# Tenant Engagement Newsletter

### Your voice shaping change

## July - September 2026

## Welcome

Hello and welcome to the first edition of our Tenant Engagement Newsletter.

This newsletter has been created to keep you updated on how we are working with tenants to shape and improve housing services. By sharing updates, outcomes and opportunities to get involved, we hope to show how tenant feedback is making a real difference across our communities.

You are receiving this newsletter because you have taken part in an activity or have expressed an interest in getting involved and are currently on our Tenant Experts contact list, a group of tenants who have expressed an interest in helping us improve housing services.

Thank you for helping us improve your housing service. Some of the projects, changes and successes featured in this newsletter may be projects that you have contributed to directly. We hope you enjoy reading our first edition. If you have any feedback or suggestions for future newsletters, please email us at: tenant.engagement@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

We look forward to working with you and hearing your views in the months ahead.




Photo of attendees for our Empty Homes Workshop in August

# Tenant Influence at a Glance



**341** tenants engaged with

**48** **different opportunities** to influence your housing service

**14** **scrutiny recommendations** agreed for improving our services

**50** tenants joined us on our new **estate walkabout** programme

**17** **communities visited** to hear what is important in their community

**1** **Community Action Day** completed

**77** tenants gave **feedback on our services** or took part in a **consultation** through surveys and emails

# In Your Community



## Out and about in communities

During September and October, we completed walkabouts in 22 of our communities. These walkabouts are a chance for staff, partner agencies and tenants to meet on their estates, look at what is working well and hear your ideas about what could be improved. Areas were selected based on higher levels of dissatisfaction identified through our tenant satisfaction surveys.

They are also a great opportunity to meet your housing officer and raise local issues directly. A big thank you to everyone who has popped out to speak with us. So far, we have been to:

- Stutton Close, Stutton
- The Timperleys, Hintlesham
- Acton Road, Bramford
- Thedwastre Close, Elmswell
- Curwen Road and Kent Road, Stowmarket
- St Edmunds Road, Stowmarket
- First Avenue, Sudbury
- Hawkins, Sudbury
- Spring Street, Lavenham
- Cordell Road, Long Melford
- Ash Street, Boxford
- Redes Way and Trinity Walk, Stowupland
- Hillside, Wright Close and Hunt Close, Stowmarket
- Denny Close and Eve Balfour Way, Haughley
- Schoolfield, High Bank and Hammond Croft, Glemsford
- Ducksen Road, Mendlesham
- Timperley Road and Ansel Close, Hadleigh
- Newberry Road, Bildeston
- John Swain Close, Needham Market
- Maple Way, Pine Close and Ash Drive, Eye
- Church Meadow and Albert Close, Diss

We are now halfway through this pilot and the walkabouts will start again in the spring.

## Community Action Day makes a difference

Our second Community Action Day of the year took place in Stradbroke.



Paths and edges were cleared to make them safer, more accessible and presentable. A dead tree was removed and three others were cut back to allow more natural light into nearby homes. A further tree was inspected and will be removed during our winter works programme.

We also spoke with tenants about their neighbourhood and identified a project that we will take forward through our Greater Places initiative. Our Community Housing Officer visited residents to discuss their queries and concerns.

# Tenant Board and Scrutiny

## Empty Homes workshop and visits

On the 20th August, staff, managers, councillors and tenants came together at Washbrook and Copdock Village Hall for an empty homes workshop as part of our scrutiny improvement programme.

The workshop focused on improving the experience for tenants moving in and out of our homes. Attendees worked together to identify actions and opportunities to strengthen the service and deliver better outcomes for tenants.

The session generated a range of incredibly interesting conversations, with valuable insights shared from different perspectives. By bringing everyone together, we were able to explore challenges, share ideas and develop practical solutions to improve the way we handle empty homes.

Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to the discussion, ensuring we continue to provide the best possible service for our tenants.

Following the workshop, an action plan was developed based on the key themes and discussions raised during the session. The proposed actions have been reviewed by all relevant housing teams, including Tenancy Services, Repairs and Maintenance, and the Compliance Team, to ensure a joined-up approach and commitment to delivering the improvements identified.




The empty homes scrutiny project output report, including the proposed action plan, was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October. The Committee recognised the value of the work undertaken and made the following recommendation:

*"That the Committee thank the Tenant Scrutiny Board for the work undertaken and note the recommendations made as a result."*

This recommendation reflects the positive contribution made by tenants, staff and councillors throughout the scrutiny process and supports the continued delivery of the improvements identified through the project.

Progress against the action plan will be monitored by our Tenant Board and reported on our website every three months. Read previous scrutiny actions plans.

# Tenant Board and Scrutiny

## Tenant Board Annual General Meeting

At the Board's Annual General Meeting (AGM), members agreed that the current Chair and Vice Chair will remain in their roles until February 2027. This will provide continuity for the Board while allowing newer members time to gain experience and develop an understanding of the responsibilities of these positions.

- Chair: Liz Perryman
- Vice Chair: Tony Cole

The Board also approved several updates to its Terms of Reference. These changes include recognising the new staffing structure within the Tenant Engagement Team to ensure appropriate officer support is available at meetings.

Membership arrangements were updated to allow for up to 12 Tenant Board members, with a maximum of two leaseholder members, rather than requiring two leaseholder positions to be filled. The Terms of Reference now also include information about the tenant engagement incentive scheme and the criteria for qualifying for payments.

## Working together to set our tenant satisfaction targets

The Board has met with managers and portfolio holders to agree targets for the next 18 months. By working together, tenants were able to share their views and focus on the areas that matter most.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures, known as TSMs, help show how well housing services are doing and how tenants feel about the services they receive. They include areas such as repairs, home safety, complaints and whether tenants feel listened to.

The new targets will give us a clear way to track progress, celebrate improvements and identify where more work is needed. Most importantly, they reflect the experiences and priorities shared by tenants.

We will review our performance regularly over the next 18 months and keep tenants updated on the progress being made.

## Are you passionate about making a difference to your wider housing services?

Why not pop along and observe a Tenant Board meeting, meet current members and see whether joining could be right for you?

Fully involved Tenant Board members receive £100 per quarter in shopping vouchers in recognition of their time and contribution.

**Meetings are held at 6pm on:**

- **25th November**
- **27th January**
- **24th February**

Contact the Tenant Engagement Team to sign up or click here for more information.

email:
tenant.engagement@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

# Resident Readers

70 tenants helped us review our Service Standards, Good Neighbourhood Toolkit and Garden Maintenance Advice Leaflet. Our Resident Readers shared valuable feedback on the documents' content, readability and layout, helping us make the information clearer and easier to read.

You can find the Good Neighbourhood Toolkit on our website here. Our Service Standards, which set out the minimum standards tenants can expect when dealing with us, is currently being finalised and will be uploaded to the website in November.

Our Garden Maintenance Advice Leaflet can be found in our next edition of My Home Bulletin. Thank you to everyone who took the time to read the documents and share their views.

Documents which have been through our Resident Reader group are then awarded the 'approved by tenants' logo (pictured above), showing they have been checked by tenants for clarity and accessibility.



# Regulatory inspection grading: C2

The Regulator of Social Housing has awarded both councils a C2 compliant rating, recognising strengths including the impact of tenant feedback on services.

The judgement also highlights areas for improvement, particularly reducing the number of homes that do not yet meet the Decent Homes Standard. This remains a key priority, and work is already underway to address this.

We would like to thank all tenants who have taken part in surveys, scrutiny reviews, consultations, and other engagement activities. We would also like to say a massive thank you to our Tenant Board who met with the Regulator in the summer. All feedback and involvement continues to help shape our services and contributed to this grading.

Read the full judgement and FAQs on our website. We will continue to work closely with tenants and the Tenant Board as we deliver further improvements and report on our progress.

# Webinars and Training

Useful resources

## Stop the Social Housing Stigma

Stop Social Housing Stigma's Annual General Meeting will be held (online) on Thursday 12th November (4pm to 6pm). All members (we are!) are welcome to attend but do need to register here. The meeting will give SSHS's members an opportunity to reflect on progress and to shape how we move forward. SSHS will be highlighting the results of their language project and talking about thoughts on tackling wider societal social housing stigma.

## TPAS Involvement Week 16th- 20th November

Get ready for a week packed full of all things tenant engagement and involvement, with plenty of opportunities to learn, share ideas, hear from others and celebrate the fantastic work happening across the sector. All of our tenants can join in- sign up here.

TENANT ENGAGEMENT EXPERTS tpas member 2026-2027

## Four Million Homes

Four Million Homes is a national programme designed to help social housing tenants better understand their rights, their landlord's responsibilities, and how they can have a greater say in the services they receive. It provides information, guidance, and resources to support tenants in becoming more informed and involved. You can find all of their resources here.

## Social Housing Round Table

A free weekly networking and discussion forum for those in the social housing sector, aimed at changing lives and communities. Find all new and previous discussions here.

# You Said, We Listened

| Project | You Said | We Listened |
|---|---|---|
| Empty Homes Scrutiny Project | The time between one tenant moving out and another moving in can be too long, and the experience is not always as smooth as it should be. | This year, the Tenant Board chose Empty Homes as its biggest scrutiny project to date. They carried out a detailed review, including information gathering, site visits, a tenant survey, and an in-person workshop with tenants who had recently moved into their homes.<br><br>Using the feedback gathered, the Tenant Board developed a 14-point action plan to improve the empty homes process and the experience for new tenants. A dedicated project group of staff will oversee the delivery of these actions, with progress reported regularly to the Tenant Board until all improvements have been completed. |
| Estate walkabouts | There were concerns about communal repairs, fly tipping, grounds maintenance, parking, and improvements needed to shared spaces across our neighbourhoods. | We have arranged a number of communal repairs, removed fly tipping from affected sites, and investigated both individual and communal tenant concerns. Essential grounds maintenance works have also been completed at Stutton Close Car Park and Spring Street. We are using feedback to plan further improvements through our Greater Places budget, including bin stores, garden areas, parking, signage, and unused land. Projects have been prioritised based on urgency and added to our consultation programme so residents can help shape the improvements. |

# You Said, We Listened

| Project | You Said | We Listened |
|---|---|---|
| **Stradbrooke Community Action Day** | The estate could be improved, with concerns about overgrown areas, accessibility of pathways, and trees affecting the appearance and enjoyment of the neighbourhood. | We visited the estate with tenants and the local Councillor, then returned with staff volunteers and Grounds Maintenance colleagues to carry out improvements. This included removing dead trees, clearing and widening pathways, and improving natural light for residents by cutting back overgrown trees. |
| Elizabeth Court, Sudbury Scheme meetings | Tenants want a safe garden area to use in the summer that islow maintenance but still looked appealing.<br><br>Unsafe paths were also reported. | We have created plans for a potential new garden area which includes an open outdoor seating area. We are also fixing and replacing some of the pathways. There will be a consultation with residents to decide next steps in November. |
| Resident Reader projects | Our documents could be clearer and more accessible. Resident Readers wanted to help shape how information is shared with residents. | We implemented the changes suggested, including updating colours on our Service Standards document to make it more accessible for people with sight vulnerabilities. We also improved the terminology used across our documents to make information clearer and easier to understand.<br><br>Feedback on our notice board survey was incorporated into our plans, helping to shape how information is displayed and shared with residents going forward. |

# Prize Draw Winners

**Did you know that if you complete one of our tenant engagement surveys you are entered into a quarterly prize draw to win a £100 shopping voucher?**

The best bit? You get an **additional** entry each time you complete another survey!

This scheme applies to all tenant engagement surveys, Resident Reader reviews *and* Neighbourhood Expert forms. To find out more about these roles, click here to visit our website and complete the interest form.

**Congratulations to John from Mid Suffolk and Suzanne from Babergh who were the winners for this quarter's prize draw, we hope you enjoy your voucher.**



# And finally- thank you!

Thank you for reading the first edition of our Tenant Engagement Newsletter. We appreciate everyone who has taken part in engagement activities this quarter, **with tenants sharing their views 341 times**.

If you would like us to visit your community, attend a local event, or hear what's important to you and your neighbours, please get in touch. We'd love to hear from you.

Email us at tenant.engagement@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk or call 0300 123 4000, option 3 and ask for the Tenant Engagement Team.

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| English | If you would like this document translated or require an accessible format such as large print or braille, please call 0300 123 4000, and select option 3. |
| Kurdish | ئەگەر دەتەوێت ئەم بەڵگەنامەیە وەربگێڕدرێت یان پێویستیت بە شێوازێکی دەستگەیشتن هەیە وەک چاپی گەورە یان نووسینی نابینایان braille، تکایە پەیوەندی بکە بە 0300 123 4000، و بژاردەی 3 هەڵبژێرە. |
| Polish | Jeśli chcesz, aby ten dokument został przetłumaczony lub potrzebujesz innego dostępnego formatu, takiego jak duży druk lub alfabet Braille'a, zadzwoń pod numer: 0300 123 4000 i wybierz wewnętrzny 3. |
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| Pashto | که چیرې ددغه سند ژباړه غواړئ یا پې لوپې چاپې یا بریل بڼې ته اړتیا ولرئ، مهرباني وکړئ 0300 123 4000 ته زنګ ووهئ او 3 اپشن یا غوراوی وتاکئ. |
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