

Tenant Board Meeting

Wednesday 24th September 2025

Attendees:

Liz Perryman	Tenant Board Member (Chair)
Gerry Crease	Tenant Board Member
Stella Morris	Tenant Board Member
Sara Szczepanski	Tenant Board Member
Paula Warren	Tenant Board Member
Tony Cole	Tenant Board Member
David White	Housing Transformation Manager
Georgia Mecoy	Tenant Engagement Co-ordinator
Kerry Lecomber	Tenant Engagement Co-ordinator
Rob Longfoot	Head of Housing Management (p/t)
Maresa Laney	Community Housing Officer (p/t)
Cllr Richard Winch	Housing Portfolio Holder (Mid Suffolk)
Amma Antwi-Yeboah	Housing Solutions Corporate Manager (p/t)

Apologies

Cllr Hendry.

Maresa introduced herself and her role. AAY did the same.

Actions from last meeting

- All actions from last meeting are in hand.
- A full consultation on grass cutting will take place next year.

Declarations of Interest

None declared.

Action: The tenant board have agreed to move the tenant influence budget agenda item to the next month's meeting.

Chair vote

GM took meeting through the background of this and explained the need for the new chair to have a fuller role in terms of running the meetings. Full training and support would be given. TC advised he would be interested in the future but was too busy currently but would be interested in being Vice Chair. All agreed to keep LP as Chair for the next year and TC will take on the Vice Chair role.

Terms of reference review

GM explained we don't have to change this but just like to review annually to check there aren't any suggested changes. LP advised it was very thoroughly reviewed last year and doesn't feel it needs changing. All agreed.

GM advised she would like to move the Annual Report from the accountability section but move to November as it's not ready in time. All agreed.

Decommissioning sheltered consultation update

RL shared a presentation updating the tenant board on the progress and feedback from tenants from face-to-face meetings and a detailed survey.

The full report on the scheme-by-scheme responses will be shared with the tenant board by 1st October.

LP: When they are decommissioned, there will be a policy for older people or those with disabilities. What age is that? RL advised it would be reserved for those aged 60+ or those over 40 with disabilities and have need for a bungalow for example and that would be for both Districts based on decisions made by the Cabinets.

PW: Would people that would like to move have to go through Gateway to Homechoice? RL advised would have to register on it but would then be offered a direct let. RL advised of one tenant advising already that they would like to move to Hurstlea Court in Needham Market, and due to work being carried out there will be an empty property which they are having reserved for them.

GC: Looking forward what about the aging population – does this mean that there will be a shortage? RL advised that we're increasingly finding that people moving into Sheltered don't actually need the Sheltered service. What we're finding now is that technology has moved on massively which means people can stay in their homes for longer and be supported in the right way. Service costs at the moment are upwards of £21 per unit per week and actually the demand for them isn't there. Moving away from a place-based approach – this is sheltered housing for older people only.

GC enquired if we would be on the lookout for spurious providers? RL advised we would be looking at the offers out there including our current provider to bulk buy a deal so we will be looking into all sorts of options.

DW advised of Council's role in terms of strategic housing and considering demographic information when forming our planning policies and demand that developers build more bungalows and level-access properties.

LP advised Age Concern have a really good policy helping people get help and advice. DW advised they are one of the external support organisations we will be signposting tenants to.

RW: We have had responses from 80% of residents – will we contact 100% of the tenants as the remaining may have vulnerabilities?

RL advised we've given everyone the opportunity to take part, and some have chosen not to take part. However now we're looking scheme by scheme to check who hasn't responded and why. We will be making sure we are speaking to every single one of our tenants and ensure their needs are being met.

TC advised concern that those not responding may be very anxious and might slip through the cracks. RL advised that whilst some were anonymous, we have ways to checking so we can ensure people are supported.

AAY advised on plans to work on an older person's development strategy which will look at what our offer to older residents will be in the future which will feed into what we develop in the future.

LP enquired if anyone may not have completed survey because of mental health issues, sight issues etc. RL advised they will be. KL advised there were tenant representatives in quite a few of the sessions.

Action: Report will be shared with recommendations shortly.

Aids and adaptations policy

AAY shared a presentation and took the meeting through the forthcoming joint policy across both Districts to provide a consistent approach to providing aids and adaptations.

GC enquired if adaptations would be inspected once they are done. AAY advised there is a surveyor in the team who will carry out inspections with the Occupational Therapists and then review the work afterwards.

TC advised when he moved into his flat there was no shower and wasn't tiled and he applied and paid to do it himself – can that happen with aids and adaptations? AAY advised no because work has to meet a certain specification and must be done in the right way to quality check it for safety. DW advised that if a tenant moves on you now have a property adapted to a specific level so it can be let to another tenant with those needs.

LP advised that if you go through Social Services they send out the OT, the NHS sends one also – why does it take so long – it can be two years. AAY advised she knows there's a shortage within the service and a great deal of demand. That's why we're not requiring OT referrals for the minor works such as grabrails and instead we will use Trusted Assessors. She does feel they could be much better co-ordinated. AAY advised because it's public money and can be up to £20k at a time with a limited budget you need to ensure you're spending the money wisely. Sometimes it's better for tenants to move than trying to adapt a property that won't ever really meet needs.

DW advised one of the main reasons to get this policy in place is to get equal service for our tenants compared with those who privately own their property.

RW enquired of two things – not entirely sure when clock starts ticking and whether we need a section on communication with the tenant to manage expectations. AAY advised of issues of us not being advised in good time because of a lack of communication from the hospitals. We can turn things around quite quickly but need them to make it part of the discharge protocol. She does want timescales that residents can hold us to account for. We also need to add some clear requirements with the contractor in terms of their communication with residents and us.

DW added there will be some KPIs added.

LP enquired if they will get a copy of final policy and processes which DW agreed was important and the processes were probably more what the tenants would like to see. AAY has already looked at learning from the complaints on adaptations and will look to running a workshop which will involve tenants who have experienced the service. She will be looking for feedback from the end users.

All confirmed that they had reviewed the policy and the report from resident readers. There was nothing else they picked that the resident readers hadn't.

All agreed that the policy can go to Cabinet. We will look to run a workshop in late October or early November and all will receive an invitation if they would like to be involved.

Scrutiny projects

Complaints

LP: CRM – will that negate the issues of people not being there because of sickness or holiday etc. DW advised yes and manager should be looking at lists of callbacks and redirecting to other staff members.

PW explained Golden Call Template.

LP: Complaints Taskforce – is that the one I go to? DW advised it was and that complaints we looked at were all from before we had improved the service so we're already carrying out a lot of work that is improving things.

PW and LP advised this is really comprehensive and so good to see so much already being done. This will be reported to O&S in October letting them know where we are along with the ASB scrutiny.

Communication

LP advised transcripts were good and could be used. Live Chat - not sure if it's a robot. PW advised it's definitely a person. All happy with three types of document to be used in scrutiny. SM advised it was a good range for tenants to review.

GM took the group through the proposal for the scrutiny project. SM agreed that groups are a good idea as doing everything might be a bit too much.

LP enquired about people enquiring by post. PW advised she can't remember single one this year. DW advised any letters are generally from an organisation or a solicitor or direct to Arthur Charvonia.

LP likes the idea of doing it in various groups – just make sure it's divided up properly. She couldn't do 15 pieces of scrutiny properly.

TC advised he has a couple built up so he will act as our 'mystery shopper' so to speak and we can use it for customer journey mapping.

All agreed it was really comprehensive.

Any Other Business

Will be carrying out tenant board 1-2-1s which we can do in person or on the phone. GM took board through what this will be and what is involved.

Overview and Scrutiny 13th October and Sara has said she'll come along as well as Stella.

Website testing – looking at content and images. Tim, Stella and Sara are coming along so please come along if you are free.

DW advised that the mock inspection will be carrying out by HQN in January 2026. That will be great development for the board and they will be attending a board meeting.