Resident Scrutiny Panel – The Moving In Experience Scrutiny Project Report

October 2026

Introduction

The "combined Trusts" Resident Scrutiny panel (RSP) is made up of residents who have volunteered to participate in a scrutiny panel. Each volunteer resident is representing one of the following organisations: -

- My Trust (formerly Sir Josiah Mason Trust and Yardley Great Trust)
- Lench's Trust
- Solihull Care Housing Association
- Harborne Parish Lands Charity
- Broadening Choices for Older People

The Panel decided on the moving in experience for their next Scrutiny project following a lengthy, productive discussion in January 2026. The following ideas were discussed:

- Consumer Standards including:
    i. Neighbourhood and community / transparency, influence and accountability focus

    Including what it means to be neighbourly, how we are viewed externally. Well-being and feeling valued was felt important to all. How can we be more integrated into the wider community?
- Keeping pets and the link to well-being
- Moving in and the focus on the welcome and well-being seemed to incorporate all the important issues the members felt passionate about and there was a consensus that we focus on the moving in experience and how it feels for new residents and those that have lived in the schemes for a longer period of time. The Panel want to consider what they wished they had known, including

information on rent and service charges, utilities, TV licenses, a buddy, a welcome pack and handbook etc.

They chose the moving in experience for the following reasons:

- *Concerns have been raised via Panel members that the process could benefit from a resident perspective*
- *Feedback from new members of the Panel on their experience*
- *Lack of satisfaction data on the moving in experience*
- *A genuine desire to make the best first impression for new residents and the impact this has on well-being*

Additionally, residents on the Panel felt that this was a subject that they could all influence based on their experiences.

Background

The Panel understand the importance of making the best first impression with new residents and the impact this has on tenancy sustainment.

Moving home is one of the most disruptive life events, particularly for older people and those with support needs. The loss of familiar surroundings, routines and social contact can create anxiety, disorientation and a sense of vulnerability. When clear information, practical guidance and a warm welcome are missing, the stress of the move increases and confidence in the new home can be undermined. A well supported moving in experience helps residents feel safe, valued and settled, and lays the foundation for a successful and sustained tenancy.

With this in mind, the Panel made particular use of those new members who had moved into a new home within the previous 12 months, in order to support the scrutiny.

The Panel were provided with independent support from Emma Wilson, Yvonne Davies Consultancy (YDC).

Lived Experience

The residents participating in the project have shared their views with Emma on what they believe should be considered in the project. They have shared their preferences with tasks and listened to what interests them.

The following scope was agreed and shared with each Chief Executive February 2026:

Resident Scrutiny Panel-Welcome and Well Being Experience Scrutiny – Final Scope, February 2026

Introduction

The Resident Scrutiny Panel have selected the "moving in experience" for their next scrutiny project after some consideration of a number of important topics. This was selected based on the importance placed on each of the organisations to make the best first impression and the impact this has on well-being.

Aims

- Determine whether the moving in experience is easy to navigate for residents and whether new residents feel welcome.
- Review satisfaction with the moving in experience to identify areas for improvement.
- Understand how each organisation supports residents to move into their homes and
- sustain their tenancies.
- Review standards of new home against the existing lettings standard ensuring we have consistency across the schemes. Understand how each of the organisations' standard compares with benchmarked organisations.
- Consider the potential to enhance the standard given the discussion around new decent homes standard/consumer standards.
- Produce a summary of evidence based findings
- Produce a set of recommendations via a report to be presented to the individual Trustees.

1. **Policy and document review**

    - Does the lettings policy clearly explain the moving in experience?
    - Is the lettings standard good enough?
    - How easy is the policy/standard to access and understand?
    - Is there a pets policy and is it fair?
    - Are there easy to understand documents / guides for new tenants?
    - Does the policy set out expectations?
    - Does each policy meet with The Regulator of Social Housing consumer standards?

    Possible next steps to consider:

        - review the policy & compare to other housing associations
        - look at best practice
        - review websites for clarity

2. **Communications and support**

- Residents should feel fully “in the know” about every stage of the moving in process from allocation to post sign up.
- Ongoing communications updating the new tenant throughout the moving in process including where key components are located, fire safety, bins, laundry, information on condensation/damp and mould, boilers, tenant handbook, welcome pack etc.
- Do residents feel supported and welcomed? Do they know how to ask for help and who to ask during a stressful life event? Is there a good neighbour policy / approach to well-being and introduction to Resident Scrutiny Panel and other Customer Forums?
- Does each organisation consider what support is required at sign up and make appropriate referrals? Is there a post tenancy visit?
- Are all equality, diversity, inclusion (EDI) and vulnerabilities considered and addressed for future services and communications?
- Is the written communication high quality and written through a resident lens?

Possible next steps to consider:

- Interview new residents that have lived experience in last 6-12 months
- Interview involved staff
- Review support offer / welcome packs
- Review example letters / communications

3. Service/Performance

- What is each organisation’s current performance, satisfaction and targets?
- What is the average tenancy length and how many tenancies fail (with reasons) within first 12 months?
- Does each organisation involved comply with its policy?
- How does each organisation actually perform against their commitments and lettings standard?
- Are residents involved in shaping/ co-producing the service? And do the organisations learn from any feedback?

Possible next steps to consider:

- Visit newly completed voids ahead of move in / review video tours
- Review website/benchmarking with others
- Survey people who’ve recently moved in
- Consider mystery shopping

4. **Staffing/Training**

    - Assurance of consistency of understanding of policy across staff.
    - Assurance on consistency in customer care and importance of well-being

    Possible next steps to consider:
        - Interview staff
        - Review examples of historic response letters
        - Review any complaints and refusals on grounds of standards

The main tasks discussed: -

1. Customer Experience (your lived experiences plus wider views from surveys, coffee mornings, viewing empty homes, mystery shopping)
2. Staff conversations (talking to staff involved in the moving in experience for their thoughts, what they would like to see improve)
3. Document review (website, letters to residents, lettings policies, pet policies, lettable standards, resident's handbook, information issued)
4. Performance and satisfaction data including any complaints about the process/standards of new homes
5. Best Practice (videos, visuals, glossy guides, hampers / welcome packs, handbook etc)

Findings

The Panel reviewed policies, interviewed staff, surveyed new tenants, inspected empty and ready to let homes, and analysed performance data across all partner organisations.

Lettings Standards

The Panel would recommend that there is a re-launch of the expectations for new residents with pictures to show what is considered the lettable standard as it is not clear from each Landlord on their websites even though the Panel know that some exist. (REC 1)

The Panel have been tasked with carrying out inspections to properties that are empty and then re-visit one they are ready to let to new tenants, and assess them against the existing standards and suitable properties, which were identified by the repairs and assets teams.

The Panel visited an empty apartment at Phoenix House, SCHA in June. The general feedback was that it was a good visit to a very well-maintained property. The pictures below show the quality of accommodation.







The Panel also carried out further visits to My Trust in May 2026 and saw the young person's Almshouses and new builds, all were exceptional standards, see pictures below.

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We have also visited a property that was ready to let at Lench's September 2026.





The BCOP Panel members despite requesting to look at empty homes weren't able to complete the task. It is recommended that they are used to carry out resident inspections after the scrutiny project has completed to ensure standards are consistent and high. (REC 19) pictures from the Panel's visits to review lettable standards helpfully bring the report to life.

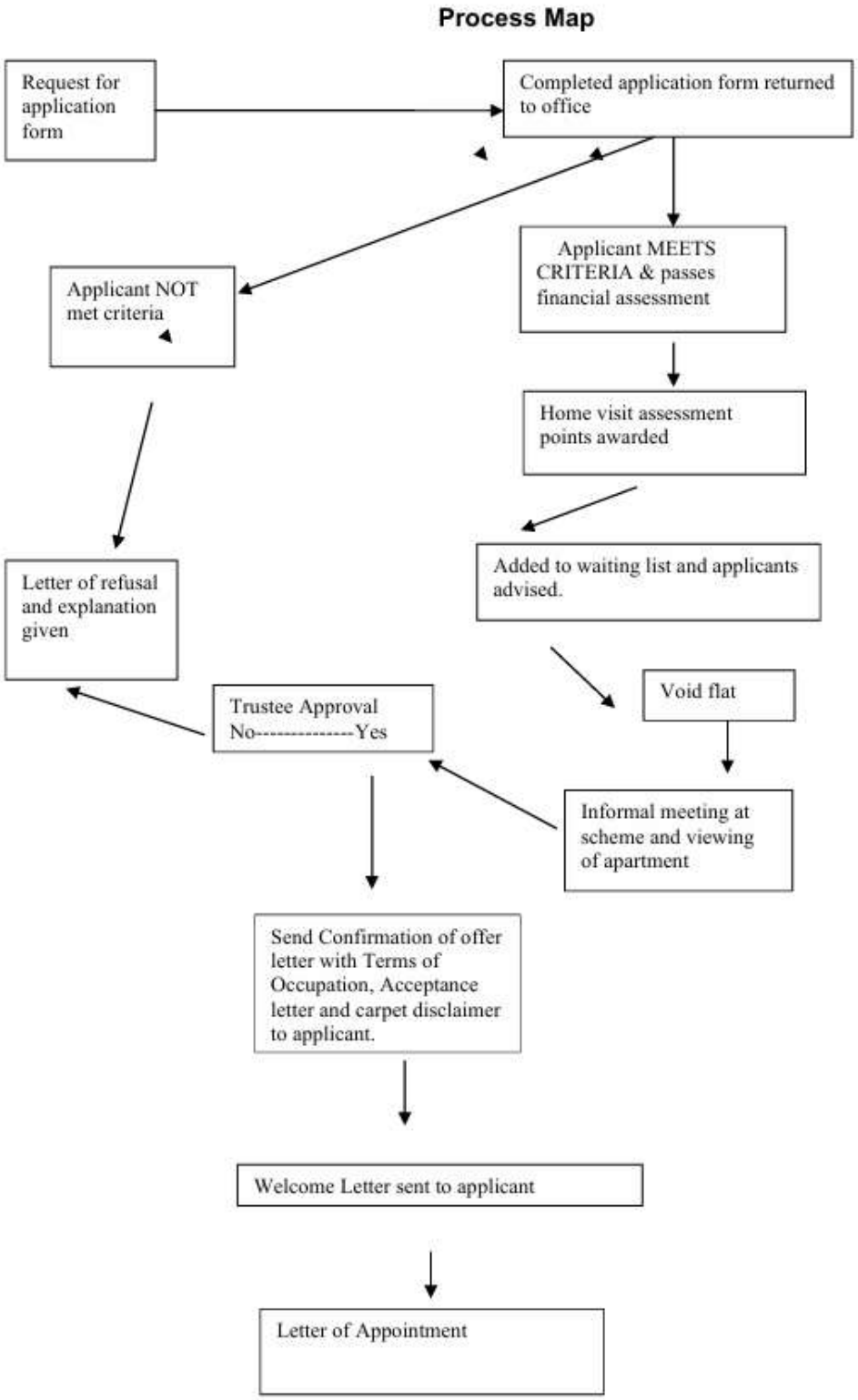
Document Review

The Panel have also completed the document review and a review of each of the partners' websites and have made observations and recommendations on the different documents reviewed.

Policies

Members of the Panel reviewed each organisation's allocations/lettings policies and found the following:

Lench's Trust – they have an "Application and Allocation" policy that is on the website and it includes a process map shown below. The policy is clear despite it being quite a complicated process. The standard letters are also part of the policy which the Panel liked. The Panel thought that the process map could be made more visible for new applicants. (REC 2)



The Panel reported that they couldn't find the details of the points scheme that was referred to in the policy which would really help someone looking for a home and it would also improve transparency. (REC 3)

The “welcome” letter is really welcoming wishing the new resident every happiness in their new home and it’s from the Chief Executive.

The Panel did find an interesting link to a “carpet fitting disclaimer” which places responsibility on the new resident to fit their own floor coverings. Throughout the scrutiny project, the Panel talked at length about the waste of removing often perfectly good carpets when the new incoming resident may not be in a position to cover the cost of new carpets. The Panel would like to review this disclaimer with Lench’s. (REC 4)

HPLC – The eligibility criteria for HPLC was found by clicking on the link to the application form.

HOUSING APPLICATION FORM

In addition, there is a link to an information leaflet that the Panel liked. Leaflet-March-2016-2016-03-21-155820.pdf

The process was quite encouraging, for example if you want to apply for accommodation at Firs Close, Watery Lane, Smethwick, you just fill in the form and then someone from HPLC will visit to discuss your situation.

SCHA have a link to information leaflets on each of their sites, the Phoenix House one is here: https://issuu.com/louisewilson-scha.org.uk/docs/a3_folder_7th_march_24_

We couldn’t find the Allocations/lettings policy (REC 5) but the process was clear on the website:

Your completed Application Form will be reviewed by an **Allocations Panel**, which includes:

- Solihull Care Housing Association (SCHA)
- Solihull Community Housing
- Social Services
- Advance Healthcare (our internal care partners)

2. In-Person Assessment

You’ll be invited to visit the service for a friendly, face-to-face assessment. This is your chance to:

- Meet our team
- Discuss your care and support needs
- Tour a modern apartment
- Enjoy a meal in our on-site dining room

We want you to get a real feel for life at Phoenix House and ensure it’s the right fit for you.

3. Panel Review

The information from your visit will help us make a fair, needs-based decision tailored to your individual circumstances.

MyTrust - The Panel really liked the "Why choose" a certain scheme on the website but recommend that the lettings policy/criteria are set out for people considering MyTrust as an option. (REC 5)

The Panel have shared the screenshots below:





Why choose Mason House?

- A comfortable communal lounge area with a large screen plasma TV.
- A games room and scooter room.
- Modern laundry facilities (washers & dryers and an ironing room).
- The entire building is fully accessible with ramped access to the main security doors.
- Two lifts to service the first floor apartments.
- Wellbeing Support Workers offer floating support and assistance Monday to Friday.
- A Warden call 'out of hours' emergency system for added peace of mind.
- A Gated main access offering a very safe and secure environment.
- Regular Residents' Meetings and resident representation at committee level.
- Regular coffee mornings and many other social events.

BCOP – the Panel found that the policy was quite complicated but the information and presentation of the information was really good.

The Buddy System

My Trust has a fantastic Buddy system in place and everyone loved it when David Healey, Chief Executive talked to the Panel about it. It is designed to support new residents, tailored to each specific site/area and has been created by a volunteer coordinator in conjunction with housing staff and residents who identify a need for more informal peer support as part of the move in process. All new residents are given a Buddy alongside the resident handbook etc.

The Scrutiny Panel are all in agreement that they loved this idea and considered it best practice. The Panel recommend for all the partners to adopt this best practice (REC 6). In addition, the RSP members suggested that residents should be asked for "likely champions" (Buddies).

Tenants Handbook and Welcome packs

The Panel reviewed what information was available to new residents from hard copies that are left in the apartments or what was issued electronically. There was a real mix of standards and quality and the Panel felt that a glossy, high quality document would be a real draw for new residents. It could be a ring binder type document so it can be easily updated. The Chair felt the partners should look at the private sector for inspiration such as McCarthy and Stone. (REC 7)

MyTrust have a whole raft of moving in documentation that the Panel members reviewed. They also had chance to review the Housing management manual that is used internally.

The manual includes lettings standards, the banding system used, prospective residents are invited to interview and to view the vacancy. The interview will focus on assessing the applicant's risks, needs and whether the applicant is a good match for the service.

SCHA had lots of print outs, all with different fonts, sizes etc that didn't give the best first impression.

BCOP was more colourful but again needed updating with information from the organisation but also that other residents felt useful to know from their experiences of moving in.

We also feel that a local directory would be useful that could be easily updated to help both new and existing residents to access local services etc. (REC 8)

The Panel also felt it necessary, after listening to a range of new residents' voices, that a hardship fund should be considered by each landlord, if not already, to help those in the greatest need have a better moving in experience. (REC 18)

Standard Letters

The Panel spent some time reviewing the letters that are sent to applicants/new residents through a customer lens. As well as the findings from Lench's already detailed above, the RSP reviewed the following:

HPLC – The residents reviewed "confirming home visit", "approved by Trustees" and the "offer" letters. The Panel thought they were well written and mostly clear. There is a recommendation that in the "approved by Trustee's" letter, the applicant is given some idea of position on the waiting list and an average length of waiting time or turnover to enable the applicant to make informed decisions. (REC 9)

The Panel would also suggest offering some further information in the offer letter in relation to the type of tenancy/license to avoid any concerns over security of tenure. (REC 9)

SCHA – We reviewed the "4 week check in meeting" letter and accompanying form and the RSP were reassured that as well as asking about finances, the first questions are really about settling in and the new residents wellbeing.

1. Settling In

1.1 How have you been settling in over the past four weeks?

_____

_____

1.2 Do you feel comfortable and safe in your accommodation?

_____

_____

1.3 Do you feel you are getting on well with staff and other residents?

_____

_____

MyTrust letters – the banding letter and appointment letter are all very good quality and clear to residents.

BCOP – at the September meeting, Omar advised that they do not use letter templates and therefore the BCOP members would like to offer support to co-create a set covering the application to move in process. (REC 10)

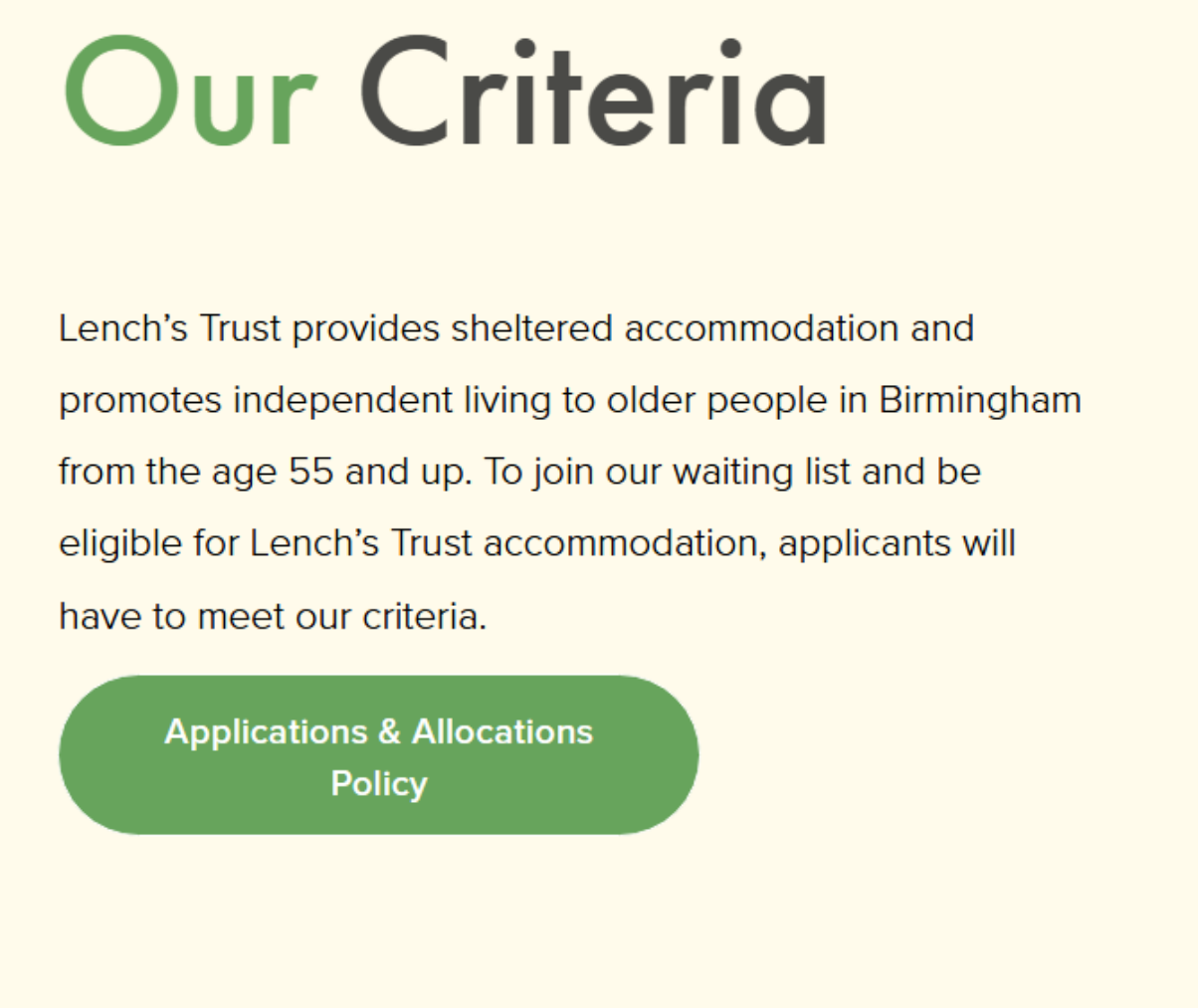
Newsletters

The Panel were pleased to see the scrutiny project referred to in the latest newsletter and we look forward to seeing the results and recommendations shared in a future edition.

Websites

The Panel took some time to review the accessibility and quality of information on each of the websites and found the following:

The RSP felt that Lench's website didn't offer a warm welcome and should go further than just outlining the criteria.

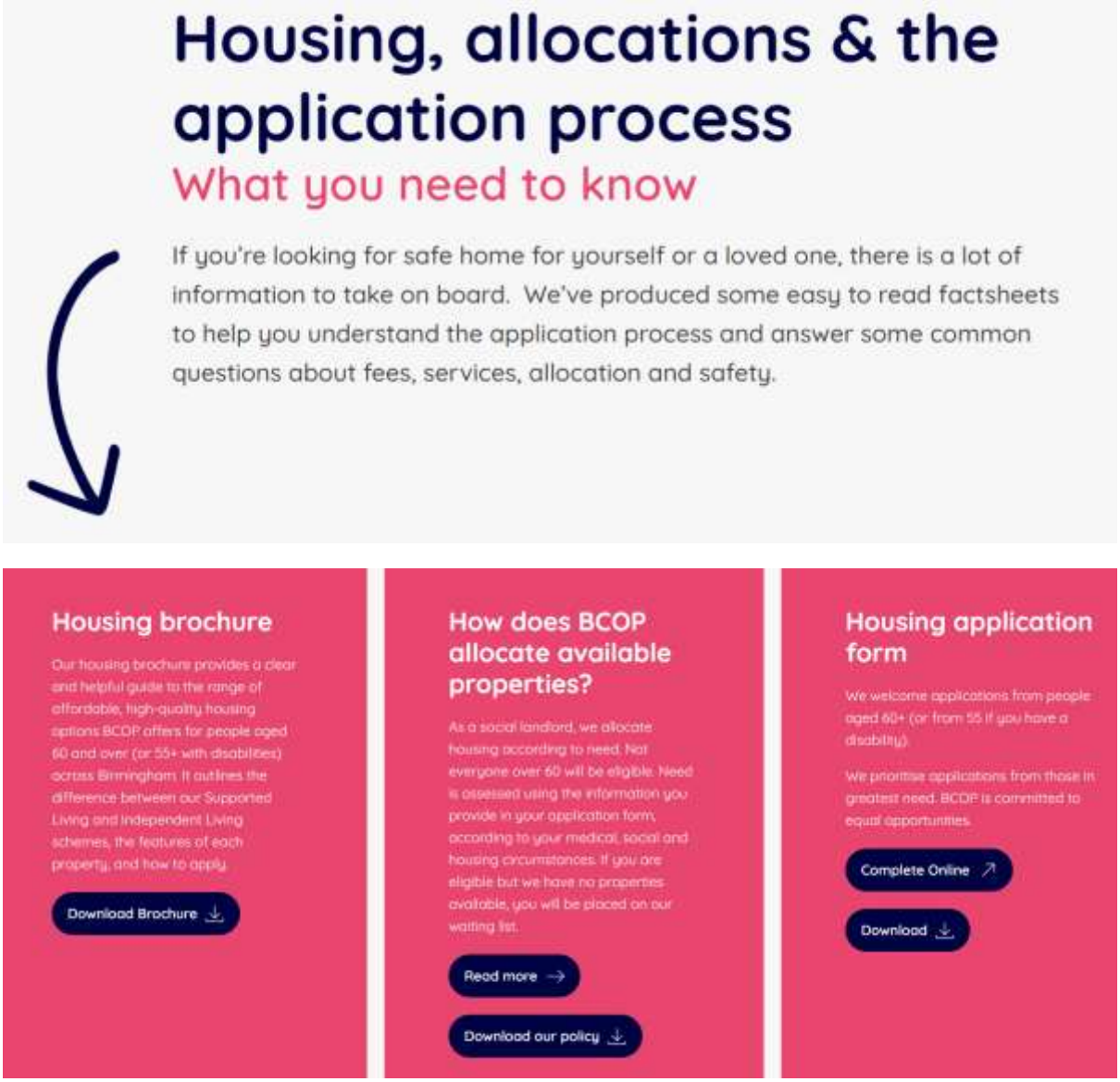


MyTrust: Again a factual piece of information that could be more welcoming.



BCOP – have a video BCOP Housing for Older People in Birmingham and a brochure that are really welcoming.

Housing brochure April 26



There is a helpful link to Allocations policy too.

HPLC set out all their accommodation on their website (like the others do when you click further).

Our Housing

Retirement Apartments and Bungalows for Rent

Harborne Parish Lands Charity (HPLC) has retirement apartments and bungalows for rent in Smethwick and Harborne.

Our properties are intended for people aged 60 or over who want to retain their independence. Some of our apartments are designed for wheelchair users.

Harborne Parish Lands Charity
We are a registered charity whose origins date back 400 years. We are also a registered housing association. We have been providing housing in Smethwick and Harborne for at least one hundred years. Our Trustees live or work locally so they know the area well. They employ staff to manage our housing. Residents are encouraged to be involved in the running of their scheme and help us maintain high standards.

Our charges
The Regulator of Social Housing sets the maximum charge. Our charges are Housing Benefit eligible and vary from £171.38 to £211.35 per week, plus a heating & water charge so you don't have to worry about winter bills.

Our service
We provide safe and secure housing for people who want to live independently, however, it is a requirement of our Supported Exempt Accommodation status that residents have support needs, although these support needs do not necessarily need to be met by HPLC. Many enjoy the variety of social activities on offer, including coffee mornings, afternoon teas, a craft club, dancing, darts and bingo. If required, our Support Officer can provide support to help you to live independently for example by putting you in touch with appropriate services.

Our properties
Our one-bedroomed apartments are self-contained with their own front door and are suitable for couples or single people. They have central heating and double glazing with a cooker and a fridge-freezer provided in the kitchen. A Building Manager oversees security, repairs, cleaning and gardening at each scheme. There are pull cords in every room so that in an emergency you can speak to a member of HPLC staff, or one of the friendly call-centre staff, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The Panel felt it was a really warm welcome for applicants looking to find a home but there could be some improvements and the RSP would like to help.

The Panel felt that given demand is high and new lets are low, it would be helpful to communicate turnover of properties by area so informed choices could be made. (REC 13)

Wider resident voices

The Panel co-created a survey that was sent to all new tenants from March 2026 to assess wider satisfaction. We had almost 100 responses in total.

Here is the survey:

The Moving In Experience Survey – Spring 2026

Thank you for taking part in our survey!

Our resident scrutiny panel would like you to answer the following questions, based solely on your experience of moving in to a new home. The residents will then work with us to review our standards and look at what we do well, and what we need to improve.

1.Thinking about before you moved in, was the process easy?
Yes

- No
- Required improvement

2. When you viewed your property, did you feel it was adequately clean?

- Yes
- No
- Required improvement

2.Did you feel that the property was safe and modern?

- Yes
- No
- Required improvement

If you answered 'no' or 'requires improvement' to the above question, please can you tell us why?

3.Did you feel that the fixtures and fittings where modern and functional? i.e. light fittings, sockets, handrails, kitchen units, etc.

- Yes
- No

If you answered 'no' to the above, what required improvement?

4. Did you have working gas and/or electric when you moved in?

Yes
No

5.Was your home decorated to a good standard?

- Yes
- No
- Required improvement

6.Did you have any floor coverings in your home? (carpet/tiles/vinyl)

- Yes
- No

7. Were you told about how to use the heating system, the door entry system and the process for parking permits (if applicable)?

Yes
No

Please explain which you were told about and any more information

8.What, if anything would have made the moving in experience better for you?

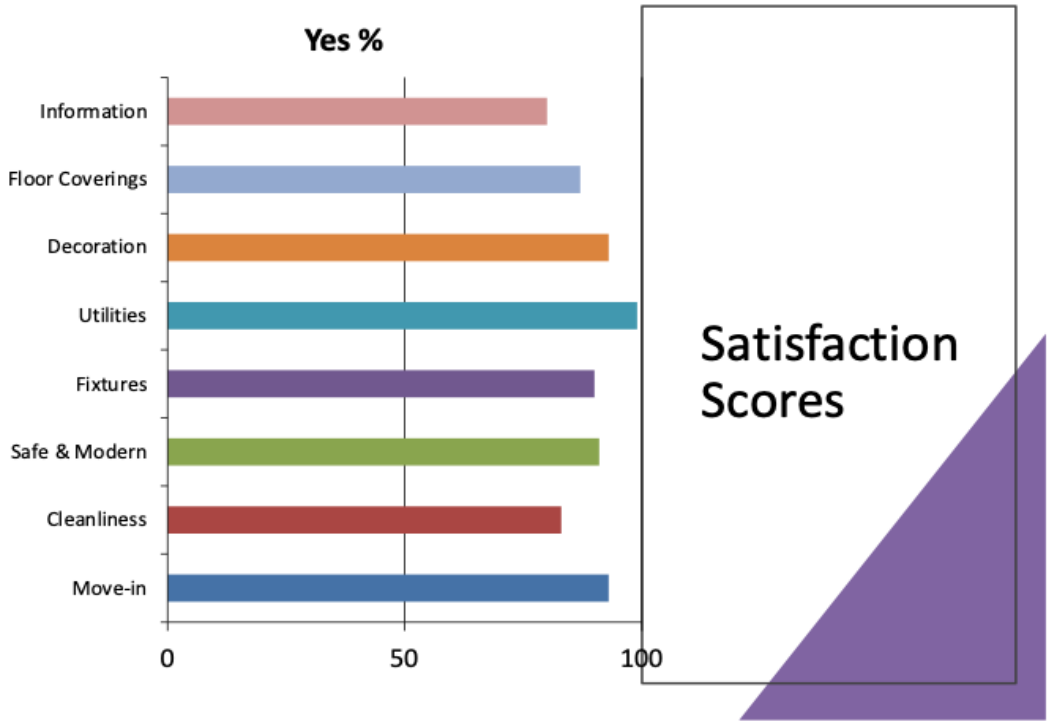
- Carpet/flooring (such as laminate) throughout
- Full house decoration (such as a white base)
- Both of the above

Greater support

- Something else

Please state -

A total of 93 residents completed the Move-In Survey, the Chair has analysed the responses and produced the key findings:



- Overall satisfaction was strong. The highest scoring areas were utility availability (97.8%), decoration standards (92.5%), ease of move-in (90.3%) and property safety/modernity (89.2%).
- The lowest scoring area was move-in information provision (69.9%).

Scheme Comparison

HPLC and My Trust were the strongest performers. SCHA achieved positive results but showed communication gaps. Lench's excelled in move-in information but scored lower on some property condition measures. BCOP showed strengths in property standards but weaknesses in the move-in process.

Conclusions

Residents are generally satisfied with the quality and readiness of their home but improvements in move in information would likely deliver the greatest increase in satisfaction.

The Panel recommend that the organisations improve the Residents handbook or develop one if not already in place and complement this with a move-in checklist to ensure consistency. (REC 7)

The Panel would like each partner to follow up with the tenants that were dissatisfied in the survey and establish if they can do anything to improve satisfaction. (REC 11)

To make the best use of the recent lived experience from the Panel, the Chair met with new residents Wayne and Shinto from BCOP who had both moved in to new homes quite recently.

Below is the content of their conversation: -

BEFORE MOVING IN DATE

When did you move in? 14 months and 9 months ago respectively

How long before the move in did you receive information about the facilities at the scheme? – Not much information provided.

Was any information that was provided good and helpful to you? Basic information provided.

They were not offered contact details to discuss any questions or concerns.

AT MOVING IN DATE

Both Shindo and Wayne had moved in within the last 2 years

Wayne's family had all communications with the Trust

Wayne's daughters had the keys and just moved him in and explored around the building a little.

Shindo saw Fay when she came to a viewing

There was no Booklet with all facilities

AFTER MOVE IN

Shindo said all information was verbal very little written info provided.

Wayne wandered around and was content to mix. He is very confident to do so.

No residents greeted them.

There was no Buddy system. Residents sat in lounge from 4pm until 6pm then left

There was very little practical written information (for example TV licence, laundry, social events Buddy introduction, public transport, dentist, doctors, pharmacy, taxi, launderette, shops, bank, or hairdressers etc.) This was not readily available

There was no welcome meeting or coffee morning introduction.

Notably, after 6 months They found out by chance that Robert Harvey House next door which provided meals for their residents, could also provide meals to be delivered to individual flats.

TOP TIPS

What would be your 3 top tips for before, during and after moving in

1. Provide a "care" package (REC 12)
2. Provide support, welcome chat and introductions to other residents (if not on the day, then soon after)
3. For the staff to tell residents when new people move in so that they can offer a warm welcome if they wish to do so. (The Panel felt that this could be part of the Buddy system, REC 6)

The wider Panel would like all of the partners to take into account these top tips as part of the wider improvements to the moving in experience.

Performance

One of the drivers for the Panel selecting the moving in experience as the next scrutiny project was the feedback from residents which caused some concern.

We have reviewed the performance information and found the following:

SCHA – for last 12 months:

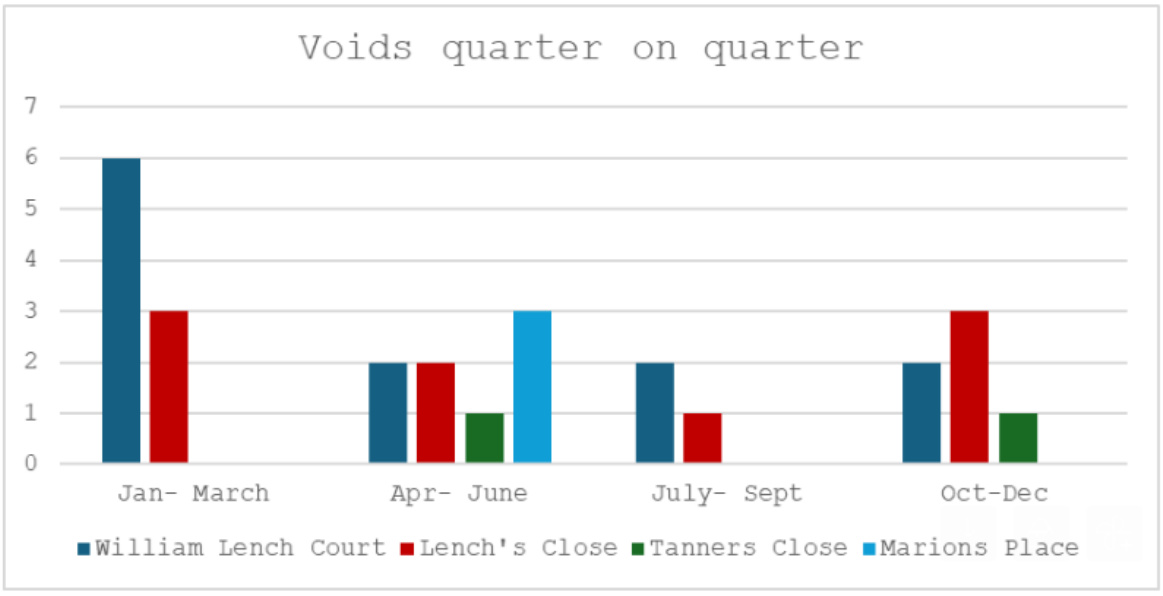
HMHO 36	Average re-let time (calendar days) - HfOP/Sheltered	23
HMHO 39	Re-lets as a percentage of stock - HfOP/Sheltered	17

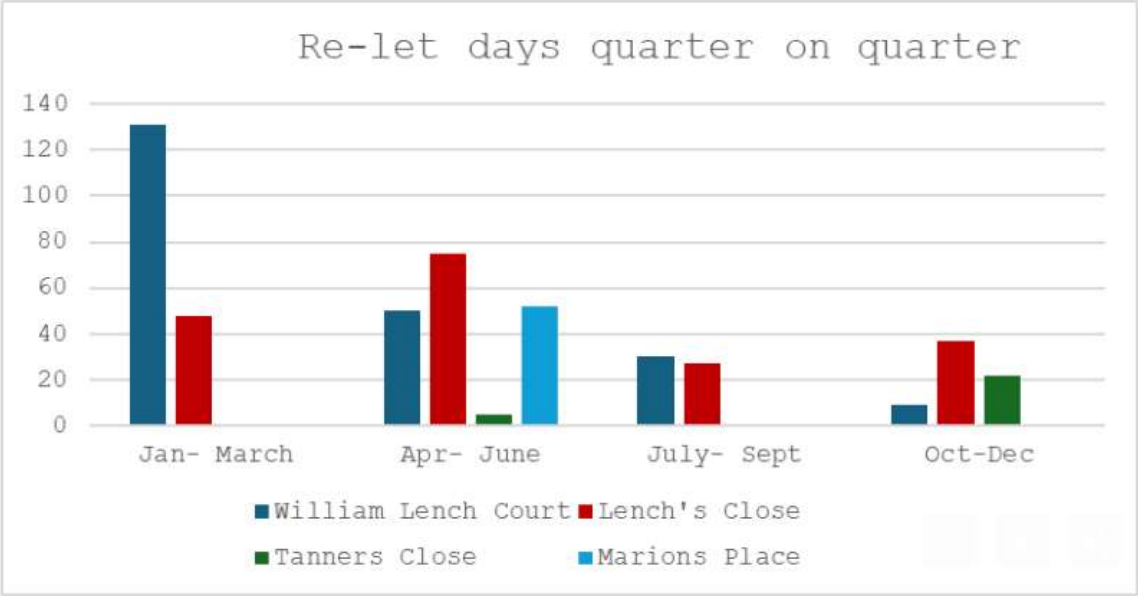
Lench's

Void turnover for Lench's Trust was shared with the Panel and for Jan- Dec 2025, they had 186 properties with 26 voids in the year, equating to 14% of stock.

486 re-let days, equating to an average of 19 days.

They produce quarterly figures for the Board of Trustees and highlight any exceptions and properties taken out of management for major works.





HPLC shared their lettings performance data with the Panel on request and advised that between April 2025 and April 2026, they had 13 voids. The average number of days between the flat becoming void and letting to a new resident was 17.8 days or 2.5 weeks. We aim to let flats within 3 weeks.

My Trust shared their Void Reporting tables:

The below table is counting all voids across housing services.

Housing Services		**Average voids pw**		**Performance**		**Performance against target**	
Scheme	**Total units**	**This 1/4**	**Last 1/4**	↑ ↔ ↓	**Target**	↑ ↔ ↓	
Mason Court	43	-	1.2	↓	5%	0%	↓
Jubilee Court	8	-	1	↓	5%	0%	↓
Mason House	64	1.7	1.4	↑	5%	2.7%	↓
Ruth Patrick House	8	-	-	↔	5%	0%	↓
Mason Cottages	36	1	-	↑	5%	2.8%	↓
Holy Trinity	6	1	1	↔	5%	16.7%	↑

Thomas Banks	6	0.2	1	↓	5%	3.3%	↓
Oak Tree House	18	2	0.5	↑	5%	11.1%	↑
Edwards Road	1	-	-	↔		0%	↓
TOTAL	**190**	5.9	6.1	↓	**5%**	3.1%	↓

Void Turnaround

Housing Services				
Scheme	**Av repair time**	**Av re-let time**	**Re-let target**	↑ ↔ ↓
Mason Court	-	-	30 days	↓
Jubilee Court	-	-	30 days	↓
Mason House	24 days	8 days	30 days	↓
Ruth Patrick House	-	-	30 days	↓
Mason Cottages	46 days	-	30 days	↓
Holy Trinity	63 days	-	30 days	↓
Thomas Banks	16 days	1 day	30 days	↓
Oak Tree House	34 days	43 days	30 days	↑
TOTAL	**42 days**	**36 days**	30 days	↑

Property Services

Site	**Emergency same day repair**	**Urgent (13 hours to 5 days)**	**Routine repairs (6 to 28 days)**	**Total per scheme**
Mason Court	**5**	**28**	**62**	**95**
Jubilee Court	**1**	**6**	**9**	**16**
Mason House	**1**	**23**	**92**	**116**
Ruth Patrick Hse	**1**	**2**	**29**	**32**

Mason Cottages	**1**	**9**	**42**	**52**
Thomas Banks	**0**	**1**	**20**	**21**
Holy Trinity	**0**	**0**	**5**	**5**
Oak Tree House	**0**	**2**	**26**	**28**
Totals	**9**	**71**	**285**	**365**
% Of repairs completed within timescales	**100%**	**95.8%**	**96.1%**	
Target Performance Indicator	**100%**	**97%**	**97%**	
Performance against indicator				

My Trust provided some helpful commentary to accompany the charts, see below:

- Team have not been to full capacity, we had a team member leave so we were down a person then a new Operative start, train and then leave again
- We have also had people on annual leave
- Voids for this period are higher than usual

The RSP unanimously agreed that performance info should be more visible for applicants, residents, new and existing residents as well as providing information to Trustees and management. (REC 13)

The Panel also were surprised that there was no resident satisfaction collected for the moving in experience, given it would be really useful insight for the organisations.

In addition to the Tenant Satisfaction Measures that are displayed on the website, each of the partners should and could go one step further by collecting and sharing satisfaction data on the moving in experience. The Panel recommend that this should be sought and then shared to show progress. (REC 14)

These surveys can be devised with the support and involvement of residents which the Panel would be pleased to be involved with.

The following performance and satisfaction data with new home/moving in experience is from the Arches Housing Association website and this would be considered best practice in comparison to other housing providers, some of which neither collect nor share it. The Panel would welcome something like this.

Percentage of homes that meet Decent Home Standards	Target **100%** Score **99.1%**		We are almost at target.
Percentage of homes that meet the Arches Home Standard.	Target **77.9%** Score **63.5%**		No current target.
Satisfaction that homes is safe and well maintained.	Target **87%** Score **84.8%**		We are not currently at target.
Satisfaction with the quality of the home and the standard of repair when tenant moved in.	Target **80%** Score **81.6%**		We are slightly above target.
Satisfaction with communication during the moving process.	Target **80%** Score **95.9%**		We are currently above target.



The Panel feel that satisfaction with quality and support was a really good measure as was communication and the number of tenancies failing in 12 months.

Best Practice

We have looked at a number of organisations websites as part of the fact finding and the Panel would recommend each of the organisations could learn from. They particularly liked Together Housing ‘s website content and style: (REC 15)

Together Housing

They have “I am looking for a new home” on their home page and it feels really welcoming for prospective tenants.

Your Housing Group actually thank visitors to their website which we thought was really lovely.

Homes to rent

Thank you for your interest in renting a property with Your Housing Group. We have a variety of properties to rent, from affordable social housing through to private rental and shared ownership.

However, the Panel were really impressed with the helpful guides for new tenants for moving in and settling in and checklists too. The RSP would really like all of the landlords to develop something with tenants of a similar nature. (REC 16)

Setting up your new home

When you first move into your new home, you'll need to sort out a few things first.

To help you be prepared, keep this checklist handy to make sure you tick everything off your 'to do' list.

- Contact your gas, water, and electricity suppliers to set up or change your utilities account
- Take meter readings as soon as you move in
- **Contact your local council** to set up or change your Council Tax payments and to add your household to the electoral roll
- Contact either your local council to make a claim for Housing and Council Tax benefit or Universal Credit (Housing Element) **Universal Credit online - Universal Credit** (if applicable)
- Find out where your stop taps, fuse box and trip switch are located (contact your Tenancy Management Officer if you need help)
- Arrange contents insurance for your personal belongings (building insurance is already set up for your property)
- Re-direct your mail from your previous address (please contact the Post Office for advice)
- Arrange or amend your **TV licence** (if necessary)
- If you install a phone, please let us know your landline number.
- Remember to let your doctor, dentist, bank, employer, school and **DVLA** , etc., of your new address.

Furnishing your home

Settling in

Once you've moved in here's some things to remembers to get you settled.

Register for a Your Home Hub account

You can register for an online account to view your rent statements and check your payments.

Once you're signed up you'll have 24/7 access to:

- **Report, book and manage repairs**
- **Make payments and view your rent statements**
- **Get information**
- **Contact us.**



We also looked at Yorkshire Housing – the Panel really liked how resident friendly and local the language was on this website. They also thought the FAQ were a really simple but effective idea.

Rent a Home | Yorkshire Housing



Livin – their website has all the important information in one handy place too:

Moving in

Moss Care St Vincents (MSV) – they have a link to their lettable standard that they refer to as a "guarantee".

https://www.msvhousing.co.uk/media/fioe0wsb/new-home-lettable-standard.pdf

Onward Home - Welcome packs for tenants | Onward we really like the welcome packs.

Onward-Home-Standard.pdf – really like the slides setting out their standards for new lets.

Progress Housing – something a bit different with a video which does make it really accessible for all tenants and new customers.

https://www.progressgroup.org.uk/media/j4lhkk5l/lettable-standard.png?width=1600&height=1600&rmode=boxpad&format=webp

The Guiness Partnership – really warm and welcoming, supportive style on their moving in page and they have a really great flow chart with drop down information on what to expect

from each stage of the process from application, allocation, sign up etc. It is very customer friendly with lots of useful information that was easy to navigate and had really nice pictures.

Moving into your home - The Guinness Partnership

Stockport Homes – have a range of videos to help new tenants ensure they are tenancy ready and their lettable standard is best practice.

Stockport Homes | Get tenancy ready - Stockport Homes

Conversations with Staff

In addition to gathering resident insight, we thought it would be beneficial to talk to colleagues from each of the organisations to hear their frustrations and ideas for improvements. We used the following questions:

Questions for colleagues – March 2026

1. What is your involvement in the moving in experience?

2. Do you feel that you have had adequate training around the process and requirements from the Regulator?

3. What is the most important part of the process for you?

4. Are you aware of the lettable standard and if so do you use it to ensure that the standards are met?

5. Who signs off each property as ready to let?

6. Why do you have differences between schemes? What are your plans to ensure consistency?

7. When was the lettable standard last reviewed?

8. What do you like about the moving in experience?

9. What would you like to see improve in the moving in experience?

10. How do all the teams involved communicate? Do you all work well together as we appreciate it's a complex process?

11. What performance and satisfaction measures are used? Are these shared with tenants? Can you share them with me please?

12. Do you get all the information you need to ensure a smooth re-let and how much of it is system led versus paper/spreadsheet?

13. Do you explain all the heating systems, door entry, parking arrangements etc?

14. Do you provide a welcome pack and a tenant's handbook?

15. What happens when things don't go well and you receive a formal complaint, do you oversee the resolution? How many complaints have you had in the last 12 months in relation to the standard of the new home?

16. Do you use standard letters or templates for each part of the moving in experience? If so, please can you share them?

From the Panel's conversations with the staff team, they found the following.

Most of the staff we spoke with told the Panel that the most important part of

the process for them was introducing new people to other residents and welcoming them.

It was encouraging to hear that building relationships, creating trust, offering support and getting to know families was the priority.

The staff all appeared to be well trained and aware the lettable standards but some staff said that it was more their Managers role and responsibility.

We also gained insight from the staff on what they would like to see improved in the moving in experience. They told their Panel members that they would like to see the following: -

- A simplified version of the handbook (ring binder with tabs)
- Consistent paperwork and processes across schemes for efficiency
- Some of the paperwork condensed to reduce repetition
- Buddy scheme to be revived

We heard about the challenges including:

- completing all of the necessary paperwork on the residents move-in day. The last thing a new resident needs is to be overwhelmed by the Scheme Manager arriving with a large number of documents to sign for office records.
- Communication can be tricky because of involvement of outside contractors and Staff shifts/hours. This is where improvements can be made.

The staff agreed with the Panel in terms of the improvements needed to the welcome pack (R17) and resident's handbook. One partner felt that due to their "close nit approach" they didn't see the need for a specific handbook, the Panel disagree and would welcome the opportunity to work on creating a handbook together with the staff.

The staff particularly wanted to see:

- Reduction and simplification of the paperwork for residents and staff
- Improvement in consistency across schemes and organisations
- Enhanced communication with contractors
- Improve resident on boarding experience (welcome packs, social integration)

Overall, the process is effective and resident-focused; however, improvements in documentation, communication, and consistency will enhance both efficiency and lived experience.

Recommendations

The Panel have created a table (appendix 1) to clearly set out their recommendations captured during this scrutiny project and we hope that they are taken on board where possible.

Next steps

The Panel would like to thank all the colleagues involved with supporting this scrutiny project and would welcome the opportunity to present our report and recommendations to the Trustees at their next Board meetings.

We would also like to monitor progress with the recommendations and have an update every other Panel meeting from the staff.

We would like to report to be shared on each of the partners' websites to that all residents can see our work and the changes we would like to see and how we are working together to make improvements to services. (REC 20) We really like the way SCHA share updates with residents regularly in their newsletter.

The Panel would like to continue to monitor lettable standards and inspect properties that are ready to let on a quarterly basis to drive further improvements for new tenants.

A special mention

The Panel have continued to grow as a team and have further developed their skills and experience throughout this important project. The Panel would like to thank their resident Chair, Eileen Leventhal for her expert leadership and guidance and for stepping up to represent the Panel during this project.

The Panel would also like to thank Val Jukes for taking on the responsibility for the role of Secretary, Emma is particularly pleased about this.

This demonstrates that the residents are becoming less reliant on the external support provided and becoming much more independent.