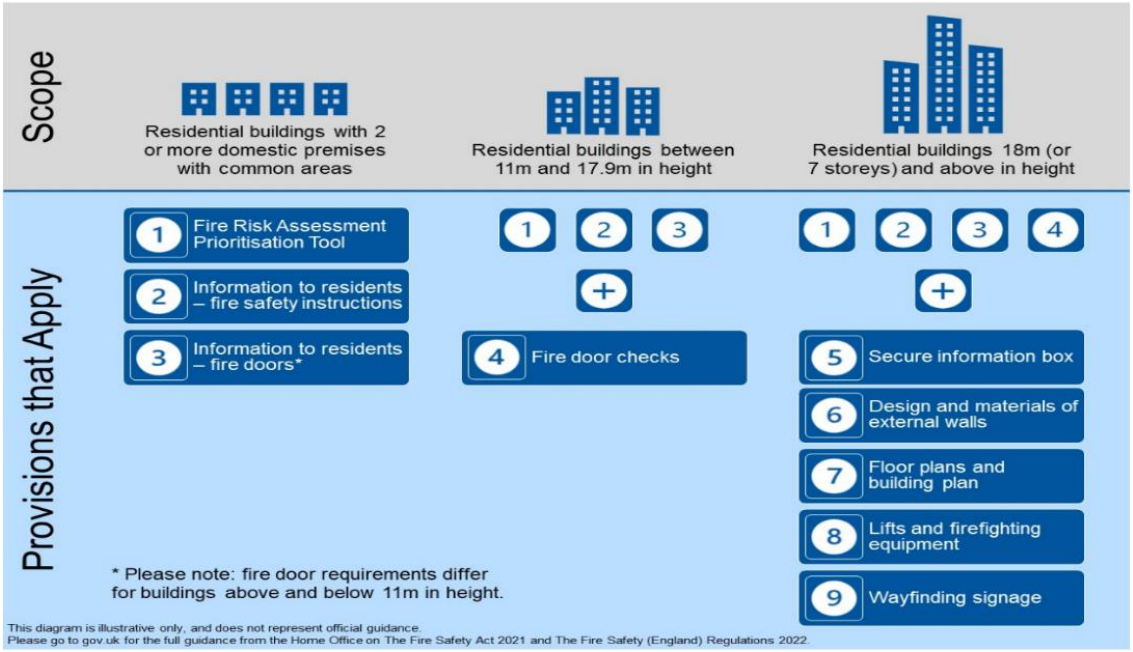
9.1. The Regulator of Social Housing has written to registered providers of social housing to highlight landlords' responsibility to take action to protect tenants from hazardous damp and mould.

9.2. Housing association and local authority landlords will need to submit evidence to the regulator to demonstrate that they have systems in place to identify and deal with damp and mould issues in their homes, and that they are addressing risks to their tenants' health.

9.3. The regulator will review this information and, where there is evidence that providers are not meeting regulatory standards, it will take appropriate action.

10. Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022

10.1. The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 introduce new duties under the Fire Safety Order for building owners or managers (responsible persons). These regulations come into force on 23rd January 2023 and will implement a number of recommendations from phase one of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. The graphic below provides a useful summary of the requirements contained in the regulations.



10.2. Guidance was issued in December 2022 by the Government to enable organisations to check their fire safety responsibilities under the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.

10.3. A template has also been made available to enable information to be gathered on external walls for the Fire and Rescue Services. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1123770/Template-External_Wall_Information_for_FRS.odt

11. Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Regulations

11.1. Following approval by the House of Commons and the House of Lords, as of 27th June 2022, the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022 are now law. Landlords must be compliant with the requirements set out in the Regulations from 1st October 2022 or to have plans in place to ensure their compliance in a prompt and timely way that mitigates any risk to tenants. These new regulations mean that:

- Registered providers of social housing must ensure at least one smoke alarm is provided on each storey of their homes where there is a room used as living accommodation. This has been a legal requirement in the private rented sector since 2015.

- All landlords must ensure a carbon monoxide alarm is provided in any room used as living accommodation which contains a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers).

- All landlords will be legally obligated to ensure smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms are repaired or replaced once they are informed and the alarms are found to be faulty.

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Incident/Accident/Near Miss Reporting Statistics

Quarter 3 2022/23
October – December 2022

The following statistics include:

- Work related incidents to employees, agency staff and others.
- Resident safety - Incidents reported by residents where a property defect or circumstance contributed to the incident.

- **NOTE: The online system Assure will require updating to mirror the revised organisation structure within SCH.**

Introduction

An incident is considered to be 'work-related' if any of the following played a significant role;

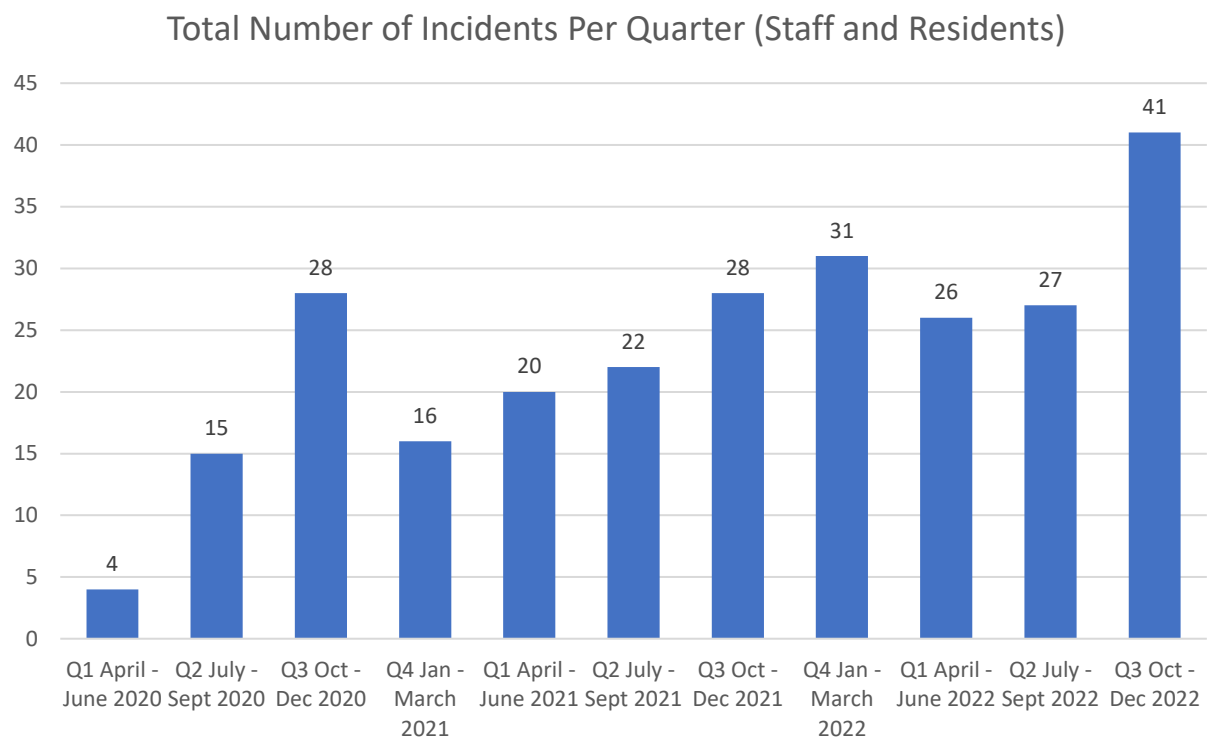
- the way the work was carried out;
- any machinery, plant, substances or equipment used for the work or
- the condition of the site or premises where the incident occurred.

Certain types of incident are reportable to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the **Reporting of injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR).**

Incidents is a collective term and are categorised into 6 categories, see table below:

Type of Incident Recorded	Definition of Incident
Accidents	• Any unplanned event that results in injury or ill health to employees and tenants, where SCH has responsibility for cause of accident.
Near Miss Events	• Any unplanned event that did not result in injury, illness or damage but had the potential to do so whether or not as a result of compensating action.
Violent / Abusive / Behavioural Incidents	• Any incident in which a person is abused or threatened either physically, verbally or in writing or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work. • Any incident involving the behaviour of an adult or customer in a social housing or care setting where an employee is injured.
Diagnosed Occupational Diseases	• Specified Diagnosed Occupational Diseases (Reportable under RIDDOR) contracted directly through work related activities.
Fire or Property Related Incidents	• Any fire or property related incidents including security, vandalism, collapse or failure of building structure or equipment damage. • The exposure of hazardous substances / materials under COSHH (The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations) including asbestos or legionella.
Environmental Incidents	• Any incident which solely impacts on the environment. This includes discharge, drainage or damage to flora or fauna and spillages.

Total number of Incidents Reported by Quarter



Headlines Q3 2022/23:

- The above graph shows the total number of incidents for both employees and residents, per quarter.
- There is a large increase in Q3 2022/23 numbers from 27 to 41 comprising of:
  - 12 incidents involved employees, agency staff and others
    - 6 of these were accidents
    - 3 were Abuse/Threat/Violent Incidents
    - 2 of these were staff RIDDOR reportable accidents due to over 7 day absence.
    - 1 near miss reported
  - 26 accidents involved residents, over 50% of these were falls
    - There were no resident RIDDOR reportable accidents – reportable due to tenants being taken directly to hospital
- The following incident data is split into:
  - **Occupational Health and Safety**, covering incidents involving employees, agency staff and others
  - **Resident Safety**, covering incidents involving tenants.

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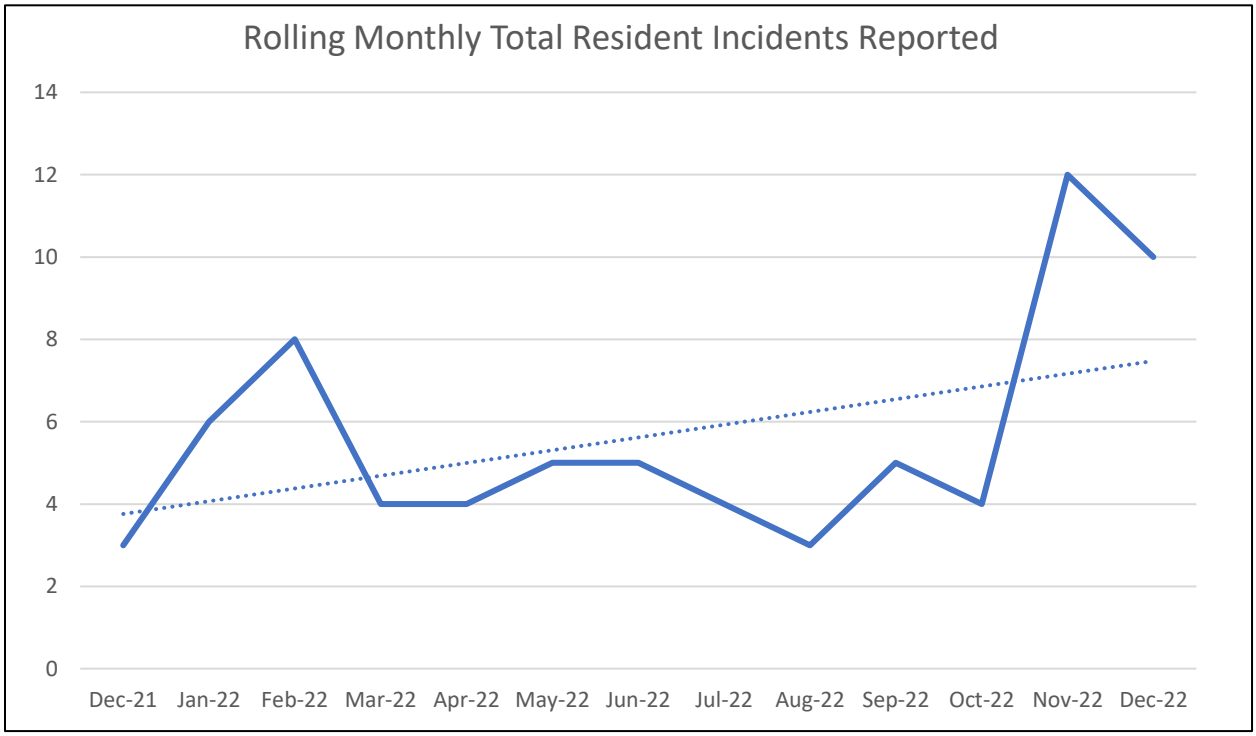
Occupational Health and Safety

Incident Statistics for Employees, Agency Staff and Others

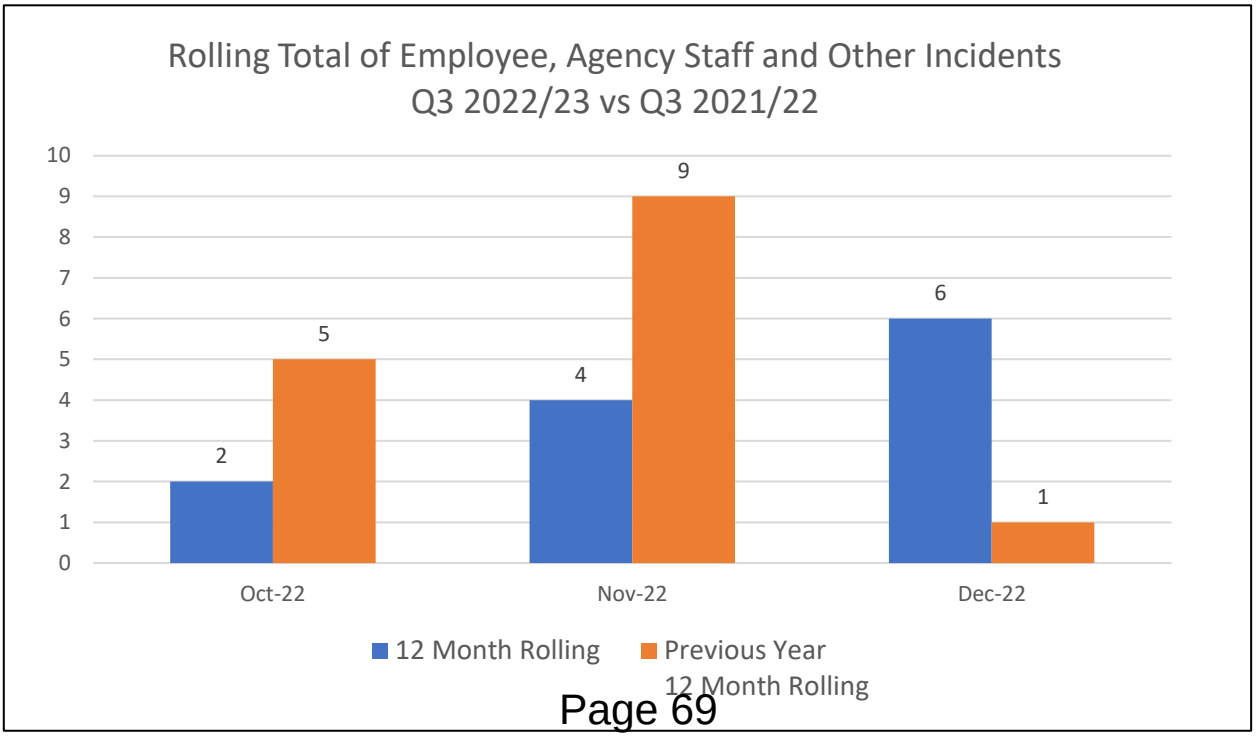
Quarter 3

October – December 2022

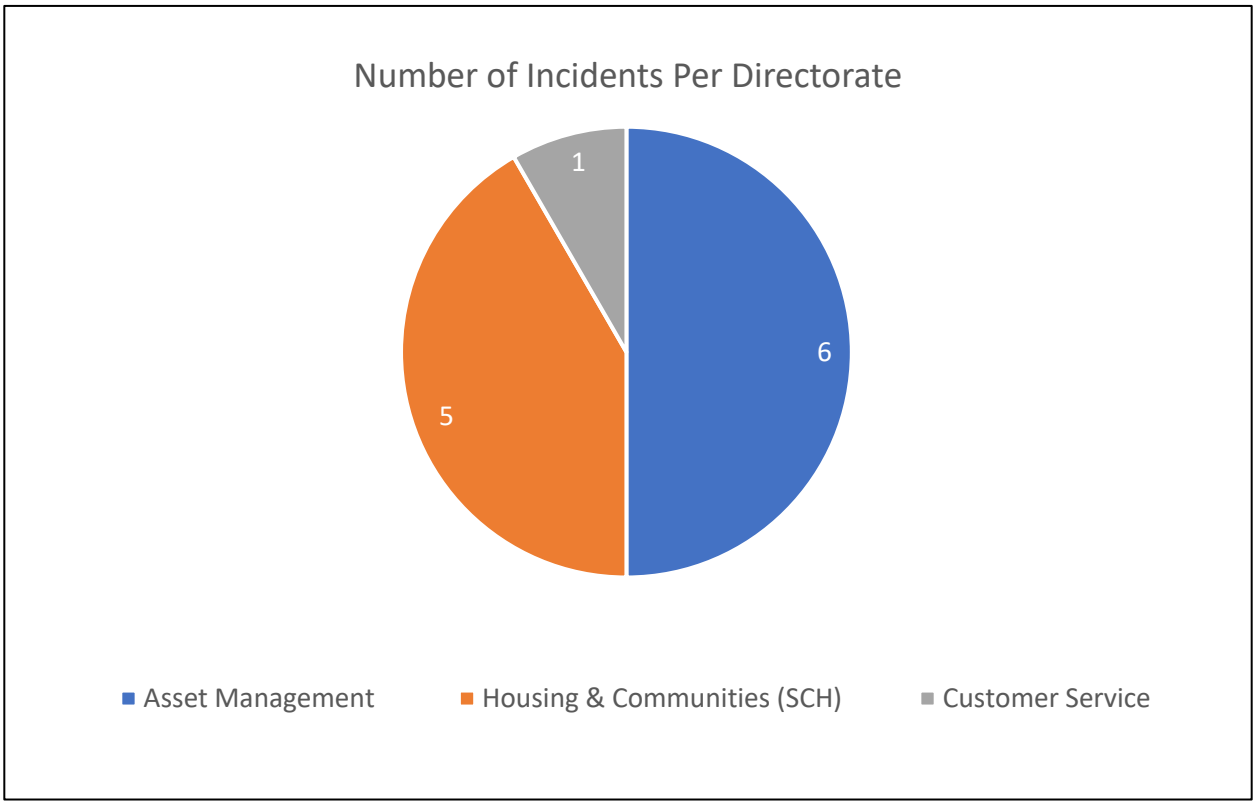
Rolling Total of Incidents

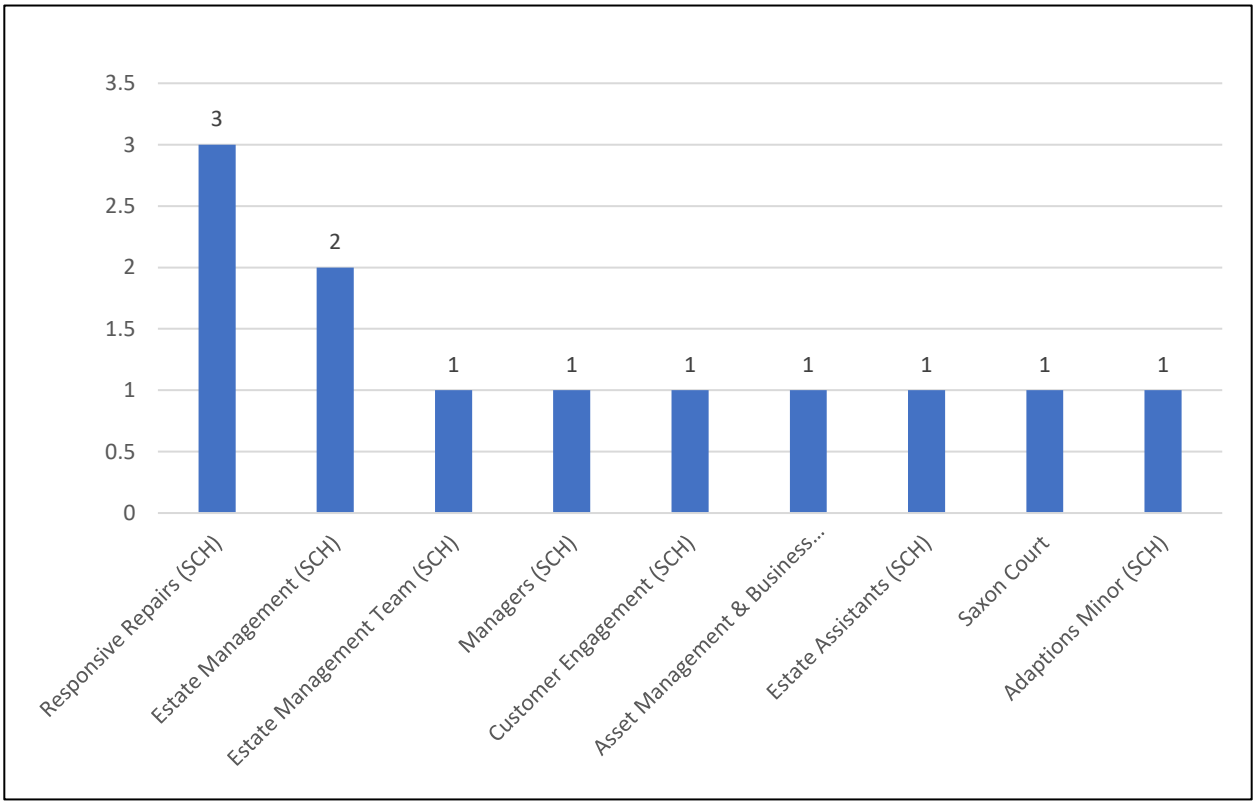


- The graph above shows employee, agency staff and other incidents over a 12 month rolling period, with the addition of a trend line, showing an upward trend.
- The graph below compares Q3 2022/23 with Q3 2021/2022



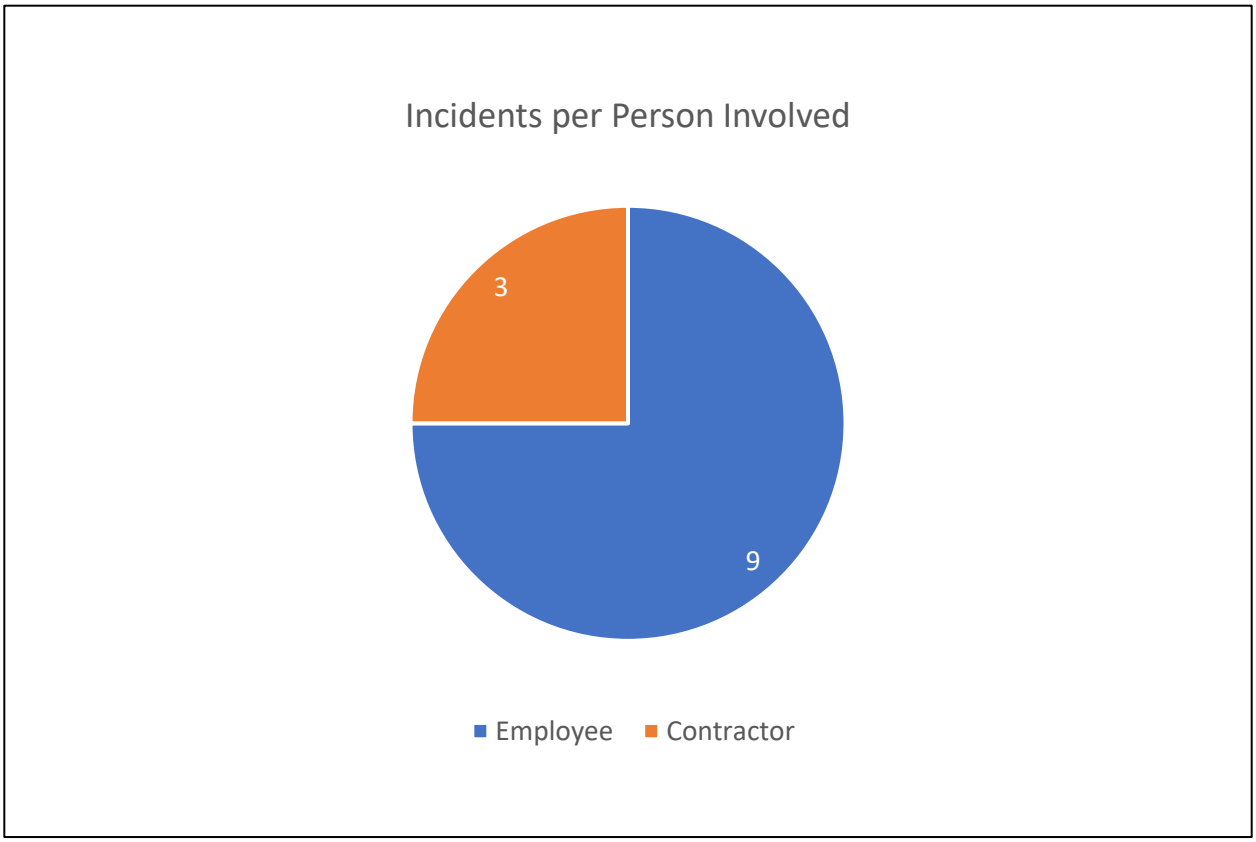
Employee/Agency and Other Incidents

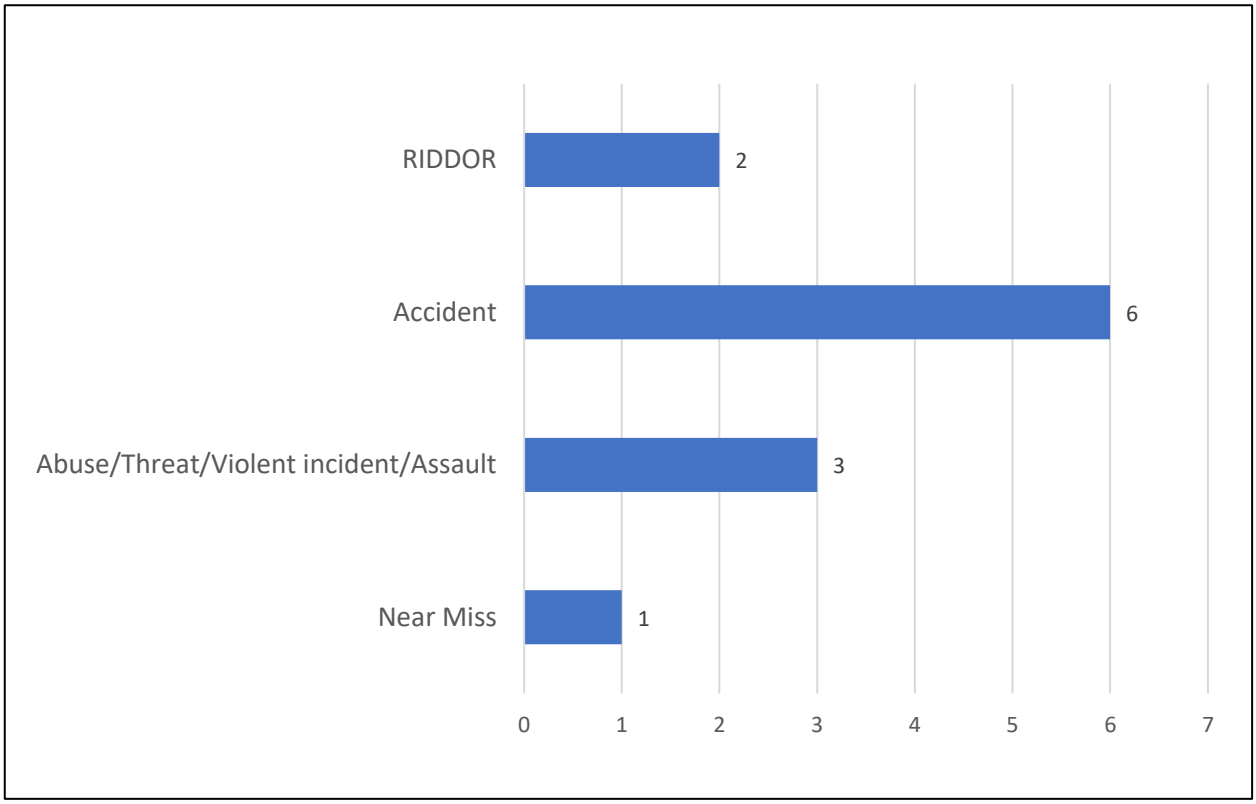




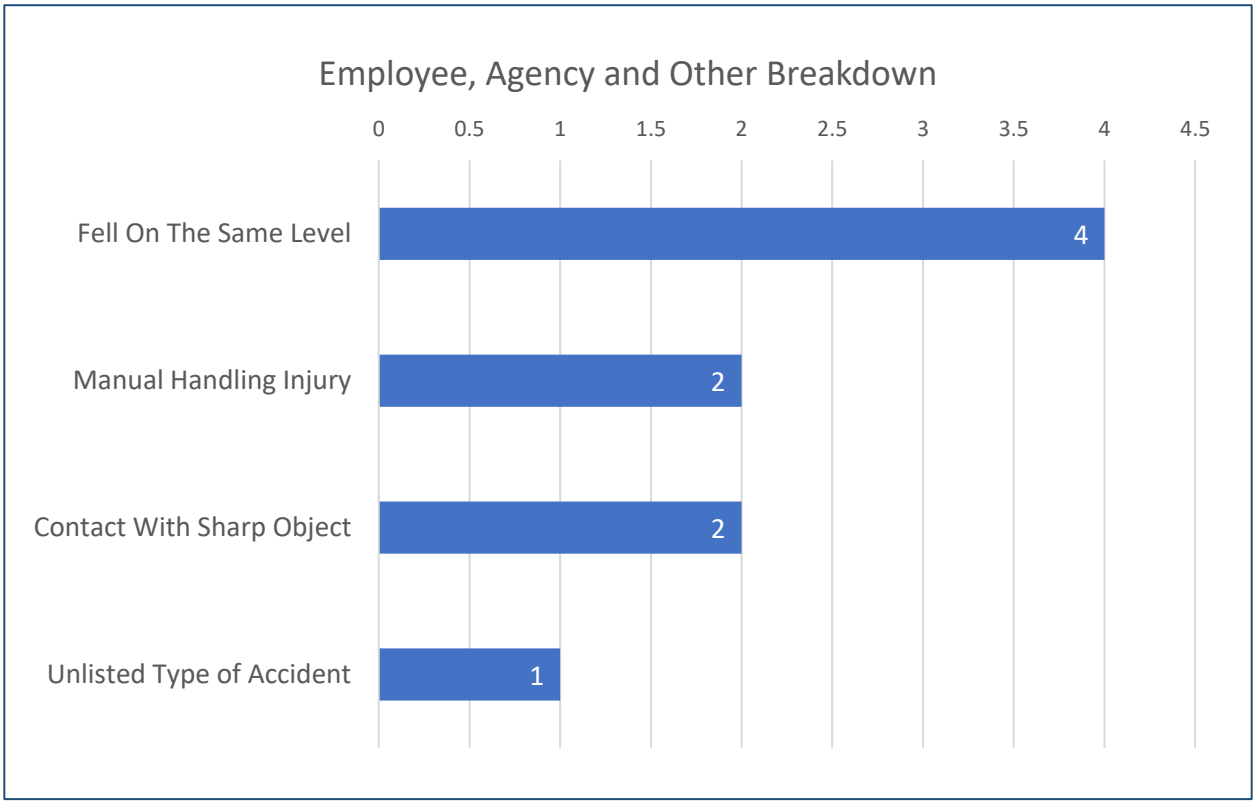
The above charts shows a breakdown of employee, agency staff and other incidents by Directorate/Service Area/Team this Quarter. A total of 12.

Person Involved and Type of Incident

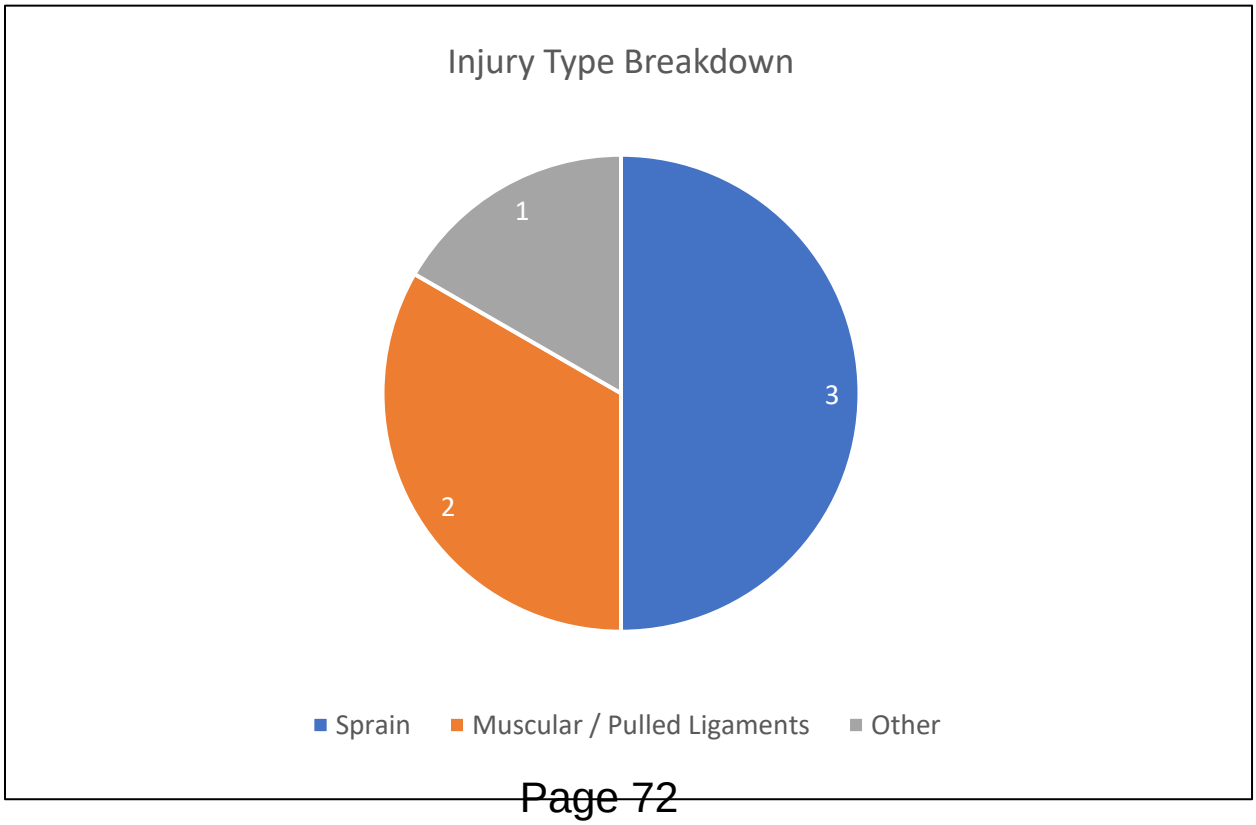




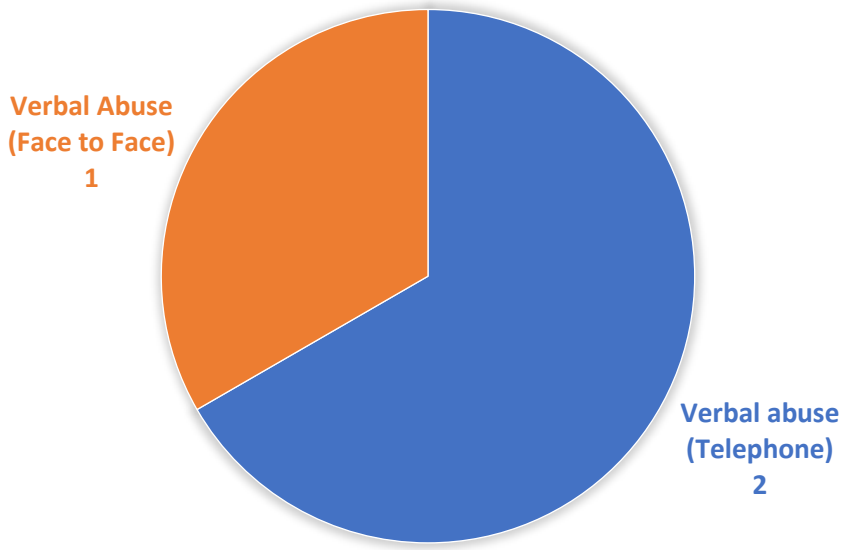
Employee/Agency/Other Accident and Injury Breakdown



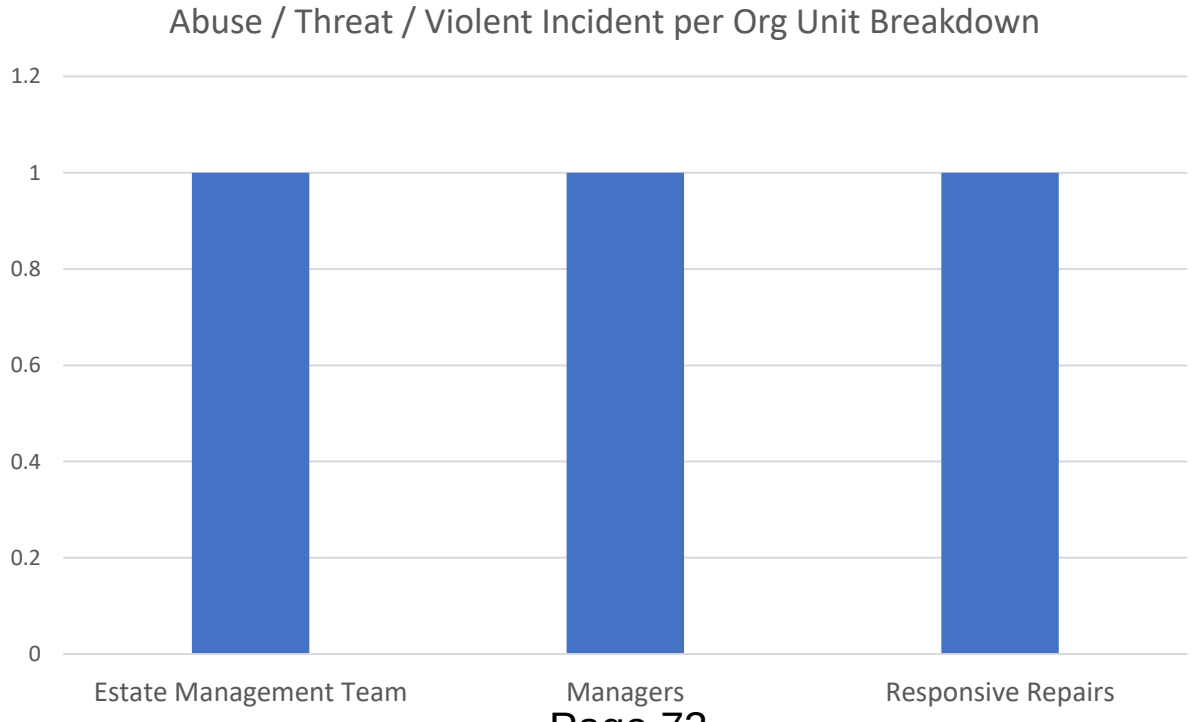
- The above chart shows a breakdown of employee, agency staff and other accidents (a total of 9).
- The chart below shows these broken down by injury type.



Employee/agency and Other Abuse/Threat/Violent Incident Breakdown



- The above chart shows a breakdown of abuse/threat/violent incidents (a total of 3).
- The chart below shows these broken down by Org Unit.



Employee, Agency Staff and Other Summary

Near Miss Reports

There was 1 reported near miss this Quarter.

Managers need to encourage staff to report more near misses to help prevent accidents by removing a potential cause before it can lead to an accident.

Abusive Incidents

There were 3 reported incidents of violence and abusive behaviour this Quarter.

Accidents

There were 8 accidents this Quarter, all minor in nature with no time lost.

RIDDOR Reportable

There were 2 staff RIDDOR reportable accidents this Quarter, one as a result of manual handling injury leading and the other caused by working in a cramped space, both resulted in the employee being unable to perform their normal duties for more than seven days.

Solihull Community Housing

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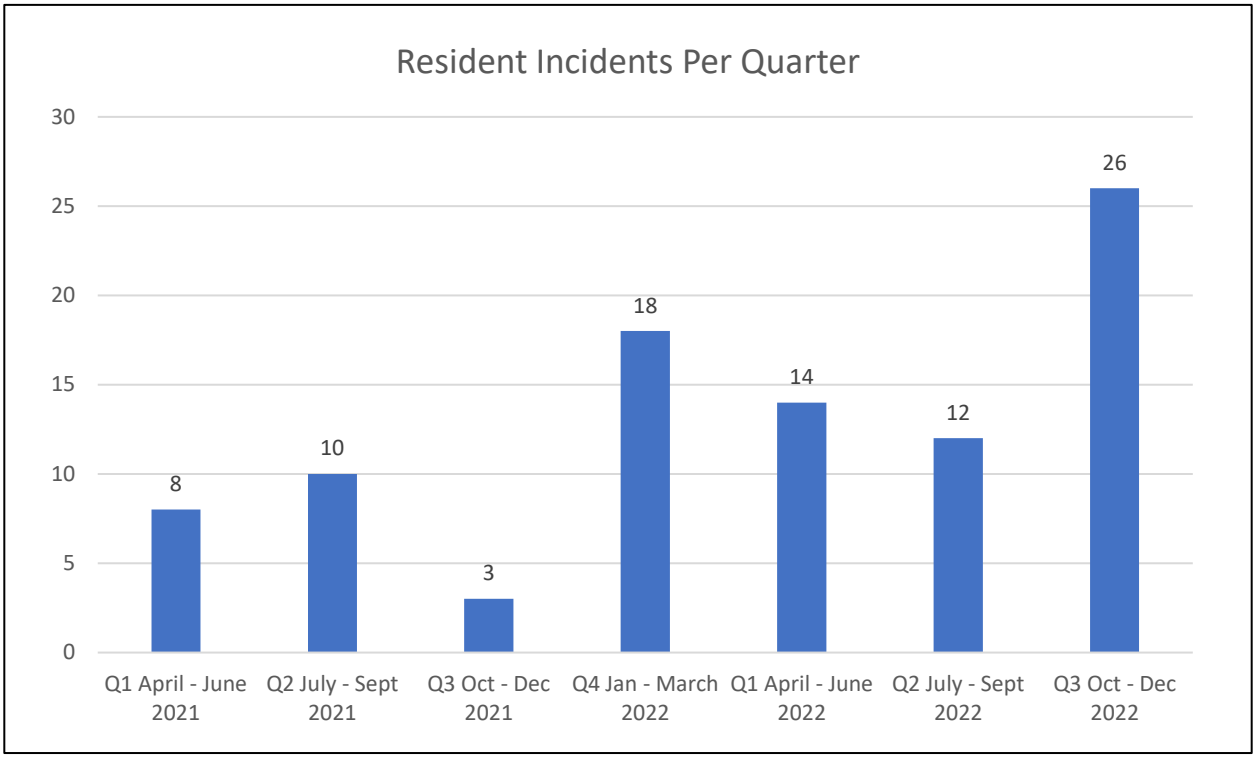
Building and Resident Safety

Incident Statistics Quarter 3

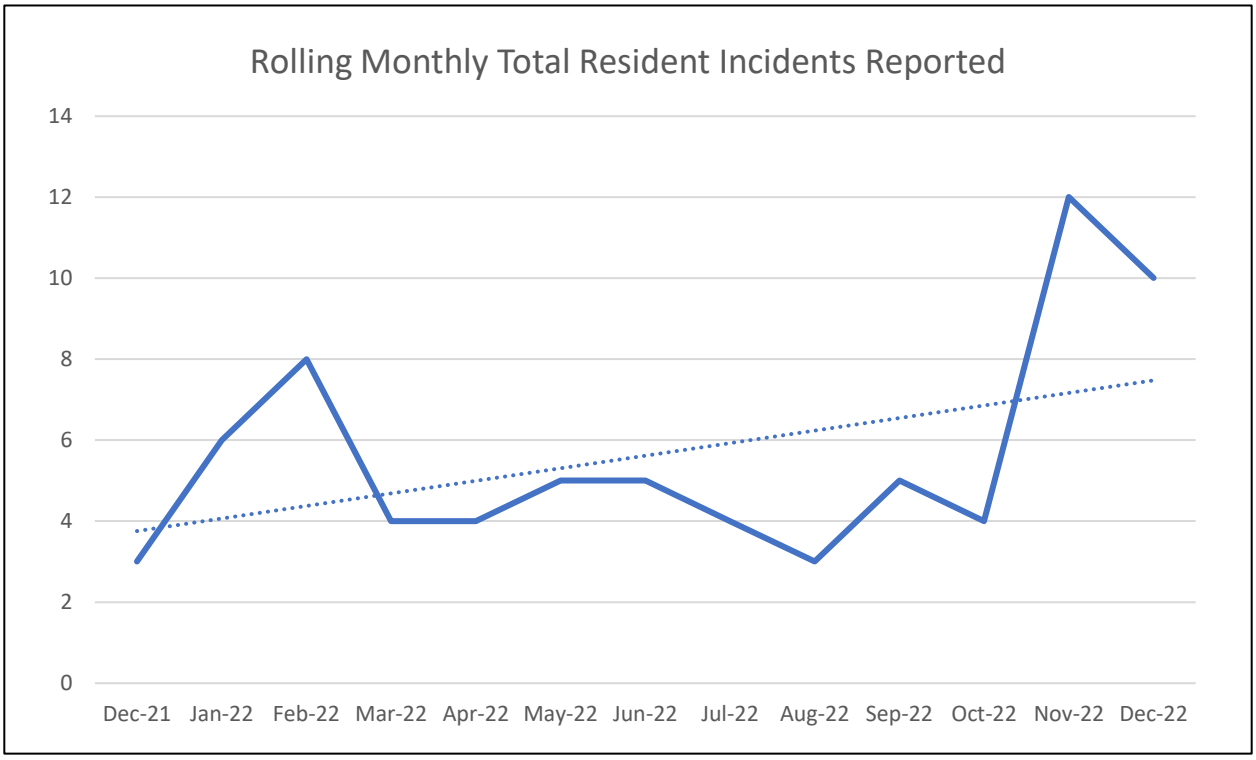
October – December 2022

This section details incidents and near misses involving tenants where a property defect or circumstance was the contributory factor to an injury or near miss and this was the landlords (SCH) responsibility to resolve.

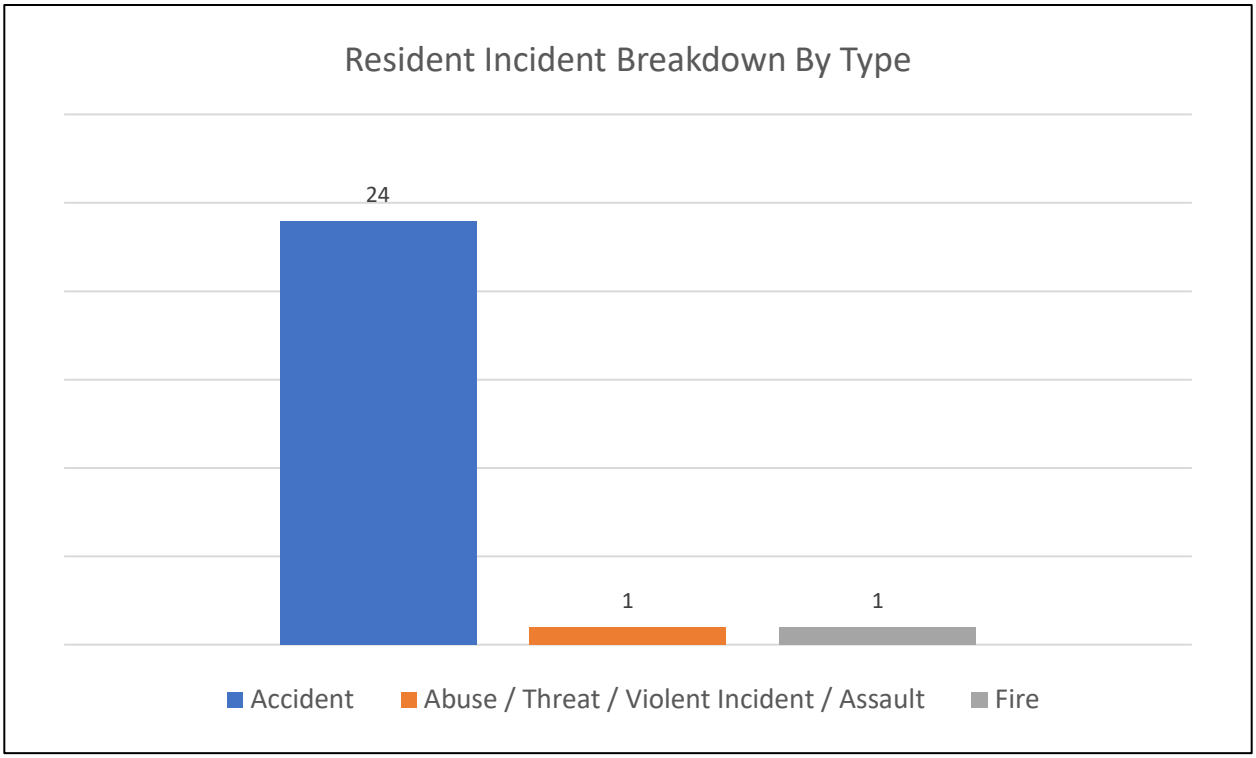
Resident Safety - Tenant Incidents



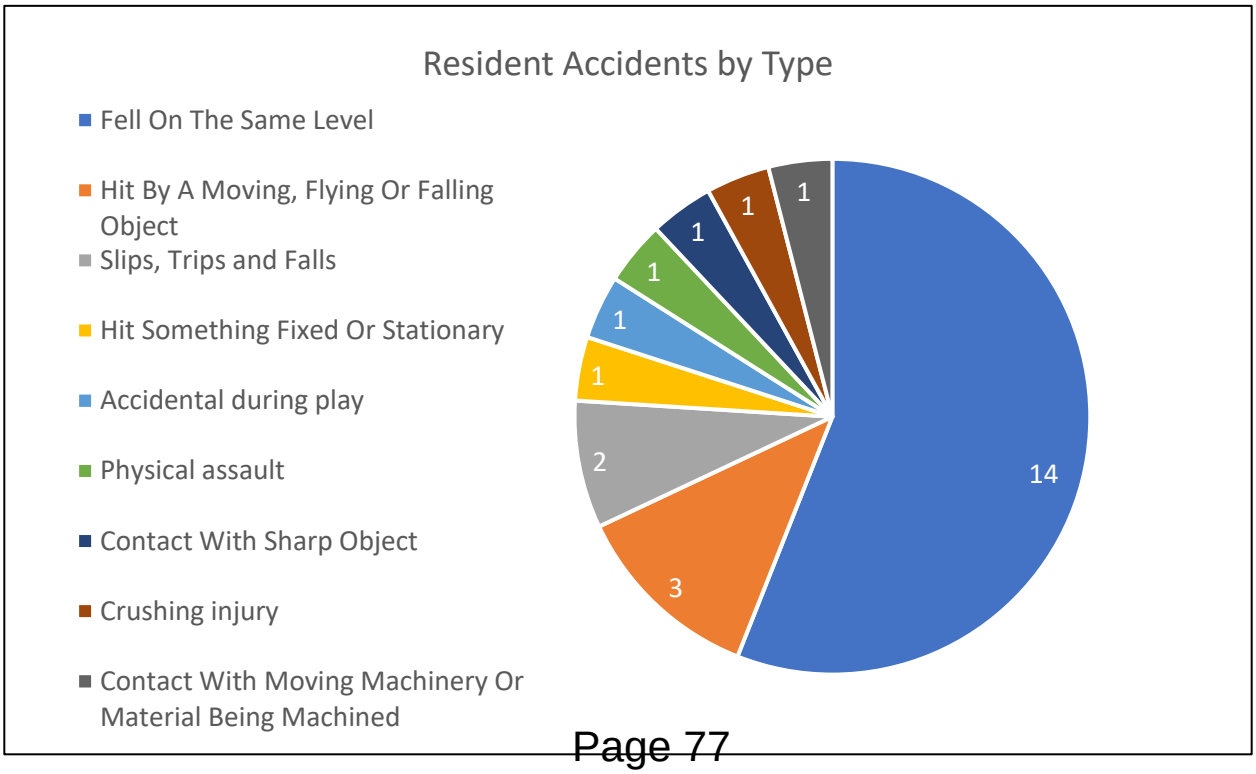
- Resident incidents reported per Quarter.
- The graph below shows the rolling monthly totals of resident reported incidents with addition of trend line.



Resident Safety - Tenant Incidents



- There were 24 resident safety accidents this quarter.
- There were 0 RIDDOR reportable accidents this quarter.
- The graph below shows the accident cause, the majority being falls.



Resident Safety Summary Notes

Near Miss Reports

- There were no near miss incidents reported during Quarter 3 2022/23.
- Near miss reporting is to be encouraged to help prevent accidents by removing a potential cause before it can cause an accident.

Abusive Incidents

- There was one reported incidence of violence and abusive behaviour towards tenants.

Tenant Accidents

Most tenants accidents this Quarter 3 2022 continue to involve a slip, trip or fall of some description. 8 involved wet floors / staircases / leaks, 7 involved faulty equipment / workmanship, 2 involved a lift, 2 were due to mobility issues, and the rest were due to day to day activities.

RIDDOR Reportable

There were no RIDDOR reportable incidents this quarter.

Fire or Property Related Incidents

There was 1 fire incident reported on Assure this Quarter. A separate Fire Log is used to log fire incidents by SCH, until Assure can be configured to enable this.

SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

BOARD MEETING: 20 FEBRUARY 2023

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

REVENUE & CAPITAL FINANCIAL MONITORING AND FORECAST 2022/23 – DECEMBER 2022 (QUARTER 3)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To update the SCH Board on the forecast financial performance as at the 9 months to 31 December 2022 (Quarter 3).

2. Recommendation – Items for Noting and Approving

2.1 The Board is requested to:

(i) **NOTE** the revenue and capital forecast to the year end for the current financial year 2022/23.

(ii) **NOTE** the current and forecast reserves position.

(iii) **NOTE** the award of the contract for the replacement of spandrel panels

(iv) **APPROVE** the use of the Restructure Reserve to fund early leaver costs

3. Financial Performance 2022/23 - General

3.1 This report summarises the Revenue and Capital forecast financial performance based on the three-month period to 31 December 2022. The Financial Dashboard is attached at Appendix A which also includes an update on rent collected and an update on the expected SCH and HRA Reserves outturn position.

3.2 The capital position shows a forecast outturn spend of £24.569million, this follows an overall reduction in this year's budget of £14.932million, as approved by Full Cabinet 12 January 2023.

3.3 Outstanding SCH Accounts Receivable debt features on the dashboard and includes the previous quarter end information for comparison. There are no issues of concern with this position as at Quarter 3.

4. Commentary on Revenue Financial Performance 2022/23

4.1 As at 31 December 2022, the Executive Directors are forecasting an overspend of +£1.238million (6.2%) by the end of the financial year, summarised in Table 1. Of this variance, +£1.308million is attributable

to unavoidable inflationary and contractual cost pressures, leaving a net underspend of (£70,000) from other variances. A further detailed breakdown of variances is shown at Appendix B.

Table 1

	Annual Budget £'000s	**Forecast Variance £'000s**
Chief Executive	2,640	(342)
Housing & Communities	4,937	915
Asset Management	9,284	750
Procurement	115	46
Customer Experience & Business Support	3,287	(131)
Total Revenue Spend	**20,263**	**1,238**

Pay Increases, Inflationary and Contractual Cost Pressures

4.2 At the time of setting the SCH budget, the assumptions made for pay increases, price increase for biomass wood pellets, energy/fuel inflation and contractual inflation were less than experienced:

- Pay award assumed as 2% and on 1 November 2022 the National Employers for local government services and unions agreed a pay award of £1,925 per employee. The impact of this agreement is +£404,000 which is spread across individual service pay budgets.
- A forecast pressure of +£253,000 on the cost of wood pellets used in biomass plants. This pressure has reduced by £142,000 from the quarter 2 based on actual costs experienced to date with a milder autumn in 2022.
- A pressure of +£423,000 is forecast allowing an increase in electricity prices of 37% and gas prices of 60%.
- An overspend on vehicle fuel costs of +£34,000.
- A 10% average increase causing +£169,000 forecast for materials costs in Asset Management.

5. Impact on SCH Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

5.1 The impact of pay inflation, utility cost inflation, contractual inflation and increases to fuel costs have been built into the latest approved SCH 2023/24 budget.

5.2 The additional cost of biomass heating should be offset by additional chargeable rates within the 2023/24 annual fees and charges.

5.3 Where the increased energy costs occur within communal areas, full cost recovery was included within the review of service charges for the 2023/24 budget.

5.4 The short term resource put in place to address the continuing issues around damp and mould and supplement the work of the Responsive Repairs and Better Places Services is expected to continue into 2023/24. It is anticipated this will cost an additional £102,000 and is included as part of the Budget Update report.

5.5 ELT and the Finance Team will continue to monitor these pressures closely in the new financial year.

6. Commentary on Capital Financial Performance 2022/23

6.1 The 2022/23 base capital budget of £33.868million was approved by Full Cabinet on 10 February 2022. A review on 12 January 2023 saw Cabinet note reductions to this budget of £14.932million and approve a net sum of £14.788million to be carried forward into 2023/24, mainly for slippage of the project for the replacement of Spandrel Panels and redevelopments at Kingshurst Village Centre and Lakeside.

6.2 There was £144,000 funding released due to underspends on recent new build schemes (Faulkner Road, Wagon Lane, Brackleys Way, Halifax Road and Willow Way) resulting in a reduced borrowing requirement.

6.3 The carried forward sum of £14.788million will be added into the Housing Capital Programme for 2023/24 increasing the budget for the next financial year to £41.057million, subject to approval from Full Cabinet on 9 March 2023. A summary of the revised 2022/23 capital budget is shown at Table 2.

Table 2

Capital Programme - approved mid-year adjustments	Carry forwards £'000s	Funding Released £'000s
Health, Safety and Legal Obligations	7,127	
Stock Growth (New Build & Acquisitions)	6,842	144
Climate and Energy	200	
Programme Management and ICT	79	
Capital Maintenance and Improvements	50	
Cyclical Capital Maintenance	808	
Adaptations	(350)	
Environment and Estates	(137)	
Crime and Security	169	
	14,788	**144**

7. Use of Reserves

7.1 Appendix A provides details of all reserves and future commitments.

7.2 The SCH Board will be aware of a Management of Change undertaken by the Executive Directors and the outcome of these proposals could potentially lead to early leaver costs. Any individual cases costing greater than £100,000 require the HR Committee approval in compliance with SCH's Standing Orders. It is anticipated that the total cost of all early leaver costs would not exceed £250,000.

7.3 In addition, earlier in 2022/23, SCH incurred £21k of exit costs due to the early departure of staff.

7.4 The Board is requested to approve the use of the Budget Strategy Reserve – Staff Restructuring for these costs which currently has a balance of £923,000 available.

8. Approval of contract for replacement of spandrel panels

8.1 Board members will be aware of the project to replace spandrel panels used in enclosed balconies from 16 of our high rise blocks, progress has been regularly reported to the Board since 2020. A total cost for the project of £8.755million was approved by Full Cabinet on 3 December 2020 and approval to enter a contract greater than £2.500million was given by Full Cabinet on 10 February 2022.

8.2 A competitive procurement process facilitated by Communities and Housing Investment Consortium (CHIC) Limited has now been completed with an intent to award the contract to Elhance Limited. Whilst the company failed financial checks, the associated risks and suitable mitigations have been identified by the Acting Executive Director of Asset Management and Development and the situation will be monitored closely by the SCH Building Safety Board. The SCH Board are asked to note the completion of the procurement process and the appointment of Elhance Limited to deliver the Spandrel Panel Project.

9. HRA Rent Collection and Debt Impairment (Information Items)

9.1 Rent collection and Debt Impairment tables are also included within the dashboard for information, although rental income is paid into the Council's HRA account. Any change to rental income ultimately affects HRA funds available for future years' SCH management fee. The dashboard shows that for HRA owned properties the collection rate is 97.31% and for SCH owned properties it is 100.91%.

9.2 The HRA Debt Impairment, previously referred to as the 'Bad Debts Provision' has significantly fluctuated over recent years and can be difficult to estimate. This provision is allocated from within HRA resources and therefore any over-estimate results in a reduction in funds available for the SCH Management fee. The financial assumptions relating to the rollout of Universal Credit were prudent and as the actual impact has been realised, it has enabled a reduction to the HRA debt impairment in the budget setting assumptions. In the event additional funding for debt impairment is required, funds have been earmarked within the Welfare Reform Reserve. The dashboard shows that as at Quarter 3 we have a requirement to provide for an additional £999,000 of HRA debt impairment, in addition to the £37,000 of write-offs this year to date. These charges will exceed the available budget in 2022/23 of £809,000.

9.3 Debt impairment for the SCH owned developments is currently showing a net charge of (£5,000) compared to the available budget of £10,000.

10. Financial Implications

10.1 The financial implications are included within the content of this report.

11. Equality and Diversity Implications

11.1 None specifically arising.

12. Risk Management Implications

12.1 Financial risks are addressed in the main body of the report and significant financial risks are included within the relevant risk registers.

13. Value for Money and Efficiency Considerations/Implications

13.1 None specifically – this report is a monitoring report detailing the usage of available funds across the organisation.

14. Tenant Involvement/Consultation

14.1 None required.

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Financial Dashboard as at Dec-22 - Period 9

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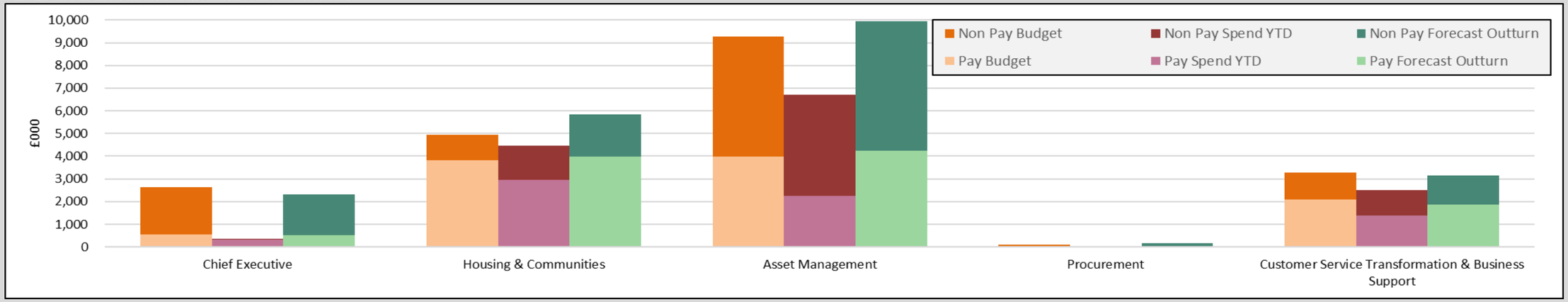
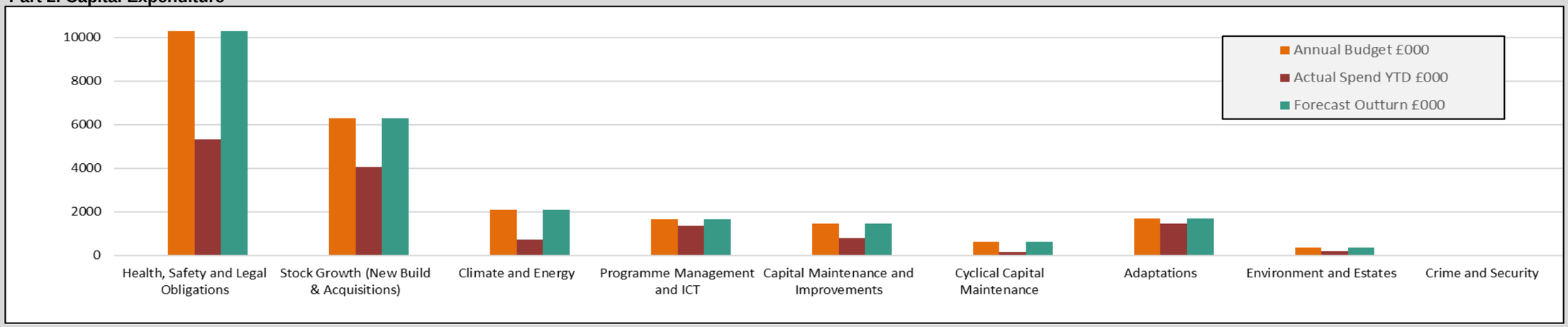
Part 1: Revenue Position - Current Forecast



Service Area	Annual Budget £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Forecast Variance £000	Previous Quarter Forecast Variance £000	Movement from previous Quarter £000	Explanation of forecast variance / Explanation for movement in variance from previous period
Chief Executive	2,640	2,309	(342)	149	(480)	(£244k) underspend due to (one-off) unallocated budget held by Chief Executive and (£45k) underspend on Pay due to an ED leaving mid-year. (£20k) staff conference now planned 23/24, (£21k) on SMBC SLA and other minor underspends of (£12k)
Housing & Communities	4,937	5,852	915	546	369	Overspends due to inflationary/ contractual pressures for energy costs prices +£338k and CCTV contract additional cost +£25k. The net payroll forecast overspend of +£107k includes the impact of the higher than budgeted pay award of approximately £147k. Pressures within the provision of the homelessness and temporary accommodation services of +£299k include the net cost of providing budget hotel accommodation (after housing benefit claims), furniture, legal costs, tenant medicals and private sector rent costs. Further adverse variances include continued reduced income within the Wellbeing service +£69k and an increase in the costs of cesspool emptying +£45k. A further pressure for the Standby costs recharge to Wellbeing +£40k is offset within Asset Management.
Asset Management	9,284	10,034	750	553	197	Overspends due to inflationary pressures for energy costs prices +£69k, costs of Biomass pellets +£253k, materials price pressure +£169k and vehicle fuel costs +£34k. The net payroll forecast overspend of +£182k includes the impact of the higher than budgeted pay award of approximately £173k and the costs of additional resources to increase our response to damp and mould issues within properties £52k. Further adverse variances due to Complaints compensation & legal costs +£175k and reduced Biomass income +£133k. The above pressures are part offset by reduced subcontractor spend within day to day (£104k) and void (£45k) repairs; and additional income for minor adaptations works (£80k). A further favourable variance pressure for Standby costs recharge to Wellbeing (£40k) is offset within Housing and Communities
Procurement	115	161	46	8	38	SLA charges from SMBC +£38k and under achieved income on the CPC Rebate (Consortium Procurement Construction) +£8k.
Customer Transformation & Business Support	3,287	3,156	(131)	(101)	(30)	Overspends due to inflationary/ contractual pressures for energy costs prices +£16k. The net payroll forecast underspend of (£73k) includes the impact of the higher than budgeted pay award of approximately £67k. Favourable variances are due to premises costs following the closure of Coppice Way (£58k), reduced Endeavour House running costs of (£44k), training spend (£20k) and a late receipt of Kickstart income for 2021/22 (£22k). Part offset by overspends due to Board remuneration +£38k, corporate subscriptions +£24k and professional fees +£42k. Other minor net variances (£16k)
Revenue Total	**20,263**	**21,512**	**1,238**	**1,155**	**94**	

Solihull Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Part 2. Capital Expenditure



Capital Classification	Annual Budget £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Forecast Variance £000	Previous Quarter Forecast Variance £000	Movement from previous Quarter £000	Explanation of forecast variance / Explanation for movement in variance from previous quarter
Health, Safety and Legal Obligations	10,306	10,306	0	(5,327)	5,327	Reduced budget follows Capital mid-year amendments of (£7.127m). Approved carry forwards into 2023/24 include continued funding for the Spandrel Panel replacement project (funded by borrowing) £7.000m.
Stock Growth (New Build & Acquisitions)	6,305	6,305	0	(5,134)	5,134	Reduced budget follows Capital mid-year amendments of (£6.986m). Approved carry forwards into 2023/24 are for the housing element of the Kingshurst Village Centre redevelopment £2.550m, the redevelopment of Lakeside £2.542m, the Council's DIY Shared Ownership scheme £1.000m and for property acquisitions £750.000
Climate and Energy	2,110	2,110	0	150	(150)	Reduced budget follows Capital mid-year amendments of (£0.200m).
Programme Management and ICT	1,664	1,664	0	21	(21)	Reduced budget follows Capital mid-year amendments of (£0.079m).
Capital Maintenance and Improvements	1,467	1,467	0	(150)	150	Reduced budget follows Capital mid-year amendments of (£0.050m).
Cyclical Capital Maintenance	642	642	0	(400)	400	Reduced budget follows Capital mid-year amendments of (£0.808m).
Adaptations	1,685	1,685	0	18	(18)	Increased budget follows Capital mid-year amendments of +£0.350m.
Environment and Estates	350	350	0	0	0	Increased budget follows Capital mid-year amendments of +£0.137m.
Crime and Security	40	40	0	(189)	189	Reduced budget follows Capital mid-year amendments of (£0.169m).
	24,569	**24,569**	**0**	**(11,011)**	**11,011**	**Reduced budget follows Capital mid-year amendments of (£14.932m) approved by Cabinet 12-Jan-23. Of this, a net sum of £14.788m has been approved to carry forward into 2023/24.**

Solihull Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Part 3. 1-4-1 Receipts

Cumulative 1-4-1 Receipts		Cumulative Required Spend	Cumulative Actual Spend to date	Spend Required	Cumulative Purchases Required [1]	Match Funding Required
Received	To be spent by	£	£	£		£
2017/18	2022/23	516,503	1,520,456			
2018/19	2023/24	1,143,429		0	0	0
2019/20	No RTB receipts from 2019/20 onwards have been identified as required for use as 1-4-1 spend.					

From April 2021 the Pooling regulations changed to allow 5 years to spend the 1-4-1 receipts and to increase proportion of receipts that can fund properties from 30% to 40%. These changes have been reflected in the above Dashboard.

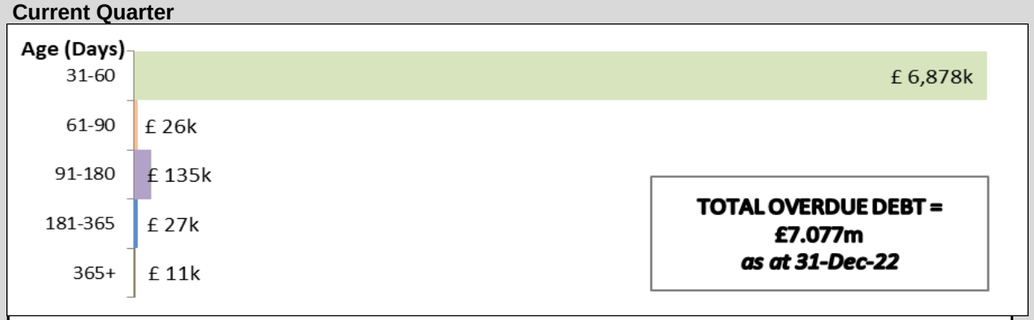
Part 4. Reserves

Solihull Community Housing Reserves	Balance 01/04/2022 £000	Forecast use 2022/23 £000	Forecast use 2023/24 £000	Forecast use 2024/25 £000	Forecast Balance 31/03/2025 £000	Comments
Minimum Working Balance	(1,500)	0	0	0	(1,500)	
Budget Strategy Reserve (BSR)	(996)	216	0	0	(780)	Forecast use: £89k Digital Transformation, £90k Apprenticeships, £37k PSL.
BSR: Restructure costs	(923)	21	0	0	(902)	
General Reserve	(5,960)	2,617	1,198	849	(1,296)	Forecast use: Budgeted Revenue deficits £238k, current forecast variance £1.238m, High Rise structural surveys £1.392m, One SCH project £1.506m, Home Options Office £290k.
TOTAL SCH RESERVES	**(9,379)**	**2,854**	**1,198**	**849**	**(4,478)**	

Housing Revenue Account Reserves (held by SMBC)	Balance 01/04/2022 £000	Forecast use 2022/23 £000	Forecast use 2023/24 £000	Forecast use 2024/25 £000	Forecast Balance 31/03/2025 £000	Comments
Working Balances (minimum £2m)	(5,362)	(839)	585	32	(5,584)	Overall HRA (Surplus)/ Deficit as per 2023/24 Draft MTFS.
Welfare Reform / HRA Balances	(1,407)	409	445	328	(225)	Forecast use (3 years) includes £635k towards HRA Debt Impairment, further £226k for Mobysoft system, further £306k for agreed temporary WRR-funded posts.
Earmarked: Regeneration	(212)	0	0	0	(212)	
Earmarked: Capital investment	(2,369)	519	1,750	0	(100)	Forecast use for acquisitions funding £1.269m and DIY Shared Ownership Scheme £1.000m
High Rise Sprinklers Reserve	(534)	534	0	0	0	
sub-total HRA Revenue Reserves	**(9,884)**	**623**	**2,780**	**360**	**(6,121)**	
Major Repairs Reserve	(2,545)	564	1,866	0	(115)	Annual top-up and use of MRR, spend includes £5.351m allocated to increased cost of High Rise Sprinklers retrofit.
High Rise Sprinklers Reserve	(2,587)	2,587	0	0	0	
RTB Receipts Reserves	(12,885)	3,769	683	(2,094)	(10,527)	RTB receipts annually, forecast use includes £3.6m Bromford Phase 2 acquisition,£4.700m towards KHVC redevelopment - housing element.
Capital Receipts Unapplied	(55)	(855)	858	0	(52)	
sub-total HRA Capital Reserves	**(18,072)**	**6,065**	**3,407**	**(2,094)**	**(10,694)**	
TOTAL HRA RESERVES	**(27,956)**	**6,688**	**6,187**	**(1,734)**	**(16,815)**	

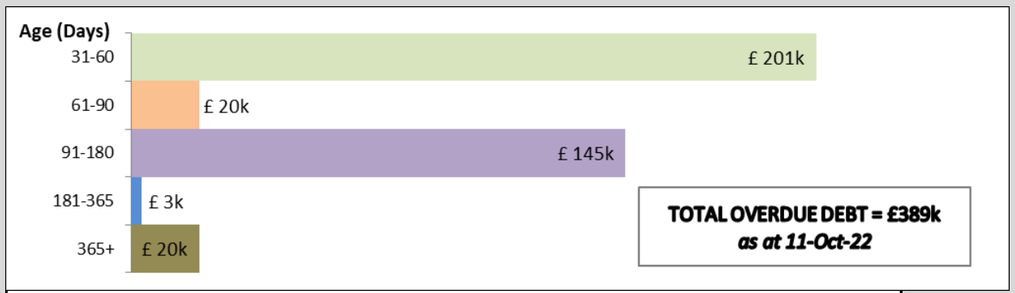
Part 5. Age of Outstanding Accounts Receivable Debts

Current Quarter



Total AR Debt outstanding of £18.950m includes £18.788m owed by the Council (99%)

Previous Quarter



Total AR Debt outstanding of £6.852m included £6.687m owed by the Council (98%)

Financial Dashboard as at Dec-22 - Period 9

Solihull Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Part 6: Rent Collection

HRA Income	
Overall Income Due	£33,849,703
HRA Income	£32,938,554
Rent Roll	£32,765,470
Percentage rent collected of rent due	97.31%
Percentage rent collected of rent due excl. arrears b/fwd	100.53%

SCH Income	
SCH Rents collectable	£139,468
SCH income of rent due	£140,738
SCH Collection percentage	100.91%

Part 7. Debt Impairment

HRA Arrears	Total HRA Debt £	Impairment Required £
31-Mar-22	3,578,643	2,732,831
13-Jan-23	4,841,085	3,731,458
Increase/ (Decrease)		**998,627**
Add: Net Write offs YTD		37,426
TOTAL CHARGE TO DEBT IMPAIRMENT		**1,036,053**
Budget available for contribution to Debt Impairment		809,000

SCH Arrears	Total SCH Debt £	Impairment Required £
31-Mar-22	160,897	148,061
13-Jan-23	116,697	97,953
Increase/ (Decrease)		**(50,108)**
Add: Net Write offs YTD		55,218
TOTAL CHARGE TO DEBT IMPAIRMENT		**5,110**
Budget available for contribution to Debt Impairment		10,000

Appendix B

REVENUE & CAPITAL FINANCIAL MONITORING AND FORECAST 2022/23 – DECEMBER 2022 (QUARTER 3)

Other variances by Directorate

1.1 A further 'unavoidable' cost pressure of +£25,000 resulted from the CCTV monitoring contract contractor's staff cost increase to the national living wage of +£25,000.

1.2 Asset Management: +£52,000 net overspend. Includes an estimated +£175,000 for the costs of complaints compensation and associated legal charges by the end of the year. Costs totaled £160,000 last year for the settlement and part-payment of 40 disrepair claims. There were 43 outstanding claims carried forward into the 2022/23 financial year from previous years and 70 new claims have been received to December 2022. Attempts to reach an agreeable settlement before legal costs escalate by the Customer Service Team have led to a reduced average amount per claim. There is a corporate task and finish group established to review issues with damp and mould. Due to the increased number of reported cases of damp and mould including disrepair claims, additional resources have been brought into the organisation on a temporary basis to focus on this area of work. The forecast includes £52,000 for the implementation of this team in 2022/23, with a further £102,000 expected to be spent in 2023/24 (see also paragraph 8.4).

1.3 Other forecast pressures include waste disposal pressures associated with changes to disposal requirements based on regulations e.g. paint, furniture and electrical waste as well as an increase in overall waste of +£53,000 and the Biomass service (excluding pressures in 4.4 and 4.5 above) - predominantly due to reduced income expectations of +£133,000. Other minor net overspends total +£9,000.

1.4 These pressures are mostly offset by reduced spend on day to day and void contractors (£149,000), the main areas of underspend being asbestos removal following an increased use of our own workforce and void electrical works where activity up to December is 16% less than at the same period last year. Increased recharges to capital are forecast for the Minor Adaptations service based on a full cost recovery model (£80,000); and a forecast underspend on Electrical testing (£65,000) - where the testing leads to capital works being undertaken the cost of the tests is met from the capital budget. Additional internal recharge income of (£76,000) is forecast for staff time from Wellbeing and the Kingshurst Village Centre project.

1.5 Housing & Communities – +£405,000 net overspend. Continuing pressures are being experienced within the Homelessness service, notably we are forecasting for the continuing requirement to use budget hotels – the net cost of hotels after housing benefit claims income is now expected to be a pressure of +£202,000, following short-term difficulties in processing claims. Further adverse variances are expected on the cost of furniture within temporary accommodation units

+£24,000, the cost of tenant medicals, where we have commissioned the independent medical advisor to the end of December +£18,000, legal costs of +£24,000 and additional rent costs of private sector leased properties +£31,000.

1.6 The Wellbeing service is continuing to experience difficulties in meeting income targets following the loss of customers during the Covid pandemic which has not yet been recovered, resulting in a forecast shortfall of +£69,000 against budget. The customer incentive initiatives proposed as part of the update to fees and charges for 2023/24 (paragraph 9.2) are planned to improve this position in the future. In addition, the cost of out of hours staffing has been charged to reflect the full costs of the service +£40,000 (offset in Asset Management).

1.7 Other minor net underspends within Housing and Communities total (£3,000).

1.8 Customer Service Transformation and Business Support – (£214,000) net underspend. The introduction of Board member remuneration +£38,000 and overspends on professional fees +£42,000 are more than offset by net staffing underspends of (£140,000), building cost savings following the decants from Coppice Way and Kingshurst Area Office (£65,000), other building supplies and services costs (£44,000) and other minor net underspends of (£45,000).

1.9 Chief Executive – (£359,000) net underspend. Within this directorate a one-off budget of £334,000 was allocated to meet unexpected pressures. To date £90,000 of this has been allocated for the refurbishment works at SCH office locations; the forecast variance of (£244,000) assumes no further use of this budget allowing the part-mitigation of the underlying pressures outlined above. Due to a part-year vacant Executive Director post there is an expected pay underspend of (£62,000). Other net underspends total (£53,000).

1.10 Procurement - +£46,000 overspend due to additional agency costs and reduced income from the Consortium Procurement Construction rebate.

2. SCH and HRA Reserves Position

2.1 The SCH Reserves at 1 April 2022 were a net negative balance of £4.708million, due to the negative Pensions Reserve balance of £14.087million. This is not included on the Reserves schedule within the Financial Dashboard as it is not considered repayable in the foreseeable future as the Council provides its continuing support to fund the pension's deficit on an annual basis.

2.2 The remaining positive reserves of £9.379million, includes the Budget Strategy Reserve of £1.919million, of which £923k is earmarked for restructure costs, £280k for the continued funding of the Digital Transformation team and £90k for the apprenticeship scheme.

2.3 Within the General Reserve balance of £5.960million, allocations have been earmarked for structural surveys within high rise blocks (£1.392million), relocation of the Home Options office (£290,000) and the funding of the OneSCH workflow system (£1.506million). The current year deficit forecast of £1.476million (being the budgeted deficit of £238,000 plus the forecast variance of £1.238million) is also forecast to be funded from this reserve.

2.4 The HRA Reserves as at 1 April 2022 were £27.956million made up of £9.884million revenue reserves and £18.072million capital reserves.

2.5 The HRA Revenue Reserves are forecast to decrease by £623,000 in 2022/23, due to £519,000 funding of the property acquisition programme (including match funding the use of 1-4-1 receipts), £534,000 further HRA revenue contribution to the Sprinkler project and £409,000 approved use of the Welfare Reform Reserves. There is also an expected surplus on the HRA Account for 2022/23 of (£839,000) which will be contributed into the reserve.

2.6 The HRA Capital Reserves are forecast to decrease by a net £6.065million in 2022/23, due primarily to the use of retained RTB receipts in order to fund the acquisition of homes from Bromford Housing £3.600million and the housing elements of the redevelopment at Kingshurst Village Centre £2.000million; in addition to the use of previously earmarked reserves to continue the installation of sprinklers within Solihull's high rise buildings £2.587million.

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SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

BOARD MEETING: 20 FEBRUARY 2023

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

2023/24 BUDGET UPDATE

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To update the SCH Board on the HRA Budget and consider revisions to the SCH 2023/24 Budget.

2. Recommendation – Items for Noting and Approving

2.1 The Board is requested to:

(i) **NOTE** the outcome of the DLUHC consultation.

(ii) **NOTE** the HRA 2023/24 budget approved by Full Cabinet on 9 February 2023.

(iii) **APPROVE** SCH owned property rents.

(iv) **APPROVE** SCH owned shared ownership rents.

(v) **APPROVE** the proposed schedule of fees and charges.

3. HRA 2023/24 Rent Increase Update

3.1 In recent years the HRA rent increase has been agreed at the legislated maximum which is capped at the September CPI rate plus 1%. In anticipation of a significant CPI rate increase for 2022 the modelling presented to the Budget Strategy Group meeting and the SCH Board was based on a rent increase of 5% for 2023/24 resulting in average weekly HRA social rents increasing from £89.56 to £94.04, or £4.48 per week over an annual 50-week year.

3.2 The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) launched a consultation seeking views on introducing revised legislation to limit increases temporarily to 5%. The Office of National Statistics confirmed the September 2022 CPI rate as 10.1% compared to 3.1% in September 2021 and the outcome of the DLUHC consultation on a rent increase cap was announced as part of the Autumn Statement at a maximum 7% rent increase.

3.3 The 2023/24 HRA rent report considered by Cabinet on 9 February 2023 included a model based on a 5% rent increase with a comparison for a 7% rent increase. After careful consideration, the decision to approve a

5% rent increase was approved. A link to the Cabinet report is shown below:

https://eservices.solihull.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s107387/Housing%20Revenue%20Account%20Estimates%20and%20Rent%20Increases%20202324.pdf

3.4 Rents for shared ownership properties would usually increase as per their tenancy agreements which are subject to RPI (at February 2023) + 0.5% with effect from 1 April 2023. Following the Autumn Statement announcement, communications from DLUHC identified this issue across landlords and was supportive of these rental increases also being limited to the temporary maximum increase. For this reason, Cabinet also approved to limit rents for shared ownership properties to 5%.

4. SCH 2023/24 Rents

4.1 SCH Board approved a 5% rent increase for 2023/24 for SCH owned properties on 8 November 2022, which is in keeping with the HRA rent increase. However, the maximum increase allowable would be 7% and the Board may wish to reconsider the rent increase.

4.2 With regard to SCH shared ownership rents, the SCH Board also approved a rent increase in keeping with the tenancy agreements of RPI (as at February 2023) + 0.5% with effect from 1 April 2023. In light of the subsequent DLUHC communication, the Board may wish to reconsider SCH shared ownership rent increases at either the recommended 7% maximum, or 5% to align with the Cabinet decision and not differentiate between Council and SCH owned properties.

5. Approval of Fees & Charges for 2023/24

5.1 A schedule of fees and charges for 2023/24 was approved by the Board on 8 November 2022 as part of the Revenue and Capital Budget Report comprising of Council delegated housing services and SCH fees and charges. At that point, further work was required for some items and this has now been concluded with the proposed fees and charges set out at Appendix A for Board approval.

Wellbeing Service Charges

5.2 Increases to the 2023/24 fees and charges for the Wellbeing Service are also included in Appendix A and there is more work required for the service to identify options to stretch towards achieving their budgeted surplus position. A recently finalised internal audit report has identified the need for a business plan that would set out plans to increase demand and make the service more attractive to new customers.

5.3 The Council is in the process of implementing a service level agreement with SCH for the provision of telecare services and SCH is working collaboratively with the Council to increase referrals from Adult Social Care. There is a potential to extend the level of support on offer in the home and provide adults to be safely independent whilst generating service income. This will be explored further as part of the Wellbeing Service business plan.

6. Use of Reserves

6.1 The Revenue and Capital Financial Monitoring and Forecast 2022/23 – December 2022 (Quarter 3) report outlines the continuing issues around damp & mould and that a short-term resource has been put in place to supplement the work of the Responsive Repairs and Better Places Services.

6.2 The overall cost of this resource and materials for an approximate 6-month period is £154,000 which will fall between both 2022/23 and 2023/24. The Board is further requested to approve the use of the General Reserve up to £102,000 to continue this programme of works into 2023/24.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The financial implications are included within the content of this report.

8. Equality and Diversity Implications

8.1 None specifically arising.

9. Risk Management Implications

9.1 Financial risks are addressed in the main body of the report and significant financial risks are included within the relevant risk registers.

10. Value for Money and Efficiency Considerations/Implications

10.1 None specifically – this report is a monitoring report detailing the usage of available funds across the organisation.

11. Tenant Involvement/Consultation

11.1 None required.

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SUMMARY OF CHARGES 2023/24

Appendix A

	2022/23	2023-24	Inc/ (Dec) £	Inc/ (Dec) %	Full Cost Recovery	Under / (Over) recovery compared to Full Cost	Comments
SECTION 1 - CHARGES FOR APPROVAL UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY FROM CABINET							
Saxon Court							
Respite units (52 weeks)	229.09	254.53	25.44	11.10%	254.53	0.00	Includes utilities, rent, service charges, furniture and equipment replacement, gas servicing and weekly cleaning products.
SECTION 2 - CHARGES FOR APPROVAL - SCH BUDGETS							
Laundry Services (charges inc.VAT at 20%):							
Washing machine (per use)	5.00	5.00	0.00	0.00%	5.85	0.85	Provision of laundry service currently under review, where leased equipment is retained no increase is proposed for 2023/24.
Tumble dryer (per use)	4.00	4.00	0.00	0.00%	3.85	(0.15)	
SCH Wellbeing Service							
Safe and Sound Lite Plan - analogue/digital(per week)	3.63	3.79	0.16	4.50%	3.99	0.20	There is a limited market for these services in Solihull (Age UK is another significant service provider, albeit with a narrower offer) but, based on the available data, we remain confident that SCH's charges are competitive. These comparisons are reflected in the proposed uplifts, with weekly charges increasing by 4.50% (well below inflation) but higher charges for one-off services reflecting the additional staff costs involved, following the 2022/23 pay award.
Safe and Sound Plan - analogue/digital (per week)	6.04	6.31	0.27	4.50%	6.64	0.33	
Additional equipment added to above plans (per week)	1.11	1.16	0.05	4.50%	1.22	0.06	
Set up cost	41.52	48.50	6.98	16.81%	45.67	(2.83)	
Installation of equipment	41.52	48.50	6.98	16.81%	45.67	(2.83)	
GSM Sim Card within telecare equipment (per month)	4.00	5.00	1.00	25.00%	5.00	0.00	
GPS Tracker SIM cards (per month)	7.00	7.00	0.00	0.00%	7.00	0.00	In order to achieve a breakeven position for the service additional customer numbers will be required, a number of marketing incentives are under consideration in order to increase demand and make the service more attractive to new customers.
Key Safe	86.60	98.00	11.40	13.16%	95.26	(2.74)	
Callout charge - during office hours		48.50		new	31.14	(17.36)	
Callout charge - Out of hours		65.00		new	79.56	14.56	
Handyperson Service (no VAT is charged)	21.75	22.73	0.98	4.50%	23.93	1.20	

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SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

HOUSING OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair's Report from the Meeting held on 14 November 2022

Recommendation for Full Board:

The Board is asked to:

(i) **Note** the matters considered by the Committee.

Board Members present at the meeting: Phil Hardy (chair); April Halpin; Gail Sleigh; Louise Tubbs

SCH Panel Members: Denis Carlin and Thelma Johnson (Item 6 only)

Officers present: Fiona Hughes; Martyn Sargeant; Mike Brymer; Carol Trappett; Becci Youlden; Mary Moroney; Barbara Griffiths and Andy Duke (Item 9 only).

Summary of Committee Meeting:

1. SCHAPE PANEL REVIEW

We received a report from the SCHape Panel on their review of support for customers during the cost-of-living crisis and for those impacted by damp and mould. The areas reviewed were:

- Money Advice Team (MAT)
- Mental Health support
- Employment and skills
- Furniture recycling
- Partnership working (Localities)
- Damp and Mould

The key recommendations included a request to explore the possibility within acknowledged budget constraints to employ additional resources, offer permanent contracts in place of fixed term to provide stability, use staff across the business to help with providing basic advice and signposting and working with the voluntary sector. Specific recommendations around damp and mould included targeted communications and provision of drying facilities for those living in flats.

2. REVIEW OF ACCESS TO HOUSING/ FAIR TREATMENT ASSESSMENT

The purpose of completing the FTA is to ensure that there are no barriers to people with a protective characteristic accessing the Housing register. This is an interim FTA pending outcome of review of the allocations policy. Several actions have been

identified, particularly updating the customer portal and adding a new question to identify whether the applicant has been or is being subjected to Domestic Abuse, exploitation or harassment.

3. PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Headline is an increase in the number of green indicators but also one additional red target. For rent arrears we expect it to be around 3.7% by year end as cost of living crisis is impacting. It is likely that the target for 2023/24 will need to reflect this and likely to be around 3.8%. In terms of void rent loss, we are proposing 1.8 next year as opposed to 0.9 this year as the number of voids outside of our control or unavailable for let are currently at 25% of all voids which is making the current target impossible to achieve.

The harm reduction target is not the right measure as the small numbers of people taking part in the survey skews the figures and not everyone who experiences ASB is at risk of harm. The Council had requested the measure, but it will be superseded by the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM), and we are proposing with Board's approval in February to change this indicator to reflect the TSM.

In terms of the Cost Per Property (CPP) the major works and cyclical maintenance increase is mainly due to the fire protection works.

4. NEW BUILD AND ACQUISITIONS UPDATE

The Lakeside development is progressing, and the full planning application will be considered in December. Full planning has been obtained for a development of two and three bedroomed houses in Anglesey Avenue and it is hoped to package this development with Lakeside to achieve economies of scale.

There are two garage sites in Daylesford Road, which it is hoped will allow the development of 15 new homes. A planning application has been submitted for three family homes on a garage site at Campden Green. We intend to package the three sites together in terms of procurement to maximise economies of scale.

Greenhill Way is progressing, and a decision has been made that a community facility does not have to be included within the scheme which permits maximising the number of residential units that can be built.

Other pipeline developments include Middlewood House where the proposal is for 21 new social rent family homes providing a mixture of two, three and four bedroomed homes. We noted that work on the Kingshurst Village Centre, was due to commence towards the end of November.

Phil Hardy
Chair of Housing Operations Committee

29 December 2022

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SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

HOUSING OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair's Report from the Meeting held on 6 February 2023

Recommendation for Full Board:

The Board is asked to:

(i) Note the matters considered by the Committee.

Board Members present at the meeting: Phil Hardy (chair); April Halpin; Gail Sleigh; Louise Tubbs

Officers present: Fiona Hughes; Martyn Sargeant; Mike Brymer; Carol Trappett; Becci Youlden; Mary Moroney; Andy Jones (Mobysoft Rentsense item only)

Summary of Committee Meeting:

1. MOBYSOFT RENTSENSE

We received a report on the first year of using the Mobysoft system for rent arrear analytics which predicts cases likely to default and priorities actions for account managers and officers.

Using the software has allowed actions to be taken on a weekly rather than fortnightly cycle and allowing a fairer split of caseloads across the team. There is access to real time information on caseloads, recommendations made, cases actioned and those outstanding. The SCH competition rate on Rentsense recommended actions is 90.55% compared to the national average of 69% for users of the system. Housemark data shows that social housing rent debt rose by 34% over the period 2020/21 and 2021/2022 and SCH have not seen this level of increase, with arrears stabilising at the end of Q3 2022/23. The use of Mobysoft is being funded for the first three years from Welfare Reform Reserves (HRA) with the costs for year 2 and year 3 being £112,807per annum.

2. ORGANISTIONAL RESTRUCTURE (PRESENTATION)

We received a presentation (attached) setting out the key drivers and overall outcomes proposed in the organisational restructures across Customer Services and Business Support, Asset Management and Housing and Communities. Consultation has already commenced in Customer Services and Business Support and is due to start in mid February with Housing and Communities staff.

3. ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK STRATEGY UPDATE

The key principles and objectives of the strategy remain broadly the same as previously with the overarching principle of “Nothing about you, without you” and incorporating the TPAS engagement spectrum which illustrates various opportunities for engagement at different levels. It is anticipated that from 2024 the Delivery Plan will cover a three year period and the Customer Engagement Strategy will be aligned at that time. Future ambitions for engagement include working with under 18 year olds so that the younger voice is heard in service development.

4. VOIDS PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Void figures are improving and following work with Housemark the methodology will be amended from the start of the new financial year to remove voids held pending development which will improve the performance on void relet times and can be benchmarked against other organisations. It will also be showing a more accurate picture of performance. The void rent loss figure will still include rent loss on properties not available for letting due to development until the point that they can be removed from the debit.

5. PERFORMANCE QUARTER 3 2022/23

Performance has broadly remained the same as previous quarter although satisfaction levels have improved which is bucking the sector trend. We were advised that there was an error with debits raised for both rent and leaseholder service charges early in quarter 3 whereby duplicate debits were added to accounts. Capita were able to resolve the issue for rents but for leaseholders the accounts had to be checked and rectified manually. This meant that for 6 weeks no chasing of service charge payments could be made whilst accounts were rectified.

We discussed whether there was a need to set a trigger point at which failure to achieve compliance levels would lead to self-reporting to the regulator and it was agreed to consider this at the next meeting of the Building Safety Task & Finish Group.

We noted the work done to prepare for the introduction of Tenant Satisfaction Measures in April 2023 with the full suite forming part of the dashboard from quarter 1 2023/24.

Phil Hardy
Chair of Housing Operations Committee
8 February 2023

Management of change overview: Spring 2023

Solihull Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

CSTBS: key drivers

- Reflecting Fiona's new senior structure
- Strengthening business intelligence
- Organisational development incl. learning and development
- Scattered administrative support
- Housing Ombudsman driving complaints improvement agenda
- Lack of flexible project resource
- No extra funding

CSTBS: primary changes

- New post of Business Intelligence Manager
- New OD/L&D team
- Move complaints function to align with Customer Services
- Bring together administrative support functions (exec support, general admin, board admin, FM)
- LGA national graduate programme

Consultation closes on 9 February.

Asset Management: Key Drivers

- Strategic asset management Investment
- Keeping residents safe in their homes
- Properties are kept in good level of repair
- Supporting net zero plans
- Building new affordable and sustainable homes
- 'Great Resignation' and skill shortage

Asset Management: primary changes

- Competent Building Safety Managers
- Increased Frontline Manager capacity within Responsive Repairs Service to focus on customer service e.g. damp and mould
- Increased sustainability capacity
- Increased commercial capacity £20million budgets
- Development capacity alongside managing major development scheme - Kingshurst

Housing & Communities: key drivers

- Safeguarding and Community Safety agenda
- Building Safety Act – high rise living
- Removing single sources of dependency / succession planning
- Evolving customer expectations and complex case management with holistic service delivery
- Desire to be more customer focused/person-centred
- Welfare Reform & Universal Credit, cost of living pressures
- Homelessness Reduction Act
- 'Blurred lines'

Housing & Communities: primary changes

- Three lead service managers with defined workstreams
- Strengthening the role of Community Safety – focus on safeguarding, intensive case management, ASB and managing estates
- Bringing tenancy services and all income functions together
- More dedicated approach to residents in high rise accommodation to support Building Safety Act
- Housing Register, Allocations & Homelessness Services moving under a single umbrella
- Consultation due to commence mid-February

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SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

CHAIR'S REPORT FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2022

Recommendation for Full Board:

The Board is asked to:–

(i) **Note** the actions taken by the Committee

Board Members present at the meeting: Mark Thrasher (Chair); Nigel Page and Dave Pinwell

Officers present: Sam Gilbert; Fiona Hughes; Martyn Sargeant; Mike Brymer; Jahnavi Jagadish; Mark Wills; Saroj Pal; Mary Moroney; Barbara Griffiths (Minutes)

Apologies: Bernie Donnelly and Karen Cranley

Summary of Committee Meeting:

1. Corporate Risk Register Update: as requested a more succinct report was presented to the Committee which is helpful. Item to note is the heightened cyber security risk, this has been considered by ELT and has been recorded at a corporate level and is now included in the risk register with mitigating actions. The plan is to test business continuity plans as if there is a total outage of our systems. ELT have also discussed the lack of sufficient investment in housing stock leading to risk. Following a discussion, it was felt the risk of under investment in stock was not likely to happen within the next couple of years at least and therefore should be revisited and possibly reduce the overall risk level. We recommended that the Board looks at setting risk appetite in the new year.

2. Internal Audit Progress Report and Audit Reports: We noted that audits are progressing with the Wellbeing audit having been completed and with the manager for comments before being finalised. A new audit has been added to the programme for the homeless service following a whistle blowing allegation. The terms of reference for the voids audit have been agreed with senior managers. The Accounts Payable audit is underway with further testing due to be carried out at year end. The terms of reference had been agreed for the audit of rents and included in this is the audit of Rentsense. Committee accepted the rationale for combining the two planned audits but asked for separate scores for rents processes and value for money aspects of Rentsense. The Safeguarding audit scored level 3 moderate assurance with 8 recommendations being identified, one being high the others being medium, responses to this by the manager are within the report but Committee also requested

an update on progress with implementing the recommendations prior to the next meeting.

3. Procurement Update: We considered the contracts register review recognising that there is a lot of activity at low contract value and there is an appetite to streamline the system to make it simpler. We recognise the need to do more forward thinking in terms of reviewing procurement requirements and planning activity. We noted progress with Oracle Cloud and that Payroll and HR should go live in February 2023. SCH have had to change systems around purchase orders as Oracle cloud does not support the system used by SCH. There is a huge piece of work around contract onboarding, generally a lot of the payment processes for contracts are manual and this is being moved online to enable closer monitoring of spend within contracts. In terms of the Spandrel Panels contract, the procurement team have utilised the CHICK framework and £2.5 million spend has been endorsed by the Council, we are expecting final approval at the next Council meeting.

4. OneSCH update: It was noted that the project is not moving at the pace expected due to lack of resources and as a result we are not seeing the operational impact. There are three primary roles we are seeking to put out to an outside agency for support. Those being mapping key business processes, better understanding of systems architecture (we have several IT systems which do not link to one another) and thirdly help with the technical specification for procurement. The plan is to send the brief out before Christmas with a view to receiving responses in early January and moving forward with the project from late January onwards.

Mark Thrasher
Chair of Audit & Risk Committee
30 December 2022

SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

HOUSING OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair's Report from the Building Safety Task & Finish Group Meeting held on 23 January 2023

Recommendation for Full Board:

The Board is asked to:

(i) **Note** the matters considered by the Committee.
(ii) **Note** the request for an escalation process to be drafted for areas of non compliance

Board Members present at the meeting: Richard Hyde (chair); Phil Hardy; Mark Thrasher

Officers present: Fiona Hughes; Mary Morrissey; Martyn Sargeant; Mike Brymer; Gabrielle Whitehouse; Mary Moroney; Barbara Griffiths

Summary of Meeting:

1. Review of Terms of Reference: Board approved the Terms of Reference in July 2022 and apart from adding in the officers who will attend on a regular basis we deferred reviewing the Terms of Reference until the group have met a couple of times. The Terms of Reference will be reviewed in July.

2. Policy and Legislative Update: We received a summary of the relevant Building Safety Legislation and in particular noted the following:

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Regulations – From 1 October 2022 landlords must ensure that there is a smoke alarm on each storey of their homes where there is living accommodation and a carbon monoxide alarm in any room used as living accommodation where there is a fixed combustion appliance (excluding a gas cooker).

Building Safety High Rise Registration – to be completed by SCH on behalf of the Accountable Person between April and October 2023. The initial registration includes property details. After registration the Building Safety Regulator will be asking the Accountable Person to apply for a Building Safety Certificate and this requires Building Safety cases to be produced.

Building Safety Information - Golden thread of information needed to keep both the building and residents safe which needs to be managed digitally.

Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 – came into force 23 January 2023 and implement recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Enquiry.

Damp and Mould – Social Housing Landlords will need to submit evidence to the regulator that they have systems in place to identify and deal with damp and mould issues.

3. Composite Building Safety Report: We received a report covering all areas of Building Safety and setting out compliance against each area:

Fire Safety – noted most actions were compliant with exception of Wayfinding signage which has been ordered and resources identified to install when received. There is signage currently in place but does not meet new standard. The Fire Service (enforcing authority) have been informed. Noted overdue actions arising from Fire Risk Assessments:

291 relating to fire door repairs or replacements; 36 to installation of Automatic Opening Vents; 31 relate to External Wall Insulation Inspections and 23 relate to fire door inspections.

Gas Safety – Noted that this is a snapshot and at time of report (December 2022) there were 11 expired gas safety certificates. The meeting requested more information for future reports on date of expiry /property type /risk assessment.

Electrical Safety – Noted that this is a snapshot and at time of report (December 2022) 127 properties without an electrical safety test within last 5 years. However, the requirement is for testing within 10 year period.

Asbestos Management – Full compliance with inspections.

Water Hygiene – Full compliance with inspections.

Lift Safety – Full compliance with inspections for the 79 lifts manged by SCH.

Damp and Mould – Action plan in place and additional resources being used to manage the increase in reported cases. Noted the positive partnership work between public health and GP's and SCH. Leaflet produced for damp and mould to be given to health visitors /medical centres and a single point of contact has been developed to report areas of concern.

Carbon Monoxide and Smoke Detector Installation Programme – 83% complete with action plan to address the no access properties (1150 as at time of report).

Sprinkler Installations – Access rate 96.7% (1475 properties) with 19 blocks having live systems. Programme due to conclude end of June 2023.

Spandrel Panels – Site surveys commenced 16 January 2023 with work on the 16 blocks due to be completed by April 2024.

4. Recommendations of the Task & Finish Group

1. Escalation Process to be developed for informing the Accountable Person (Mary Morrissey); Chair of Board (Richard Hyde) and Enforcing Authority where there are areas of non-compliance /high risk and keep an audit trail of any authorised exceptions or extensions of time to comply
2. More granular detail (implications /risk level) to be added to the Building Safety Compliance Summary to be clearer about areas of non-compliance
3. Where there are outstanding actions either from Fire Risk Assessments or expired safety checks then details of property type and date of expiry /due dates need to be clearly identified to assess level of risk
4. Once current backlog of overdue actions from Fire Risk Assessments cleared need to look to set a target for outstanding actions

Richard Hyde

25 January 2023

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SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

BOARD MEETING: MONDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2023

REPORT OF THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ASSET MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Asset Management Strategy

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report sets out the development of the new year 10-year Council Housing Asset Management Strategy and Investment Plan for Solihull.

2. Recommendation – Item for Approval

2.1 The Board is recommended to approve the Council Housing Asset Management Strategy and Investment Plan for Solihull and note that it will now go forward to SMBC Cabinet for final joint approval.

3. Executive Summary

3.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Board approval for the Council Housing Asset Management Strategy and Investment Plan for Solihull. The report provides an overview of the Council Housing Asset Management Strategy and Investment Plan and the process that has been carried out to develop the document.

3.2 The full Council Housing Asset Management Strategy and Investment Plan are provided at Appendix 1 and 2 respectively.

3.3 The 10-year Council Housing Asset Management Strategy sets out the:

- The drivers for change
- The management arrangements via Solihull Community Housing
- local context of Solihull and the performance of the housing stock
- Customer views
- 8 Strategic objectives of the Strategy
- Leadership and Governance arrangements

3.4 The Investment Plan covers the 3-year period 2023-2025 and focuses largely on the planned activity to achieve the strategic objectives with priorities, actions and timescales.

3.5 Engagement exercises have taken place with tenants, staff and senior managers during the development of the Strategy.

3.6 A report was provided to Economic Development and Managed Growth Scrutiny Board on 17 November 2022. Scrutiny Board made no formal resolutions to be considered by Cabinet.

4. Council Housing Asset Management Strategy and Implementation Plan

4.1 The draft Council Housing Asset Management Strategy covers the 10-year period 2023 - 2032 and is supported by an Investment Plan for the 3-year period 2023-2025. The Strategy replaces the previous two-year strategy that has now expired.

4.2 The full Strategy is provided at Appendix 1 and the Investment Plan at Appendix 2. The key drivers for change identified within the strategy are:

- National focus on ensuring customers are safe in their homes and neighbourhood
- Targets to ensure all homes to meet energy performance Band C by 2030 and to meet stretch targets for homes to be net zero carbon in Solihull by 2041
- Increased focus on housing quality - disrepair, damp and mould
- Greater emphasis on placing the customer at the centre of service delivery through a culture of openness, respect and accountability
- The need to increase housing supply to meet local demand
- Greater focus on the importance of communities and neighbourhoods - including green space, external areas and communal areas
- Focus on ensuring reliable and accurate data is used to support evidence-based decision-making

4.3 Responding to these drivers for change, the Strategy has 8 strategic objectives which are:

1. Investing intelligently in our homes
2. Ensuring safe, high-quality homes
3. Supporting the Council's net zero plans by investing in 'greening' our homes
4. Ensuring high-rise living is 'fit for the future'
5. Providing safe and attractive neighbourhoods that support thriving communities
6. Building new affordable and sustainable homes
7. Ensuring customer engagement in shaping our future services
8. Building a fantastic team

These are not set in an order of priority.

4.4 The previous two years have been some of the most challenging for the social housing sector. We are still working through impacts from the national economic climate and the Covid-19 recovery. The implications and challenges regarding mental health for our residents alongside the economic implications for construction related works with increased supply chain costs is significant. Notwithstanding these challenges, we have a responsibility to positively respond to the legislative requirements associated with the Building Safety and Fire Safety Acts, enhance efforts for energy efficiency and decarbonisation and consider the implications

emanating from the review of the Decent Homes Standard along with the publication and requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill.

4.5 For these reasons (along with others) we are developing a longer-term Asset Management Strategy that covers a timeframe of a 10-year term. This will allow more time period to agree and implement the longer-term priorities in Solihull and provide sufficient capacity to remain agile and develop innovative responses to the challenges that we face.

4.6 In further detail, the strategic objectives of the Strategy set out to achieve the following:

- Investing intelligently in our homes – We know that each investment has an ‘opportunity cost’ – spending on one thing means we must go without another. A key priority for SCH is therefore to ensure all investment is targeted to achieve good value for money. This in turn relies on a robust approach to data management and to corporately strengthen our systems and use of ‘business intelligence’ to improve decision-making – ensuring our investment is focussed on homes that are sustainable in the long-term.

- Ensuring safe, high quality homes – Feedback from our customers has highlighted the need to ensure that homes are safe – this is an even higher priority for residents following the COVID-19 pandemic. This priority will also focus on the known and emerging requirements from Building Safety and the Fire Safety Acts. This priority will also shape our response to the emerging wide ‘Decent Homes 2’ requirements that as well as providing building components to expected lifecycles e.g. kitchens and bathrooms will also be shaped by new expectations surrounding keeping properties free from damp and mould and sustainable forms of heating to meet carbon reduction requirements.

- Supporting net zero plans by investing in ‘greening’ our homes – Our homes are central to how we contribute to Solihull Council has ambitious plans for tackling the borough’s CO2 emissions. These changes will see homes and communities become very different, the focus within this strategy is to ensure all our homes reach Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) C by 2030 and working towards net zero carbon emissions in Solihull by 2041. It will be essential that SCH and SMBC maximise contributions from external funding so that the overall carbon neutral target of 2041 for Solihull is achieved as a significant amount of additional investment will be required during this time period.

- Ensuring high-rise living is ‘fit for the future’ – Develop a bespoke high-rise standard to reflect building safety and other health and safety requirements, the delivery of repairs, safety and security in the home, communal spaces and neighbourhood, green and open space and car parking. We will also need to consider the viability of the high rise schemes as we gather additional information on their condition and life expectancy.

- Providing safe and attractive neighbourhoods that support thriving communities – SCH recognise that our homes are ‘more than bricks and mortar’. The COVID-19 pandemic has made many of us more aware of the value we place on

communities and neighbourhoods. We will work in partnership with customers and other organisations to create thriving neighbourhoods and communities that are clean and safe. When upgrading internal and external communal areas, we will make every effort to identify opportunities to improve accessibility for our communities either in terms of mobility considerations or for young families.

- Building new affordable and sustainable homes – Building new affordable and environmentally sustainable homes is key to ensuring we remain financially strong and meet the housing needs and aspirations of our existing and future tenants. Because the availability of development land is challenging in Solihull we will need to apply active asset management to our existing homes so that we can support the development of new homes. Along with larger strategic projects such as with the Kingshurst Village Development.

- Ensuring customer engagement in shaping future standards and services – Looking forward we know that the future sustainability of homes is dependent on them being desirable to residents. That is why we want to co-design standards with our SCHape Panel and Customer Advocates to embed tenant engagement as an integral part of our key processes from service planning to delivery. We will seek out feedback as a 'reality check' on the performance and quality of services.

- Building a fantastic team – Linking with the People Strategy, the AMS will only be successful if it is driven by our people. Employing staff with key competencies to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in place for delivery is key.

5. Collective Development of the Asset Management Strategy

5.1 There has been extensive engagement and collaboration on the development of the Draft Council Housing Asset Management Strategy that has included:

- A customer engagement exercise was completed as part of the strategy development work for the Asset Management Strategy; this attracted 164 responses from residents.
- Three specific senior corporate workshops across both organisations, the first focussing on the findings from completed stock condition surveys; the second on a draft of the Strategy; and the third considering the resourcing requirements and the 3-year Investment Plan.
- Multiple reports to the Strategic Housing Board for discussion and feedback
- Cabinet CLT in August for discussion and feedback
- SCH Housing Operations Committee for discussion and feedback
- SCH Board for discussion and feedback
- Engagement has also taken place with the Joint Asset Management (JAM) Group at SMBC
- The Joint Stock Investment Group for discussion and feedback.
- Economic Development and Managed Growth Scrutiny Board

The preparation timeline for developing the strategy has been planned to synchronise with the development of the new Solihull Housing Strategy.

6. Risk Management Implications

6.1 The overarching themes of the Asset Management Strategy are reflected within the corporate risk register.

- SCH0203 – Failure to ensure Building Safety in line with current and in preparation for future legislation
- SCH0202 – Failure to ensure health and safety of customers, employees and contractors.
- SCH0205 - Failure to have robust systems and process for data management
- SCH0201 - Insufficient or inappropriate use of resources to deliver SCH delivery plan commitments
- SCH0199 - Failure to optimise capital investment.
- SCH0196 - Failure to deliver the SCH asset management improvement plan in line with the recommendations made by the recent Asset Management review (Housemark)

REPORT AUTHOR: Mike Brymer
Interim Executive Director of Asset Management & Development
michaelbrymer@solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk

List of appendices referred to

Appendix 1. Council Housing Asset Management Strategy

Appendix 2. Council Housing Asset Management Strategy Implementation Plan 2023 - 2025

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Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Solihull Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Asset Management Strategy 2023 – 2033

"Homes fit for the future"

Introduction

SCH and Solihull Council have adopted a strategic approach to asset management. This approach is forward-looking and is focussed on making best use of resources to meet the future needs of our customers. We want to improve both the quality and desirability of homes while ensuring all investment delivers good value for money.

We are in a phase of rapid change with a review of national standards (Decent Homes Standard), new duties to ensure customers are safe with a particular focus on our high-rise schemes and ambitious plans to improve the energy efficiency of our homes and achieve net zero carbon emissions in Solihull by 2041.

Our Asset Management Strategy is based on a good understanding of stock condition and relative asset performance that we will use to drive our investment plans and support evidence-based decision-making.

Our Strategy will be underpinned by robust governance and performance reporting arrangements. Our customers will play also key role in shaping our future standards and services and holding us to account for performance and decisions for example, through the SCHape Panel.

Drivers for change

There is more focus on and wider expectations of the social housing sector than ever before. The challenges we face will fundamentally reshape what we do and how we will deliver strategic asset management services in the future.

Some of the key 'drivers for change' affecting how we deliver asset management in the future are set out below.

The 'drivers for change' include:

- National focus on ensuring customers are safe in their homes and neighbourhood
- Targets to ensure all homes to meet energy performance Band C by 2030 and to meet stretch targets for homes to be net zero carbon in Solihull by 2041
- Increased focus on housing quality - disrepair, damp and mould
- Greater emphasis on placing the customer at the centre of service delivery through a culture of openness, respect and accountability
- The need to increase housing supply to meet local demand
- Greater focus on the importance of communities and neighbourhoods - including green space, external areas and communal areas
- Focus on ensuring reliable and accurate data is used to support evidence-based decision-making

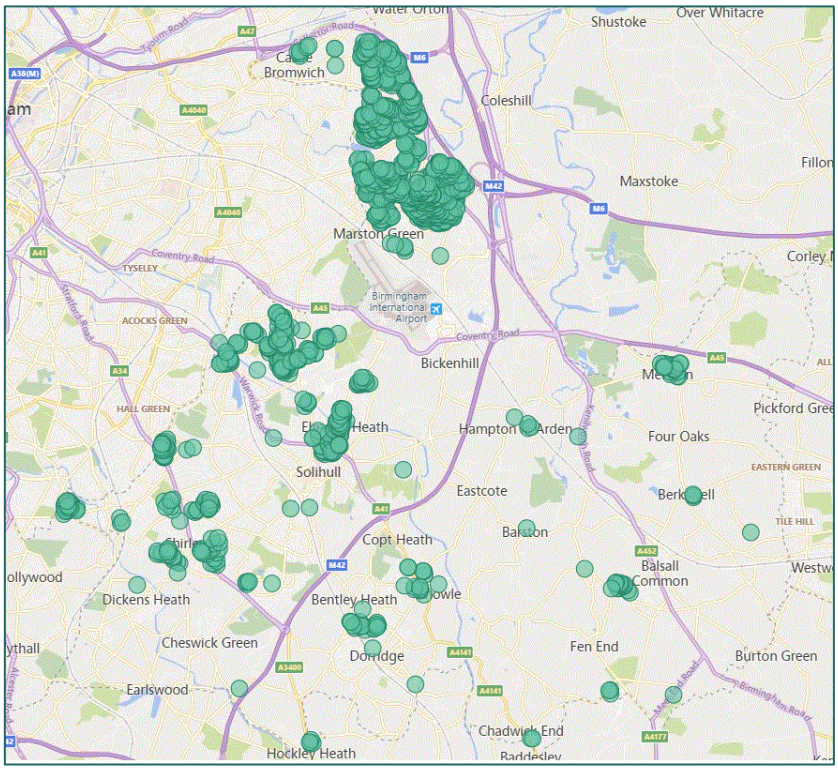
National focus on ensuring customers are safe in homes & neighbourhood
All homes to meet energy performance Band C by 2030 & to be net zero carbon in Solihull by 2041
Greater emphasis on placing the customer voice at the centre of service delivery
The need to increase affordable housing supply
Focus on ensuring reliable & accurate data to support evidence-based decision-making
Increased focus on housing quality & desirability & a zero-tolerance approach to damp & disrepair
Greater focus on the communities & neighbourhoods - including green space, external & communal areas

Managing the housing stock

Solihull Community Housing (SCH) is an Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO), wholly owned by Solihull Council and set up in 2004 to manage housing services on their behalf.

Our relationship with the Council is defined by a Management Agreement which specifies the services that SCH will deliver and how performance is monitored and reviewed.

We manage just fewer than 10,000 tenanted homes and some 1,200 leasehold properties, together with approximately 4,600 garages and a small number of shared ownership properties.

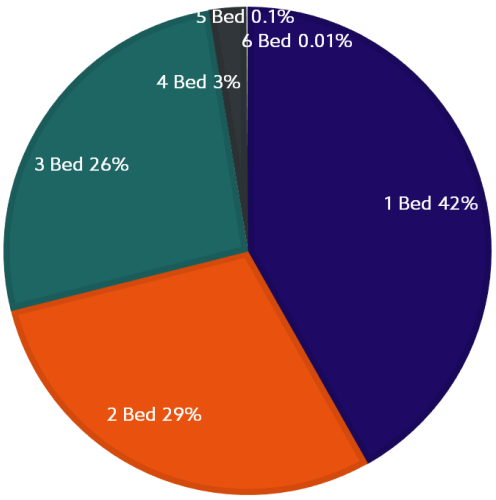


Over two thirds of the homes managed by SCH are located in the north of the Borough with particular concentrations in Chelmsley Wood, Kingshurst & Fordbridge and Smith's Wood.

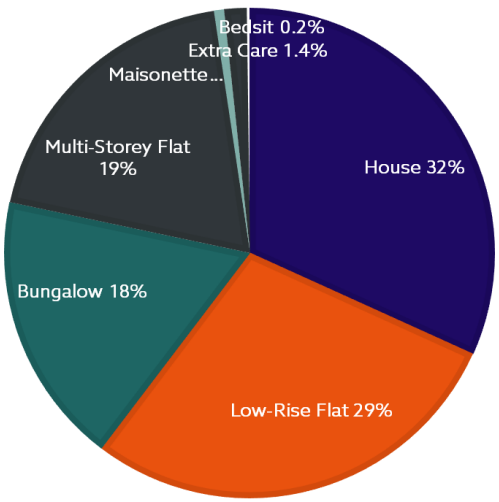
Our housing stock comprises:

- 65% of homes are between 50 and 60 years old with a high proportion built using non-traditional techniques - not built of brick or stone - that allowed them to be mass produced quickly
- Half of our homes are houses and bungalows with another half flats and maisonettes
- There are 37 high-rise blocks providing over 1,900 flats in the north of the Borough

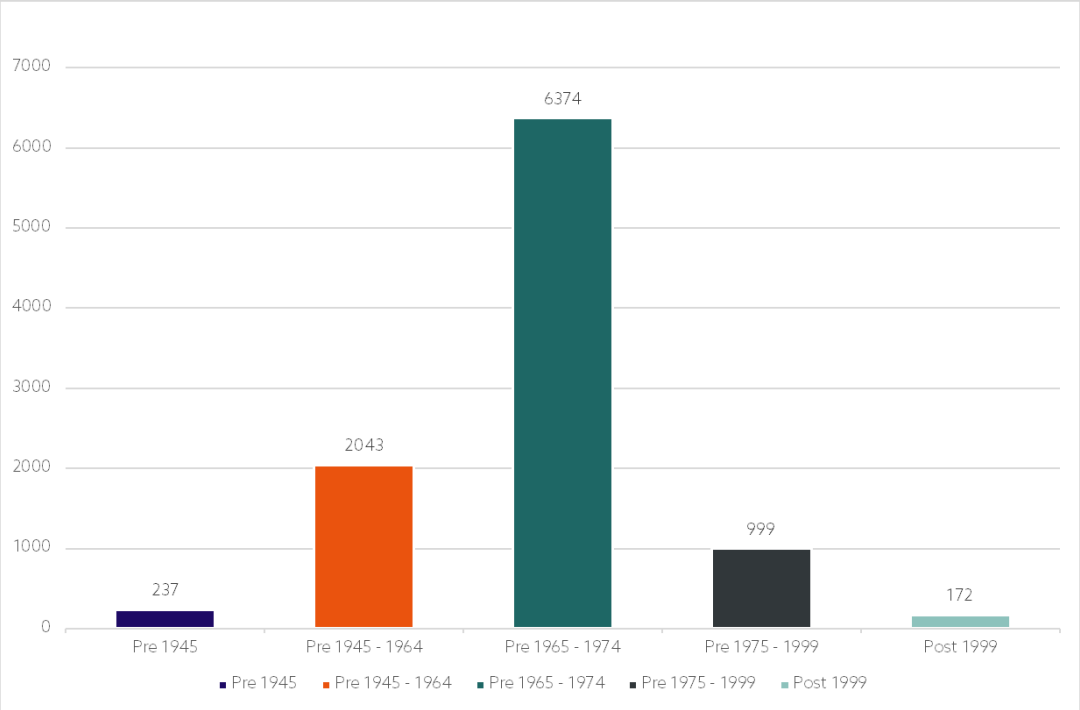
- 40% of our homes have one bedroom, around 30% have two bedrooms and just over 25% have 3 bedrooms



Size of property



Type of property



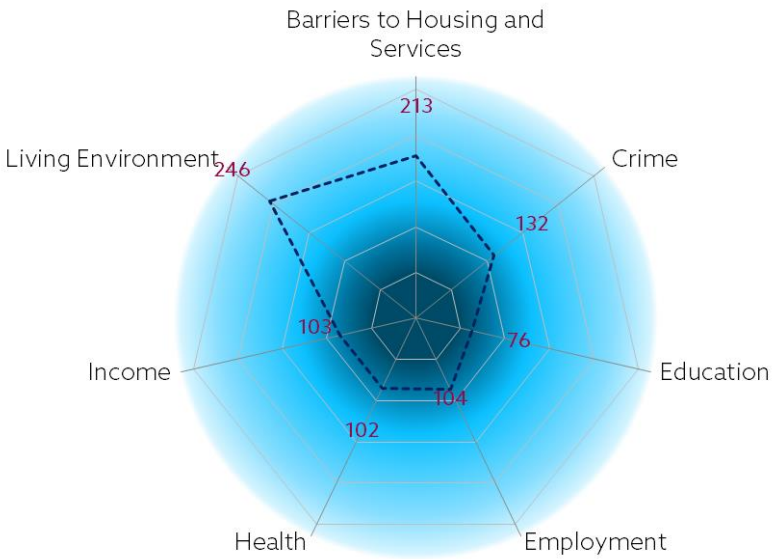
Year of construction

Solihull

Solihull is a strong residential location. The Borough provides a good range of housing, an attractive environment, a strong economy and is well connected with excellent schools and local services. Solihull has a population of 216,200 (2021 Census), growing at 4.6 percent in the last decade – lower than the England average of 6.6 percent. Population growth is driven by a combination of in-migration and natural change which is the difference between births and deaths.

A significant trend in Solihull's demographic change is its ageing population. Between 1998 and today the number of people aged 65 and over increased by 40 per cent from 16 per cent to 21.5 per cent of the population. Population projections suggest the population over 65 will grow faster than any other age group. By 2040 over 65s could make up over a quarter of Solihull's population. During the same period, the number of people over the age of 90 is projected to double to comprise some 4,500 people. These trends have significant implications for the delivery of housing services.

Solihull is one of the least deprived areas in the West Midlands with average incomes above the UK average. However, incomes are unequal across Solihull between large parts of the Borough that experience minimal deprivation and areas where levels of prosperity are lower. This includes the North Solihull wards of Chelmsley Wood, Kingshurst and Fordbridge and Smiths Wood.



Solihull Index of Multiple Deprivation

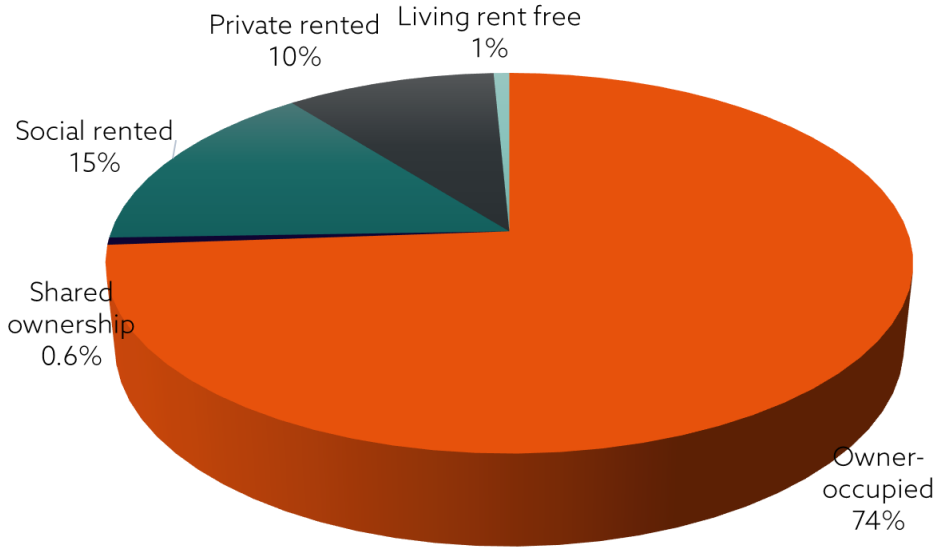
There are 20 neighbourhoods among the bottom 20 per cent most deprived areas in England. Indeed, 16 neighbourhoods are among the most deprived 10 per cent. These neighbourhoods reflect those areas with the greatest concentration of SCH managed stock.

The main drivers of deprivation are unemployment, poor educational attainment, low income and relatively high levels of crime.

Solihull has one of the largest gaps in the country between the Life Expectancy of those living in the most and least deprived neighbourhoods. On average someone in the least deprived neighbourhoods can expect to live to 89.4 years while in the most deprived it is 72.9.

This area was the focus of an ambitious regeneration programme between 2005 and 2021 and saw a significant redevelopment of housing. More than 750 Council homes were demolished and over 1,700 new homes built across 40 sites, with 51% for sale and 49% affordable rent. The regeneration programme also delivered wider investment and important benefits including 6 new primary schools, 2 new village centres, 6 new parks and improved open spaces and an enterprise centre.

There are good strategic road and rail links which makes access to services relatively easy. Much of the area also benefits from a high-quality living environment – two thirds is designated as Green Belt. However, this does create pressure on identifying land available for development.



Solihull housing tenure

There are around 89,482 dwellings in Solihull (2021 Census). 72.2 percent of homes are owner-occupied - significantly higher than the national average of 62 percent. The average house price in Solihull is £325,000 (2022) meaning house price to earnings ratio of 9.15 (2022) – the highest in the West Midlands.

For the many that cannot afford to buy there is relatively limited choice of rented accommodation. The size of the private rented sector accounts for 12.8 percent of the stock compared with the all-England average of 20.3 percent.

Social renting accounts for just 14 percent of all homes – again below the national average of around 17.1 percent. This leads to high housing demand – there were 2,980 households on Solihull's housing waiting list as at April 2022 – equivalent to 3.7 households for every SCH home let.

The Solihull Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment confirms that Solihull has an acute Borough wide shortage of social rented homes. The Council and SCH are committed to securing as much affordable housing as viability allows.

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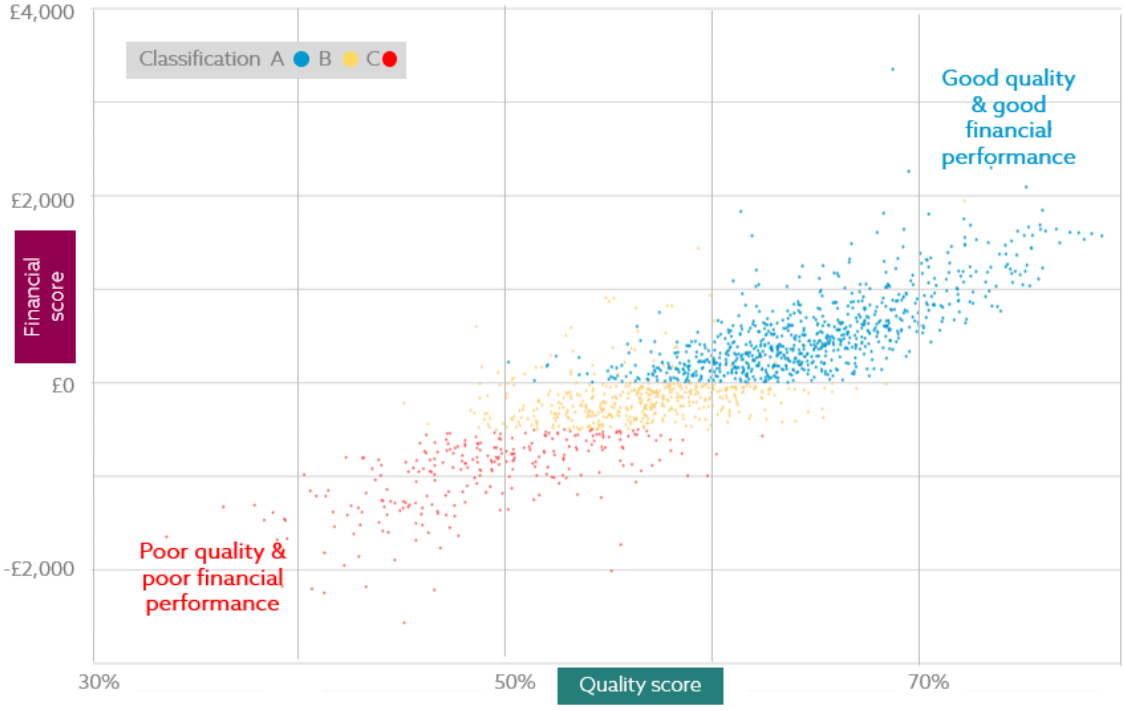
Performance of our stock

SCH carried out a strategic assessment of asset performance in 2020. This analysis combined data from across the organisation with an assessment of homes and neighbourhoods to produce a relative grading of our homes in over 1,500 'neighbourhoods'.

This has identified some significant differences in key areas such as income from rent and service charges and expenditure on capital works, day-to-day repairs and housing management costs.

Analysis also shows that some areas experience higher turnover of tenancies and lower levels of customer satisfaction.



Asset performance analysis 2020

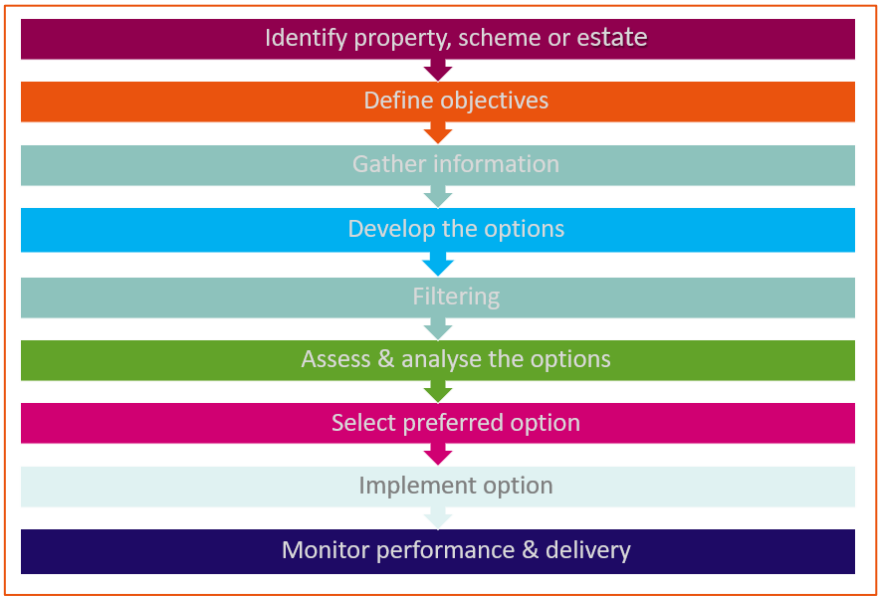
The graph above plots the overall 'quality' (horizontal axis) against the relative financial performance (vertical axis – per unit per annum profit/loss).

Assets have been placed into groups known as Asset Classes A, B and C depending on their performance.

Over 50 per cent of homes are Class A - these perform well and are likely to be sustainable in the long-term. A further 30 per cent of stock (Class B) perform satisfactorily but will be monitored to ensure that our work or investment in the 'home' and 'place' will help improve performance.

The remaining 18 per cent or 2,411 homes in 265 schemes perform relatively poorly in terms of overall quality and financial performance (Class C).

SCH will review all Class C properties to identify actions to either improve their 'performance' or where necessary conduct a detailed option appraisal. This process will begin with larger category C schemes (52 have over 5 units – 370 homes in total) and will involve a series of practical steps that can be applied to individual properties, schemes or whole estates.



The option appraisal process will explore all options to improve 'performance' for example, investment to improve the quality and desirability of homes or neighbourhood-based interventions such as environmental improvements or targeted approaches to improve safety and security.

Where an asset is identified as not sustainable or no longer fit-for-purpose, SCH and Solihull Council will identify an alternative course of action such as remodelling, redevelopment, disposal, changing tenure, customer group or the approach to housing management.

Customer views

Throughout this strategy we have sought to reflect the views and aspirations of our customers. We undertook an extensive consultation exercise and have used the feedback to inform the strategy.

The headline message from customers is the need to ensure that homes are safe – this is an even higher priority for residents following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Customers also want homes that are kept in good repair, wind and watertight and have up-to-date facilities such as kitchens and bathrooms.

Many customers – particularly those aged 65 and over - highlighted the importance of their home being flexible and adaptable. Homes that are adaptable can support people to be independent for longer and reduce demands on other services.

Younger customers (under 35) have different priorities focussing more on safety and ensuring homes are in good repair and wind and watertight. Importantly, 4 out of 5 younger customers highlighted the importance of accessing well-kept and safe green and open space.

There is a different emphasis on investment priorities by customers living on our estates in South Solihull compared with those living in North Solihull (Chelmsley Wood, Kingshurst and Fordbridge and Smith's Wood).

Customers particularly in North Solihull also value investment to improve safety and security of their home and neighbourhood. Residents in South Solihull value well-kept green and open space.

There is an increasing focus on energy efficiency and our impact on the environment. With spiralling fuel costs many customers understandably worry about the cost of running their home. This was a particular issue among customers living in high-rise blocks.

Ensuring homes are in good repair is a higher priority for new customers (under two years) and longstanding customers who have been SCH residents for over 20 years.

The different views of our customers means we need to be flexible in our approach to investment and develop different solutions across our properties, property types and neighbourhoods.

Our Asset Management Strategic Objectives

In developing our Asset Management Strategy, we have used insight and intelligence about our homes and, how we manage them.

Importantly, we have also sought out the views of our customers to arrive at eight strategic objectives that set out how we will deliver our vision of *'creating better homes and thriving communities.'*

Taken together, these objectives will ensure we will focus on doing the right things in the right way to make a real difference to the lives of people in Solihull.

1. Investing intelligently in our homes
2. Ensuring safe, high-quality homes
3. Supporting the Council's net zero plans by investing in 'greening' our homes
4. Ensuring high-rise living is 'fit for the future'
5. Providing safe and attractive neighbourhoods that support thriving communities
6. Building new affordable and sustainable homes
7. Ensuring customer engagement in shaping our future services
8. Building a fantastic team

1. Investing intelligently in our homes

We know that each investment has an 'opportunity cost' – spending on one thing means there is less money to spend on another. A key priority for SCH is therefore to ensure all investment is targeted to achieve good value for money.

SCH has an improving understanding of stock condition and a good understanding of relative asset performance.

We aim to complete around 2,000 stock condition surveys each year to help us drive our investment plans and decision-making.

We recognise the need across SCH to further strengthen our systems and to make better use of 'business intelligence.' We also want to embed a robust approach to data management.

For poor quality or poorly performing assets we will conduct a detailed option appraisal. This approach will involve a series of practical steps that can be applied to individual properties, schemes or whole estates.

The option appraisal process will explore the options to improve 'performance.' Where an asset is identified as not sustainable or no longer fit-for-purpose, we will identify an alternative course of action such as remodelling, redevelopment or disposal.

To deliver our work in this area we will:

- Intelligently invest sufficient resources to ensure our homes are safe, in good condition and are 'desirable' both now and in the future (by reflecting the 'things that matter' to customers)
- Embed a robust approach to data management covering all compliance activities, performance indicators and stock condition data - the fundamental 'building block' of intelligent investment
- Undertake option appraisals of our poorly performing stock

2. Ensuring safe, high-quality homes

Ensuring homes are safe and high-quality is paramount for SCH, the Council and our customers.

Feedback from our customers has highlighted the need to ensure that homes are safe – this is an even higher priority for residents following COVID-19 pandemic.

SCH undertakes routine programmes to ensure homes are safe and in good condition. For example, each year we undertake over 8,000 gas services and almost 2,000 electrical tests.

SCH will remain 'agile' and invest sufficiently in forward-looking standards that are responsive to changes in national standards and customer expectations.

Customers want their homes to be kept in good repair and have up-to-date facilities such as kitchens and bathrooms. SCH will adopt a transparent and auditable process for dealing effectively with damp and disrepair issues.

Many customers highlighted the importance of their home being flexible and adaptable. Indeed, for almost 9 out of 10 customers aged 65 and over this was a high priority.

SCH recognise that homes that are adaptable and accessible can support customers to remain living safely and independently for longer and reduce demands on other services. We will integrate simple changes in line with the 'Lifetime Homes' standard into all new development and investment plans.

We will identify an annual budget to support our home improvement team to help customers who develop a disability with adaptations. And our Safe and Sound service also helps to facilitate independence at home.

All new homes will be designed to be adaptable. We will also explore how we can improve the design and accessibility of our homes to better reflect the future needs of our customers in our day-to-day work.

To deliver our work in this area we will:

- Ensure there are transparent and auditable processes to ensure homes are safe and in good condition
- Ensure sufficient investment to provide a high-quality standard of home
- Improve the accessibility of our homes to meet the 'lifetime' needs of our customers
- Improve our systems and use of 'business intelligence' to ensure we invest intelligently - proactively managing disrepair, damp and mould and reducing our day-to-day spending

3. Supporting net zero plans by investing in 'greening' our homes

Our homes are central to how we contribute to Solihull Council's ambitious plans to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2041.

Our customer consultation highlighted an increased focus on energy efficiency and its impact on the environment among our customers. Energy efficiency is rated on a scale between Band A (very good) and G (very poor). The average rating for UK homes is currently Band D.

SCH know that for many customers the cost of running their home is a key concern. National research has identified over half of residents living in social housing with poor energy efficiency (Band D or below) are likely to be in fuel poverty.

In response we our developing an Energy and Environmental Sustainability Strategy that drives our investment in the 'greening' of our homes – reducing carbon emissions and tackling fuel poverty. This will include a range of 'retrofit' measures – this means installing or replacing parts of the home to reduce carbon and make it more energy-efficient.

Our retrofit challenge

- The projected cost (all based on 2021/22 prices) of meeting Band C target in all homes by 2030/31 is £10,723,000
- Cost to retrofit properties to meet net zero carbon target by 2041 is £234m (£12m per year)
- Average property cost to meet net zero carbon target: £23,600

SCH has a very diverse property portfolio. Positively, almost three quarters (72.5%) of our homes are already in Band C or above. However, over 2,700 homes are in Band D with a small number below.

Some homes in Band D can be improved through relatively simple retrofit measures such as loft insulation top-up, low energy lighting or through planned investment in heating or window replacement.

However, achieving net zero carbon across all our homes presents a huge challenge – particularly for our non-traditional stock – those mass produced and not built of traditional brick or stone.

There are broadly two approaches to delivering net zero carbon for existing homes: whole house (also called 'deep retrofit') or phased. The measures remain the same, the difference is the approach and time taken to complete.

SCH will develop a retrofit 'fabric first' phased programme. This means improving the energy efficiency of walls, floors, roofs, windows and doors to reduce heating loss and provide warmer homes, improved thermal comfort (the feeling of being warm), lower fuel bills and improved ventilation. Improvements will also support the reduction of damp and mould.

To deliver our work in this area we will:

- Develop a flexible, phased approach to energy efficiency investment
- Deliver an £11million energy efficiency programme so that all properties are Band C by 2030 - initial focus on retrofit of the building fabric, smart controls and renewables
- Seek out external funding opportunities to support our delivery and maximise our Capital Investment Funding

4. Ensuring high-rise living is 'fit for the future'

Our customer consultation highlighted the different emphasis placed on investment priorities among customers living in the 1,900 homes in our 37 high-rise schemes.

Customers living in high-rise accommodation placed a higher priority on building safety, safety and security in their home and neighbourhood, energy efficiency and ensuring their homes is in good repair.

The profile of customers living in the high-rise schemes is very different to the customer population as a whole. Customers are more likely to be younger (almost 1 in 5 are under 25) with an average age of 43 compared with an SCH average of 53. Over 20 per cent of customers moved in to their home in the last two years. And typically we can expect customers to ask for more repairs and to live in their home for 4 years less than the SCH average of 12.4 years.

The blocks are typical of 1960s Radburn urban design with open plan housing estates arranged around parking courtyards, and small green spaces.

All the blocks have benefitted from work to improve their safety and energy efficiency. The 32 non-traditional blocks have had external wall insulation and the 5 traditional brick tower blocks have benefitted from cavity wall insulation. All the blocks have benefitted from significant investment in fire safety measures.

We will complete all building safety works including the installation of sprinklers and replacement of cladding panels by 2024. We will also carry out full structural surveys of the blocks over the next five years.

However, the blocks present challenges in terms of quality and desirability with high future investment needs and ongoing repair costs. In addition, we experience difficulties in terms of demand and tenancy sustainment with high levels of turnover.

Indeed, our strategic assessment of asset performance identified that 32 of the blocks with 1,598 homes fall into Class C - poorly performing assets. The remaining 5 blocks containing 299 homes were identified as Class B – satisfactory performance but requiring monitoring.

SCH and Solihull Council have new duties to ensure that our high-rise schemes are safe. All landlords must identify an 'Accountable Person' responsible for ensuring the safety of their buildings. They in turn must appoint a senior manager (Head of Building Safety) to oversee the day-to-day management of building safety.

Over the life of this strategy SCH will undertake option appraisals on our blocks to ensure they are sustainable and 'fit for the future' over the longer-term.

SCH will also develop a new high-rise standard. This will shape how we will deliver a cohesive approach to housing management with specific health and safety requirements and actions to improve the quality and desirability of homes including heating, safety and security measures.

To deliver our work in this area we will:

- Develop an overarching strategy for Building Safety Management to the high-rise blocks
- Complete the Building Safety Capital Works Programmes by 2025
- Review sustainable heating solutions for the blocks as part of our net zero plans
- Develop a Building Safety Strategy
- Conduct detailed option appraisals based on survey result on all poor performing blocks to ensure they are 'fit for the future'

5. Providing safe and attractive neighbourhoods that support thriving communities

SCH recognise that our homes are 'more than 'bricks and mortar.' The COVID-19 pandemic has made many of us more aware of the importance of our neighbourhoods and communities on physical and mental wellbeing.

People want to live in places that are attractive and where they feel safe. For many the ability to easily access green and open space is also important. This was particularly important to customers aged under 35 - 80 per cent of whom identified this as an important priority.

SCH's teams are active 'on the patch' supporting the local community and taking a lead role in addressing anti-social behaviour issues including graffiti and fly-tipping. We will use our well-developed approach to neighbourhood inspections and our customer engagement to promote partnership working with customers, the Council and other organisations to improve safety and security and enhance the quality and attractiveness of our neighbourhoods.

We manage approximately 4,600 garages across Solihull with an annual income of around £1.1 million. Looking forward our aim is to maintain occupancy of our garages and to maximise rental income that can reinvested in improving the quality of our garages.

We want to invest in our garages to ensure they are attractive, secure and well-maintained and contribute positively to our neighbourhoods. We will explore providing additional facilities including Electric Vehicle charging points.

We have a number of 'difficult to let garages' where there is no demand, or the garage is no longer fit-for-purpose due to its size or condition.

Our primary focus will be to develop new affordable homes on sites identified as difficult to let or on the 950 'pads' where garages have previously been demolished.

Where there is a need, we will look at providing additional 'open' car parking. However, we are keen to identify opportunities to add to Solihull's green infrastructure. For example, by planting trees or creating allotments and community gardens. This will deliver wider community benefits by adding amenity and supporting biodiversity.

To deliver our work in this area we will:

- Invest in improving the useability and attractiveness of local open space for both recreation and amenity use
- Ensure garages and outbuildings are secure, well-maintained and contribute positively to our neighbourhoods working in partnership with our Thriving Community Locality groups

- Encourage residents to be good neighbours

6. Building new affordable and sustainable homes

Building new affordable and environmentally sustainable homes is key to ensuring we remain financially strong and meet the housing needs and aspirations of our existing and future customers.

Solihull faces a high level of housing need and pressure to identify land suitable for development. Through active asset management of our existing homes we can support the grow social housing by developing new homes.

Our option appraisal process will explore options for redevelopment of homes or in a small number of cases garage sites that are not sustainable or no longer fit-for-purpose.

In some cases, there may be opportunities for redeveloping existing homes at a higher density particularly where this can contribute positively to the regeneration of estates. We also recognise that some mixed-tenure development may provide a means to deliver more affordable housing and support inclusive and thriving communities.

In the first instance any plot of land should be considered for redevelopment with the HRA for affordable housing. This is in accordance with the Council Plan which has a stated aim of increasing the amount of affordable housing especially social rented housing. The next priority would be to investigate if the land can contribute to Self and Custom Housebuilding including Community Led Housing, in accordance with the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015. If no house building is possible, due to the site size, overlooking or other constraints such as underground water and sewerage pipes, the disused sites should be considered for green infrastructure such as trees and community gardens or allotments

SCH will also increase our focus on stock acquisition to help meet housing need or where it delivers wider community benefits.

To deliver our work in this area we will:

- Support and develop regeneration schemes to support and create thriving communities within Kingshurst and Chelmsley Wood

- Carry out more stock acquisition to meet housing need and deliver community benefits

- Maximise opportunities for building new affordable homes through the Council's corporate assets including under-used, surplus or brownfield land

7. Ensuring customer engagement in shaping our future services

In developing our Asset Management Strategy, we have sought to listen to and act on customers views. This this is just the start.

Looking forward we know that the future sustainability of homes is dependent on them being 'attractive' to customers. That is why we want to co-design standards that focus on "what customers want."

While customer views vary depending on age, type of property and where people live, there is a strong consensus around the priorities that homes should be safe, in good repair, wind and watertight with up-to-date facilities such as kitchens and bathrooms.

We want to provide all customers with a range of ways to engage with us and have their say in the delivery of this strategy.

We will work with our SCHape Panel and Customer Advocates to embed tenant engagement as an integral part of our approach to asset management. The customer will be at the heart of our key processes from service planning to delivery.

We will involve customers in decision-making on investment at a local level to ensure we address local concerns and priorities.

We will also seek out tenant feedback to provide us with a 'reality check' on the performance and quality of services.

Active tenant involvement can also play a valuable part in supporting service improvement for example, in understanding and responding to the needs of different groups such as new and younger customers.

Our SCHape Panel will also play a key role in shaping our services and holding us to account for performance and decisions.

We want to incentivise and 'reward' actions and behaviours that support us in being more efficient. For example, this could include maintaining tenancies, keeping homes in good repair or 'downsizing' from an under-occupied home.

We will work with customers to develop a 'reward' scheme to recognise positive actions and behaviours and devise a menu of 'rewards' that customers will value.

To deliver our work in this area we will:

- Embed customer engagement at the heart of the service delivery through our policies and practice
- Carry out reviews of new customers experience of our services
- Involve customers in 'piloting' and promoting the success of new technologies and approaches
- Work with customers to develop a 'reward' scheme to recognise and incentivise positive actions, engagement and behaviours'

8. Building a fantastic team

To deliver this Strategy and better outcomes for our customers and communities we need to build a fantastic team who are well trained, supported and motivated.

Our People Strategy – *"Passion in People"* recognises the need to invest in our people and to create a culture where people are empowered to make decisions, learn from their own experiences and be accountable for their actions.

We will review our structures and costs of our asset management service to ensure it is 'fit for purpose,' adequately resourced and represents good value for money.

To build a sustainable workforce we will regularly review the knowledge and skills we need and develop a workforce plan to address current or future skills 'gaps.'

Over the life of this strategy we will also consider the optimum balance between in-house and external contractor delivery - comparing our in-house Team with the 'best in class' external contractors.

We will also work closely with our internal teams and external contractors to ensure that our people embrace equality, diversity and inclusion in everything we do.

We will also seek to maximise social value outcomes such as the direct employment of local people and apprenticeships, formal training and work experience through our investment programmes

To deliver our work in this area we will:

- Contribute to the SCH People Offer and our *Passion in People Strategy*
- Recruit, retain and develop people with the knowledge, skills, competencies and behaviours we need for now and in the future
- Embed a learning culture where people are empowered to take accountability for their decisions and proactively learn from their own experiences and manage their own development
- Benchmark the structure and costs of our asset management service to ensure it is 'fit for purpose,' adequately resourced and represents good value for money
- Maximise social value outcomes through Teams and contractor partners

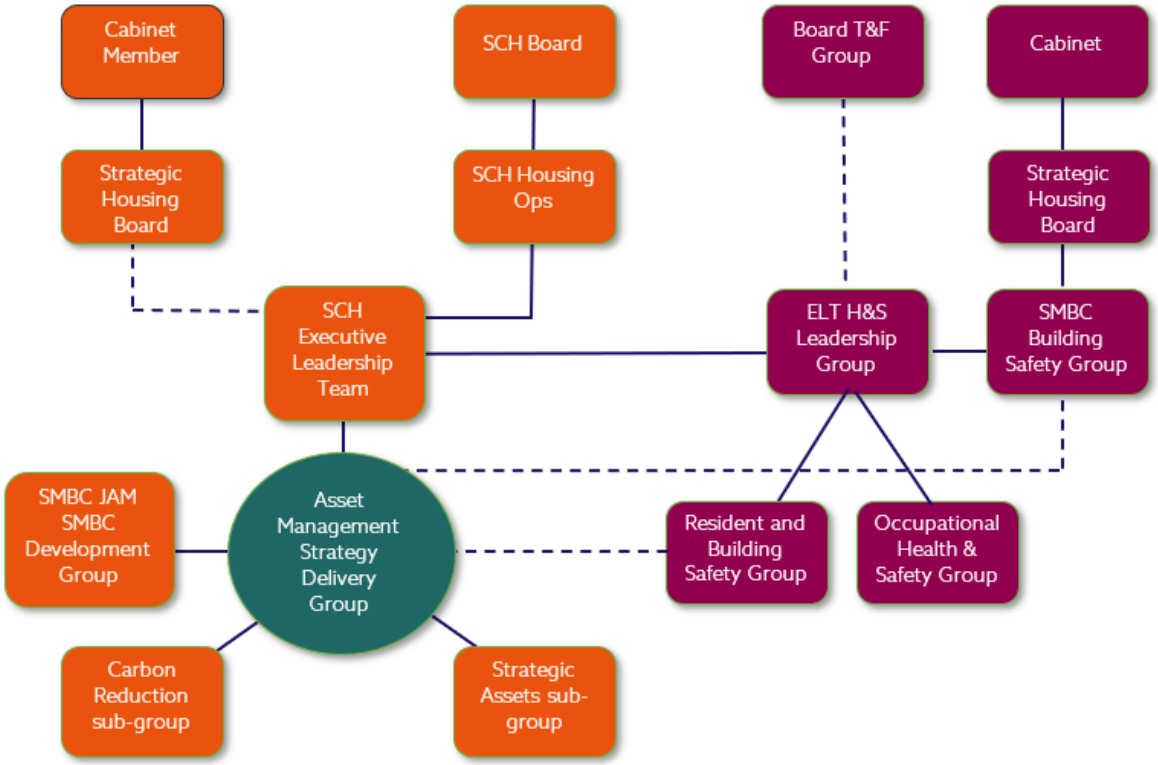
Delivering our plans

Leadership and Governance

SCH and Solihull Council have jointly developed this strategy. It is a key strategic document for both organisations that reflects our ambitions to deliver against our shared priorities and meet both legal and regulatory requirements.

We have introduced a robust Governance Framework (shown below) to ensure transparency and accountability in what and how we deliver this strategy.

There are two interconnected governance reporting pathways. This provides clear oversight and a high level of scrutiny on our performance, resourcing and the delivery of the actions identified in this strategy. To help with this SCH will develop a rolling three-year investment plan.



Solihull METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Solihull Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Joint Asset Management Strategy 2023 – 2033 – Three Year Investment Plan

Strategic Objective: 1. Investing intelligently in our homes		
Priorities - WHAT	**Actions - HOW**	**Date - When**
Intelligently invest sufficient resources to ensure our homes are safe, in good condition and are 'desirable' both now and in the future (by reflecting the 'things that matter' to customers)	• Setup decent homes module in capita. • Embed the Compliance and Workflow Modules of Open Housing • Formally refresh the financial capital investment required for the SMBC Housing Stock every two years	• 2023/24 • 2023/24 • 2024/25
Embed a robust approach to data management covering all compliance activities, performance indicators and stock condition data - the fundamental 'building block' of intelligent investment	• Formalise the process to the collection and entry of stock data and profile information using capita system. • Work with building safety managers to develop process for data checks on components requiring service. • Further develop the stock data collection plan to include staff from wider service areas • Develop and implement the corporate data strategy including data cleansing and verification within the Housing System.	• 2023/24 • 2023/24 • 2023/24 • 2024/25
Undertake option appraisals of our poorly performing stock	• Complete the options appraisal programme in response to the 6 identified low rise properties and identify an action plan for implementation • Develop reporting and tracking the impact of completed Options Appraisals through Asset Management Strategy Delivery Group • Develop year 2 and 3 options appraisal programmes in response to the updated asset performance information.	• 2023/24 • 2023/24 • 2024/25

Strategic Objective: 2.	Ensuring safe, high-quality homes	
Priorities - WHAT	**Actions - HOW**	**Date - When**
Ensure there are transparent and auditable processes to ensure homes are safe and in good condition	• Commission and review Third Party Audits for external assurance purposes on are six main areas of safety compliance • Embed transparent systems and processes for reporting of building safety • Implement the three year Building Safety Implementation Plan • Work with strategic partner for mechanical and electrical safety works to ensure accurate data, systems and processes are in place.	• 2023/24 • 2023/24 • 2024/25 • 2024/25
Ensure there is sufficient investment to provide a high-quality standard of home	• Respond to changes in legislation, customer expectations and rising investment costs as affordable through the Capital Investment Works Programme • Introduce capital investment work programmes in response to the new decent homes standard requirements • Review the amount of investment identified in the HRA Business Plan in comparison to the amount of investment required	• 2025/26 • 2024/25 • 2024/25
Improve the accessibility of our homes to meet the 'lifetime' needs of our customers	• Improve access to service delivery information through on-line channels • Implement housing assistance policy for council owned homes and private properties • Review standards of service in accordance with available funding to properties that require adaptation • Implement the lifetime homes standard to new build properties	• 2023/24 • 2023/24 • 2024/25 • 2025/26
Improve our systems and use of 'business intelligence' to ensure we invest intelligently - proactively managing disrepair, damp and mould and reducing our day-to-day spending	• Implement the damp, mould and disrepair Action Plan to reduce complaints and proactively improve property conditions • Create new works planned work programmes to offset the demand of repair works required from the revenue budget • Implement plans to reduce the number of reported repairs in the first two years of tenancy	• 2023/24 • 2024/25 • 2024/25

Strategic Objective: 3.	Supporting net zero plans by investing in 'greening' our homes	
Priorities - WHAT	**Actions - HOW**	**Date - When**
Develop a flexible, phased approach to energy efficiency investment	• Review the energy efficiency position of the Housing Stock in accordance with the latest environmental guidance. • Work on poorest performing properties first and map against known fuel poverty areas • Whilst heating technology is still developing introduce other treatments • Investigate connections between rent arrears and low performing housing stock • Prepare retrofit surveys in advance so that information is available for new funding streams • Assess business case for Council/SCH in-house Retrofit Assessment & Coordinator capacity (including services to private sector)	• 2023/24 • 2023/24 • 2025/26 • 2024/25 • 2024/25 • 2023/24
Deliver an £11million energy efficiency programme so that all properties are EPC Band C by 2030 / 31	• Complete energy efficiency works to all properties with an EPC Rating lower than 'F', LADS 2 and SHDF Funding programmes • Capture the increased energy rating score through a post completion EPC Survey following capital improvement works • Ensure an effective maintenance programme is in place for new eco technology installations • Implement a forward programmes of energy efficiency works consisting of windows / doors, lighting, replacement heating equipment and insulation measures	• 2023/24 • 2023/24 • 2025/26 • 2025/26
Seek out external funding opportunities to support our delivery and maximise our Capital Investment Funding	• Work in partnership with SMBC to attract funding via the West Midlands Combined Authority for Solihull properties • Establish new funding streams and develop a strategic partner approach to maximise new funding opportunities. • Develop forward programmes of works that can respond to emerging grant funding opportunities to maximise external contributions • Consider piloting a holistic whole house approach to carbon reduction investment projects in remote locations	• 2023/24 • 2024/25 • 2023/24 • 2025/26

Strategic Objective: 4. Ensuring high-rise living is 'fit for the future'		
Priorities - WHAT	**Actions – HOW**	**Completion Date – when**
Develop an overarching strategy for Building Safety Management to the high-rise blocks	• Deliver the Building Safety Implementation Plan • Appoint Building Safety Managers • Quantify the findings of the Structural Findings • Implement Resident Engagement Strategy and Block Specific Engagement Plans with residents • Complete Building Safety Cases	• 2024/25 • 2023/24 • 2024/25 • 2024/25 • 2024/25
Complete the Building Safety Capital Works Programmes by 2025	• Complete Sprinkler installs to all tower blocks. • Undertake structural surveys in order to understand the structural integrity and life expectancy of blocks • Complete Spandrel panel replacement programme and improve ventilation in communal areas.	• 2023/24 • 2024/25 • 2024/25
Review sustainable heating solutions for the blocks as part of our net zero plans	• Benchmark the life cycles on heating and develop block replacement plans. • Consider the merits of further investment and expansion of the district heating systems with existing or new technologies e.g. ambient loop or battery technology • Engage external advisors to develop heating solutions that address Fuel Poverty	• 2024/25 • 2025/26 • 2023/24
Develop a Building Safety Strategy	• Produce a High Rise Strategy identifying the approach to management, maintenance, safety and investment • Review service standards for housing management services such as frequency of estate inspections • Review approach to Capital investment within High Rise Blocks to avoid disproportionate investment e.g. feasibility of kitchen upgrade rather than full new installation • Where we have high turnover look at alternative solutions such as the letting standard and lettings policy, blocks with an age restrictions are performing better than those without.	• 2023/24 • 2024/25 • 2024/25 • 2024/25 • 2023/24
Develop detailed option appraisals based on survey results on all poor performing blocks to ensure they are 'fit for the future'	• Undertake viability study for the conversion of unused space and bedsits to create larger living accommodation • Identify approaches and strategies for alternative housing provision to high rise residential blocks	• 2024/25 • 2025/26

Strategic Objective 5 – Providing safe and attractive neighbourhoods that support thriving communities		
Priorities - WHAT	**Actions - HOW**	**Completion Date – when**
Invest in improving the useability and attractiveness of local open space for both recreation and amenity use	• Explore a new 'Neighbourhood and Community' standard setting out how we will work in partnership with the Locality Groups and residents to ensure our neighbourhoods are attractive, safe and secure • Embed new communal cleaning contract • Review performance of Strategic Environmental Contract • Continue with Cyclical and Enveloping programmes in partnership with the Estates Service to improve footpaths, fencing and car parking (link with natural capital strategy) • Identify opportunities to improve car parking facilities • Maximise 'social value' with our contractor organisations	• 2023/24 • 2023/24 • 2023/24 • 2025/26 • 2024/25 • 2025/26
Ensure garages and outbuildings are secure and well-maintained and contribute positively to our neighbourhoods working in partnership with our Thriving Community Locality groups	• Review the optimal use of garage sites as part of the Garage and Small Site Policy • Consider further development opportunities under the "HRA" as part of the hierarchy of use for garage areas • Review CCTV and Lighting Provision to assist with place based ASB Matters • Develop list of sites suitable for green infrastructure, community gardens, Vehicle charging etc.	• 2023/24 • 2024/25 • 2024/25 • 2025/26
Encourage residents to be good neighbours	• Promoting ownership and pride in gardens and communal areas. • Implement key initiatives of the engagement framework e.g. planting of seeds. • Ensure all staff and contractors act as SCH's 'eyes and ears' – proactively managing the safety and condition of our homes and neighbourhoods	• 2024/25 • 2024/25 • 2025/26

Strategic Objective 6 - Building new affordable and sustainable homes		
Priorities - WHAT	**Actions - HOW**	**Completion Date – when**
Support and develop regeneration schemes to support and create thriving communities within Kingshurst and Chelmsley Wood	• Complete the demolition and ground work preparation to the Kinghurst Village Centre Regeneration Scheme • Complete the building of the Community/health/commercial construction at Kinghurst Village Centre • Deliver regeneration project milestones up to project completion at Kinghurst Village Centre Regeneration Scheme • Provide ongoing support to master planning process for Chelmsley Wood	• 2023/24 • 2024/25 • 2025/26 • 2025/26
Carry out more stock acquisition and explore remodelling opportunities to meet housing need and deliver community benefits	• Manage SCH's annual programme of property acquisitions to meet the housing need of the Borough • Explore mixed-tenure development as a means of maximising the delivery of affordable housing and supporting inclusive and thriving communities • Explore remodelling developments as a means of maximising the delivery of affordable housing • Make better use of existing stock for example, building new homes to replace poorly performing stock	• 2025/26 • 2025/26 • 2025/26 • 2025/26
Maximise opportunities for building new homes through the Council's corporate assets including under-used, surplus or brownfield land	• Commence on site works and deliver agreed Phase 3 pipeline works • Work with SMBC to identify suitable redevelopment sites and deliver development sites particularly in the South of the Borough • Adopt the requirements for the Future Homes standard and changes to Building regulations. • Undertake low carbon design and specification for all prospective SCH new build schemes with a focus on Net zero • Reuse unviable or land inappropriate for affordable housing for Self and Custom Housebuilding or green infrastructure	• 2023/24 • 2025/26 • 2024/25 • 2023/24 • 2025/26

Strategic Objective 7 - Ensuring customer engagement in shaping our future services		
Priorities - WHAT	**Actions - HOW**	**Completion Date – when**
Embed customer engagement at the heart of the service delivery through our policies and practice	• Implement the Customer Engagement Framework principles within the way that we work • Provide customers with a range of ways to engage with us and have their say in the delivery of this strategy • Implement Building Safety Resident Engagement and Communications Plan • Improve customer perception to above the median benchmark for satisfaction with homes and repairs and maintenance.	• 2025/26 • 2023/24 • 2024/25 • 2024/25
Carry out reviews of new customers experience of our services	• Work with customers to co-design new SCH standards • Home improvement advocates to engage with procurement and contract management • Support SCHape Panel and VIP Reviews such as the experience of new customers moving into homes and the design of building safety block plans	• 2024/25 • 2023/24 • 2025/26
Involve customers in 'piloting' and promoting the success of new technologies and approaches	• Engage with our residents when reviewing the introduction of new technologies for heating or property improvements • Environmental sustainability resident group to influence decisions and hold us to account for performance	• 2025/26 • 2025/26
Work with customers to develop a 'reward' scheme to recognise and incentivise positive actions, engagement and behaviours'	• Explore options that support us in being more efficient and encourage greater ownership/ investment by customers in their home and neighbourhood • Review the merits of a customer reward scheme	• 2024/25 • 2024/25

Strategic Objective 8 – Building Fantastic Teams		
Priorities - WHAT	**Actions - HOW**	**Completion Date – when**
Contribute to the SCH People Offer and our Passion in People Strategy	• Empowering managers to take responsibility and manage • Offer a mentoring scheme for managers • Providing a coaching offer for staff • Implement Health and wellbeing action plan	• 2023/24 • 2024/25 • 2024/25 • 2023/24
Recruit, retain and develop people with the knowledge, skills, competencies and behaviours we need for now and in the future	• Actively promote vacancies and apprentices to ensure that we employee a diverse workforce • Review future opportunities for expansion in service delivery and train staff so that they are competent to carry out service delivery requirements now and for the future e.g. energy efficiency works, drainage • Conduct a training needs analysis and provide development opportunities to 'grow our own' and combat the current construction sector skills shortage	• 2023/24 • 2024/25 • 2024/25
Embed a learning culture where people are empowered to take accountability	• Look at succession planning and how current staff can help shape the future of the service • Challenge historic views and practices in the context of organisational values and the one team approach • Develop induction programmes for all new staff, and new starter buddies.	• 2023/24 • 2023/24 • 2023/24
Benchmark the structure and costs of our asset management service to ensure it is 'fit for purpose', adequately resourced and represents good value for money	• Carry out value for money review of service. • Review requirements for future van fleet and reduce our impact on the environment • Review the range of repairs and maintenance service delivery models • Identify the optimum balance between in-house and external contractor delivery • Benchmark our remuneration packages against other providers.	• 2024/25 • 2024/25 • 2025/26 • 2024/25 • 2025/26
Maximise social value outcomes through Teams and contractor partners	• Creating training and apprenticeship opportunities within the service and with contractor partners • Participate in community events • Carry out work placements and support of Kickstart scheme	• 2024/25 • 2025/26 • 2025/26

SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

BOARD MEETING 20 FEBRUARY 2023

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SCH SAFEGUARDING, EXPLOITATION AND DOMESTIC ABUSE (SEDA)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To update Board on the SEDA Action Plan for SCH.

2. Recommendation – Item for information

3. Background

3.1 To support the improvement to services being developed at SCH, the Chief Executive, requested Audit Services to review the effectiveness of the assurance around safeguarding arrangements.

3.2 The Safeguarding, Exploitation and Domestic Abuse Group (SEDA) that includes managers from across SCH has the leading strategic role for safeguarding, including its wider responsibilities to vulnerable children and adults. The review examined its role and how their work translates into learning and development across the organisation.

4. Key Findings

4.1 Overall, the review found that individual safeguarding roles and tasks are being carried out well. However, the review highlighted areas where improvements could be made to build on this. These included the need to:

- Introduce a detailed policy clarifying how safeguarding is carried out and how management obtain their assurance.
- Enhance how SEDA receives its assurance to show how well safeguarding learning and development is implemented across the organisation.
- Strengthen the roles in place to support safeguarding and review capacity to ensure that it is delivered consistently and effectively.
- Completion of the mandatory safeguarding training (72% against target at time of audit)
- Introduce regular reporting of safeguarding to the Executive Leadership Team and Board
- Enhance the formal risk management relating to safeguarding

4.2 Overall, based on the testing undertaken, a level 3 rating was given (moderate assurance).

5. Action Plan

5.1 A comprehensive action plan has been developed to address key elements highlighted in the audit, including SEDA's governance and assurance oversight in their responsibilities to vulnerable children and adults, and SCH's involvement in strategic partnerships relating to this. This will help to support the visibility of this work to ensure that it is delivered well.

5.2 The plan is focused on 6 key themes which form the comprehensive RAG rated monitoring framework to assist SEDA's role in assurance around the identified activities:

- **Governance - Roles and Responsibilities**
- Ensuring ELT (quarterly) and Board (annually) have oversight of safeguarding assurance/action plan progress and relevant performance targets
- Ensuring SCH has a named operational manager for Safeguarding
- SEDA to review its ToRs
- SEDA to be responsible for the review and monitoring of safeguarding risks

- **Safeguarding Policy and Procedures**
- Introduce a comprehensive SCH Safeguarding Policy in line with SMBC. SMBC are currently reviewing their Safeguarding Policy which is due for completion during Q4 2022/23. SCH will use this as the framework for its own policy.
- Development of internal safeguarding procedures to complement the West Midlands multi-agency safeguarding procedures.

- **Partnership Working**
- Ensure SCH are represented on strategic and operational groups across the borough in all aspects of safeguarding, exploitation, and domestic abuse
- Ensure SCH are included in relevant practice reviews and task and finish groups for the borough, and that learning is shared.

- **Staff Development and Training**
- SEDA to be assurance leads for ensuring mandatory safeguarding training is undertaken, and that enhanced training in areas of safeguarding, exploitation, neglect and domestic abuse is taken up by relevant front-line officers
- SEDA to promote awareness of and use of multi-agency tools and/or risk assessments used in exploitation, domestic abuse, child neglect, adult self-neglect, and early help.

- **Reporting**
- SEDA to ensure teams are making use of existing performance data such as Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) referrals to monitor the delivery of safeguarding
- SEDA to develop a schedule of internal case audits to assess compliance against policy, and monitor practice within single and multi-agency processes
- Review training take up against targets, and training evaluations
- Embedding the process of learning from serious case reviews and audits

- Oversight and reporting on the Domestic Abuse plan including the DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance) accreditation project plan
- Oversight of the service offer to SCH vulnerable customers on the Inclusive Services Register

- **Communications**
- Identifying and agreeing a communications approach and timetable of activity to support national and regional activities around safeguarding

6. Domestic Abuse

6.1 SCH are now members of DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance) who will be supporting us to improve our response to domestic abuse, through membership, accreditation framework and training packages. Their framework includes 8 priority areas against which we will be assessed: policy & procedures, case management, risk management, inclusivity & accessibility, perpetrator management, training, publicity & awareness. A self- assessment is currently underway which will inform the project plan going forward.

6.2 SCH have established a lead for the DAHA accreditation project plan, working with the appointed DAHA regional lead and operational steering group, consisting of teams from across SCH and SMBC. It will be overseen by SEDA the internal strategic group having oversight and assurance responsibilities.

6.3 The domestic abuse action plan will align with the Solihull Borough Domestic Abuse Partnership Board's Domestic and Sexual Abuse Delivery Plan 2022-2024. The strategic element of this action plan will feature in the partnership plan (ie DAHA accreditation) and SCH will be held to account for these through the partnership plan.

7. Key Priorities

7.1 Key priorities for 2023/24 will focus on embedding safeguarding learning and development into SCH's operating processes. Key activities will include:

- Deliver the SEDA performance framework giving assurance across key themes: Governance, Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Partnership Working, Staff Development and Training, Reporting, Communications and Best Practice.
- Undertaking case audits and self-assessments to support learning within single and multi-agency processes.
- Progress the SCH DAHA accreditation supporting the effective response to domestic abuse.
- Progress the new Housing Services delivery model, incorporating operational specialisms and Champion roles to support embedding safeguarding learning and development across SCH.

8. Conclusion

8.1 It is expected that the actions outlined in this report will build on the strengths within SCH to deliver effective safeguarding, based on improved oversight and assurance.

9. Financial implications

9.1 There are no cost implications identified**.** SCH benefits from access to free multi agency safeguarding training through the Partnership Boards, including domestic abuse training through DAHA. The DAHA membership and accreditation is funded from existing budgets.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

10.1 SCH is committed to protecting and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and to give assurance in how it deals with safeguarding issues. In developing its safeguarding policies and procedures a Fair Treatment Assessment will be undertaken to identify any implications across the protected characteristics**.**

11. Risk Management Implications

11.1 Safeguarding risks are registered on the JCAD Risk Management System and reviewed by SEDA.

12. Tenant Involvement

12.1 SCH involved tenants will have an opportunity to shape its safeguarding policy development, including the DAHA accreditation.

13. Consistent with Delivery Plan

13.1 The actions outlined are contained within the SCH Delivery Plan 2023/24.

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SOLIHULL COMMUNITY HOUSING

BOARD MEETING 20 FEBRUARY 2023

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER SERVICE TRANSFORMATION AND BUSINESS SUPPORT

PERFORMANCE UPDATE

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To give an update on performance in 2022/23 at end of quarter 3 (31 December 2022) where targets have not been met.

2. Recommendation – Items for Noting

2.1 Board is recommended to:

(i) **NOTE** those indicators, and the associated narrative, where the target performance has not been achieved.

3. Performance Summary

3.1 For 2022/23 there are 34 KPIs. For the period to the end of quarter 3, there were:

		Trend
18	Target is being met	↑
8	Performance is within the tolerance range	↑
8	Target is not being met	↓

3.2 Improvements have been made against:

- CR31 - Overall Satisfaction (perception) - 1.7% increase on Q2 and 0.67% off target
- CR2 - Overall satisfaction (transactional) - above target
- AM19 - Repairs satisfaction (perception) – consistent increase over six-month period
- WR2 – benefits awarded: significant upturn in performance; now ahead of profiled target.

- H05 - Percentage of homeless approaches where prevention or relief achieved - significantly above target.

4. Performance Exceptions

4.1 There were eight red indicators at end of Q3, the same number as recorded in Q2. There were a further eight off target but within tolerance. The red issues were:

4.2 **NS2 - Percentage of leaseholder service charges collected (quarterly only)**
Due to a system issue early in Q3, incorrect balances were shown on accounts which took some time to rectify. As a result, no recovery action took place for 6 weeks. We are still trying to recover from the issue but have since recommenced action to recover the shortfall. Officers are targeting cases to escalate recovery action throughout Q4.

4.3 **WR15 – Arrears as percentage of rent debit**
Following a successful Christmas rents campaign, arrears reduced by £253k during December (as a result of the rent free week and Christmas incentives). At this point last year we were 3.40%.

Arrears caseloads are slightly higher than last year with 4,007 cases being reported compared to 3,803 last year (just over a 5% increase). Mobysoft is helping to regulate the numbers and weekly recommendations have reduced. The team is now focused on improving the overall arrears position in Q4 as we strive to achieve the best possible position by Year End.

4.4 **WB20 - Customers supported with independence to remain in home**
85% of residents who responded to the Acuity survey reported that the service had helped them stay safe and well in their homes. Across the quarter, this averaged 91%, against a target of 95%.

4.5 **AM1a - Percentage of properties with valid gas certificate**
Snapshot as of Quarter 3 was 11 properties with expired or no gas certificate.

As at 9 February that figure reduced to six. Four are due to be progressed through legal, and legal action has commenced on two.

The oldest dates when the properties became out of compliance are June 2022 (two properties), with one more in 2022 (November), one in January and two in February 2023.

Two are low rise, two are high rise, one is a house and the sixth is a bungalow.

Further works between Safer Homes and Neighbourhood Services is

ongoing and recruitment of a dedicated compliance neighbourhood officer to progress cases is due to start in February 2023.

4.6 **AM20 - Average number of days to complete repairs**
Whilst the indicator is out of target, the significant decrease in average days is a good indicator that the service continues to move in the right direction and is in line with the performance improvement aspirations.

4.7 **VL13 - Percentage of rent loss due to voids**
We currently report the void figure to include properties that are out of management and due for demolition. However, Housemark have confirmed that these properties can be removed from the calculation. To maintain consistency within the financial year, we will remove these properties from Q1 2023. As at 31 December, void loss was **1.64%**

If we were to remove the properties due for demolition from the reporting (Kingshurst redevelopment and Lakeside) this brings void loss to **1.32%.**

At present we are not reletting a number of supported units whilst appraisals are undertaken on their future use. If these were removed from the figure, this would reduce the void loss to **1.10%.**

Due to the usual seasonal trend, fewer voids works were completed and properties let in December due to the Christmas bank holiday closures and applicants' reluctancy to move over the festive period.

4.8 **CR5 - Short term staff sickness days**
Absence has decreased to 11.43 days per employee from 11.67 last period. Long term sickness has increased to 6.86 days compared to 6.68 days. Short term sickness has decreased to 4.57 days compared to 4.99 days.

SMBC comparator data for this period is 12.23 average days lost per FTE, a slight decrease from the previous month of 12.20.

Mental Health is still the top reason for absence at 40% of time lost, which is a slight increase from last month (39%) SMBC core council is at 33% (36% last month).

With leavers taken out the figure is 9.10 (9.35) days per FTE.

4.9 **HO3a – Average stay in temporary accommodation (budget hotels) for families with children**
A confluence of various issues (including issues in private rented sector and Ukrainian refugees) has caused a c20% increase in demand and pressure on limited stock. Additional arrangements are being implemented to help tackle this including agreement with a local agency to provide two and three bed properties on a per night basis.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no specific cost implications arising from this information report. The costs of delivering services are covered by the annual budget setting process.

6. Equality and Diversity Implications

6.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

7. Risk Management Implications

7.1 The risks arising from failing to meet specific targets such as not collecting income are included within the general risk management framework.

8. Value for Money and Efficiency Considerations/Implications

8.1 The expectation of SMBC is that we continue to deliver excellent services whilst delivering efficiencies.

9. Tenant Involvement/Consultation

9.1 There has been no specific consultation in relation to this report; however, the SCHAPE panel will consider the summary of performance.

10. Consistent with Strategic Vision

10.1 The report is consistent with the refreshed strategic vision for 2020 to 2025.

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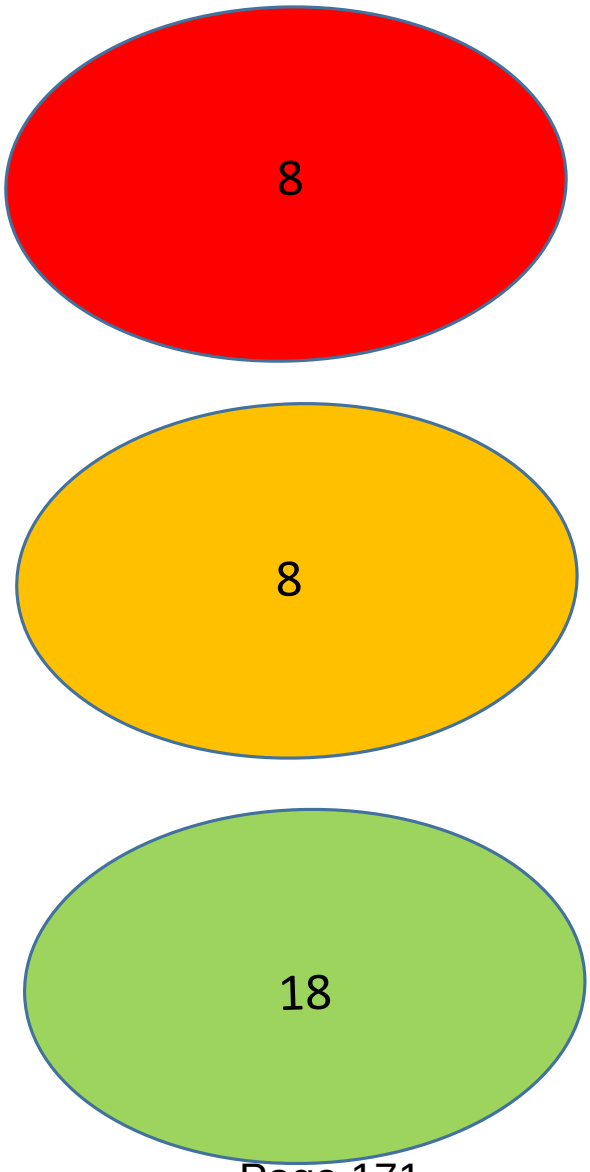
Solihull Community Housing

Shaping our neighbourhoods

Performance dashboard - December 2022



Performance dashboard - December 2022

Solihull Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Housing & Communities

Previous Year | Actual | Target

		Trend	Performance	Actual	Year-end Forecast	Target	Previous Year	Benchmark	Comment
NS1a	Percentage of rent collected of rent due (exc arrears b/fwd)			100.51%	99.00%	99.00%	99.19%	99.66%	Above target
NS2	Percentage of leaseholder service charges collected (quarterly only)			98.21%	99.00%	99.00%	99.19%	91.66%	£5,706.53 short of the 99% target. Arrears suspended following incorrect balance issues early in Q3, no action took place for 6 weeks. Still trying to recover from the issue & have since recommenced recovery action to try and recover shortfall. Officers are targeting cases to escalate recovery action throughout Q4.
NS4	Percentage of rent paid by digital means including Direct Debit			80.28%	80.50%	82.00%	80.54%	N/A	£13,222,663.37 / £16,471,103.92. 56.1% paid by DD.
WR2	Benefits awarded due to Money Advice Team intervention (£000's)			£1,651,168	£2,000,000	£1,024,086	£1,110,862	N/A	The team are on track to achieve their welfare benefit gains target with a cumulative figure of £1,651,168.39 after 9 months. Household Support Fund cases were the main reason for appointments in December = 35%, Multiple Debts and HB claims for customers in T/A were both 16% being the main referral sources into the Team. This is particularly pleasing given the fact that we are still encountering numerous problems with restricted access to the Northgate benefits system. The Team are also working well on Advice Pro.
WR15	Current tenant arrears as % of rent debit			4.14%	3.93%	3.60%	3.40%	3.83%	Following a successful Christmas rents campaign arrears reduced by £253k during December (as a result of the rent free week and Christmas incentives). At this point last year we were 3.40%. Arrears caseloads are slightly higher than last years with 4,007 cases being reported compared to 3,803 last year = 204 more. Mobysoft is helping to regulate the numbers and weekly recommendations have reduced to 1,222 per week. The Team are now focused on improving the overall arrears position in Quarter 4 as we strive to achieve the best possible position by Year End.
NS9	Percentage of flatted blocks passing cleaning inspection			93.55%	89.41%	98.00%	97.81%	N/A	We continue to work closely with Pinnacle, weekly and monthly operational meetings Pinnacle still experiencing a churn of staff including supervisors and they have an ongoing recruitment drive. We are now meeting g several times a week, the contract manager is working from our office every week and we are collating all actions on an action tracker.
NS10	Percentage of estate inspections completed			96.83%	100.00%	98.00%	98.91%	N/A	All estate inspections have been completed in accordance with the plan for the year to date however, the target is not profiled to reflect this. The work programme is on course to be completed by the year end.
NS21	Percentage of new tenancies sustained			98.65%	97.50%	90.00%	97.00%	N/A	442 tenancies granted in 12 months to end of December 2022 with 6 failures, 1 in December (4 across the quarter)
NS38	Harm Reduction Resulting from ASB Intervention			100.00%	50.00%	80.00%	N/A	N/A	One resident responded to the survey in December, and they reported that their situation had improved. Across quarter 3, 75% of respondents stated that the intervention had reduced the harm being caused by ASB.
HO1	Average stay in temporary accommodation (all) - days			54	24	112	92	N/A	Outturn significantly below target for December at 54 days.
HO3a	Average stay families with children in budget hotels - days			37	30	15	15	N/A	Outturn above target due to increased demand for temporary accommodation.
HO5	Percentage of homeless approaches where prevention or relief achieved			70.00%	94.71%	55.00%	51.84%	N/A	Achieved significantly above target with housing solutions through the housing register, securing supported and private rented accommodation, and mediation with friends and family.
WB20	Percentage of customers supported with independence to remain in home			85.00%	82.57%	95.00%	N/A	N/A	Across the quarter, 91% of respondents reported that the service had helped them stay safe and well in their homes.

Performance dashboard - December 2022

Solihull Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Asset Management & Development

Previous Year | Actual | Target

		Trend	Performance	Actual		Year-end Forecast		Target	Previous Year	Benchmark	Comment
AM1a	Percentage of properties with valid gas certificate			99.86%		99.64%		100.00%	99.88%	99.82%	Snapshot as of Quarter 3 was 11 properties with expired or no gas certificate. As at the 9th February that figure reduced to six. Four are due to be progressed through legal, and legal action has commenced on two. The oldest dates when the properties became out of compliance are June 2022 (two properties), with one more in 2022 (November), one in January and two in February 2023. Two are low rise, two are high rise, one is a house and the sixth is a bungalow. Further works between Safer Homes and Neighbourhood Services is ongoing and recruitment of a dedicated compliance neighbourhood officer to progress cases is due to start in February 2023.
AM1b	Percentage domestic properties with a satisfactory Electrical Installation Condition Report			98.70%		98.82%		100.00%	97.77%	N/A	127 properties with expired or no EICR certificate. The number of overdue tests has remained stable from close at end of November at 127, with the number of 'No Previous Certs' at 20 total. The up and coming tests are being managed with works ongoing to continue to reduce those that are overdue. This process will be further aided by the resourcing of a dedicated Building Safety Neighbourhood Officer.
AM1c	Percentage non-domestic assets covered by a valid FRA			100.00%		100.00%		100.00%	100.00%	N/A	On target
AM1d	Percentage known asbestos locations re-inspected within benchmarked period (communal areas)			100.00%		100.00%		100.00%	100.00%	N/A	On target
AM1e	Percentage of relevant water installations covered by a risk assessment			100.00%		100.00%		100.00%	100.00%	N/A	On target
AM1f	Percentage communal passenger lifts that require a thorough examinations (LOLER)			100.00%		100.00%		100.00%	100.00%	N/A	On target
AM4	Percentage of appointments kept - Response repairs			96.81%		96.00%		98.00%	98.99%	95.72%	Whilst below target, it exceeds the Benchmark and indicative of the steps taken so far to drive performance through a difficult period. The service has encountered periods of absence driven by Covid throughout the end of the year and this has impacted on performance.
AM7	Percentage of repairs completed right first visit			94.29%		92.00%		95.00%	96.03%	90.98%	The need to ensure effective initial diagnosis of the repair and an increase in damp and Mould related cases continues to provide a pressure on this performance indicator.
AM17	Average number of repairs per property			0.99		1.04		2.50	1.44	3.00	Within profiled target.
AM20	Average number of days to complete repairs			9.69		12.00		7.50	10.73	11.40	Whilst the indicator is out of target, the significant decrease in average days is a good indicator that the service continues to move in the right direction and is inline with the performance improvement aspirations.
WB1	Percentage of Minor adaptation works completed on time			100.00%		98.00%		98.00%	99.02%	N/A	Above target
WB2	Percentage of Major adaptation works completed on time			100.00%		90.00%		90.00%	84.74%	N/A	Above target
VL13	Percentage of rent loss due to voids			1.64%		1.30%		0.90%	1.72%	1.36%	We currently report the void figure to include properties that are out of management and due for demolition. However, Housemark have confirmed that these properties can be removed from the calculation. To maintain consistency within the financial year, we will remove these properties from Q1 2023. If we were to remove these from the reporting (Kingshurst redevelopment and Lakeside) this brings void loss to 1.32%. At present we are not reletting a number of supported units whilst appraisals are undertaken on their future use. If these were removed from the figure, this would reduce the void loss to 1.10%. Due to the usual seasonal trend, fewer voids works were completed and properties let in December due to the Christmas bank holiday closures and applicants' reluctancy to move over the festive period.

Performance dashboard - December 2022

Solihull Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Customer Services & Business Support

Previous Year | Actual | Target

		Trend	Performance	Actual	Year-end Forecast	Target	Previous Year	Benchmark	Comment
CR2	Overall satisfaction (transactional)			88.89%	87.00%	85.00%	88.37%	N/A	Above target.
CR31	Overall satisfaction (STAR perception) - quarterly			79.33%	79.00%	80.00%	78.35%	72.50%	+1.7% vs Q2 and above performance noted at the same time last year.
AM19	Satisfaction with responsive repairs service			92.65%	90.87%	90.00%	91.01%	88.00%	Above target. Consistent increase over 6 month period
CR1	Percentage of complaints resolved at stage 1			96.47%	97.00%	97.00%	98.57%	N/A	There were 85 stage 1 complaints in the quarter of which 83 were resolved at stage 1 and 2 escalated to stage 2 (97.65%). The two complaints investigated at stage 2 were not upheld and no change in position from initial investigation.
CR34	Complaints resolved in timescale			95.29%	95.00%	90.00%	79.54%	80.42%	During the quarter there were 4 late complaints and the manager and ELT members are sent reminders prior to target times elapsing to try to ensure dealt with on time. There were 3 late complaints in October and 1 in December with all completed on time in November. In December the officer tried to make contact with the customer but they failed to return calls etc. The team are working with a new process in that they should not close damp and mould complaints without getting in to see the tenant. As the tenant did not make contact, the officer wasn't able to negotiate an extension of time to complete the complaint.
CR28	Percentage of tenants using customer portal			40.29%	44.73%	38.67%	36.00%	N/A	incremental increase in the percentage of residents using the portal has been noted for the last 12 months, and is 5.29% higher that the same time last year.
CR36	Contact centre ASA			245	180	270	N/A	169	Reduced volumes relate to shorter month, longer waits and higher abandon are seasonal due to customer traffic squeezing into beginning of the week for example w/c 19th Dec. In addition, reduced resource and increased volumes on return to office for 2 days has impacted performance.
CR5	Short term staff sickness days			4.57	5.00	4.00	4.23	2.04	Absence has decreased to 11.43 days per employee from 11.67 last period. LTS has increased to 6.86 days compared to 6.68 days. STS has decreased to 4.57 days compared to 4.99 days. SMBC comparator for this period is 12.23 average days lost per FTE, a slight decrease from the previous month of 12.20. Mental Health is still the top reason for absence at 40% (39%) of time lost, which is an increase from last month. SMBC core council is at 33% (36% last month). With leavers taken out the figure is 9.10 (9.35) days per FTE

Performance dashboard - December 2022

Solihull Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Tenant satisfaction measures

Previous Year | Actual | Target

		Trend	Performance	Actual	Year-end Forecast	Target	Previous Year	Benchmark	Comment
CR31	Overall satisfaction with services provided by SCH			79.33%	79.00%	80.00%	78.35%	72.50%	+1.7% vs Q2
STAR1	Quality of home			70.95%	74.00%	75.00%	N/A	73.20%	-3.72% vs Q2
STAR2	Repair in the last 12 months			79.57%	80.00%	80.00%	N/A	80.45%	+0.01% vs Q2
STAR3	Time taken to complete the last repair			72.04%	77.00%	80.00%	N/A	N/A	-4.76% vs Q2
STAR4	Repairs and maintenance overall			80.67%	76.00%	80.00%	N/A	70.06%	+5.75% vs Q2
STAR5	Home is well maintained			72.00%	80.00%	85.00%	N/A	79.55%	New question following TSM consultation. First reporting of this question.
STAR6	Home is safe			77.93%	80.00%	85.00%	N/A	79.55%	Previous QTR figure is for the old "safe and secure" question.
STAR7	Landlord listens to and acts upon tenants' views			71.67%	71.00%	70.00%	N/A	56.80%	-1.02% vs Q2
STAR8	Landlord keeps you informed about things that matter to you			82.88%	77.00%	80.00%	N/A	N/A	+7.71% vs Q2
STAR9	Landlord treats me fairly and with respect			83.33%	82.00%	80.00%	N/A	N/A	-1.18% vs Q2
STAR10	Landlord keeps communal areas clean and safe			63.49%	61.00%	70.00%	N/A	N/A	+2.25% vs Q2
STAR11	Provides information on building safety and tenant responsibilities			85.71%	81.00%	80.00%	N/A	N/A	+5.28% vs Q2
STAR12	SCH is easy to deal with			80.67%	81.00%	80.00%	N/A	67.50%	-0.25% vs Q2
STAR13	SCH makes a positive contribution to neighbourhood			79.22%	72.00%	75.00%	N/A	N/A	+7.79% vs Q2
STAR14	SCH approach to handling ASB			63.16%	64.00%	70.00%	N/A	N/A	-0.65% vs Q2
STAR15	Complaints handling			27.03%	70.00%	70.00%	N/A	N/A	-44.65% vs Q2

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Date produced – 1 February 2023

Full Board
Forward Plan

Monday 20 February 2023			
		Quarter 3 2022/23 Performance Exception Report	Becci Youlden
		Quarter 3 2022/23 Health and Safety Report	Mark Wills
		Quarter 3 2022/23 Financial Monitoring	Sam Gilbert
		Chair's Report from Audit and Risk Committee on 12 December 2022	Mark Thrasher
		Chair's Report from Housing Operations Committee on 14 November 2022 and 6 February 2023	Phil Hardy
		Delivery Plan 2023/24	Martyn Sargeant
		Safeguarding Report (SEDA)	Carol Trappett
		Asset Management Strategy	Mike Brymer
Monday 22 May 2023			
		Quarter 4 2022/23 Performance Exception Report	Martyn Sargeant
		Quarter 4 2022/23 Health and Safety Report	Mark Wills
		Quarter 4 2022/23 Financial Monitoring	Sam Gilbert
		Chair's Report from Human Resources, Equalities and Remuneration Committee on 24 April 2023	Louise Tubbs
		Chair's Report from Housing Operations Committee on 22 May 2023	Phil Hardy
		Chair's Report from Audit and Risk Committee on 20 March 2023	Mark Thrasher
		Preparations for Regulatory Compliance	Martyn Sargeant
Monday 4 September 2023			
		Quarter 1 2023/24 Performance Exception Report	Martyn Sargeant
		Quarter 1 2023/24 Health and Safety Report	Mark Wills
		Quarter 1 2023/24 Financial Monitoring	Sam Gilbert
		Chair's Report from Audit and Risk Committee on 19 June and 25 September 2023 (including signing of accounts)	Mark Thrasher
		Chair's Report from Housing Operations Committee on 4 September 2023	Phil Hardy
		Chair's Report from Human Resources, Equalities and Remuneration Committee on 17 July 2023	Louise Tubbs
		Budget 2024/25	Sam Gilbert
Monday 20 November 2023 AGM			
		Quarter 2 2023/24 Performance Exception Report	Martyn Sargeant

		Quarter 2 2023/24 Health and Safety Report	Mark Wills
		Quarter 2 2023/24 Financial Monitoring	Sam Gilbert
		Chair's Report from Housing Operations Committee on 27 November 2023	Phil Hardy
		Chair's Report from Human Resources, Equalities and Remuneration Committee on 17 October 2023	TBA
		Draft Delivery Plan 2024	Martyn Sargeant
		HRA Budget 2024/25	Sam Gilbert

Regular Items (every meeting):

- Minutes of Previous Meeting
- Action Log
- Chairs' reports from Committee Meetings

Quarterly Reports:

- Performance (Exception Reporting)
- Financial Monitoring
- Health & Safety Report (including data on accidents)