

SHDC Housing Landlord Strategy

2024-2027



Introduction

This Strategy outlines South Holland District Council's renewed vision for the management and improvement of its Council-owned social housing stock, for the period 2024-2027. This one-year extension to the original 2024-2026 Strategy allows the Council to consolidate progress made to date, embed key transformation projects, and respond to evolving regulatory expectations, including the implementation of the Regulator of Social Housing Improvement plan following the C2 grading issued to the Council in 2025.

With over 3,700 homes, South Holland District Council remains the largest landlord in the district, directly delivering lettings, tenancy and estate management, repairs, programmed maintenance, and rent collection. Homelessness duties continue to sit outside the scope of this Strategy.

The housing sector continues to evolve, with increasing expectations placed on Registered Providers to ensure homes are safe, well-maintained, and that tenants are treated with respect and fairness. The focus on tenant experience, property condition, and accountability has intensified, alongside greater scrutiny from the media, the Housing Ombudsman, and the Regulator of Social Housing.

Following a programmed inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing, the Council is now actively delivering a comprehensive Improvement Plan, with a strong emphasis on tenant engagement and service quality. This next phase is not only about addressing areas for improvement but also about embedding a culture of listening, learning, and acting on tenant feedback.

The Housing Transformation Team remains central to driving this work forward, ensuring that the commitments made are translated into meaningful outcomes for tenants. This Strategy should be read alongside the Housing Transformation and Improvement Programme Mandate and the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Sub-Regional Strategy 2024/25–2028/29, which together provide a framework for collaborative, inclusive, and accountable housing services.

National context

The social housing sector is currently facing several key external drivers that will influence this Strategy over its delivery period. Over the past 2 years, there has been widespread consultation and debate but, in many areas, the detail is still being determined.

The Strategy and supporting action plan must remain agile to account for pending clarifications around key policy issues. The Strategy and action plan will be revised to reflect any financial and operation impacts arising from any material changes to the assumptions made at the time of drafting this Strategy.

- **Social Housing Regulation Act 2023**

From April 2024, the Consumer Standards introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing are now in force, marking a significant shift in how social landlords are held to account. These standards require landlords to:

- Listen to tenants and act on their feedback
- Communicate clearly and effectively
- Maintain accurate, up-to-date information about the condition of their housing stock
- Deliver responsive, accessible, and high-quality services

The new regulatory framework strengthens the role of tenants, ensuring they live in safe, decent homes, have choice and protection, and can hold their landlords to account.

The Regulator now operates a proactive inspection regime, assessing compliance with four core Consumer Standards:

- Safety and Quality
- Transparency, Influence and Accountability
- Neighbourhood and Community
- Tenancy

These are supported by a Code of Practice, providing guidance on how landlords can meet the standards in practice. The regulatory approach is no longer limited to cases of serious detriment it now includes routine inspections, data scrutiny, and tenant satisfaction measures.

- **Fire Safety Act 2021**
Additional fire safety measures to ensure tenants are safe in their homes.
- **Building Safety Act 2022**
New legislation to make sure all tenants are safe in their homes and landlords have a responsibility to advise and report on compliance.
- **Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code**
The Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code sets out good practice that will allow landlords to respond to complaints raised by their residents quickly and to use the data and learning from complaints to drive service improvements. It will also help to create a positive complaint handling culture amongst staff and residents.
- **Social Housing Decent Homes Standard Review**
A review of the standards for condition of social homes – outcome of consultation pending.
- **Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) Consultation**
Government proposals to introduce a minimum EPC rating of C for socially rented homes by 2030, aiming to improve energy efficiency, tackle fuel poverty, and support net-zero targets. Consultation closed; outcome pending.
- **Future Homes Standard 2025**
Ensuring new built homes from 2025 produce less emissions.
- **Domestic Abuse Act 2021**
Transforming the response to domestic abuse, helping to prevent offending, protect victims and ensure they have the support they need.
- **Care Act 2014**
Ensuring that housing has a role to play in safeguarding adults.
- **Levelling up White paper**
The government’s vision for spreading opportunity more equally across the UK, announcing the establishment of an Older People’s Housing Taskforce to better understand the housing market for our ageing population.
- **People at the Heart of Care, Adult Social Care Reform White Paper**
Sets out the Government proposals for reform of Adult Social Care, highlighting prevention and positioned digital connectivity as vital to better care. The government’s key policy priority is to support people to remain at home, rather than in care homes or hospital settings, for as long as possible.

Whilst there is legislation, regulation and prescribed practice in place, the Council still has freedom to determine how it delivers services. This Strategy sets out how the Council will deliver its Housing Landlord Service “the service”.

Regulatory Judgement

In July 2025, South Holland District Council received its first consumer regulatory judgement from the Regulator of Social Housing, resulting in a C2 grading. This outcome reflects a service that is broadly meeting the consumer standards however there are some weaknesses, particularly in relation to the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard. The judgement acknowledges the Council's progress in its transformation journey, including strong performance in safety and quality, where over 98% of homes meet the Decent Homes Standard, and compliance with health and safety legislation. Repairs are delivered in line with service standards, neighbourhood partnerships are tackling anti-social behaviour, and tenancy management supports community sustainability.

However, the inspection highlighted areas needing attention, especially around tenant engagement, scrutiny, and equitable access to services. While digital information is available, the Council recognises the need to diversify communication channels and formalise tenant involvement in decision making.

To better understand the factors behind the C2 grading, the Council undertook a comprehensive Root Cause Analysis (RCA) in September 2025. This analysis confirmed that the primary driver was the absence of a formal, embedded approach to tenant engagement across the whole tenant cohort, a gap directly linked to the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard. While engagement work had begun, particularly with sheltered tenants and through the co-development of a Tenant Engagement and Influence Strategy the timing of the Regulator's inspection meant these improvements were still in their infancy.

The RCA identified contributing factors such as a historically limited culture of tenant involvement, capacity constraints during early transformation phases, and a risk-based prioritisation of governance and safety over engagement. Lessons learned include the need for a whole-cohort approach and dedicated resources for sustainable engagement. These findings have shaped the Council's corrective actions, including accelerating the implementation of the Tenant Engagement Strategy, establishing a Tenant Forum, and embedding engagement into governance structures.

The C2 grading reflects the strategic shift initiated in 2024 through the Housing Transformation Programme, which prioritised the governance and safety and laid the foundation for improvement. Key developments included the creation of the Housing Transformation Board, Performance and Compliance Clinic, Capital Programme Clinic and the Housing Complaints Working Group, alongside the launch of the Tenants Forum. External support was commissioned to develop a new Tenant Engagement and Influence Strategy, approved in June 2025.

Looking ahead, the Council is focused on delivering the remainder of the Landlord Strategy, with a clear commitment to addressing the weaknesses identified in the judgement. This includes strengthening tenant scrutiny, improving accessibility for all tenants, embedding engagement in service design, and enhancing the use of tenant data to ensure fair and responsive services. SHDC remains committed to working closely with tenants and the Regulator to achieve a C1 grading and full compliance with consumer standards.

Strategic vision

The overall strategic vision for the Council is directed by the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Sub-Regional Strategy 2024/25-2028/29.

A bold and ambitious partnership of Councils, working together:

- To shape policy at sub-regional level
- To secure more resources to deliver on our priorities
- To do more for the communities we serve
- To have a greater impact in tackling the wider common challenges our communities face
- To become more efficient in the way we operate

As a social landlord, South Holland District Council aims to go beyond the minimum statutory and regulatory requirements placed on local authority landlords, where the tenant's voice is heard and acted upon.

Our Tenants

In 2023, the Council carried out a tenant census. Tenants were invited to complete the census by post, online and by telephone. 70% of tenants took part in this piece of work allowing us to understand more about current occupancy and vulnerabilities, as well as the level of interest and involvement tenants had in the service provided.

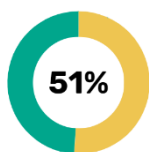
The census data continues to be updated through individual tenant interactions with officers, ensuring our records remain current and reflective of tenants' evolving circumstances. In addition, a full census programme will be undertaken every four years to maintain a comprehensive understanding of our tenant base.

Alongside this, we have introduced regular tenancy audits to complement the census. These audits provide an opportunity to verify occupancy, identify changes in household circumstances, and ensure properties are being maintained appropriately. They also help strengthen engagement with tenants and support early intervention where needed.

Data insights:



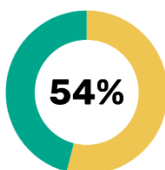
Our 'typical' tenant is a woman in her mid sixties living on her own in the Council's general needs housing



51% of tenants state that their day to day activities are limited by a long term physical or mental health condition or illness, with 40% of households experiencing permanent mobility issues



A third of general needs tenants have children living with them



54% of general needs tenants are underoccupying their home

Tenant satisfaction

Tenant satisfaction is one of the many ways to measure the performance of the service.

From 2023, the Regulator of Social Housing requires all registered providers to collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in managing their homes and neighbourhoods. There are 22 tenant satisfaction measures, covering five themes:

- Keeping properties in good repair
- Maintaining building safety
- Respectful and helpful engagement
- Effective handling of complaints
- Responsible neighbourhood management.

This data must be submitted to the Regulator and published. The Council has submitted its Tenant Satisfaction Measure data for 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 which has been published on the website and in the annual report.

Tenants told us they wanted the Council's TSM results to be benchmarked against other Lincolnshire authorities with housing stock. In response, we have introduced benchmarking as requested, enabling us to compare performance and identify opportunities for improvement.

PERCEPTION SURVEY RESULTS		SHDC 2023- 2024	Nation al Bench mark 24/25	SHDC 2024- 2025	City of Lincoln	North Kesteven District	South Kesteven District
TP01	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with the overall service from their landlord.	73%	71.8%	74%	68%	79.9%	61.1%
TP02	Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the overall repairs service.	70%	73.6%	73%	73%	79.4%	66.2%
TP03	Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair.	62%	69.5%	76%	66%	74.9%	52.4%
TP04	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is well maintained.	71%	71.9%	75%	70%	78.2%	59.2%
TP05	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is safe.	86%	77.6%	86%	75%	81.7%	69.1%

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PERCEPTION SURVEY RESULTS continued		SHDC 2023- 2024	Nation al Bench mark 24/25	SHDC 2024- 2025	City of Lincoln	North Kesteven District	South Kesteven District
TP06	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them.	60%	61.6%	65%	56%	65.8%	49.5%
TP07	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps them informed about things that matter to them.	73%	72%	76%	71%	75.7%	59.1%
TP08	Proportion of respondents who report that they agree their landlord treats them fairly and with respect.	84%	77.9%	83%	78%	78.8%	67.6%
TP09	Proportion of respondents who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are satisfied with their landlord's approach to complaints handling.	28%	35.5%	34%	44%	42%	36.2%
TP10	Proportion of respondents with communal areas who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained.	67%	66.7%	81%	72%	62.6%	64.9%
TP11	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood.	66%	64.6%	72%	65%	61.1%	59.2%
TP12	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with their landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour.	50%	59.5%	69%	55%	56.5%	57.5%

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MANAGEMENT INFORMATION RESULTS		SHDC 2023-2024	SHDC 2024-2025		National Benchmark 24/25	City of Lincoln	North Kesteven District	South Kesteven District
			All managed properties	SHDC Owned Stock				
BS01	Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out.	100.0%	100%	100%	100%	99.87%	99.96%	99.3%
BS02	Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out.	100.0%	100%	100%	100%	91.24%	100%	100%
BS03	Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out.	100.0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
BS04	Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out.	100.0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
BS05	Proportion of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out.	100.0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
NM01 (1)	Number of anti-social behaviour cases, opened per 1,000 homes.	29.0	26.5	26.8	36	106	7.16	15.8

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MANAGEMENT INFORMATION RESULTS continued		SHDC 2023-2024	SHDC 2024-2025		National benchmark 24/25	City of Lincoln	North Kesteven	South Kesteven
			All managed properties	SHDC Owned Stock				
NM01 (2)	Number of anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate incidents opened per 1,000 homes	0.5	0.26	0.3	0.7	0.4	0.00	0.00
RP01	Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard.	2.5%	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%	0.26%	1.7%	2.5%
RP02 (1)	Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale.	91.0%	91.3%	91.3%	82.5%	89.12%	99.21%	68%
RP02 (2)	Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale.	100.0%	100%	100%	94.9%	99.96%	86.91%	87%
CH01 (1)	Number of stage one complaints received per 1,000 homes.	9.7	55.64	56.3	53.5	52.79	49.08	39.8
CH01 (2)	Number of stage two complaints received per 1,000 homes.	0.0	7.58	7.7	8.3	7.71	9.71	3.10

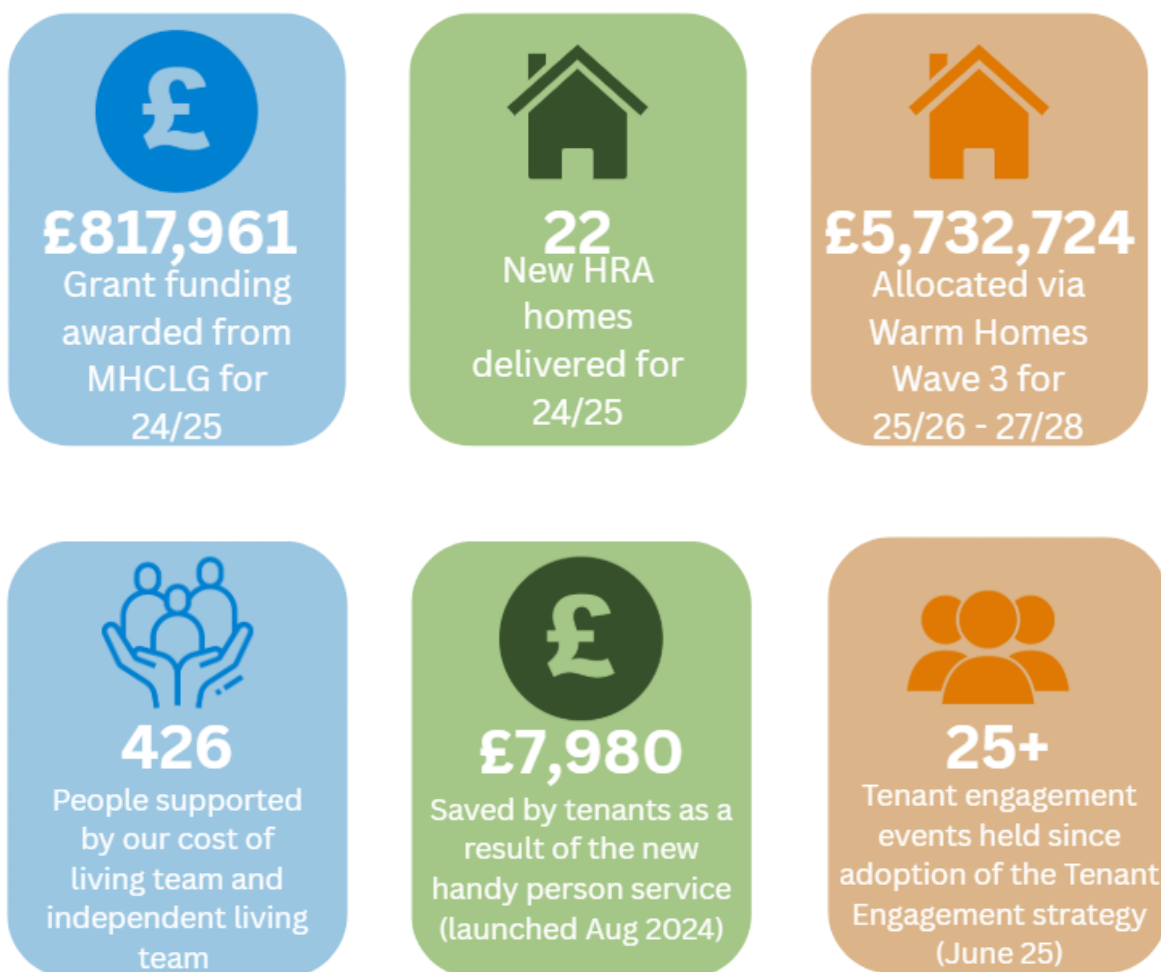
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MANAGEMENT INFORMATION RESULTS continued		SHDC 2023-2024	SHDC 2024-2025		National Benchmark 2024-2025	City of Lincoln	North Kesteven	South Kesteven
			All managed properties	SHDC Owned stock				
CH02 (1)	Proportion of stage one complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales.	48.6%	94.84%	94.8%	89.9%	93.4%	64.6%	88%
CH02 (2)	Proportion of stage two complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales.	0.0	100%	100%	88.9%	78.3%	86.84%	100%

Live data on tenant satisfaction is made available on our website at www.sholland.gov.uk/GetInvolved-Feedback and is shared with our tenants and Members annually.

Supporting our tenants

The Council prides itself in supporting its tenants.



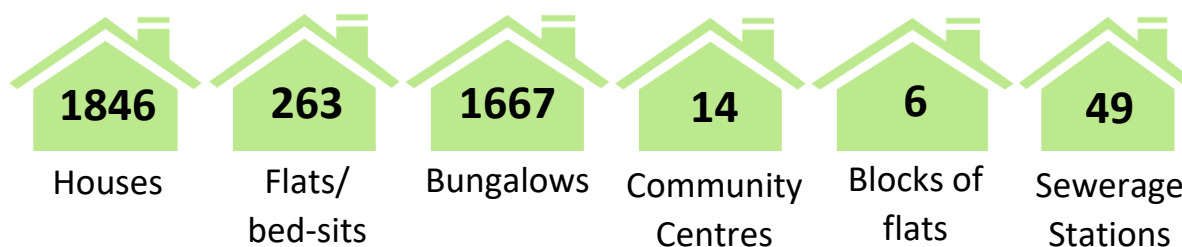
- For many years, the Council has partnered with the Citizens Advice, offering a dedicated money and debt advice service to its tenants focussed on sustaining tenancies.
- Following extensive consultation with our tenants, we have completed a review of the Sheltered Housing service offer. Alongside digital improvements designed by tenants we have also introduced a new handy person service to support tenants in their homes. The service has so far saved tenants over £7000.
- We established a Cost-of-Living Support team, concentrated on brokering support from partner agencies, having assisted over 250 households to date with a variety of issues such as improving finances, downsizing and accessing employment.
- We established an Independent Living Team, supporting tenants to live independently in our sheltered housing accommodation. The team have supported over 500 tenants since the introduction of the team in August 2024.
- Following extensive consultation with our tenants they helped shape a new Tenant Engagement and Influence Strategy which was adopted in June 2025. A new Tenant Forum has been launched to support tenants to effectively influence landlord services and shape decisions. A programme of focus groups have also been launched including on performance and complaints, tenancy management and property services.

Our properties

South Holland District Council manages a portfolio of over 3,700 homes across the district consisting of bed-sits, flats (all below 11m tall), bungalows and houses let as general needs and sheltered housing, plus shared owners and leaseholders. 1027 units are let as sheltered housing to residents aged 55 and over and/or residents that would benefit from a wellbeing alarm system connected to a telecare service available 24/7.

Included in the portfolio are community centres scattered across the district within our Sheltered Housing schemes, as well as sewerage treatment works where our residents are not able to access mains sewers. We purchased 54 new properties in 2023 and 22 in 2024.

The portfolio is ringfenced via the Housing Revenue Account. All money received from tenants and leaseholders for rent and service charges pays for housing management services, reactive repairs, planned maintenance, estates, and asset management. The Strategy provides the overarching direction for how the resources and assets held within the HRA are used.



Please note these figures fluctuate based on Right to Buy sales and new properties being purchased.

Our ambitions

This Strategy covers areas of service delivery related to landlord functions and how the Council shapes, engages, and improves services for tenants. The Strategy follows four themes:



Culture and Operational Excellence

We will deliver a service that meets the needs and aspirations of our tenants, whilst keeping them safe. To accomplish this, we will:

- Embed a professional and positive culture where we respect and listen to tenants and do the right thing, including proactively putting things right when they go wrong. The corporate culture will include partnership working, inclusivity and task ownership
- Appropriately resource the service, retaining and recruiting talent
- Ensure that the service has a strong voice across the Council and South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership
- Make sure our colleagues have the tools, insight, knowledge and flexibility to provide a positive customer experience including intelligence into how people are living, targeting support for those in greatest need
- Equip our colleagues with the information, professionalism, skills and capacity to embed change

Accountability and Transparency

We will be well governed and financially resilient, operating efficiently and responsibly, and investing wisely to fulfil our social purpose. To be successful, we will:

- Critically examine our decision making, satisfaction and performance with our tenants and our partners through the lens of their expectations
- Measure, monitor, report and publish our performance, anticipating issues before they occur
- Embed compliance and assurance at the heart of our Service through good governance arrangements
- Balance the priorities of excellence in outcomes for tenants whilst seeking efficiency and delivering value for money
- Benchmark ourselves against organisations inside and outside of the Housing sector
- Use data to make the right decisions to drive the best outcomes for our homes and our customers

Quality Homes and Connected Neighbourhoods

- We will deliver well maintained, safe, affordable homes and neighbourhoods, where people are proud to live that supports their health and wellbeing. To achieve this, we will:
- Continue to take our regulatory, statutory and legislative responsibilities extremely seriously by carrying out programmed safety checks, visits, and regular inspections
- Continue to actively seek external funding and invest in our homes to improve energy efficiency, thermal comfort and seek to reduce the running costs of our homes
- Be confident in the data we hold about our assets to help us make informed proposals on where tenant's money should be spent including making strategic decisions about disposing of assets that are impacting on the standard of service we can deliver
- Continue to work with our tenants to inform us how to improve and get the best out of our Repairs Service
- Invest in the delivery of new homes across a variety of tenures to increase choice and support successful mixed communities
- Work with our partners to provide reliable, consistent services, and tailored intensive support to those tenants who need us the most.

Tenant Voice and Opportunity

Tenants will be at the heart of everything we do and every decision we make. In order to ensure tenants are involved and informed, we will:

- Transform our approach to tenant engagement, ensuring that tenants have opportunities to engage with us in ways that suit them, where they can influence and shape our current and future services
- Ensure tenants are well positioned in our governance structure, inviting them to scrutinise services with us
- Ensure tenants have a high level of satisfaction, where we listen to their concerns and put things right where we need to
- Give tenants a choice in when and how they use our services, ensuring they can access high-quality services quickly, easily and in a way which suits them
- Prioritise service improvements where it will make the biggest difference to our tenants

Measuring success

The Council will measure the success of our Strategy using a series of key performance indicators.

- National Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- Tenant satisfaction surveys
- Repair response times and satisfaction
- Quality, time and satisfaction of void properties
- EPC rating of our homes
- ASB data and insight
- Regulator of Social Housing inspection
- New policies adopted
- Complaints data and insight
- Employee satisfaction surveys
- Call and email response times to tenants

Monitoring

The Council is committed to being open and transparent about our performance, and accountable to all our stakeholders, ensuring there is clarity about the accountability and structures framework.

The work of teams, and the results of performance, will be scrutinised and regulated collaboratively by the following:

- Council boards and committees
 - In addition to committees such as Policy Development Panel and Performance Monitoring Panel, we have established a Housing Programme Board to monitor the satisfaction, performance, and progress of the strategy.
 - Oversight for the delivery of the Strategy lies with the Portfolio Holder – Strategic and Operational Housing, Director of Communities and Assistant Director - Housing. They will make sure the service fulfils the primary requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and all other legislation
 - Compliance and performance will be reported as follows:
 - Monthly to the Portfolio Holder – Strategic and Operational Housing
 - Quarterly to Senior Leadership Team
 - Quarterly reports will be published to Cabinet
- Our tenants
 - Tenant Forum established
 - Formal Scrutiny Panel – to be established
 - Progress updates and performance information (including satisfaction) is shared regularly with our tenants including in focus groups, in the annual report and on our website
- Regulator of Social Housing and regulatory standards
 - Annual and quarterly reporting on key performance metrics, stock volumes and implementation of the regulatory standards
 - The Assistant Director of Housing meets monthly with the Regulator as part of the provider improvement plan following the c2 grading issued in 2025.
- Housing Ombudsman Service
 - Self-assessment against the Complaints Handling Code
 - Reporting complaint data and demonstrating learning from complaints
- Building safety regulation
 - Health & safety legislation and regulatory compliance
 - Responding to the emerging Building Safety Regulator within the Health and Safety sector

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- Benchmarking against the sector and Lincolnshire peers following tenant feedback.

To ensure the Strategy reflects the changing landscape in the social housing sector, the content will be reviewed on a regular basis with minor operational amendments adopted by the Assistant Director – Housing in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Operational Housing. Progress against the Strategy will be reported annually taking account of any fundamental changes.