

Meeting Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Venue: Brierley Room - County Hall

8. **Shared Ownership Policy** (Pages 57 - 88)
9. **Presentation on Renters' Rights Act 2025 and the Council's Emerging Strategy on Empty Homes** (Pages 89 - 106)
10. **Cultural Strategy Update** (Pages 107 - 128)
11. **Draft Work Programme 2026-27** (Pages 129 - 132)
12. **Date of Next Meeting - 10 June 2026**
13. **Any Other Items**
Any other items which the Chair agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances

Members are reminded that in order to expedite business at the meeting and enable Officers to adapt their presentations to address areas causing difficulty, they are encouraged to contact Officers prior to the meeting with questions on technical issues in reports.

Contact Details

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Barry Khan
Assistant Chief Executive
Legal and Democratic Services
County Hall
Northallerton

Monday, 23 February 2026

North Yorkshire Council

Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 1 December 2025 commencing at 10.00 am at County Hall, Northallerton.

Committee Members present: Councillor Sam Gibbs in the Chair; plus Councillors John Ritchie, John Cattanach, Caroline Dickinson, Nigel Knapton, Bob Packham, Yvonne Peacock, Clive Pearson, Roberta Swiers, Phil Trumper, Matt Walker, Greg White and Philip Broadbank.

Officers present: Melanie Carr, Carl Doolan, Jo Ireland, Richard Mair, Hazel Smith, Andrew Rowe, Ben Walker and Victoria Young

Apologies: Councillors John Mann, Stuart Parsons, Kirsty Poskitt and Dan Sladden

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

80 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Mann, Stuart Parsons, Kirsty Poskitt and Dan Sladden.

Councillor Dan Sladden was substituted by Councillor Phillip Broadbank.

81 Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 September 2025

Resolved – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2025 be taken as read and confirmed by the Chair as a true record, subject to the following amendments to Minute 70 – Declarations of Interest:

A number of declarations of interest were made in relation to Agenda Item 6 – Annual Review of Libraries, as follows:

- Councillor Bob Packham declared an interest as the Chair of Sherburn and Villages Library Management Group. He also declared his wife was the Chair of Sherburn and Villages Community Trust.
- Councillor Yvonne Peacock declared an interest as a member of the Upper Dales Community Partnership
- Councillor Phillip Broadbank declared an interest as a Trustee of Starbeck Library

82 Declarations of Interest

A number of declarations of interest were made in relation to Agenda Item 5 –Libraries Strategy Midterm Review, as follows:

- Councillor Bob Packham declared an interest as the Chair of Sherburn and Villages Library Management Group. He also declared his wife was Chair of Sherburn and Villages Community Trust.
- Councillor Yvonne Peacock declared an interest as a member of the Upper Dales Community Partnership
- Councillor Phillip Broadbank declared an interest as a Trustee of Starbeck Library

83 Public Participation

No public questions or statements were received.

84 Library Strategy - Mid-Term Review

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director for Community Development seeking the Committee's views on the mid-term review and draft update of the current Library Strategy 2020-2030.

Hazel Smith, Head of Libraries attended the meeting to present the report, confirming the Strategy had been running for five years and the purpose of the review was to ensure it still reflected the needs of customers and remained aligned with national and local priorities.

Attention was drawn to the proposed changes made to the Strategy, as listed at paragraph 3.1 of the report. Members acknowledged the importance of the variety of services made available through the library service which were reflected in the Strategy

Members also recorded their thanks to the many volunteers working within the county's community libraries, and in particular noted the recent King's Award presented to Newby and Scalby Library for its voluntary service.

The Chair thanked the officer for the report, and it was

Resolved – That the findings from the review be noted and the proposed changes to the Strategy be endorsed prior to their consideration by the Executive Member for Culture, Arts and Housing.

85 Active North Yorkshire Membership and Pricing Review

Considered – A presentation from the Corporate Director for Community Development providing an overview of the principles behind the pricing structure being developed for the range of leisure facilities across the county, alongside the findings from a recent customer survey.

Jo Ireland, Assistant Director for Leisure & Culture introduced the presentation confirming the importance of undertaking the review as part of the convergence of Leisure Services. She draw attention to the principles behind the review and some of the associated challenges.

Ben Walker, Commercial Development Manager for the Council talked members through the presentation slides, providing an overview of the current position regards membership and pricing structure at the Council's Active Leisure facilities across the county. He also drew attention to:

- The findings from a recent customer survey - Members noted the key priorities identified by customers i.e. the removal of contracts and the offer of flexible terms.
- The benchmarking of services against those of other similar operators
- The complexity of the current range of membership packages and the monthly income they generate
- The detailed financial modelling underway which would likely lead to price increases being proposed for some areas should the Council proceed with the preferred two-tier membership option
- The ongoing review to consider the standardisation of Pay As You Go rates
- The proposed removal of any historic 'Price for Life' membership arrangements and fixed-term contracts
- The range of memberships being proposed and the benefits each of those might bring

- The range of concessions being proposed and the proposal to raise the older persons concession to state pension age.
- The procurement underway for a new Leisure Management System
- The planned delivery of an improved Health and Wellbeing Service whilst remaining financially sustainable

Members welcomed the proposed virtual membership offer, noting the benefits it would bring to residents living in the more rural areas of the county. They noted it would include both access to online classes and healthcare services.

They also noted the potential for pricing changes for some customers that may arise as a result of the detailed modelling work currently underway, recognising it would be necessary in order to finance future service developments and further invest in the council's facilities.

In regard to swimming clubs, Jo Ireland confirmed the council's intention to work with existing clubs to ensure the continuing provision of swimming lessons. It was recognised that many were run by volunteers and provided a service to their communities that the Council may otherwise have to deliver. Jo Ireland also confirmed there would be a review of the Health and fitness classes being provided across the county, to ensure some equity in their provision and their quality of that provision.

Members discussed the potential barriers to increasing the number of new customers i.e. the quality of equipment and restricted opening hours at some sites. In response, it was confirmed that gym equipment was to be renewed at all sites, and where practicable opening hours would be increased. It was noted that some sites were already open 24/7. Members also questioned whether geographical data was held on existing customers recognising it would help clarify the distance some residents were travelling to access Leisure Services.

In regard to data collection on customers, Members recognised that some customers did not want to provide all their data just to be able to access a gym facility on a one-off PAYG basis, but they accepted there was still a need for some data collection for Health and Safety requirements, and induction purposes.

Members suggested officers further consider:

- Concessions for North Yorkshire Council staff
- Ancillary services such as on-site parking, vending machines and cafes

Members noted that in coastal areas 30% of residents were not engaging in any physical activities. They went on to consider ways to grow the service and recognised that the new LMS would enable the improved targeting of services and encourage greater levels of participation.

Overall, based on all of the information provided, Members accepted that the two-tier membership proposal offered a more balanced financial approach for now, but welcomed the potential to re-visit that approach in the future, recognising that not everyone in the Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon areas might be able to afford the proposed higher rate.

They also agreed to add a future update to the Committee's work programme post implementation, and it was

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

86 Leisure Service - Bi-annual Performance Update

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director for Community Development providing an overview of performance across the Leisure & Culture related services, with the exception of the Library Service.

Melanie Carr, Senior Scrutiny Officer presented the report, drawing attention to the data within the performance summary at Appendix A and the specific update on progress in relation to the Cultural Strategy's strategic priorities provided at paragraph 3.8 of the report.

Members noted the ongoing leisure outreach programmes provided mainly by volunteers and recognised the contribution of volunteers in delivering community-based services.

The Chair thanked officers for the update, and it was

Resolved – That:

- i. The performance data in Appendix A be noted
- ii. An annual update on progress against the Cultural Strategy's strategic priorities be added to the Committee's future work programme.

87 Joint Venture Development Update

Consider – A report of the Corporate Director for Community Development providing a progress update on the development of the Joint Venture.

Andrew Rowe, Assistant Director for Housing introduced the report which drew attention to:

- The reduction in the number of sites in the first tranche
- The addition of a site outside of Scarborough area to the first tranche(Sharphaw Avenue in Skipton)
- The need for further negotiation on the required legal documentation as part of the preferred bidder stage
- An overview of the timeline for completion of the outstanding work required before incorporation can be delivered.
- A proposal that the Committee undertake a future review of performance against the Joint Venture objectives listed in Appendix A of the report, 12 months after incorporation of the Joint Venture vehicle

It was noted that all of the affordable housing delivered through the Joint Venture would be added to Housing Revenue Account, and that Housing England grants would be sought where possible to support the Joint Venture.

Members welcomed the progress to date, and it was

Resolved – That:

- i. The current status of negotiations with regard to the Housing Joint Venture be noted
- ii. A performance review of the Joint Venture 12 months after its incorporation, be added to the Committee's 2026-27 work programme.

88 Draft Asset Management Strategy

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director for Community Development presenting a

draft Asset Management Strategy for the Committee's consideration, prior to its consideration by the Executive on 16 December 2025.

Andrew Rowe, Assistant Director for Housing introduced the draft Strategy drawing attention to the two-week consultation currently ongoing with Involved Tenants and went on to discuss the measurable outcomes listed at paragraph 4.11 of the report, which were expected to be delivered by 2027.

Members noted that a large proportion of council homes did not meet the standard currently, and that the ongoing stock condition surveys were helping to identify those homes. It was confirmed that initially the focus had been on those homes suspected to need the most work, but the focus had now shifted to a more geographical approach.

The Chair thanked officers for the report and draft Strategy, and it was

Resolved – That

- i. A future update on progress against the Strategy's measurable outcomes be added to the Committee's work programme for Autumn 2026.
- ii. Future performance reports include data on the number of properties meeting the required standard.

89 Draft Tenancy Agreement & Tenancy Policy

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director for Community Development, presenting a draft Tenancy Agreement and Tenancy Policy for the Committee's consideration in advance of their recommended sign off by the Executive Member for Culture, Arts and Housing on 14 January 2026.

Carl Doolan, Head of Housing Management and Landlord Services introduced the draft Tenancy Agreement and Tenancy Policy, drawing attention to the proposed amendments detailed in sections 4 and 5 of the report respectively.

Members noted the delayed commencement of the ongoing statutory consultation, which had prevented them from being able to consider the consultation findings as part of their consideration of the draft Agreement and Policy. In response, it was confirmed that the feedback from tenants had already highlighted a number of issues to be addressed, and Members asked that they be kept updated on the themes arising from the tenant feedback.

Members discussed issues around property succession and the potential for elements of discretion to be applied where it was considered to be appropriate. They also discussed the benefit of having a register of adapted properties, noting they would be identified through the ongoing stock condition survey work.

Overall, Members agreed both draft documents were appropriate and ready for consideration by the Executive Member for Culture, Arts and Housing

The Chair thanked officers for the report and draft Strategy, and it was

Resolved – That the Committee's views on the draft Tenancy Agreement and Tenancy Policy be shared with the Executive Member for Culture, Arts and Housing to inform his consideration of those documents.

90 Draft Right to Buy Policy

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director for Community Development, presenting a draft Right to Buy Policy for the Committee's consideration in advance of their

recommended sign off by the Executive Member for Culture, Arts & Housing on 10 December 2025.

Andrew Rowe, Assistant Director for Housing introduced the draft Right to Buy Policy, drawing specific attention to two specific aspects of the proposed approach, as detailed at paragraph 4.9 of the report i.e. whether the Council should allow disposals of properties previously sold under Right to Buy subject to Section 157 restrictions where:

- a) a property had been marketed for at least 12 months at a realistic market value and no eligible local buyer has come forward
- b) the potential purchaser could evidence a confirmed offer of employment in the protected area?

In principle, Members agreed with the draft Policy but sought clarity on the following:

- Would there be an opportunity to expand on the 'local' restriction e.g. by a geographical measure i.e. 10 miles, or open it to 'North Yorkshire'
- Would there be an opportunity to grant consent in certain cases (12 months marketing and/or offer of employment) but with a restriction that it should be the purchasers 'primary residence'?
- Could the Council stipulate the level of evidence needed in order to grant such consent? - the example of agricultural occupancy conditions was given as an equivalent and the level of information which must be submitted to satisfy that process.
- How many properties would it likely apply to?

They also noted that the statutory consultation had only just been completed on 28 November 2025, which had prevented them from being able to consider the consultation findings as part of their consideration of the draft Policy.

Officers agreed to seek legal advice on the queries raised by the committee and to include feedback on those queries in the Executive Member report.

The Chair thanked officers for the report and draft Policy, and it was

Resolved – That their views on the draft Right to Buy Policy be shared with the Executive Member for Culture, Arts and Housing to inform his consideration of those documents.

91 Lettable Standard Review - Verbal Update on Implementation of Recommended Monitoring Arrangements

Andrew Rowe, Assistant Director for Housing provided a verbal update on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the Committee's previously completed scrutiny on the Lettable Standard.

It was noted that a majority of the recommendations had been addressed through their inclusion in the revised Standard, approved by the Executive Member for Arts, Culture and Housing in July 2025.

The remaining recommendation focussed on ensuring appropriate measure were in place to be able to monitor the implementation

It was noted that void periods were proving to be longer now as a result of the new Standard, and that voids were running at just over 4% of stock numbers. It was noted that in the longer term the situation would be helped by the completion of the stock condition survey work and the completion of the remedial works identified through that process.

The Chair thanked the officer for the update.

92 Q2 Housing Strategy Monitoring Report

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director for Community Development providing an update on progress made toward compliance with the requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation Act), and an oversight of the Councils Housing Improvement Strategy and Performance Framework in advance of their consideration by the Executive Member.

Victoria Young, Housing Service Improvement Manager introduced the report drawing attention to the individual workstreams and the benchmarking data against other councils.

Members noted a number of actions shown as either overdue or at risk of delay – shown in tables 3, 4 and 7 in the report.

Specifically in regard to the outstanding action in Table 7 i.e. 'Review service charges to ensure clear policy, consistent charges, management in a fair and transparent manner and effective communication to tenants', Members reiterated their intention to undertake a Task Group Review in support of that review.

It was confirmed the Council was now employing more contractors to address the backlog in repairs and the works identified as a result of the stock condition surveys.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Director for Housing for the update, and it was

Resolved – That the Housing Improvement & Regulatory Update be noted.

93 Complaints Update

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director for Community Development providing an update on complaints handling performance within the Housing Service.

Victoria Young, Housing Service Improvement Manager presented the report and confirmed the position was improving.

Members were pleased to note the ongoing overall improvement in complaints handling since the revised policy had been introduced, and that the council's response and resolution of complaints was being done satisfactorily.

However, they also noted:

- The increase in complaints across all areas - the largest increase had been seen in the Harrogate area and work was underway to investigate why.
- The drop in compliance with timescales from Quarter 1
- The ongoing issues arising from push from some residents to 'Keep Harrogate Local'

The Chair thanked officers for the update, and it was

Resolved – That the update on complaints handling performance within the Housing Service be noted.

94 Work Programme 2025-26

Considered – The work programme for the remainder of the 2025-26 municipal year presented by the Senior Scrutiny Officer.

Members took account of the discussions on previous agenda items and other developments taking place across the county and agreed to add:

- iii. A performance review of the Joint Venture 12 months after its incorporation

iv. A future update on the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy

Resolved – That the above be added to the Committee's 2026-27 work programme.

95 Date of Next Meeting - 3 March 2026

The meeting concluded at 12.33 pm.

North Yorkshire Council

Housing & Leisure Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 3 March 2026

Tenant Scrutiny Panel

Report of the Corporate Director for Community Development

1.0	PURPOSE OF REPORT
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide members with an outline the work that the tenant scrutiny panel have carried out so far, to inform discussions on how a successful working relationship can be formed with the Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee in future.
2.0	SUMMARY
2.1	Through the introduction of the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard registered social landlords are required to provide tenants a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise their landlord's services.
2.2	The vision of the Tenant Involvement Strategy adopted in April 2025, is to engage and involve tenants and use their insight to influence and improve services, ensuring their voice is heard in decisions that affect their home, their safety and their communities.
2.3	A key aspect of the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard is the need to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in delivery landlord services.
2.4	Our Tenant Scrutiny panel is a group of tenants who work in partnership with us to review and improve housing services. Following a period of training the newly established panel decided to review the complaints process for tenants with an objective of improving future tenant experiences and the level of satisfaction with the complaints process.
2.5	It was agreed that the findings and recommendations of the tenants' work would be brought forward for the attention of this committee to assist this committee in their task seeking assurance that the complaints policy is working effectively.
3.0	TENANT SCRUTINY
3.1	North Yorkshire Council Tenant Scrutiny Panel Complaints Report 2025
3.2	The tenant scrutiny panel looked at the complaint's procedure for their first project – this was informed by tenant satisfaction data and tenant and staff feedback. The 2024/2025 Tenant Satisfaction Measures showed that only 33% of tenants were satisfied with complaints handling and by Qtr 2 of 2025/2026 this remained the lowest scoring metric in the survey.
3.3	They carried out various tasks and the work resulted in 22 recommendations. These recommendations were taken to the Housing Improvement Board on 27 th November 2025. The Housing Improvement Board acknowledged the recommendations and an action plan for implementation has been presented to the tenants. This plan is attached as Appendix A.

- 3.4 Progress against the action plan will be monitored by the tenant scrutiny group over the next months.
- 3.5 Following completion of the first project the group are now looking to put together a work plan for 2026/2027.
- 3.6 Introducing a workplan allows for the panel to consider any opportunities there may be to work closely with the Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny panel on any future projects. The aim of this report is to highlight the work that our tenant scrutiny panel have done but also to start discussions about how the two groups can work together on future projects.
- 3.7 The tenant scrutiny group are aware that members have previously worked on the lettable standard and have plans to revisit this later this year. This is a topic that the tenant scrutiny is interested in for their next project.
- 3.8 For the work on the lettable standard the tenant group plan to meet with relevant officers to initially gain more insight around the lettable standard but they also aim to visit a range of council homes to assess whether they meet the lettable standard. This could feed into work that the Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny have planned.
- 3.9 The tenants would like to work closely with the committee, we would like to discuss how this could work best.

4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 This report introduces discussion points and at this stage, no alternative options have been considered.

5.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 5.1 The Tenant Involvement Strategy and the work of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel directly supports North Yorkshire Council's strategic ambition to deliver "good quality, affordable and sustainable housing that meets the needs of our communities. Tenant involvement supports North Yorkshire Council's aim to become an exemplar landlord providing high quality tenant services.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific financial, legal, climate change, equalities or other implications associated with the recommendation in this report. The Council has demonstrated its commitment to achieving compliance with the Consumer Standards and made sufficient provision within existing budgets.

The Consumer Standards for registered providers of social housing came into effect on 1 April 2025 and as a registered provider, the Council must comply with the standard and be subject to inspection by the Regulator.

7.0 REPORT RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 The Committee are asked to note the report and consider opportunities for future joint working with the housing tenant scrutiny panel.

Nic Harne
Corporate Director – Community Development
County Hall
Northallerton

18th February 2026

Report Author – *Sarah Thompson, Tenant Involvement Manager*

Presenter of Report – *Sarah Thompson, Tenant Involvement Manager*

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard (Consumer Standards), Regulator of Social Housing 1 April 2024

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Complaints Tenant Review – Recommendations & Action Plan

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

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NYC Resident Scrutiny Panel – Recommendations from the Complaints Scrutiny October 2025

Ref.	Recommendation	Response from NYC and Actions to be taken	Desired Outcome	Responsible Officer	Completion Date	Notes/Progress or Comments
R1.	Review Complaints policy with a residents focus group taking into account the following: - Need to use more straight forward language. Need to take into account HOS requirements following their review of the Policy October 2025. Include “expected practice re tel calls / personal contact” to ensure its adopted and consistently applied.	The North Yorkshire Council Housing Complaints Policy was reviewed on 16 th December 2026, updating the policy following recommendations from the Housing Ombudsman. All of the HO’s recommendations were agreed. Decision - North Yorkshire Housing Complaints Policy North Yorkshire Council , Staff guidance on complaint handling and procedure are to be updated – reflecting a ‘call first’ approach.	Our Housing Complaint Policy is compliant with HO expectations. Our complaint handling guidance to staff is updated and clear. Our ‘call first’ approach is embedded. Tenant Satisfaction with complaint handling increases.	Dani Reeves/ Vicky Young	March 2026	Complaints Policy was reviewed and agreed by Exec Member in December 2025. Review considered Tenant Scrutiny feedback and Housing Ombudsman recommendations. Complaints procedure/ guidance to staff re calls and personal contact to be revised. TSM Q3 – satisfaction with complaint handling is up to 36%.
R2.	Produce an accessible residents easy read	A tenant guide to complaint handling will be produced.	Our complaint handling guidance to tenants and	Alison Clarke	March 2026	

Ref.	Recommendation	Response from NYC and Actions to be taken	Desired Outcome	Responsible Officer	Completion Date	Notes/Progress or Comments
	guide/visual/flowchart to accompany the policy.		leaseholders is accessible and clear.			
R3.	Ensure Panel are able to speak with service users with recent lived experience in future scrutiny projects.	<i>There are issues here around GDPR and sharing of personal data. Instead focus should be on asking tenants with lived experience to self present, rather than details be given.</i>	Panel can carry out evidence based scrutiny reviews based on true experiences of tenants and leaseholders.	Sarah Thompson	Jan-Mar 2026	
R4.	Consider accessibility and transparency of information for those tenants who can't/choose not to access information via the NYC website and provide alternatives including the newsletter.	Linked to Communications Plan. To ensure that complaints information is accessible and available – information will be available in the newsletter and in communications to tenants ie. Regulatory Updates.	The Housing Complaints Policy and Procedure is more accessible. Tenants feel more able to raise complaints.	Vicky Young/ Alison Clarke	March 2026	
R5	Ensure learning from complaints is specific and the learning is shared in a visible space in the newsletters and on	Collating and reporting on lessons learnt is improving. <i>See Q2 Complaint Handling report and the Annual Service Improvement and Complaint</i>	Lessons learnt to be clearly reported and communicated to staff, tenants and leaseholders.	Vicky Young/ Nathan Oxnard/ Alison Clarke	Ongoing – March 2026 review.	Q3 Complaints report will include lessons learnt section. Complaint clinics to be held

Ref.	Recommendation	Response from NYC and Actions to be taken	Desired Outcome	Responsible Officer	Completion Date	Notes/Progress or Comments
	the website. Possibly use a “you said, we did” approach.	<i>Handling Performance report.</i> Review Tenant Communications Plan to ensure feedback loop is closed. Internal communications plan – managers feeding lessons learnt back to teams.	Quarterly Complaints Handling reports. Newsletter/ comms plan updated. Monthly complaint summaries discussed with teams.			quarterly with AD and HOS.
R6.	Ensure twice weekly meetings are being held and demonstrating improvements with communication and ownership across teams (as noted in the annual complaints performance report). The Panel would like to hear an update on this discussion and if it has been implemented and for	Twice weekly meetings between the Complaints Officer and Housing Standards Managers are happening. This is helping to ensure that complaints are correctly assigned – hope to see this have an impact on the time taken to respond.	Better assignation of complaints should translate into faster response times.	Nathan Oxnard	March 2026	Twice weekly meetings continue to take place to ensure better assignation of complaints.

Ref.	Recommendation	Response from NYC and Actions to be taken	Desired Outcome	Responsible Officer	Completion Date	Notes/Progress or Comments
	the outcomes to be shared.					
R7.	For future self-assessments against the Complaint Handling Code to work together with tenants, particularly those who had recent experience of using the complaints service.	Tenant Forum will be invited to review the self-assessment document prior to it being agreed by the Executive	Future self-assessments will include a tenant voice.	Dani Reeves/ Vicky Young	September 2026	
R8.	NYC need to have a clear plan to improve communication with complainants, meeting individual communication preferences, (tel calls or letters/emails etc) and ensuring that responses are personalised.	New complaints handling system records communication preference. Improvements to the procedure mean that moving forward the complaints officer will have access to housing systems in order to have that increased view of the tenant.	Complaints communication tailored to individual preference and circumstance.	Vicky Young/Nathan Oxnard/ Alison Clarke	March 2026	
R9.	Complaints performance sits under tenant involvement on the	This has been reviewed and complaints performance now sits		Vicky Young/ Alison Clarke	August 2025	Resolved.

Ref.	Recommendation	Response from NYC and Actions to be taken	Desired Outcome	Responsible Officer	Completion Date	Notes/Progress or Comments
	website, link - Tenant involvement North Yorkshire Council which isn't the most obvious place. It is recommended that it's moved to ensure easier to access for tenants.	under housing performance and transparency Council housing performance and transparency North Yorkshire Council				
R10.	Make the complaints performance information more visibly appealing using charts, graphs and some colour.	We will explore with the web team what the opportunities are to make the information more visibly appealing.	Complaints data more easily digestible.	Alison Clarke	April 2026 (end of year data)	
R11.	The Panel would like to recommend that NYC learn from best practice found and make outbound calls to all closed complaints to measure satisfaction with complaint handling and outcome.	New complaint handling system will auto-survey complainants upon closure of cases and satisfaction will be recorded. Further improvement to the staff guidance/ procedure will increase the customer focus and follow up conversations.	Customer satisfaction with complaints handling to be recorded and reported. Management information provided should be used to identify trends in satisfaction with communication etc.	Dani Reeves / Vicky Young	TBC	

Ref.	Recommendation	Response from NYC and Actions to be taken	Desired Outcome	Responsible Officer	Completion Date	Notes/Progress or Comments
R12.	Review resource within the team to address single point of failure and to demonstrate how the service is valued.	Action has already been taken to secure 1 additional FTE to the complaints team, dedicated to HRA complaints. There is an ongoing corporate review of complaints handling/ resource.	Properly resourced complaints team, dedicated to HRA Services.	Hannah Heinemann	March 2026	Recruitment is underway for an additional complaints officer, dedicated to tenant and leaseholder complaints.
R13.	The Panel would want to see the delivery of the recommendations from this scrutiny report shared in the forthcoming months in the newsletters and on the website evidencing that the work of the resident scrutiny panel is taken seriously and valued.	Propose that progress on delivering these recommendations is included in the quarterly complaint handling report and tenant communication plan updated to deliver updates to wider tenant base.	Recommendations are clearly actioned and value of the work is demonstrated.	Vicky Young/ Alison Clarke	Ongoing	
R14.	Ensure Complaint response letters meet the requirements of your own policy and HOS by introducing some quality assurance.	Additional resource in the complaints team will provide capacity to quality check response letters. The Service Improvement Team is	Response letters are of a high, consistent quality with checks in place to ensure that standards are being maintained.	HOS/ Nathan Oxnard		As above - recruitment is currently underway to provide some of the capacity needed to do the

Ref.	Recommendation	Response from NYC and Actions to be taken	Desired Outcome	Responsible Officer	Completion Date	Notes/Progress or Comments
	The Panel would recommend the Service Improvement team make use of residents to help improve the letters.	not responsible for letters sent. Additional training – detailed below – should improve the responses given.				quality assurance work.
R15.	Clarity on the Member Responsible for Complaints' (MRC) role (Cllr Myers) and how he works effectively for tenants/NYC. The governing body response should be from Cllr Myers as he is cited in the self-assessment as the MRC.	Cllr Myers will be briefed on this review and on the progress on delivering the recommendations. The governing body response was provided by Cllr Myers, this will be made clearer in future self assessments.	MRC is visible and informed, working effectively for tenants.	Andrew Rowe/ Vicky Young	January 2026	Complaints Policy review was considered by Cllr Myers in December 2025
R16.	Ensure that recurring themes from complaints are monitored appropriately and the insight used to identify actions that may need longer term /different action.	Monthly complaint handling summary to Extended Management Team will continue to raise recurring themes and lessons learnt.	Complaint handling is appropriately monitored and reported with meaningful results.	Vicky Young/Nathan Oxnard		

Ref.	Recommendation	Response from NYC and Actions to be taken	Desired Outcome	Responsible Officer	Completion Date	Notes/Progress or Comments
	Share any outcomes of learning and celebrate success on the website and in the newsletter.					
R17.	Culture of complaints – complaints should be welcomed and all formally recorded rather than “managed”. Invest in training for every Manager and team that work in Housing services including contact centre. Ensure specific training for those that investigate and respond to complaints that focuses on active listening, greater compassion and empathy with complainants and try and walk in their shoes and consider how they would feel if it was their mum	Messaging around complaints handling is changing. Complaint handling e-learning is available and is being identified as mandatory where appropriate. This will also be rolled out to other services. I.e. Customer. Lessons learnt workshops also take place, face to face.	Organisational culture and staff competence is improved and a complaint handling ethos embedded.	Dani Reeves/ Vicky Young/ Alison Clarke		

Ref.	Recommendation	Response from NYC and Actions to be taken	Desired Outcome	Responsible Officer	Completion Date	Notes/Progress or Comments
	complaining for example. Training to be in person in NYC offices in a different workshop style such as role play/use of anonymised case studies would help with attendance and commitment. Make annual refresher training on complaints mandatory training for Officer that respond to complaints. Centre for Learning Housing Ombudsman Service All staff that respond to complaints should also watch this.					
R18.	Develop a script/template to help ensure consistent, high quality, customer focused complaint	Some template correspondence does exist and this is part of the corporate complaints system project – to be reviewed.	Consistent, high quality complaint responses.	Alison Clarke		

Ref.	Recommendation	Response from NYC and Actions to be taken	Desired Outcome	Responsible Officer	Completion Date	Notes/Progress or Comments
	responses to complaints.					
R19.	Further analysis to be carried out on escalations as a result of failing to meet stage 1 promises and action taken to address this failing so that there are no stage 2 escalations for this reason.	This will be carried out once additional resource has been recruited.		Nathan Oxnard		In January 2026 complaints summary to extended management team we have started to look at numbers of Stage 2s as a result of this.
R20.	NYC to re-introduce tenant inspectors/ mystery shoppers and recruit a pool of volunteers who can follow an annual programme to complement scrutiny work/test recommendations have been delivered.	There is work on-going as part of the Customer programme to introduce mystery shopping of our services. We will explore to understand if tenant could form part of this.		Gemma Barnes		
R21.	Consider self-assessing against the 21 recommendations in the Housing Ombudsman's	This will be undertaken as part of the annual report 2025/26.	Increased assurance of NYC's complaint handling practice.	Vicky Young/ Dani Reeves	June 2026	

Ref.	Recommendation	Response from NYC and Actions to be taken	Desired Outcome	Responsible Officer	Completion Date	Notes/Progress or Comments
	Knowledge and Information Management report as good practice and identify any gaps that need to be plugged.					
R22.	Ensure greater visibility of complaints at a senior level by ensuring managers regularly review complaint responses and actions and ensure that promises are kept and lessons are learnt.	We need to establish what level of system access HOS will have to the new complaint handling system. Additionally, quarterly dip checking of complaint responses should help managers to review responses and actions.	Increased visibility of complaints and closure of the complaints process.			To be part of the new complaints clinic process.
	Out of complaints scope however the Panel recommend a door knocking exercise to be carried out to engage and develop relationships with tenants, build trust and accountability and take into account vulnerabilities.				Ongoing	To be considered as part of the wider TI plan for the year

North Yorkshire Council

Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3 March 2026

Housing Complaints Handling Update Q3 2025/26

Report of the Corporate Director Community Development

1.0	PURPOSE OF REPORT
1.1	To provide an update to the Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the complaints handling performance within the Housing Service.
2.0	SUMMARY
2.1	Complaint handling is a critical component of effective service delivery. Complaints provide crucial insights into residents' experiences which can help direct service improvement. As both a landlord and the strategic housing authority, North Yorkshire Council need to be receptive to complaints to help build a greater understanding of residents' priorities and areas of shortfall in our provision. Clear and transparent complaint handling is vital to ensure lessons can be learnt from outcomes.
2.2	As a social landlord our responsibilities around complaint handling are set out in legislation and codes of guidance. Effective complaints handling, and the accurate recording of this data are key requirements social housing landlords are required to adhere to under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code. This legislation gave the Housing Ombudsman responsibility to monitor compliance with the complaints handling code.
2.3	As a social landlord a positive complaint handling culture supports the cultivation of a positive relationship with our tenants who can then trust us to respond to complaints in a timely manner. Being viewed as a proactive landlord who responds to tenant needs demonstrates North Yorkshire Council's commitment to improving our tenant's overall experience. Elected Members and Tenants play a crucial part in this by challenging and scrutinising our complaints data.
3.0	BACKGROUND
3.1	The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 requires social landlords to measure tenant satisfaction, complaints handling is included in this metric. This legislation gave the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code statutory power. Therefore, there is a legal obligation for local authorities to comply with, and demonstrate compliance, with the code.
3.2	The Housing Ombudsman provides a skeleton framework to which all social housing providers must adhere to, but it is up to the individual housing provider to decide the operational components of this framework.
3.3	As obligated by the Housing Ombudsman, North Yorkshire Council has a two stage complaints process. At Stage One, an acknowledgement will be provided within five working days, and a response within 10 working days detailing any resolution that may take place. Should a tenant be unhappy with their outcome, they can request for their complaint to be raised to Stage Two. At this stage, a response must be given within 20 working days.

4.0 COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 A complaint is defined as: *‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’* A tenant does not have to use the word ‘complaint’ for it to be treated as such.
- 4.2 During Quarter Three 2025/26 the Housing Service received a total of 144 new Stage One complaints. Table One below shows that 19 of those complaints were regarding General Fund Housing Services whilst 125 were from our social housing tenants/ leaseholders, up from 102 in Quarter Two.

Table 1 Count of new Stage One complaints by acknowledgement date

Count of Quarter	Column Labels 									
Row Labels 	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Grand Total
Housing - General	7	4	8	8	11	3	7	4	8	60
Housing Delivery			1		1					2
Housing Management			2							2
Housing Needs	6	2	4	3	4	1	3	2	4	29
Housing Renewal	1	2	1	5	6	2	4	2	4	27
Housing - Tenant	22	26	24	37	30	35	46	47	32	299
Housing Delivery	1		1		2	1		3		8
Housing Management	1	7	5	8	4	10	8	6	3	52
Housing Standards	20	19	18	29	24	24	38	38	29	239
Grand Total	29	30	32	45	41	38	53	51	40	359

- 4.3. Further breakdown (Table 2) highlights that 84% (105) of all HRA complaints received were regarding our Housing Standards Service (responsible for council house repairs, stock condition and planned maintenance), 13.6% (17) were regarding Housing Management (responsible for tenancy management) and 2.4% were regarding our Housing Delivery Service.
- 4.4 The split between complaints received about our landlord services and general housing complaints remains consistent with the 2024/25 figures where the majority of complaints received were from our tenants and/or leaseholders. Table 3 details a further breakdown of complaints received about our landlord services.

Table 2 Number of new Stage One Housing Complaints by Service Area, quarterly

Column Labels 								
Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Total Count of Quarter		Total Count of Quarter2
Row Labels	Count of Quarter	Count of Quarter2	Count of Quarter	Count of Quarter2	Count of Quarter	Count of Quarter2		
Housing Delivery	2	2.78%	3	2.94%	3	2.40%	8	2.68%
Housing Management	13	18.06%	22	21.57%	17	13.60%	52	17.39%
Housing Standards	57	79.17%	77	75.49%	105	84.00%	239	79.93%
Grand Total	72	100.00%	102	100.00%	125	100.00%	299	100.00%

Table 3 Number of new Stage One Housing Tenant Complaints by Service Area, quarterly

Column Labels 									
Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Total Count		Total %	
Row Labels	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%			
Housing Delivery	2	2.78%	3	2.94%	3	2.40%	8	2.68%	
Building Fabric Concern		0.00%	1	0.98%		0.00%	1	0.33%	
Communications		0.00%	2	1.96%	1	0.80%	3	1.00%	
Other	2	2.78%		0.00%	2	1.60%	4	1.34%	
Housing Management	13	18.06%	22	21.57%	17	13.60%	52	17.39%	
Anti-social Behaviour	3	4.17%	4	3.92%	4	3.20%	11	3.68%	
Building Fabric Concern		0.00%	1	0.98%		0.00%	1	0.33%	
Communal/ Shared Area	1	1.39%		0.00%		0.00%	1	0.33%	
Communications	2	2.78%	4	3.92%	3	2.40%	9	3.01%	
Housing Allocations Policy/ Decision	2	2.78%	3	2.94%		0.00%	5	1.67%	
Other		0.00%	5	4.90%	2	1.60%	7	2.34%	
Repairs - time take to resolve	1	1.39%	1	0.98%		0.00%	2	0.67%	
Staff/ Contractor Conduct	4	5.56%	4	3.92%	6	4.80%	14	4.68%	
(blank)		0.00%		0.00%	2	1.60%	2	0.67%	
Housing Standards	57	79.17%	77	75.49%	105	84.00%	239	79.93%	
Adaptations	1	1.39%		0.00%		0.00%	1	0.33%	
Anti-social Behaviour		0.00%	1	0.98%		0.00%	1	0.33%	
Asbestos Concern		0.00%		0.00%	1	0.80%	1	0.33%	
Building Fabric Concern	1	1.39%	3	2.94%	5	4.00%	9	3.01%	
Communications	6	8.33%	12	11.76%	9	7.20%	27	9.03%	
Damp and Mould Concern	4	5.56%	2	1.96%	2	1.60%	8	2.68%	
Fire Safety Concern	1	1.39%		0.00%		0.00%	1	0.33%	
Gas Safety Concern	1	1.39%		0.00%	3	2.40%	4	1.34%	
Housing Allocations Policy/ Decision		0.00%		0.00%	2	1.60%	2	0.67%	
Lift Safety Concern	1	1.39%		0.00%		0.00%	1	0.33%	
Other	2	2.78%	2	1.96%	4	3.20%	8	2.68%	
Repairs - dissatisfaction with quality of work	2	2.78%	9	8.82%	15	12.00%	26	8.70%	
Repairs - time take to resolve	34	47.22%	46	45.10%	60	48.00%	140	46.82%	
Staff/ Contractor Conduct	3	4.17%	2	1.96%	3	2.40%	8	2.68%	
Water Safety Concern	1	1.39%		0.00%		0.00%	1	0.33%	
(blank)		0.00%		0.00%	1	0.80%	1	0.33%	
Grand Total	72	100.00%	102	100.00%	125	100.00%	299	100.00%	

5.0 HRA COMPLAINTS

- 5.1 Further analysis of the complaints received for our landlord services shows that of the 125 received in Quarter Three, 84% (105) were regarding our Housing Standards service and of those 105, 48% (60) were classified as 'Repairs – time taken to resolve'. This is reflective of the high volume of repair requests being received, alongside the increased workload of the repairs time in dealing with repairs raised through the stock condition survey programme. The team is currently experiencing a backlog of repairs which is reflected in the increased number of complaints coming through.
- 5.2 Table 4 provides a breakdown of Stage One landlord service complaints by locality. The information available shows that overall, the level of complaint is 4.9 per 1000 homes (up from 3.9 in Q2) and that Q3 complaint levels in Selby reflect this almost precisely however, the number of complaints per 1000 homes is higher in Harrogate (5.6) and lower in Richmondshire (2.1). The average number of new stage one complaints received per month in Quarter Three was 41.6, this has increased from an average of 33.3 per month in Quarter Two.
- 5.3 Broken down by locality and calculated as a figure per 1000 homes the following is found:

Locality	Q1 Average PCM	Q1 Complaints per 1000 homes	Q2 Average PCM	Q2 Complaints per 1000 homes	Q3 Average PCM	Q3 Complaints per 1000 homes
Harrogate	12	3.2	19	5	21.6	5.6
Richmondshire	4	2.5	2	1.25	3.3	2.1
Selby	8	2.3	13	3.8	16.3	4.8
Combined	23.3	2.7	33.3	3.9	41.6	4.9

Table 4 Stage One complaints received by month and locality

Count of Quarter		Column Labels			
		Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Grand Total
Row Labels					
Housing - Tenant		72	102	125	299
Craven			1		1
Housing Delivery			1		1
Harrogate		36	58	65	159
Housing Delivery		1	2	1	4
Housing Management		8	12	8	28
Housing Standards		27	44	56	127
Richmondshire		12	5	10	27
Housing Delivery				1	1
Housing Management		2		3	5
Housing Standards		10	5	6	21
Scarborough				1	1
Housing Management				1	1
Selby		24	38	49	111
Housing Delivery		1		1	2
Housing Management		3	10	5	18
Housing Standards		20	28	43	91
Grand Total		72	102	125	299

- 5.4 Despite high complaint figures not necessarily being indicative of poor provision, in Quarter Three 85% of tenant complaints were either upheld (62%) or partly upheld (23%), this is the highest level since performance monitoring began.

Table 5 Summary of outcomes of those complaints closed in month

Count of Quarter	Column Labels 						Q3 25/26 Total	Grand Total	
	⊕ Q1 25/26		⊕ Q2 25/26		⊖ Q3 25/26				
			⊕ October		⊕ November ⊕ December				
Row Labels 									
⊖ Housing - Tenant		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	
⊕ Not Pursued / Investigated		8.82%	9.90%	6.67%	4.44%	6.45%	5.79%	7.93%	
⊕ Not Upheld		27.94%	8.91%	13.33%	11.11%	0.00%	9.09%	13.45%	
⊕ Partly Upheld		16.18%	19.80%	22.22%	31.11%	12.90%	23.14%	20.34%	
⊕ Upheld		47.06%	61.39%	57.78%	53.33%	80.65%	61.98%	58.28%	
Grand Total		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	

- 5.5 During 2024/25 the service were actively monitoring the increase in complaints received and increasing our communications with tenants and staff around the complaints process. This, alongside our improved complaint handling process resulted in an increased number of complaints and an increase in complaints being upheld. It was speculated that a peak had been reached and that a fall in complaints numbers in Quarter One saw levels coming back down however, as complaint numbers have risen again and, noticeably so in Harrogate particularly, we continue to see the result of increased pressure on the repairs service.
- 5.6 Regarding our complaint handling performance and compliance with response timescales. Performance during Quarter One averaged at 85% of complaints responded to within timescale, performance in Quarter Two this dropped to 61% (Table 6) and performance in Quarter 3 has dropped further to 58%.

Table 6 Summary of Stage One complaints closed in month within policy timescales

Service Area	Housing - Tenant									
Type	(All)									
Status	Closed									
Count of Sent Ontime	Column Labels									Grand Total
	2025	Q1		Q2		Q3				
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Row Labels										
N	12.50%	17.86%	15.79%	42.86%	15.00%	48.72%	43.24%	39.02%	42.50%	34.70%
Y	87.50%	82.14%	84.21%	57.14%	85.00%	51.28%	56.76%	60.98%	57.50%	65.30%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

- 5.7 In order to address this drop in performance additional resource has been secured, an additional Complaint Officer will be appointed, dedicated to Landlord Services and our approach to complaint handling will be refined to adopt a 'phone first' approach, improving tenant communication and resolution outcomes.
- 5.8 In terms of Stage Two complaints received in Quarter Three, 13 new complaints were received for landlord services. 85% (11) of these Stage Two complaints were assigned to Housing Standards. This is equivalent to 10.4% of Stage One complaints resulting in a Stage Two complaint, reduced from 15% in Quarter One, demonstrating the effective complaint handling by the Housing Team as tenants feel satisfied with a resolution to their complaint. The low proportion of tenants requiring follow up investigation is indicative of the Housing Service's ability to respond and resolve complaints to a satisfactory level and reflective of most of the complaints being upheld.
- 5.9 A critical element of complaint handling is the process around learning from complaints and using that learning to inform service improvement. Throughout Quarter Three there have been numerous examples of the housing service learning from complaints received.

Right to Buy process – after receiving several complaints regarding Right to Buy applications, the back-office process was improved to ensure that critical factors in the calculation of cost floor / discounts are moved to the start of the process and communicated to applicants, ensuring that customer expectations regarding discount amount are managed much earlier on.

Post-Stock Condition Survey Communication – after receiving a number of complaints regarding repairs not being carried out post- stock condition survey, the process was improved to include written communication to tenants on completion of the stock condition survey which outlines the repair works to be completed and the priority it has been assigned.

Damp and Mould – complaints data shows that we are receiving fewer complaints about damp and mould. This provides us with some assurance that the improved damp and mould reporting mechanisms are working and that tenants are able to raise these service requests more easily, leading to less dissatisfaction.

Complaints Resource – as our improved monitoring of complaints handling embeds, we are able to identify increased demand for complaint handling in a timelier manner. Monthly reporting to the Extended Management Team has twice highlighted drops in policy compliance and has triggered a Deep Dive Review to the Housing Improvement Board, resulting in improved processes and approval for resource dedicated to housing complaints.

6.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 6.1 Having an effective complaints policy aligns to two key council priorities:
- Good quality, value for money services that are customer focused and accessible to all
 - People are free from harm and feel safe and protected.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Complaints which are not resolved to a satisfactory standard for the tenant can be progressed to the Housing Ombudsman. This can have financial implications for the Council the Ombudsman can direct compensation. It is within the Council's interest to action and resolve complaints quickly.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The implementation of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code has placed a legal requirement on all social housing providers to have an accessible and comprehensive complaints policy. As part of this, providers of social housing must be able to evidence effective complaints handling.
- 8.2 Our responsibilities as a Local Authority housing provider means we are also bound to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman which covers all housing provision other than social housing.
- 8.3 Failure to comply with this legal obligation leads to maladministration claims.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Currently, our complaints procedure does not and is not developed to collect equalities data. Therefore, we cannot comment on any correlations between our complaints and tenant characteristics. This is a key area of improvement our system needs to be able to collect more extensive data about our tenants.

- 9.2 A new corporate complaints system has been developed which will collect equalities data, this is planned to be launched Quarter Three 2025/26.

10.0 PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Performance implications in terms of volume of complaints received and responses given compliant with policy timescales are detailed within the body of the report.
- 10.2 Complaint handling performance continues to be reported to the Extended Management Board on a monthly basis and to Housing Improvement Board by exception.
- 10.3 The introduction of a new corporate complaint handling system and implementation of the reporting module should improve our ability to report on performance, learning from complaints and any resulting actions.

11.0 TENANT VOICE

- 11.1 The North Yorkshire Council Tenant Scrutiny Panel has recently concluded its first scrutiny review; it's chosen topic being Complaints Handling. The panel have analysed the complaints policy, complaints performance data and examples of complaint responses as well as carrying out their own independent research into sector standards and good practice.
- 11.2 The findings and recommendations of the tenants' work will be brought forward for the attention of this committee to assist this committee in their task seeking assurance that the complaints policy is working effectively.
- 11.3 In response to the Panel's findings, several improvements have already been made; the complaints policy has been reviewed in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and the complaint's resource is being increased. Further progress in implementing tenant recommendations will be reported back to the Scrutiny Panel quarterly.

12.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 11.1 Since the introduction of an improved complaints policy in response to the revised Housing Ombudsman Code, our complaints handling approach has improved. We now have more assurance that complaints regarding our landlord services are reaching the right officers and are being more accurately tracked.
- 11.2 In terms of our landlord services, the number of complaints and the percentage of complaints being upheld has increased again in Quarter Three. The distribution of complaints received continues the previous trend, with an increased number of complaints per 1000 homes in Harrogate and a lesser amount in Richmondshire.
- 11.3 The continued low percentage (10.4%) of complaints that progress onto Stage Two (see para 5.8) can be viewed two ways; either a low number progress to Stage Two due to the effectiveness of our complaints handling, or a low number progress as tenants feel unable / unsupported to progress complaints to Stage Two after completing the Stage One process – this could be linked to the length of time taken to resolve complaints. It is only by surveying tenants once their complaint has been closed that we would start to get any feedback on this.
- 11.4 When comparing data across quarters, our performance in terms of volumes and compliance with response timescales fell to the lowest since reporting began. However, interventions have been made which will hopefully see performance increase.

12.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 As part of our commitment to being a tenant focused landlord, it is good practice to report on our complaints data to help build a better picture of commonly reported complaints to establish patterns within the data to target service improvement. It is important to provide the Tenant Forum and the Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee with regular updates regarding this data and our complaints handling procedures to help guide this work.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 13.1 To consider the contents of the report and comment on the progress made along with the issues raised in this report and the interventions being made.

Nic Harne
Corporate Director – Community Development
County Hall
Northallerton

19 February 2026

Author & Presenter of Report – Vicky Young, Service Improvement Manager

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

[Social Housing \(Regulation\) Act 2023](#)

[North Yorkshire Council Housing Complaints Policy](#)

APPENDICES: None

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

North Yorkshire Council

Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3 March 2026

Housing Improvement Monitoring Q3 2025/26

Report of the Corporate Director Community Development

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the progress made in delivering the Housing Improvement Strategy and the Improvement Plan.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report provides an update on the progress made in delivering the Housing Improvement Strategy and Improvement Plan. It outlines the key areas of work and outputs achieved within the Third Quarter of 2025/26 through extracts from the Housing Improvement Plan. It also brings together the Landlord Services Tier One Performance Supplement – Quarter Three (Appendix A), the Regulatory Compliance Risk Assessment extracted from the Corporate Risk Register (Appendix B) and the Tenant Satisfaction Measures Quarter Three report (Appendix C)

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In response to the C3 Regulatory Judgement issued by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) to North Yorkshire Council in September 2024 a Housing Improvement Strategy and Improvement Plan were developed to support the Council on its journey towards compliance.
- 3.2 The Housing Improvement Strategy sets out the longer-term roadmap for developing Landlord Services at North Yorkshire Council. It serves as the overarching document and as our commitment to tenants, leaseholders and other stakeholders such as the Regulator for Social Housing on what we intend to deliver and what outcomes should be expected.
- 3.3 The Improvement plan provides the broad strategic framework for change and is split into 7 separate workstreams that focus on:
- Governance and Oversight
 - Understanding Stock Quality
 - Keeping Homes Safe and Compliant
 - Understanding Tenants and Responding to Diverse Needs
 - Effective Repairs and Maintenance
 - Working with other to ensure safe neighbourhoods.
 - Allocating homes fairly and Managing Tenancies
- 3.6 A Performance Framework has also been developed to sit alongside the Strategy. The performance framework is designed to build assurance in the data that underpins the key performance indicators and support the business on its journey towards compliance. It is for use by services that deliver the Housing Revenue Account services (Housing Standards and Housing Management primarily); however, will also apply to those services providing support to these teams, namely Complaints, Strategy and Performance, Technology and Customer Services when dealing with housing related issues.

4.0 HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGY UPDATES

4.1 Governance and Oversight (Table 1)

- 4.1.1 The fundamentals of governance for the Improvement Plan have been put in place with the Board established, Terms of Reference agreed and membership confirmed. Further to that the Housing Improvement Plan was agreed by Executive on 15th April and the Housing Improvement Strategy agreed by Executive Member for Culture, Arts and Housing on 9th July, both following consultation with involved tenants and discussion with the RSH.
- 4.1.2 A performance framework has been developed and was agreed in tandem with the Housing Improvement Strategy in July 2025. It is recognised that although Tier One performance monitoring and reporting is now in place, there is further work required to fully deliver the performance framework.
- 4.1.3 The Tier Two Dashboard KPIs, which are more operational figures, need to be fully developed and assurance provided before reporting can begin. Further work is also required on new measures to be introduced monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of new/ harmonised policies, helping us to ensure that the changes we are making are having the intended outcomes. Therefore Action 1.2 has been re-profiled to include delivery of these items.
- 4.1.4 Action 1.4 has progressed well since the recruitment of a Housing Policy and Strategy Officer in March 2025. In all, the following high priority policies have been harmonised and agreed following consultation:
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
 - Good Neighbourhood Management Policy
 - Tenancy Policy
 - Tenant Involvement Strategy
 - Tenancy Agreement
 - Repairs Standard
 - Disrepair Policy
 - Compensation Policy
 - Lettable Standard
 - Right to Buy Policy
 - Asset Management Strategy
 - Void Reduction Strategy
- 4.1.5 The policies have been harmonised following the newly agreed policy development principles involving consultation principles which help to ensure that tenant voice is heard throughout policy development. The following policies are currently in review and expected to conclude within Quarter 4, a summary of these policy reviews is appended at Appendix D;
- Rent Policy
 - Leaseholder Policy
 - Shared Ownership Policy
 - Mutual Exchange Policy
 - Learning and Development Strategy
- 4.1.6 The ambition of the HRA Policy Harmonisation Framework was to have all high priority policies harmonised by April 2026, save for the Service Charges Policy, which requires a more in-depth review. However, the Grounds Maintenance Policy Review will roll into Quarter One 2026/27 given the complexity of the work involved and the need for tenant consultation on proposed policy revisions.
- 4.1.7 Overall this theme remains broadly on track with clear expectations and outcomes on the remaining open actions.

Table 1

Code	Action	Target date	Status	Revised Target
1.1	Establish a Housing Improvement Board to oversee improvements set out in the "C3" Regulatory Judgment Published September 2024, to deliver the expected outcomes of the RSH consumer standards, accountable to the CMT, Scrutiny Committee and the Executive	Feb-25	Complete	
1.2	Develop and implement comprehensive Performance Reporting framework including suite of KPIs, reporting frequency, targets/dates for improvement and governance pathway.	Mar-27	On Track	
1.3	Develop Housing Data Governance Manual and associated action plan to ensure sustained data quality across key datasets	Mar-27	On Track	
1.4	Develop schedule to harmonise policies in all areas of the consumer standards and approve policies in line with schedule	Mar-27	On Track	
1.5	Develop and implement the learning and development strategy to meet requirements of the Competence and Conduct Standard and briefing plan for regulatory response	Jul-25	On Track	Apr-26

4.2 Understanding Stock Quality (Table 2)

- 4.2.1 Actions within this theme of the plan have continued to receive focus in Quarter Three. The cornerstone of our understanding of stock quality is the completion of our stock condition survey programme (Action 2.1). The target of the programme is to have completed detailed HHSRS Stock Condition Surveys (SCS) on 50% of our housing stock by March 2026 and 100% (c.8500 dependent on stock movement) by September 2026.
- 4.2.2 At the end of Quarter Three the service were able to report that 4527 (53%) on site surveys had been completed, meaning that the 50% target had been achieved ahead of schedule.
- 4.2.3 However, whilst progress on site surveys has progressed a growing back-office admin burden has arisen due to the manual interventions required to translate stock condition surveys into work orders and undertake the required assessments and communications with tenants post-survey
- 4.2.4 In December, in house surveyor resource was redirected from completing proactive stock condition surveys to addressing the admin backlog, this successfully brought the number of surveys inputted to 1839, with a target to achieve 3500 by March 2026.
- 4.2.5 The SCS data will also be used to inform the Stock Investment Plan (Action 2.2) which is scheduled for January 2027.
- 4.2.6 The Asset Management Strategy (Action 2.3) was agreed on 16th December 2025, this outlines the position on surveying, validation and compliance and sets out the priorities for Asset Management between now and 2027.
- 4.2.7 Underpinning each of these actions and critical to the understanding of our stock quality is the implementation of a new asset management system, a single system for the management of all stock data, compliance information and for the management of repairs and maintenance. Phase One (internal repairs) of the project went live on 31st March 2025 and Phase Two (external repairs, voids, customer launch) went live, ahead of schedule, on 9th June 2025.

4.2.8 A development plan for the further development and integration of Planon as our full asset management solution has been developed. This includes:

- Configuring Planon to receive stock condition and health and safety compliance data and associated reporting, including Decent Homes reporting.
- Developing Planon to deal with Planned Preventative Maintenance scheduling
- integrating the Planon system with the corporate finance system
- Automating customer communications directly from the system in respect of repairs and maintenance scheduling and appointments.

Table 2

Code	Action	Target date	Status	Revised Target
2.1	Carry out stock condition surveys across entire housing stock: 50% March 2026 100% September 2026	Sep-26	On Track	
2.2	Stock investment plan developed from robust stock data	Jan-27	On Track	
2.3	Review / produce Asset Management Strategy including setting out policy positions on surveying, validation and compliance and receive assurance on associated procedures	Sep-25	Complete	Dec 25
2.4	Deliver staff training on SCS and HHSRS process	Sep-25	Complete	
2.5	Implement new asset management system	Jan-27	On Track	

4.2.9 Overall this theme remains broadly on track however it is recognised that most of the actions have long target completion dates and therefore increased short term monitoring is required. The Housing Improvement Board receive detailed monthly updates on the Stock Condition Survey Programme.

4.3 Keeping Homes Safe and Compliant (Table 3)

4.3.1 Progress on this theme has been significant however it should be noted that the scale of the data challenges that the service continues to face had led to several of the actions being re-profiled, once initial work to understand the scope of the challenges had been undertaken.

4.3.2 In terms of establishing a baseline position on safety and compliance with regulatory requirements, Operational Guidance and Management Plans (Action 3.1) have been drafted for the 'Big 7' Health and Safety areas (Electrical, Gas, Fire, Asbestos, Lift Safety, Legionella and Damp and Mould). The documents have been circulated to relevant staff and are being used to inform development of the Tier 2 Performance Dashboard which will provide management information to enable better oversight of health and safety compliance.

4.3.3 Electrical safety inspection compliance is one of those areas where our data gap has been more pronounced. The storage, retrieval and extraction of data from electrical inspection certificates (EICR) undertaken by legacy authorities were all problematic meaning that the service were unable to report on compliance in this area with assurance in respect of inspections prior to 2023.

4.3.4 In Quarter Three legislative change meant that Electrical Safety Standards now apply to social housing (Amendment Regulations 2025). The change dictates that all new tenancies

must be compliant from November 2025 and existing tenancies by May 2026. This requirement for all new tenancies is being met, as per our Lettable standard, all void properties have a new EICR and all remedial works completed prior to handover of keys to new tenants.

- 4.3.5 However, regarding existing tenancies, our work programme to achieve 100% coverage was profiled to run to March 2027. Reprofiled this to complete 3759 non-compliant properties and those that expire in 7 months (May 2026) increased the monthly target by 337 to 537.
- 4.3.6 Work to achieve this target began in Quarter Three, with contractors onboarded and 600 work orders raised in December 2025. Contractors report confidence that the work package can be completed by 30th April 2026.
- 4.3.7 Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) is an area where the initial action to address the backlog and outstanding assessments (Action 3.4) is now complete however ongoing monitoring of performance is a priority as the team seek to address all remedial actions and pursue an ongoing programme of assessments and reassessments. FRA performance in Quarter Three stood at 100% for testing and saw a reduction in outstanding remedial actions.
- 4.3.8 Completion of Water Hygiene (Legionella) assessments (Action 3.5) is another action which was re-profiled in Quarter One. This was due to recognition of capacity constraints within the in-house trade teams once the scale of the outstanding assessments was fully understood. As a result, our external contractor was engaged to carry out the remedial works. However, despite assurance from the contractor, they failed to meet the agreed revised target of 30 Sep 2025.
- 4.3.9 As a result, a new contractor was appointed and at the end of Quarter Three had been able to achieve 13 of the 14 assessments required. The Service has since been able to report that all required assessments have been completed.
- 4.3.10 Action 3.6 regarding outstanding Asbestos inspections and remediation was also rescheduled in May 2025. Appointment of a single contractor for all asbestos works brought the programme into focus and therefore Housing Improvement Board took the decision to extend the delivery date for this action to November 2025. At the end of Quarter Three the service were able to report that the action has completed with all asbestos management surveys, removals and annual inspections in place for complex site and blocks of flats with communal spaces.

Table 3

Code	Action	Target date	Status	Revised Target
3.1	Big 7 management plans compiled and implemented	May-25	Complete	Aug-25
3.2	Data Review to confirm accuracy of compliance data complemented by SCS	Jun-25	Complete	Dec-25
3.3	Electrical safety inspections - complete programme to ensure all properties have an EICR within 5 years and report on progress with remediation works in KPIs	Mar-27	On Track	May 26
3.4	Fire risk assessments - complete all outstanding assessments (and reassessments) and report on progress with remediation works in KPIs	Jul-25	Complete	
3.5	Water Hygiene - Complete all outstanding assessments, record evidence of assessments and report on progress with remediation works in KPIs	Jul-25	Overdue	Sep-25

3.6	Asbestos - Identify and complete outstanding assessments and report on progress with remediation works in KPIs	Jul-25	Complete	Nov-25
3.8	Training matrix and plan compiled and scheduled for landlord compliance framework	Mar-25	Complete	

4.3.11 After the re-profiling activity this theme remains on track for the majority of actions to be complete by May 2026. Ensuring that these activities transfer from action plan to business as usual and that these processes are embedded in service delivery is critical to the success of the Improvement Plan.

4.3.12 Delivery of the safety and compliance elements of the Improvement Plan are referenced in the Corporate Risk Register (Appendix B).

4.4 Understanding Tenants and Responding to Diverse Needs (Table 4)

4.4.1 Initial progress on this theme was accelerated as actions where progress was within the gift of the service and where statutory requirements were progressed at pace and items such as complaints self-assessment (Action 4.5), annual reporting (4.4, 4.6) and complaints handling process management (4.7) have been incorporated into business as usual activity. Whilst further work is required to ensure that these improvements have been embedded and continue to be compliant these actions were completed.

4.4.2 A key component in our understanding of tenants is the engagement activity we undertake. In Quarter Three delivery of the Tenant Engagement Strategy was progressed, through support provided to the newly established Tenant Voice Forum and Tenant Scrutiny Panel. The Scrutiny Panel concluded its first in depth scrutiny review, presenting findings to the Housing Improvement Board in November 2026.

4.4.3 Where actions remain open in this theme (Actions 4.1, 4.2) there is a slightly longer target date of April 2026, further support and resources are required from colleagues in Corporate Services and from external consultants.

4.4.4 In terms of understanding current tenant data and holding up to date information on those within our households (Action 4.1), a tenant census exercise commenced in December 2025, the purpose being to survey the household composition and protected characteristics of our tenanted homes. The survey is being undertaken by Acuity and is expected to conclude in March 2026.

4.4.5 The information collected in the census exercise will be used to further our understanding of tenants, their needs and how we might shape our services in response (Action 4.2).

4.4.6 Further information regarding fairness and equity of service outcomes will come from the implementation of a new corporate complaints handling system, the new system is now partially rolled out and benefits of the new system and processes should soon be seen.

Table 4

Code	Action	Target date	Status	Revised Target
4.1	Complete project to understand current data and collect consistent information on tenants and keep up to date	Apr-26	On Track	
4.2	Demonstrate understanding of tenants needs and fairness and equity of service outcomes (reporting by protected characteristics, tenure, location etc)	Apr-26	At Risk of Delay	

4.3	Establish new framework for tenant engagement, including scrutiny opportunities and develop the tenant involvement strategy and how it will be evaluated	Apr-25	Complete	
4.4	Produce annual complaints performance and service improvement report	Jun-25	Complete	
4.5	Address actions arising from self-assessment with Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code	Sep-24	Complete	
4.6	Establish systemic process for learning from complaints handling (will feed through to annual complaints report)	Jun-25	Complete	
4.7	Deliver staff training in complaints handling	Apr-25	Complete	

4.4.7 Progress against Action 4.2 has switched to at risk of delay, which is concerning as completion will push the service much further towards being able to demonstrate compliance with the Diverse Needs outcome within the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.

4.4.8 In Quarter Three progress was made on the project to harmonise the tenancy management systems, reducing from the three legacy systems to one incorporating ASB, Domestic Violence and tenancy case management. Integration of that new system with the complaints system and corporate CRM is the desired position, alongside exploration of other potential integrations council wide, to ensure an enhanced understanding of our customers, their diverse needs and equity of outcomes.

4.5 **Effective Repairs and Maintenance (Table 5)**

4.5.1 The Effective Repairs and Maintenance Theme is one in which the identified actions were completed relatively early in the improvement planning process. The review of current contracts (Action 5.1) was completed in April 2025 and a forward plan agreed with Procurement to ensure future contract reviews are programmed in.

4.5.2 The other action within this theme to develop a revised adaptations policy (Action 5.2) was completed with adoption of the Housing Assistance and Disabled Facilities Grant Policy by Executive in September 2024.

4.5.3 However, other work in this area, which was not included in the plan, has progressed in Quarter 3;

- Implementation of the harmonised Repairs Standard and Lettable Standard.
- Convergence to a single Repairs and Maintenance System.
- Online form developed for tenants to report repairs at their convenience.
- Tenant web pages updated.
- Management reports defined and planned into Planon development plan.
- HRA Business Plan development

4.5.4 It should be highlighted that, as a result of the Stock Condition Survey programme, there has been increased pressure on the Repairs Service. As the number of surveys becoming 'admin complete' increased the repair forecast is becoming clearer, and steps are being taken to increase contractor capacity to divert all Priority 4 and Planned repairs to Contractors until repair volume stabilise. In-house trade teams along with specialist contractors will continue to respond to Priority 1- Priority 3 urgent and emergency repairs within SLA.

Table 5

Code	Action	Target date	Status	Revised Target
5.1	Review current contracts and procurement to ensure effective long term planning and identify efficiencies	Apr-25	Complete	
5.2	Develop revised adaptations policy and procedure	Sep-24	Complete	

4.5.5 Although this theme is marked as complete Housing Improvement Board have taken the decision to retain oversight of this area in recognition that there is further work to develop in this area which will be included in the next iteration of the Improvement Plan.

4.6 Working with Others to Ensure Safe Neighbourhoods. (Table 6)

4.6.1 This theme had seen some early movement with adoption of the Domestic Abuse Policy (Action 6.4) and the Anti-social Behaviour Policy (landlord services) (Action 6.3). Adoption of the latter was also supported by the introduction of new case management software in Quarter One.

Table 6

Code	Action	Target date	Status	Revised Target
6.1	Create register of all HRA communal land.	Sep-26	Not started	
6.3	Develop ASB policy capturing reporting mechanisms and timescales for investigation	Apr-25	Complete	
6.4	Develop policy and associated training on domestic abuse	Sep-24	Complete	

4.6.2 The remaining open action in this theme (Action 6.1) has a longer term target achievement date. However, some initial scoping work has taken place to ascertain what is required to achieve completion and any corporate resources required.

4.7 Allocating Homes Fairly and Managing Tenancies (Table 7)

4.7.1 The final theme in the Housing Improvement Plan includes several large system and policy projects surrounding our allocation and management of tenancies.

4.7.2 Quarter One saw the adoption and implementation of the NYC Tenancy Strategy and the NYC Tenancy Policy, both foundational documents upon which further policy development can stem from. The NYC Tenancy Agreement is one such document, this was subject to review in Quarter Three and has subsequently been revised and agreed in January 2026.

4.7.3 Quarter One also saw the implementation of the harmonised Allocations Policy and move to a single system for Choice Based Letting, this involved the onboarding of all applications from the former Harrogate Borough Council lettings areas and convergence of back-office processes across the Housing Allocations Team. This was a huge achievement for the team and has been embedded in Quarter Three.

4.7.4 Action 7.3 'Gain assurance on compliance with the Rent Standard' was marked as complete in December 2025 with a final report and recommendations due in January 2026. Any remedial work arising from this will be reported to the Housing Improvement Board.

Table 7

Code	Action	Target date	Status	Revised Target
7.1	Develop tenancy strategy and policy including tenancy sustainment and eviction process and reporting	Apr-25	Complete	
7.2	Review service charges to ensure clear policy, consistent charges, management in a fair and transparent manner and effective communication to tenants	Mar-26	At risk of delay	
7.3	Gain assurance on compliance with the rent standard	May-25	Complete	Nov-25
7.4	Review leaseholder policy and processes to provide consistency across the county, including shared ownership and resident consultation	Jun-26	On Track	

4.7.5 The remaining open actions within this theme are the Review of Service Charges (Action 7.2) and the Review of Leaseholder Policy (Action 7.4)

4.7.6 The Review of Service Charges is currently scheduled for completion in March 2026. Work to scope this project has begun and there is recognition that it is a complex piece of work with need for detailed financial, equality and customer considerations alongside significant consultation requirements. It is likely that this action will be rescheduled once the scoping is complete.

4.7.7 Action 7.4, the Review of Leaseholder Policy is included within the HRA Policy Framework and is currently on track to be completed by June 2026.

4.8 Housing Improvement Strategy

4.8.1 The Housing Improvement Strategy (2025-30) was agreed by the Executive Member for Culture Arts and Housing on 9th July 2025. The Strategy sets out the key strategic objectives for the council's improvement journey:

- a) Ensure the problems identified in the regulatory judgement are addressed as well as the underlying causes and learning is captured in revised governance, policies and reporting.
- b) Our culture reflects a high performing organisation and continuous improvement.
- c) Work is prioritised appropriately, and risks are well managed
- d) Systems and Data are effective to support service delivery, reporting and oversight.
- e) All properties have an up-to-date stock condition survey.
- f) The repairs service delivers repairs in line with targets set
- g) Homes are safe and compliant meeting all Landlord requirements evidenced by robust and well-maintained data
- h) Complaints are well managed, and processes meet the expectations of the Housing Ombudsman complaints handling code and consumer standards.
- i) Resident views are heard and acted upon.
- j) A communication approach which delivers clear, consistent and timely communications with tenants, leaseholders and other stakeholders.

4.8.2 The Improvement Strategy also sets out the staged approach to improvement:

Stage One: Stabilisation, planning and high priority actions started (May 2024 – June 2025)

Stage Two: Adjustment and track record of delivering against plan (June 2025 – March 2027)

Stage Three: Embedding and assurance that actions have been effective, longer term actions completing. (March 2027 – June 2028)

Stage Four: Continuous Improvement (June 2028 onwards)

- 4.8.3 Quarter Three saw the strategy move further into Stage Two and completion of more of the actions initially identified as high priority. The key outcomes for Stage Two are to build up a track record of delivering against the planned actions and to make any adjustments necessary.
- 4.8.4 Further work is required to build a strategy monitoring tool, ensuring that the service can, on an ongoing basis be held to account on delivery of the Improvement Strategy and its embeddedness.
- 4.8.5 A key tool for assessing delivery of the strategy is the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) report. North Yorkshire Council assess tenant satisfaction on a quarterly basis via a telephone survey. The Quarter Three report is attached at Appendix C. The report shows that overall satisfaction with housing services provided by North Yorkshire Council saw an increase in Q3 2025/26, after a fall in Q2, the overall satisfaction is back at its highest recorded satisfaction as first seen in Q1. This is very encouraging, and the analysis of the comments about the overall service is generally positive about the Council. Five measures have satisfaction above 75%: Well maintained home, Safe home, Satisfaction with Repairs in the last 12 months, Kept Informed and Treated Fairly and with Respect. Two measures were below 60% satisfaction, 36% are satisfied with the handling of complaints. (up from 33% in Q1) and 56% satisfaction with the approach to anti-social behaviour. Further work to analyse the TSM data is being undertaken to further understand trends and underlying causes of dissatisfaction.
- 4.8.6 During Quarter Three, at the request of the Housing Improvement Board, Savill's were asked to conduct a Consumer Standards Review. The purpose of the review was to assess the Council's compliance position against all of the Consumer Standards and our progress made to date in addressing the areas of non-compliance noted in the Regulatory Judgement. The review found that North Yorkshire Council has made significant progress since becoming a new unitary council and integrating three legacy housing services and that the service now has solid foundations, including restructuring, team development, and early operational improvements. The review also highlighted several areas for improvement and makes key recommendations to the Council to ensure grading recovery is achieved.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 Work to deliver the agreed actions within the Improvement Plan continues into Quarter Four. Key deliverables will be the further development of the asset management system to hold key compliance data and critically the information required to demonstrate compliance with the Decent Homes Standard. Further systems review will be undertaken aiming to deliver a single tenancy management solution, whilst work to harmonise tenancy policies progresses in consultation with tenants and Elected Members.
- 5.2 Throughout the next quarter the findings of the Consumer Standards Review need to be acted upon. The Housing Improvement Board will meet on 26th February 2026 to discuss the recommendations and a response to them. Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be updated on these discussions verbally.

6.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 6.1 The Housing Improvement Strategy directly supports North Yorkshire Council's strategic ambition to deliver "good quality, affordable and sustainable housing that meets the needs of our communities," as outlined in the Council Plan 2025–2029 and the Housing Strategy 2024–2029. By establishing a clear roadmap for improvement and vision for continuous review of the service post compliance this contributes to the Council's vision of being an

“exemplar social landlord” and aligns with the Housing Strategy’s key themes of “Our People, Our Places, and Our Homes.”

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Council has demonstrated its commitment to achieving compliance with the Consumer Standards and approved a new HRA Investment Plan in February 2024 that made sufficient financial provision to ensure compliance going forward. Activity identified to meet our regulatory requirements is considered in the HRA Budget setting process and reviewed on a regular basis.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The new Consumer Standards for providers of Social Housing came into effect on 1 April 2024. The council, as a Registered Provider, is compelled to comply with the standards and to deliver against the objectives and be subject to inspection by the Regulator at their request.
- 8.2 The Regulator has set out its ‘co-regulatory approach’ whereby registered providers are encouraged to be open and honest about failings against the expected standards and work with the RSH on improvement plans.
- 8.3 Transparency and reporting around our progress on delivering those actions set out in our Improvement Plan and on the delivery of the Housing Improvement Strategy are critical to that compliance.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Equality Impact Assessments undertaken led to the conclusion that the impact of the Housing Improvement Plan and Housing Improvement Strategy will be positive. The key drivers of the strategy are to improve the services provided to tenants and leaseholders and to promote equity and accessibility in service delivery.

10.0 PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The service performance information is detailed in the body of this report and Appendix A.
- 10.2 The service, supported by the Strategy and Performance Team has made more improvements in the quality and timeliness of performance reporting during Quarter 3. Whilst there are still improvements to be made, including the introduction of a Tier 2 Performance Dashboard, the information now available to report and use in management of our stock and tenancies is hugely valuable.
- 10.3 Performance will continue to be monitored monthly by the Extended Management Team and reported to Housing Improvement Board on a monthly basis and Tenants and Elected Members on a quarterly basis.
- 10.4 Performance information is also shared with the Regulator of Social Housing on a monthly basis.

11.0 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are risk management implications which are registered on the corporate risk register and detailed throughout the body of the report.
- 11.2 There are financial risks associated with non-compliance with the Consumer Standards including the ability of the RSH to issue unlimited fines and to enforce stock transfer.

- 11.3 Non-compliance with the Consumer Standards puts the health and safety of our tenants and our properties at risk.

12.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 12.1 This report provides an update on the progress made in delivering the Housing Improvement Strategy and Improvement Plan in Quarter Three 2025/26.
- 12.2 The report details notable progress in areas of the programme, particularly in system implementation and in policy and operational process development.
- 12.3 The report also details where actions have been rescheduled and what the next steps will be in review and delivery of the programme.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 13.1 That the Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the progress made on delivery of the actions detailed within this report, alongside the supplementary information provided in the appendices.
- 13.2 That any areas for concern or where further information is required are highlighted.

Nic Harne
Corporate Director – Community Development
County Hall
Northallerton

17 February 2026

Report Author – Vicky Young, Service Improvement Manager
Presenter of Report – Andrew Rowe – Assistant Director (Housing)

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: [Social Housing \(Regulation\) Act 2023](#)

APPENDICES:

Appendix A - Landlord Services Tier One Performance Dashboard Quarter 3
Appendix B - Extract from Corporate Risk Register
Appendix C – Tenant Satisfaction Measures – Quarter 3
Appendix D – HRA Policy Review update

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

Housing Landlord Services Performance Supplement

Quarter 3 2025-26

Report produced by Strategy and Performance

Introduction

Over the last year performance has been showing steady improvements and in particular the last two quarters across most metrics are showing improved stability and consistency; so whilst the noted improvements in performance over this quarter may be slightly muted in comparison to previous increases, it reflects a much improved confidence in the reporting of the data, the analysis of the information and ultimately the insight gathered to inform service improvements; for example in the case of gas certificates, variance in reported performance over the last six months is less than 1% (0.94%) whilst the preceding 6 months (January to June 2025) this variance was 4.05%. This confidence in the quality of data and reduction in variance is apparent across the whole service; with stability witnessed across Electrical Installation Condition Reports across high-risk sites showing 100% compliance and fire risk assessment compliance returning to 100%.

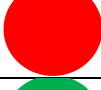
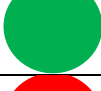
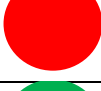
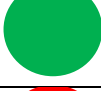
Alongside the ongoing reviews of performance at the Extended Housing Managers Meeting and Housing Improvement Board, the service has commissioned Savills to undertake a review of compliance with the Regulatory Standards to assess direction of travel, and establish what gaps exist or have emerged since the previous review of the service. This has proven to be a useful point of triangulation highlighting the positive progress made in many areas but also reiterating the need for accessible, good quality data from which service improvements can be identified.

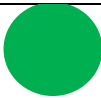
Following a recommendation to increase the scope of this report to cover all aspects of the Tier 1 dashboard as opposed to providing snapshots, the summary will take the following format:

- ***Compliance (including damp and mould)***
- ***Repairs and Maintenance (including voids)***
- ***Tenancy management and complaints***

Compliance

Compliance Dashboard

Indicator	October	November	December	TSM Benchmark (2024/25)	Data Assurance
% of properties with valid Gas Safety certificate	99.87%	99.62%	99.67%	100%	
% of properties with valid smoke alarms / detectors	99.81%	99.66%	99.71%	N/A	
% of properties with valid carbon monoxide alarms / detectors	99.78%	99.62%	99.68%	N/A	
% of domestic properties with EICR certificate up to 5 years old	49.17%	48.59%	47.93%	N/A	
% of communal assets with EICR certificate up to 5 years old	100%	100%	100%	N/A	
% of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out	94.50%	96.20%	100%	100%	
% of homes for which all legionella risk assessments have been completed	81.36%	89.78%	98.88%	100%	
% of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or reinspection's have been carried out	100%	100%		100%	

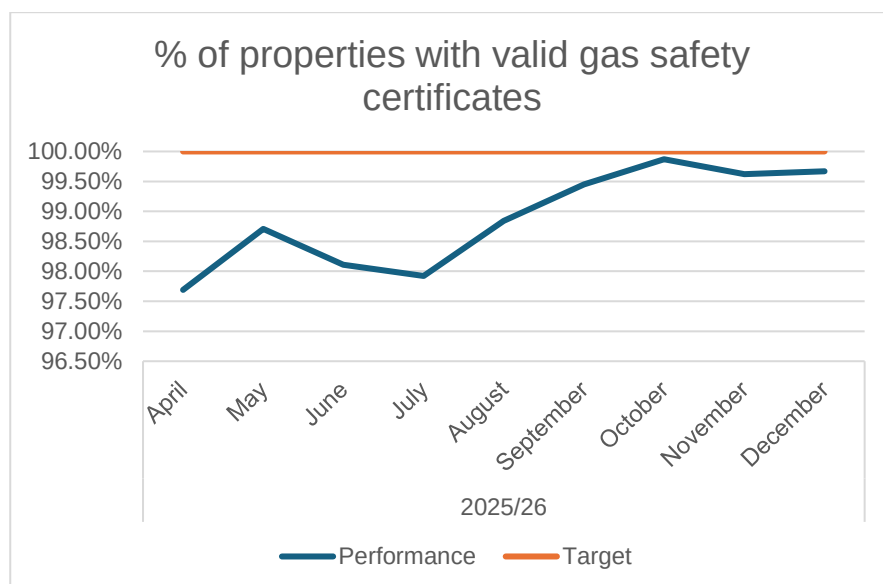
% of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out	62.50%	100%	100%	100%	
Damp & mould investigations (% completed within 10 working days)		91%	24%	-	
Damp and mould letters % sent within three working days		100%	0%	-	
Damp and mould repairs (% begun within 5 working days)		100%	25%	-	

Compliance performance

Compliance is now looking healthy and the main compliance elements as reported back to the Regulator are comparable with the sector returns of 2024/25. The reporting of fire risk assessments at 100% is in line with the sector performance and gas, legionella and asbestos compliance are showing improvements each month that would suggest if these levels were maintained NYC would be very close to achieving the 100% status at the year end.

It is also worth stating that the service is continuing to improve its data assurance. In the case of services delivered to complex sites, assurance is green (such as legionella / passenger lifts); whilst data drawn from spreadsheets or informed by the legacy systems does have a degree of complexity to reconcile confidently are still showing as red. The work done by SureServe in respect of gas servicing (and alarms and CO detectors) is amber. The service is due to celebrate its anniversary in early 2026 at which point every property will have been inspected in relation to these items and this should be sufficient to move the assurance to green subject to final checks on the data.

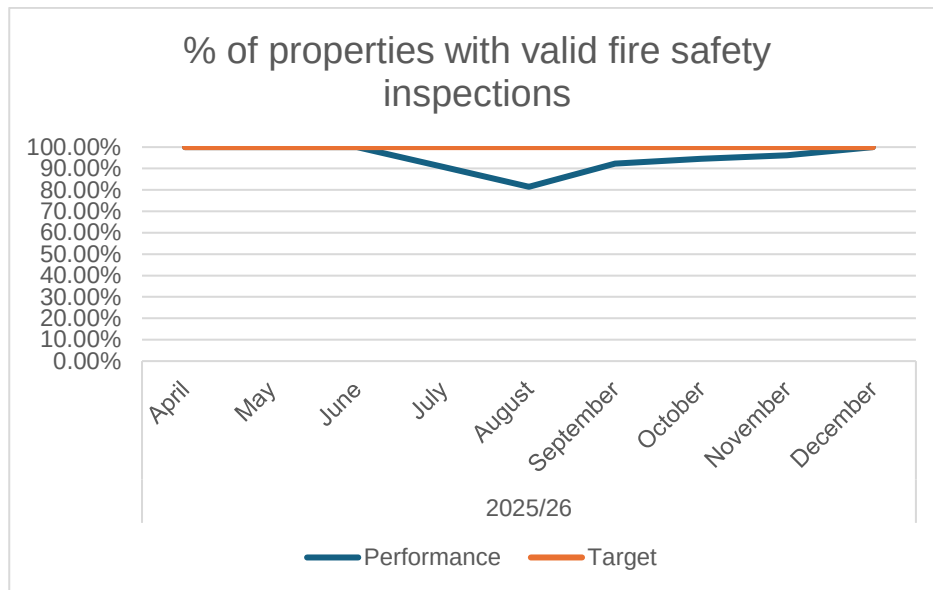
Gas Safety



Compliance with gas safety has shown sustained improvement over the year with Q3 performance showing a degree of stability. Reporting is now much more consistent with a clear understanding of the profile of out-of-date inspections. As of the end of December the longest overdue inspection was from July. The total outstanding inspection profile is;

- 0-1 month: 14 outstanding
- 1-3 months: 10 outstanding
- 3+ months: 4 outstanding

Fire Risk

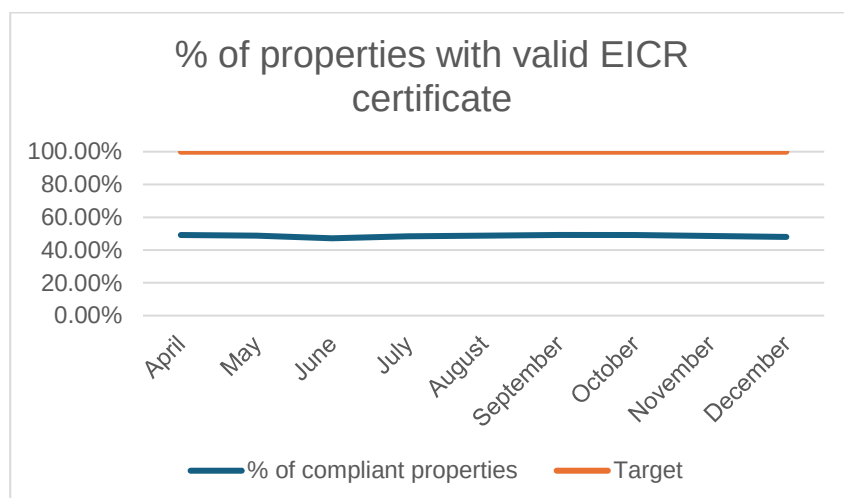


Completion of fire safety inspections is also positive with compliance back to 100% following a few months where inspections had stalled following changes to the team and the loss of an assessor. In terms of remedial actions there was significant progress to November however this has stalled over December; this is largely linked to access issues.

	July	August	September	October	November	December
Outstanding fire risk assessment remedials: High Risk (over 1month target)	296	232	225	133	149	149
Months 2-3	31	22	17	7	39	23
Months 4-6	37	26	28	10	1	17
6 Months +	228	184	180	116	109	109
Total Outstanding fire risk assessment remedials: Medium Risk (Over 3 month target)	136	105	114	54	54	69
Months 4-5	10	6	12	0	0	15
Months 6-9	30	26	23	1	1	1
9 Months +	94	73	79	53	53	53

Electrical Installation Condition Reports

Compliance with EICR's is largely static; whilst this is not yet a Tenant Satisfaction Measures requirement, reporting is essential as it will become mandatory in November 2026.



The static nature of this indicator suggests the service is maintaining a stable output that just about covers the number of expired certificates that occur each month. The service is about to appoint a new contractor to increase capacity of testing and that should drive improvements to performance over the next few months. In terms of the complex sites, performance has remained at 100% for all communal assets throughout the year. These sites do pose a significant risk, and it should be recognised that the service continues to prioritise the safety of its most vulnerable customers.

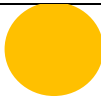
Damp and Mould

A new regulatory requirement was introduced in response to Awaab's Law in the reporting and tackling of damp and mould at the end of October 2025.; for ease Octobers return was merged with the data for November, hence just two data points exist so far (November and December). Initial performance in relation to these items was positive with 100% of letters sent and repairs started in target delivered across November. Since then some issues around communication have emerged whereby data was not transferring effectively between two teams and this resulted in a failure of all letters being sent in December, and due to the intrusive nature of the work and the reluctance of customers to have the work started ahead of Christmas it has meant that the % of repairs started within 5 days plummeted to 26%. This highlights a likely seasonal issue the service will need to be aware of in future. It is expected that the issues identified in this instance will be resolved for the reporting required for January.

Repairs and Maintenance

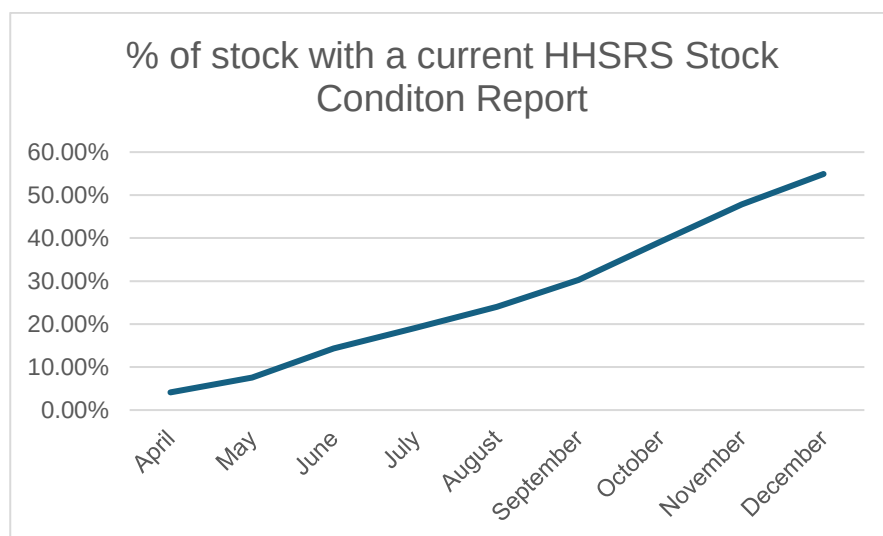
Repairs and maintenance dashboard

Indicator	October	November	December	TSM Benchmark (2024/25)	Data Assurance
% of homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard	-	-	-	-	
Number of stock condition surveys carried out	743	723	588	-	
% of stock with a current HHSRS Stock Condition Survey (cumulative)	39.16%	47.84%	54.91%	-	

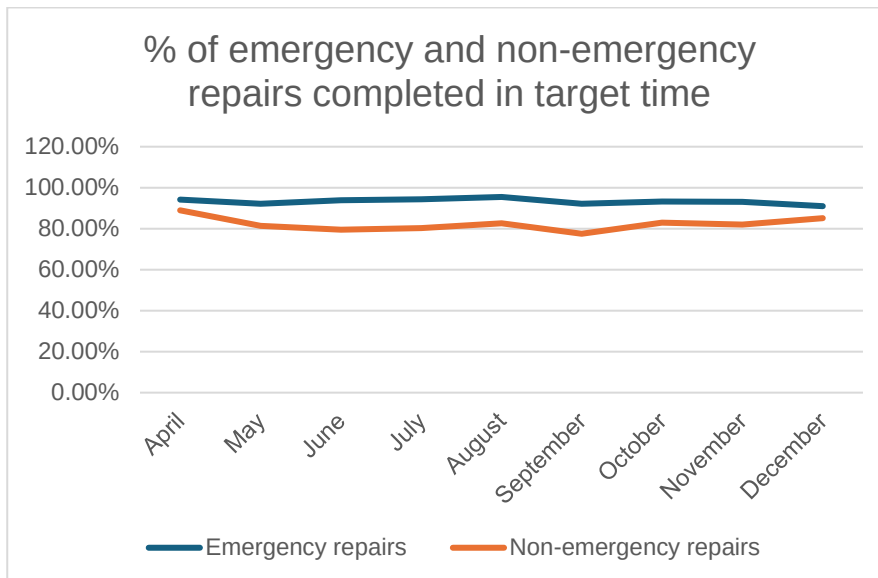
Proportion of non-emergency repairs completed in target timescale	82.99%	81.93%	85.07%	89.10% (upper) 74.80% (lower)	
Proportion of emergency repairs completed in target timescale	93.30%	93.13%	90.98%	98.90% (upper) 89.10% (lower)	
Disrepair claims – open cases	78	80	85	-	
Average time in days taken to relet	266	300	575	-	

Decent Homes

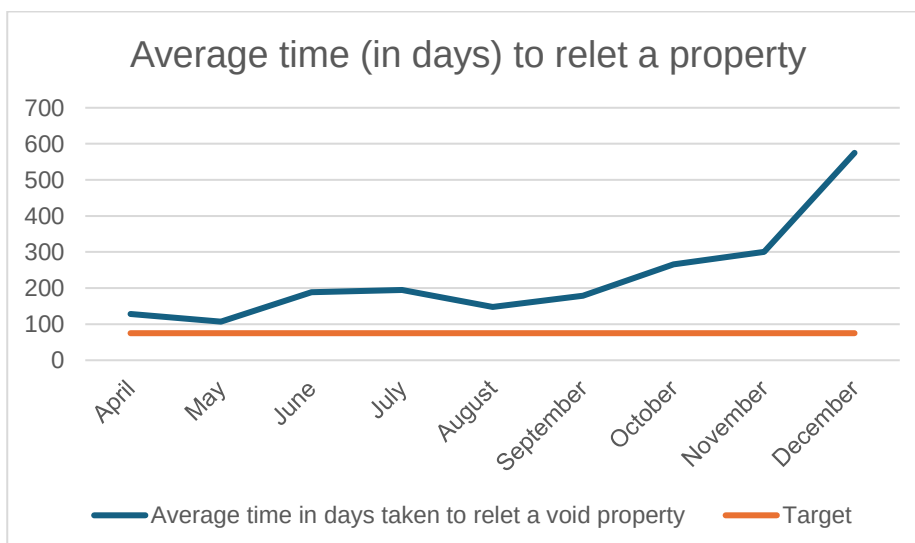
Fundamental to the reporting of Decent Homes is a well informed and robust stock condition survey. Over the last year the service has been actively improving its capacity and quality of its stock condition surveys as well as undertaking a significant review of the ability of systems to store and report on stock decency. Despite still not being able to report the actual number of properties that meet the Decent Homes Standard the number of surveys completed is increasing and the service has taken steps to improve the speed of processing of surveys to start being able to report decency. Over the next month a clear methodology will be created for the calculation of the Decent Homes figure that can be easily explained and details the assumptions made of the data.



As a side note the increase in the number of completed surveys does lead to an increase in the works needed at each property. Following previous underinvestment, it is clear that the stock is in need of improvement and in many cases, repairs have not been reported by customers. This is leading to an increase in a backlog of repairs orders which the service is assessing and identifying appropriate remedial actions to solve.



Completions of emergency and non-emergency repairs has proven to be relatively stable. Repairs are now being logged via the Planon system and this is improving both the accuracy of the performance reporting and also insight available from the system; for example its becoming clearer that through the increase in repairs logged from the stock condition surveys a sizeable amount are lower priority, (28 day target, P4 repairs). From the period April-November, the service was completing an average of 1,923 orders per month. Improved reporting is also helping with the identification of issues related to 'no access'; in December, 31 jobs failed for this reason; in addition, a further 21 jobs failed to hit target due to issues around a lack of materials, whilst three repairs fell outside of target as the main work following a temporary fix couldn't be completed due to the inclement weather.



The average time to relet a property remains on the surface massively over target and increasing; however, the data itself needs to be considered to understand the performance. In December the fastest relet was 133 days and this would be comparable with the early year performance; however, the data is significantly skewed by supported housing properties being brought back in to use that had been vacant for a considerable time; the worst of these were three properties that have been void since 2021, in one case a total of 1,715 days empty. It is recognised that these issues are not likely to be permanent and nor do they reflect specific issues within the service. In improving the void standard and quality of property let to customers alongside the added survey work and where needed energy efficiency measures, the void time is accepted as likely to be over target; however, this approach will likely prove beneficial to customers immediately and to the authority over the longer term.

Housing Management and Complaints

Housing management dashboard

Indicator	October	November	December	Data Assurance
TSM - No. of ASB cases opened (per 1,000 homes) (NM01)	0.72	0.12	0.48	
TSM – No. of ASB cases that involve hate incidents opened (per 1,000 properties) (NM01)	0	0	0	
TSM - No. of new stage 1 complaints received in month per 1,000 properties. (CH01)	5.16	5.40	3.60	
TSM - No. of new stage 2 complaints received in month per 1,000 properties (CH01)	0.48	0.24	0.60	
TSM - % of stage 1 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales (%) (CH01)	58.33%	58.54%	58.33%	
(TSM) - % of stage 2 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales (%) (CH01)	66.67%	75.00%	50.00%	
TSM – Overall satisfaction with the service provided by North Yorkshire Council (Quarterly) (TP01)	-	-	77%	
True current tenant arrears at the end of the month (%)	0.81%	0.91%	0.51%	

Across the housing management indicators, performance is less variable and more robust in general due to the ability to better understand the data and insight available (it requires less manual manipulation and in the case of ASB, complaints and arrears can be extracted easily from the systems). The amber RAG rating for assurance is born from a degree of manual intervention that is needed and, as yet these processes are not fully automated or are still extracted from multiple platforms.

In the case of complaints, the change to a new system will improve the visibility and accessibility of the complaint information, triaging to the relevant person much easier; this has not yet happened however is in development and this should drive noticeable improvements to the % of stage one and stage two complaints completed in target time.

Customer satisfaction remains positive and based on last year's TSM results, a score of 77% would place North Yorkshire Council in the second quartile. This is a fantastic result given the challenges the service has faced (and overcome) over the last 12 months and places the authority in a strong position going into the final quarter. This result also highlights that despite the systems challenges, the front-line service provided by housing officers and repairs contractors in particular as the main points of contact for customers is excellent and should be acknowledged accordingly.

Conclusion

The overriding position for the service remains positive. There are identified challenges such as voids and a growing backlog of repairs (which will be addressed in future reports); however, these are noted and expected given the decisions made by the service which clearly prioritise the needs and requirements of customers. Over the last year the authority has made significant progress in understanding its data and improving the accuracy of its reporting. This is now starting to improve

the insight available and the potential to do more meaningful service improvements based on better understanding of trends, the limitations of the data and the requirements of the Housing improvement Plan. Over the next quarter further work will be done with regard to the development of Planon and creating accurate reporting from the system; alongside formulating a robust methodology to tackle the issue of how to accurately report the Decent Homes figure both in line with the requirements of the TSM but also to help inform wider asset management strategies and plans.

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North Yorkshire Council

Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3 March 2026

Draft Shared Ownership Policy

Report of the Corporate Director Community Development

1.0	PURPOSE OF REPORT
1.1	To present the Draft Shared Ownership Policy to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review and comment prior to its finalisation and presentation to the Executive Member.
2.0	SUMMARY
2.1	This report presents the draft Shared Ownership Policy (see Appendix A) for members to review and comment on prior to finalisation. The policy aims to introduce a consistent and transparent framework for North Yorkshire Councils management of its shared ownership homes.
2.2	The draft policy clarifies how the Council will manage key areas including repairs and maintenance responsibilities, service charges, staircasing, resale processes and lease compliance, whilst ensuring the individual shared ownership lease remains the primary legal determinant of obligations. Significant variation between historic lease types means the policy sets out high-level principles rather than detailed operational rules to avoid conflicting with contractual or statutory requirements, reflecting legal advice received during development.
2.3	The policy is still under development and requires further refinement to align fully with the emerging Leasehold Policy, with which it shares substantial overlap. This staged approach reflects legal advice that both policies must be coordinated to prevent duplication or conflicting interpretation. Engagement with shared owners is planned through a tenant focus group to test clarity, identify lived-experience issues and inform the final version prior to formal approval.
2.4	Members are invited to review the draft policy and provide feedback on its approach, clarity and remaining areas of development before it progresses to tenant consultation and subsequent consideration by the Executive Member for approval.
3.0	BACKGROUND
3.1	North Yorkshire Council manages a portfolio of shared ownership properties inherited from the former district and borough councils. However, none of the legacy authorities had a formal, consolidated shared ownership policy in place. Instead, homes were historically managed under differing policies and practices, with a wide range of lease types in place. This inconsistency has created challenges for staff and resulted in variable experiences for shared owners.
3.2	The development of a single Shared Ownership Policy is required to bring coherence and consistency across the new authority. The policy forms part of a wider consolidation of housing policies following Local Government Reform, ensuring that shared owners receive

clear information about their rights, responsibilities, and the services provided by the Council. The draft policy also clarifies that the Council's obligations are limited strictly to those set out within the individual lease and any relevant title covenants.

3.3 During policy development, several areas were explored where greater clarity and consistency would be beneficial for shared owners. However, these aspects remain under review and cannot yet be finalised within the policy. Initial legal advice has confirmed that both Section 106 requirements and buy- back arrangements are subject to significant constraints, but further work is needed to determine how they should be reflected in the final document. In particular:

- Local connection flexibility at resale: Explored to address challenges some shared owners experience in selling their homes. While early consideration was given to whether any flexibility could be applied where Section 106 requirements are limiting a resale, initial legal advice indicates that these obligations are set through planning agreements and cannot be altered through policy. Further work is therefore underway to establish whether any scope exists to support shared owners within the limits of these legal constraints and to determine how this should be reflected in the final policy.
- Buy-back criteria: Considered to provide clarity where shared owners struggle to sell. Early legal review highlighted that legacy leases vary significantly, and some may include mandatory buy- back provisions. As a result, setting prescriptive criteria could risk conflicting with these lease terms. Further legal and operational assessment is required to determine an approach that is both compliant and workable before this section can be finalised.

3.4 The draft presented to Members is therefore currently a working document, setting out the overarching approach while further aligning with the Leasehold Policy and continuing to review areas such as Section 106 requirements and buy-backs to determine how they should be finalised within the policy and any supporting procedures.

4.0 REGULATOR OF SOCIAL HOUSING CONSUMER STANDARDS

4.1 The Regulator of Social Housing sets consumer standards that local authorities must meet in delivering landlord services. The adoption of this Shared Ownership Policy supports compliance with these standards by ensuring transparency, fairness and consistency in how shared ownership homes are managed across North Yorkshire.

4.2 This policy directly supports the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard by providing shared owners with clear, accessible information about their rights and responsibilities, including repair responsibilities, staircasing, resales, alterations and lease compliance. It also sets out how shared owners can seek advice, raise concerns and engage with the Council, helping strengthen accountability and resident influence.

4.3 The policy also contributes to the Safety and Quality Standard by clarifying responsibilities for building safety, communal areas and statutory compliance, and by ensuring that shared owners and officers have a consistent understanding of who is responsible for which elements of repairs and maintenance. The policy makes clear that safety responsibilities apply only to areas owned or managed by the Council, not to individual dwellings where responsibilities fall entirely to the shared owner under the lease.

4.4 Failure to implement a unified Shared Ownership Policy could expose the Council to governance risks, inconsistent decision-making, unclear obligations for residents, and potential regulatory scrutiny. By adopting this policy, the Council demonstrates its commitment to meeting the Regulator's Consumer Standards, ensuring shared owners

receive a fair and consistent service, and strengthening the Council's overall systems of control, assurance and accountability.

5.0 SHARED OWNERSHIP POLICY

- 5.1 The Shared Ownership Policy establishes the Council's approach to managing shared ownership homes, setting clear expectations for both the Council and shared owners. It clarifies how key processes, such as repairs, staircasing, resales, lease variations, and service charges are managed, ensuring consistency and fairness. The policy also outlines the Council's approach to communication, engagement and complaints handling for shared owners, helping to ensure transparency and accessibility of information.
- 5.2 The policy sets out the high-level split of responsibilities between the Council and shared owners. Due to the wide variation in legacy leases across the former councils, the policy emphasises that the individual lease takes precedence. This approach ensures that the policy remains legally compliant without attempting to impose a uniform standard where contractual terms differ. The policy therefore sets out consistent principles, while recognising that operational differences will necessarily arise in cases where lease terms differ, and the Council must comply with those contractual requirements.
- 5.3 The policy further clarifies the position on repairs during defects and warranty periods, setting out that where issues fall within a developer's defects liability period, building warranty scheme or manufacturer guarantee, these routes must be followed before approaching the Council. This provides shared owners with clear expectations about how repairs should be managed during the early years of a new-build property.
- 5.4 While resales form a core part of shared ownership, the ability to sell can be restricted by Section 106 Agreements, which may impose local connection or eligibility criteria. Initial legal advice indicates that these requirements are derived from planning obligations and cannot be altered or overridden through policy. However, further work is underway to consider how these restrictions should be presented within the final policy, including whether any practical support or procedural flexibility can be offered to shared owners who experience difficulties selling because of Section 106 conditions. The policy will be updated once this review is complete to ensure it accurately reflects both the legal framework and the Council's final approach.
- 5.5 The Council occasionally receives requests from shared owners to buy back their property where a resale proves difficult. While early drafts of the policy considered setting out clear criteria for such decisions, initial legal review identified that legacy leases vary significantly and that some may include mandatory buy- back provisions. As a result, prescribing a fixed approach within the policy could risk conflicting with existing contractual obligations and limiting the Council's flexibility to respond to individual circumstances. Further legal and operational work is therefore underway to determine how buy- back arrangements should be addressed in a way that is both compliant and practical. At this stage, the draft policy includes only high- level principles, with the final approach to be confirmed once this review has been completed.
- 5.6 Legal Services have advised that the Shared Ownership Policy should ultimately be aligned with the emerging Leasehold Policy, as both apply lease-based management frameworks and share substantial content. The draft will continue to be amended to maintain consistency, remove duplication, and ensure that shared-ownership-specific provisions are layered appropriately onto the wider leasehold framework.
- 5.7 Given this ongoing alignment work, the Shared Ownership Policy is presented as a draft. Member input is sought to help shape the final version prior to tenant consultation and

subsequent approval. Members will also be offered the opportunity to review the completed final draft before it progresses through the formal decision-making process.

6.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

- 6.1 Internal consultation has taken place during the development of the draft Shared Ownership Policy, involving legal services and housing teams. This has included detailed review of the implications of legacy lease variations, confirmation of the limits of the Council's legal responsibilities, and advice on the interaction between the policy and Section 106 planning obligations.
- 6.2 A tenant focus group is currently being planned with shared owners to gather direct feedback, test the clarity and usability of the policy and to identify any practical concerns for those with lived experience of shared ownership. Feedback will be analysed and incorporated into the final draft before the policy is presented for approval. This engagement will also support a smoother implementation process and strengthen transparency and trust with residents.

7.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 7.1 The Shared Ownership Policy contributes directly to several of North Yorkshire Council's strategic priorities by establishing a consistent, transparent and fair framework for the management of shared ownership homes across the county.
- 7.2 By setting out high-level principles for the management of shared ownership properties, and by ensuring alignment with lease obligations and regulatory requirements, the policy supports the Council's aim of delivering safe, well-managed and affordable homes. Clarity around repairs, building safety responsibilities and staircasing improves the security and sustainability of shared ownership arrangements.
- 7.3 The policy promotes consistent service delivery across North Yorkshire, replacing a patchwork of inherited approaches with a single corporate standard. This supports the Council's commitment to efficient and effective services, reduces the risk of inconsistent decision-making, and ensures compliance with lease terms, planning requirements (including Section 106 Agreements), and the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards.

8.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 One option was to retain the various shared ownership practices inherited from the former district and borough councils. This option was discounted as it would perpetuate inconsistencies in service delivery, create unequal experiences for residents depending on location, and increase operational complexity for staff managing different processes and standards across the county. A single unified policy offers clearer guidance, improved consistency and supports fair treatment of all shared owners.
- 8.2 An option to include a structured set of criteria for discretionary buy-backs was explored to provide greater clarity for officers and shared owners. Initial legal advice highlighted that legacy leases vary significantly, and some may include mandatory buy-back clauses, meaning that a prescriptive policy could risk conflicting with existing contractual obligations. Further work is therefore underway to consider whether, and to what extent, a structured approach could be developed in a way that remains legally compliant and sufficiently flexible to respond to individual cases.
- 8.3 Given the level of overlap between leasehold and shared ownership management, one option was to finalise both policies concurrently. Legal Services advised against this, as

parallel drafting risks unintended inconsistencies or duplication. The recommended approach is to finalise the Leasehold Policy first, then ensure the Shared Ownership Policy aligns with it. The draft being considered by Members reflects this staged approach.

9.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS

- 9.1 The implementation of the Shared Ownership Policy will support more consistent working practices across a range of Council services, including Housing Management and Legal Services. The policy's emphasis on alignment with lease terms, statutory compliance and improved clarity for shared owners is expected to streamline casework and reduce time spent resolving enquiries arising from legacy inconsistencies.

10.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Shared Ownership Policy itself does not introduce new financial burdens, it provides a clearer and more consistent framework for managing shared ownership homes across North Yorkshire. The policy helps reduce financial risk by clarifying responsibilities, minimising ambiguity created by legacy arrangements, and setting out high-level principles for areas such as repairs, staircasing, resale processes and building safety obligations. Any costs associated with administering shared ownership responsibilities will continue to be managed in accordance with existing budgets and the terms of individual leases.
- 10.2 The policy does not introduce new financial commitments for the Council beyond those already established through existing statutory and contractual duties. This includes statutory processes such as Section 20 consultation for major works, which the Council must undertake where required, but which do not create additional financial liabilities for the authority beyond existing legal duties, any resulting costs are recoverable from shared owners in accordance with their lease.

11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The Shared Ownership Policy has been developed with initial input from Legal Services to ensure that it reflects the statutory, regulatory and contractual framework governing shared ownership. As individual leases remain the primary legal documents defining the rights and responsibilities of both the shared owner and the Council, the policy is drafted to avoid creating any obligations that could conflict with those terms. Further legal review will continue as the policy is refined.
- 11.2 A key legal consideration is the variation in lease types across the former district and borough councils. These include differing clauses relating to repairs, staircasing, resale processes, nomination rights, service arrangements, and in some cases, mandatory buy-back provisions. Initial legal advice has highlighted the need for caution, and further detailed work is required to determine how buy-back arrangements should be addressed in a way that is both legally compliant and operationally workable. Final procedures will be developed once this review is complete.
- 11.3 The policy must also operate within the legal framework established by Section 106 Agreements, which may apply eligibility or local connection restrictions to shared ownership homes. Initial legal advice indicates that these requirements cannot be altered or relaxed through policy. Further legal and procedural review is underway to determine how best to present these obligations in the final policy and whether any practical support can be offered to shared owners affected by them.

- 11.4 Legal implications also arise from the Council's responsibilities under housing, landlord and building safety legislation, including the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, the Building Safety Act 2022, and relevant fire and building regulations. The policy ensures that the Council meets these obligations in relation to communal areas, building safety compliance, consultation duties, and, where applicable, statutory processes relating to major works and administration charges. The policy safeguards the Council by clarifying that shared owners' and the Council's responsibilities are governed by lease terms and statute rather than discretionary practice.
- 11.5 As discussed, regulatory compliance is another legal consideration. The Regulator of Social Housing requires local authorities to demonstrate fairness, transparency and accountability in the delivery of leasehold-related services. Failure to operate within a clear and legally compliant framework could expose the Council to regulatory scrutiny, increased complaints, legal challenge, or inconsistent decision-making. Adoption of the policy helps mitigate these risks by establishing consistent principles and strengthening internal governance.
- 11.6 Legal Services have advised that the Shared Ownership Policy should ultimately align with the emerging Leasehold Policy, given the shared legal framework underpinning both. Work will continue to ensure the two documents are consistent, avoid duplication and do not conflict. The Shared Ownership Policy may require further refinement once this wider policy alignment is complete.

12.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The Shared Ownership Policy seeks to provide a consistent and transparent approach that ensures shared owners are treated fairly and equitably across North Yorkshire. The policy clarifies rights and responsibilities and seeks to remove inconsistencies arising from previous district-level approaches. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed (see Appendix B). The assessment identified no negative impacts on protected groups.

13.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The policy does not directly introduce new climate-related responsibilities, however, effective management of repairs, major works and building safety may indirectly support energy efficiency improvements and reduce environmental impacts.
- 13.2 Where major works or planned maintenance are undertaken, the Council will continue to consider opportunities to improve energy performance in line with wider corporate climate objectives. Shared owners remain responsible for improvements within their own homes unless otherwise set out in their lease.
- 13.3 A Climate Change Impact Assessment (CCIA) screening form has been completed (see Appendix C). The assessment identified no adverse climate-related impacts. The policy does not introduce new duties or activities that would increase carbon emissions or environmental risk.

14.0 PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 The policy supports improved performance by establishing clearer expectations for both shared owners and officers. Consistency in repairs responsibilities, service charge administration, staircasing, and resale processes will support better case management and reduce service variation.

- 14.2 Performance will be monitored through the Housing Revenue Account Performance Framework once the policy is in place.

15.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 This Shared Ownership Policy forms part of the wider post-Local Government Reform policy consolidation programme. It aligns with, and ultimately will be consistent with, the emerging Leasehold Policy and Rent Setting Policy.
- 15.2 It replaces multiple legacy approaches previously used by the former district and borough councils, establishing a single corporate standard.

16.0 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 16.1 Adopting the policy reduces risks associated with inconsistent decision-making, unclear responsibilities, and potential non-compliance with lease terms or statutory requirements. Without the policy, the Council may face greater volume of disputes and complaints from shared owners, increased legal challenge risk from misinterpretation of legacy leases, reputational risk due to inconsistent service delivery and regulatory scrutiny under the Social Housing consumer standards
- 16.2 The policy therefore provides a mitigation measure strengthening governance and assurance.

17.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 17.1 The draft Shared Ownership Policy provides a clear, consistent and legally compliant framework for the management of shared ownership homes across North Yorkshire. It addresses inconsistencies inherited through Local Government Reform, strengthens alignment with consumer standards and statutory requirements, and enhances transparency for shared owners. While the policy establishes an overarching approach, complete uniformity is not possible due to historic lease variations, and some differences in management will necessarily remain where individual leases impose different legal obligations.
- 17.2 Member feedback will support final refinements prior to tenant consultation and formal approval.

18.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 18.1 The Shared Ownership Policy is still under development and requires further refinement, before it can be finalised, including continued alignment with the emerging Leasehold Policy and the incorporation of feedback from shared owners. Several key areas, particularly those relating to Section 106 requirements, potential flexibility at resale, and the Council's approach to buy- back arrangements, are still being reviewed. Initial legal advice has informed the drafting to date, but further legal, operational and procedural assessment is required before these elements can be finalised in a clear and legally compliant way.
- 18.2 The recommendations therefore seek Member feedback at this stage to ensure that the final version of the policy is robust, transparent and consistent with statutory, planning and contractual obligations. Member input will support the final development of the policy before it progresses to tenant consultation and subsequent approval.

19.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

19.1 The Committee is asked to:

- (i) Review and comment on the draft Shared Ownership Policy at Appendix A.
- (ii) Note that the policy remains under development, including ongoing work to align with the Leasehold Policy, review unresolved areas such as Section 106 requirements and buy-back arrangements, and incorporate feedback from shared owners through the planned tenant focus group, prior to its presentation to the Executive Member for approval.

Nic Harne
Corporate Director – Community Development
County Hall
Northallerton

18 February 2026

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Draft Shared Ownership Policy
Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)
Appendix C – Climate Change Impact Assessment Screening Form (CCIA)

Report Author – Imogen Downie, Housing Policy and Strategy Officer (Service Improvement)
Presenter of Report – Imogen Downie, Housing Policy and Strategy Officer (Service Improvement)

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

DRAFT – North Yorkshire Council Landlord Services – Shared Ownership Policy

Version	Development Stage	Descriptions	Key Changes Implemented
1	Initial draft	Preliminary version of the policy document developed by the Service Improvement Team.	Baseline content created outlining the policy's purpose, scope and initial provisions.
2	Internal Consultation	Circulated for internal review, including legal and departmental stakeholders for feedback.	Expanded sections, clarified responsibilities, incorporated colleague comments.

1. Introduction

North Yorkshire Council provides and manages shared ownership homes through shared ownership leases. This Shared Ownership Policy sets out how the Council delivers services to shared owners, the standards they can expect, and the framework within which the Council fulfils its responsibilities as landlord and freeholder.

The Council is committed to managing shared ownership homes in a fair, transparent and consistent manner. Shared owners should have access to clear information about their rights and responsibilities, the services provided, service charges and rent, and how to engage with the Council regarding the management of their homes.

This policy operates alongside the individual terms of each shared ownership lease. It does not replace, override or amend lease conditions. Where any conflict arises between this policy, an individual lease, or relevant legislation, the lease and the law will always take precedence.

2. Policy Purpose and Scope**2.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear framework for the Council's statutory and contractual duties in managing shared ownership homes. It outlines how the Council:

- manages repairs and maintenance responsibilities
- administers rent and service charges
- supports staircasing (increasing ownership share)
- manages lease variations, assignments and resale processes
- communicates and engages effectively with shared owners

This policy supports consistent, transparent and fair decision-making, ensuring services are delivered in accordance with legislation, regulatory guidance, good practice, and the Council's wider housing objectives.

2.2 Scope

This policy applies to shared ownership properties where the resident holds a shared ownership lease with North Yorkshire Council. This includes all shared owners regardless of:

- the ownership percentage held
- whether the home was purchased new or as a resale
- whether ownership share has increased through staircasing

This policy does not apply to:

- leaseholders who purchased under Right to Buy
- homeowners who have staircased to 100% and now hold full ownership
- fully rented tenants
- residents in other low-cost home ownership products

- homes where the Council is not the freeholder
- shared ownership homes developed, sold or managed by Bracewell Homes Ltd, which is a separate housing company wholly owned by North Yorkshire Council. These homes operate under Bracewell Homes' own policies, procedures and lease terms, and are not covered by this Shared Ownership Policy

3. Policy Aims

The Shared Ownership Policy aims to:

- set out clearly how the Council manages and supports shared ownership homes
- define the rights, responsibilities and obligations of both the Council and shared owners
- ensure shared owners receive clear, timely and accurate information about rent, service charges, repairs, maintenance and all relevant processes
- promote transparency in the calculation, setting and communication of rent, service charges and associated fees
- ensure shared ownership services comply with statutory, regulatory and leasehold requirements
- provide a fair, proportionate and consistent approach to lease compliance, dispute resolution and managing breaches
- support positive relationships with shared owners through effective communication, engagement and service delivery

Through these aims, the Council seeks to meet its responsibilities as a landlord and freeholder, while enabling shared owners to maintain successful, secure and sustainable homes.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

North Yorkshire Council's management of shared ownership homes is governed by a combination of statutory requirements, regulatory requirements and standards, and the contractual terms contained within individual shared ownership leases. Where homes have been acquired using grant funding, there may also be funding conditions which the Council has to comply with. This policy has been developed to ensure that all services are delivered lawfully, transparently and in line with recognised good practice.

4.1 Legislation

The Council must comply with all relevant legislation that applies to shared ownership and leasehold housing. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Housing Acts 1985, 1988 and 1996
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and 1987
- Service Charges (Consultation Requirements) (England) Regulations 2003
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Housing and Regeneration Act 2008
- The Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002

The Council will comply with any subsequent legislation or statutory guidance relevant to shared ownership housing management.

4.2 Regulatory Framework

The Council follows the regulatory expectations set by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) consumer standards. These include:

- The Safety and Quality Standard - requiring landlords to provide safe, good-quality homes and meet all building safety and repairs obligations.
- The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard - requiring landlords to provide clear information, support residents to raise concerns and influence services, and operate an effective complaints process.
- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard - requiring landlords to work with partners to ensure residents live in safe, well-maintained neighbourhoods.
- The Tenancy Standard - including requirements for the fair and transparency setting and review of shared ownership rents.
- Model shared ownership leases - issued periodically by the RSH, who strongly recommend that they are used on the grant of a new shared ownership lease.

These standards form the regulatory backdrop for how the Council manages and supports shared ownership homes.

4.3 Funding Requirements

Where properties have been developed or acquired with Homes England funding, the Council must comply with:

- Capital Funding Guide
- The applicable Shared Ownership Model Lease
- Affordable Homes Programme and Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme grant conditions

The model leases set out standard clauses relating to rent, repairs, alterations, leaseholder covenants and resales which registered providers are encouraged to utilise when granting new shared ownership leases. They also set out “fundamental clauses” relating to alienation, mortgagee protection, staircasing, rent review, and pre-emption provisions. Leases granted based on the 2021-26 Model Lease also contain fundamental clauses relating to repairs during the first ten years of the lease term. Where grant funding has been obtained, amendments to these clauses are not permitted without the approval of Homes England.

4.4 Legal Framework

Each shared ownership home is governed by an individual lease, which grants the leaseholder a legal interest in the property. The lease sets out the rights and responsibilities of the shared owner, the Council's obligations as landlord, and other standard lease terms including rent, service charges, repairs, maintenance, alterations, staircasing and resales.

The Council's title to the Property may also govern the way in which the property is to be managed. For example, the freehold title held by the Council may be subject to covenants restricting the way in which the property can be used, or granting others' rights over the property, and in most cases the leasehold interest held by a shared owner would also be subject to those covenants or rights.

Where there is any inconsistency between this policy, a lease or other title document, or legislation, the terms of the lease or other title document and the applicable legislation will always take precedence.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The effective management of shared ownership homes relies on clear roles, responsibilities and expectations for the Council, shared owners and any external partners.

5.1 North Yorkshire Council

As a landlord and/or freeholder, the Council is responsible for:

- Compliance with legislation and regulatory standards that govern shared ownership housing.
- Fulfilling all obligations on the part of the landlord set out within the shared ownership lease

- Where the Council owns or has responsibility for neighbouring land or property which the shared owner has the benefit of using in connection with their lease, managing and maintaining such land or property in line with lease terms and statutory duties.
- Where the Council is responsible for doing so, administering rent, service charges and major work contributions, including issuing estimated, actuals and statutory consultation where required.
- Facilitating staircasing and resale and lease variation processes, ensuring these are delivered fairly, consistently and within published timescales.
- Responding to enquiries, concerns or complaints in line with corporate policies and regulatory requirements.
- Maintaining accurate records, including property data, financial information and correspondence.
- Working in partnership with shared owners, contractors and external agencies to deliver safe and well-managed homes and neighbourhoods.

5.2 Shared Owners

Shared owners are responsible for:

- Fulfilling all obligations on the part of the Tenant set out within the shared ownership lease, including but not limited to payment of rent, service charges and any applicable administration fees.
- Maintaining and repairing the property in accordance with the provisions of the shared ownership lease
- Where applicable, reporting communal repairs or building safety concerns promptly to the Council or managing agent.
- Arranging any necessary permissions for alterations or improvements, including landlord consent where applicable.
- Ensuring the home is used in accordance with lease conditions, including but not limited to restrictions on use, alienation, nuisance or unauthorised alterations.
- Obtaining and maintaining contents insurance and any additional cover required for improvements or alterations within their demised premises.
- Providing access for inspections, repairs or safety checks when required and with appropriate notice.
- Engaging constructively with the Council regarding service queries, arrears, or changes in household circumstances.

5.3 External Partners

The Council works with a range of external agencies, including:

- the Fire and Rescue Service
- Homes England
- the Regulator of Social Housing
- local authority teams (e.g. planning, environmental health, community safety)
- other landlords or housing providers where buildings are mixed-tenure

These bodies may contribute to building safety compliance, grant monitoring, neighbourhood management or the delivery of housing-related support.

6. Repairs and Maintenance Responsibilities

Repairs and maintenance responsibilities for shared ownership homes vary depending on the individual shared ownership lease, the age and construction of the property, and any applicable defects or warranty periods. Because leases differ significantly, including between historic versions, new-build homes and properties acquired through resale, the terms of the lease will always take precedence.

Shared owners should always refer to their own lease for definitive repairs responsibilities.

6.1 General Principles

Each shared ownership lease sets out the specific responsibilities of both the landlord (North Yorkshire Council) and the shared owner.

Responsibilities may differ depending on:

- the lease version used at the time the home was built or sold
- whether the property is a house or flat
- whether there are communal areas
- any developer defects period
- building warranties such as NHBC or equivalent

Where repairs are covered by a defects period, warranty, guarantee or building insurance, these routes must be used before approaching the Council.

6.2 Council Responsibilities

The Council is responsible for repair and maintenance obligations only where the lease states that the landlord holds responsibility. This may include some elements of the structure, exterior or communal areas for certain property types.

Where the Council is responsible, it will carry out repairs in accordance with the lease and relevant legislation. The Council will also meet any statutory building safety duties for communal areas or buildings it owns.

6.3 Shared Owner Responsibilities

Shared owners are responsible for all repairs and maintenance to the parts of the property included within their demised premises, as defined by the lease. This typically includes internal fixtures and fittings, but the exact scope varies between leases.

Shared owners must review their lease to understand their specific obligations.

6.4 Defects and Warranty Periods

For new-build homes, responsibilities during the initial years may sit with:

- the developer (during the defects liability period)
- warranty providers (e.g. NHBC, Premier Guarantee)
- manufacturers or installers (for appliances, boilers, windows, etc.)

These periods vary and are not governed by this policy. Shared owners must report issues through the correct route and retain all warranty information provided at purchase.

6.5 Access and Entry

Where required by the lease or legislation, shared owners must provide reasonable access for the Council, its contractors or statutory bodies to carry out essential works, inspections, safety checks or emergency repairs.

Failure to allow access when properly requested may constitute a breach of the lease.

6.6 Rechargeable Repairs

Where permitted by the lease, the Council may recharge the cost of repairs resulting from:

- damage caused deliberately or through negligence
- unauthorised alterations
- misuse of the property
- failure to carry out leaseholder responsibilities

Rechargeable repairs are administered in accordance with the lease terms and relevant legislation.

7. Rent and Service Charges

7.1 Rent

Shared owners pay rent on the unowned percentage share of the property. Rent is calculated and reviewed in accordance with the terms of the shared ownership lease and by the Council's Rent Setting Policy.

The Council will review rent annually in line with the formula set out in the lease and will provide written notice of any changes within the required timescales. Shared owners are responsible for paying rent in full and on time.

For detailed information on how rent levels are determined, please refer to the Council's Rent Setting Policy.

7.2 Service Charges

Shared owners may be required to pay service charges in accordance with the terms of their shared ownership lease. Service charges may be charged by the Council, for example where the Council is the freehold owner of an apartment building with responsibility for communal areas or owns neighbouring land which shared owners have the right to use under the terms of their shared ownership lease. Service charges may also be charged by third parties, for example housing developers or management companies where those companies are responsible for managing and maintaining communal land and property. Service charges are a contribution to the cost of the provision of services and repairs, maintenance and management of land and property.

7.2.1 Calculation and Apportionment of Charges

Service charges are calculated in accordance with:

- the individual shared ownership lease
- relevant legislation
- recognised good practice

Costs are apportioned between shared owners according to the method set out in the lease.

Where estimates are used for the annual service charge:

- these estimates will be reconciled against actual expenditure
- shared owners will receive balancing charges or credits in accordance with the lease
- Where service charges are charged by the Council, the Council will administer and recover service charges in line with relevant legislation, good practice and Homes England requirements.

Service charges charged by the Council will only be recovered where permitted under the lease and must be:

- reasonably incurred, and
- reflective of works or services provided to a reasonable standard.

Service charges are payable in addition to rent due under the shared ownership lease.

7.2.2 What Service Charges Cover

Service charges may include, but are not limited to, a proportion of:

- repairs, maintenance and renewal of the structure, exterior and communal areas
 - major works and cyclical maintenance programmes
 - buildings insurance arranged by the Council
 - communal utilities, services and facilities, such as lighting, lifts, door entry systems and shared grounds
 - estate or block management costs, including management and administration fees
 - any other services provided to the building or estate
- Not all shared owners receive all services. Service charges vary depending on:

- the type of property
- the services provided to the block or estate
- whether the home is a house or flat

7.2.3 Management and Administration Fees

Service charges may include reasonable management and administration fees, which may cover:

- staff time associated with managing shared ownership and communal services
- procurement and contract management
- consultation processes
- financial administration
- statutory obligations (e.g. fire safety compliance in communal areas)

Shared owners may request further information about how such fees have been calculated.

7.2.4 Information Provided to Shared Owners

The Council will provide shared owners with clear and timely information about service charges in accordance with the requirements of the individual shared ownership lease and statutory requirements, including:

- service charge demands
- an itemised breakdown of estimated or actual costs
- information about balancing charges or credits
- notices required under Section 20 (where major works are proposed and shared owners are liable for a contribution)

Shared owners have statutory rights to request further information, including:

- summaries of costs
- inspection of supporting accounts, receipts and documents (where applicable)

7.2.5 Payment of Service Charges

Service charges must be paid in accordance with the timescales set out in the lease and in line with the Council's payment terms.

The Council offers a range of payment methods. Shared owners experiencing financial difficulty are encouraged to contact the Council as early as possible to discuss payment options or potential arrangements.

Failure to pay service charges may result in action being taken against shared owners in accordance with the shared ownership lease and relevant legislation.

Charges relating to major works (Section 20 works) may be eligible for payment plans subject to assessment and agreement.

8. Major Works and Long-Term Agreements

Major works and long-term service agreements can result in significant costs to shared owners. These activities are governed by the lease, relevant legislation and statutory consultation requirements. The Council is committed to ensuring that all major works and long-term contracts are planned, procured and delivered in a transparent and lawful manner.

8.1 Major Works

Major works are substantial repairs, maintenance or improvement activities that affect the building or estate. These may include (but are not limited to):

- Roof renewal or major structural repairs
- External decoration or redecoration cycles
- Window replacement (where this is a landlord responsibility under the lease)
- Replacement of communal heating or electrical systems

- Major repairs to lifts, fire safety systems or shared mechanical/electrical services
- Full or partial refurbishment of communal areas

8.1.1 Charging for Major Works

Costs for major works are recovered from shared owners in line with the terms of their lease. Charges are usually variable and based on the actual cost of works, apportioned in accordance with the lease.

Where the lease provides for a reserve or sinking fund, contributions may be used to offset the cost of qualifying works in accordance with the terms of the lease.

8.2 Section 20 Consultation

Where required under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and associated regulations, the Council will carry out a formal Section 20 (S20) consultation process before undertaking major works or entering long-term agreements that will result in any shared owner being required to contribute more than £250 towards qualifying works or more than £100 in any 12-month period towards a qualifying long-term agreement.

The statutory process includes:

- Notice of Intention - advising shared owners of the proposed works, giving reasons and inviting written observations
- Consideration of Observations - reviewing and responding to any comments received
- Notice of Estimates - providing at least two estimates for the works, including one from an independent contractor
- Notice of Reasons - where required, explaining contractor selection decisions

Failure to carry out statutory consultation may limit the amount recoverable from shared owners, therefore the Council will ensure full compliance with S20 requirements.

8.3 Long Term Agreements

A long-term agreement is a contract for the provision of services lasting more than 12 months, such as:

- Communal cleaning
- Grounds maintenance
- Compliance and safety inspections
- Servicing and maintenance contracts for lifts, fire alarms or door entry systems
- Building safety management services

Where a long-term agreement will result in shared owners being charged more than the statutory threshold, the Council will undertake Section 20 consultation before entering the contract.

9. Improvements and Alterations

Shared owners may wish to make improvements or alterations to their home. All such works must comply with the terms of the lease.

9.1 Permission Requirements

Shared owners must obtain written consent from the Council before carrying out:

- Structural alterations
- Changes to plumbing, heating, gas or electrical systems
- Installation of replacement kitchens, bathrooms or heating systems
- Any work affecting load-bearing walls, the external fabric of the building or communal services
- Additions such as extensions, loft conversions, porches or conservatories

Consent may be subject to:

- Provision of plans or specifications
- Evidence of competent and accredited contractors
- Planning or building regulation approvals
- Payment of reasonable administration fees

9.2 Works Not Requiring Consent

Minor decorative works inside the property (e.g. painting, flooring, shelving) do not require permission but must not damage the building fabric or breach safety regulations.

9.3 Post-Completion Requirements

Upon completion of approved works, the Council may require:

- Completion certificates
- Electrical or gas safety certificates
- Guarantees or warranties for equipment or installations

9.4 Impact on Resale

Unauthorised alterations may delay or prevent resale, require reinstatement at the shared owner's cost or affect valuation for staircasing or resale.

9.5 Use of Property

The home must be occupied as the shared owner's main and principal residence in accordance with the lease. The property must not be used for business or commercial purposes. Shared owners must not store flammable materials, gas cylinders or other hazardous items that may invalidate building insurance or create a safety risk. Breach of these conditions may result in enforcement action.

9.6 Pets

Pets may be kept only in accordance with the terms of the individual shared ownership lease and any other applicable title covenants. Where restrictions or requirements are included in the lease or title documents, shared owners must comply with them.

10. Health and Safety Responsibilities

The Council and shared owners share responsibility for ensuring homes and buildings remain safe and compliant.

10.1 Council Responsibilities

The Council's health and safety responsibilities apply only to buildings or communal areas that North Yorkshire Council owns, as defined by the individual shared ownership lease and any relevant title documents. Where the Council owns the building or the relevant communal areas, its responsibilities include:

Completing and reviewing fire risk assessments for communal areas it owns and implementing required safety actions.

- Complying with duties under the Building Safety Act and associated regulations for buildings it owns.
- Carrying out statutory safety checks in communal areas it owns (e.g. fire systems, lifts, emergency lighting, electrical compliance, water hygiene).
- Managing asbestos safely in landlord-controlled areas owned by the Council.
- Taking appropriate action where safety defects or risks are identified within areas the Council owns.

These responsibilities apply only to buildings or communal areas owned by the Council and do not extend beyond that ownership.

10.2 Shared Owner Responsibilities

Shared owners are responsible for safety within their home, in accordance with the terms of their lease. This includes:

- Maintaining smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors inside the dwelling.
- Using gas, electrical, heating and other domestic installations safely, and ensuring that any works to these systems are carried out by appropriately qualified contractors.
- Not removing, altering or disabling fire doors, smoke detection equipment or other safety features installed to protect the home or building.
- Promptly reporting any safety concerns relating to the building structure, communal areas or fire safety.
- Ensuring that any improvements, alterations or DIY works do not compromise building safety.

11. Building Insurance

11.1 Council Responsibilities

Where the Council is the freeholder responsible for insuring the building, it will:

- Arrange appropriate buildings insurance covering the structure of the property
- Recover the cost of the premium (or an appropriate proportion thereof) from shared owners through service charges
- Provide details of cover upon request
- Manage insurance claims for structural damage following insured incidents

11.2 Shared Owner Responsibilities

Shared owners are responsible for:

- Taking out content's insurance
- Insuring any improvements or alterations not covered by the building policy
- Reporting any damage promptly to enable timely claims
- Paying any excess charges incurred because of the shared owner's actions or omissions

12. Staircasing

Staircasing is the process by which a shared owner may be able to purchase additional shares in their home, thereby increasing their ownership percentage. Some leases also contain the right to acquire a freehold interest in the property. The right to staircase (including whether the shared owner has the right to acquire the freehold), the minimum share purchase and any restrictions are set out in each individual lease.

12.1 Eligibility

Shared owners may staircase provided:

- the lease permits staircasing (some rural or protected areas may restrict staircasing)
- they do not already own the maximum percentage shared permitted by the lease
- rent and service charge accounts are up to date or arrangements are in place
- the property is their main residence, and they continue to comply with lease obligations

12.2 Valuation

Purchasing further shares requires:

- a valuation by an independent RICS-registered surveyor
- the valuation to be less than a set number of months old (as defined in the lease, commonly 3 months)
- the purchase price for the additional share to reflect the market value in the valuation

If the valuation expires before completion, a refreshed valuation will be required.

12.3 Minimum Shares

The lease will specify the minimum additional tranche that can be purchased (typically 5% or 10%). Under some leases incremental staircasing of 1% may be permitted in certain circumstances.

12.4 Process

The right to staircase and the legal requirements for purchasing additional shares are set out in the shared ownership lease. The Council administers the staircasing process in line with those requirements and any relevant legislation or funding conditions.

The general process is as follows:

- The shared owner notifies the Council of their intention to staircase and obtains an independent valuation in accordance with the lease.
- The Council confirms eligibility, and any checks required before proceeding.
- Legal representatives are instructed to prepare the necessary documentation, including the Memorandum of Staircasing.
- The shared owner arranges payment of the purchase price and any applicable fees.
- Completion takes place when funds are received and the Memorandum of Staircasing is executed.
- Following completion, the rent is adjusted to reflect the new ownership share.

Shared owners may appoint their own solicitor to act for them, and this may be required where mortgage funding is being obtained. Shared owners are responsible for taking their own legal advice, including advice on Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) and lender requirements.

13. Resale and Nomination Rights

Shared owners wishing to sell their share must follow the resale process set out in their lease. This ensures fairness, transparency and compliance with Homes England requirements.

13.1 Selling Your Share

Shared owners may sell their leasehold interest in the property at any time. The process to be followed is set out in the individual lease.

13.2 Valuation

The sale price must not be more than the market value of the relevant percentage share owned by the shared owner at the time of the sale. The market value will be determined by a valuation carried out by a RICS-registered surveyor, and the costs of the valuation are to be borne by the shared owner. Completion of the sale must take place before the expiry date of the valuation, as set out either in the lease or on the valuation itself. If the valuation expires before the sale completes, it may need to be reissued.

13.3 Nomination Period

Many leases include a nomination period (usually 8 or 12 weeks) during which the Council has the right to nominate a buyer, or market the property through its resale route.

If the Council does not nominate a buyer during the nomination period, the shared owner may proceed to sell the property to a purchaser who meets the eligibility and any other requirements set out in the lease, planning obligations or title documents. This means the buyer no longer needs to be nominated by the Council, but any applicable eligibility criteria, including local connection requirements in a Section 106 agreement, will continue to apply.

13.4 Council's role

The Council's role in the resale process is as landlord of the property only and will be limited to liaising with the buyer and seller's solicitors in relation to any required Licence to Assign.

The Council will also provide replies to its standard form Leasehold Management Enquires if requested, on payment of a reasonable fee. The Council will not reply to any other enquiries about the property, as the shared owner in occupation of the property will be far better placed to answer any such queries.

Following completion of the resale, notice of the same must be provided to the Council in accordance with the requirements of the lease.

14. Subletting

Whether subletting is permitted depends on the terms of the individual shared ownership lease. Some leases restrict or prohibit subletting of the whole property, while others allow it in specific circumstances or subject to certain conditions. Shared owners must refer to their own lease to understand the rules that apply to their home.

Where the lease requires consent from the Council before subletting, the Council will consider requests in line with the lease provisions. Consent may be granted or refused and may include reasonable conditions, for example relating to:

- time limits
- insurance requirements
- the form of tenancy agreement to be used
- protecting the quiet enjoyment of neighbours

Each request will be assessed individually, in accordance with the lease and any relevant legal or planning obligations.

15. Complaints, Disputes and Tribunals

Shared owners may raise complaints about service delivery, charges, or the management of their home through the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure.

15.1 Housing Ombudsman

If a shared owner remains dissatisfied after exhausting the Council's complaints procedure, they may refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service, which covers shared ownership services provided by social landlords.

15.2 First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber)

Certain disputes may be taken to the Tribunal, including those concerning service charge reasonableness, administration charges, Section 20 consultation compliance and interpretation of lease terms.

The Tribunal is an independent body that issues legally binding decisions.

15.3 Dispute Resolution

The Council will encourage early resolution by responding promptly to concerns, providing clear explanations, offering meetings where helpful and signposting to additional support.

16. Breaches of Lease and Enforcement

Shared ownership leases are legal documents governing the ownership and occupation of property, and the Council has a responsibility to take appropriate and proportionate action where breaches occur. Breaches may include (but are not limited to) non-payment of rent or service charges, unauthorised alterations, unauthorised subletting, causing nuisance or anti-social behaviour, misuse of the property or refusal to allow access for safety checks or repairs.

Shared owners are required to ensure that their behaviour, and the behaviour of anyone living in or visiting their home, does not cause nuisance, harassment or anti-social behaviour (ASB) as this may constitute a breach of the shared ownership lease terms. The Council will respond to reports of ASB in accordance with its Anti-Social Behaviour Policy - Landlord Services, which sets out how concerns are assessed, investigated and addressed. This policy applies to all residents living in Council-managed homes, including shared owners.

Where ASB constitutes a breach of lease, the Council may take enforcement action in line with the provisions of the lease, this Shared Ownership Policy and the relevant ASB procedures

The Council will notify shared owners of concerns, provide an opportunity to resolve issues informally, offer support or signposting where appropriate and consider vulnerabilities and safeguarding needs.

16.1 Formal Action

Where informal resolution is not successful, the Council may:

- issue formal warning notices
- recover costs through administration charges
- apply to the courts where necessary
- recover unpaid rent or service charges
- commence forfeiture action as a last resort, following strict legal procedures

Any enforcement action will be proportionate to the severity of the breach, compliant with legislation and case law and mindful of equality, vulnerability and safeguarding considerations.

17. Performance monitoring

We are committed to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in the delivery of our services. Performance in relation to the implementation of this policy will be monitored through the Housing Revenue Account Performance Framework.

18. Communication and tenant's voice

A copy of this policy can be found on our website and can be requested in PDF format or hard copy. An easy read version will also be available. If needed in a different format, please let us know and all reasonable efforts will be made to provide this. The policy will regularly be promoted to tenants via our communication channels including via the tenant's newsletter.

19. Equalities Statement

We will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently to all Shared Owners. An equality assessment was carried out during the development of this policy. This concluded that the implementation of this policy will not have any negative impacts. We recognise that in application of this policy that there is not one solution for all, each situation will be different, and different resolutions may be sought. We will take individual circumstances and diverse needs and vulnerabilities of our Shared Owners with a range of solutions in mind – within the restrictions placed by relevant legislation.

20. Policy Review

This policy will undergo an initial **review after one year**, followed by a review every three years by the Service Improvement Team to ensure alignment with legislative, regulatory, and best practice developments. Where necessary, interim updates may be made outside of the scheduled review cycle to maintain the policy's relevance, fairness, and effectiveness, particularly in response to new legislation or regulatory changes.

Last updated: X

Approved: X

Review date: X

21. Contact

For enquiries, comments or complaints about a service, please use our standard contact routes via the contact us web page, by phone, or in person at any Council office.

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Equality impact assessment (EIA) form: evidencing paying due regard to protected characteristics

(Form updated October 2025)

Shared Ownership Policy

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) form is a document that proves paying due regard by considering protected characteristics. EIAs that accompany reports presented to Councillors for decision-making are published with the committee papers on our website and are also available in hard copy at the relevant meetings.

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment Screening

This section documents the equality screening process of actual or potential impacts of the proposed activity on a specific protected characteristic, along with NYC's additional agreed-upon characteristics, to determine whether a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is necessary or appropriate.

Basic Details	
Directorate	Community Development
Service area	Housing
Proposal being screened	Shared Ownership Policy
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Imogen Downie
Lead Officer and contact details	Imogen Downie, Housing Policy and Strategy Officer (Service Improvement) imogen.downie@northyorks.gov.uk
Date of the assessment	Feb 2025
Please describe briefly what this EIA is about. (e.g. are you starting a new service, changing how you do something, or stopping doing something?)	Development of a unified Shared Ownership Policy for North Yorkshire Council to bring together legacy approaches into a single consistent framework for managing shared ownership homes.
What does the authority hope to achieve by it? (E.g. to save money, meet increased demand, do things in a better way.)	The authority aims to create a single, consistent Shared Ownership Policy that replaces the varied legacy approaches inherited from former councils. The policy will provide clarity, fairness and transparency for shared owners, support consistent decision-making, and ensure management of shared ownership homes aligns with legislation, lease requirements and good practice.
Further Details	
1.1 How have stakeholders been involved in this policy/ decision/ proposal? (e.g. a consultation exercise)	Stakeholders have contributed through internal engagement with Legal Services and Housing teams during the development of the draft policy. A tenant focus group with shared owners is also being planned to gather further feedback and ensure the policy is clear, practical and reflects lived experience.

1.2 Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (e.g. partners, funding criteria, etc.). Please explain briefly		No significant impacts on other organisations are expected. The policy sets out North Yorkshire Council's own approach to managing shared ownership homes and does not change the responsibilities of external organisations such as developers, management companies or other landlords.			
1.3 Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYC's additional agreed characteristics Tick and indicate which protected characteristics are identified as relevant to the proposal (positive, negative, neutral or don't know).					
Protected characteristic	Impact				Comments
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Don't know	
Age			X		From information currently available we can estimate that 51% of our tenants are aged over 60. In 2021, 25% of the county's adult population was over the age of 65. This is higher than the national percentage of 18.4%. This means that our tenant population is significantly more aged than the average population for North Yorkshire and the country. By 2035, 32.60% of North Yorkshire's total population will be aged 65+ and 5.97% will be aged 85+. Nationally 23.26% will be 65+ and 4.05% will be 85+ by 2035. Less than 5% of our tenant population are under 29. North Yorkshire has a lower proportion of young people than the national average- 24.5% under 25 compared to 29.2% nationally. Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.
Disability			X		North Yorkshire has a lower proportion (19.3%) of people with a disability or long-term limiting illness whose day-to-day activities are limited a lot- against the national average of 23.69%. However, this will rise to 20.89% of the 65+ population in North Yorkshire, against a national average of 24.86%. Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.
Sex			x		The proportion of females is slightly higher (51%) than that of males (49%). This pattern is reflected across all localities, with the exception of Richmondshire, where the large number of predominantly male military personnel have the effect of reversing the proportions.

					Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.
Race (including GRTS)			X		North Yorkshire has a much lower proportion (4.77%) of people who identify with a non-UK identity than the national average (12%). Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.
Gender reassignment			X		In the 2021 census 1478 (0.28%) of residents across North Yorkshire identified themselves as transsexual or with a gender identity different to that registered at birth. Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.
Sexual orientation			x		In the 2021 census 11,291 (2.2%) of residents across North Yorkshire identified themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Other (LGB+). Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.
Religion or belief			x		North Yorkshire has higher levels of Christians (55.6%) than the national average (46.2%), and lower levels of all other religions than the national average. Percentages of those with no religion or not stating their religion are broadly similar to the national average. Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.
Pregnancy or maternity			x		In 2021 there were 5133 live births in North Yorkshire. In 2020 the conception rate per 1000 for under 18's was 10.9. This is below the rate for England (13). In 2020/21 4.2% of deliveries in North Yorkshire were to mothers from ethnic minorities, compared to the England value of 21.6%. Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.
Marriage or civil partnership			x		A higher percentage of North Yorkshire's population is married or in a civil partnership (53.7%) than the national average (46.8%)

					Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.
NYC's additional characteristics					
People in rural areas			x		The population in North Yorkshire is generally sparser than the national average (77 people per square kilometre as opposed to 434 nationally). In some parts of the county this is lower still (Ryedale 36, Richmondshire 38, Craven 48, Hambleton 69). Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.
People on a low income			x		The proportion of households in deprivation in North Yorkshire reduced between 2011 and 2021. In 2011 52.1% of households in North Yorkshire were deprived in at least one of the four dimensions (employment, education, health and disability, housing). By 2021 this had fallen to 46.7%. This 5.4 percentage point reduction in North Yorkshire compared with a 5.9 percentage point reduction across England as a whole, with the proportion of households in deprivation in North Yorkshire remaining below the national average. Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.
Carer (unpaid family or friend)			x		Carers' allowance claimants make up 0.98% of North Yorkshire's population. This is lower than the average for England (1.42%) but there are variations across the county. It is likely, however, that these figures do not reflect the true number of people carrying out caring roles in the county as many do not claim allowances. Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.
Are from the Armed Forces Community (including veterans)			x		North Yorkshire has 29,831 Armed Forces Veterans. Richmondshire has the highest proportion of Armed Forces Veterans in North Yorkshire at 9.5% (3,962), which is the third highest nationally. The proportion of veterans in Richmondshire is more than double the national average rate, which is 3.8%. Harrogate has the highest number of Armed Forces Veterans in North Yorkshire with 7,076 (5.2%).

					Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.	
1.4 To which Part(s) of the Public Sector Equality Duties is the Policy/decision/proposal relevant? Tick and briefly describe.						
General Duties	Yes	No	Details			
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	x		The policy provides a clear and consistent framework for managing shared ownership homes, reducing the risk of inconsistent or unfair treatment and helping ensure shared owners are treated equitably.			
Advance equality of opportunity	x		By improving clarity around rights, responsibilities and processes, the policy supports shared owners in understanding and exercising their rights regardless of background or personal circumstances.			
Foster good relations between different groups	x		Clear, transparent policy expectations and consistent decision-making help promote trust, reduce misunderstandings and support positive relationships between the Council and shared owners.			
1.5 Decision (Please tick one option) Decision to recommend this policy/ decision for an Equality Impact Assessment?			Yes		No	x
If the answer is “Yes”, or you indicate a negative impact on any of the characteristics mentioned in the table above, please continue to Section 2 and complete the full Equality Impact Assessment. If the answer is “No”, please give a brief reason here. The initial assessment shows no negative impacts on any protected characteristic. The proposal is a policy level framework that does not change service access, eligibility or delivery in a way that would disadvantage any group. The EIA screening indicates the policy supports consistency and fairness, and a full EIA is not required.						
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)						
Date						

Section 2: Equality Impact Assessment

This section aims to provide a full assessment of the actual or potential impacts on specific protected characteristics, along with NYC's additional characteristics. It will also identify the proper actions to mitigate these impacts, if needed.

2.1 Evidence, Consultation and Data: What data or evidence source(s) has/ have been used to inform this assessment? Select the relevant source (s):

- Demographic data
- Service usage data
- Consultation feedback
- National/local research and report
- Expert opinion
- Others

2.2 Stakeholder Engagement: What engagement has been done regarding the proposal and what are the results?

- Who has been consulted?
- How were they consulted?
- What feedback was received?

2.3 What positive impact will this proposal have on the council budget, people, community, economic growth and environment, etc? Please explain briefly

2.4 Please briefly describe how will this proposal affect people with protected characteristics? Only those who are identified as relevant to the proposal in section 1.

protected characteristics	Negative	Don't know	Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information, etc.
---------------------------	----------	------------	--

Age			
-----	--	--	--

Disability			
------------	--	--	--

Sex			
-----	--	--	--

Race (including GRTS)			
-----------------------	--	--	--

Gender reassignment			
---------------------	--	--	--

Sexual orientation			
--------------------	--	--	--

Religion or belief			
--------------------	--	--	--

Pregnancy or maternity			
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Marriage or civil partnership			
-------------------------------	--	--	--

NYC's additional characteristics

People in rural areas			
-----------------------	--	--	--

People on a low income			
------------------------	--	--	--

Carer (unpaid family or friend)			
---------------------------------	--	--	--

Are from the Armed Forces Community (including veterans)			
--	--	--	--

2.5 Geographic impact: Please detail where the impact will be (please tick all that apply)		
North Yorkshire wide		
Craven		
Hambleton		
Harrogate		
Richmondshire		
Ryedale		
Scarborough		
Selby		
If you have ticked one or more areas, will specific town(s)/ village(s) be particularly impacted? If so, please specify below.		
2.6 Will the proposal affect anyone more because of a combination of protected characteristics? (e.g. older women or young gay men) State what you think the effect may be and why, citing evidence from Q2.1 & Q2.2, e.g. engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information, etc.		
2.7 Mitigation and Actions: List the actions that will be taken to reduce or eliminate any negative impact identified above and how positive impacts will be enhanced. Briefly describe the action you defined.		
Actions	Lead	By when
2.8 Monitoring and Review: If the proposal is to be implemented, how will the impact be monitored? Briefly describe the monitoring arrangements/systems that will be put in place to find out how the expected outcomes have been achieved in practice.		
2.9 Conclusion: Please summarise the findings of your EIA, including impacts, recommendations in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.		

2.10 Sign off section

This full EIA was completed by: Imogen Downie

Job title: Housing Policy & Strategy Officer

Directorate: Community Development

Signature:

Completion date: 18/02/2026

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature): A Rowe

Date: 18 February 2026

Once this has been signed off, please send it to webteam@northyorks.gov.uk for publication on the appropriate webpage.

Publication:

To help people find completed EIAs, we publish them in the Equality and Diversity section of the NY Council [website](#).

Contact details

If you need further support and guidance about carrying out EIA, please contact your directorate equality representative as listed in Stage 4 on our Intranet: [Paying due regard to equality using equality impact assessments](#)

Or contact North Yorkshire Council's equality team on email Equality@northyorks.gov.uk

Initial Climate Change Impact Assessment (Form created August 2021)

The intention of this document is to help the council to gain an initial understanding of the impact of a project or decision on the environment. This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. Dependent on this initial assessment you may need to go on to complete a full Climate Change Impact Assessment. The final document will be published as part of the decision-making process.

If you have any additional queries, which are not covered by the guidance please email climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk

Title of proposal	Shared Ownership Policy
Brief description of proposal	Development of a unified Shared Ownership Policy for North Yorkshire Council to bring together legacy approaches into a single consistent framework for managing shared ownership homes.
Directorate	Community Development
Service area	Housing
Lead officer	Imogen Downie
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	

The chart below contains the main environmental factors to consider in your initial assessment – choose the appropriate option from the drop-down list for each one.

Remember to think about the following;

- Travel
- Construction
- Data storage
- Use of buildings
- Change of land use
- Opportunities for recycling and reuse

Environmental factor to consider	For the council	For the county	Overall
Greenhouse gas emissions	No effect on emissions	No Effect on emissions	No effect on emissions
Waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste
Water use	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage
Pollution (air, land, water, noise, light)	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution
Resilience to adverse weather/climate events (flooding, drought etc)	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience
Ecological effects (biodiversity, loss of habitat etc)	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology
Heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape

If any of these factors are likely to result in a negative or positive environmental impact then a full climate change impact assessment will be required. It is important that we capture information about both positive and negative impacts to aid the council in calculating its carbon footprint and environmental impact.

Decision (Please tick one option)	Full CCIA not relevant or proportionate:	✓	Continue to full CCIA:	
Reason for decision	The proposal relates solely to the development of a policy framework and does not introduce any new activities that would directly affect emissions, resource use, pollution, land use or the wider environment. As a non-operational policy, it has no direct environmental impact. Any potential environmental benefits would only arise indirectly through existing repair and maintenance processes, where opportunities to improve energy efficiency may be considered, but these activities are not created or altered by the policy itself. A full CCIA is therefore not required.			
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	A Rowe			
Date	18 February 2026			

Overview And Scrutiny

Private Sector Renters Rights Act and Empty Homes

Page 89

**Andrew Rowe - Assistant Director Housing
Lynn Williams - Head of Service Housing Renewal**

03 March 2026

Agenda Item 9

A photograph of a young Black couple smiling and receiving a set of keys from a person whose back is to the camera. The woman is holding the keys, and the man stands behind her. They are in a bright room with large windows in the background. The person handing the keys is holding a clipboard with a document on it.

Renters Rights Act

Implementation timeline

1 May 2026 - statutory duty to enforce legislation

- Fixed-term ASTs abolished → Assured Periodic Tenancies
- Section 21 abolished
- Updated Section 8 possession grounds
- Rental bidding banned; adverts must show one rent
- Rent in advance restricted to one month
- Rent increases: once per 12 months (s13)
- Anti-discrimination rules (children, benefits)
- Written tenancy agreements become mandatory

Late 2026 – National Infrastructure

- PRS Database begins
- Private Landlord Ombudsman registration starts

Future (post-consultation)

- Decent Homes Standard (PRS)
- Updates to hazard responses & property standards

Impact on NYC

Higher demand for tenancy relations advice and early homelessness prevention

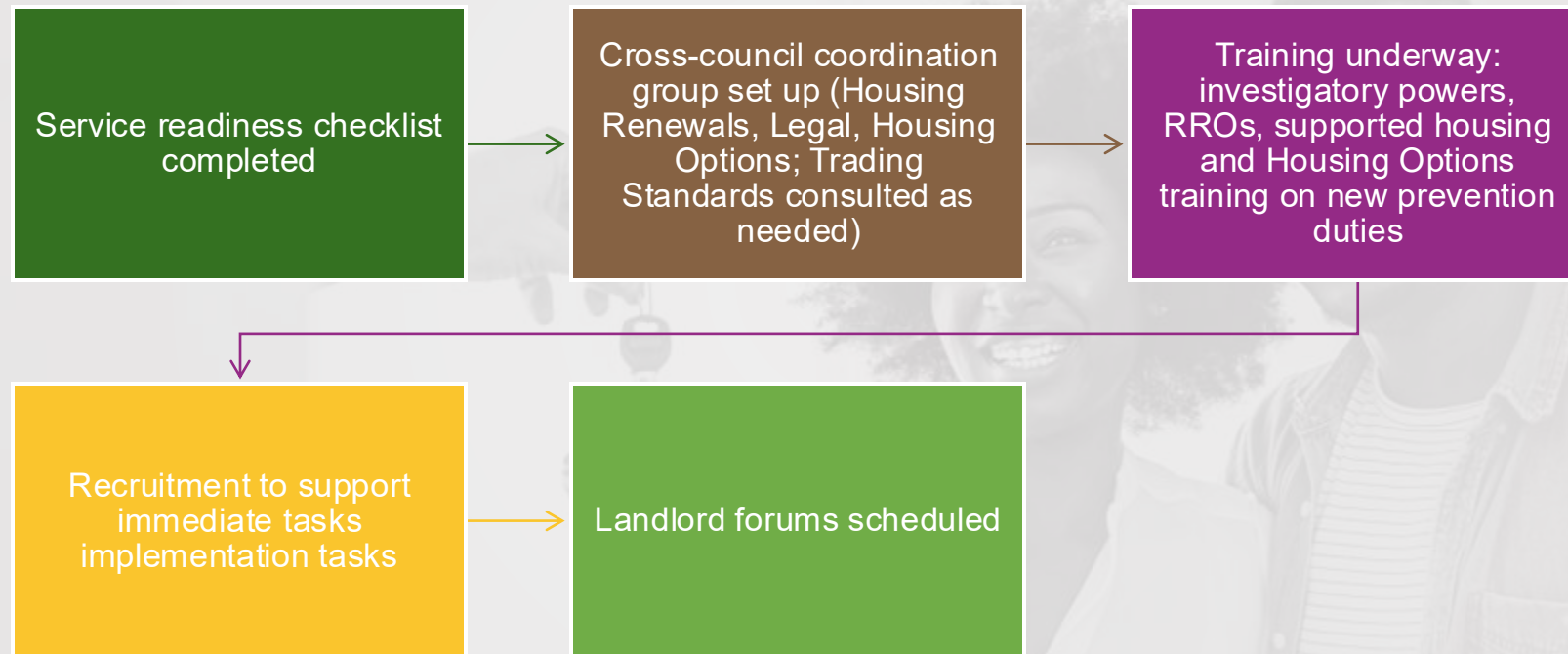
More formal enforcement casework under new powers

Increased involvement from Legal Services (grounds, notices, challenges)

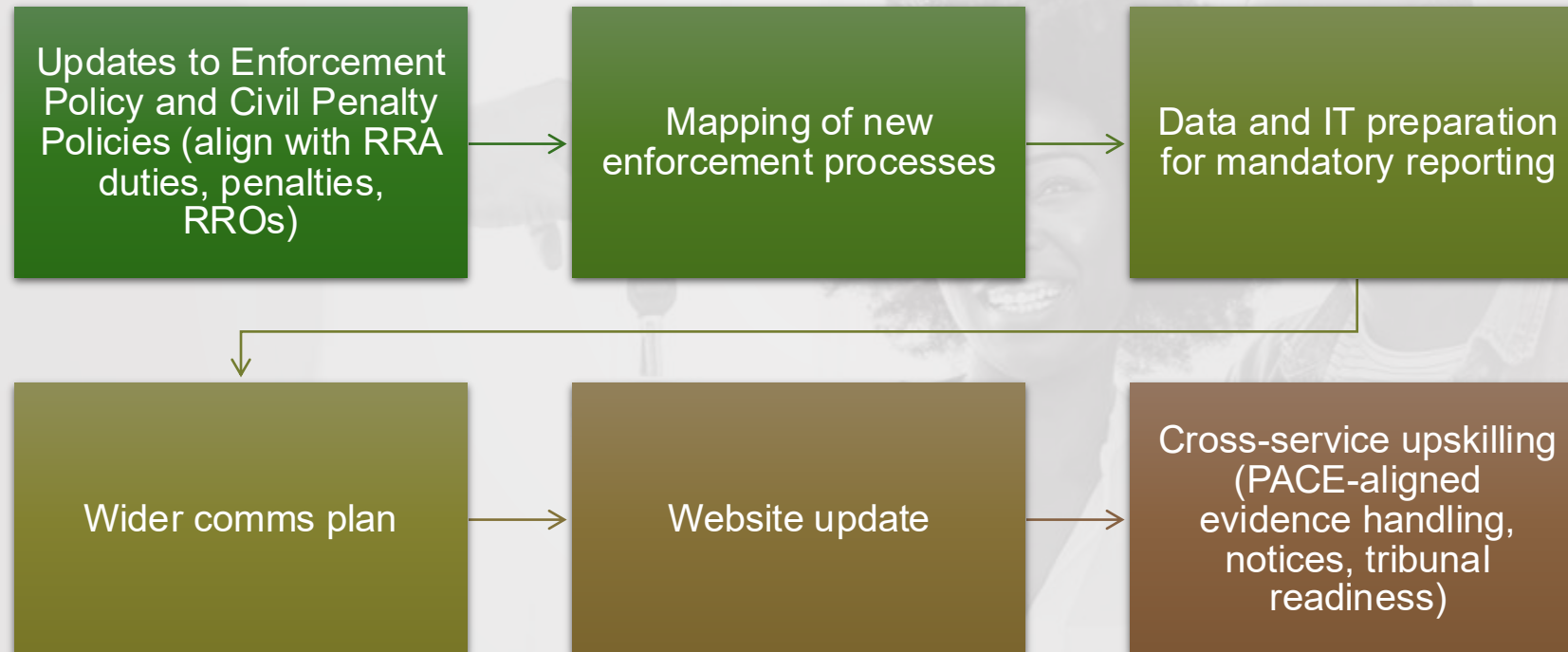
Strong dependency on IT/Data for Phase 2 (PRS Database integration)

Need for clear corporate comms for landlords, tenants and Members

Progress so far..



In Progress (Jan- Apr 2026)



Resources

Resource implications

Staffing growth (circa 3 FTE)

Funding from Vacancies, Second Homes Council Tax (£100k), and Burdens Funding (£200k).

- Burdens funding is short term

It is anticipated by MCHLG that civil penalty income will fund enforcement activity in the future

Future resource needs remain uncertain and will depend on levels of activity.



Empty Homes – An Emerging Strategy

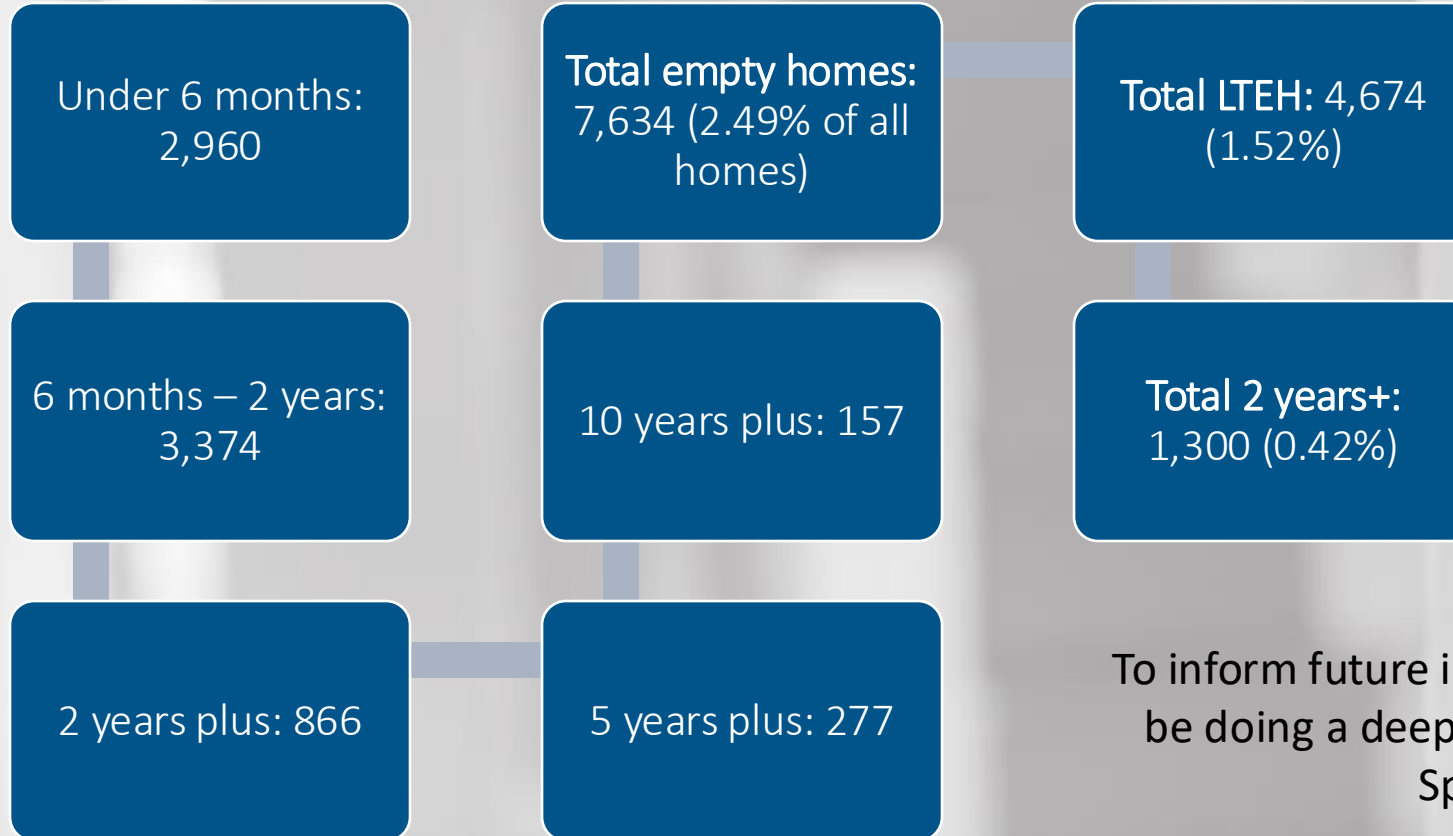
The scale of the issue

Empty homes are a normal part of a healthy housing market, but high numbers -especially Long-Term Empty Homes (LTEH, unoccupied >6 months)-are a growing concern.

NYC has seen a 24% increase in LTEH from 2024 to 2025 (from 3,755 to 4,652), now representing 1.52% of total homes -higher than both the Yorkshire & Humber regional average (1.3%) and England (1.17%).

The yearly increase equates to 897 additional LTEH in North Yorkshire

Empty homes breakdown (length of time empty)



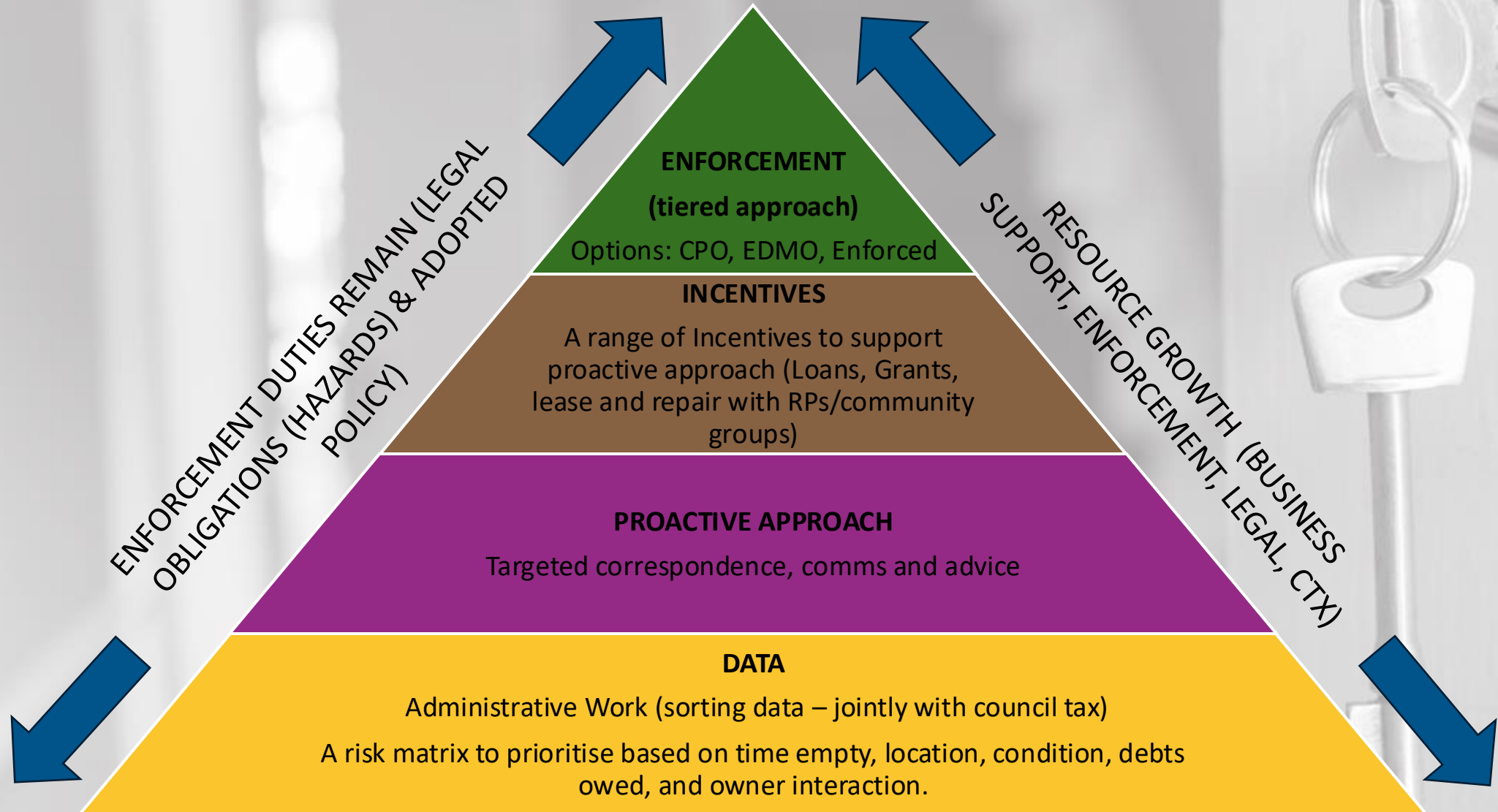
To inform future interventions we will be doing a deep dive with CTX this Spring

Current position is reactive and focused on complaints

- No dedicated resource for proactive activity
- Inconsistent data
- A mix of legacy approaches (no policy in place, but a commitment to develop)
- No system for prioritisation
- Meeting our minimum legal requirements (reactive enforcement to deal with hazards/nuisance)
- No capital programme or incentives
- High expectations from members and public

Targeted and focused approach (growth)

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Key enforcement options

Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)

- Used where owners cannot be traced or refuse to engage
- Council buys the property, carries out works, and usually sells it back to market
- High cost, complex and time-consuming
- Council assumes ownership and ongoing maintenance risk
- Best suited to strategic regeneration, not routine empty homes cases

Enforced Sale

- Used where a relevant debt is owed to the Council
- Property is sold to recover costs and typically returned to use
- Lower cost, lower risk than CPO
- Does not require the Council to own the property
- Only available where a qualifying debt exists

Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs)

- Used where a property is habitable (or can be at reasonable cost)
- Council manages the property and recovers costs through rental income
- Can last up to 7 years
- Resource-intensive with financial recovery risks
- Only applicable where the property has been empty 2+ years



Key incentive & assistance options

Incentives remove barriers and encourage early engagement, reducing the need for enforcement and bringing homes back into use more quickly.

Financial Support

- **Loans** – interest-free or low-cost loans (including equity-based options) to fund essential works, repayable on sale or transfer
- **Grants** – targeted, conditional grants to bring long-term empty homes back into use
- **Energy Retrofit Funding** – link empty homes to energy efficiency and retrofit schemes to improve viability and reduce future costs

Partnership Approaches

Lease to Registered Provider – RP refurbishes and manages the property; owner receives guaranteed rent and Council gains nomination rights

- **RP Purchase / Supported Acquisition** – RPs acquire and refurbish empty homes for affordable housing, with Council facilitation where needed
- **Community Led Housing** – community or voluntary sector led, typically requires revenue and capital funding from LA

Practical & Non-Financial Incentives

- **Dedicated Officer Support** – hands-on advice, casework and brokerage to overcome owner barriers
- **Buyers / Lettings Support** – buyers lists, rent bond schemes and help with letting to encourage voluntary reuse



Pros & Cons of a targeted approach

Page 103

PROS	CONS
• Prioritises long-term, high-risk and high-impact empty homes which are most likely to cause harm or blight • Moves the Council from reactive to proactive • Targeting allows early engagement with owners before issues escalate supporting proportionate and defensible enforcement • Risk-based, targeted approach provides a clear audit trail • Aligns incentives, support and enforcement • Enables the Council to match the right tool to the right property • Provides clearer outcomes for members and communities • Targeting priority properties and areas helps demonstrate visible improvement and progress	• Resource-intensive setup requirements • A targeted approach relies on accurate data, risk matrices, proactive engagement and partnership working, all of which require dedicated officer and business support capacity that is currently limited • Significant existing capacity pressures from new legislation, with the new duty to enforce, resulting in more formal enforcement • RRA will also increase dependency on Legal and corporate services, further reducing flexibility to support empty homes initiatives • Focusing only on priority properties or areas may lead to perceptions of inconsistency or inaction elsewhere • Even when targeted, outcomes remain dependent on owner cooperation; without sufficient incentives or capital funding, progress can still be slow, risking frustration and escalation to enforcement

Members views?

- Given the financial implications (both revenue and capital) do Members have a view on the level of prioritisation on empty work compared to other areas of activity?
- Are there any of the incentives that members would like us to consider in more detail?
- Are there any of the enforcement options that Members would like us to consider in more detail?
- Is there anything else Members would like us to focus on as we develop the strategy?



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Part of



**Update on progress of North Yorkshire's Cultural Strategy
1-year post-implementation
NYC Overview & Scrutiny Committee
March 2026**

Danielle Daglan, Head of Culture & Archives

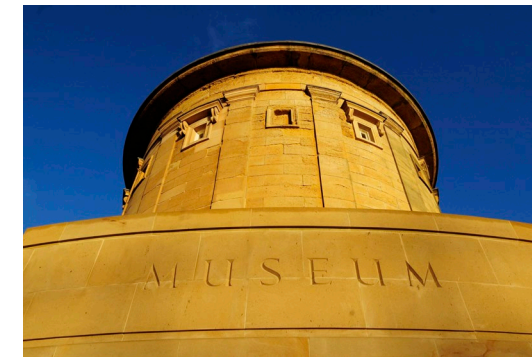


Cultural Strategy

Emerged a phrase,
"cultural strategy", if you will



Part of





To use culture and creativity to create places where people want, and are able to live, work, visit, learn and engage.



**'I left with extreme pride
and admiration for what
the young people have
achieved'**

Audience member, Now Then! Tadcaster

Image: Now Then!
Rob Young, Selby





Nathan & Jodie
Summer Workshops
Woodend Creative,
Scarborough



Soundscales – Ben Crick & Michaela French
Skipton Town Hall



**To ensure that places,
spaces and activities
are inclusive and
accessible**





To enable a thriving cultural workforce including employees, volunteers and freelancers, where grassroots creativity is nurtured and supported to grow.



Mercer Gallery Work Placement Students, Harrogate

H.A.P.P.Y Collections

Liz West explores Harrogate's museum collections

Page 118



'The whole day was brilliant from start to finish, a great agenda and mix of delegates'

International Puppetry Symposium
delegates



Art Happens Here : Art Studio Collective
Cracker Workshop, Malton



To maximise the value and ensure sustainability of the region's cultural assets and promote the cultural identity, wealth and distinctiveness of the region

North Yorkshire Council Museums & Galleries welcomed c.300,000 visitors in the last year
Our Archive search facility averages 70% occupancy usage
Outreach, livestreaming and project engagement reached a further 47,000 people
Over 90% of visitors report their visit as very good or excellent,
and over 96% find their accessibility needs are well met





To ensure cultural engagement contributes to improved health and wellbeing of communities







A close-up photograph of a person's hand reaching into a red cup filled with various colored pencils. In the foreground, there is a blue cup containing several markers. The background is slightly blurred, showing a desk with papers and a book. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

To ensure cultural activity positively contributes to the delivery of strategic priorities including economic, health and social well-being, skills and education, environment, public transport and quality of life.

To identify, support and promote places, spaces, people and activities that can contribute to the vision.



Creation of a Creative Hub - Update

- Culture North Yorkshire
- Mapping
- Website plan
- Consortium Newsletter
- Network events – networking, training & development
- Research and learning (e.g. Audience Agency)
- Data collection (e.g. social value tool and new surveying)
- Funding support
- Partnership working and collaborations
- Links to Tourism – county event strategy

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Housing & Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Draft Work Programme 2026/27

Role and Remit: To scrutinise Housing and Leisure (including Culture)

Committee Meeting - Wednesday 10 June 2026 at 10am (Deadline for Papers: 29th May)

Subject	Description
Leisure & Culture Performance	Performance Update – Will Boardman, Head of Strategy and Performance & Jo Ireland, AD Culture & Leisure
Housing Strategy Review	Andrew Rowe & Hannah Lawty
Homelessness & Rough Sleeping	Update on the implementation of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030
Housing Annual Review	Housing Performance & Service Improvement Annual Report, including annual complaints self-assessment and summary of tenant involvement – Andrew Rowe
Housing Improvements & Regulatory Update	Progress update on implementation of the improvement plan – Andrew Rowe
Complaints	Dashboard summary of complaints handling including Ombudsman cases
Work Programme 2026-27	Work Programme 2026-27

Mid Cycle Briefing - Tuesday 29 July 2026 at 10am

Committee Meeting - Tuesday 22 September 2026 at 10am (Deadline for Papers: 9th Sept)

Subject	Description
Leisure Investment Strategy Update	Jo Ireland, AD Culture & Leisure
Libraries	Annual Review of Libraries – Hazel Smith, Head of Libraries
Asset Management Strategy	Update on progress against the Strategy's measurable outcomes – Andrew Rowe, AD for Housing
Q1 Housing Improvements & Regulatory Update	Update on Housing Improvement Board key actions – Andrew Rowe, AD Housing
Complaints	Dashboard summary of complaints handling including Ombudsman cases
Work Programme 2026-27	

Mid Cycle Briefing - Wednesday 29 October 2026 at 10am

Consideration of the Work Programme

Committee Meeting - Monday 1 December 2026 at 10am (Deadline for Papers: 18th Nov)

Subject	Description
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Leisure Service Performance Update	Performance and Service Improvement Bi-Annual Update, including update on economic impact of Scarborough Air Theatre – Richard Mair, Strategy & Performance Lead
Cultural Strategy	Annual update on progress against the Cultural Strategy's strategic priorities – Jo Ireland, AD Culture & Leisure
Active Leisure	Update on implementation of new pricing structure for NYC's Active Leisure facilities – Jo Ireland, AD for Culture & Leisure
Joint Venture	Post implementation update - Hannah Heinemann, Head of Housing Delivery and Partnerships
Q2 Housing Improvements & Regulatory Update	Update on Housing Improvement Board key actions – Andrew Rowe, AD Housing
Complaints	Dashboard summary of complaints handling including Ombudsman cases – Andrew Rowe, AD Housing & Vicky Young,
Work Programme 2025-26	
Mid Cycle Briefing - Thursday 21 January 2027 at 10am	
Committee Meeting - Tuesday 2 March 2027 at 10am (Deadline for Papers: 17th Feb)	
Subject	Description
Strategic Leisure Review	Jo Ireland, AD Culture & Leisure
Q3 Housing Improvements & Regulatory Update	Update on Housing Improvement Board key actions – Andrew Rowe, AD Housing
Complaints	Dashboard summary of complaints handling including Ombudsman cases
Draft Work Programme 2026-27	
Mid Cycle Briefing - Friday 23 April 2027 at 10am	

Possible future items:

Tenants Feedback – Attendance of Chair of Tenants Association

Leisure Investment Strategy – Phase II

Relevant Performance Indicators:**Primary Indicator - CD11 Average re-let time in days (standard re-lets in month)**

Homes are vacant for longer between tenants while energy efficiency and renovation works are carried out. A very small number of homes that had been unoccupied for some time are being brought back into use, which skews this measure upwards. Benchmarking across local authority landlords at the end of Q3 places North Yorkshire in the fourth quartile. Average re-let times increased from October (135.00 days) to December (142.07 days)

Benchmarking Data – 2024/25: Q2: 90.62 Q1: 73.52 2023/24 52.1 days 2022/23 51.9 days 2021/22 43.5 days

Primary Indicator - CD19 Households assessed as homeless per 1000 households

The proportion of households that were assessed and found to be homeless in Q3 was smaller than the previous quarter but above last year's Q3 level. 347 households were accepted as homeless between October and December 2024, down from 414 in Q2. The household total is based on the latest ONS projection, which estimates the number of households in each local authority area for a given year. (For 2024, this is 280,548.) This tends to exaggerate change between calendar years, i.e. between Q3 and Q4 each year. Regional and national data reporting lag: the latest comparison data show that in Q1 2024/25 North Yorkshire's rate was about two thirds of the mean for unitary authorities (2.00)

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