



## **Resident Board**

**Thursday 10 June 2021**

## **ZOOM Meeting**

**Main Meeting 6:30pm until 8:00pm**

Join Zoom Meeting (accessible from 6pm)

<https://zoom.us/j/9052143290?pwd=UTg0V25VUDN6STFOOFJHeVhRTTd1Zz09>

Meeting ID: 905 214 3290

Passcode: 583034

### **Agenda**

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Minutes from previous meeting
4. Action Log
5. Q4 Performance
6. Complaints 20/21 Annual Report
7. Update on fire safety
8. Forward Plan
9. AOB
10. DONM

**Date of next meeting Thursday 16 September 2021 6.30pm -8pm**

**Venue – ZOOM Video Conference**

## Resident Board

**Wednesday 24 February 2021**

## ZOOM Meeting

**Main Meeting 6:30pm until 8:00pm**

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**Present:**

Aruna Bhatt	(AB)	Chair
Elizabeth Fitzgerald	(EF)	Co-Chair
Angela Shine	(AS)	Member
Carol Douet	(CD)	Member
Darwin Bernardo	(DB)	Member
Eileen Langan	(EL)	Member
Jade Lan	(JL)	Member
Jennifer Gentle	(JG)	Member
Linda Graham	(LG)	Member
Tatiana Jose	(TJ)	Member
Zac Gonis	(ZG)	Member
Deborah Beckford	(DBc)	Customer Engagement Co-Ordinator
Tim Blanc	(TB)	Head of Community Engagement
Camille Yerles	(CY)	Customer Involvement Officer
Greg Terefenko	(GT)	Head of Housing Management
Ryan Bolton	(RB)	Head of Repairs & Estates
Stuart Bishop	(SB)	Head of Property Services
Kate Laffan	(KL)	Director of Customer Experience and Improvement
Laura Davison	(LD)	Head of Customer Experience

Item	Title
1	<b>Welcome &amp; apologies</b> Full attendance
2	<b>Minutes from previous meeting</b> Everyone agreed with the minutes from the previous meeting.
3	<b>Action Log</b> Nothing to discuss on the action log All actions have been completed
4	<b>Q3 Performance</b> <p>KL: For those who had previously seen the quarterly performance report, we are now trying a different format and we would appreciate any feedback. We will also try to give you benchmarking information so you can get a sense of where we fit against other providers.</p> <p>On the first page, you can see there is a quick snapshot of how we have been doing against the last quarter. We can see that in Q2 we have made some positive direction of travel, we have fewer red indicators. We are getting closer to our targets.</p> <p>Tonight, most of the operational Heads of Services are present, so we will do our best to try and answer as many questions as possible. The only representation that we don't have is around homelessness from Housing Options.</p> <p>AB: We will go page by page and invite members to ask their questions.</p> <p>JL: The first thing that stuck out to us is that we can see the overall tenant satisfaction in the report, but we are not able to see leaseholder satisfaction. We were wondering if you have the data, and if you could include it in the future reports?</p> <p>KL: We do measure overall leaseholder satisfaction, but it is not on this report. We can include it next time around in Q4 and we could add additional indicators for you to track.</p> <p>JL: Thanks. We also had another question around the targets. I am interested to know about who sets the targets, how is the number set, and what is the process to set them up?</p> <p>KL: What you will notice with targets is that generally they are never set at 100%, and particularly with satisfaction because it is a perception indicator. The only target that is set at 100% is gas safety because it is a matter of life and death, and there is no tolerance. But in terms of other target setting, we have an annual process to review targets, and we have a document called the 'delivery plan' which Barnet Homes shares with the council committee structure. We propose the targets ourselves, and usually then in dialogue with council colleagues and our Board we agree on these targets, and then the council committee signs them off. Sometimes the council might challenge our proposed targets if they think we are not setting stretching targets. But when setting a target, it is very important to find a balance between having a target that is challenging but also realistic</p>

and achievable. We have recently set next year's targets, and in light of COVID-19 and other challenges, we had to adjust to make more realistic for the operating environment. For example, in Income Collection

JL: Thank you very much. And, I agree, but what would be interesting is to benchmark against other boroughs, to see who is doing better or worst. And maybe we should share knowledge across boroughs to help re-shape the targets but also to help others.

KL: We regularly look into benchmark exercises with HouseMark. And we do look at who is best in the sector, to know who to contact to do a best practice visit. We often had people visit Barnet Homes to share best practice in areas that we excel in.

JL: For the satisfaction of repairs being completed right the first time, there is a monitor in the Q3 target. What does the monitor means?

RB: The reason why the satisfaction that repairs is completed right the first time has a monitor against the Q3 target is that we completely changed the methodology to collect data. We now monitor satisfaction over a year to understand what the baseline figure is, to set an achievable but stretching target. Next year's target will be 83%. And this is based on last year's monitoring exercise. The reason why we changed the methodology is because of HouseMark, which released a revised methodology for calculating the first-time fix.

KL: Wherever possible we try to use Housemark's methodology to make it easy to compare ourselves with others.

JL: It would be interesting to see how they monitor such things. I would think that for the satisfaction of repairs, they would ask tenants or leaseholders, but it seems like this has changed over time. Is there a document that explains how HouseMark measures such things?

RB: Yes, there is guidance which we can share with you. We now measure satisfaction for repairs via text messages just after the completion of the repair. We also have around 200 surveys a month that are being returned from residents upon completion of repairs, and we use that data to shape overall satisfaction.

JL: is 200 a lot? How many repairs are we looking at?

RB: The number pre-covid was 2000 repairs a month. But this has fluctuated through the pandemic. And for example, at the moment we are delivering only essential and emergency repairs, so this has affected the number of repairs completed each month.

KL: Is it fair to say that a text with an option to complete a survey goes out after the completion of every repair?

RB: Yes absolutely.

TJ: When looking at the overall satisfaction, why is non-secure tenants' satisfaction not included?

LD: We survey non-secure customers using the same methodology we use for tenants and leaseholders. Since Q3, we use an independent company called TLF to contact our non-secure customers. By the end of Q4, we will have a good number of non-secure customers survey responses. Traditionally, for overall satisfaction, we use only secure tenants because it is what we need to be able to benchmark against HouseMark. But we

do think it is very important to hear about the experience of customers who live in non-secure accommodations. We use the same set of questions that we use for secure tenants, and very similar to leaseholder as well. We recently started to survey people living in our temporary accommodations. We think it is important to engage with all our customer groups, and we can share those results with you quarterly. But for the indicators that the council looks at, it is only tenant satisfaction.

TJ: And with HouseMark you said you are using the benchmark, does this mean that other boroughs do not measure non-secure tenant satisfaction?

LD: I would have to check that; it is a very good question because it would be interesting if we could do a benchmark exercise for non-secure tenants.

KL: I am not absolutely sure, but I think we have got quite a unique scenario in Barnet because not all local authorities have regeneration estates with non-secure tenants living on these estates as a form of TA. So, we will certainly ask HouseMark the question, and it would be useful if they can provide any comparative data. But for the action log, it would be useful to show leaseholder satisfaction along with non-secure satisfaction and going forward we will report these as additional information for Q4 Performance Reports.

LD: And we can also break it down by questions unless it is too much information. We can share that as an appendix and create a dashboard.

TJ: Thank you, yes it would be interesting to reflect on the whole service rather than showing only one group of customers because otherwise you are not giving the full picture.

KL: Yes absolutely, and we will go back and ask Housemark if they can provide any comparative data.

DB: It was great to see in atHome that repairs services have moved in-house. But I was wondering where the new repairs employees are coming from, are they coming from Mears? How do you solve problems emerging from employees coming from the old contractor, what lessons have been learned? How do you measure and monitor this new in-house service?

RB: We have in-sourced old contracts we had with Mears for repairs, void delivery, and gas. We had a legal obligation under employment law to offer employment to these Mears employees. it is called Tupe, and if staff were eligible then we had an obligation to tupe transfer these employees. We had 60 employees transferred from Mears. A lot of these people are still with us today, but others have been managed out, some have also been made redundant.

We have also brought in some new managers into the service, and we have gone out to the market to find the very best people that we can to fill in the roles available in the new structure. But we now have a combination of ex Barnet Homes staff, ex Mears staff, and new staff.

In terms of skills when we Tupe transferred the operatives from Mears we did a skills assessment on them. And we are still in the process of delivering additional training based on that assessment. Mears also provided training and L&D reports, and because they did not have that much learning and development in the last couples of years we started fresh with a new training programme to make sure they get to the level they need to be at.

And about the management of contractors, we try to deliver as much as possible with our employees, but for specialist things, we do need to outsource professionals. So over time when it makes commercial sense to do so, we will deliver that work in-house, but we do need to use some other contractors for certain specialist services. We do see it as a

priority to measure customer satisfaction of the repairs service delivered by external contractors.

DB: And in this new digital world, how much are they retaining from online training? Because sometimes there is a gap between theoretical training compare to a real-life situation? How do you ensure they are confident and comfortable? How do you move away from theory to practice and ensure a smooth transition?

RB: Yes, and it has been an absolute challenge, but we have not been able to do training physically with large groups of operatives due to the current restrictions. We have carried out some mandatory training via Zoom and MS team but this is not ideal. We are in the process of setting up a training hub to deliver specific training to managers, supervisors, and staff as soon as we come out of lockdown. This will include Health and Safety Briefings, toolbox talks and specific training sessions aimed at upskilling the work force.

DB: We were astonished to hear that some operatives from external contractors are coming to the properties without the correct PPE. How do you ensure your contractors are keeping residents safe? And how do you also ensure to maintain Barnet Home's reputation safe?

RB: We did get isolated complaints from residents saying operatives turned up without PPE in Q3. We did send a clear message at the start of the pandemic regarding strict safety measures in place, but we reissued that message by end of Q3 about how strict we should be in terms of safety. And since we had barely any complaints. We appointed a Senior Health and Safety Compliance manager within the service, who is now doing audits and regular safety checks on operatives and contractors to ensure they are adhering to COVID-19 safety measures.

JL: If 60 employees were transferred from Mears, how many employees do you have in total?

RB: The majority of employees are the ex-Mears staff. Out of the total of repairs operatives and gas engineers, we transferred across, 25% will be new or agency staff that we brought in.

JL: Okay thanks.

RB: When you have an in-sourcing exercise, it's a massive challenge in itself because you have to set up new IT, procedures, hardware etc. And there has been additional pressure with the pandemic and most staff working from home.

My honest assessment is that we are a bit behind, but it is because most staff are working from home. And when staff will be back in the office it will drive performance.

AS: About the fire risk and the cladding. How much cladding in the borough has been removed and how much is there left to be removed?

SB: We are very aware of what our responsibilities are in terms of cladding. In terms of fire safety, the focus at the moment is on the building of 6 stories or 18m and above. We have in total 20 blocks falling in this category. Post Grenfell, we did checks on the cladding, and we had one significant block in Granville towers, and we had to remove the cladding and replace it, and that was done a year ago.

In all the other schemes, as part of a strict fire safety regime, we are carrying out fire safety surveys. But in terms of combustible cladding, we don't have any scheme in scope that is concerning. But there are new fire safety regulations and legislations coming up as part of a new Fire Safety bill. Which means that requirements on landlords will be

tougher, and we will need to do new assessments on all of our blocks. At the moment we are ahead of the game compared to other Local Authorities in London. We are fortunate in terms of the numbers, some of the bigger landlords have between 100 and 200 buildings to look at. Our number is around 20 so it is much easier to manage. But it won't be straightforward and to take on board all the new regulations we will have to take on new resources, and that's part of our strategy.

AS: Has the replacement of cladding cost the leaseholder any money? And are our buildings safe enough to not have fire wardens?

SB: We have increased our security patrol, but comparatively there is a low-level risk. We are not looking to carry this on across time, this is only a short-term measure. We will soon have new measures in place so we don't need the patrol. And in both situations, it does not cost leaseholders.

AS: What do you consider short-term in terms of the security patrol?

SB: We have extended it to another month, it is on a month by month basis because we know that shortly, we will be able to deal with the issue in different ways. For example, with sprinklers and fire alarms.

AS: I was told a few years ago, that fire alarms in communal areas are inefficient because if something goes wrong and the device is inefficient, the council or Barnet Homes is liable. Therefore, if residents want a fire alarm it should be down to them to install it and monitor it. So how will you monitor fire alarms to ensure that they are working at all the times?

SB: With new technologies, we can now monitor fire alarms remotely, so regular testing and reporting of problems will not be a problem anymore.

LG: There were two situations where there was increased security, can you name those two, please?

SB: Two schemes currently have extra safety patrols: Hanshaw Drive and Whitefields tower blocks.

JG: Fire doors don't meet the targets, and I was wondering when will they all be completed?

SB: We have an ongoing replacement programme to replace all fire doors that do not meet the current regulations. It is a significant programme as there are thousands of doors to replace. By the end of the year 2021/2022, we should have replaced all non-compliant doors. We will also introduce regular maintenance checks on the new fire doors – only alterations to fire doors approved by the Fire Safety team will be undertaken and these will be done by a specialist contractor.

JL: I had my door replaced and they did a fabulous job. And they came back to do a check after as well. But I think it was mentioned during our induction that there has been a pause in the programme, can we have an update on this?

SB: There might have been a slight delay due to COVID-19. These doors are manufactured elsewhere, and there was a period where contractors were not receiving the resources, they needed due to COVID-19. But we are now back on track, and it's going well despite the slight delay.



	<p>JL: It was reassuring to have people come to check the fire doors and following up. Thank you!</p> <p>ZG: What has been happening in terms of anti-social behaviour?</p> <p>GT: In terms of anti-social behaviour, we are seeing an increase in youth hanging around the estates. But on the other side, we are seeing a reduction in what we call 'high level' ASB. We are working closely with the police and other groups to address ASB. We are installing new door systems, to prevent people from outside the estate to enter. 'Low level' ASB is increasing, but 'high level' ASB is reducing due to proactive work. We are right in our target, and we prioritise evicting perpetrators of high-level ASB. 'Low level' ASB is mainly increasing because of lockdown, youth are out of school and people have nowhere else to go. And when we benchmarked against other providers, we have noticed the same. This is an issue across the UK at the moment.</p> <p>DB: What is 'high' and 'low ASB</p> <p>GT: 'low level' of ASB relates to youth congregating and causing graffities for example. It also means that we would not consider taking tenancy enforcement actions, which means taking the premises off the tenant. 'High level' of ASB relates to drug trafficking, breaking entry, what police would class as a serious crime</p> <p>DB: ASB with youth congregating is a known issue. Who would you refer the young people to, and who are the partners we are working with to help reduce ASB?</p> <p>GT: TB is my go-to person. We have regular conversations to talk about youth and ASB, but also look at employment and skills, as well as sources of funding for development opportunities.</p> <p>TB: In the past, when we have received a high level of youth related ASB, the ASB Team would normally have a conversation with me and we would carry visit in the estates and engage with organisations such as Art Against Knives. As an example, on The Grange estate, a couple of years ago, we had youth-related issues and we commissioned Arts Against Knives to deliver youth provision for 3 years. Whether it is a high or low level of ASB there is a need for a multi-agency approach.</p>
5	<p><b>Q3 Complaints</b></p> <p>TB gave an overview of the Q3 complaints report on behalf of Laura Giles, Head of Strategy and Compliance, who could not attend the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is something of a strange time for you to be reviewing complaints, because this area has been impacted by COVID-19. It's difficult for us to compare performance meaningfully with previous years because we're not providing a full service in some areas and are experiencing unprecedented issues across all services. Complaints are lower than they were a year ago, but it's difficult to tell how much of that is due to COVID. We have seen an increase in complaints throughout the year following the significant decline during the first lockdown.</li> <li>• The key context regarding complaints is that we were previously experiencing very high numbers of complaints about Repairs under Mears. We expected, in time, for complaints to reduce due to the service coming in-house and although it's hard to tell exactly where we stand because of the impact of COVID, we have seen a reduction in complaints in this area.</li> </ul>



- We can definitely see an impact of COVID on the most common primary theme of complaints, with Delay being higher than Customer Care for the first time in a long time. This is understandable due to the number of repairs jobs that are on hold while we deliver an essential repairs-only service.
- Performance in time (that's answering complaints within 10 working days) was unusually low in Q3. Due to the high number of Repairs complaints, the team's performance has a significant impact on overall results, and Repairs' performance during the last quarter was unusually poor. This is currently being explored with the service so that we can drive improvements.
- Satisfaction with complaints-handling remains an area of challenge. We've had very low completion rates of the surveys and have found that customers seem more likely to respond if they have experienced a continuing issue. We've been able to introduce telephone surveys in 2021, and hope this will give us a better completion rate, so we understand better how we're doing. We're making sure to follow up on the comments received where customers believe their issue has not yet been resolved.
- Finally, the complaints report is quite long and detailed, so I'd appreciate any feedback members have on how easy it was to understand, and on how useful the information is - is it pitched at the right level, and do they want to focus on any particular aspects of complaints-handling, or for anything in this report to not be included next time?

DB: The report shows that repairs had 159 complaints. And because you mentioned earlier that 75% of staff came from Mears, and that complaints were higher under the Mears contract, do you think there is a correlation between the two? Is there a pressing need to push on training for operatives get to the standards?

RB: A majority of complaints relate to repairs not being completed within the timeframe, and this is due to our reduced services. Looking at the overall complaints, pretty much every organisation in our sector are receiving the highest number of complaints around repairs. And that's because we have the most contact with residents. I don't think we are massively behind compare to other organisations. The repairs service is always the most complained about service due to its nature.

We now have started to do customer care training for all the Mears staff that came across. And we are still looking to improve on the communication side of things, to better communicate with residents when we don't achieve that first-time fix. It is still a work in progress, and it is hard to compare the numbers truthfully due to fluctuations between pre and post covid world. But we are focusing on looking at the lesson learned and what is coming out of the complaints so we can improve the service.

JG: I wanted to go back to section 4.1.4 which touches on the fire doors and the quality of the installation. It looks like there have been complaints around the quality of the fire door installation. Are you using the same contractor for the whole programme or do you use different contractors? And how do you monitor satisfaction over time?

SB: The whole programme has been left to a single contractor and this is as part of the value for money exercise. Getting one contractor is much more cost-efficient. That being said we are constantly monitoring what our contractor is doing, and given they will be installing many thousands of doors, I think inevitably we will get the odd situation where perhaps the quality of installation is not what we expected the first time around. While we

	<p>see 15 complaints about Property Services, I am not sure how many are related to the fire doors but that could be 2 or 3. Relatively I don't believe this is a cause for concern, but we have project managers and RLO constantly scrutinising the contract. And if any issues are identified by us or residents, we will take them directly to the contractor.</p> <p>DB: What does delay means to Barnet Homes, especially in a world where people are confined in their homes for a long period. What is an acceptable amount of time to hear back from Housing Officers?</p> <p>GT: In respect of whether people are working from home, delays exacerbate the frustration. What's acceptable to our customers is 10 days response time and this is set according to the standard across the sector. But I believe the frustration is around lack of communication and update. And it does frustrate me as Head of the Service if we don't at least update our customers about the progress of their requests promptly. And I have asked the complaints manager to come to my meeting monthly to show what best practice looks like. Of course, we will always have complaints, but what is in our remit is to better manage the way we communicate with our customers, and that's what we are going to focus on because that's what we can change. And as an action for myself, I will go back and find out if there are any opportunities to review our processes from a Housing Management perspective.</p> <p>AB: We are running out of time, DB if you have any additional questions please send them to me and I will forward them to GT.</p> <p>TB: There are a couple of areas for members to consider, in the report it does cover stage 1 and 2, and previous quarters are included. So that's one area to ensure the Resident Bard monitors during future meetings. And if we move down on the report there is a lesson learned section, which covers points raised regarding repairs and housing management. It is for the Resident Board to ensure they keep track of this and look for improvements in the next quarter. If members have any other questions, please pass them over to DBc or CY so they can pass them to Laura Giles.</p> <p>AB: Thank you to all the Head of Services for coming to our first Resident Board meeting.</p>
6	<p><b>Resident Board Forward Plan</b></p> <p>TB invited the RB to discuss the priority areas it wanted to focus on for their 2021/22 forward plan</p> <p>AB: We are now going to discuss the Resident Board moving forward, and the areas we would like to focus on. Last year we looked at the three-following service areas: Repairs contract, Gas contract and the Building Fire Safety. I want your views about what you feel should be a priority for the coming year.</p> <p>CD: I'd like us to do more scrutiny on complaints, and on all aspects of complaints, whether it is leaseholders or tenants. Complaints are always really high, and I think we should scrutinise this at every meeting. It is not okay to have these many complaints, I don't think it is acceptable.</p> <p>TB reminded the RB the Resident Support Group is in place to support the Board and be actively taking part in service reviews, such as taking part in focus group, surveys and mystery shopping</p> <p>CD: I want feedback on the training that is happening with the repairs staff. And ask why staff who are getting complaints are still working with Barnet Homes, and why are they</p>

still keeping the old staff? I am conscious that you can't just fire people, but I want to know what they are doing to improve the standards of work?

TB: If you look at the report you can see a lot of lessons learned, so the expectation is that everything that is listed highlight the areas they are working on, so there should be a reduction in the next quarter. And if not, you should ask them why not, and how many of the lessons learned are working.

CD: So, we should look at how many of the lessons learned have been learned really.

TB: So far in the forward plan, I have leaseholder satisfaction, complaints, gas and repairs, ASB, building and fire safety. Any others?

AS: Yes, lack of communication with housing officers, because you can never see them or get hold of them, you are never sure who they are.

TB: Let's put that as the entire Customer Experience programme. You got six items in your plan so far, so you will need to think about what the priority for the June meeting is.

DB: Does gas fall under repairs automatically?

TB: Yes, I have listed gas and repairs as one.

DB: Looking at repairs, complaints, leaseholder, building safety, and customer experience, and that seems to encompass everything.

LG: I have a question around leaseholder, what if a leaseholder rents its property, how is this information captured in terms of who is living there?

Board requested an understanding of leaseholder obligation around gas safety checks. (add to action log)

TB: I have added the role of the absent landlord within the leaseholder piece of work, so we can encompass that as a whole.

EL: I'm wondering if the calls are recorded, if so how is this monitored? Can this be used for training purposes? Also, in terms of booking repair appointments, how flexible can they be? Can there be late night appointments ie after 5 pm or weekends to accommodate people who are working?

TB: I don't know if calls are being monitored. But it is a valid point and we will report back on this.

LG: Do managers have the ability to listen-in a call when an operator is dealing with a customer.

TB: Yes, they do, and what would have happened normally as part of your Resident Board induction, we would have invited you to our Customer Contact Team to take part in listening-in. But that should still happen when things go back to normal.

AS: When you reach out to most companies via phone it first says, 'your call is being monitored'. Why Barnet Homes does not monitor calls? This could be used for training purposes.

TB: Let's add this to the question log.

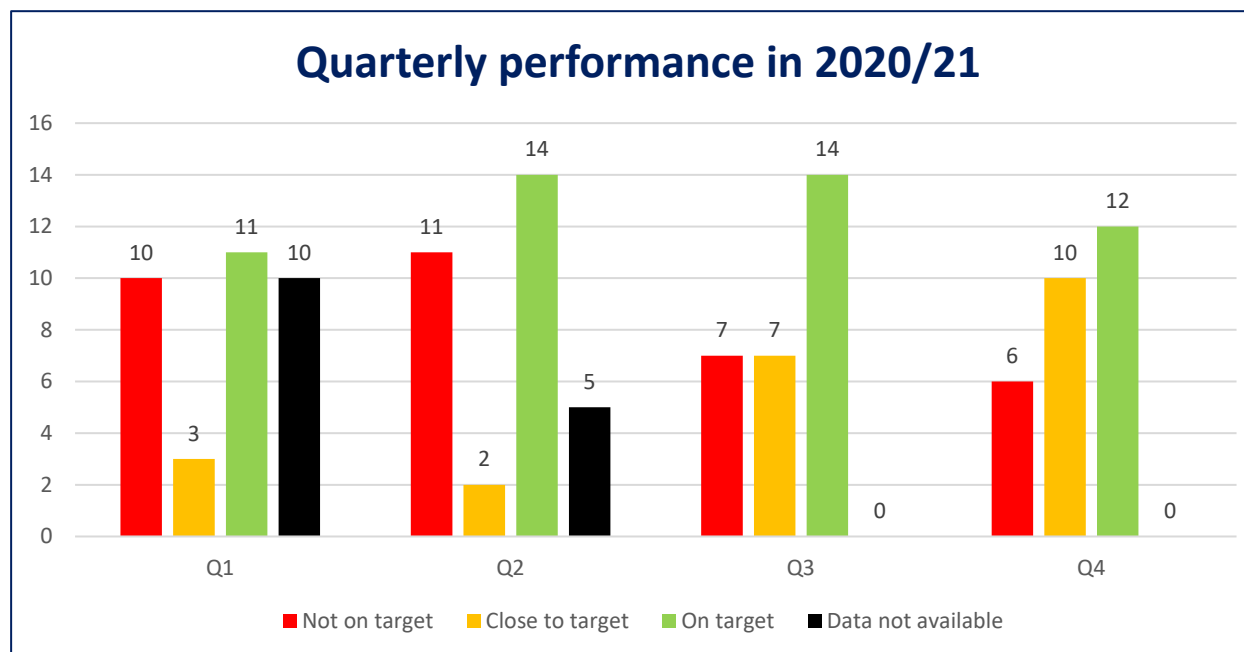
<b>7</b>	<b>AOB</b> No AOB
<b>8</b>	<b>DONM</b> Thursday 10 June 2021

draft

## The Barnet Group Ltd

<b>Title of Report:</b>	Barnet Homes Q4 Performance Report, 10 <sup>th</sup> June 2021
<b>Nature of Report:</b>	To update the Resident Board on performance against the Barnet Homes Annual Delivery Plan as at Q4 2020/21
<b>Approved by:</b>	Elliott Sweetman, Group Director, Operations & Property, The Barnet Group Ltd

### The number of indicators at Red, Amber and Green in Quarter 1-Quarter 4.



#### **Data not available:**

Some indicators in Q1 & Q2 have no data available because they were only introduced later in the year.

Indicator key					
Not on target	Close to target	On target	Data not available	No target. The indicator is for tracking purposes only	Wider customer indicator suite

Indicator	Performance in the past 4 quarters				Q4 Target	Is Q4 performance better or worse than Q3?	Commentary & Benchmarking data against peer organisations in London Boroughs
	Q1 2020/21 (Jun-2020)	Q2 2020/21 (Sep-2020)	Q3 2020/21 (Dec-2020)	Q4 2020/21 (Mar-21)			
Overall secure tenant satisfaction with Barnet Homes as a social housing provider	77.1%	62.1%	77.6%	67.1%	80%	Worse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 71.0%</li> <li>TLF (independent company) completes perception surveys with secure tenants each quarter.</li> <li>Benchmarking: Barnet Homes were ranked equal 4<sup>th</sup> out of 16 organisations, in the top quartile (the last time that we benchmarked).</li> </ul>
Overall non secure tenant satisfaction with Barnet Homes as a social housing provider	N/A	N/A	55.8%	61.3%	62%	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 57.9%</li> <li>TLF also completes perception surveys with non-secure tenants each quarter.</li> <li>Other local authorities do not collect benchmarking data for non-secure tenants, as this is not a typical tenure type except on regeneration estates.</li> </ul>
Overall leaseholder satisfaction with Barnet Homes as a social housing provider	51.2%	32.6%	51.2%	52.3%	55%	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 46.6%</li> <li>Benchmarking: Barnet Homes were ranked 4<sup>th</sup> out of 10 peer organisations, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile (the last time that we benchmarked).</li> </ul>

Indicator	Performance in the past 4 quarters				Q4 Target	Is Q4 performance better or worse than Q3?	Commentary & Benchmarking data against peer organisations in London Boroughs
	Q1 2020/21 (Jun-2020)	Q2 2020/21 (Sep-2020)	Q3 2020/21 (Dec-2020)	Q4 2020/21 (Mar-21)			
Overall secure tenant satisfaction with overall quality of their home	80.8%	63.8%	73.9%	62.5%	80%	Worse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 70.2%</li> <li>Benchmarking: Barnet Homes were ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 16 peer organisations, in the top quartile (the last time that we benchmarked).</li> </ul>
Overall non secure tenant satisfaction with overall quality of their home	N/A	N/A	51.7%	46.7%	N/A	Worse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 49.7%</li> </ul>
Overall secure tenant satisfaction with Barnet Homes providing a home that is safe and secure	80.8%	65.4%	77.2%	72.1%	N/A	Worse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 73.9%</li> </ul>
Overall non secure tenant satisfaction with Barnet Homes providing a home that is safe and secure	N/A	N/A	46.7%	64.0%	N/A	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 53.3%</li> </ul>
Overall secure tenant satisfaction with Barnet Homes is easy to deal with	73.8%	60.4%	67.6%	66.2%	N/A	Worse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is</li> </ul>



Indicator	Performance in the past 4 quarters				Q4 Target	Is Q4 performance better or worse than Q3?	Commentary & Benchmarking data against peer organisations in London Boroughs
	Q1 2020/21 (Jun-2020)	Q2 2020/21 (Sep-2020)	Q3 2020/21 (Dec-2020)	Q4 2020/21 (Mar-21)			
Overall non secure tenant satisfaction with Barnet Homes is easy to deal with	N/A	N/A	53.3%	60.0%	N/A	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 55.9%</li> </ul>
Overall secure tenant satisfaction with their neighbourhood as a place to live	82.9%	71.7%	84.6%	75.8%	80%	Worse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 66.6%</li> <li>Benchmarking: Barnet Homes were ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 16 peer organisations, in the top quartile (the last time that we benchmarked).</li> </ul>
Overall non secure tenant satisfaction with their neighbourhood as a place to live	N/A	N/A	46.7%	57.3%	N/A	Better	
Overall secure tenant satisfaction with the repairs service received	N/A	89.2%	80.7%	80.7%	88%	Same	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 83.4%</li> <li>For Q4, reasons for underperformance include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delays in carrying out works</li> <li>Repairs outstanding</li> </ul> </li> <li>Repairs was reduced to an 'essential-only' service. Full-service resumed on the 14<sup>th</sup> April.</li> <li>No benchmarking data is available.</li> </ul>

Indicator	Performance in the past 4 quarters				Q4 Target	Is Q4 performance better or worse than Q3?	Commentary & Benchmarking data against peer organisations in London Boroughs
	Q1 2020/21 (Jun-2020)	Q2 2020/21 (Sep-2020)	Q3 2020/21 (Dec-2020)	Q4 2020/21 (Mar-21)			
Overall non secure tenant satisfaction with the repairs service received	N/A	90.9%	77.3%	84.2%	88%	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 82.5%</li> </ul>
Overall secure tenant satisfaction that repair was completed right first time	N/A	85.4%	78.5%	84.0%	N/A	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 82.3%</li> <li>Since July 2020, this indicator measures tenants' own view of whether the repair was completed right first time. This is based on feedback received from residents via SMS text surveys, following the completion of the repair.</li> </ul>
Overall non secure tenant satisfaction that repair was completed right first time	N/A	90.6%	69.7%	86.1%	N/A	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 79.1%</li> <li>There is no target for this indicator.</li> </ul>
% Properties with Current Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR)	99.73%	100%	99.99%	99.93%	100%	Worse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Q4, gas compliancy is not 100% due to 6 properties not allowing access as tenants were following government shielding.</li> <li>Shielding guidelines ended on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and appointments were booked for the remaining 6 properties to get a valid LGSR.</li> <li>All properties have now been accessed and April should return to 100% - unless any self-isolation cases emerge.</li> </ul>

Indicator	Performance in the past 4 quarters				Q4 Target	Is Q4 performance better or worse than Q3?	Commentary & Benchmarking data against peer organisations in London Boroughs
	Q1 2020/21 (Jun-2020)	Q2 2020/21 (Sep-2020)	Q3 2020/21 (Dec-2020)	Q4 2020/21 (Mar-21)			
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benchmarking: In 2019/20, Barnet Homes were ranked 7<sup>th</sup> out of 18 peer organisations, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile.</li> </ul>
No. of new ASB cases per 1k properties	4.2	4.8	3.6	3.2	5	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2019/20, Barnet Homes were ranked 1<sup>st</sup> out of 11 peer organisations, in the top quartile.</li> </ul>
Average end to end time to complete major adaptation jobs	N/A	18.1 weeks	7.7 weeks	5.6 weeks	20 weeks	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 8.8 weeks.</li> <li>Adaptations contractor, Effectable, now deals with only those adaptations for which clients/ Occupational Therapists have expressed an urgent need, and where it is safe to proceed.</li> </ul>
Average re-let time for major works lettings	114.3 days	114.3 days	140.2 days	109.3 days	56 days	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 119.0 days.</li> <li>In Q4, performance was affected by longstanding voids with complex issues and issues with contractor performance.</li> <li>Benchmarking: In 2019/20, Barnet Homes were ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 14 peer organisations, in the top quartile.</li> </ul>
Average re-let time for routine lettings	62.5 days	59.4 days	40.5 days	32.2 days	20 days	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 43.8 days.</li> <li>In Q4, performance was affected by delays due to additional works requested after handover, refusals, incorrect information on documentation, and COVID-19. An additional contractor, MCP have been hired to help with resources.</li> </ul>

Indicator	Performance in the past 4 quarters				Q4 Target	Is Q4 performance better or worse than Q3?	Commentary & Benchmarking data against peer organisations in London Boroughs
	Q1 2020/21 (Jun-2020)	Q2 2020/21 (Sep-2020)	Q3 2020/21 (Dec-2020)	Q4 2020/21 (Mar-21)			
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benchmarking: In 2019/20, Barnet Homes were ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 17 peer organisations, in the top quartile.</li> </ul>
% of annual leaseholder service charge and arrears collected	26.4% (26% target)	61.3% (51% target)	84.3% (76% target)	103.2% (102.0% target)	102.0%	Better	
General needs tenants; current arrears as a percentage of the debit	4.34% (3.44% target)	4.42% (3.51% target)	4.50% (3.62% target)	3.96% (3.30% target)	3.30%	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This indicator has had good performance despite the impact of COVID-19. The arrears decreased in February to March 2021, due to targeted casework and campaigns.</li> <li>In 2019/20, Barnet Homes were ranked 7 out of 18 peer organisations, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile.</li> </ul>
Number of tenancy failures (evictions and abandonments)	0	0	0	0	5 per quarter	Same	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benchmarking for tenancy failures: in 2019/20, Barnet Homes were ranked 1 out of 3 peer organisations, in the top quartile.</li> <li>Benchmarking for evictions due to rent arrears: in 2019/20, for number of tenants evicted due to rent arrears as a percentage of all units, Barnet Homes were ranked 10<sup>th</sup> out of 18 peer organisations, which is the median value - between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile</li> </ul>
% of Priority 0 and 1 fire safety actions completed on time	100%	100%	98.5%	99.9%	90%	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priority fire safety actions continue to be undertaken wherever possible. These actions mainly take place in communal areas and can be completed in a COVID-secure way.</li> </ul>

Indicator	Performance in the past 4 quarters				Q4 Target	Is Q4 performance better or worse than Q3?	Commentary & Benchmarking data against peer organisations in London Boroughs
	Q1 2020/21 (Jun-2020)	Q2 2020/21 (Sep-2020)	Q3 2020/21 (Dec-2020)	Q4 2020/21 (Mar-21)			
Scheduled fire risk assessment completed (council housing) on time	100%	73.1%	100%	97.0%	100%	Worse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full year result is 92.8%</li> <li>Programme of FRAs continues in communal areas in line with priorities determined according to property type and client group.</li> </ul>
Number of homes purchased for use as affordable accommodation	1 (10 target)	9 (25 target)	17 (40 target)	21 (50 target)	n/a	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were 21 completions in Q4, bringing the total of completions to 48 in 2020/21, against a target of 125.</li> </ul>
Supply a range of housing available for care leavers, in particular for those ready to move into independent living	7	12	18	31	12 per quarter	Worse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>31 care leavers were housed in Q4, bringing the year-end total to 67 against a target of 48.</li> </ul>
Affordable housing delivered on council owned land	0 (0 target)	77 (93 target)	22 (14 target)	46 (38 target)	38	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In spite of delays to building completions from the pandemic, by year-end, 145 completions were achieved against a target of 144.</li> </ul>
Number of homelessness preventions	268	340	320	336	312	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>186 preventions were achieved in the month of March 2021.</li> <li>By year-end, 1264 preventions were achieved against a target of 1250. This is strong performance when considering the challenges presented by lockdown.</li> </ul>

Indicator	Performance in the past 4 quarters				Q4 Target	Is Q4 performance better or worse than Q3?	Commentary & Benchmarking data against peer organisations in London Boroughs
	Q1 2020/21 (Jun-2020)	Q2 2020/21 (Sep-2020)	Q3 2020/21 (Dec-2020)	Q4 2020/21 (Mar-21)			
Overall number of households in Temporary Accommodation (TA)	2654 (2400 target)	2561 (2350 target)	2499 (2300 target)	2399 (2250 target)	2250	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of households in TA fell from 2494 in February to 2399 in March.</li> <li>Reasons include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>39 clients moved to social housing (Council or Housing Association) units</li> <li>10 clients moved into private rented sector</li> <li>18 clients abandoned or found their own accommodation</li> <li>14 clients moved out/discharge of duty</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Households placed directly into the private rental sector (PRS)	142	168	185	152	152	Worse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By year-end, 647 households were placed in the PRS, against a target of 610.</li> </ul>
Families with Children in Temporary Accommodation	54.4%	54.5%	53.2%	52.3%	N/A	Better	
Rough sleeping in Barnet	11	14	7	11	20	Worse	
Households in Emergency Temporary Accommodation (ETA)	387	298	268	229	225	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The total number of clients in ETA dropped from 270 in February to 229 in March.</li> <li>The reasons were:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low number of new admissions</li> <li>High numbers of offers for social housing</li> <li>High number of properties handed back</li> </ul> </li> <li>The Accommodation Solutions Team continued to make significant progress moving clients</li> </ul>

Indicator	Performance in the past 4 quarters				Q4 Target	Is Q4 performance better or worse than Q3?	Commentary & Benchmarking data against peer organisations in London Boroughs
	Q1 2020/21 (Jun-2020)	Q2 2020/21 (Sep-2020)	Q3 2020/21 (Dec-2020)	Q4 2020/21 (Mar-21)			
							from expensive TA and those with disrepair issues to more suitable accommodation.
Length of stay in Current Emergency Temporary Accommodation	44.2 days	53.8 days	58.1 days	66.9 days	N/A	Worse	
Number of families with children living in Bed and Breakfast for more than 6 weeks	1	0	0	0	0	Same	
% of those households in ETA pending enquiries or found to be intentionally homeless	53.0%	37.9%	37.7%	34.5%	N/A	Better	
% of homeless appeals completed on time	98.1%	100%	100%	100%	95%	Same	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full-year result is 99.4%</li> </ul>
Temporary accommodation clients; current arrears as a percentage of debit	5.65% (5.85% target)	6.55% (5.77% target)	6.55% (6.05% target)	5.31% (5.20 target)	5.20%	Better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the full year, in monetary terms the total arrears were £1.2m, missing target by only £24k. This represents a continued reduction in arrears since September.</li> </ul>



### **Housemark benchmarking methodology:**

We use Housemark's benchmarking system to measure Barnet Homes' performance against our peers - other ALMOs and local authorities. Housemark's system provides us with annual benchmarked performance data in areas that include: the cost of service delivery, resources for delivery and customer satisfaction.

We submit performance data to Housemark annually. Housemark validate our submission by comparing it with source documents that are either publicly available or are used internally as part of our management and governance structure. The main document types that Housemark ask for include:

- Staff structure chart/establishment list/payroll records
- The CORE (continuous recording) lettings data that we submit to the National Register of Social Housing – to help validate our voids & lettings performance data.
- Star and StarT customer satisfaction data, plus other documentation that cross references with the satisfaction data in our benchmarking submission.

For customer satisfaction, Housemark say that the Star and StarT survey methodology is industry-standard, and that it achieves a 95% confidence threshold that the satisfaction results are accurate.

Above, where benchmarking data has not been provided, it is not available.

Meeting:	Resident Board
Date:	10 June 2021
Title of Report:	Barnet Homes Complaints Performance 2020/21

Report Author:	Laura Giles, Head of Strategy & Compliance Carly Williamson, Complaints & Information Manager	Date:	26/05/21
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Recommendations:
Members note and discuss the performance summarised in this report.

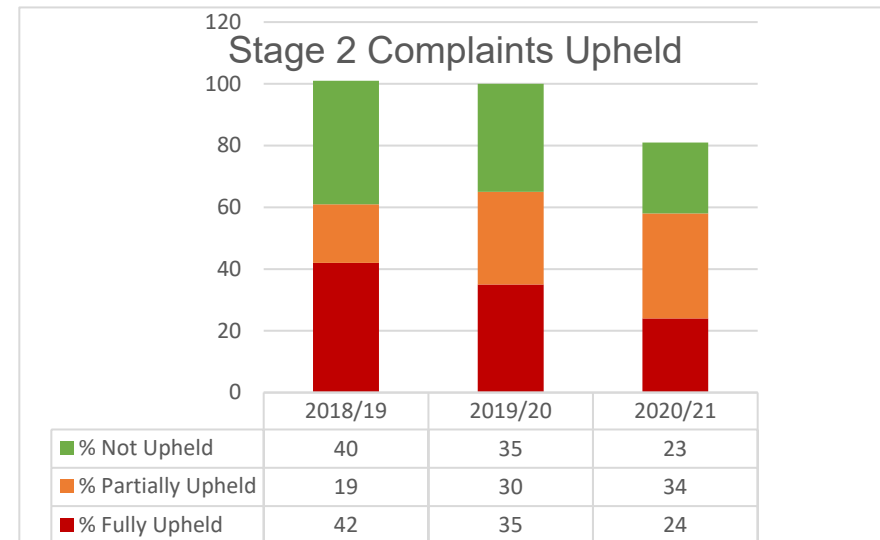
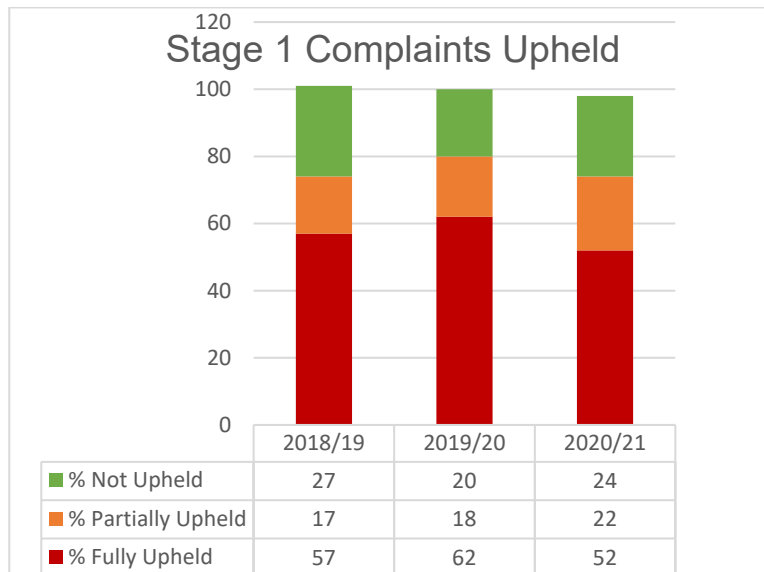
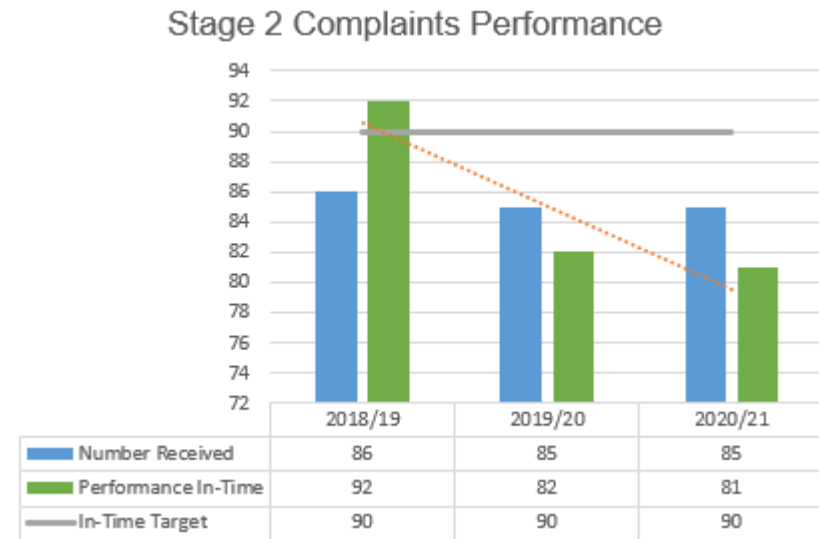
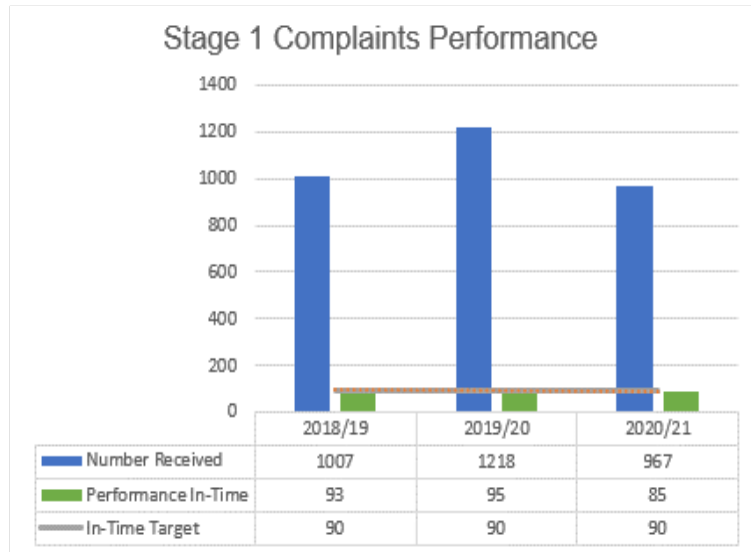
Executive Summary:
<p>It is difficult to draw meaningful performance comparisons between 2020/21 and 2019/20 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our service provision, particularly during the lockdown periods when significantly-reduced services were provided in line with government advice.</p> <p>In 2020/21 the number of Stage 1 complaints decreased by 20.6% compared to the previous year. This was largely driven in the first quarter when COVID-19 resulted in service restrictions or suspensions, and generally there was good customer understanding about this. Despite the impact of the restrictions, we are also hopeful that bringing the Repairs service in-house has had a positive impact as Repairs complaints have decreased by 36.8% - a higher proportion than the overall reduction.</p> <p>Gas has also historically been a high-volume complaints area, and the number of Gas complaints increased by 4.2% compared to 2019/20; however, more positively, in the second half of the year, 4.8% fewer Gas complaints were received than in the same period in the previous year, and it is again hoped that this is indicative of improvements following the service being brought in-house.</p> <p>Repairs and Gas complaints made up 66.7% of all complaints received; however, this had decreased by 5.7% compared to 2019/20.</p> <p>Stage 1 performance in time (answer within 10 working days) fell below target; this was largely driven by unusually poor performance in Repairs and Gas, although teams in Housing Management and Property also under-performed.</p> <p>The proportion of complaints escalated to Stage 2 increased from 7% to 9%, and Stage 2 performance in time remained below target.</p> <p>Customer Care as the primary theme for complaints decreased at Stage 1 and Stage 2, however there was an increased proportion of complaints about Service Failure and Quality at Stage 1 and Quality, Policy and Delay at Stage 2.</p>

## 1. Key performance indicators

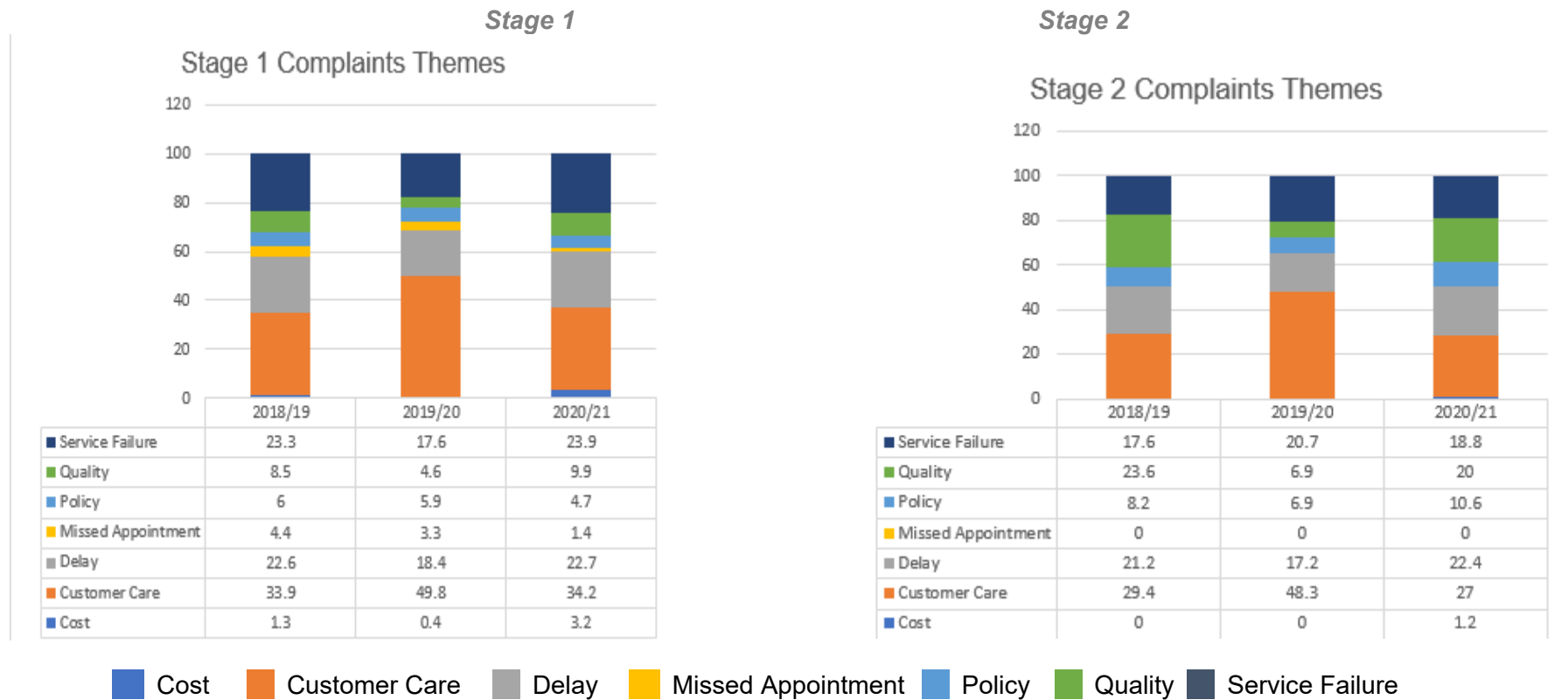
Performance Indicator	2020/21	2019/20	Comments
Number of Stage 1 complaints	<b>967</b>	1,218	20.6% decrease overall compared to 2019/20. This was largely driven in the first quarter when COVID-19 resulted in service restrictions or suspensions, and generally there was good customer understanding about this. Despite the impact of the restrictions, we are also hopeful that bringing the Repairs service in-house has had a positive impact as Repairs complaints have reduced by 36.8% - a higher proportion than the overall reduction.
% Stage 1 complaints answered in time <i>Target: 90%</i>	<b>85%</b>	95%	Declined performance largely driven by the high-volume complaints service of Repairs which did not perform to its usual standards for some months of the year as the service bedded in after it was brought in-house. Repairs' overall in time performance was 80% and given the large number the service receives this has driven down the overall in-time performance.
% Stage 1 complaints fully upheld	<b>52%</b>	62%	Large proportion of upheld complaints driven by Repairs and Gas. Lower number of complaints upheld in Housing Options and Growth & Development.
% Stage 1 complaints partially upheld	<b>22%</b>	18%	
% Stage 1 complaints not upheld	<b>24%</b>	20%	
Number of Stage 2 complaints	<b>85</b>	85	Despite the decrease in Stage 1 complaints, we received the same number at Stage 2 as last year, resulting in a higher proportion of complaints escalating. Performance may suggest that quality of complaints responses at Stage 1 has declined; however, it has also been noted that some complainants became more impatient during the year due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 restrictions and the impact of this on dealing with matters quickly. We have seen an increase in complaints about delay that also supports this.
% complaints escalated to Stage 2	<b>9%</b>	7%	
% Stage 2 complaints answered in time <i>Target: 90%</i>	<b>81%</b>	83%	Performance was below target again this year; whilst improvements were seen in some teams following targeted work on this, the under-performance is largely due to unusually poor performance in Repairs.
% Stage 2 complaints fully upheld	<b>28%</b>	35%	Complaints fully or partially upheld was slightly lower than at Stage 1.
% Stage 2 complaints partially upheld	<b>40%</b>	30%	
% Stage 2 complaints not upheld	<b>27%</b>	35%	

## 2. Complaints trends

2.1 The following charts highlight trends and direction of travel over the past three years.



- 2.2 Barnet Homes allocates a primary theme to each complaint received, and in 2020/21 there was a decrease in complaints related to customer care; service failure and delay became more prominent themes.



### **3. Common causes of complaints (top 5 service areas)**

#### **3.1 Stage 1**

##### **3.1.1 Repairs (423 complaints (669 in 2019/20)) and Gas (222 complaints (213 in 2019/20))**

- delays to roofing works
- poor communication with residents from contractors
- appointments being moved without the resident being informed.
- lack of contact from inspectors once an inspection has taken place
- PPE related complaints - more to contractors than our own staff.
- Gas - poor customer care; tenants not being kept informed about what is happening with outstanding repairs

##### **3.1.2 Housing Options (84 complaints (120 in 2019/20))**

- poor record keeping
- absence of case updates/ inconsistency in recording case notes.
- not following up actions
- lack of communication between Housing Options staff/other directorates

##### **3.1.3 Housing Management (124 complaints (98 in 2019/20))**

- increase in leaseholder complaints (+133%) due to delays in communicating with residents and providing information regarding right to buy, valuations, plans and general queries.
- Neighbourhood / ASB – delays in response from the Housing Officers on a variety of subjects

##### **3.1.4 Property (48 complaints (61 in 2019/20))**

- District heating system performance

##### **3.1.5 Customer Contact Team (29 complaints (17 in 2019/20))**

- poor customer service

##### **3.1.6 The decrease in Repairs complaints is a positive indication of the impact of bringing the service in-house; although a reduced service was provided for most of the year which may naturally lead to fewer complaints, the reduction of 36.8% for Repairs was greater than the overall reduction in complaints of 20.6%. Despite the slight increase in Gas complaints for the full year, results in the second half of the year following the service being brought in-house are also promising, with 4.8% fewer Gas complaints compared to the same period in 2019/20. The reduction in complaints about Housing Options is also positive given the pressures on the service during the pandemic.**

#### **3.2 Stage 2**

##### **3.2.1 The main reason complaints were escalated to Stage 2 is that we agreed with the complainant that the complaint wasn't answered in full at Stage 1. However, the number of Stage 2s stayed the same as in the previous year despite the decrease in Stage 1 complaints, and this may be due to complaints not being handled effectively at Stage 1; however, expectations may also have been elevated due to the increase in service delays as a result of the pandemic. We also saw escalations to Stage 2 because of a failure to deliver upon the promises that were made in the Stage 1 response – particularly in the Repairs service.**

- 3.2.2 For Repairs and Property the number of Stage 2 complaints increased in 2020/21 (Repairs 40 compared to 29, and Property 8 compared to 3). Housing Management Stage 2 complaints remained stable at 13, and Gas and Housing Options Stage 2 complaints decreased (Gas 6 compared to 11, and Housing Options 10 compared to 26). Performance in time was unusually poor in Repairs and Gas due to capacity issues following the service coming in-house, as well as in Housing Options and Property, but was above target in Housing Management.

#### 4. Satisfaction

- 4.1 Satisfaction surveys for complainants were introduced in 2020/21, and capture feedback one month after a complaint has been closed. From Q4, additional resource has been made available within the business to undertake these surveys by telephone, and this has resulted in a larger number of surveys being undertaken (127 in Q4 compared to 11 in Q3), which should improve the reliability of results and helps us to gain further insight where there is any dissatisfaction with complaints-handling.
- 4.2 Customer satisfaction with complaints-handling remains a challenging area. This is an emotive process, and we see from the qualitative comments provided by respondents that perceptions are clouded by ongoing issues with other areas of service provision. Results are also often shaped by resident satisfaction with the outcome of the complaint, and where they are not happy with this they often provide negative feedback about how the complaint was handled. We are finding that whilst we may consider the handling of their complaint to be contained to our formal process, customers often have experienced longer-term issues and may still feel that their concern has not been resolved to their satisfaction. We also know from discussions with peer organisations that surveys on complaints are likely to indicate lower levels of satisfaction.
- 4.3 However, it is positive to see a marked improvement in satisfaction for the full year compared to the results first reported in Q3. It is believed that the increase in satisfaction surveys being completed, with customers being contacted by telephone instead of being emailed the survey, is providing a more balanced view. We will continue to monitor trends over time, and use the qualitative comments to direct improvements wherever possible.

	Easy	Difficult
Thinking about when you first contacted Barnet Homes, how easy or difficult was it to report your complaint?	42%	47%
	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the information provided by staff regarding your complaint?	24%	59%
From when you first made your complaint, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the time it took to resolve your complaint?	21%	68%
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the actions Barnet Homes took to resolve your complaint?	21%	64%
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the final outcome of your complaint?	21%	66%
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your complaint was handled by Barnet Homes?	16%	61%
	Yes	No
Did our staff treat you with respect?	72%	26%



- 4.4 We know from comments provided that much of the dissatisfaction with ease of making complaints was not specifically about the complaints process, but rather about customer service and access overall. We will continue to encourage customers to give more detailed feedback in the telephone surveys so that improvements to services in general can be identified, in addition to any actions needed to enhance staff's complaints-handling.
- 4.5 Some of the qualitative comments from surveys highlight key issues affecting satisfaction, and are to be followed up on by the services affected to improve complaint-handling or address service issues; feedback is provided to services at the point of completion of the surveys to facilitate this. Areas affecting satisfaction included, for example:
- A belief that the complaint has not yet been answered.
  - Delays to follow-up works or actions to put the complaint right.
  - General dissatisfaction with the timeliness and/or quality of repairs works, rather than complaint-handling itself.
  - Ongoing issues with missed appointments
  - Reports of poor customer service and/or lack of ownership of issues – including poor communications and perceptions of slow email responses.
- 4.6 We will not always be able to satisfy our customers in terms of the outcome of a complaint, so it is important that we do our best to deliver excellent customer care and keep all promises that we make, to show them that we have taken their concerns seriously and fully investigated them, even if the final outcome is not what they might have hoped for. This is emphasised for staff who handle complaints in our procedures, related guidance and good practice information, and in briefings regularly delivered on effective complaints-handling.
- 4.7 Positively, there are also examples of good customer service being provided when handling complaints, with several comments about the support provided to help raise a complaint. This is important as we are aware that making a complaint can be a stressful experience for customers, and we have a responsibility to make the process as easy as possible.

## **5. Equality analysis**

- 5.1 In 2020/21, enhancements have been made to the complaints reporting suite that allow equality analysis (a review by the Equality Act's protected characteristics of the complainants) to be undertaken. At present this analysis is limited in its usefulness in identifying potential barriers or areas for improvement, as the organisation is still developing its ability to analyse service access in a similar way; we therefore do not know if the profile of complainants is representative of those accessing the services being complained about. However, we can compare it to the wider resident profile for the time being.
- 5.2 We will continue to monitor the observations made regarding the protected characteristics of complainants to identify any trends. As more information is made available about who is accessing services, the ability to compare this (for example, a particular group may be under-represented in its access to a service, but over-represented in the proportion of complaints about the service) will help us to identify any potential unequal impacts on protected characteristics, and improvements to address these. We will focus on the theme of Customer Care when undertaking equality analysis of complaints.

- 5.3 In the meantime, no significant observations were made in 2020/21 about the theme or outcome of complaints when analysing information about gender, age, religion or belief, or sexuality. We have, however, made the observations below about disability and ethnic origin. These initial results will continue to be monitored, as differences in the outcomes and/or themes of complaints could indicate barriers or issues for particular groups. Although further information on this is needed, there is already work underway to strengthen the Group's approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion, and actions such as providing unconscious bias training to staff may have a positive impact on diverse groups.

Protected Characteristic	Customer Care theme	Complaints Upheld	Complaints Partially Upheld	Complaints Not Upheld
Disability	Disproportionate representation of disabled customers (67% of all complaints from disabled customers were about Customer Care, compared to 30% from customers who are not disabled)	Complaints from disabled customers upheld more often (67%) than those from complainants without a disability (58%)	Complaints from disabled customers partially upheld more often (33%) than those from complainants without a disability (18%)	No complaints from disabled customers were not upheld, compared to 23% of complaints from those without a known disability.
Ethnic Origin	Disproportionate representation of those from an ethnic minority background (32% of all complaints from customers from an ethnic minority background, compared to 24% of all complaints from those from a white background). The highest proportion of complaints about Customer Care from any group were received by those from a Black / Black British background (37%, compared to 31% overall).	Complaints from customers from an ethnic minority background upheld (59%) less often than those from customers of a white background (63%)	Complaints from customers from an ethnic minority background partially upheld (14%) more often than those from customers of a white background (12%).	Complaints from customers from an ethnic minority background not upheld (27%) more often than those from customers of a white background (23%).

## **6. Lessons learnt**

- 6.1 Most lessons learnt from complaints were related to improving communications. Common steps taken in response to complaints were staff training, process reviews, improved use of systems, complaints handling briefings, increased monitoring by managers, and staffing level reviews and service changes.
- 6.2 Lessons learnt and improvements as a result of these are managed by service managers with monitoring support from the central Complaints and Information Team. Higher level lessons and improvements to complaints handling, and actions to strengthen Barnet Homes' complaints culture, are discussed by senior managers through the Operations Board's Service Improvement Group.
- 6.3 Often, complaints are about individual cases. Below are examples of actions taken in response to complaints from the teams receiving the most complaints.

### **Repairs:**

- Closer monitoring of the contractors required – full-time person working with the Planners to liaise with the contractors and chase outstanding orders.
- Further training for contractors on Repairs system.
- Monthly meeting with Contractors to address performance
- Recruitment to several posts, including Repairs Operational Manager, so Inspectors are being monitored more closely.

### **Gas:**

- Breakdown and Servicing workshops held to review performance and processes over the last six months to create actions to take forward to meet continuous improvement objectives.
- Complaints to play a key role in understanding where we need to improve, notably around productivity and planning.

### **Housing Options:**

- Updated the internal procedure for homelessness application
- Briefing to service to emphasise importance of up to date notes on systems.
- Housing Needs Officers briefed on the statutory guidance and internal procedures for managing cases.
- Housing Options Management team to remind their officers of the importance of our customers being kept up to date with their applications.

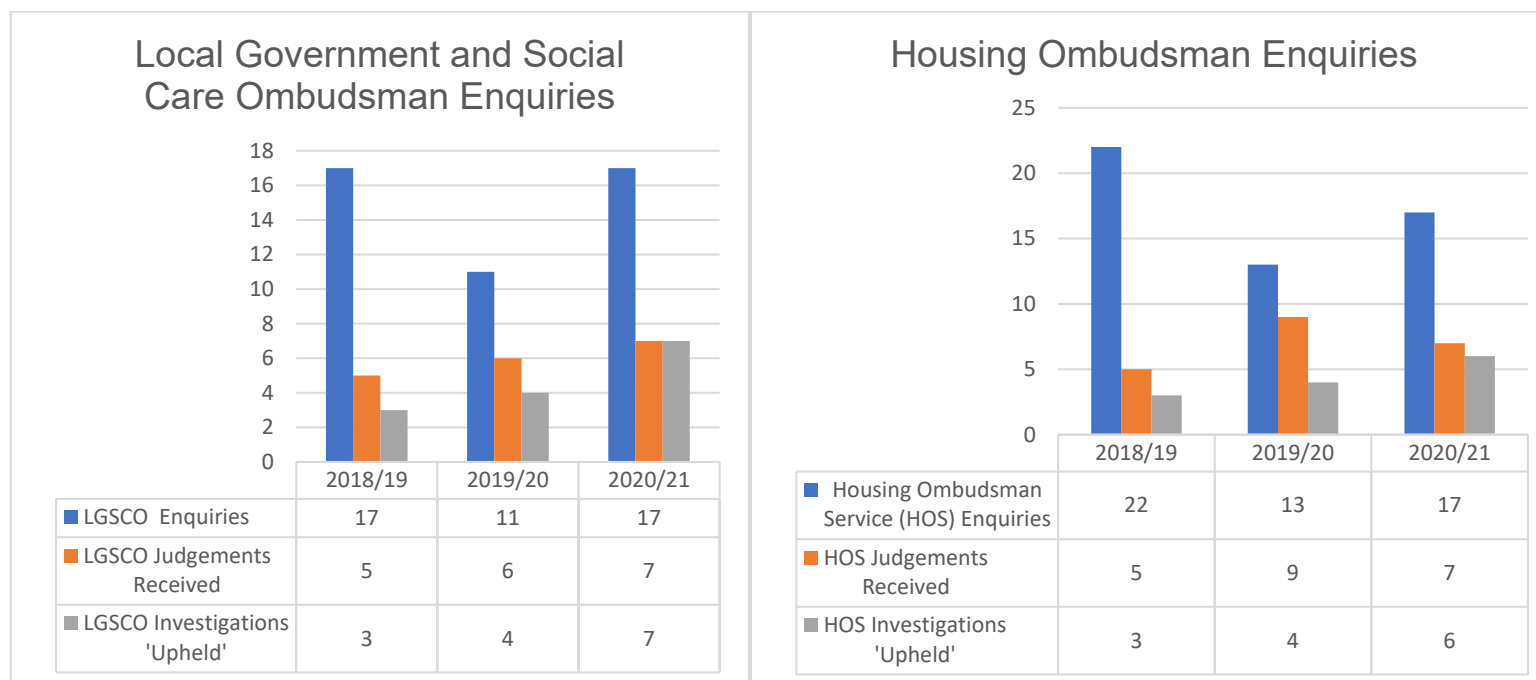
### **Housing Management:**

- Additional training for officers on Right to Buy process.
- Weekly workshop set up to understand complexities of leasehold queries on so that any system issues can be addressed.
- Commencement of weekly meetings with Legal and London Borough of Barnet to specifically look at any contract packs awaiting delayed plans

### **Property:**

- Letter out to all residents explaining the compensation process for when the District Heating System fails, to try to minimise customers making complaints because they do not feel informed.
- Fire Safety Project Manager doing spot checks during works to fire doors, and an inspection post work to ensure quality is of the expected standard.

## 7. Ombudsmen complaints



- 7.1 During 2020/21, Barnet Homes was notified of 34 customer complaints that had been referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) (complaints about homelessness, lettings, or adult social care) or the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) (complaints about landlord services); this was an increase of 10 compared to 2019/20. The majority of HOS queries concerned complaints about Repairs and Estates, with an increase of 75% compared to the previous year. The majority of LGSCO complaints were about Housing Options, with an increase of 33% compared to the previous year.
- 7.2 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's (LGSCO) and Housing Ombudsman Service's (HOS) annual reviews for 2020/21 have not yet been published; the reported numbers therefore reflect the queries Barnet Homes received from the Ombudsmen. It is likely that the full figures for Barnet Homes that are published by the Ombudsmen later this year, which we will review to understand how we compare to our peers, will be higher due to the number of queries they typically receive but decide not to follow-up (for example, those considered invalid or incomplete complaints, those where advice was given, and those that were referred back for local resolution).

## **Barnet Homes Fire Safety – Stuart Bishop**

### **Granville Towers – Fire safety Works**

Installation of sprinklers and other fire safety works to the three tower blocks are scheduled for 2021/22. Consultation on the retendered works will formally end on 28 May 2021 with works scheduled to commence in late June 2021.

### **Longford, Prospect and Norfolk Towers - Fire Safety Works**

These works will be fully completed by the end of June 2021 with completion slightly impacted by difficulties with access to all properties.

### **Whitefields Towers - Fire Safety Works**

The major programme of fire safety works to the three tower blocks on the Whitefields estate are now complete. This included replacement of front entrance doors and communal fire doors; fire stopping; fire detection system upgrades; class 'O' redecoration works to communal areas.

However, the evolving nature of government guidance in the last 2 years or so and the extended period before regeneration works commence, led us to engage a 3rd party expert fire consultant primarily to assess the way the cladding was installed and the associated fire and cavity breaks.

### **Whitefields Towers - Cladding Removal**

Following sample intrusive works, the fire consultant, Urban Change, determined that the cladding system should be removed to ensure additional safety for residents. It was recommended that this be done in the next three months and we have been able to mobilise Capital PCC consultants and specialist contractors, D + B Facades, with minimal delay.

Communications to residents and other stakeholders were rapidly organised and works have been underway for the past two weeks. Removal of cladding to all three blocks is scheduled to complete by the end of October 2021. There will be an element of making good to the textured concrete finish that will be left exposed and it may be that a more aesthetic solution is required - we will be led on this by LBB planning department.

An enhanced 24-hour security patrol has been put in place for the period of the cladding removal to facilitate the change from a stay put policy to an evacuation strategy in the event of a fire incident.

Residents will be recompensed for additional heating costs over the next 3 winter periods until the scheduled regeneration start in early 2024.

### **Whitefields Low-Rise Blocks**

Enhanced fire detection systems with an evacuation strategy are now proposed for these blocks. These works were tendered previously but not progressed given the impending regeneration but the delay in regeneration necessitates that we undertake risk mitigation now.

### **Other Medium and Low-Rise Blocks**

Expert consultants are undertaking in-depth FRAs and urgent works actioned as a priority, with other observations forming part of a longer-term planned programme of improvements. Almost 900 surveys have been undertaken with the remainder (approx. 100) scheduled for completion by the end of June 2021.

Costs for consequential works to these blocks are likely to be very significant and will require an enhancement of the agreed £52m fire safety budget.

### **Replacement of Composite Fire Doors**

The programme of GRP fire door replacements continues with c.1770 door installations now completed. Agreement has been reached with Morgan Sindall Property Services (MSPS) that these faulty doors will be replaced at the contractor's expense and liability resolved through independent adjudication when the work is finished.

There remains c.1850 doors to replace within the MSPS contract and the scheduled completion is September 2021.

### **Additional Programme of fire Door Upgrades**

Additionally, there are c.1400 fire door replacements required that were not the original Manse Masterdor products but fail to meet current criteria. These are being delivered outside of the MSPS contract.

### **Balcony Replacements**

In line with recent guidelines on the prescribed use of non-combustible materials in balcony construction, several new build schemes require balcony replacements to ensure compliance with fire safety requirements.

Balconies will be replaced at Barnet Homes schemes: Ansell Court, Octavia Court, Sapara Court and Beecham Court and at ODH schemes: The Croft, Burgundy Court and Gordon Court. Tenders are due back in June 2021 and works scheduled for completion in Q3 2021/22.

### **Fire Safety Bill**

The Fire Safety Bill received Royal Assent in April 2021.

We are obliged to undertake FRAs that assess the external wall and fire doors as a matter of course. There is also an expectation to check balconies and windows in relation to fire risk.

The Fire Safety Act introduces 'risk-based guidance' which, when defined, and if satisfied, will provide a proportionate approach to compliance.

For buildings currently 'in-scope' the government's building safety fund is accessible (and leaseholders are not required to contribute). For buildings between 11m and 18m, a loan is available for cost of cladding removal (leaseholders are expected to contribute and may be able to access loans to do so). This does not remove the controversial situation where leaseholders must pay for something that is out of their control.

The Building Safety Bill is due to receive Royal Assent later this year and its focus will be on the new regulatory regime and the need for Building Safety Cases for in-scope buildings.

## Barnet Homes Resident Board 2021\_22

### Forward Agenda Planning

Service Area	Head of Service	10 June 2021	16 September	2 December	February	Away Day/s	Comments ✓
Quarter		1	2	3	4		
<b>Leaseholders -</b> Satisfaction and steps being taken to drive improvement, as well as a better understanding of the role and responsibility of absent landlords	Greg Terefenko						
<b>The Customer Experience Program -</b> What next, what has been learned and any future plans and exercises that will involve engaging with residents	Laura Davison						
<b>Repairs and gas services</b> Progress since it has been brought in house	Ryan Bolton						
<b>Complaints –</b> A report that focusses on lessons learned and measures that have been taken to improve	Laura Giles						
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour –</b> A better understanding of the	Greg Terefenko						



issues, including measures and interventions							
<b>Building Fire Safety</b> – Progress of all works, resident satisfaction and perception of safety	Stuart Bishop						
<b>Ad-Hoc Agenda Items</b>							
Community Engagement Strategy	Tim Blanc						
2019/20 Housemark Benchmarking Results	Elliot Sweetman	✓					