

23rd October 2024

Haringey Council - Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel

Briefing Note

Dear Members

Hornsey Housing Trust

Thank you for the invitation to attend the meeting of 5th November 2024. As a small organisation with a long history of operation exclusively within the Borough, we believe that we continue to provide a community-focused response to housing need for older people in Haringey.

I have attached our recently published annual report to tenants, as I think that provides a good summary of activity across our services and covers many of the points you have asked about in advance. I also added our Link magazine from summer 2024 which covers the results of our first Tenant Satisfaction Measure survey, and our response, in further detail.

Having celebrated our 90th anniversary in 2023, this year we have been focusing on the coming 5 years with our new corporate plan. A key emphasis is the repairs function, which we outsourced for 5 years prior to 2024, and took the decision to bring back in-house.

The service we launched in May 2024 features Multi-Skilled Operatives directly employed by the Trust, supported by other local contractors on trades that we don't carry in-house. Our aim is to attend to 80% of day-to-day repairs in-house. Although we are only 5 months in to the service, we are already seeing positive satisfaction results and improved performance for on response times to repairs overall.

Until recently, we were also outsourcing the property safety compliance function. We introduced a new role of Repairs & Compliance Manager in July 2024 and are using a new IT system which enables us to manage the data, and crucially the evidence, on compliance more closely.

Another key activity this year is a comprehensive stock condition survey which will allow us to re-plan our forward investment programme for our assets, including identifying where we might have future risks around decent homes compliance and how we can most effectively prioritise decarbonisation of our homes.

You'll see from our TSM data that in 2023 Complaints was the lowest metric in terms of satisfaction with the service received. While that is fairly typical across the sector, we believe that we can improve in this area. We renewed our policy against the Housing Ombudsman code in March 2024 and have published our self-assessment against it. We are presently updating our IT systems to improve the tracking of complaints for improved management of them and we have a Board representative who reviews complaints periodically. We are also planning to feature complaints in future newsletters to tenants to show what we are learning from them.

Being a learning organisation is very much part of the culture we are striving to create at the Trust, with our new values Caring, Collaborative, Curious and Committed. We have a training programme for staff, including mandatory sessions on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and Property Safety and more targeted training depending on each team's needs. We blend online training with in person group sessions, and also encourage shared learning via 'lunch and learn' sessions where colleagues can learn about the work of others.

I hope this is useful background and look forward to meeting you at the Panel session.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'E. Barr', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Euan Barr

Chief Executive