

**Wiltshire Council**

**Environment Select Committee**

**14 January 2025**

---

**Subject: Wiltshire Council's Housing Board Annual Report**

**Cabinet Member: Cllr Phil Alford  
Cabinet Member for Housing**

---

### **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to update the select committee regarding the activities of Wiltshire Council's Housing Board (WCHB) between October 2023 and November 2024.

The primary role of WCHB is to develop and approve the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan and then to ensure that Plan is being implemented by the HRA Housing Management Services (HMS) and provide scrutiny to and seek assurance from the service.

Throughout the year, WCHB is regularly updated about the HRA budget position, HRA Scorecard (key performance indicators), and other key activities and issues across the service.

This Annual Report was presented to WCHB at the AGM on 27 November 2024. It was presented to the Environment Select Committee (ESC) on 14 January 2025. It is being presented to the Cabinet on 21 January 2025.

WCHB is in its third cycle of 4 years, linked to the council's local electoral cycle; this cycle commenced after elections in May 2021 and will run until May 2025.

### **Proposal(s)**

For the select committee to:

- 1) Note this Annual Report.

### **Reason for Proposal(s)**

To present the report to the select committee.

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Environment Select Committee**

**14 January 2025**

---

**Subject: Wiltshire Council's Housing Board Annual Report**

**Cabinet Member: Cllr Phil Alford  
Cabinet Member for Housing**

---

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To update the Environment Select Committee regarding the activities of Wiltshire Council's Housing Board (WCHB) between October 2023 and November 2024 and provide an overview of the activities and performance across the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) service.

### **Relevance to the Council's Business Plan**

2. This report supports the Business Plan 2022 to 2032, in particular our mission to ensure 'The people of Wiltshire are empowered to live full, healthy and enriched lives', 'Our communities continue to be beautiful and exciting places to live', 'Our local economy thrives and is supported by a skilled workforce' and 'We lead the way in how councils and counties mitigate the climate challenges ahead'. Additionally, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) actions support: 'We have vibrant, well-connected communities', 'We ensure decisions are evidence-based', 'We live well together', 'We have the right housing', 'We take responsibility for the environment' and 'We are on the path to carbon neutral (net zero)', and more around supporting vulnerable customers and supporting the local economy.

### **Background**

3. The current WCHB was appointed between May and July 2021 following a recruitment process and interviews by the Cabinet Member for Housing and senior officers. WCHB meets bi-monthly to consider all matters relating to the delivery of the HRA Business Plan and the activity of Housing Management Services (HMS). The Board considers policy, performance, strategy, and high-level operational issues relating to the delivery of that service.
4. Development and Investment ('Place') Sub-Committee covers: investment programme, asset management plan, design guide (including climate change), garage strategy, sheltered housing strategy, development programme, audit, regeneration strategy (including better use of stock) and local plan policies as consultee (including Neighbourhood Development Plans).
5. Finance and Policy ('Pounds') Sub-Committee covers: business plan, income (including bad debt), rents and service charges, budgets, efficiency and audit.

6. Performance and Risk ('People') Sub-Committee covers: operational policies, key performance indicators (including benchmarking) in the HRA Scorecard, challenge and change group (scrutiny) reports, risk register, community and resident engagement, regulatory framework, customer satisfaction, service development (for example, voids process and specification), audit, annual report and TPAS (tenant participation advisory service).

## Main Considerations for the Council

### Context

#### New Regulatory Agenda

7. The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) plays a crucial role in overseeing the new Regulatory Framework for local authority social housing. Its primary responsibility is to ensure that housing providers comply with legal and regulatory standards focusing on tenant safety, service quality, and value for money. Under the new framework, the Regulator enforces stricter accountability, including regular inspections, tenant feedback, and the monitoring of repairs and maintenance standards. By holding local authorities to higher standards, the Regulator is aiming to drive improvements in the housing sector. This enhanced scrutiny ensures that tenants live in safe, well-maintained homes while fostering transparency, trust, and better overall service delivery from housing providers.
8. From April 2024, the RSH introduced an inspection regime for all social landlords based on a revised set of 'Consumer Standards'.
9. These standards are:
- The Safety and Quality Homes Standard
  - Neighbourhood and Community Standard
  - Tenancy Standard
  - Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
10. The RSH will inspect large landlords (over 1,000 stock) at least once every four years and publish gradings as follows:

Grading	Description
<b>C1</b>	Our judgement is that overall the landlord is delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards. The landlord has demonstrated that it identifies when issues occur and puts plans in place to remedy and minimise recurrence.
<b>C2</b>	Our judgement is that there are some weaknesses in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and improvement is needed.

<b>C3</b>	Our judgement is that there are serious failings in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and significant improvement is needed.
<b>C4</b>	Our judgement is that there are very serious failings in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards. The landlord must make fundamental changes so that improved outcomes are delivered.

### **Housing Ombudsman**

11. A co-regulatory approach between the Housing Ombudsman and RSH has been adopted. A statutory Complaint Handling code now applies requiring streamlined, two-stage complaint processes, clear timescales and transparent reporting. The Ombudsman will monitor compliance, and non-compliance could result in public Complaint Handling Failure orders. This aims to improve resolution rates and address barriers to tenant complaints.
12. A noticeable shift in the way the Housing Ombudsman is reviewing complaints has been noted by the council and confirmed amongst our partner social housing providers of the more rigour and investigation that the Ombudsman is now giving to all complaints.

### **Cost of Living Pressure**

13. We continue to support tenants who are struggling with cost-of-living pressures and utility prices. Support is provided via our Tenancy Sustainment team who have access to various funds which offer financial support. In the last 12 months we have completed 703 cases and attained £844,530 in financial gains for our tenants.

### **Inflation**

14. The CPI rate of inflation dropped over this reporting period. However within the key area of property maintenance the cost of materials and services continued to rise above the CPI rate adding budget pressure. Much of the activity in this area is non-discretionary and providing good quality, well maintained and safe homes for our tenants is a regulatory requirement. Therefore, the inflationary increases result in increased levels of spending across all areas of maintenance, which then exerts pressure and creates challenges in all other areas of the budget.

### **HRA Business Plan Pressure**

15. All of the pressures described so far collectively exert pressure on the HRA Business Plan. Rising costs of building, maintaining and improving the housing stock have an impact on the long-term financial performance of the service. The general requirement to improve the standard of housing and the relationship we, the provider, has with our tenants requires increase in spend on both maintenance activity and staff resources. These increases need to be delivered within a comparatively static level of income from rent, with increases in income not meeting the increase in demands.

## 16. **Prioritised action plan**

17. In response to the new regulatory regime and changes across the sector, the service has been working to improve the following areas in a consolidated HRA Action plan:

- Addressing gaps in service provision.
- Increased the outward reach by engaging more with sector partners and professional organisations (eg: HouseMark, Advantage Southwest, Local providers)
- Assurance re performance and compliance
- Managing our reputation and profile.
- Complaints
- Data and insight improvements

## 18. **Overview of Key Achievements over the past 12 months**

### i. **HRA Action Plan**

The service has amalgamated several action plans into one master action plan (HRA Action Plan). This incorporates all areas of our business and is reviewed periodically by our Housing Board for progress.

### ii. **Compliance data review by Savills**

The service commissioned Savills to undertake a comprehensive data review of all compliance activity against the regulatory requirements. The result was a high degree of assurance that the council's data is in good standing with only very few queries raised and now actioned.

### iii. **Electrical Safety Testing Improvements**

Previously, the service undertook a 5 yearly Electrical Safety inspection programme, however, some due in year 5 of our cyclical programmes were going over the 5-year anniversary of the last inspection. This has now been addressed and all inspections are now within the 5-year cycle. As a result of the changes, our compliance has risen from 90% to almost 99% compliance.

### iv. **Damp and Mould Cases**

The sector has seen a huge increase in the number of reported damp or mould cases and Wiltshire Council is no exception. The service has now created a system where all reports of damp and mould are now handled in the case management system. Cases are categorised and severity rated and the service has created a robust in-house inspection survey carried out by surveyors on mobile devices. Active cases have reduced through 2024 due to the categorisation process where cases move from "active" cases to "monitoring" cases and where necessary to "Tenancy" cases, depending on each individual case.

### v. **Compliance Audit programme**

The service has established a regular review of all compliance activity carried out by South West Audit Partnership (SWAP). Gas Safety, Fire Safety and Housing Rents have been completed this period. Gas Safety received a "Reasonable Assurance" with 1 x minor action. Fire Safety received a "Reasonable Assurance" with only 2 x minor actions. Housing Rents received a "Substantial Assurance" with only 1 x minor action to resolve.

- vi. **HouseMark Mock Inspection**

The service commissioned HouseMark to carry out an inspection against the RSH Consumer Standards. The key objective of this inspection was to assess the council's compliance with the four current consumer standards. The council had 'limited' 'adequate' and 'substantial' assurance across the four standards. Of the total 77 applicable criteria across all standards, nine were 'substantial', 38 were 'adequate', and 30 were 'limited'. The actions from the mock inspection have been incorporated into the HRA action plan. The service has resolved some of these actions and is working on those remaining as part of the HRA Action plan.
- vii. **Complaints Process Review**

In response to the Housing Ombudsman's requirements and the new regulatory framework, the service has undertaken a full review of the complaints process and procedures. All staff have undergone mandatory training and dedicated officer support for complaints, has been put in place. This has led to a 100% compliance in the handling of complaints.
- viii. **Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) completed**

The service has now carried out the second year of the TSMs in accordance with the RSH requirement. From this, an Action plan has been produced and incorporated into the master HRA Action Plan. Results from 2024 showed a clear improvement from the 2023 results.
- ix. **Decent Homes data cleanse**

The service has undertaken a review of all DecentHomes data and data cleansing has resulted in an improvement which as at November 2024 is at 98.2%. Average compliance in England was 8% of homes were non-decent during 2022/2023. The council reported 4% non-compliance in 2022-2023 and only 2% in 2023/2024.
- x. **Reduction in Void homes**

The service has established a voids working group to intensely manage the void properties. As a result, the number of voids has reduced by approximately 50%. Work continues on trying to reduce this further despite the challenges of contractor resource and increasing numbers of new properties coming through, including new properties purchased under the "Homes for Ukraine" and "Homes for Afghan" scheme.
- xi. **Stock Condition Programme established**

A full Stock Condition Survey programme is currently underway with Penningtons Choices Ltd, which includes full stock condition, EPC (Energy Performance Certification) survey and HHSRS (Housing Health & Safety Rating System) inspection. The programme started in September 2024 and is due to deliver 1,600 full surveys by the end of February 2025. Following this first phase the programme will be extended with the intention to have 100% coverage of Stock Condition Surveys by the end of the 2025/2026, with a further procurement exercise undertaken to achieve this if required.
- xii. **Reduction in Arrears**

The service has reduced Current Tenant Arrears over the last twelve months by 1.34% of the Gross Rent Debit with cash value of £305k. The arrears percentage, at end of October 24, is 2.32% against a target of 2.50%. There is high confidence that arrears will continue to reduce towards year end.

xiii. **New HRA Scorecard**

The service has undertaken a complete re-write of all performance reporting and consolidated into a single scorecard which is used for many of the service reporting areas including the Housing Board, Senior Management CLT and other performance reporting bodies.

xiv. **Mobile working expanded**

The service has introduced an array of new mobile working forms for officers. All mobile forms have background processing that update our Housing IT system and produce all necessary reports automatically, meaning a huge reduction in administration for all officers using mobile devices. All development has taken place in-house using line of business software but with no consultancy required – saving time and money. This includes:

- Tenancy Check inspections
- Tenancy Sign up forms
- Pre-End Tenancy forms
- Damp and Mould Inspection forms
- Repairs and Inspection processing forms
- Case management forms
- Post Void inspection forms
- Fire Door safety
- Mutual Exchange forms

xv. **Housing Board Review**

Members were notified of the Director – Asset's intention to review Housing Board arrangements. Private meetings were arranged between Board members (except 1 former member) and the Director – Assets. Housing Board arrangements were updated; this included updating the Terms of Reference. All 3 sub-committees were retained as they provided a good forum for informal discussion of topics and were seen as successful by Board members. For the main Housing Board meetings, there would be 3 held in-person (May, November and January) and 3 held remotely (July, September and March). Strategic Planning and Development Days (half-day sessions) would be scheduled for 2 times per year, held in-person and immediately before an in-person main Housing Board meeting; these would be in May and November. ModGov access was extended beyond Councillors and officers, to all Board members, which includes independents and tenants. A SharePoint external collaboration site would be retained. Performance reviews conducted by the Chairman would be incorporated into a board development plan, along with one-to-one performance review meetings.

xvi. **HRA Business Plan Review**

The significant budget pressures arising from the increase in construction costs and the impact on the Council House Build Programme, and the increase in maintenance costs were such that a full review of the HRA Business Plan was required. In late 2023 the review took place and a report was produced by Housing Finance Specialists. The report was included in the HRA Budget and Rent Setting, and 30-Year Business Plan Review that went to Cabinet in February 2024.

xvii. The review and report concluded that the business plan model was showing a sustainable long-term HRA that supported its investment plans. Repayment of existing

and new borrowing is achieved over the life of the plan and minimum balances are maintained. However the resilience of the plan was considered to be limited particularly in the early years of the plan due to the investment in the Council House Build Programme.

- xviii. A further review of the plan has been undertaken in the autumn of 2024. A specific review of depreciation and an increased understanding of the revenue pressures caused by increased maintenance have been included in the recent review and further modelling is underway. This will inform the budget setting process for 2025/26 and Cabinet will be updated of the full financial position at its meeting in February 2025.

## **Community Support**

### **Continuing Actions**

19. The Housing Support Services stats listed below are reported from the last twelve-months (Tenancy Sustainment and Mental Health Housing Support combined):

**128** cases currently being actively worked on  
**703** completed cases  
**31** pending referrals  
**413** Drop-in presentations out in the community

Additional yearly income generated: **£549,200**  
Backdated benefits: **£77,625**  
Grants: **£217,705** (including HSF rent arrears £118,010,79)

**Total additional financial gains generated: £844,530**

20. Plus an abundance of extra help for tenants, with non-monetary value such as: food bank parcels, bus passes, disabled parking badges and clothing.
21. Housing Income have also just secured another £60,000 from the Household Support Fund provided by the Government to support our tenants through the winter months who are suffering financial hardship and may need help with food, fuel, white goods, flooring, unexpected expenses and emergencies. This is to be distributed from October 2024 to the end of March 2025.
22. The Housing Income Team have also recruited an enhanced Tenancy Sustainment Officer who's role is to concentrate on property conditions and supporting those tenants with hoarding tendencies.

### **23. Resident Engagement**

- Monthly Neighbourhood Reviews with improved outcomes and improved capture and reporting systems.
- Scrutiny ("Challenge and Change Group") continued with in-person meetings and optional remote attendance where necessary. New projects undertaken by the group and presented to the service and reported at Housing Board meetings.
- Return to in-person engagement as well as continued online sessions.
- Resident Engagement Plan 2024-2027.



- Final Small Improvement Bids delivered.
- Community Club and Sheltered Scheme meetings held.
- Live cookery training sessions plus an online cookery course delivered.
- In response to addressing issues in the TSM results, the team is looking more at supporting 'core services' and addressing better communications across all areas of the service.
- Continued the physical edition of the Housing Matters magazine every year
- Monthly newsletter to all tenants via email is in operation, including a monthly Haper draw (in collaboration with Tesco).
- Communications group ("Comms and Tech Group") now established and meeting regularly to discuss service communication
- Feedback to our tenants through "you said – we did" and Resident Engagement visits.
- Sheltered Housing Forum now re-established
- Continued expansion and presence of social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram)
- Partnership working with contractors on social value projects across the housing sheltered schemes.

#### **24. Planned Investment in Homes**

##### 25. Planned Maintenance Programmes

26. The majority of the planned maintenance works are delivered across a range of works contracts. All of these were re-procured in 2023 with new contracts starting in October. The new number of contracts increased with a previous single contract for fabric works being split into 5 separate lots, encouraging smaller and more specialist providers to bid for the works. These contracts have been mobilised and new work programmes have been agreed.

##### 27. Housing Energy Efficiency Programme (HEEP)

28. Progress has continued with the works to improve the energy performance, reduce costs for tenants, and reduce carbon emissions from across all properties in the HRA. Work has focused on those properties with the lowest EPC rating and include the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps and solar panels, and the upgrading of insulation, ventilation systems, doors and windows. The council continues to receive positive feedback from tenants who have benefited from HEEP works.

29. The key achievement this period was the completion of two model properties in the same street in Bemerton Heath. Each has been fully refurbished with identical insulation, fixtures and fittings including solar panels and electric vehicle charging points, but with different heating systems. One house uses an Air Source Heat Pump, the other is heated by infra-red panels. We will be working with the tenants to monitor performance and cost from each system.

##### 30. Council House Build Programme – Phase 3, 1000 homes (1 x single phase)

##### 31. Programme headlines:

- a) 157 homes completed, 421 homes in the pipeline, including:
- a. Total of 380 of the above land-led homes delivered as zero carbon in use, with air source heat pumps, PV panels and EV charging.
  - b. 53% of the programme is acquisitions (ex-local authority homes, purchases from the market, and new build s106 and development agreements), leaving the remainder of the programme to be delivered as land led on council owned land.
- b) Current land led schemes are all MMC (save for ECH and Sheltered). including:
- a. Completed scheme at Durrington (1 unit)
  - b. Under construction at Corsley and Rowde (18 units) with occupations to take place in early 2025.
  - c. Planning achieved in Ludgershall (18 units) and Salisbury (7 units).
  - d. Planning submitted in Devizes (32 units) having acquired the site from the NHS and Salisbury (6 units).
- c) Acquisitions continue to feature heavily in the programme:
- a. Homelessness properties completed via SHAP funding (9 units).
  - b. S106 sites in Semington and Trowbridge (20 units), Salisbury (13 units) and Chippenham (13 units) all either secured or on site, with some completions having taken place.
  - c. Local Authority Housing Fund for Ukrainian and Afghan Refugees, also part funded by Homes England (30 units) all completed.
  - d. ex-MOD accommodation in Devizes (18 units) have completed.
- d) Shared Ownership Sales – The team now has dedicated resource with currently 21 units available for sale.
- e) Customer satisfaction – New build/s106 acquisition occupied homes achieving an average of 91% satisfaction rate from residents.
- f) Breakdown of the current programme by delivery type:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Programme Units</b>	<b>Average Cost per Home</b>
S106 Acquisitions	85	£189,565
Individual Purchases	146	£236,202
MMC Land Led – Agile	7	£264,313
Development Agreement Acquisition – Additionality	20	£288,450
MMC Land Led – Rollalong	176	£383,604
Sheltered Housing Land Led	144	£453,264
Sheltered minus Communal and Core Areas	N/A	£299,463
<b>Total</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>£302,123</b>

### 32. Programme risks and experiences:

- Increase in house prices, impacting costs of market and s106 acquisitions.
- Increased build cost to meet space standards and achieving zero carbon in use.
- General needs homes using MMC solutions currently delivered at a premium.
- New Build Sheltered Schemes have viability challenges due to high levels of communal and circulation spaces. Additional costs due to need for decanting/home loss payments.
- Inflation and pressure on the economy remains high.
- Whilst materials cost increases have stabilised, not seen in lower costs.
- Labour costs increase, as part of wider challenges for the industry.

### 33. Programme Expenditure:

<b>Current Budget Allocation</b>	<b>Spend to Date 19/11/2024</b>	<b>Committed Budget</b>	<b>Headroom for further delivery</b>
£195,000,000	£50,584,710	£184,414,489	£10,585,511

- All current projects (578 units) within the programme within the agreed £195m cabinet approval.
- To achieve 1,000 units further capital will be required, with amount to be confirmed as part of budget setting 2025/26.

### 34. Future programme:

- a) Development Strategy being drafted awaiting completion of Business Plan review to understand programme affordability. Plan likely to increase level of acquisitions on cost basis.
- b) Financial viability under review as 40 years payback parameter for land led is challenging, with options being considered.

### 35. MMC 3 Year procurement process Update:

- a) In 2023, 3-year contract via Southwest Procurement Alliance Framework entered into with MMC partner (Rollalong) to deliver homes for Wiltshire Council and Magna Housing Association.
- b) Magna Housing collaboration enables competitive price against contracting alone. It also creates the opportunity for shared knowledge and lessons learned with all parties involved.
- c) The tender included fixed price guarantee for period of time, resulting in initial order for 83 homes, across 3 sites.
- d) Working with Rollalong to improve on their on-site delivery performance and lessons learnt on the MMC process/experience as further sites and projects develop.

### 36. Service Performance and Tenant Satisfaction

- a) The service has replaced its Key Performance Indicator(s) document with a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Scorecard which was first presented to the Housing Board in draft in November 2023. It was intended that the HRA Scorecard would continue to be developed over time. As the data presented for Residential Development was considered unhelpful, the Board agreed at its meeting held in September 2024 to remove this from the HRA Scorecard and instead have performance against annual targets for that area presented in the General Housing Services Update paper, which it receives on a monthly basis. The HRA Scorecard will continue to be developed with input from the Board.
- b) The HRA previously carried out a STAR Survey every 2 years to understand our residents' views about our services. In 2023 the STAR survey was replaced with the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) survey. This approach involves surveying one-half of our tenants each year, with the pattern repeated every 2 years.

The ARP Research (research partner) report states that:

"The survey was carried out between 08 June and 19 July 2024, with a half census of 2,599 LCRA (low cost rental accommodation) tenant households. In the first phase, an email invitation and reminders were distributed to all 2,061 households for whom a valid email address was available inviting them to complete the survey online, resulting in 385 eventual responses (19%).

In the second phase, a paper survey was distributed to the 2,279 households that did not complete online within the first 2½ weeks.

In total 781 tenant households took part in the survey, which represented a 30% response rate (error margin +/- 3.2%). The returns exceeded the stipulated TSM target error margin of +/- 4%. Over half of the responses were received online (54%).

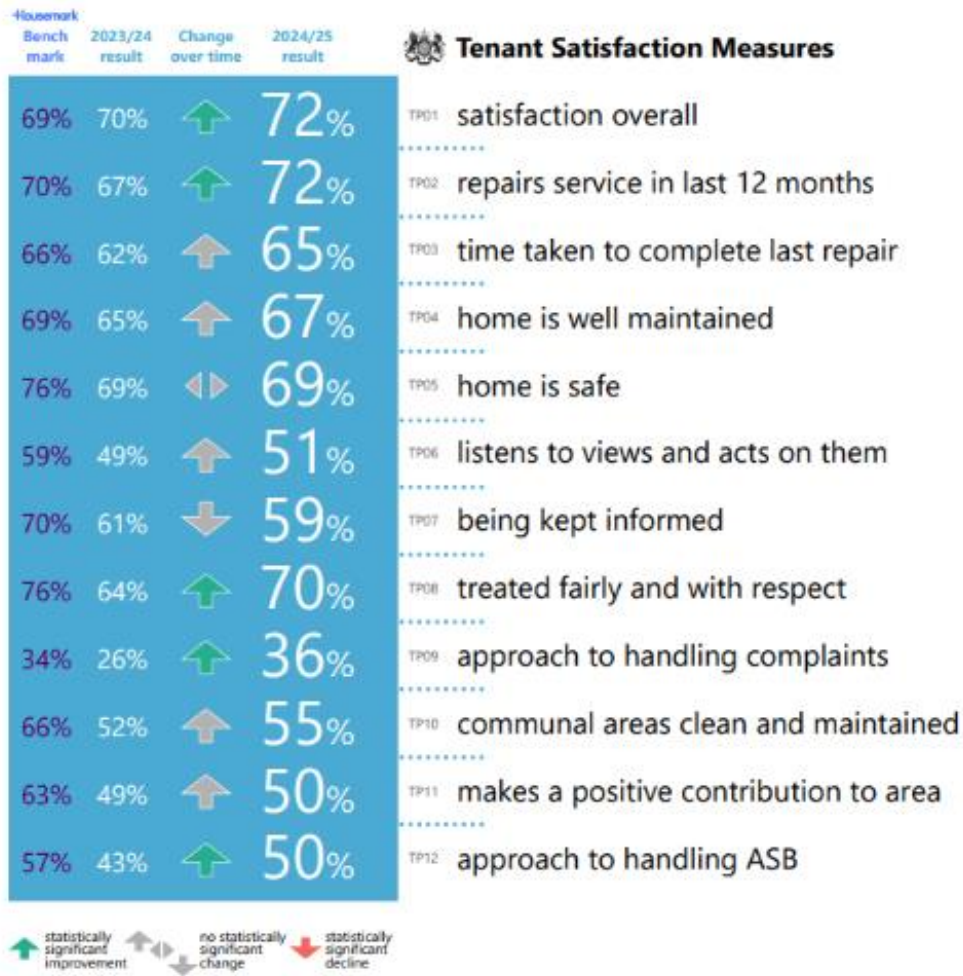
The final survey data was weighted by interlaced age group, property type and stock type to ensure that the survey was representative of the tenant population as a whole."

As with the STAR survey, the service takes the results of the TSM and the information it provides about the tenants' views of our service and generates an improvement action plan to address the areas of concern. The service has reviewed the results of the TSM survey and for each measure has produced an action plan.

The survey will be repeated in July 2025 to the remaining households that were not surveyed this time in order to gain a full census survey.

The questions are benchmarked against ARP Research's (research partner) client database of completed TSM compliant surveys. For the overall satisfaction score this includes 14 landlords, amongst which 7 are local authorities and 3 are ALMOs.

The Executive Summary is replicated below (TSM Survey 2024, page 2):



In September 2024, report outcomes were presented to the Housing Board. The Housing Board agreed to note the contents of the cover report and the full Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) report that was attached to it.

In November 2024, the Housing Board were asked to comment on and have input into the action plans which were presented to the Housing Board.

c) iHousing portal

i) More residents are signed up to use our digital option.

Customer Facing iHousing Portal: Approximate Registered Users				
Former iHousing	New iHousing			
to November 2020	October 2021	14 November 2022	27 October 2023	11 October 2024
900	1,900	2,467	2,576	2,890

- ii) More efficient and positive outcomes for customers.
- d) Resident Engagement Plan
  - i) A new Resident Engagement Plan was due to be introduced for 2024 onwards. The Housing Board agreed to introduce this new Resident Engagement Plan at its meeting held on 29 November 2023. Outcomes since implementation have continued to be delivered, benefitting residents and their families throughout the year.
- e) Challenge and Change Group
  - i) Repairs Reporting Guide, Tenant Handbook, and Damp and Mould Guide
  - ii) Customer Interface Element of Responsive Repairs: Appointments, Communication and Customer Care (suggested by the Director – Assets)
  - iii) Key Performance Indicators (this may not be progressed as the HRA Scorecard has already been introduced)
  - iv) This was recorded in the Housing Board minutes, 27 March 2024, as being “either something coming from the Housemark Mock Inspection or Service Charges. If a Housemark Mock Inspection topic were inserted, then the Service Charges topic would remain but be pushed back and a new topic inserted before it.” The service charges topic may be pushed into the next financial year so that it is aligned with the service charges audit, which the Board agreed on 25 September 2024, as per the draft minutes, “That, once completed, a service charges audit should follow the rents audit.”

### 37. Membership and Attendance Record (October 2023 – November 2024)

<b>WCHB Member</b>	<b>29/11</b>	<b>19/12</b>	<b>31/1</b>	<b>27/3</b>	<b>29/5</b>	<b>31/7</b>	<b>25/9</b>	<b>27/11</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Councillor Member 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8 (100%)
Tenant Member 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	7 (87.5%)
Tenant Member 2	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	5 (62.5%)
Councillor Member 2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8 (100%)
Former Tenant Member	✗	✗	✓	Not a member.					1 (33.3%)
Independent Member 1	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	5 (62.5%)
Tenant Member 3	Not a member.						✓	✓	2 (100%)
Independent Member 2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	7 (87.5%)
Independent Member 3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	6 (75.0%)
Councillor Member 3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	7 (87.5%)

38. Attendance relates to Board meetings only (that is, the figures exclude Away-Days, sub-committees, etcetera).

### Safeguarding Implications

39. There are no specific safeguarding implications associated with this report.

## **Public Health Implications**

40. There are no specific public health implications associated with this report.

## **Procurement Implications**

41. There are no significant corporate procurement implications associated with this report; although should the Board make recommendations regarding procurement of services to be delivered to residents, then this will become a consideration.

## **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

42. All Board members operate in and treat all residents in a fair and balanced manner, maintain their independence and make recommendations to Housing Management Services. Board members do not represent a particular area; they represent all council residents in the county of Wiltshire and make recommendations in the best interests of all council residents in Wiltshire. The service continually works toward Housing Board membership better reflecting council house residents, in respect of the protected characteristics of the Equalities Act.

## **Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

43. There are no significant environmental or climate change implications associated with this report. That is because the report is for noting not making a decision. Members may consider the HEEP programme discussed above and net-zero MMC housing in relation to environmental and climate change considerations.

## **Workforce Implications**

44. There are no significant workforce implications associated with this report.

## **Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken**

45. Wiltshire Council's Housing Board would fail to meet the requirements of its Terms of Reference, namely to provide an Annual Report to Cabinet.

## **Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks**

46. Vacancies can occur from time-to-time; there is a risk that there may not be any applicants for vacant posts, however recent experience demonstrates that there was a wealth of applicants for member types (councillor, independent or tenant). We will continue with the same recruitment approach, where necessary.

## **Financial Implications**

47. There are no significant financial implications directly associated with this report.

## **Legal Implications**

48. There are no significant legal implications associated with this report.

## **Overview and Scrutiny Engagement**

49. This Annual Report is for noting by Cabinet. This Annual Report was presented to WCHB at the AGM on 27 November 2024. It was presented to the Environment Select Committee (ESC) on 14 January 2025. It is being presented to the Cabinet on 21 January 2025.

## **Conclusions**

50. There is increasing evidence that Wiltshire Council's Housing Board is having a positive impact on the quality of service provision to residents and their families, has itself created an additional opportunity for residents to engage with the service and shaped further engagement opportunities.

## **James Barrah (Director - Assets)**

---

Report Author: Ian Seeckts, Governance and Scrutiny Officer,  
[ian.seeckts@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:ian.seeckts@wiltshire.gov.uk), Tel: 01722 434353

## **Appendices**

None