

additional papers 1



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Mon 1 Sep
2025
6.30 pm



Oakenshaw Community Centre
Castleditch Lane, Redditch, B98 7YB

**If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
Mat Sliwinski**

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Overview and Scrutiny

Monday, 1st September, 2025
6.30 pm
Oakenshaw Community Centre

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:

Matthew Dormer
(Chair)
Craig Warhurst
(Vice-Chair)
William Boyd
Claire Davies
James Fardoe

Andrew Fry
Sachin Mathur
Rita Rogers
Paul Wren

- 5. Regulator of Social Housing Inspection Report and Housing Improvement Plan - Pre-Scrutiny** (Pages 5 - 36)
- 6. Voluntary Sector Grants Scheme 2026/27 to 2029/30 - Pre-Scrutiny** (Pages 37 - 78)
- 7. Adoption of Fixed Penalty Charge for breach of Community Protection Notice - Pre-Scrutiny** (Pages 79 - 84)
- 8. Quarter 1 Housing Consumer Standards Report - Pre-Scrutiny** (Pages 85 - 104)
- 9. Housing Ombudsman Findings Report 1 Ref 202417927 - Pre-Scrutiny** (Pages 105 - 128)
- 10. Housing Ombudsman Findings Report 2 Ref 202331009 - Pre-Scrutiny** (Pages 129 - 144)
- 16. Disposal of Housing Revenue Account Assets - Four garages at Ashorne Close, Matchborough, Redditch - Pre-Scrutiny** (Pages 145 - 158)

This item contains restricted appendices and may need to be considered in exempt session.

- 17. Disposal of Housing Revenue Account Assets - 53 Parsons Road, Southcrest, Redditch. 53 Crabbs Cross Lane, Crabbs Cross, Redditch - Pre-Scrutiny** (Pages 159 - 172)

This item contains restricted appendices and may need to be considered in exempt session.

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Regulator of Social Housing - Inspection Report and Housing Improvement Plan

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bill Hartnett
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Directors	Simon Parry & Judith Willis
Report Author	Job Title: Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services, Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services Contact email: Simon.parry@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Judith.willis@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 3201
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Community & Housing
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive RESOLVE that: -

- 1) The Regulatory Judgement published by the Regulator for Social Housing on 30th July 2025 is noted, following an inspection of Redditch Borough Council's Housing Service.**
- 2) The Housing Improvement Plan, which includes actions to address areas for improvement, confirmed as part of the inspection process, is approved.**
- 3) Delegation be given to the Assistant Director Environment & Housing Property and Assistant Director Community & Housing, following consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder, to revise the Housing Improvement Plan following consultation with the Regulator for Social Housing as part of their Provider Improvement Process or in response to legislative changes.**
- 4) The proposed structure for governance of the Housing Improvement Plan be approved.**

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The Executive RECOMMEND that: -

- 5) A supplementary estimate of £60,000 is added to the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2025/26 funded from the Housing Revenue Account Balance Reserves to:**
 - a) appoint a Senior Tenant Engagement & Participation Officer (£25,000 – part year effect) and:**
 - b) establish, train and manage the development of participation opportunities for Council Housing tenants and leaseholders to influence changes in the delivery of Housing services (£35,000)**
- 6) £75,000 ongoing expenditure budget is added to the Housing Revenue Account base budget in 2026/27, funded from the Housing Revenue Account to:**
 - a) continue to employ a Senior Tenant Engagement & Participation Officer (£50,000 – full year effect) and:**
 - b) continue to train and manage the development of participation opportunities for Council Housing tenants and leaseholders to influence changes in the delivery of Housing services going forward (£25,000).**

2. BACKGROUND

Executive Summary

- 2.1** In July 2025, Redditch Borough Council underwent a comprehensive inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), following the enactment of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. This inspection assessed the Council's compliance with the newly introduced Consumer Standards, which focus on safety, transparency, community engagement, and tenancy management.
- 2.2** The Council received a **C3 Regulatory Judgement**, indicating serious failings in delivering housing services, particularly in repairs and maintenance, fire safety, tenant engagement, and data management. Key issues included approximately 3,000 overdue repairs, 3,000 outstanding fire safety actions, limited stock condition surveys, and insufficient tenant involvement mechanisms.

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- 2.3 Despite these challenges, the RSH acknowledged the Council's commitment to improvement, highlighting positive practices in electrical safety, anti-social behaviour management, and the establishment of a Damp and Mould team. The inspection also praised the passion and dedication of staff and Members.
- 2.4 In response, the Council has developed a robust **Housing Improvement Plan**, which the Executive Committee is asked to approve, which outlines targeted actions across all Consumer Standards. Key initiatives include:
- Appointment of a **Senior Tenant Engagement & Participation Officer**.
 - Establishment of tenant forums and training programmes.
 - Implementation of new systems for repairs and safety compliance.
 - Development of a five-year rolling programme for stock condition surveys.
 - Enhanced governance through a multi-tiered oversight structure.
- 2.5 A supplementary budget of **£60,000 for 2025/26** and **£75,000 ongoing from 2026/27** has been proposed, from the Housing Revenue Account, to support these improvements.
- 2.6 The Council is committed to transparency and accountability, with quarterly reporting to the Executive Committee and ongoing engagement with tenants. The Housing Improvement Plan will be monitored through a structured governance framework, including strategic oversight and operational delivery groups.
- 2.7 This report marks a pivotal moment in Redditch Borough Council's journey to transform its housing services, ensuring safe, quality homes and meaningful tenant involvement.

Regulator of Social Housing

- 2.8 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act received royal assent in July 2023 and amended the original delivery of regulation under Section 193 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. The Social Housing (Regulation) Act amended the original Consumer Standards, with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) consulting on the revised standards between July and October 2023. The new Consumer Standards were published in February 2024 together with its first Consumer Standards Code of Practice.

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2.9 In April 2024, the RSH was given new powers, following the introduction of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, to proactively inspect all social housing landlords (with over 1,000 homes) as part of a continuing effort to drive up standards within the social housing sector. This in effect sees the return of regulation for local authority social housing landlords for the first time in several years of deregulation.

2.10 The Regulator of Social Housing introduced four new Consumer Standards in April 2024 to ensure social landlords provide safe, quality homes and services. These standards apply to all registered providers, including local authorities, and are enforced through regular inspections and tenant feedback. The following is a brief summary:

1. **Safety and Quality Homes Standard** – Landlords must understand the condition of their homes and ensure they are safe, well-maintained, and meet health and safety requirements.
2. **Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard** – Tenants should be able to access information about their landlord's performance and have meaningful opportunities to influence decisions.
3. **Neighbourhood and Community Standard** – Landlords must work to maintain safe, clean, and well-managed neighbourhoods, collaborating with other agencies where needed. It includes addressing anti-social behaviour, including domestic abuse.
4. **Tenancy Standard** – This covers fair and transparent tenancy management, including allocations, enabling mutual exchanges and support for tenants to sustain their tenancies.

2.11 Under the new Consumer Standards framework, the RSH introduced a new grading system in April 2024. Under this system, social landlords are assessed and assigned a "C" grade, which reflects how well they meet the required consumer standards. The scale runs from C1 to C4, where:

C1 indicates the landlord is meeting the consumer standards effectively.

C2 suggests some weaknesses, but not serious enough to cause significant concern.

C3 points to serious failings in delivering the standards, with current arrangements not strong enough to put things right - this often impacts tenants' experiences and accountability.

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C4 would represent the most severe level of non-compliance, though as of now, no landlords have been publicly graded at this level.

- 2.12 These gradings are based on evidence gathered through inspections, self-referrals, and regulatory engagement. As at July 2025, 53 Councils with social housing had been inspected and the gradings given were:

C1 - 4 Councils	(8%)
C2 - 17 Councils	(32%)
C3 - 30 Councils	(56%)
C4 - 2 Councils	(4%)

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

The Inspection

- 3.1 An inspection of Redditch Council's landlord services was first notified on 22nd January 2025 with the final submission of information on 17th May 2025. RSH shared the scope of our inspection, and all four consumer standards were in scope.
- 3.2 The inspection consisted of contextual documentation (Appendix 1), a scoping document (Appendix 2), a two-day site visit including observations of a meeting with the portfolio holder, corporate leadership team meeting and executive meetings, together with interviews with key senior management, Members, officers and tenants.
- 3.3 In excess of 400 items of evidence were provided across the inspection covering the contextual document and a supporting presentation together with supplementary requests made through the whole process.

Redditch Borough Council – Regulatory Judgement

- 3.4 The Council were verbally informed of the Regulatory Judgement on Monday 30th June 2025 however this was under embargo until being published on the RSH website on 30th July 2025. The Regulatory Judgement was a C3 grade (Appendix 3).
- 3.5 According to the Regulator of Social Housing's updated guidance, local authorities are expected to take primary responsibility for identifying and addressing any weaknesses in how they meet the Consumer Standards. If a local authority receives a **C2, C3, or C4 grading**, it must develop an improvement plan to address the issues identified during inspection.

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- 3.6 From the RSH guidance “A C3 grade means that there are serious failings in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards, which the landlord’s current arrangements are not strong enough to put right. This will be significantly impacting on service outcomes for tenants and/or accountability to tenants. We expect the landlord to develop a plan that will drive significant change and to share that with tenants. Our engagement with the landlord will be intensive and we will seek evidence that gives us the assurance that sufficient change and progress is being made.”
- 3.7 The guidance also emphasises that improvement plans are not automatically approved by the RSH. This means local authorities must demonstrate that their plans are robust and capable of delivering real change, even if the regulator doesn’t formally sign off on them.
- 3.8 The Regulatory Judgement recognised that Redditch Borough Council needed significant improvement within Repairs and Maintenance with particular reference to the large number of overdue repairs (circa 3,000), lack of root cause analysis and strategic oversight, inconsistent data, lack of visibility and promotion of the repairs policy on the Council’s website. Fire Safety was another area where significant improvement was required with nearly 3,000 overdue remedial actions from Fire Risk Assessments. The lack of opportunities for tenants to influence and scrutinise housing services and having no tenant engagement strategy nor formal tenant groups.
- 3.9 Other notable weaknesses identified were only 20% of housing stock had a condition survey undertaken in the last five years with 25% having no recorded condition survey. Whilst all risk assessments are complete for Water Safety at the time of the inspection there were over 150 overdue actions. Complaint handling was generally slow in achieving response times, as set out by the Housing Ombudsman, although it was acknowledged there had been early improvements in achieving better performance. Performance Information publicised to customers was not easily accessible or well communicated to tenants.
- 3.10 The Regulatory Judgement identified areas with positive practices including Electrical Safety, where quick action was taken when missing certificates were identified, and the development of a robust no-access policy. It was acknowledged that with the establishment of a new Damp and Mould team there was better triaging and leadership awareness of this aspect of the service. The strength of partnership working was acknowledged especially around Anti-Social Behaviour and there is an accessible allocations policy and support for vulnerable tenants.

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- 3.11 In providing feedback the Regulator also emphasised that they “*were really blown away by all of the efforts of the team that they met on site and that Officers and Members showed their passion for tenants and were clear about improvements to be put in place.*” The Regulator further reported that Redditch Borough Council had been engaging constructively with them and had plans in place to address most of its failings, including completion of health and safety remedial actions, developing an effective and timely repairs service, and ensuring that tenants have meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise services. Redditch Borough Council had demonstrated that it understood the issues it needed to address and was already taking action towards rectifying the failures identified. This included developing plans to deliver the required improvements, introducing improved oversight of landlord services, procuring new systems and validation processes for health and safety information, and developing its strategy for tenant engagement. Whilst early in the delivery of these plans, there was positive evidence of progress being made in some areas and the regulator had assurance that there was strong organisational commitment to ensuring improved outcomes for tenants.
- 3.12 The Council’s Housing Service must ensure that it retains an awareness and focus on all aspects of the Consumer Standards, and to actively address action required to support the continuous improvement plan.

Communicating the Judgement

- 3.13 The Regulatory Judgement has been communicated to all tenants, leaseholders, Councillors and staff, through the Housing Annual Report covering 2024/25 that has been mailed to each household that the Council manages and through dedicated sessions with staff and Members. The Council’s website also includes news of the Judgement, links to the report from RSH and associated Frequently Asked Questions.
- 3.14 Future communication, consultation, scrutiny and involvement opportunities for tenants and leaseholders will be developed, including a Housing specific Engagement Strategy that will be subject to a future report.

Improvement Journey

- 3.15 The Housing Service has gone through significant changes in order to modernise over the last 5 years, this has included large scale changes in personnel, at all levels, the introduction of new systems and technologies, new strategies, policies and procedures as well as developing a more customer focussed delivery of services. During this

period the need to ensure performance information and management was undertaken has enabled a greater understanding of our current position, when compared to our peers, and to drive improvements. Whilst significant improvements have been made it is acknowledged that further improvements are required.

- 3.16 To ensure the Council was seeking continuous improvement, prior to the Regulatory Judgement being made, an interim Housing Improvement Plan was developed and is being actioned and monitored. This plan was shared with the Executive Committee at a meeting held on 10th June 2025 and was approved with a three-monthly reporting cycle to feedback on progress. Subsequently, following the Regulatory Judgement, the Improvement Plan has been reviewed and updated (Appendix 4).
- 3.17 The Housing Improvement Plan is built on the areas within the Consumer Standards where the Council has not met the desired outcomes. The actions cover Safety & Quality, Transparency, Influence and Accountability and Neighbourhood and Community. Work is ongoing to deliver the actions and improvement identified and progress is included at Appendix 4.

Governance Arrangements

- 3.18 To ensure that the Housing Improvement Plan is managed and monitored effectively it is proposed to create the following governance arrangements as described at section 3.19 of this report. An update on progress and performance of the Housing Service is included in the work programme for the Executive Committee with reports produced on a quarterly basis.
- 3.19 To support the formal reporting of progress, and ensure actions are delivered, it is proposed to establish a structure that has a Housing Improvement Board, which will provide strategic oversight, a Housing Improvement Delivery Team, for day-to-day management and co-ordination, and separate workstreams/subgroups to deliver specific areas of the plan. This structure is set out together with initial Terms of Reference at Appendix 5.
- 3.20 Following the Regulatory Judgement, as part of the RSH powers under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, there will be a Provider Improvement Process which is a formal mechanism by which the RSH can issue a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Notice where the RSH has identified concerns through the inspection process and or through data. Regular monthly meetings will be held with

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representatives of RSH from August 2025 to provide assurance that the concerns raised are being actioned in a timely manner.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Housing Revenue Account will fund the additional costs in line with the requirements of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 and the outcomes of the Regulatory Judgement.
- 4.2 The current proposed additional cost implications are as follows:
- In 2025/26, £25,000 to establish the post of Senior Tenant Engagement & Participation Officer and £25,000 to train and manage the development of participation opportunities for Council Housing tenants and leaseholders so that they can influence changes in the delivery of Housing services. In addition, a further £10,000 to set up the tenant involvement opportunities, covering any additional events or outreach to attract willing parties, associated IT set up including laptops and legal fees.
 - For 2026/27 onwards, £50,000 is required for the new post, £25,000 to provide initial and ongoing training for participants, additional consultancy support in setting up and managing these new forums, meeting expenses, associated staff time and communications.
- 4.3 These additional costs will be funded from Housing Revenue Account balance reserve. Any future additional costs to deliver against the Action Plan will be brought to future Executive Committee meetings.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The report sets out the requirements of legislation which the Council is required by law to adhere to. Compliance with section 193 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 as amended by the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.
- 5.2 Inspections are carried out under section 201 to section 203A of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 There are no direct implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

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Relevant Council Priority

6.2 Community & Housing

- Build more council homes.
- Ensure our housing stock is clean & safe to live in
- Reduce the housing waiting list.
- Reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation.
- Improve time taken for repairs to be completed.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3** The responsive, cyclical and planned maintenance of our properties seeks to ensure our Council Housing properties are well maintained, warm and safe. Included within our programme of works are projects to increase the thermal efficiency of properties. In particular, within the HRA Capital Programme there are budgets established to improve the energy efficiency rating of properties with an Energy Performance Certificate of D or below.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4** The contents of this report impact on all our customers.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1** The following represent the key risks identified.

Risk	Description	Risk Mitigation
Failure to address improvements identified in the Regulatory Judgement	The Council cannot demonstrate the assurance required by the Regulator to make the improvements identified in the Regulatory Judgement	Housing Improvement Plan with regular review through Housing DMT, Portfolio for Housing and quarterly reporting of progress to the Executive Committee.
Failure to meet the Consumer Standards	The Council fails to meet the Consumer Standards which could lead to a self-referral and subsequent actions	Housing Improvement Plan progress monitoring and annual self-assessment.
Reputational Damage	Confidence in the Council's Housing Service declines affecting stakeholder relationships	Acknowledge the judgement publicly and promptly. Demonstrate a clear commitment to improve and provide transparency on progress against the improvement plan through proactive media and social media management

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8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix 1: RSH - Redditch Borough Council context form (included below)

Appendix 2: RSH - Redditch Borough Council Inspection Scoping Document (included below)

Appendix 3: RSH - Redditch Borough Council Regulatory Judgement (attached)

Appendix 4: Housing Improvement Plan (included below)

Appendix 5: Housing Improvement Plan Governance Proposals (included below)

Background Papers

Redditch Borough Council Housing Annual Report - [Housing Annual Report](#)

Housing Regulator Consumer Standards - [Regulatory standards for landlords - GOV.UK](#)

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Appendix 1: RSH - Redditch Borough Council context form

Redditch Borough Council context form

We are seeking information about...	...to help us understand	Information could include (but is not limited to):
The Council's provision of housing	The size of the housing stock, the type of housing provision and stock profile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A summary of the housing provision• Any reviews (internal or external) which detail the Council's provision.• Any demographic or context information relevant to the LA area
The operational management structure of the Council	Where the housing function sits within the Council structure and who is responsible for delivery of the housing function	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organograms of the Council and the housing function.• A flow chart showing the hierarchy of decision-making.• Names of key officers• Details of any delegated management functions.• Details of whether Repair & Maintenance and other frontline services are delivered in-house or via other arrangements, such as joint ventures
The Council's governance structure	Where oversight of the housing function sits, how the Council gains assurance of performance, and the role of members in this oversight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A diagram or explanation showing the governance arrangements at officer and member level.• Names of relevant members – including portfolio holders and lead members.• Details of any relevant boards/committees, how information from these is escalated to cabinet and the frequency of meetings.

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Appendix 2: RSH - Redditch Borough Council Inspection Scoping Document



REGULATORY INSPECTION OF REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCOPE AND DOCUMENT REQUEST

Component	Element	Assessment focus	Suggested documents (latest versions)
1. Service Outcomes	1.1 Stock quality, decency, repairs & maintenance, and adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Redditch's accurate, up to date and evidenced understanding of the condition of its homes and how this informs the provision of good quality, well-maintained and safe homes.• Compliance with the Decent Homes Standard• The effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of Redditch's repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service• Redditch's approach to assisting tenants seeking housing adaptations to access appropriate services. (no documents requested at this stage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report to councillors/senior officers setting out Redditch's approach and range of activities for assessing and recording the condition of individual homes and for keeping this information up to date, including the extent and scope of physical surveys• Reporting to councillors/senior officers on the progress and current performance against this approach and activities to understand the condition of homes.• Examples of how information on the condition of homes has informed Redditch's approach to its planning and prioritisation of works.• Report to councillors/senior officers on compliance with the Decent Homes Standard and robustness of underlying evidence.• Report to councillors/senior officers setting out Redditch's assurance on the robustness of the data and processes underpinning its reported repairs and maintenance performance.• Evidence of internal audit and any external assurance/data validation of repairs and maintenance data and processes, and reporting to councillors and senior officers.



Component	Element	Assessment focus	Suggested documents (latest versions)
	1.2 Health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Redditch's approach to ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reports to councillors/senior officers on delivery of work associated with health and safety of tenants in their homes including compliance with statutory health and safety requirements and progress on remedial actions• Reports to councillors/senior officers on the identification and management of damp and mould in tenants' homes• Reports to councillors/senior officers regarding the robustness of the data and processes underpinning reported performance on health and safety compliance• Evidence of internal audit and any external assurance/data validation of data and processes relating to health and safety compliance and reporting to councillors and senior officers.• Reports to councillors/senior officers on environmental health judgements, official disrepair claims, Housing Ombudsman and Building Safety Regulator findings where relevant

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Component	Element	Assessment focus	Suggested documents (latest versions)
	1.3 Maintenance of shared spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How Redditch works with tenants, other landlords and relevant organisation to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of shared spaces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are not requesting documents in this area at this stage.
	1.4 Local co-operation and anti-social behaviour (ASB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The effectiveness of Redditch's approach to dealing with ASB and hate incidents including through partnership working. Redditch's co-operation with partners to promote the environmental, social and economic well-being of the areas in which it operates. (no documents requested at this stage) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports to councillors/senior officers on performance on ASB and hate incidents. Reports to councillors/senior officers on lessons learnt and improvements in the approach taken Feedback to customers in relation to ASB and hate incidents performance
	1.5 Management of domestic abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redditch's co-operative working with other agencies tackling domestic abuse and enabling tenants to access appropriate support and advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are not requesting documents in this area at this stage.
	1.6 Tenancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How Redditch ensures that tenancies and terms of occupation granted are appropriate, meeting all relevant requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to councillors/senior officers on how tenants', including prospective tenants', needs are taken into account through the approach to allocation and lettings. Reports to councillors/senior officers on how tenancies and terms of occupation offered appropriately reflect accommodation purpose, the needs of individual households, community sustainability and efficient use of

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Component	Element	Assessment focus	Suggested documents (latest versions)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redditch's support for tenants to maintain their tenancy. Redditch's support to relevant tenants in eligible housing to access mutually exchange their homes 	<p>their homes, and assurance that statutory and legal requirements are being met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports to councillors/senior officers on the approach to tenancy management, including tenancy sustainment and prevention of evictions, and tackling tenancy fraud We are not requesting documents in this area at this stage. We are not requesting documents in this area at this stage.
2. Transparency & Accountability	2.1 Fairness and respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which Redditch treats tenants and prospective tenants with fairness and respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports to councillors/senior officers that contain relevant consideration and evidence of the extent to which there is equitable access to and delivery of service.
	2.2 Diverse needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which Redditch takes action to deliver fair access to, and equitable outcomes of, housing and landlord services for all tenants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance and other relevant reports to councillors/senior officers showing monitoring by service users' protected characteristics. Information / reports on the use of profile data for customers and how this impacts service delivery

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Component	Element	Assessment focus	Suggested documents (latest versions)
	2.3 Engagement with tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redditch's approach to giving its tenants a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise strategies, policies and services. • Extent to which Redditch ensures that it takes tenants' views into account in its decision-making about how landlord services are delivered and communicates how tenants' views have been considered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports to councillors/senior officers on tenant engagement activities, the extent to which these are successful in facilitating tenant influence and scrutiny and whether there is sufficient accessible support that meets the diverse needs of tenants. • Reports to councillors/senior officers and other communication that sets out the impact of tenant views on service delivery. • A list of tenant scrutiny activities undertaken in the previous two years and the forward programme. • Papers for the tenant scrutiny panel (or equivalent) meeting being observed, to be discussed at scoping meeting on 25th February 2025
	2.4 Service and performance information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which Redditch communicates with tenants and provides information so that they can use its services, understand what to expect from Redditch and hold it to account. • How Redditch collects and provides information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of its performance in delivering landlord services. • Whether Redditch meets the requirements in relation to the tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to councillors/senior officers providing assurance that the information given to tenants is available in a form that ensures they can access services and essential information about their homes. • Publicly available performance information that supports effective scrutiny by tenants • Report to councillors/senior officers setting out assurance on the accuracy and robustness of the methodology underpinning its survey data and that the information is an accurate,

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Component	Element	Assessment focus	Suggested documents (latest versions)
			<p>reliable, valid, and transparent reflection of their performance against the tenant satisfaction measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports to councillors/senior officers on the outcomes of Tenant Satisfaction Measures and any subsequent related activities including how information has been used to inform lessons learned and decision making.
	2.5 Complaints handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which complaints are addressed fairly, effectively and promptly. • Redditch's approach to ensuring that there is sufficient information so that tenants can make complaints, understand Redditch's policy and process including what they can do if dissatisfied with the outcome of how the complaint was handled and what lessons are being learnt from complaints overall to continuously improve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting to councillors/senior officers on complaints handling performance and its self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman complaints handling code. • Report to councillors/senior officers on themes and learning from complaints, improvements and changes made as a result. • Internal and external reviews on complaints handling. • Responses to Housing Ombudsman determinations in the last 12 months

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Appendix 3 – Regulatory Judgement: 30th July 2025

Our Judgement

	Grade/Judgement	Change	Date of assessment
Consumer	C3 Our judgement is that there are serious failings in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and significant improvement is needed.	First grading	July 2025

Reason for publication

We are publishing a regulatory judgement for Redditch Borough Council (Redditch BC) following an inspection completed in July 2025.

The regulatory judgement confirms a consumer grading of C3. This is the first time we have issued a consumer grade in relation to this landlord.

Summary of the decision

From the evidence and assurance gained during the inspection, it is our judgement that there are serious failings in Redditch BC delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and significant improvement is needed, specifically in relation to some outcomes in our Safety and Quality Standard and Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard. Based on this assessment, we have concluded a C3 grade for Redditch BC.

How we reached our judgement

We carried out an inspection of Redditch BC to assess how well it is delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards as part of our planned regulatory inspection programme. During the inspection we considered all four of the consumer standards: Neighbourhood and Community Standard, Safety and Quality Standard, Tenancy Standard, and the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.

During the inspection we observed a meeting of the council's executive, a resident engagement meeting, a corporate leadership team strategic meeting and a Housing Portfolio Holder meeting. We met with tenants, officers, the leader of the council, and the councillor who is the portfolio holder for housing. We also reviewed a wide range of documents provided by Redditch BC.

Our regulatory judgement is based on a review of all of the information reviewed during the inspection as well as analysis of data received through our routine regulatory returns and other regulatory engagement activity.

Summary of findings

Consumer – C3 – July 2025

We found serious failings in how Redditch BC is delivering some outcomes of the Safety and Quality Standard and the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard and that significant improvement is needed.

The Safety and Quality Standard requires landlords to have an accurate record, at an individual property level, of the condition of their homes based on a physical assessment of all homes and ensure that homes meet the requirements of the Decent Homes Standard. We have some assurance that Redditch BC has an accurate, up to date and evidenced understanding of the condition and decency of its homes. Redditch BC has information for around 20% of its homes that are less than 5 years old and for around 75% of homes less than 6 years old. It has plans in place to prioritise those with no survey on record and undertake surveys on an ongoing basis thereafter. Redditch BC is reporting less than 10% of homes are not decent. However, there are some weaknesses to address, as we found limited evidence of effective oversight and monitoring of the stock condition survey process and there are no plans currently in place to resolve the decency issues.

The Safety and Quality Standard also requires landlords to identify and meet all legal requirements that relate to the health and safety of tenants in their homes and communal areas, and to ensure that all necessary actions arising from legally required health and safety assessments are carried out within appropriate timescales. At the time of the inspection, the outcomes across several health and safety compliance areas were broadly being met. However, our assessment is that there are serious failings in respect of completing fire safety remedial actions and weaknesses in addressing water safety in a timely manner.

At the time of the inspection, there were around 2,900 overdue fire remedial actions including around 800 high risk actions that had been overdue for more than 12 months. Redditch BC has undertaken some work to programme and prioritise these remedial actions. It has also completed the actions for any buildings over two storeys high and has put in place interim mitigations where needed. However, we will continue to seek evidence to give us assurance that sufficient improvement is being made on progressing these actions. In addition to this, there were around 150 outstanding water remedial actions, the majority of which were high risk and overdue by over 12 months. Redditch BC was in the process of completing all water remedial actions at the time of the inspection. Redditch BC provided assurance during the inspection that it understands its failings and weaknesses and is developing plans to address these. We will continue to monitor these issues through our ongoing work with Redditch BC.

Our inspection identified that there are also serious failings in the provision of an effective, efficient and timely repairs service. At the time of the inspection, internal performance targets for emergency, urgent and routine repairs were not being met, and there were almost 3,000 overdue repairs. Whilst Redditch BC has been developing plans to address these issues, including improved reporting and data systems, these issues were first identified in 2019 following an external audit and since then, there has been little progress in improving outcomes for tenants. We will continue to engage intensively with Redditch BC and seek assurance that progress is made so that outcomes for tenants are improved.

In relation to the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, Redditch BC has provided assurance that it is working in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where it provides social housing. However, there are some weaknesses in how Redditch gains transactional feedback from tenants, communicates with them about response times and reports performance information. Redditch BC is reviewing the service and planning improvements to address these issues.

In relation to the Tenancy Standard, we found evidence that tenancies being offered meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements and are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of its housing stock. We saw evidence that Redditch BC has an allocations policy and tenancy management policy that sets out its approach to ensuring all properties are let in a fair and transparent way and considers the needs of tenants and prospective tenants.

The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard sets out the outcomes landlords must deliver about being open with tenants and treating them with fairness and respect so that tenants can access services, raise complaints, influence decision making and hold their landlord to account. We found serious failings in how Redditch BC is delivering the outcomes of the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard across several areas. Redditch BC has acknowledged these failings, and we were provided with evidence of a draft improvement plan.

During the inspection we observed a respectful approach to tenants. In terms of the information it holds about its tenants' diverse needs, Redditch BC has not been able to fully evidence that it understands the varied needs of its tenants and we identified weaknesses in its approach. Whilst Redditch BC collects information about its tenants at tenancy sign up, this information was limited and not being consistently updated. Redditch BC has considered the accessibility of its services and reasonable adjustments are made for tenants, but this is currently limited to individual service requests. We saw limited evidence of how Redditch BC uses tenant information strategically to ensure fair and equitable outcomes for tenants and to inform service design and delivery. Redditch BC has acknowledged this as an area for improvement.

The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard also requires landlords to take tenants' views into account in their decision-making about how landlord services are delivered and communicate how tenants' views have been considered. We found

serious failings in Redditch BC's provision of meaningful opportunities for tenants to effectively scrutinise its performance, with it acknowledging that this provision had not been in place for several years. Redditch BC was unable to demonstrate how tenants' views have been considered, and we saw limited evidence of tenant engagement and consultation shaping policies. Redditch BC is committed to improving engagement and scrutiny opportunities with tenants, it acknowledged that the effectiveness of its current tenant engagement arrangements is inadequate and has commenced a review of its approach to deliver improvements.

Landlords must also provide information so that tenants can use landlord services, understand what to expect from their landlord, and hold their landlord to account. Through the inspection, we saw that Redditch BC provides some information to tenants but there are weaknesses in its approach. In respect of performance information, landlords must collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance. Redditch BC provides some performance information to tenants on its website; however, it has not been able to evidence how it communicates this information to tenants beyond publication on the website, thereby limiting tenants' ability to effectively scrutinise performance and hold Redditch BC to account.

The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard also requires landlords to ensure complaints are addressed fairly, effectively, and promptly. We have assurance that overall, complaints are handled fairly and effectively and there are a wide range of methods for making a complaint, with evidence of Redditch BC actively learning from the complaints it receives. However, at present complaints are not addressed promptly and improvement is required. Redditch BC is sighted on this issue and has plans in place for improvements to be implemented.

Redditch BC has been engaging constructively with us and has plans in place to address most of its failings, including completion of health and safety remedial actions, developing an effective and timely repairs service, and ensuring that tenants have meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise services. Redditch BC has demonstrated that it understands the issues it needs to address and is already taking action towards rectifying the failures identified. This includes developing plans to deliver the required improvements, introducing improved oversight of landlord services, procuring new systems and validation processes for health and safety information, and developing its strategy for tenant engagement. Whilst early in the delivery of these plans, there is positive evidence of progress being made in some areas and we have assurance that there is a strong organisational commitment to ensuring improved outcomes for tenants.

We will continue to engage with Redditch BC as it seeks to address the issues that have led to this judgement. Our engagement will be intensive, we will seek evidence that gives us the assurance that sufficient change and progress is being made, and our priority will be that risks to tenants are adequately managed and mitigated. We are not proposing to use our enforcement powers at this stage but will keep this under review as Redditch BC seeks to resolve these issues.

Background to the judgement

About the landlord

Redditch BC is a district council with borough status in Worcestershire. Redditch BC owns and manages 5,562 social and affordable rent homes, the majority of these are general needs, with 54 supported housing properties.

Our role and regulatory approach

We regulate for a viable, efficient, and well governed social housing sector able to deliver quality homes and services for current and future tenants.

We regulate at the landlord level to drive improvement in how landlords operate. By landlord we mean a registered provider of social housing. These can either be local authorities, or private registered providers (other organisations registered with us such as non-profit housing associations, co-operatives, or profit-making organisations).

We set standards which state outcomes that landlords must deliver. The outcomes of our standards include both the required outcomes and specific expectations we set. Where we find there are significant failures in landlords which we consider to be material to the landlord's delivery of those outcomes, we hold them to account. Ultimately this provides protection for tenants' homes and services and achieves better outcomes for current and future tenants. It also contributes to a sustainable sector which can attract strong investment.

We have a different role for regulating local authorities than for other landlords. This is because we have a narrower role for local authorities and the Governance and Financial Viability Standard, and Value for Money Standard do not apply. Further detail on which standards apply to different landlords can be found on our [standards page](#).

We assess the performance of landlords through inspections and by reviewing data that landlords are required to submit to us. In Depth Assessments (IDAs) were one of our previous assessment processes, which are now replaced by our new inspections programme from 1 April 2024. We also respond where there is an issue or a potential issue that may be material to a landlord's delivery of the outcomes of our standards. We publish regulatory judgements that describe our view of landlords' performance with our standards. We also publish grades for landlords with more than 1,000 social housing homes.

The Housing Ombudsman deals with individual complaints. When individual complaints are referred to us, we investigate if we consider that the issue may be material to a landlord's delivery of the outcomes of our standards.

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Appendix 4: Housing Improvement Plan

<u>Consumer Standard</u>	<u>Consumer Standard outcome</u>	Action	Lead Officer	Target Date	Comments
<i>Neighbourhood and Community</i>	ASB and Hate Incidents 1.3	Provide ASB performance data via the Quarterly Performance Reports to Executive Committee and to tenants via the website and annual report,	Judith Willis	Jul-25	Included in report to Executive 2nd September and thereafter quarterly. Included in Annual Report. A corporate ASB webpage is to be developed. This would include a specific housing section and could include quarterly performance data
<i>Neighbourhood and Community</i>	ASB and Hate Incidents 1.3	Review data recording of Hate Incidents	Judith Willis	Sep-25	Work is in progress to improve Hate Crime report. Corporately it is reported through a North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership reporting tool. Guidance is being developed for Officers to pull off these cases appropriately on the Housing system.
<i>Neighbourhood and Community</i>	ASB and Hate Incidents 1,3	Establish a procedure to keep tenants informed of the progress of their ASB cases	Judith Willis	Sep-25	Work is in progress to provide further training to NTO's regarding effective communication and positive case closure. Further, to implement the case closure survey at the point of closing the case.

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<i>Safety & Quality</i>	<i>Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4</i>	Communicate to customers the priority codes and Repairs Policy together with performance against these	Simon Parry	Jul-25	Priority Codes included in the Annual Report posted out July 30th and a separate page on the website has been developed
<i>Safety & Quality</i>	<i>Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4</i>	Mobilise the Caretaker Service to undertake regular cleaning, testing and inspection of Communal Areas	Simon Parry	Aug-25	Works commenced in early July to deep clean communal areas
<i>Safety & Quality</i>	<i>Health and Safety 1.3</i>	Finalise a plan for the completion for all outstanding remedial actions for Fire, EICR, and Legionella in appropriate timescales	Simon Parry	Sep-25	A plan is being developed that identifies financial implications.
<i>Safety & Quality</i>	<i>Health and Safety 1.3</i>	Mobilise a fire door inspection programme	Simon Parry	Sep-25	Discussions with a service provider are being finalised in order to mobilise and complete these inspections by December 2025.
<i>Safety & Quality</i>	<i>Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4</i>	Implement Total Mobile for Repairs and Maintenance	Simon Parry	Sep-25	Final User Acceptance Testing is being undertaken.
<i>Safety & Quality</i>	<i>Stock Quality 1.1</i>	Develop a 5-year rolling programme to ensure Stock Condition Surveys are undertaken to all Housing Stock	Simon Parry	Sep-25	The stock condition surveys for 25/6 are due to commence in September and thereafter the rolling programme will ensure we record accurate data on an annual basis.
<i>Safety & Quality</i>	<i>Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4</i>	Review all outstanding/overdue repairs and put in place necessary capacity to complete in a timely manner	Simon Parry	Oct-25	There is an ongoing review of outstanding/overdue repairs which has highlighted operational process issues which are now resolved, this

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					will allow a better understanding of capacity issues/demands on the service
Safety & Quality	Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4	Use Repairs Performance Data to identify trends and root causes for improvements to be made and regularly monitor and manage performance	Simon Parry	Nov-25	With the Power Bi reports we are now able to better understand our data and identify trends or issues, work is ongoing with the Business Improvement Team.
Safety & Quality	Health and Safety 1.3	Undertake an independent review of the mitigation in place and the delivery programme for fire safety	Simon Parry	Dec-25	Identification of the scope and therefore providers for this is in progress.
Safety & Quality	Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4	Review the Repairs Policy in conjunction with Tenants	Simon Parry	Dec-25	An initial draft is being undertaken and will form an important part of the new opportunities for tenants to influence policy and strategies.
Safety & Quality	Repairs, Maintenance and Planned Improvements 1.4	Develop a working group with tenants to seek further feedback on improvements required to deliver a more effective Repairs service	Simon Parry	Dec-25	Following expressions of interest as part of the Annual Report which every household will receive, we will develop this further.
Safety & Quality	Decency 1.2	Ensure the Housing Capital Programme reflects the volume and scope of works to meet the Decent Homes standard across all Housing stock	Simon Parry	Jan-26	Work is ongoing reviewing our decent homes data to ensure programmes include the affected properties
Safety & Quality	Decency 1.2	Undertake a review of the Housing Asset Management Strategy and the Housing Capital Programme developed for 2023-	Simon Parry	Jan-26	Linked to the information above the data will influence the Asset Management Strategy revisions which in

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		2027 in line with stock condition information			turn will form part of the opportunities for tenants to influence policy and strategies
<i>Safety & Quality</i>	<i>Health and Safety</i> 1.3	Utilise the feedback from the TSM Tenant Perception Survey to improve on the results from the 24/5 survey on 'Feeling Safe'	Simon Parry	Jun-26	Analysis of feedback is ongoing and will be used to understand, together with the new opportunities for tenants to influence policy and strategies, what can be done to provide greater reassurance to our tenants.
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	Fairness and Respect 1.1	Ensure that tenant profile data is collected more widely across all customers so that services can be more reflective of tenants needs, including establishing an 'Every Contact Counts' philosophy.	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Jul-25	Script developed for entry of data at point of contact. Wider review to be undertaken when no contact is received from customers
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	Information about landlord service 1.4	Develop and publish the Annual Housing Report for 24/5	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Jul-25	Annual Report circulated on 30th July 2025
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	Information about landlord services 1.4	Implement a Tenants Portal within Cx	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	April 26	In progress
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	Engagement with tenants 1.3	Review the range of opportunities available for tenants to influence and scrutinise strategies, policies and services and implement improvements identified in accordance with best practice	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Sep-25	Recommendations from external report from TPAS to be agreed and actioned. Budget approval being sought for a Tenant Engagement & Participation Officer and

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					resources budget as part of this committee report.
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	Complaints 1.6	Recruit to two new posts of Complaints and Quality Officer	Judith Willis	Nov-25	One complaints Officer to be recruited and the second post to be refocussed as a Tenant Engagement and Participation post.to work alongside a Senior Post.
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	Performance Information 1.5	Housing Performance Dashboard completed, and performance reports provided to Executive and tenants.	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Jan-26	Quarterly performance reported to Executive Committee – this commenced in June 2025. Performance reporting contained within the Tenants Annual Report – published on 30 July 2025.
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	Performance Information 1.5	Establish a communications strategy to regularly update tenants on services and performance	Judith Willis	Jan-26	In progress
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	Complaints 1.6	Undertake further engagement with tenants and learn from our peers how they have sought to improve complaint handling satisfaction	Judith Willis	Jan-26	In progress
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	Complaints 1.6	Improve how promptly complaints are addressed	Judith Willis	Dec - 25	Quarter 1 data shows the following improvements: Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling

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					Code timescales (Stage 1) 93% in Q1, compared to 62% for 2024/25. Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales (Stage 2) 100% in Q1, compared to 80% in 2024/25
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	Fairness and Respect 1,1	Ensure a programme of training is delivered to ensure tenants are treated with fairness and respect	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Mar-26	In progress and is included as part of CIH qualification that Officers hold or are scheduled to enrol.
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	Fairness and Respect 1.1	Develop a programme for embedding the Council's corporate culture work programme within Housing Services	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Mar-26	In progress
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	Engagement with tenants 1.3	Continue work with TPAS to develop a robust tenant engagement offer with future reporting to Executive Committee setting out key actions and required resources.	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Nov-26	One complaints Officer to be recruited and the second post to be refocussed as a Tenant Engagement and Participation post.to work alongside a Senior Post.
<i>Transparency, Influence and accountability</i>	Diverse Needs 1.2	Implement the Customer Profile Action Plan, with milestones established	Judith Willis/Simon Parry	Jan-27	In progress

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Appendix 5: Housing Improvement Plan Governance Proposals

1. Housing Strategic Oversight Board

Purpose:

Provide strategic direction, ensure alignment with broader housing policy, make recommendations to the Executive Committee and monitor overall progress and reporting of the Housing Improvement Plan

Membership:

- Chair: Portfolio Holder for Housing
- Deputy Leader/Portfolio Holder for Performance and Governance
- Senior representatives
 - Chief Executive
 - Executive Director - Environment and Communities
 - Assistant Director – Community and Housing Services
 - Assistant Director – Environmental and Housing Property Services
 - Finance (as required)
 - Legal Services (as required)
 - Tenant/Leaseholder Representatives (4)

Key Objectives:

- Recommend the Housing Improvement Plan and major revisions.
- Ensure alignment with local and national housing strategies.
- Monitor strategic risks and mitigation plans.
- Recommend funding allocations and major procurement decisions.
- Champion resident engagement and equity

Meeting Frequency:

Every 3rd month to replace the meeting of the Housing Improvement Board, with additional meetings as required.

2. Housing Improvement Board

Purpose:

As with the Housing Strategic Oversight Board, strategic oversight.

Membership:

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- Chair: Portfolio Holder for Housing
- Senior representatives
 - Executive Director - Environment and Communities
 - Assistant Director – Community and Housing Services
 - Assistant Director – Environmental and Housing Property Services
 - Finance (as required)
 - Legal Services (as required)
 - Tenant/Leaseholder Representatives (4)

Key Objectives:

- Ensure and monitor high-level progress and risks.
- Ensure alignment with corporate priorities.
- Escalate issues to the Housing Strategic Oversight Board and/or Executive Committee as required.

Meeting Frequency:

Every month with the 3rd meeting being the Housing Strategic Oversight Board, with additional meetings as required.

3. Housing Delivery Group

Purpose:

Oversee the implementation of the HIP, manage programme-level risks, and ensure delivery against milestones.

Membership:

- Chair: Executive Director
- Representatives
 - Assistant Director – Community and Housing Services
 - Assistant Director – Environmental and Housing Property Services
 - Housing Property Services Manager
 - Housing Services Manager
 - Communications
 - Senior Tenant Engagement & Participation Officer
 - Business Improvement Team

Key Objectives:

- Track progress against programme milestones.
- Manage interdependencies between projects.

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- Escalate risks/issues to the Housing Improvement Board/Strategic Oversight Board
- Ensure budget adherence and value for money.
- Coordinate stakeholder communications and engagement.

Meeting Frequency:

Monthly

4. Operational Working Groups

Purpose:

Deliver specific components of the Housing Improvement Plan e.g., repairs, compliance, engagement/participation, and report progress to the Housing Delivery Group.

Membership (varies by group):

- Group Lead (e.g., Repairs Manager, Capital Manager, M&E Manager)
- Technical Officers
- Senior Engagement & Participation Officer
- Contractors/Delivery Partners
- Data Analyst (as needed)

Key Objectives:

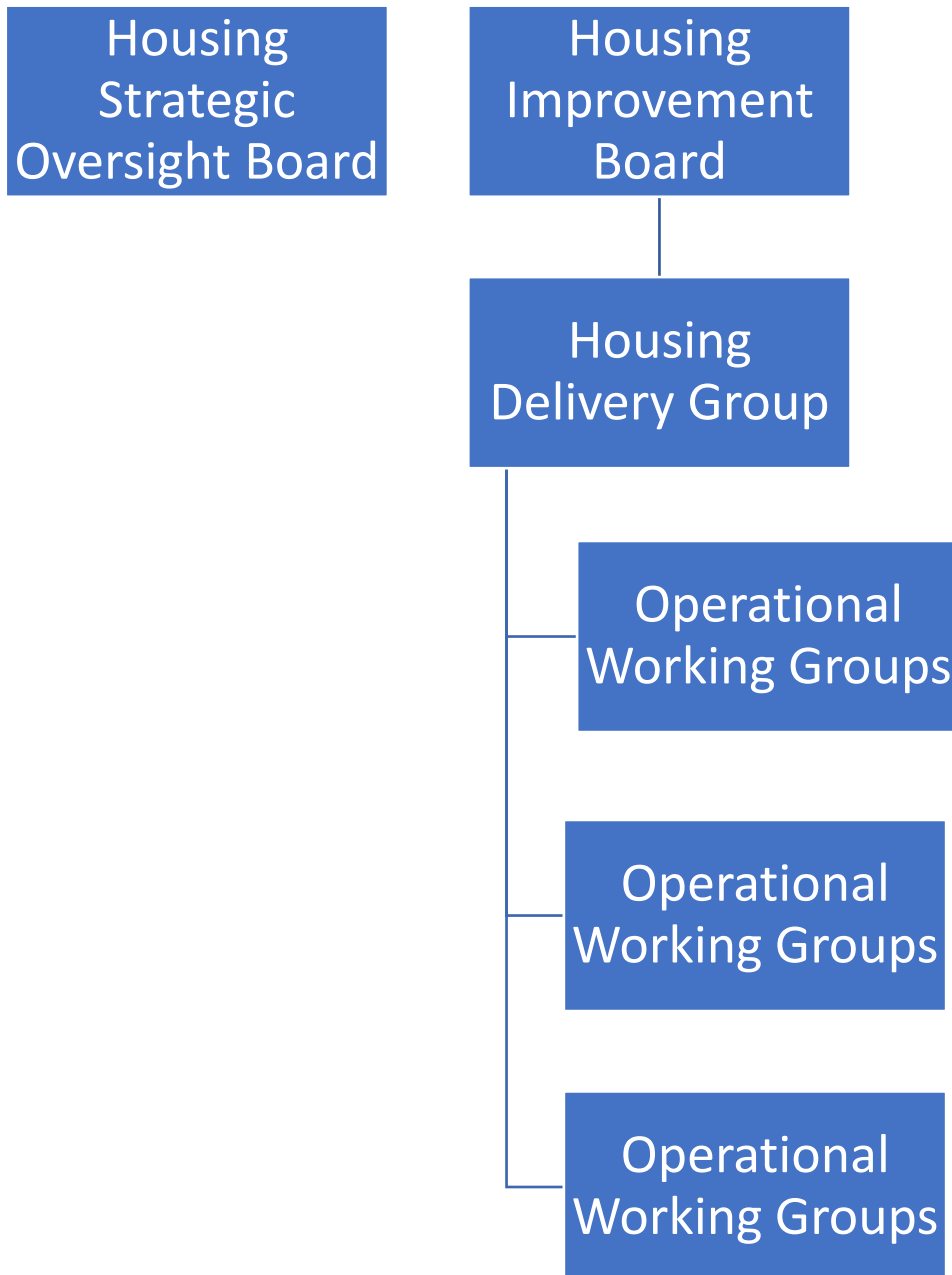
- Implement operational tasks and projects.
- Monitor day-to-day delivery and resolve issues.
- Engage residents and gather feedback.
- Report progress and KPIs to HDG
- Ensure compliance with safety and quality standards.

Meeting Frequency:

Bi-weekly

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Voluntary and Community Grants Scheme 2026/27 – 2028/29

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Begum
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Judith Willis – Assistant Director of Community & Housing Services
Report Author	Tara Day Job Title: Community Services Manager Contact: tara.day@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Council Priority	Economy, Regeneration & Prosperity Green, Clean & Safe Community & Housing
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee RECOMMEND that

- 1) The funding for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Grants Scheme be agreed for a further three-year period with a total grant pot of £175k per annum**

The Executive Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

- 2) subject to approval of recommendation 1 above, the VCS Grants Scheme be delivered in accordance with Option 2 which entails:**
 - a) Including up to £75k in the total grant funding to be available for a Financial Advice Grant**
 - b) A Grants Panel, comprising elected Members, to be established to consider and make recommendations to the Executive Committee in relation to higher grants (valued at £2k up to £10k)**
 - c) delegated authority being granted to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, following consultation with the Officer Grants panel, to consider and agree decisions on lower grants (valued at £500 up to £2k);**

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- 3) subject to agreement of proposal 2 above, five Members be appointed to serve on the Grants Panel, with appointments to be made in accordance with nominations received from the political group leaders;
- 4) the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Policy be approved;
- 5) subject to approval of proposal 2b above, agreement of the proposed terms of reference for the Grants Panel be approved;
- 6) distributions are passported to bereavement charities following an application process and are funded by receipts from the Recycling of Metal Recovered from Cremation Scheme; these are managed separately from the Voluntary and Community Grants Scheme; and
- 7) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Spaces and the Voluntary Sector, to passport the distribution of receipts from the Recycling of Metal Recovered from Cremation Scheme.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The current VCS Grants Policy and funding allocation was set up following consideration of a report at the Executive Committee and Council meetings in October 2022, when several options were put forward. The three-year Scheme provided an annual grants budget of £150k. Of this total £100K was available for the Main Grants Pot and applicants could apply for grants between £500 to £10,000. £10,000 of this is set aside for Grants under £2,000, which are all paid in one instalment. Grants over £2,000 are paid in two instalments once satisfactory monitoring information has been received. Grants are currently awarded by an officer panel, who assess the applications against a specific criterion that supports the Council's priorities.
- 2.2 The remaining £50k was agreed to continue to fund the Financial Advice and Problem-Solving Grant which had been granted to Bromsgrove and Redditch Citizens Advice (B&RCA). This grant was awarded for 3 years from 2023-2026. Performance data covering 2023/24 and 2024/25 are detailed in Appendix 1.

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- 2.3 Appendix 2 shows the grants that have been paid out during the 3 years this policy has been in place. For 2025/26 a total of 46 applications were received with grants being paid to 17 organisations - a summary of these grants and projects are included.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The current policy has worked well; there were more applications this year from new organisations as well as the more familiar established ones. Having a smaller grants pot works well and the Council had 16 applications for grants for £2,000 or less. Advertising is communicated through a press release, the website and social media. Any previous applicants are notified via email that there is funding available.
- 3.2 Following consultation on 14th April 2025 with Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (BARN) on behalf of the VCS community, it is suggested that the terms of the policy continue to support both specific projects and the overall core costs for organisations. Feedback was also given that Terms of Reference would ensure the Members of the panel were clear on their roles and responsibilities and to declare any conflicts of interest. Maintaining a scoring matrix to enable decisions to be as fair as possible with a clear understanding final decisions are made by the Executive Committee. Panel Members should attend an information and training session with the Grant's Officer prior to serving on a meeting of the Panel.
- 3.3 Further support provided by the Council to the VCS is provided in terms of helping to identify which VCS groups receive funding through Recycling of Metal Recovered from the Crematorium Scheme. In previous years this has been arranged through the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) with Local Authorities able to send (with permission of the families) metal parts recovered after cremation for recycling for money which is then gifted back to the Local Authority to be redistributed to the local VCS. A decision was made in 2024 by the then manager to recycle direct, which has generated additional funding. Bereavement charities are invited to make applications for funding and an officer panel considers these and make the awards. This year the Council was able to help three local charities receiving £12k each.
- 3.4 Options
- Option 1 – Continue with the current scheme for a 3-year period with a total grant pot of £175k, which would include £75k being available for the Financial Advice and Problem-Solving Grant – with an Officer panel making the decisions on the grant applications and the Bereavement

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Charity funding via the Recycling of Metal Recovered from Cremation Scheme.

Option 2 – As detailed above but with a Member panel to award the higher grants and continue with an Officer panel for the lower grant application decisions and the Bereavement Charity funding via the Recycling of Metal Recovered from Cremation Scheme.

Option 3 – As detailed above but with a Member panel for both the higher and lower grant applications.

Option 4 – As this is not a statutory service, it is determined that the Council no longer funds and operates a scheme.

- 3.5 If Options 2 and 3 are approved, terms of reference for the Grants Panel will need to be approved. The Council has previously operated a Member Grants Panel, and it is proposed that as previously it would comprise five Members and be Chaired by a Councillor who is not a member of the political group in administration a. The Panel would have no decision-making powers but rather will make recommendations about the allocation of the grants for a final decision by Executive Committee.

4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Should Members wish to continue to provide a VCS scheme it is proposed that the current grants scheme continue, with £90K being made available for the higher and £10k for the lower grants and £75k for the Financial Advice and Problem-Solving Grant. This total funding is an increase of £25,000 compared to the last financial year and can be funded from existing budget.

- 4.2 Other sources of funding are available as follows:

- a) the Redditch Councillor Grant Facility to enable ward councillors to help their local communities;
- b) the Redditch Borough Council Lottery - each pound spent on the lottery is split in the following way – 50% goes to Good Causes, 10% goes to the central fund (this is RBC and will cover lottery costs with the rest reallocated to the VCS through the grants programme), 20% goes towards prizes, 17% goes to the External Lottery Manager (ELM) with 3% VAT (which RBC can claim back);
- c) the Recycling of Metal Recovered from the Crematorium Scheme – the amount available for bereavement organisations will vary year on year dependent on how much metal is recycled – no additional budget is required. The Scheme is managed separately

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from the Voluntary and Community Grants Scheme as it is a separate funding stream.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The council needs to continue to ensure that it has a transparent and fair grants scheme and ensure that we comply with the 2015 Local Government Transparency Code.
- 5.2 Whilst grant funding and concessions to the VCS are not a statutory function, under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to incur expenditure which in its opinion is in the interest of and will bring direct benefit to its area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants. The direct benefit accruing must also be commensurate with the expenditure incurred.
- 5.3 There is further power to make grants to voluntary organisations providing recreational facilities under Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. Depending on the option within this report that is approved, a new VCS grants policy will be required.
- 5.4 Local Authorities must comply with the 2015 Local Government Transparency Code and Best Value Duties.
- 5.5 The rules in respect of appointing Members to Committees in accordance with the political balance apply to formal Committees that meet in public (except for the Executive Committee). These rules would not apply to the Grants Panel, which would operate as an Executive Advisory Panel, like the Member Support Steering Group, and which has no decision-making powers. However, it is considered good practice to ensure that all political groups are represented on Executive Advisory Panels.
- 5.6 In addition, in the previous incarnation of the Grants Panel the group was chaired by a Councillor who was not a member of the controlling political group. This arrangement helps to demonstrate the independence and neutrality of the panel when making recommendations in respect of grant funding applications.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**Local Government Reorganisation**

- 6.1 It is anticipated the Scheme will operate until 2028/29 at which point Local Government Reorganisation may have taken place in

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Worcestershire and the Scheme would operate under a new authority, however it cannot be guaranteed the new authority will continue with the Scheme. Any new authority would need to determine any current and future funding for a Grants Scheme within the Borough. No other District Council in the County operates a Grants Scheme to this level. Bromsgrove District Council operates a smaller Equalities Grants Scheme worth £10k per annum. The other Districts have Grant Schemes that are available such as rural communities funding, but this is external.

- 6.2 Worcestershire County Council Public Health fund a variety of Voluntary Sector and Community Schemes.
- 6.3 There is a Strengthening Worcestershire fund that is match funded by Worcestershire County Council. This is delivered by the Community Foundation on their behalf, as they must generate match funding to give out alongside the County Council's contribution to grow their investment pot.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.4 The Grants to Voluntary Bodies Scheme supports work across the third sector that support the Council's vision "A Council which delivers quality services for our communities, residents and businesses" and the Council priorities:
- Economy, Regeneration & Prosperity
 - Green, Clean & Safe
 - Community & Housing

Climate Change Implications

- 6.5 The green thread runs through the Council Plan. It is proposed that, should the scheme continue for 2026/27 and 2028/29, there will continue to be a question on the application form, although not included in the scoring, which would ensure applicants were giving consideration to the impact of climate change.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.6 The VCS support many members of the community and add social value. Alongside this, the sector support community relations and cohesion. In submitting funding applications organisations are asked 'who is your target audience and how do you ensure that your proposed project/service will reach them and will be open and accessible to all?' The panel will be required to score this element of the application.

**Executive
2025**

2nd September

Organisations are also asked, where appropriate, to confirm they have an Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy in place.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Given the number of organisations applying for this funding, the Council are unable to fund the breadth and diversity of projects versus the number of organisations that apply. However, organisations such as BARN offer support to more inexperienced groups in finding and applying for other sources of funding. There will also be some funding available via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for 2025/26 to support the Voluntary Sector and Community Groups with training.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Executive Committee Voluntary & Community Sector Grants Scheme – October 2022.

Appendix 1 – Citizens Advice Performance Data

Appendix 2 – VCS Grants allocations 2023- 2025

Appendix 3 – Grants Policy and Terms of Reference

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Begum	1st August 2025
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Judith Willis Assistant Director Community and Housing Services	8 th August 2025
Financial Services	Deb Goodall Assistant Director Finance and Customer Service	11 th August 2025
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings Principal Solicitor	23 rd July 2025

Executive
2025

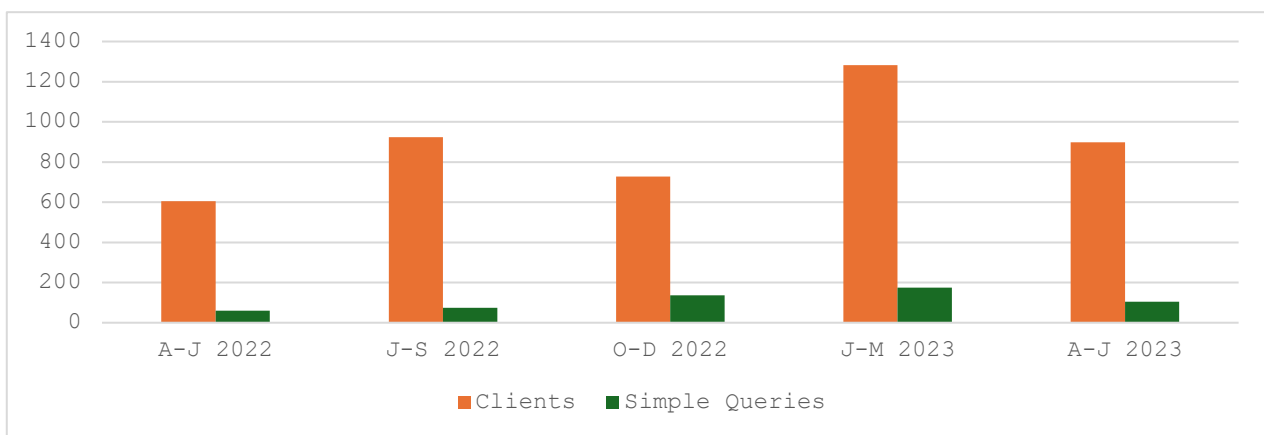
2nd September

	Legal, Equalities and Governance	
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green Policy Manager	11 th August 2025

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

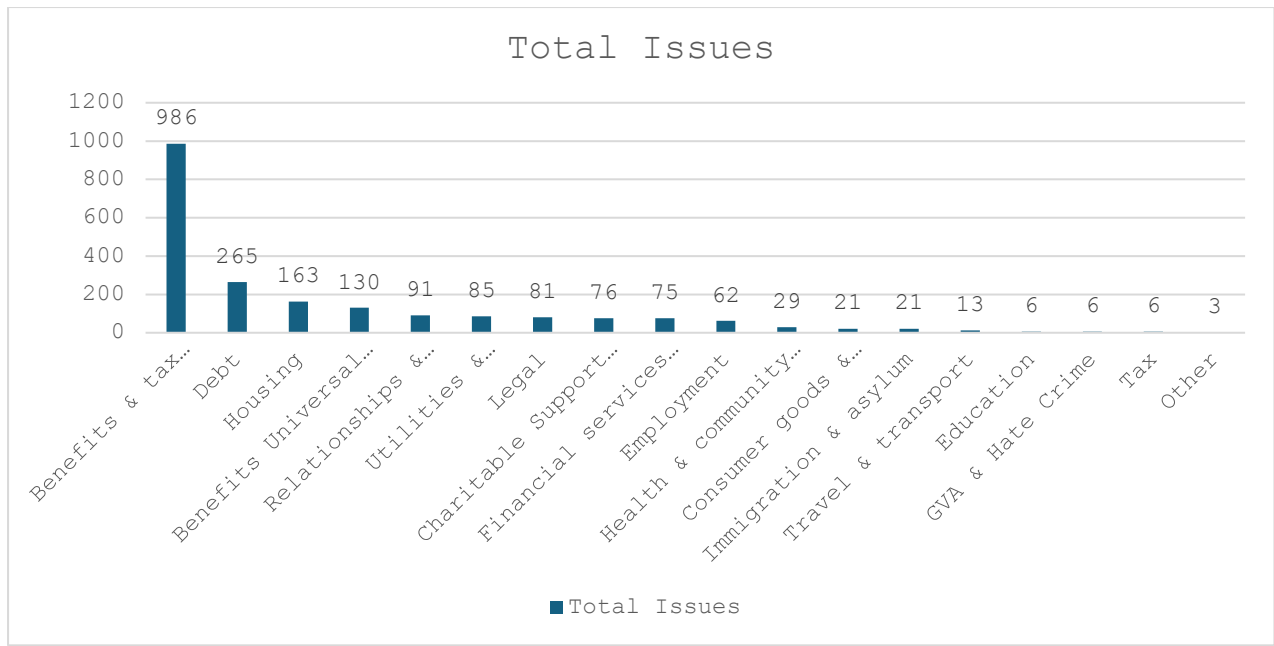
Redditch Q1 2023-2024 Report**Key Statistics****Number of unique clients using the service**

	Clients	Simple Queries	Total
A-J 2022	605	60	665
J-S 2022	924	74	998
O-D 2022	727	137	864
J-M 2023	1283	175	1458
A-J 2023	899	105	1004

**Outcomes**

Income gained	£53,363
Re-imbursements, services, loans	£1,413
Debts managed	£253,101
Priority debts	£114,437
Non priority debt	£138,664
Average debt per client	£6,328
Foodbank Vouchers	156
Charitable Support Applications	123

Advice Types and Issue Totals

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

Total issues dealt with: 2119

Client Satisfaction Survey Results

*figures are how many clients responding to the question

How easy it was to contact our service?

Very easy	16
Easy	12
Difficult	0
Very Difficult	0

Do you feel more confident about finding information / advice in the future?

I am more confident I would know what to do on my own	16
I am more confident I would know where to get help	12
Not confident, I would only have some idea what to do	0
Not confident at all	0

Do you feel more confident about accessing information and advice online?

Already confident	5
More confident	17
no internet	2
not confident	4

Has our advice made a difference to your wellbeing or peace of mind?

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

A lot	13
Some	10
No difference	4
N/A	1

How happy were you with our service?

Very happy	22
Fairly happy	6
Unhappy	0
Very Unhappy	0

Would you recommend our service?

Yes	28
No	0

Feedback

“A very kind and understanding contact. First class service. Thank you so much Kind regard.”

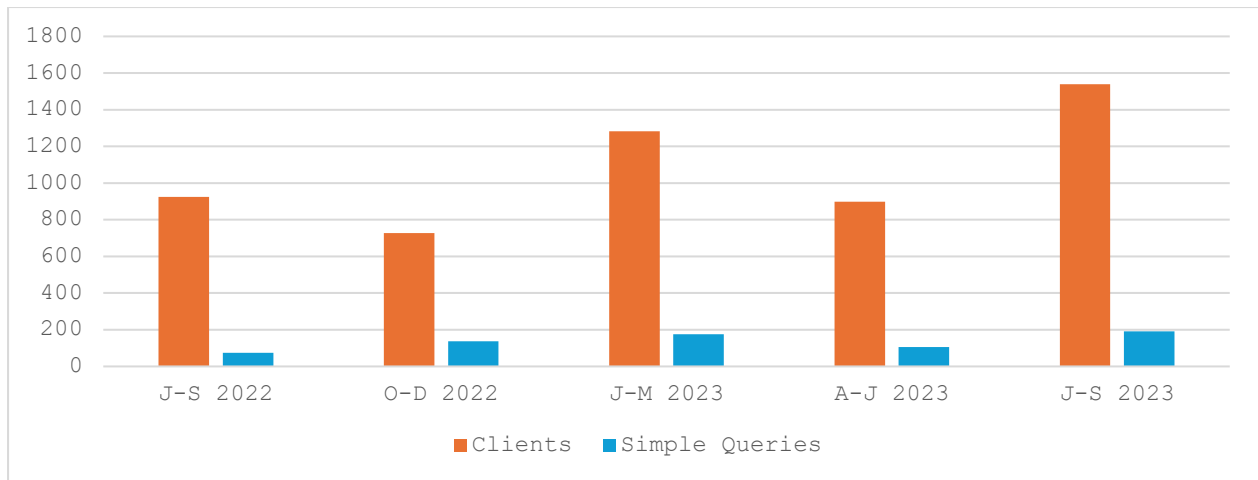
“It is very nice to have help about situations that you never have been before and have someone direct you.”

“I think it's very good how you are helping with our bills.”

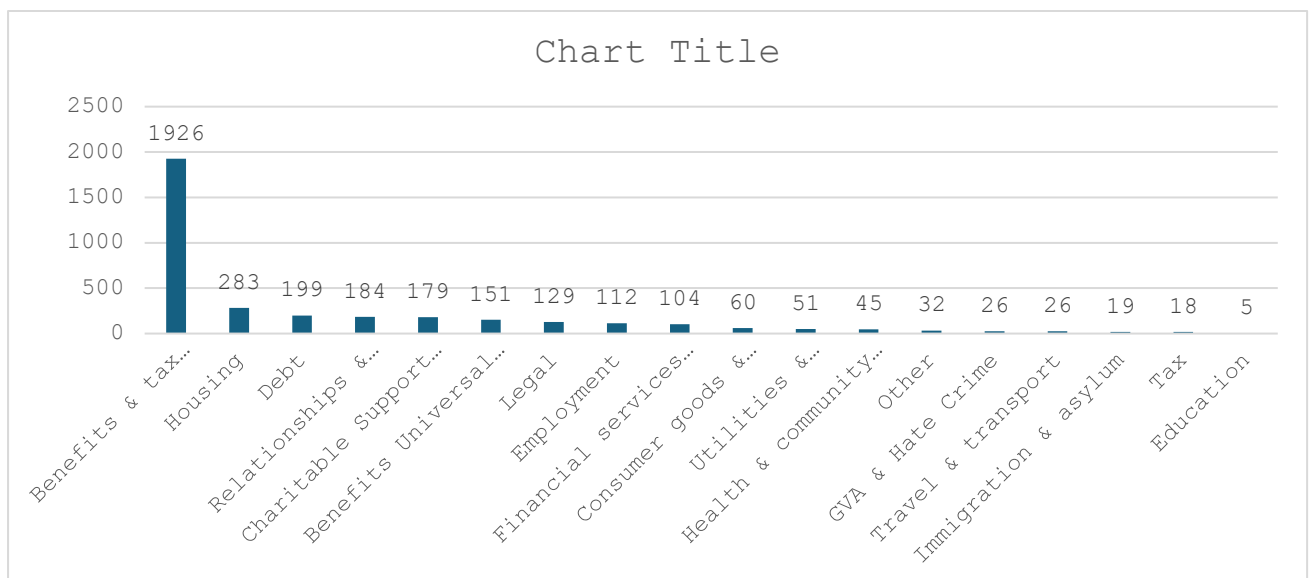
“Service excellent, [CAB representative] was very efficient, polite and knowledgeable. Prefer to come to C/Advice for help one to one. Please don't ever close this office, a great comfort to people ...”

Redditch Q2 2023-2024 Report**Key Statistics****Number of unique clients using the service**

	Clients	Simple Queries	Total
J-S 2022	924	74	998
O-D 2022	727	137	864
J-M 2023	1283	175	1458
A-J 2023	899	105	1004
J-S 2023	1539	191	1730

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25**Outcomes**

Income gained	£211,018
Re-imbursements, services, loans	£1,640
Debts managed	£354,692
Priority debts	£85,862
Non priority debt	£268,829
Foodbank Vouchers	78
Charitable Support Applications	99

Advice Types and Issue Totals

Total issues dealt with: 3549

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25**Client Satisfaction Survey Results**

*figures are how many clients responding to the question

How easy it was to contact our service?

Very easy	11
Easy	6
Difficult	2
Very Difficult	3

Do you feel more confident about finding information / advice in the future?

I am more confident I would know what to do on my own	1
I am more confident I would know where to get help	18
Not confident, I would only have some idea what to do	1
Not confident at all	1

Do you feel more confident about accessing information and advice online?

Already confident	2
More confident	7
no internet	1
not confident	8

Has our advice made a difference to your wellbeing or peace of mind?

A lot	10
Some	11
No difference	0
N/A	1

How happy were you with our service?

Very happy	14
Fairly happy	7
Unhappy	0
Very Unhappy	1

Would you recommend our service?

Yes	21
No	1

Feedback

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

“Very helpful & friendly people and advisors. It's been good & reassuring having your advisors to talk to.”

“The advice I received was very helpful. Thank you so much.”

“Thank you for the help received.”

“Very nice person and very nice guy to work with, please continue to help and support families.”

“I'm really very happy with all the helpful information that I have been given.”

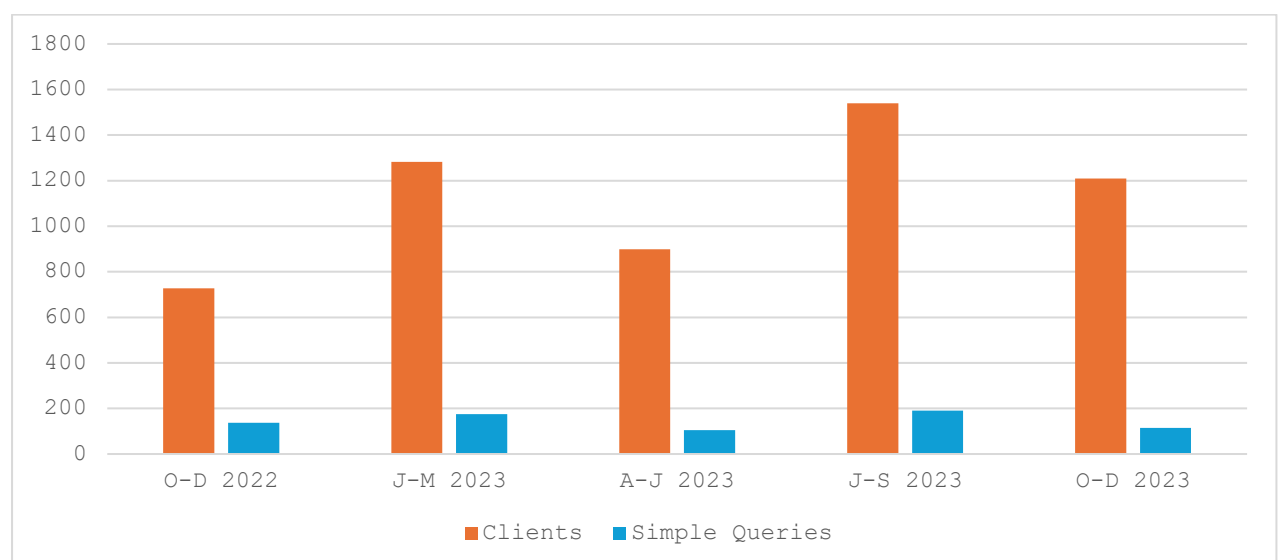
“Lovely [CAB representative] helped me understand what DWP have done. Lovely service from [CAB representative]. Going forward I shall be in touch. Thank you.”

Redditch Q3 2023-2024 Report

Key Statistics

Number of unique clients using the service

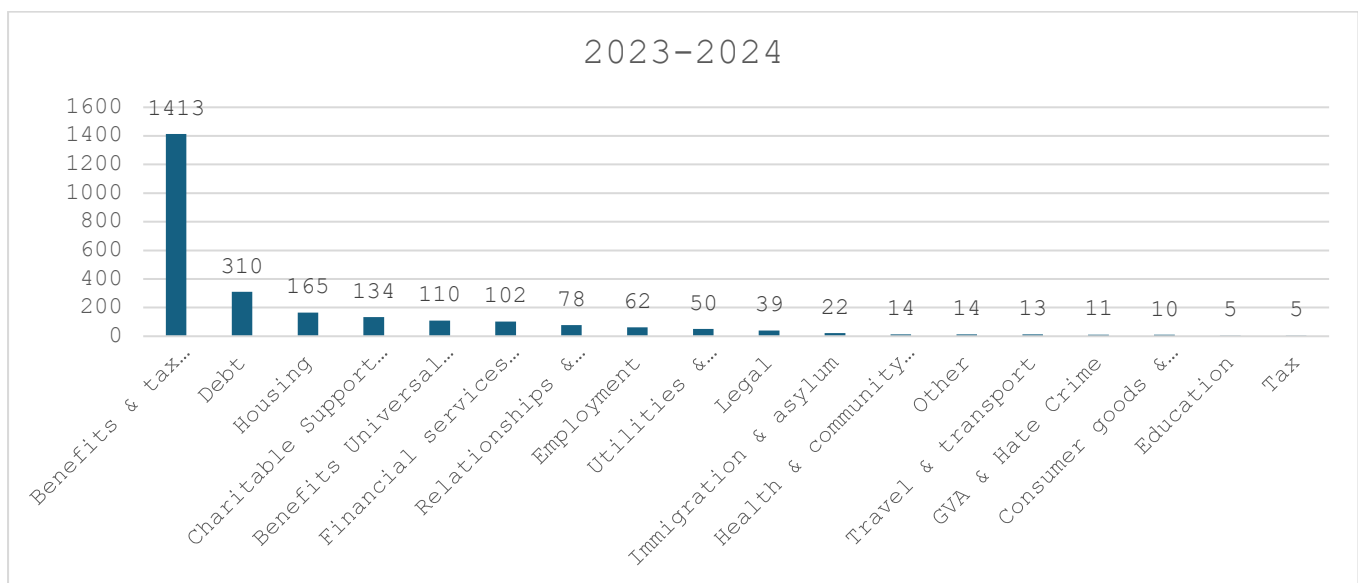
	Clients	Simple Queries	Total
J-S 2022	924	74	998
O-D 2022	727	137	864
J-M 2023	1283	175	1458
A-J 2023	899	105	1004
J-S 2023	1539	191	1730
O-D 2023	1209	114	1323



Outcomes

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

Income gained	£256,946
Re-imbursements, services, loans	£3,838
Debts managed	£213,897
Priority debts	£121,660
Non priority debt	£92,236
Foodbank Vouchers	78
Charitable Support Applications	99

Advice Types and Issue Totals

Total issues dealt with: **2557**

Client Satisfaction Survey Results

*figures are how many clients responding to the question

How easy it was to contact our service?

Very easy	7
Easy	11
Difficult	6
Very Difficult	2

Do you feel more confident about finding information / advice in the future?

I am more confident I would know what to do on my own	4
I am more confident I would know where to get help	13
Not confident, I would only have some idea what to do	0

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

Not confident at all	7
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Do you feel more confident about accessing information and advice online?

Already confident	6
More confident	7
no internet	3
not confident	7

Has our advice made a difference to your wellbeing or peace of mind?

A lot	9
Some	8
No difference	6
N/A	3

How happy were you with our service?

Very happy	17
Fairly happy	5
Unhappy	3
Very Unhappy	1

Would you recommend our service?

Yes	23
No	3

Feedback

"I feel a lot more confident in dealing with my financial situation"

"Very grateful for the help and support given"

"I have so far had two appointments, with more to come, and have been very pleased with the person's kindness, caring and understanding.... Thank You !!"

"Cannot thank you enough for all the support we have had from the service"

"Adviser was extremely helpful and knowledgeable, he gave me information and contact details which enabled me to resolve my issue"

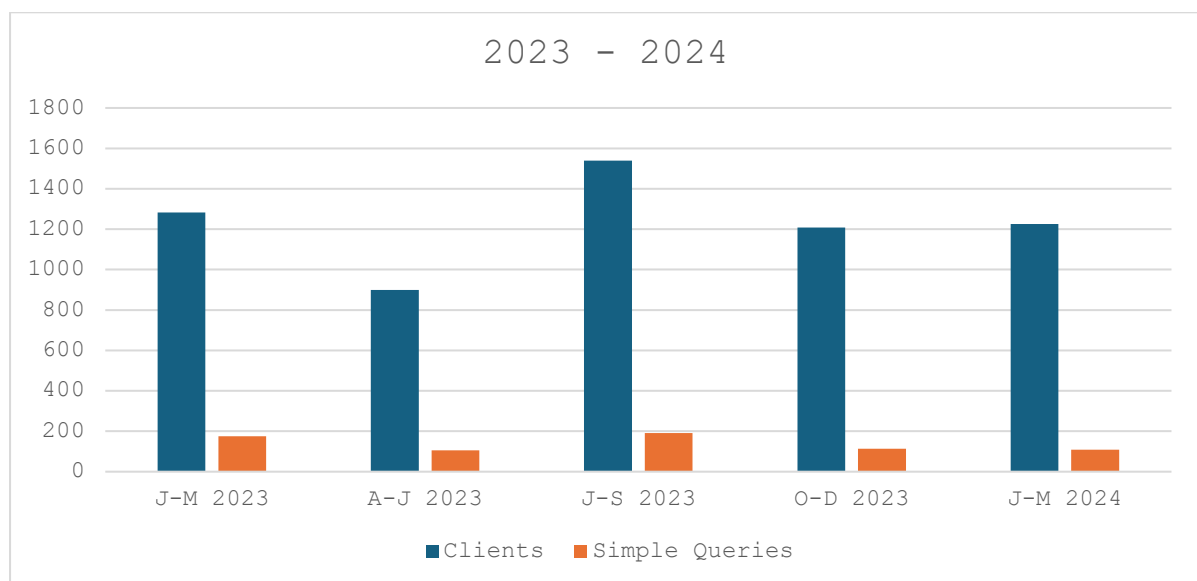
"Thank you for being so patient and pleasant. That's exactly what you need from a service"

Redditch Q4 2023-2024 Report**Key Statistics**

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

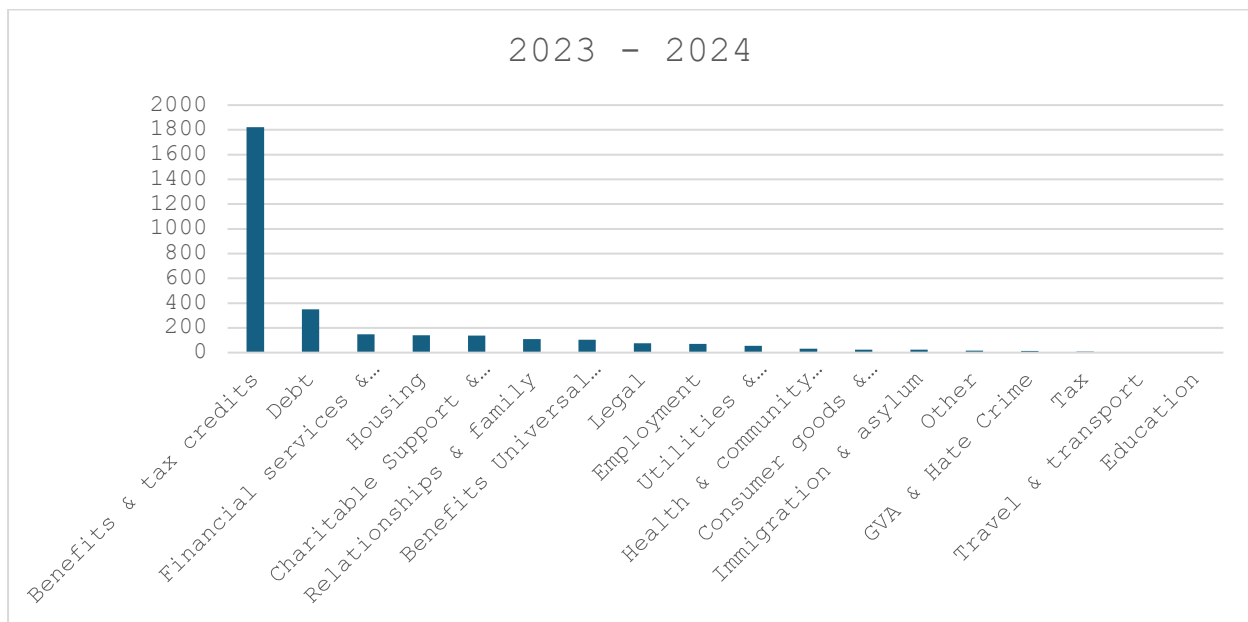
Number of unique clients using the service

	Clients	Simple Queries	Total
J-M 2023	1283	175	1458
A-J 2023	899	105	1004
J-S 2023	1539	191	1730
O-D 2023	1209	114	1323
J-M 2024	1,226	109	1,335

**Outcomes**

Income gained	£166,827
Re-imbursements, services, loans	£22,239
Debts managed	£175,872
Priority debts	£104,701
Non priority debt	£71,171
Foodbank Vouchers	72
Charitable Support Applications	52

Advice Types and Issue Totals

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

Total issues dealt with: **3138**

Client Satisfaction Survey Results

*figures are how many clients responding to the question
(151 sent to clients from CABR received 37)

How easy it was to contact our service?

Very easy	13
Easy	16
Difficult	7
Very Difficult	1

Do you feel more confident about finding information / advice in the future?

I am more confident I would know what to do on my own	7
I am more confident I would know where to get help	19
Not confident, I would only have some idea what to do	0
Not confident at all	9

Do you feel more confident about accessing information and advice online?

Already confident	8
More confident	14
no internet	1
not confident	13

Has our advice made a difference to your wellbeing or peace of mind?

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

A lot	11
Some	14
No difference	9
N/A	3

How happy were you with our service?

Very happy	23
Fairly happy	11
Unhappy	2
Very Unhappy	1

Would you recommend our service?

Yes	34
No	3

Feedback

"I feel a lot more confident in dealing with my financial situation"

"Very grateful for the help and support given"

"Cannot thank you enough for all the support we have had from the service"

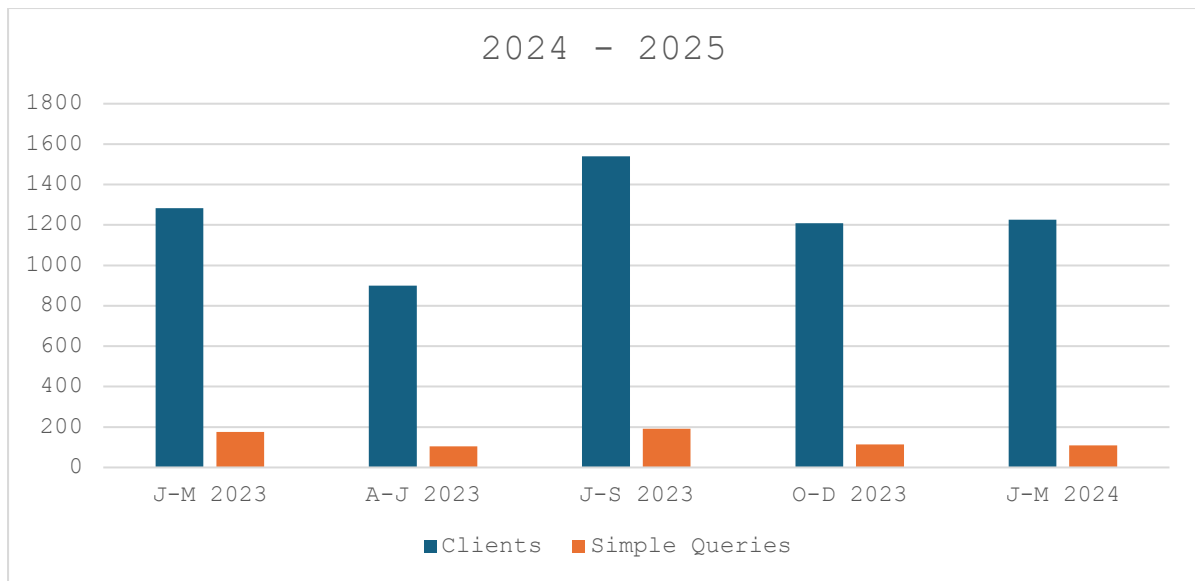
"Adviser was extremely helpful and knowledgeable, he gave me information and contact details which enabled me to resolve my issue"

"Very helpful, thanks"

"Absolutely amazing, were really really helpful"

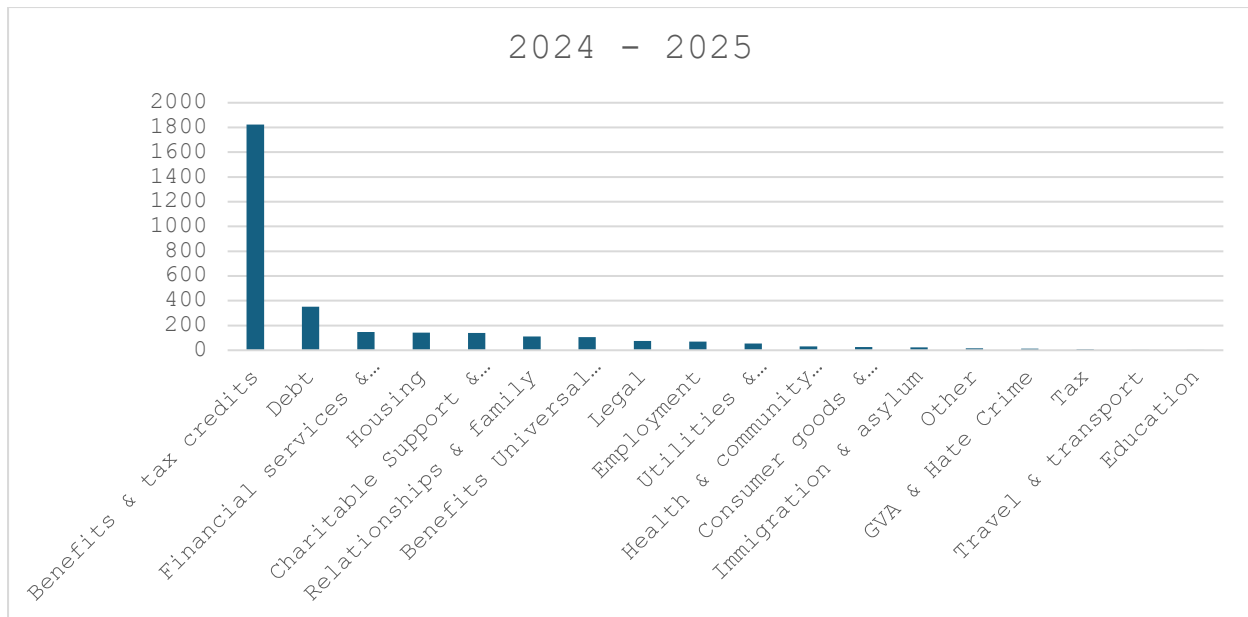
Redditch Q1 2024-2025 Report**Key Statistics****Number of unique clients using the service**

	Clients	Simple Queries	Total
A-J 2023	899	105	1,004
J-S 2023	1,539	191	1,730
O-D 2023	1,209	114	1,323
J-M 2024	1,226	109	1,335
A-J 2024	959	205	1,164

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25**Outcomes**

Income gained	£166,827
Re-imbursements, services, loans	£22,239
Debts managed	£175,872
Priority debts	£104,701
Non priority debt	£71,171
Foodbank Vouchers	72
Charitable Support Applications	52

Advice Types and Issue Totals

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

Total issues dealt with: **3138**

Client Satisfaction Survey Results

*figures are how many clients responding to the question
(151 sent to clients from CABR received 37)

How easy it was to contact our service?

Very easy	13
Easy	16
Difficult	7
Very Difficult	1

Do you feel more confident about finding information / advice in the future?

I am more confident I would know what to do on my own	7
I am more confident I would know where to get help	19
Not confident, I would only have some idea what to do	0
Not confident at all	9

Do you feel more confident about accessing information and advice online?

Already confident	8
More confident	14
no internet	1
not confident	13

Has our advice made a difference to your wellbeing or peace of mind?

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

A lot	11
Some	14
No difference	9
N/A	3

How happy were you with our service?

Very happy	23
Fairly happy	11
Unhappy	2
Very Unhappy	1

Would you recommend our service?

Yes	34
No	3

Feedback

"I left a voicemail and completed an online request and someone called me. She was so extremely helpful. I cannot fault her at all."

"It helps a lot. Adviser explained everything to me in detail"

"thanks for the helpful information in regard to accessing employment assistance and help with my financial situation."

"The adviser was very helpful on the phone and pointed me in the right direction to sort out my problem. I am waiting for my complaint to be processed"

"You really were amazing. I drove from Redditch to find you are not open for drop-in but you allowed me in and I was seen by an adviser quickly. I was really upset and you calmed me down. Thank you for caring and the support you gave me."

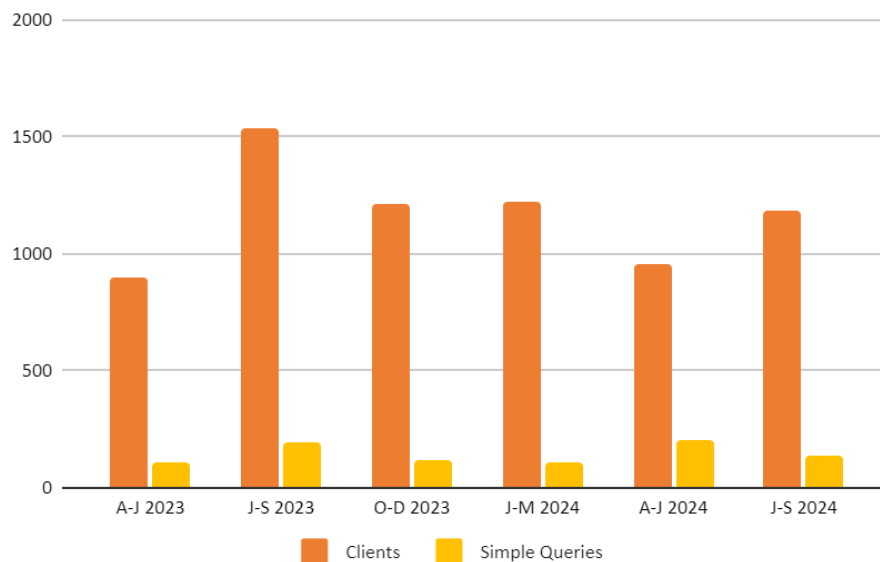
"I applied for the household money and the adviser I spoke to helped me send in my documents for checking. I got my voucher for the fund for a new washing machine"

"I applied for the household support fund through your website. I was called by a very nice man who talked me through what was needed. I received a voucher for £450! The whole process was very good and easy. I can now buy clothing for my children."

Redditch Q2 2024-2025 Report**Key Statistics****Number of unique clients using the service**

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

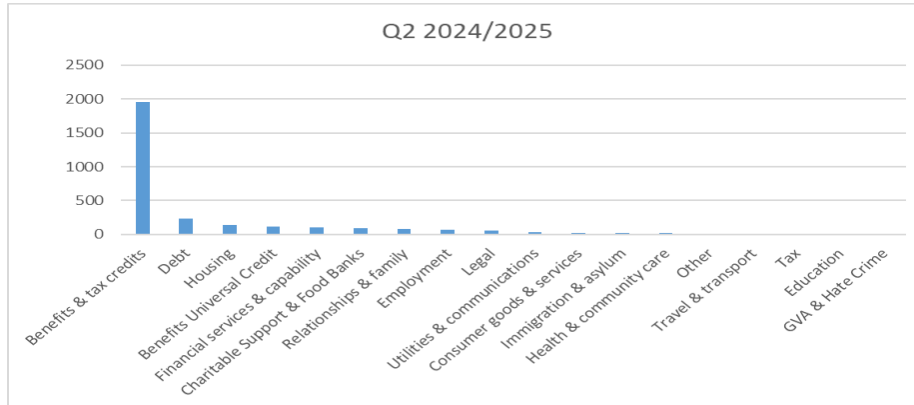
	Clients	Simple Queries	Total
A-J 2023	899	105	1,004
J-S 2023	1,539	191	1,730
O-D 2023	1,209	114	1,323
J-M 2024	1,226	109	1,335
A-J 2024	959	205	1,164
J-S 2024	1,180	142	1,322

**Outcomes**

Income gained	£148,180
Re-imbursements, services, loans	£3,778
Debts managed	£94,471
Priority debts	£53,094
Non priority debt	£41,377
Foodbank Vouchers	87

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

Charitable Support Applications	38
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Advice Types and Issue Totals

Total issues dealt with: **2,998**

Client Satisfaction Survey Results

*figures are how many clients responding to the question
(230 sent to clients from CABR, received 22)

How easy it was to contact our service?

Very easy	8
Easy	12
Difficult	1
Very Difficult	1

Do you feel more confident about finding information / advice in the future?

I am more confident I would know what to do on my own	4
I am more confident I would know where to get help	15
Not confident, I would only have some idea what to do	0
Not confident at all	3

Do you feel more confident about accessing information and advice online?

Already confident	3
More confident	13
no internet	4
not confident	2

Has our advice made a difference to your wellbeing or peace of mind?

A lot	8
Some	10

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

No difference	3
N/A	1

How happy were you with our service?

Very happy	17
Fairly happy	3
Unhappy	1
Very Unhappy	1

Would you recommend our service?

Yes	20
No	2

Feedback

“Thank you for all your help, where there was darkness you were a beacon of light”

“Many thanks to Citizens Advice! You have helped me so many times in the past! In fact, you help me more than many times more like 1 million times! I certainly wouldn't be where I am today without you! And a big thank you to [CAB representative] who is based at Bromsgrove the help and support she has given me is unbelievable thank you again.”

“I received the household support fund from you which I was very grateful for. Everything went really well many many thanks.”

“Excellent service, clear and concise reply”

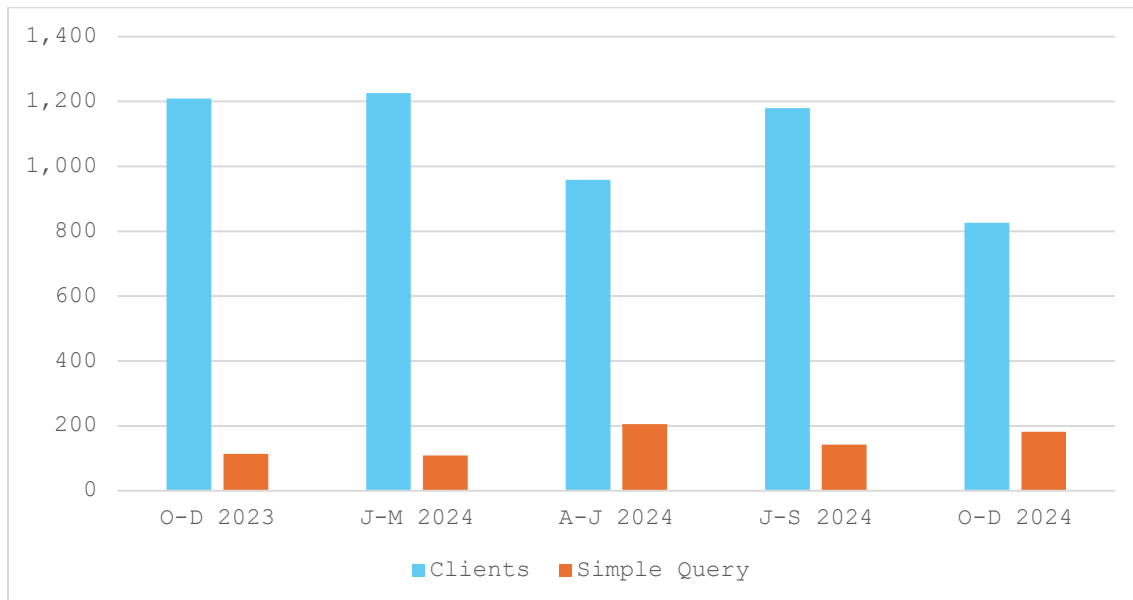
“Many thanks to [CAB representative] he was very good thank you”

Redditch Q3 2024-2025 Report**Key Statistics****Number of unique clients using the service**

	Clients	Simple Queries	Total
O-D 2023	1,209	114	1,323
J-M 2024	1,226	109	1,335

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

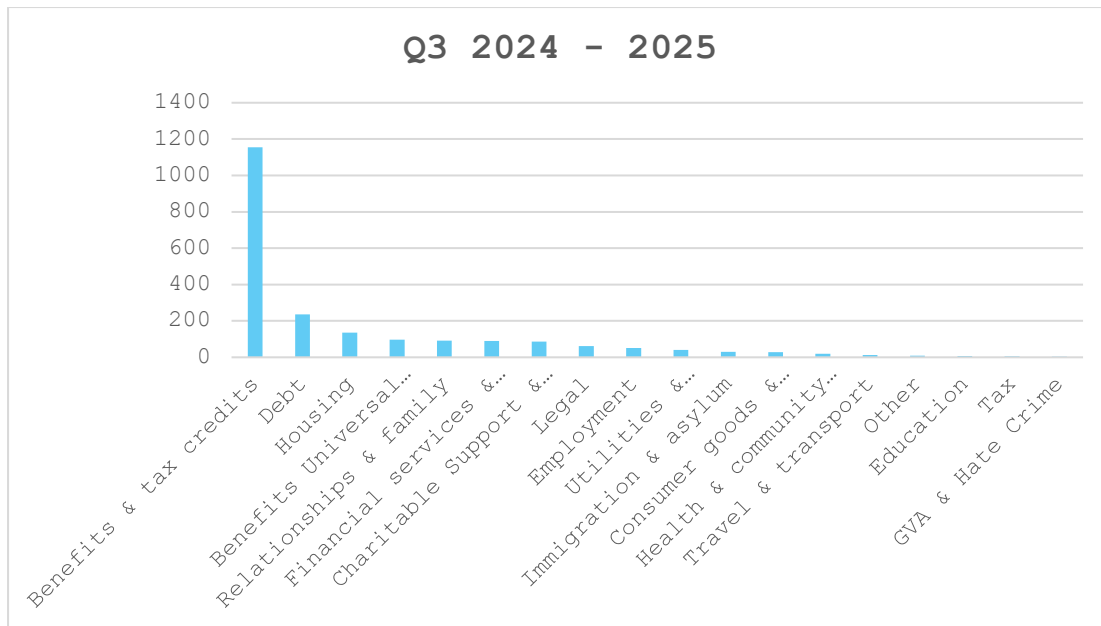
A-J 2024	959	205	1,164
J-S 2024	1,180	142	1,322
O-D 2024	826	182	1,008

**Outcomes**

Income gained	£104,029
Re-imbursements, services, loans	£2,706
Debts managed	£104,029
Priority debts	£63,748
Non priority debt	£88,724
Foodbank Vouchers	77
Charitable Support Applications	47

Advice Types and Issue Totals

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25



Total issues dealt with: **2,364**

Client Satisfaction Survey Results

*figures are how many clients responding to the question
(165 sent to clients from CABR, received 19)

How easy it was to contact our service?

Very easy	8
Easy	11
Difficult	0
Very Difficult	0

Do you feel more confident about finding information / advice in the future?

I am more confident I would know what to do on my own	4
I am more confident I would know where to get help	13
Not confident, I would only have some idea what to do	2
Not confident at all	0

Do you feel more confident about accessing information and advice

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

online?

Already confident	3
More confident	8
no internet	2
not confident	6

Has our advice made a difference to your wellbeing or peace of mind?

A lot	9
Some	8
No difference	1
N/A	1

How happy were you with our service?

Very happy	17
Fairly happy	1
Unhappy	1
Very Unhappy	0

Would you recommend our service?

Yes	19
No	0

Feedback

“The adviser was amazing, caring, understanding but above all very knowledgeable, this lady goes above and beyond with added empathy.”

“Received exceptional service and help. Staff very empathetic. Highly recommend CABR.”

“Felt listened to and supported with the correct information thank you”

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

“I was impressed as after leaving a message saying it might be 5 days before you replied, I had a call within 2 hours as I did have a deadline I had to meet. I got the help I needed and the result I wanted. Thank you.”

“The adviser at Bromsgrove Citizens Advice was extremely helpful - took time to listen and was friendly and interested in helping me find more information. Thank you for your help.”

“Very helpful and very, very patient with me, also very understanding and professional thank you.”

Redditch Q4 2024-2025 Report**Key Statistics****Number of unique clients using the service**

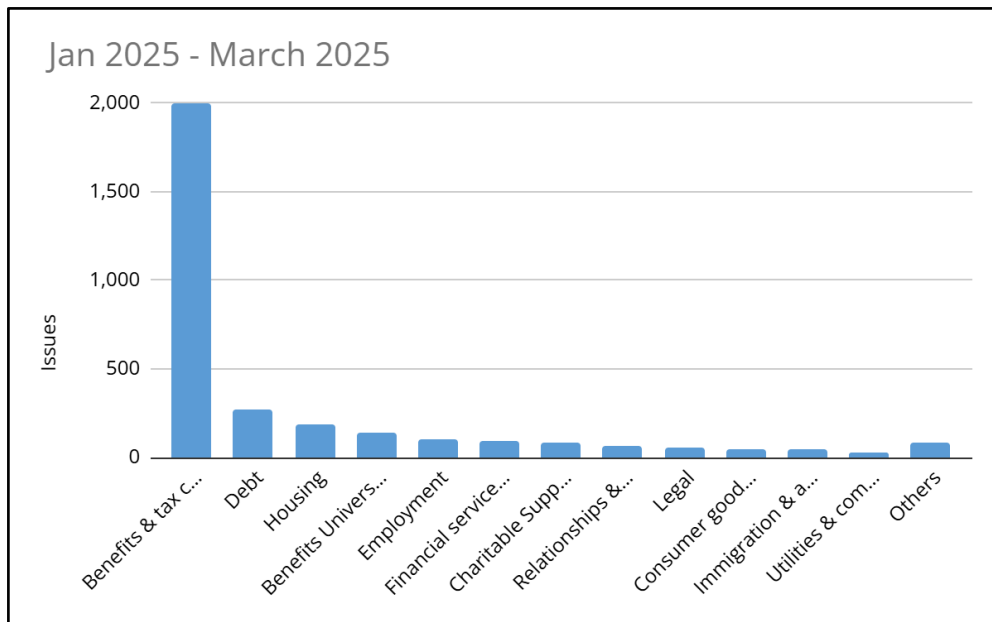
	Clients	Simple Queries	Total
J-M 2024	1,226	109	1,335
A-J 2024	959	205	1,164
J-S 2024	1,180	142	1,322
O-D 2024	826	182	1,008
J-M 2025	1,309	244	1,553

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25**Outcomes**

Income gained	£220,960
Re-imbursements, services, loans	£2,934
Debts managed	£166,803
Priority debts	£68,938
Non priority debt	£97,865
Foodbank Vouchers	124
Charitable Support Applications	38

Advice Types and Issue Totals

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25



Total issues dealt with: **3,220**

Client Satisfaction Survey Results

*figures are how many clients responding to the question
(133 sent to clients from CABR, received 18)

How easy it was to contact our service?

Very easy	8
Easy	7
Difficult	2
Very Difficult	1

Do you feel more confident about finding information / advice in the future?

I am more confident I would know what to do on my own	2
I am more confident I would know where to get help	13
Not confident, I would only have some idea what to do	1
Not confident at all	2

Do you feel more confident about accessing information and advice online?

Already confident	5
More confident	11

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

no internet	1
not confident	1

Has our advice made a difference to your wellbeing or peace of mind?

A lot	8
Some	7
No difference	1
N/A	2

How happy were you with our service?

Very happy	13
Fairly happy	3
Unhappy	0
Very Unhappy	2

Would you recommend our service?

Yes	15
No	3

Feedback

"I left there with a different mindset and a different feeling. You both helped me so much. Words cannot explain what a difference you made"

"The CAB are very helpful and are always there if you need them"

"Thanks for helping me access HSF funding"

"The adviser at Citizens Advice was extremely helpful - took time to listen and was friendly and interested in helping me find more information. Thank you for your help"

"Very helpful and very very patient with me also very understanding and professional thank you"

"Very good"

"Thank you for providing your service. I appreciate it"

Appendix 1 Bromsgrove & Redditch Citizens Advice Data 2023/24 and 2024/25

“After feeling very anxious on arrival I feel speaking and talking has helped me & pointed me in the right direction. Thank you”

“You are lovely, you are. Thank you”

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Appendix 2

Redditch Borough Council's Voluntary & Community Sector Grant Funding Programme for 2023/24

Grants Awarded

VCS groups can bid for funding from £500 up to £10,000 to help with their core costs or to support them to deliver great community projects and activities. This year the Council ringfenced £10,000 of this funding to create a separate pot for Lower grant applications, from £500 to £2,000. The remainder of the Main Grants Pot (approximately £90k) was for Higher applications – grants over £2,000 and up to £10,000.

Higher Grants Awarded

Group / Organisation	Project	Grant Award
NewStarts	Furniture Project	£10,000
Carers Careline	Running Costs	£10,000
BARN -VCS	VCS Kick Start Project 2023	£6,485
BluWave	Running costs	£9,825
Homestart	Creating Social Networks	£10,000
Oasis Christian Centre	Christians against poverty debt centre	£5,000
CAB	Housing Advice	£9,816

Appendix 2

Batchley Support Group	Community Pantry	£7,415
The Old Needleworks	Moving On Project	£7,980
Age UK	Information and advice home visits in Redditch	£4,620
REACH	Running Costs	£10,000

Lower Grants Awarded

Group / Organisation	Project	Grant Award
ARCH	Cricket Club	£1,850
AGE UK	Outreach Development	£1,996
Moons Moat Conservation Group	Orientation	£2,000
Brockhill Wildlife Project	Planting	£1,500
Redditch First Responders	Vehicle Running Costs	£2,000

Appendix 2

Redditch Borough Council's Voluntary & Community Sector Grant Funding Programme for 2024/25

Higher Grants Awarded

Group / Organisation	Project	Grant Award
NewStarts	Running costs	£10,000
Carers Careline	Running Costs	£10,000
BARN -VCS	Onwards and Upwards Project	£7,018
REACH	Running costs	£10,000
The Lord Taverners	Redditch Wicketz	£7,788
Age UK	Information and advice home visits in Redditch	£4,620
The Old Needleworks	Wellbeing groups project	£8,566
Oasis Christiam Centre	Christians against poverty debt centre	£5,000
Acorns Childrens Hospice	Specialist palliative care for children from Redditch	£7,000
Relate	Redditch relationship support	£6,000

Appendix 2

Sight Concern Worcestershire	Redditch IAG & wellbeing support	£5,000
ARCH (Active Redditch community Hub)	Football and more for all	£3,400
Homestart- North East Worcestershire.	Combating loneliness & isolation project	£10,000

Lower Grants Awarded

Group / Organisation	Project	Grant Award
First Redditch Scouts	Purchase of outdoor cooking equipment	£1,926
Redditch and Bromsgrove Talking Newspapers	Running costs	£1,750
Redditch Local History Museum	Purchase of various pieces of equipment	£2,000
Redditch Community Shed	Expansion of support	£2,000
Friends of Isaacs Food Bank	Additional storage costs	£2,000

Appendix 2

Redditch Borough Council's Voluntary & Community Sector Grant Funding Programme for 2025/26

Higher Grants Awarded

Group / Organisation	Project	Grant Award
YMCA	Mentoring Project	£9,184
Your Ideas	Woodrow Thrive	£10,000
BARN	Strengthening Voluntary and Community Sector	£9,101
Age UK	Information and advice home visits in Redditch	£5,642
Citizens Advice B&R	Volunteer Capacity Project	£10,000
Reanella Trust	Resilience Recovery Relief Project	£9,600
Astwood Bank Community	Community Project Running Costs	£10,000
Carers Careline	Running Costs	£10,000
Kingfisher Rotary	Creative Carousel Project	£9,924

Appendix 2

Acorns – Specialist Palliative Care for Children in Redditch	Running Costs	£3,400
Ahead of Well-Being	Some Men Not All Men – Freedom Programme	£9,982

Lower Grants Awarded

Group / Organisation	Project	Grant Award
West Midlands Search & Rescue	Help Save a Life Training Project	£1,500
Where Next Association	Funding for seeds, plants and compost	£2,000
Redditch Scouts	Scouts Ditch Jam running costs	£1,810
Redditch Stars	Couch to 5k costs for volunteers and training	£1,200
FRHENS – support group for vulnerable women	Running costs	£2,000



APPENDIX 3

VOLUNTARY SECTOR MEMBERS GRANTS PANEL TERMS OF REFERENCE

Date:

Date of Review:

Chair: The Panel will be chaired by a Councillor who is not a member of the controlling group.

Meeting Frequency: The Panel shall meet a minimum of two times per year to review and score grant applications. The dates of the meetings will be identified and included in the annual calendar of meetings.

Quorum: The Panel shall consist of five members and the quorum will be three.

Overall functions and responsibilities:

The Grants Panel shall be an Executive Advisory Panel. Its recommendations will require ratification by the Executive Committee. When participating in meetings of the Grants Panel, Members will be required to abide by the Council's Member Code of Conduct.

The purpose of the Grants Panel will be to consider grant applications from various Voluntary and Community Sector organisations on behalf of Redditch Borough Council in accordance with the agreed eligibility guidelines.

Membership:

Members of the Panel will be nominated by political group leaders – Members of the Panel cannot be members of the Executive Committee.

The VCS Grants Officer will attend the meetings to provide the paperwork and answer any queries.

Members of the Panel will only be permitted to participate in meetings of the Panel once they have attended appropriate training.

Accountability and reporting arrangements:

The Grants Panel will report recommendations to the Executive Committee.

Each Member is responsible for:

- Attending an information and training session on the grant application process.
- Attending the Panel Meetings to score the higher grant applications using the scoring matrix.
- Ensuring that the grants budget for the relevant financial year is not exceeded.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of Redditch Borough Council's grant allocation process.
- Not being a signatory on any grant cheque.
- Declaring any interests that they, or their spouse, may have in applications received through the grants process. Members are advised to withdraw from taking part in the debate and vote on any applications with which they are so involved.
- Not sharing any information contained in the application forms outside of the Grants Panel Meetings.
- The results of any recommendations concerning grants applications will be referred to the Executive Committee for consideration and approval.

Agenda Packs and Papers:

The Grants Officer will support the administration of the Panel and will be responsible for consulting with the Chair and Members ensuring that the papers are sent out in a timely fashion.

Agenda packs and papers will be available to the members of the group five working days before the meeting.

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Adoption of Fixed Penalty Charge for breach of Community Protection Notice

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jane Spilsbury Councillor Sharon Harvey
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes, Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Report Author	Job Title: Toni Ainscough, Principal Officer (Environmental Enforcement) Contact email: toni.ainscough@worcestershire.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01562 738035
Wards Affected	ALL
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Clean, Green and Safe & Community and Housing
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive Committee RECOMMEND that:-

- 1) That the Council adopt a Fixed Penalty Notice Charge of £100 for failure to comply with a Community Protection Notice.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In June 2024 responsibility for enforcement of Planning Enforcement, Fly-tipping, littering, duty of care of waste offences and dog fouling was passed to Worcestershire Regulatory Services. One of the tools for dealing with some of these issues is service of a Community Protection Notice (CPN) under Part 4 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 which came into effect in England and Wales on 20 October 2014.
- 2.2 Whilst WRS have a remit to undertake enforcement of Planning Enforcement related matters, Fly-tipping, littering, duty of care of waste offences and dog fouling, CPNs can be used for a wider range of anti-social behaviours by the Police or other Council departments.
- 2.3 CPNs are intended to stop a person or business continuing with conduct which unacceptably affects victims and the community. They

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can only be served where there are reasonable grounds to believe the offender's conduct is having a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, and it is unreasonable and the behaviour is of a persistent or continuing nature. Before one can be served, the offender must be given a writing warning (Community Protection Warning) stating that a CPN will be issued unless their conduct ceases to have the detrimental effect.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 Failure to comply with a CPN is a summary offence under Section 48. The offence is punishable on conviction in the case of an individual by a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale (currently £2,500) or in the case of a body/business an unlimited fine.
- 3.2 However, in accordance with the Council's enforcement policy, there are alternatives to prosecution which should also be considered for use where appropriate. Simple Cautions for example could also be considered and may be appropriate in the case of a first or a merely technical breach of a CPN. Section 52 of the act provides that an authorised person may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) as an alternative to prosecution for breach of a CPN. Payment of the FPN within 14 days from the date of issue has the effect of discharging any liability to convict for the offence but allows for action to be taken for subsequent offences.
- 3.3 A fixed penalty cannot be for more than £100.
- 3.4 There is currently no charge adopted by the Council for any FPN served in the event of failure to comply with a CPN.
- 3.5 Adoption of a charge would allow FPNs to be considered as an alternative method of discharging any liability alongside simple Cautions and prosecution.
- 3.6 Any charge level adopted would apply to all FPNs served following a breach of a CPN served by the Council regardless of the department undertaking the enforcement action. Any charge would be reviewed in line with the usual fees and charges setting process the Council undertakes annually.
- 3.7 This report is being brought forward at this point as Community Protection Warnings and Notices have been served or are currently being prepared for service by WRS on behalf of the Council and there is the strong likelihood that we will benefit from the ability to offer fixed

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penalty notices prior to the annual fees and charges paper in February 2026.

- 3.8 There is no recommended change to the reporting mechanisms for reporting on activity associated with CPNs or FPNs through this report. For all Council areas CPN and FPN numbers are reported through the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny reports. Any served for waste related issues are also reported to Defra and for subject areas for which such may be served by WRS matters are reported to the WRS Joint Board in accordance with the shared service governance arrangements.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None. Any penalties are payable to the Council and would be collected in line with those from other forms of FPN served by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS).
- 4.2 Any FPN charges should be approved and published by the local authority.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The addition of an FPN option for offences under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 is in line with the Council's and WRS' enforcement policy. WRS have robust procedures in place to ensure CPNs and FPNs are only used where appropriate and the evidential test has been met.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 None.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 CPNs are used to enforce action against a variety of anti-social behaviours which would otherwise have an impact on the community, including the ability of residents to feel safe in their homes. CPNs can be used for waste related matters which are a priority for the Council and their ability to maintain a clean environment. This helps meet the specific commitment of the Council to "address litter and dog mess, the impact of fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour".

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Climate Change Implications

6.3 None.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.4 None.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 None.

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Jane Spilsbury PFH WRS Sharon Harvey PFH Env Serv	Consulted 11/08/25
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes	Consulted 01/08/25
Financial Services	Debra Goodall	Consulted 01/08/25
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor - Governance	06/08/25
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green	Consulted 01/08/25
	Bev Houghton, Community Safety Manager	12/08/25
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green	Consulted 01/08/25
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Eccles	Consulted 01/08/25

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive Committee****2nd September 2025****Quarter 1 2025/6 Housing Consumer Standards**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bill Hartnett
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Parry and Judith Willis
Report Author	Job Title: Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services and Assistant Director of Community and Housing Services Contact email: simon.parry@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk, Judith.willis@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel:
Wards Affected	ALL
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Community and Housing
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS**The Executive Committee RESOLVE that: -**

- 1) The Council's 2025/26 performance against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (Landlord) are noted.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) has established the 'Tenant Satisfaction Measures' (TSM) which places a responsibility on all social housing landlords, in England, to return performance information, so that each provider can be assessed for how well it is providing good quality homes and services. The TSM sets out 22 measures covering 5 themes.

1. Keeping Properties in good repair
2. Maintaining Building Safety
3. Respectful and helpful engagement
4. Effective handling of complaints
5. Responsible neighbourhood management

- 2.2 Of the 22 measures they are split between those that the landlord is required to measure directly (10 No.) and those that are measured by tenant perception surveys (12 No.)
- 2.3 This report provides an update on the current position regarding all 10 of the landlord measures across Housing, together with other

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supplementary measures critical for service delivery in meeting the outcomes from the RSH. This includes services provided by both Housing Property Services and Housing Services through the management and maintenance of Redditch Borough Council (RBC) Housing Stock.

- 2.4 RSH in April 2024 also published four Consumer Standards: Safety and Quality, Transparency, Influence and Accountability, and Neighbourhood and Community and Tenancy.
- 2.5 The Safety and Quality Consumer Standard sets out, under 1.3 Health and Safety, that Redditch Borough Council 'must take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas'. To achieve this, the Council must identify and meet all requirements, and all required actions are carried out in appropriate timescales and that in the design and delivery of landlord services the Council takes reasonable steps to mitigate any identified risks to tenants.
- 2.6 The Neighbourhood and Community Standard sets out under 1.3.1 that RBC must 'work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.' Performance against this is included within the report.
- 2.7 The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard sets out under 1.6.1 that RBC 'must ensure complaints are addressed fairly, effectively, and promptly.' Performance against this is included within the report.
- 2.8 The 10 measures, some of which have subcategories, are as follows

RP – Keeping Properties in good repair

- | | |
|--------|---|
| RP01 | Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard |
| RP02.1 | Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale |
| RP02.2 | Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale |

BS – Maintaining Building Safety

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- | | |
|------|--|
| BS01 | Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out |
| BS02 | Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out |
| BS03 | Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out |
| BS04 | Proportion of homes for which all required legionella checks have been carried out |
| BS05 | Proportion of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out |

CH – Effective Handling of Complaints

- | | |
|--------|---|
| CH01.1 | Number of stage 1 complaints received (per 1,000 homes) |
| CH01.2 | Number of stage 2 complaints received (per 1,000 homes) |
| CH02.1 | Proportion of stage 1 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales |
| CH02.2 | Proportion of stage 1 complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales |

NM – Responsible Neighbourhood Management

- | | |
|--------|--|
| NM01.1 | Number of anti-social behaviour cases opened (per 1,000 homes) |
| NM01.2 | Number of anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate incidents opened (per 1,000 homes) |

- 2.9 There are presently no TSMs for Electrical Installation checks including domestic, communal, smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. However, these are included in the report as part of our compliance responsibilities to ensure properties are safe.

- | | |
|------|---|
| EI01 | Proportion of homes for which all electrical checks have been carried out (5-year period) |
|------|---|

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- | | |
|------|---|
| EI02 | Proportion of homes for which all required communal electrical checks have been carried out (5-year period) |
| EI03 | Proportion of homes for which smoke alarms have been fitted |
| EI04 | Proportion of Homes for which carbon monoxide detectors have been fitted |

2.10 Following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak who died due to prolonged exposure to damp and mould the Government have introduced Awaab's Law which aims to ensure timely, professional and empathetic responses to housing hazards The first phase of this commences in October 2025 in tackling damp and mould hazards. The new law places responsibilities on Housing landlords including

- Investigate potential hazards within **10 working days**
- Provide a written summary of findings within **3 working days** after investigation
- If a significant risk is found
 - Make the property safe within **5 working days**
 - Complete full repairs within **12 weeks**
- In emergencies, act within **24 hours**
- If the property can't be made safe in time, offer alternative accommodation at the landlord's expense.

2.11 Performance against these measures will be included in the next quarterly report.

Operational Issues

3.1 The following sets out the performance for quarter 1 of 2025/26 with commentary where performance has not met target or where updates on progress are being made.

3.2 RP – Keeping Properties in good repair - see Appendix 1 for measures table

RP01: Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard

- 3.3 There has been a small improvement in non-decency levels with work programmes ongoing to ensure that properties are made decent. Most of the reasons for non-decency fall within the State of Repair category of the Decent Homes Standard and represents elements such as Roofing, Electrical, Gas, Kitchens and Bathrooms.

Stock Condition Data

- 3.4 To ensure the Council can report against this robustly, Housing Property Services have a programme of Stock Condition Surveys to our properties which are undertaken by an external consultant on an annual basis. Through 2025/26 the target is to complete 1,340 surveys; to update the Council's data, these surveys are scheduled to start at the end of August 2025. In 2019/20 the first Stock Condition surveys undertaken for many years were completed which covered approximately 55% of our Housing Stock at the time, which then formed the basis of the current 5-year capital investment programme within the report to the Executive Committee in February 2023. The Council completed surveys for a further circa 20% of our housing stock in the last financial year. However, best practice advises that data is only used for a 5-year period, therefore a programme, to complete all the authority's stock over the next 3 financial years including this, has been established.
- 3.5 Currently, therefore the percentage of properties with a Stock Condition Survey undertaken in the last 5 years is 19.71%.

RP02.1: Repairs completed within target timescale – Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale**RP02.2: Repairs completed within target timescale – Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale**

- 3.6 In conjunction with the Business Improvement Team, the Repairs Team have been building Power Bi reports since January 2025, to provide performance information. The tables below represent the percentage of Works Orders (WO) closed on the system together with the percentage that have been closed within the target timescales for each Priority Code.

RPO2.1 covers all Priority 2 & 3 repairs

Priority 2	Urgent	5 working days
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Priority 3	Routine	20 working days
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RP02.2 covers all Priority 1 repairs

Priority 1 Emergency 24 hrs

- 3.7 Emergency repairs are those that need to be carried out to avoid serious danger to the health and safety of the occupants or where a failure to carry out the repair could cause extensive damage to buildings and property.

- 3.8 The following table sets out monthly performance against each priority: code.

Priority	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	Q1
1	83.5%	80.2%	86.9%	83.4%
2	80.1%	74.1%	88.7%	81.1%
3	60.3%	64.8%	79.8%	67.8%

- 3.9 Work is ongoing with the Business Support and Business Improvement Teams to close jobs following completion, using the correct process, to review previously raised repair jobs prior to raising duplicate jobs, as duplicates have been identified as a key area for the number of open/overdue jobs. Further analysis is being undertaken and measures put in place. For example, fencing is an area under Priority 3, where there is a backlog, a new contractor has been tendered to support the inhouse teams to improve timescales.

- 3.10 **BS- Maintaining Building Safety (see Appendix 1 for the measures table)**

BS01: Gas safety checks

- 3.11 The key statutory requirement is that RBC adhere to the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 as amended. It is a legal requirement for RBC to perform a gas safety check every twelve months on Council Houses and to maintain the associated paperwork.
- 3.12 All current gas safety checks are in place for both the Council's domestic boilers and communal boilers. Work to improve the quality and efficiency of boilers continues with boilers replaced on both a reactive basis (where beyond economical repair) or planned replacement due to age and efficiency.
- 3.13 There are 204 properties that have their gas supply capped. These properties comprise of current voids and customers who do not want or can't afford gas. There are 156 properties that have been capped greater than 3 months and these are identified and shared with the Neighbourhood and Tenancy team to provide opportunity for tenancy visits to ensure there is support for the household.

BS02: Fire safety checks

- 3.14 The key statutory requirement is the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO) which requires RBC to undertake regular assessments of all communal areas within the Council's housing stock, by a competent person. This assessment of a building is to ensure that it is at least maintained, as designed, to protect the integrity of fire safety features such as compartmentation and escape routes.
- 3.15 There is a rolling programme of inspection for the Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) with designated properties being part of an annual risk assessment (Sheltered Accommodation) with the remainder (General Needs) being undertaken on a 3-year cycle. The FRAs are undertaken by external consultants Ridge and Partners LLP.
- 3.16 Through the FRAs that were undertaken significant numbers of remedial actions were identified. To tackle these, programmes of interventions including fire compartmentation works, replacement communal internal and flat entrance doors and upgrading of signage have been ongoing. The programme prioritised the previously designated 'sheltered accommodation' blocks of low-rise flats e.g. Ibstock House, Malvern House, Harry Taylor House etc., with these all complete. Beyond these property types the programme has then covered the Council's 3 and then 2 storey buildings, unless there are higher risks based on the condition of the existing fire doors or measures within any property type, at which point they will be accelerated through the programme.
- 3.17 The outstanding remedial works from the FRAs are included in the table below.

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Table 3: Fire Remedial Actions

	No. of high-risk actions - Serious	No. of medium risk actions – Minor	No. of low-risk actions – Best Practice
Overdue FRA remedial actions (< 3 months)	15	460	103
Overdue FRA remedial actions (3-6 months)	10	139	52
Overdue FRA remedial actions (6-12 months)	159	742	95
Overdue FRA remedial actions (12+ months).	604	424	113
Totals	788	1765	363

- 3.18 Initially, the list of remedial actions totalled 6,189. However, the work identified previously has significantly reduced this, noting however there is much work still to be undertaken. The serious items in Table 3 cover many sites, examples of which, are works to fire doors, fire stopping, which equates to approximately 89% of outstanding serious actions, ensuring person centred fire risk assessments for highly vulnerable people are undertaken and in place and that an assessment is undertaken of any cladding materials. Works are in progress across a range of these issues; the budget for 25/6 for these works has been agreed at £1.5 million. In the interim, to mitigate the risks identified, Housing Property Services are developing a programme of fire door inspections which it is anticipated will be in place by September 2025. As part of the FRA, the item most referenced for doors states:

‘All flat entrance doors should be checked to see if they provide adequate fire resistance, have the correct ironmongery and operate correctly. The doors should be upgraded as necessary to achieve FD30S standard, with a self-closing device capable of closing the door in its frame from any angle and overcoming the resistance of any latch.’

- 3.19 Whilst all our flats have existing fire doors, these surveys will identify the standard of the doors in the interim to mitigate against the risks prior to replacement, where required, and inform the programme accordingly. The document that holds all this data is being continuously

updated as individual items are completed, with tasks allocated to various teams across the whole of the Housing Service. As part of our regular maintenance and surveillance of communal areas the new caretaking service, will provide assurance that flammable objects are not stored within these areas together with timely reporting of any issues within the communal areas. Housing Property Services have ensured that emergency lighting and fire alarm testing and maintenance is undertaken and that flats have the relevant smoke alarms to help protect tenants in the event of a fire.

- 3.20 Within the Housing Improvement Plan, under a separate agenda item on this agenda, there is a key action to 'Finalise a plan for the completion for all outstanding remedial actions for Fire, EICR, and Legionella in appropriate timescales'. The plan will include options for the timescales in which these items are completed and the associated budgetary implications.

BS03: Asbestos safety checks

- 3.21 The key statutory requirement is the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR2012) which requires RBC to undertake an asbestos survey to confirm locations of asbestos containing materials within communal areas. Regulation 4 of the above legislation (CAR) places a specific obligation upon 'duty holders' (owners and/or those responsible for maintenance) to manage asbestos within non-domestic premises (including common parts of domestic dwellings). This requires identification of the location and condition of asbestos containing materials (ACMs), a corresponding risk assessment and written management plan to prevent harm to anyone who occupies or works upon the building. Although the regulations do not extend to domestic properties, Housing Property Services do have a duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Working Regulations 1999 to ensure the safety of our workforce and contractors when working within RBC properties.
- 3.22 All blocks have had asbestos surveys undertaken to the communal areas which categorised the presence and condition of any asbestos present. A programme of removal has been completed to remove poor quality asbestos from communal areas. Where ACM were left, an annual reinspection regime has been put in place to ensure there has been no deterioration and therefore identified intervention to control the risk.
- 3.23 Through the Council's regular meetings with the authority's specialist contractor, it was identified that there was a delay in 6 blocks receiving their annual reinspection which has led to the underperformance reported above. These sites have all now been re-inspected.

BS04: Water safety checks

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- 3.24 Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, housing providers must assess and control the risk of exposure to legionella bacteria in water systems.
- 3.25 The RSH set out **BS04 – Water Safety Checks** - Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out.
- 3.26 Through the issuing of the Risk Assessments for each of the 51 communal sites, several actions have been identified. These are listed in the table below. Monthly checks are undertaken by the Council's contractor to monitor water temperature, and the authority's in-house Gas Team carry out a weekly flush of the systems. Work is ongoing to clear all outstanding remedial actions.
- 3.27 The risk assessments identified several high-risk sites that suffer from low water movement or no use. The Gas team, as part of their weekly monitoring, have investigated the use of these areas and have removed 34 redundant sites to eliminate any potential health issues or concerns which will reduce our sites to only 17 going forward.
- 3.28 The work to clear sites and outstanding remedial actions has seen significant improvement in through quarter 1 and it was anticipated that all outstanding would have been closed by the end of August 2025.

BS05: Lift safety checks

- 3.29 Responsibilities for the inspection and maintenance of lifts are covered by the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER), and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER). These regulations require that any equipment, including lifts, provided for tenants must be safe for use, properly maintained, and suitable for the environment. These works were part of the responsibilities previously undertaken by the Property Services and have since transferred to Housing for operational compliance.
- 3.30 The Council's insurer completes the necessary checks on these lifts and reports any issues that need remedial works. The underperformance in this quarter was due to issues at the point of entry for the authority's insurer to undertake their checks. These have now been remedied however works have fallen outside the period of reporting. The lifts are generally 30 years or older and therefore have been added to the Capital Investment Programme for replacement. Works are currently ongoing to replace the lift at Auxerre House and plans are being finalised for the replacement of the lift at Ibstock House.

- 3.31 Within Quarter 1 the Council's insurer experienced difficulties accessing one of the lifts for inspection. This has now been remedied and the inspection undertaken however, as it was not completed in the required timescales this has impacted on performance in the short term.

Electrical

- 3.32 Under the British Standard, BS 7671, Requirements for Electrical Installations (also known as the IET Wiring Regulations) RBC are required to undertake regular assessments, Electrical Inspection Condition Report (EICR), by a competent person.
- 3.33 The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 are being amended to include social rented housing. As such it will become a legal responsibility, rather than best practice previously, to ensure from 1st November 2025, that new tenancies have a compliant EICR and from 1st May 2026 that all existing tenancies, granted before 1st December 2025, are also compliant.
- 3.34 To enhance the Council's opportunities for access, the Council have developed, in conjunction with the authorities in house and external Legal Teams, a similar 'warrant' type approach that is utilised by the Gas Team to provide entry to fulfil compliance responsibilities. Officers have requested that Internal Audit include electrical works in Housing Property Services within their Audit programme for 2025/26.
- 3.35 Remedial actions for EICR reporting are defined by a C rating as below:
- C1 immediately dangerous* - RBC do not allow its contractors to leave a C1 departure at time of test.
- C2 Potentially dangerous, safe at time of test*, but could become unsafe should 1 protective measure fail. RBC wait for the report to be returned and raise these as new works orders with a priority 3 target.
- C3 Improvement recommended*, these do not comply with current regulations however don't pose a safety risk. These could be used to target a capital programme. The Council does not currently report on these however, work is ongoing to review a potential software solution to identify trends and issues across C3 departures.
- 3.36 The breakdown of outstanding remedial works is in the table below.

Table 5: C2 - Electrical Remedial Actions

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< 3 Month		3-6 Months		6-12 Months		12+ Months	
Total	10	Total	2	Total	15	Total	20

- 3.37 This represents a reduction of 12 Remedial actions. These are always in flux, but the time periods will be indicative of differing issues.

< 3 months- will include new jobs, this number will always show the healthy turn around in works orders.

3-6 Months- will be indicative of jobs that have fulfilled the no access process and will have two no access calls attended and evidenced. These have been referred for tenancy support.

6-12 Months- These are a mixture of repairs at no access stage and reports the Electrical Team in Housing Property Services didn't receive on time therefore affecting the Council's figures. Housing Property Services have been contract managing partner contractors against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) culminating in termination of the contract for one of our two contactors for this workstream.

>12 Months, these mainly consist of vulnerable residents with very complex needs. Housing Property Services have worked with the Council's third-party solicitor to review procedures and have mapped in Civica CX (Housing ICT System) a 'cases and tasks' workflow which is partially built and due to be tested and should allow for an auditable referral route for tenancy issues that is compliant with the Council's no access process. This process can ultimately result in an access injunction, although instigates support in the first instance.

- 3.38 A programme is in place for EICR to Communal Areas to ensure communal areas all have a current certificate within the 5-year cycle.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- 3.39 The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022 requires landlords to provide smoke alarms to be fitted to each storey of premises used as living accommodation. Similarly, where a room contains a solid fuel burning combustion appliance, then a carbon monoxide alarm is to be fitted. Work is ongoing to complete these works to all outstanding properties with 66 properties non-compliant for smoke alarms and 61 properties non-compliant for carbon monoxide detectors.

Complaints – (see Appendix 1 for the measures table)

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- 3.40 23 complaints were received across April (5), May (10), and June (8) 2025. Of these, 9 complaints were upheld (39%), 1 was partially upheld (4%), and 13 were not upheld (57%).
- 3.41 April was an unusually quiet month, with no complaints upheld, indicating effective resolution and timely responses. In May, a normal volume of complaints was received, though still lower than the previous year. While 3 Repairs and Maintenance (R&M) complaints were upheld, including issues like repeated cancellations, misdiagnosed roof leaks, and a severe damp issue, these indicated areas for further training and process improvement. June saw a slight increase in complaints, with 3 fully upheld and 1 partially upheld. Notably, Capital services faced complaints related to communication breakdowns and R&M relating to delayed repairs.
- 3.42 Despite the upheld complaints, the quarter also saw a significant number of compliments – 54 in total. These compliments highlight the ongoing improvements in customer satisfaction.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) – (see Appendix 1 for measures table)

- 3.43 The service since the restructuring in 2021 have developed a dynamic, functional and accessible ASB service for customers, creating strong partnerships including with the local Police. The service has undertaken many significant and highly complex enforcement actions including Civil Injunctions, Closure Orders and Discretionary and Mandatory Possession Orders against tenancy breaches.
- 3.44 The whole ASB service is committed to utilising the full range of tools and powers at its disposal. The Council works with partner agencies wherever possible to deal robustly and proportionately with all forms of nuisance and ASB that have a direct impact upon the sustainability of tenancies and communities and to ensure that residents of all tenures can enjoy peace, quiet and security in and around their homes, whilst remaining tolerant of the reasonable behaviour of others.
- 3.45 Each complaint of ASB is handled in accordance with the ASB Policy and relevant procedures, ensuring that risk and vulnerability is continuously and dynamically assessed throughout the management of the case. Where enforcement action becomes necessary, this will always follow a consistent and proportionate process of escalation, with all parties to the case treated with dignity and respect and with due regard to the Equality Act.
- 3.46 Between 1st April 2025 and 30th June 2025, 72 new ASB cases were started, 39 ASB cases were closed and currently the team is managing 96 live ASB cases.

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- 3.47 The cases are broad ranging covering incidents against the person and against the community, such as damage to communal areas, dog fouling etc. Noise nuisance complaints are also reported frequently to the team.
- 3.48 Following some backlogs in the judicial system earlier in the year, the Council has had a good number of cases getting to court. These cases are mainly for civil injunctions, to curb ASB from tenants by restricting how they can behave in their home, toward their neighbours and towards RBC staff. That said, the Council has also taken some cases to gain back possession of homes when ASB has been perpetrated or when tenants have abandoned their homes.
- 3.49 ASB continues to create the highest level of work within the team.
- 3.50 The team continue to attend all appropriate meetings with partner agencies to prevent and enforce ASB cases, including the Police, Mental Services, Social Services etc.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 All work undertaken through the delivery of services highlighted in this report are budgeted through the Capital Programme and the Housing Revenue Account. As part of the development of an improvement plan where additional budgets are required to improve compliance and performance, these will be included in a separate report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The report sets out the requirements of legislation which the Council is required by law to adhere to.
- 5.2 Compliance is required with section 193 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 as amended by the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.
- 5.3 Inspections are carried out under section 201 to section 203A of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**Local Government Reorganisation**

- 6.1 No direct implications for Local Government Reorganisation have been identified in this report.

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Relevant Council Priority

- 6.1 This report supports the current Council Plan and, in particular, the following Council priority:

Community and Housing

- Providing Council Housing that is improved and upgraded through the Housing Capital Investment Programme
- Ensuring the housing stock is clean and safe to live in
- Improve time taken for repairs to be completed
- Maximising funding available to the sector

Climate Change Implications

- 6.2 The responsive, cyclical and planned maintenance of the Council's properties seeks to ensure that Council Housing properties are well maintained, warm and safe. Included within the programme of works are projects to increase the thermal efficiency of properties.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.3 Through the delivery of Housing Services, the Council identify the needs of individuals and households to tailor services appropriately.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The key risk is failure to ensure properties are well maintained, safe and compliant in accordance with the relevant regulations highlighted through this report. Work is ongoing to ensure compliance and will be further evidenced through the Housing Improvement Plan.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Measures Table

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Hartnett	
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Guy Revans	4/8/25
Financial Services	Debra Goodall	
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor - Governance	30/07/25
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green	N/A
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matthew Eccles	N/A

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Appendix 1 – Measures Table

Keeping Properties in good repair

	Measure Name	Type	Q4 24/5	Q1 25/6	Q2 25/6	Q3 25/6	Q4 25/6	Target	Trend
RP01	Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	%	4.17%	4.15%				0.00%	Amber
RP02.1	Repairs completed within Target Timescale (Non-Emergency)	%	71.95%	77.88%				100%	Amber
RP02.2	Repairs completed within Target timescale – (Emergency)	%	83.6%	83.6%				100%	Amber

– BS - Maintaining Building Safety

	Measure Name	Type	Q4 24/5	Q1 25/6	Q2 25/6	Q3 25/6	Q4 25/6	Target	Trend
BS01	Gas Safety Checks	%	100%	100%				100%	Green
BS02	Fire Safety Checks	%	100%	100%				100%	Green
BS03	Asbestos Safety checks	%	100%	99.50%				100%	Red

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BS04	Water Safety checks	%	100%	100%				100%	Green
BS05	Lift Safety Checks	%	100%	87.00%				100%	Red
EI01	Electrical Test of Properties	%	90.50%	94.89%				100%	Amber
EI02	Electrical Test of Communal Areas	%	100%	100%				100%	Green
EI03	Smoke Alarms	%	97.36%	98.80%				100%	Amber
EI04	Carbon Monoxide Alarms	%	98.33%	98.89%				100%	Amber

Complaints

	Measure Name	Type	Q4 24/5	Q1 25/6	Q2 25/6	Q3 25/6	Q4 25/6	Target	Trend
CH01.1	Complaints relative to the size of the landlord (Stage 1)	# per 1,000 homes	4.51	3.07				Less than 10	Green
CH01.2	Complaints relative to the size of the landlord (Stage 2)	# per 1,000 homes	0.72	0.90				Less than 3	Green
CH02.1	Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales (Stage 1)	%	62%	93%				85%	Green

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CH02.2	Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales (Stage 2)	%	80%	100%				85%	Green
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Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

	Measure Name	Type	Q4 24/5	Q1 25/6	Q2 25/6	Q3 25/6	Q4 25/6	Target	Trend
NM01.1	Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord	# per 1,000 homes	22.8	27.1*				35.5**	Amber
NM01.2	Anti-social behaviour cases (involving Hate Crime) relative to the size of the landlord	# per 1,000 homes	0	0				0.6**	Green

*Current data is below the national mean which is potentially due to under reporting. Therefore, it is anticipated that the Council's measurement will increase this year.

**This represents the median level reported for 2023/24 across this TSM for all social housing providers

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Housing Ombudsman findings – Report 1 ref 202417927

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jane Spilsbury and Bill Hartnett
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton
Report Author Claire Felton	Job Title: Assistant Director for Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services Email: c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 64254
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	All
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RESOLVE that: -

1) The findings, orders and recommendation from the Housing Ombudsman be noted.

2) Compliance with those matters by the Council and the wider learning points be noted.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The complaint considered by the Housing Ombudsman concerned the Council's handling of the following: -

- a. The resident's reports of damp and mould in the property.
- b. The installation and maintenance of aids and adaptations.
- c. The resident's reports of structural problems with the balcony wall.
- d. The resident's reports of a leak to the communal entrance.

2.2 The Housing Ombudsman found there was maladministration in the Council's handling of all 4 matters listed at a. to d. above.

2.3 The matter was determined by the Housing Ombudsman on 30th June 2025 (ref 202417927), although a copy of the final report was not issued until 18th July. The time for compliance was extended until 8th August to reflect the late delivery of the report.

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-
- 2.4 A copy of the anonymised report is attached at Appendix 1. The Housing Ombudsman ordered that the Council must take the following actions by 8th August: -
- a. Send a written apology to the resident for the failings identified in this Investigation.
 - b. Arrange for an independent damp specialist to carry out a full damp survey on the property.
 - c. Review the resident's current accessibility in and out of their property. Following this it must assess any necessary adjustments or further adaptations and whether a further Occupational Health (OH) assessment is required. It must communicate the outcome to the resident within 4 weeks of this report.
 - d. Provide confirmation that the Council has completed the roof replacement work that should have started on 9th June 2025.
 - e. Provide a specification and timeframe for carrying out all necessary remedial work, following the leaks in the communal entrance.
 - f. Assist the resident with a claim against its insurers for damage to their belongings from the damp and mould.
 - g. Pay the resident £2,200 compensation, which includes £50 previously offered on a voluntary basis. The total of £2,200 is broken down as follows:
 - i. £750 for the distress and inconvenience caused by the Council's failure to appropriately address the damp and mould.
 - ii. £700 for the distress and inconvenience caused by the Council's failure to address the structural damage to the balcony and wall.
 - iii. £450 for the resident's time and trouble caused by the failings identified in the landlord's handling of the communal leak.
 - iv. £300 for the distress and inconvenience caused by the delay in installing and repairing the resident's adaptations.
 - h. Provide documentary evidence of compliance with the above orders.
- 2.5 In terms of improving complaint responses, the Council was also ordered by the Housing Ombudsman to "review its complaint procedure in respect of timescales for requesting escalation to ensure it is compliant

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with the Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. The landlord must complete this review within 8 weeks of the date of this determination. If its policy has already changed – it must confirm this to us.”

- 2.6 In addition to the “Orders” listed above, the Ombudsman's report also includes a “Recommendation” as follows: -

“The landlord reviews its record keeping processes. In doing so it may want to consider self-assessing against the recommendations made in our spotlight report on knowledge and information management.”

- 2.7 Members are referred to the full narrative of the Housing Ombudsman's report which is set out at Appendix 1. The report notes that the resident concerned would have been classed as vulnerable. These matters were known to the Council.

- 2.8 The key findings in relation to the 4 areas investigated can be summarised as follows: -

- **Damp and mould in the property**

- 2.8.1 The Council's handling of this aspect was judged by the Housing Ombudsman to be poor.

- 2.8.2 *“Its [the Council's] attempt to put matters right consisted of replacing the windows within the year and completing a damp inspection to identify the underlying cause. It could not evidence that it progressed either. Despite the mitigating factor of the cancellations and no access by the resident, an offer of £50 redress was not proportionate. It demonstrated no regard for the household vulnerabilities. It continued to repeat ineffective treatment, causing inconvenience and prolonged detriment to the resident. Its complaint process did not recognise its failings, which meant it did not apologise, put things right or offer appropriate redress. We have therefore made orders for redress regarding its handling of this matter.”*

- **Aids and adaptations**

- 2.8.3 There were delays by the Council in responding to an Occupational Therapist (OT) referral for adaptations to be made to the property. The original request made in October 2022 had not been complied with by February 2023. By February 2024, one matter had been dealt with, but two others remained outstanding. The investigation found poor record keeping by the Council which undermined the ability of the Housing Officer (HO) to establish a timeline of events or review communication by the Council with the resident / compliance with policy. The report

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concluded that although both outstanding repairs had been completed, unfortunately one of them had since failed.

- **Structural problems with the balcony and wall**

2.8.4 There were delays by the Council in actioning the resident's report of problems with the balcony and external wall. The bricks were crumbling and fencing panels coming away from the wall. The Council failed to progress any repair works following an inspection in March 2023. The Council apologised for this and re-inspected in March 2024 but by August 2024 again no action had been taken. Although the Council did subsequently complete an updated specification of works, that exercise in itself appeared to indicate that there was a significant problem with moisture in the fabric of the building. The Council did not make it clear that this may well be linked to the overall issues of damp and mould in the property.

2.8.5 *"The landlord's handling of the problems with the resident's external walls and balcony were poor and indicate significant failings. It has failed to meet its obligations under section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act. Its inspections and record keeping were inadequate. It failed to act to resolve the problems for an unacceptable amount of time. If there is a correlation between the damaged exterior and the internal damp and mould, the 2-year delay to address it has been of serious detriment to the resident who is vulnerable. We have therefore made orders for redress regarding its handling of this matter."*

- **Leak to the communal entrance**

2.8.6 There were delays by the Council in carrying out roof repairs which would have prevented rain leaking into the communal hallway. The Council failed to prioritise these works even after the resident had complained in February 2024 including reporting that she had slipped on the wet floor. The report notes significant issues with extensive surface water, peeling debris from the ceiling and the floor lifting.

2.8.7 Roofers booked in to carry out works failed to attend in April 2024 and works were later carried out in July 2024. In January 2025 the Council decided that the whole of the roof would need to be replaced and this was scheduled for June 2025.

2.8.8 Whilst the Housing Ombudsman acknowledged that there was increased demand for roofing repairs in the relevant period due to factors outside the Council's control, consideration should have been given to implementing mitigating measures such as additional cleaning and removal of water after rain.

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- 2.8.9 *“Overall, there were considerable failings by landlord as it did not demonstrate that it fully adhered to its repairs policy in its handling of the leaks to the communal hallway. While its struggle to keep up with demand for its roofing service was unavoidable, it did not consider the impact on, or the risk to, its residents. Its failure to keep the resident informed has led to anger and frustration, which, if allowed to continue, has the potential to damage the landlord tenant relationship.”*
- 2.9 With regard to the “orders” set out in paragraph 2.4 officers can confirm that a. (apology) and g. (payment of compensation) have been actioned together with the remedial works to the communal entrance roof and the internal decorations to the communal hallway. From the damp and mould survey two areas were identified that are to be treated on 11th August 2025. There is an outstanding item where the Occupational Therapist is seeking to reassess the customer’s needs. This has been delayed due to personal circumstances however contact is ongoing to provide a timely assessment.
- 2.10 The review of the complaint procedure regarding timescales for escalating complaints was completed on 14th April 2025 and is included in the current Housing Complaints Standard approved by Executive on 10th June 2025.
- 2.11 All orders listed within the determination were completed and evidenced within the timescale set by the Housing Ombudsman.
- 2.12 With regard to the recommendation that the Council review its record keeping processes, officers can update Members that Housing Property Services are now utilising the Housing Civica CX system to store notes.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 In accordance with paragraph 12.3 of the Articles of the Constitution, the Monitoring Officer is required to report to the Executive Committee (or Council for non-executive functions) if any decision or omission has given rise to maladministration. This report concerns actions that the Housing Ombudsman has determined were maladministration / service failings.
- 3.2 This report also helps to ensure that the Council is reporting in an open and transparent manner on findings arising from an investigation conducted by the Housing Ombudsman and on the action that has been taken in response.

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4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising out of the report, other than the recommendation for the payment to the resident of compensation of £2,200. The compensation was paid from the Housing Revenue Account.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is required under Section 5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in view of the decision by the Housing Ombudsman.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The requirement for the Monitoring Officer to report findings of maladministration is relevant to all of the Council's priorities.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 There are no specific climate change implications.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 Working with the Council's tenants it is imperative the Council identifies issues that may require services to be adjusted to meet the individual needs identified. Work is ongoing as part of the Housing Improvement Plan to ensure that relevant training is developed and delivered across the Housing Service.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The main risks identified in relation to this report are the risk of the Council being found to have caused maladministration in the future, and the negative impact on residents of delays in carrying out repairs and works and failings in the complaint handling system when such delays are reported.

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- 7.2 The risks are being managed by compliance with the recommendations set out in the Housing Ombudsman's report and form an integral part of the Housing Improvement Plan to ensure the Council can meet the Consumer Standards set by the Regulator for Social Housing.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 Housing Ombudsman Report reference 202417927

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillors Jane Spilsbury and Bill Hartnett	
Lead Director / Head of Service	Claire Felton Assistant Director for Legal Democratic and Procurement Services Simon Parry – Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services	
Financial Services	Bob Watson – Section 151 Officer and Director of Finance	
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings – Principal Solicitor	

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Housing

Ombudsman Service

REPORT

COMPLAINT 202417927

Redditch Borough Council

30 June 2025

Our approach

The Housing Ombudsman's approach to investigating and determining complaints is to decide what is fair in all the circumstances of the case. This is set out in the Housing Act 1996 and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme (the Scheme). The Ombudsman considers the evidence and looks to see if there has been any 'maladministration', for example whether the landlord has failed to keep to the law, followed proper procedure, followed good practice or behaved in a reasonable and competent manner.

Both the resident and the landlord have submitted information to the Ombudsman and this has been carefully considered. Their accounts of what has happened are summarised below. This report is not an exhaustive description of all the events that have occurred in relation to this case, but an outline of the key issues as a background to the investigation's findings.

The complaint

1. The complaint is about the landlord's handling of:
 - a. The resident's reports of damp and mould in the property.
 - b. The installation and maintenance of aids and adaptations.
 - c. The resident's reports of structural problems with the balcony wall.
 - d. The resident's reports of a leak to the communal entrance.

Background

2. The resident is a secure tenant of the landlord which is a council. The resident has vulnerabilities [REDACTED] and this is known to the landlord.
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
3. There have been historical problems of re-occurring damp and mould in the resident's property and re-occurring leaks in the block's hallway.
4. The resident raised a formal complaint on 8 February 2024. She complained a number of repairs were outstanding that were reported a year before. A leak in the communal hallway, that often caused flooding had not been repaired. It was now causing the flooring to lift. She [REDACTED] had already slipped on it. She had damp and mould that had been treated several times but has kept coming back. She wanted compensation for the numerous belongings damaged by mould. Her occupational therapist had made recommendations for adaptations that were still outstanding. Inspections had identified a problem

with her balcony wall crumbling and the need to replace all her windows, but nothing had progressed.

5. The landlord issued its stage 1 response on 11 March 2024. It said the resident had refused access to an inspection on 16 February 2024, as she had a compensation claim in progress. A new appointment had been agreed to assess any underlying cause of damp and mould on 14 March 2024. At the same time the inspector would revisit the issue of the crumbling wall, damaged fence and water ingress to the block. It apologised this had not progressed from its visit in March 2023. All window replacement had been put on hold due to budget constraints. Her windows would be completed in the next financial year. It understood her bath had been replaced but a [REDACTED] had been overlooked, it planned to install it the same week. It had installed a [REDACTED] but was not aware it had failed, it would send someone out to repair it. Her front door was on the fire upgrade list to be replaced in due course. If a [REDACTED] could be fitted it would do so at this time.
6. On 15 April 2024 the resident advised the landlord's complaints team that none of the work agreed had progressed and asked who she should contact. It said it would speak to the relevant managers who would contact her. On our on 13 August 2024, she asked it to escalate her complaint to stage 2. It emailed her on 15 August 2024 and declined her request as she was out of time.
7. On 12 February 2025 the landlord formally reiterated its rejection of her request to escalate to stage 2 because it was out of time. It commented that there had "been unacceptable delays in completing the works" so made a goodwill gesture offer of £50.
8. The landlord issued a full stage 2 response on 26 February 2025. It said it was satisfied it had acted on the resident's reports of damp and mould. It cited a number of no access attendances and times the resident delayed or re-arranged the appointments.
9. The landlord also said it addressed 3 reports of a leak to the communal area between 11 December 2023 and 9 June 2024. It completed repairs in December 2023 and has agreed to a full roof replacement, starting in June 2025. It said a backlog of roofing works had caused a delay. It said no access could be gained for an appointment [REDACTED] on 9 September 2024. It had no notes from its inspection of the balcony on 14 March 2024 and no jobs were raised. It intended to arrange another inspection.
10. The resident was not satisfied with the landlord's response. She said its goodwill gesture was not reflective of the problems experienced and it had not resolved the repair issues, particularly the damp and mould.

Assessment and findings

Scope of investigation

11. The resident raised concerns that the landlord's inability to resolve the damp and mould was impacting on her and her son's health [REDACTED]. The courts are the most effective place for disputes about personal injury and illness. This is largely because independent medical experts are appointed to give evidence. They have a duty to the court to provide unbiased insights into the diagnosis, prognosis, and cause of any illness or injury. When disputes arise over the cause of an injury, oral testimony can be examined in court. Therefore, the complaint about the impact of the damp and mould on her and her son's health is better dealt with via the court

Damp and mould

12. Landlords must ensure that properties they rent out are fit for human habitation. The main source of this duty is section 9A of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985. A property can be deemed unfit because of the presence of damp and mould.
13. Despite previous treatments the year before, the landlord logged reports of damp and mould 3 times at the resident's property between February and December 2023. The repair records were not clear on outcomes and actions, but it mentioned a mould treatment on 21 February 2023 and again on 4 December 2023.
14. The landlord raised a further damp inspection just a month later on 20 January 2024, as the resident had reported the mould had returned.
15. In her complaint on 8 February 2024, the resident said the landlord had failed to address the damp and mould in her property. It had cleaned and painted over it several times, but it just kept coming back. She raised her health concerns about the mould, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
16. The Government has guidance for housing providers on the health impacts of damp and mould. It states that damp and mould pose a risk to anyone's health and should always be acted on quickly. However, it is particularly important that it is addressed with urgency for the groups more vulnerable to significant health impacts. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
17. As this was a re-occurring issue and household members were at [REDACTED] risk of the impacts of damp and mould, we would expect to see the landlord respond

with a level of urgency. It made an appointment for the surveyor to attend on 16 February 2024, which was appropriate.

18. The landlord's complaint response of 11 March 2024 said the resident did not give access on the day. This was because she had a compensation claim outstanding. She disputed this, stating that she had forgotten about the appointment as she had been up all night [REDACTED]. She said the same surveyor had attended the previous year. She told him it was the exact same problem, and she thought he could address it as he had seen it before.
19. The landlord said it had arranged a further appointment for the surveyor and senior trades person to attend on 14 March 2024. This was to determine the underlying cause.
20. This was appropriate action for the landlord to take, as government guidance stresses simply removing surface mould will not prevent the damp and mould from reappearing. It is important to identify and tackle the underlying causes of it, including building deficiencies, inadequate ventilation, and condensation. However, there were no records of the outcomes from the visit or evidence of any follow up work.
21. The resident contacted the landlord on 15 April 2024. She raised concerns that the repair actions agreed in its stage 1 response were not progressing and asked who she should contact. It said it would refer her concerns to the relevant manager who would be in touch with her directly.
22. The landlord did not take any further action until the resident contacted this Service in August 2024. For a reoccurring issue, with a household at [REDACTED] risk of the impacts of damp and mould, its lack of action did not demonstrate the level of urgency guidance requires.
23. On this Service's advice, the resident escalated her complaint. The landlord refused the request. It said she was out of time. It advised her its policy requires that escalation requests are made within 10 days of the stage 1 response. This Service did not consider 10 working days to be a reasonable amount of time in which to escalate her complaint. Particularly in respect of a complaint about repairs, where its routine response time is 20 working days. She raised her concerns about the complaint outcome within a month, in April 2024. It was apparent by this date it had not resolved her repairs within its response times. That it did not respond to her concerns, was a failing.
24. The landlord raised an order on 15 August 2024 for an operative to attend to inspect again and "treat if time allowed". As it had not diagnosed an underlying cause, the treatment could only have been another mould wash. This was not

appropriate. It had taken this action several times without success and its complaint response had committed to determine any underlying cause.

25. Unfortunately, in September 2024 the resident had to cancel 2 appointments to either inspect or treat the damp and mould because of ill health. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The landlord cannot be held responsible for delays caused by access as this is outside of its control.
26. The repair records indicate neither party revisited the damp and mould until 8 January 2025 when a mould inspection was arranged. This was a shortcoming by the landlord, it was on notice of damp and mould in the property and the vulnerabilities of the household. However, it would have been helpful for the resident to have chased it up during this time.
27. The resident had to re-schedule this appointment twice until 26 February 2025. This again was due to her and her family's ill health, which was unfortunate, but was a delay also outside of the landlord's control.
28. An email on 25 February 2025 details the landlord's inspection of the property. It was not clear what date it completed the inspection. It reported no extractor fan in the kitchen. It highlighted the poor condition of its early second-generation double-glazed windows. Glazed panels had blown, and the trickle vents were seized shut. It is highly likely that the lack of ventilation, and poor functioning double glazing would have contributed to the damp and mould in the property.
29. The resident's need for new windows had previously been identified. The landlord said in March 2024 that it had exhausted its budget for window replacements. It had put them on hold until the new budget in April 2024. It explained there would be a backlog, but her window replacement would be within the new financial year. Better functioning double glazing should contribute to reducing moisture in the property and help ease the damp and mould.
30. The landlord identified the need for new windows again in February 2025. It was coming to the end of the financial year in which the resident's windows were due to be replaced. At this stage she should have had at least a date for fitting, to meet its stage 1 commitment to replace them in this financial year. The re-occurring damp and mould and the household vulnerabilities should have made the resident a priority on its replacement programme. Not progressing with the agreed window replacement for a further year was a failing as it had also not clarified whether any interim repairs were required and completed.

31. The landlord's inspection recommended a mould treatment in 2 bedrooms followed by applying a barrier paint and a coat of 360 anti-mould paint. Without work to improve the ventilation in the property prior to treatment, mould removal would be an ineffective solution as it had been in the past.
32. Following intervention from this Service, the landlord provided a stage 2 response on 12 February 2025. It was our view that the resident had tried to escalate her complaint in April 2024. It should have logged a new complaint for her at that point as its process meant that she was out of time for an escalation. In providing such a delayed response, it focused considerably on matters from the time of our intervention in August 2024. From this date, the resident, known to be vulnerable, experienced particularly poor health. This impacted on her ability to provide access and inevitably caused delays outside of its control.
33. The landlord's response lacked focus on the period just prior to this, which the resident was complaining about. It did not adequately assess that had it followed through with the repair actions agreed in its response of 11 March 2024, matters should not have still been outstanding in September 2024 [REDACTED] Nor did it acknowledge that the matter had only progressed because of her continued complaint and our intervention.
34. The landlord's final response was that it found no service failure in acting on her reports of damp and mould, as it had attempted to attend. The resident's complaint, however, was that it had not addressed the damp and mould appropriately. She complained they attended but continued to wash and paint over it, which was not resolving the issue. She escalated her complaint because it committed to determine the root cause at stage 1 but did not implement the actions agreed.
35. The landlord's response gave little regard to the fact that the inspection on 14 March 2024, the action from its stage 1 response, produced no outcome. Its stage 2 response a year later acknowledged that there were no records available, and it progressed no actions from this inspection. Further inspections were only raised in response to her ongoing complaints. As a result, it did not apologise or offer any redress. It was clear from its inspection in February 2025 that at a minimum there was an issue with ventilation in the property, which would affect damp and mould. Its damp and mould inspections in 2023 and 2024 did not identify this, which questions the quality of its damp inspections.
36. The landlord's original stage 2 response acknowledged that there were "unacceptable delays" in completing works and offered the resident £50 as a goodwill gesture.
37. Remedies should be commensurate to the distress and inconvenience caused to the resident. Since early 2023, the landlord had failed to identify the root

cause of the damp problem, and despite committing to do this in 2024, it continued to offer the same treatment, which was having no effect. The detriment to the resident in not resolving this for this length of time was significant. The household was vulnerable and at a [REDACTED] risk of the health impacts of damp and mould. The offer was not proportionate to the service failing and the inconvenience experienced. It was also below the range the Ombudsman would order for a failing that had a significant and prolonged impact on a resident.

38. The landlord was silent on the resident's request for compensation for the damage caused by the damp and mould to her furniture and belongings. It should have provided her with the details of its insurers to make a claim for her losses.
39. Overall, the landlord's handling of the resident's damp and mould was poor. Its attempt to put matters right consisted of replacing the windows within the year and completing a damp inspection to identify the underlying cause. It could not evidence that it progressed either. Despite the mitigating factor of the cancellations and no access by the resident, an offer of £50 redress was not proportionate. It demonstrated no regard for the household vulnerabilities. It continued to repeat ineffective treatment, causing inconvenience and prolonged detriment to the resident. Its complaint process did not recognise its failings, which meant it did not apologise, put things right or offer appropriate redress. We have therefore made orders for redress regarding its handling of this matter.

Aids and adaptations

40. The landlord's aids and adaptations policy recognise that the timely provision of minor adaptations can often sustain the independence of its residents and postpone the need for substantial major adaptations. It therefore sees the provision of minor adaptations as an important preventative service.
41. The policy explains minor adaptations as those usually costing under £1,500. Major adaptations include extensive structural alterations such as extensions to properties, improvements, or additions to the fabric of the property that will normally cost between £1,500 and £30,000.
42. The landlord has a partnership referral process in place with its local NHS trust. Community occupational therapists (OT) assess the resident's needs and make recommendations to the landlord for equipment and adaptations.
43. On 21 October 2022 the community OT sent a request for 3 adaptations to assist the resident in her home. These were to:

- a.
- b.
- c.

44. There is no indication that the landlord responded to this request. It is not clear whether this was because it ignored the request or was a record keeping failure.

Any delay in addressing this does not align with its policy commitment to sustain resident independence.

45. On 23 February 2023, the community OT sent the landlord a further request

It referenced a site meeting with the landlord.

46. This suggests that the landlord had not actioned the October 2022 request for an adaptation. This does not support its policy commitment to provide timely adaptations. With no records on the issue, it has failed to demonstrate how it responded to the resident's request for this adaptation. As such, we cannot assess that it responded appropriately or adhered to its policy.

47. Clear record keeping is a core function of a repairs service. This is not only so that landlords can provide evidence of events and actions taken when requested for an investigation. It is because this also assists the landlord in its understanding of the condition of a property, monitoring outstanding works and providing accurate information to residents. Records also serve as evidence in any external processes which the resident and landlord may engage in.

48. The resident's complaint in February 2024 stated that the bath was replaced. This confirmed that it actioned this but again failed to log details appropriately in its records.

49. The resident complained that some adaptations from the OT's original request were still outstanding. The landlord acknowledged an oversight. It apologised and arranged an urgent appointment which was appropriate.

50. The complaint investigation determined that it had fitted a but this had since failed. Again, there was no evidence of this in its records. It told the resident the OT had not notified it of this, as the resident had thought. The landlord is only required to act on repairs once they are reported or identified.

Any delay in completing a repair that has not been reported cannot be considered a service failure.

51. To resolve the issue, the landlord offered to look at the [REDACTED] to see if it could be repaired. It advised her front door was on the fire upgrade list and would be replaced "in due course". If it could, it would install [REDACTED] then. This was only reasonable if it could address the issue with the [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]

52. The landlord attended to inspect the [REDACTED] on 22 August 2024. This was 5 months after its response. This was not a timely approach to an adaptation or conducive to sustaining a resident's independence.

53. Where a landlord receives notice of a vulnerability, it would be required in line with the Equality Act 2010 to consider whether the resident has a disability as defined by law. Where on notice, it must consider whether its decision making, or actions, could place a person at a particular disadvantage because of their vulnerabilities. The Act also states that landlords have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for residents who are at a substantial disadvantage compared to people who do not have a disability.

54. [REDACTED]

55. The landlord has not adequately demonstrated that it adhered to its policies and processes in dealing with the resident's requests for adaptations. We conclude that there was a significant failing in its handling of this matter.

Structural problems with the balcony and wall

56. On 26 April 2024, the landlord attended to inspect a report from the resident of problems with the balcony and external wall. Its records showed no details of the outcome or any follow-up works.
57. In her complaint of 8 February 2024, the resident said that nothing had progressed from the inspection a year ago. She said at the time the landlord noted structural problems with the balcony wall, the bricks were crumbling, and fencing panels were broken and had come away from the wall.
58. In the landlord's response of 11 March 2024, it apologised that the work had not progressed from the inspection raised in March 2023. It advised a further inspection was arranged for 14 March 2024. Following this, it would raise all the

work and the inspector would ensure that it provided her with a list of dates the work was to be carried out.

59. In her escalation request in August 2024, the resident complained that following the second inspection of the balcony in March 2024, she had heard nothing further.
60. In response, the landlord said that “unfortunately, there were no notes or jobs raised following attendance on 14th March 2024”. It said it would arrange an inspection for this as soon as possible and she would be notified accordingly.
61. The landlord has an obligation to repair and maintain the structure and exterior of the building. Any repairs identified should be completed within a reasonable time. Its repairs policy commits to responding to routine repairs within 20 working days. It had been on notice of the fault since 21 April 2023 and had exceeded its policy response time by almost 2 years. Its action to put matters right was to arrange a third technical inspection.
62. The landlord’s response was not reasonable. To repeat the same failing showed it had taken no learning from the resident’s complaint or made any service improvements to ensure it did not happen again. Its complaint response did not acknowledge its failure to act on the inspection for a second year was a further failing. As a result, it did not apologise to her or consider offering her any redress.
63. The landlord has since provided an undated specification of work with photographs of widespread damage to the balcony. This includes crumbling brick (often a result of water damage) and rotting woodwork, which appeared damp. The external walls show significant efflorescence, which indicates moisture problems in the walls.
64. This evidence suggests there is a significant problem with moisture in the fabric of the building. It did not make clear if this was a contributory factor to the internal damp and mould. As this was recurrent on the outside walls, it was difficult to see how it could not be.
65. The landlord’s handling of the problems with the resident’s external walls and balcony was poor and indicate significant failings. It has failed to meet its obligations under section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act. Its inspections and record keeping were inadequate. It failed to act to resolve the problems for an unacceptable amount of time. If there is a correlation between the damaged exterior and the internal damp and mould, the 2-year delay to address it has been of serious detriment to the resident who is vulnerable. We have therefore made orders for redress regarding its handling of this matter.

Leak to the communal entrance

66. The landlord's repairing obligations under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 require it to repair and maintain the structure of the property, which includes any shared parts of the building which the home is a part of.
67. The landlord's repair records for the block show that a leak above the communal entrance into the hallway has been a reoccurring issue since early 2022.
68. The resident's complaint of 8 February 2024 said that the communal hallway floods every time it rains. She said she had reported the leaks many times, and sent in photographs and videos, but the landlord had still not resolved the problem. She told it she [REDACTED] had already slipped on the wet floor.
69. In the landlord's response, it apologised that this was one of the issues that had not been resolved following the inspection in March 2023. It confirmed it had booked a job to address the leak on 11 April 2024.
70. The landlord, however, was silent on her report of falling on the wet floor. This should have been a trigger for it to consider any health and safety implications. It should have contacted her about her fall and written up an incident report. It would also have been appropriate to provide her with details of its insurers should she wish to make a personal injury claim.
71. Pictures from the resident show the surface water on the internal floor was quite extensive. They also showed the communal hall was filthy, creating a slimy surface. There was significant peeling debris hanging from the ceiling. With the flooring reportedly lifting, the area presented several hazards, which were a health and safety issue.
72. The resident tried to escalate her complaint in April 2024 when the contractors failed to attend to address the leak on 11 April 2024, as agreed at stage 1. The landlord did not respond to her report of a no-show by the roofers. She contacted the repairs team herself and was told no roofer would be available until June 2024.
73. In its stage 2 response on 12 February 2025, the landlord said it had responded to all reports of the roof leaking since May 2022. It inspected the same day following a report on 11 December 2023. It raised works on 21 December 2023 to remove a small tree causing the problem. It said it had completed the work but did not specify when. It also did not explain why it took 10 days to raise the works following the inspection.
74. The landlord said following a report of a further leak on 20 Jan 2024, it inspected again on 1 February 2024 and completed follow-on works on 11 July 2024. It received another report on 17 January 2025 and agreed to the work to replace the whole roof beginning on 9 June 2025. It omitted to explain why the

roofers did not attend the pre-arranged appointment on 11 April 2024 as set out in its stage 1 response.

75. There were extensive delays of 6 months in the landlord's repair response to the last 2 reports of a leak. This significantly exceeded its target response time of 20 working days for routine repairs.
76. The landlord said the delays were because of a backlog of roofing works, which had been exacerbated by two storms in the last year. It said it had to prioritise works that were urgent, which resulted in the delays in attending.
77. Events will occasionally occur that place unprecedented demand for services. The increased demand for the landlord's roofing service was an event outside of its control and it was appropriate for it to prioritise more urgent works over others. However, when works are delayed, it needs to keep residents informed, provide regular updates and the reasons for the delay. There was no evidence that it did until its stage 2 complaint response, which was not appropriate.
78. The landlord should also have considered the risk involved in a delay to the work and whether it could do anything in the interim to mitigate against it. It should have had an action plan in place to increase the cleaning and regularly check and remove the ceiling debris. It should have removed the internal surface water following any rain and put up warning signs for the hazard of a slippery surface. The evidence suggests it did nothing to mitigate against the risk of an accident in the interim, which was a service failing.
79. Overall, there were considerable failings by landlord as it did not demonstrate that it fully adhered to its repairs policy in its handling of the leaks to the communal hallway. While its struggle to keep up with demand for its roofing service was unavoidable, it did not consider the impact on, or the risk to, its residents. Its failure to keep the resident informed has led to anger and frustration, which, if allowed to continue, has the potential to damage the landlord tenant relationship.

Determination

80. In accordance with paragraph 52 of the Scheme there was maladministration in the landlord's handling of:
 - a. The resident's reports of damp and mould in the property.
 - b. The installation and maintenance of the resident's aids and adaptations.
 - c. The resident's reports of structural problems with the balcony and wall.
 - d. The resident's reports of a leak to the communal entrance.

Orders

81. The landlord must take the following actions within 4 weeks of the date of this report:
- a. Send a written apology to the resident for the failings identified in this investigation.
 - b. Arrange for an independent damp specialist to carry out a full damp survey on the property.
 - c. Review the resident's current accessibility in and out of her property. Following this it must assess any necessary adjustments or further adaptations and whether a further OH assessment is required. It must communicate the outcome to the resident within 4 weeks of this report.
 - d. Provide confirmation that it has completed the roof replacement work that should have started on 9 June 2025.
 - e. Provide a specification and timeframe for carrying out all necessary remedial work, following the leaks in the communal entrance.
 - f. Assist the resident with a claim against its insurers for damage to her belongings from the damp and mould
 - g. Pay the resident £2,200 compensation, which includes the £50 previously offered. Broken down as follows:
 - i. £750 for the distress and inconvenience caused by its failure to appropriately address the damp and mould.
 - ii. £700 for the distress and inconvenience caused by its failure to address the structural damage to the balcony and wall.
 - iii. £450 for the resident's time and trouble caused by the failings identified in the landlord's handling of the communal leak.
 - iv. £300 for the distress and inconvenience caused by the delay in installing and repairing the resident's adaptations.
 - h. Provide documentary evidence of compliance with the above orders.
82. The landlord must review its complaint procedure in respect of timescales for requesting escalation to ensure it is compliant with the Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. The landlord must complete this review within 8 weeks of the date of this determination. If its policy has already changed – it must confirm this to us.

Recommendations

83. The Ombudsman recommends that:

- a. The landlord reviews its record keeping processes. In doing so it may want to consider self-assessing against the recommendations made in our spotlight report on knowledge and information management.

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee named on
September 2025

2nd

Housing Ombudsman findings – Report 2 ref 202331009

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jane Spilsbury and Bill Hartnett
Portfolio Holder Consulted	
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton
Report Author Claire Felton	Job Title: Assistant Director for Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services Email: c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 64254
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	All
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RESOLVE that:-

1) The findings, orders and recommendation from the Housing Ombudsman be noted.

2) Compliance with those matters by the Council and the wider learning points be noted.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The complaint considered by the Housing Ombudsman concerned the Council response to the resident's concerns of damp and mould, and the Council's complaint handling.
- 2.2 The Housing Ombudsman found there was maladministration in the Council's response to the resident's reports of damp and mould.
- 2.3 The Housing Ombudsman found there was maladministration in the Council's complaint handling.

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-
- 2.4 The matter was determined by the Housing Ombudsman on 17th June 2025 (ref 202331009), and a copy of the anonymised report is attached at Appendix 1. The Housing Ombudsman ordered that the Council:-
- (a) Arrange for a senior manager to apologise to the resident in writing for the failings.
 - (b) Pay the resident £800 compensation comprised of:-
 - (i) £600 for the distress, inconvenience, time and trouble caused by the Council's handling of their reports of damp and mould.
 - (ii) £200 for the distress, inconvenience, time and trouble caused by the Council's handling of their complaint.
 - (c) Within 4 weeks of the date of the determination the Council is ordered to inspect the guttering at the property to ensure that it has addressed the issues identified by the Council's surveyor. In the event that the guttering still needs repair, the Council must complete the repairs within a further 4 weeks.
 - (d) The Council must provide the Ombudsman with evidence of compliance with the orders within the deadlines above.
- 2.5 In addition to the "Orders" listed above, the Ombudsman's report also includes a "Recommendation". This is linked to an earlier finding of maladministration in a similar complaint that was determined by the Ombudsman in May 2024. In that case, which was reported to Members in January 2025, there were findings against the Council in relation to the authority's handling of damp and mould complaints, requests for non-damp and mould repairs and investigations into reports of a ticking notice.
- 2.6 In the May 2024 matter (ref 202216635), the orders included the following learning points:-
- That a senior management review of the case be carried out to identify what went wrong and what the Council would do differently.
 - That the Council consider developing a policy and procedure on compensation and noise complaints.
 - That relevant staff be trained in relation to dealing with queries from vulnerable customers.
 - That relevant staff complete the learning modules on the Ombudsman Landlord's Learning Hub for noise complaints, knowledge information management and attitudes, respect and rights.

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- 2.7 In this latest case when referring to case reference 202216635 the Ombudsman's report stated as follows:-

"The Ombudsman previously ordered the landlord to undertake a case review which included an assessment against our Spotlight report on damp and mould. Some of the issues identified in this case are similar. The landlord has demonstrated compliance with the previous wider order made on case 202216635. Therefore, we have not made any orders on this case, which would duplicate those already made. It should, however, consider whether there are any additional issues arising from this later case that require further review or action."

- 2.8 The orders including the compensation payment and other actions listed at paragraph 24 (a) to (d) were all completed and evidenced to the Housing Ombudsman within the 4-week timescale set.
- 2.9 Members may want to consider whether any further follow up action is required by officers given the similarities between the issues raised in the latest case and that of case reference 202216635. Officers can advise Members that the assessment against the spotlight report on Damp and Mould has led to the creation of additional capacity and the expansion of the Housing Property Services team to create a dedicated Damp and Mould Team that was approved by Executive.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 In accordance with paragraph 12.3 of the Articles of the Constitution, the Monitoring Officer is required to report to Executive (or Council for non-executive functions) if any decision or omission has given rise to maladministration. This report concerns actions that the Housing Ombudsman has determined were maladministration/ service failings.
- 3.2 This report also helps to ensure that the Council is reporting in an open and transparent manner on findings arising from an investigation conducted by the Housing Ombudsman and on the action that has been taken in response.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising out of the report, other than the order from the Housing Ombudsman for the Council to make a payment to the resident in compensation of £800. The compensation was paid in accordance with the Housing Ombudsman's order, from the Housing Revenue Account.

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5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is required under Section 5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in view of the decision by the Housing Ombudsman.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priorities

- 6.2 The requirement for the Monitoring Officer to report findings of maladministration is relevant to all of the Council's priorities.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 There are no specific climate change implications.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 There are no implications for Equalities and Diversities arising out of the report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The main risks identified in relation to this report are the risk of the Council being found to have caused maladministration in the future, and the negative impact on residents of failings in the complaint handling system when the Council is responding to reports of damp and mould and general housing disrepair.
- 7.2 The risks are being managed by compliance with the recommendations and on-going training. In addition to this, since the events in the complaint took place, the Council has updated the authority's processes around responding to complaints of damp and mould and committed additional resources to tackling this problem through the implementation of the Damp and Mould business case.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 Housing Ombudsman Report reference 202331009.

Background Papers

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Report on Housing Ombudsman Findings Dated 14th January 2025.

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillors Jane Spilsbury and Bill Hartnett	
Lead Director / Head of Service	Claire Felton Assistant Director for Legal Democratic and Procurement Services Simon Parry – Assistant Director of Environmental and Housing Property Services	
Financial Services	Bob Watson – Section 151 Officer and Director of Finance	
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings – Principal Solicitor	

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Housing

Ombudsman Service

REPORT

COMPLAINT 202331009

Redditch Borough Council

17 June 2025

Our approach

The Housing Ombudsman's approach to investigating and determining complaints is to decide what is fair in all the circumstances of the case. This is set out in the Housing Act 1996 and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme (the Scheme). The Ombudsman considers the evidence and looks to see if there has been any 'maladministration', for example whether the landlord has failed to keep to the law, followed proper procedure, followed good practice or behaved in a reasonable and competent manner.

Both the resident and the landlord have submitted information to the Ombudsman and this has been carefully considered. Their accounts of what has happened are summarised below. This report is not an exhaustive description of all the events that have occurred in relation to this case, but an outline of the key issues as a background to the investigation's findings.

The complaint

1. The complaint is about the landlord's handling of the resident's reports of damp and mould.
2. The Ombudsman has also investigated the landlord's complaint handling.

Background

3. The resident has been a secure tenant at the property since 10 November 2022. The property is a 2-bedroom ground floor flat.
4. On 11 July 2023 the landlord raised a repair job to assess mould throughout the property. An operative attended on 18 July 2023 but noted that they had found no visible signs of mould and asked the resident to call back if she had any further concerns.
5. On 22 August 2023 the resident reported that mould was an issue again. She cancelled an appointment for the landlord to attend on 30 August 2023 which it rearranged for 5 September 2023. It then raised 2 further jobs to treat mould in the living room and install 2 air bricks in the living room and bedroom.
6. The resident complained on 2 October 2023. She said that:
 - a. Her furniture had been damaged due to the mould.
 - b. The property did not have enough ventilation.
 - c. A representative from the landlord's insurance company had attended the property that day and said her claim for damaged items would not be successful.

- d. The operative that sprayed the wall to treat the mould had got paint all over the new laminate flooring and sofa.
7. The landlord acknowledged the complaint on 2 October 2023. The insurance company emailed the resident on 4 October 2023. It said that it was making further enquiries with the landlord about the repair history at the property.
8. On 12 October 2023 a building surveyor completed a survey of the property and provided a schedule for reinstatement works. The surveyor used a moisture meter to take readings during the inspection. The survey report said that:
 - a. The living room showed no visible sign of damp. However, the moisture meter showed that it was at risk of damp. Therefore, it recommended remedial external repairs to reduce the ground level to 150mm below the damp proof course and cut back overgrown vegetation.
 - b. The kitchen showed no visible sign of damp or mould. However, the moisture meter again showed that it was at risk. Therefore, it recommended remedial repairs to supply and install a mechanical extractor.
 - c. The bathroom had a small patch of mould staining. The existing extractor was not adequate. Therefore, it recommended that the landlord fitted a new extractor and applied a mould treatment to the area of staining.
 - d. There was minimal evidence of mould staining on the walls in bedroom 1 but the moisture meter showed that the walls were wet. It recommended that the landlord reduced the external ground level to 150mm below the damp proof course and constructed a soakaway.
 - e. There were minimal signs that bedroom 2 was excessively cold. The surveyor could not access the outside wall to take a moisture reading but it recommended that the landlord carried out the same work as in bedroom 1.
 - f. There was also evidence of a leaking rainwater gutter causing long term staining on the external brickwork with excess water being dumped onto the already soaked ground.
9. On 19 October 2023 the landlord emailed the resident to request a further 10 days to respond to the complaint. It provided a stage 1 complaint response on 27 October 2023. It said that:
 - a. It would replace the kitchen and bathroom extractor fans that week.
 - b. A surveyor had taken moisture readings and the additional ventilation would “help with this”.
 - c. It had offered to clean the paint off the floor but the resident had declined this and said she was just happy to get the ventilation resolved.

- d. Compensation was “outside the remit” of the repairs and maintenance team. However, if she wanted to request compensation, she could contact the relevant service or claim via a page on its website (link provided).
10. The resident asked the landlord to escalate the complaint to stage 2 of the complaints process on 2 November 2023. She said that:
- a. She had first noticed mould in May that year. It was growing on items in the bedrooms and started under the beds. She had cleaned everything but it returned on the underside of the bed and mattresses, the drawers, wardrobes, clothes, shoes, and pictures.
 - b. She had had 3 chest infections and an ear infection since moving in but had not suffered with these before.
 - c. She had lived in 4 previous flats and never had damp and mould before. The landlord tried to play down her issues on a visit saying that others probably lived in much worse situations and it had made her feel ‘stupid’.
 - d. The surveyor that came out gave her some useful tips without being patronising.
 - e. The landlord had now installed the fans which did a good job of removing condensation after a shower and the overgrown shrubs by outside walls of the property had also now been removed.
 - f. She had also asked her own surveyor to look at the property and they had said that the guttering should be repaired because water was leaking down the block onto the mud outside her property and that the damp proof course was covered.
 - g. The landlord had not told her the outcome of the survey and what work would be completed at the property.
 - h. She had claimed on the landlord’s insurance, as advised. At first, they did not offer a payment because they said the mould issue was her fault. However, she had now told them about the overgrown shrubs and the new extractor fans.
 - i. The whole issue had made her question if she was “being silly” or “overreacting”.
11. The landlord acknowledged receipt of the stage 2 complaint on 2 November 2023 and responded on 13 November 2023. It said that:
- a. It had dug out the stone adjacent to the damp proof course and installed a drain in early November. It apologised that it did not explain this previously.
 - b. When it had visited the property there was no evidence of mould.

- c. Its insurance company would decide the outcome of the claim for her belongings.
12. On 27 November 2023 the insurance company wrote to the resident and offered her £500 to contribute towards cleaning her furniture.

Assessment and findings

Scope of investigation

13. The Ombudsman may not consider complaints which concern matters where it is quicker, fairer, more reasonable or more effective to seek a remedy through the courts, other tribunal or procedure. This Service does not determine liability for damages or award damages in the way that a court might and therefore we are unable to determine liability for the damage to the resident's belongings or order compensation for these issues.
14. We will, however, consider the landlord's handling of the resident's request for reimbursement due to damaged belongings and whether it handled this reasonably and in line with its own policy and procedures.

Damp and mould

15. Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 places an obligation on the landlord to keep the structure of the property in good repair.
16. The landlord told us that its damp and mould policy was under review at the time of the complaint and that it had not assessed itself against our Spotlight report on damp and mould dated October 2021.
17. When the resident reported the damp and mould the landlord attended within a reasonable timeframe. It then raised repair jobs to complete a mould wash and fit air bricks. However, we have seen no evidence that it fitted the air bricks within a reasonable timeframe and the damp issue was not resolved. This oversight cost the resident time and trouble because she had to make a complaint.
18. Our Spotlight report on damp and mould recommended that landlords should ensure that their staff can identify damp and mould. It also recommended that landlords should identify and resolve any skills gaps they might have to ensure that staff and contractors have the appropriate expertise to properly diagnose and respond to reports of damp and mould.
19. The resident told the landlord that another member of staff then visited the property and told the resident that air bricks would not resolve the damp. This contradiction meant that the resident lost faith in the landlord's ability to resolve

the issue. There is also no evidence that the landlord ordered any other work after this visit. Its failure to do so meant that the resident was living with damp conditions for longer which caused her distress.

20. The landlord arranged a survey of the property within 10 days of the resident's complaint. This was an appropriate action to take and it identified that repairs were required to resolve the damp issue. However, the landlord conducted the survey 3 months after the resident first reported the problem. Had it followed the recommendations made in our Spotlight report and ensured that appropriately trained staff attended after the initial report, it might have identified the cause of damp earlier and prevented service failure. This delay cost the resident further time and trouble because she had to contact the landlord again.
21. Following the survey the landlord raised repair jobs to complete some of the recommended work. However, it did not communicate the outcome of the survey and what work it had ordered to the resident. This communications error cost her further time and trouble because she had to contact it for updates. It also meant that she was unaware when operatives would arrive which caused her inconvenience.
22. We have also seen no evidence that the landlord followed the surveyor's recommendation to repair the leaking gutter. The resident also reported the faulty guttering in her stage 2 escalation request but the landlord did not address this in its response. This may mean that the landlord did not address 1 of the causes of damp identified by the surveyor. It also showed a lack of communication with the resident about the issue.
23. When the resident told the landlord that mould growth had caused damage to her belongings it promptly signposted her to its insurance company which was an appropriate action to take. However, it did not then promptly provide a copy of the survey report to the insurance company so the assessor was not aware that there were any issues with the structure of the property. Therefore, the resident had to take further time and trouble communicating with the insurance company although she also did not have a copy of the survey report.
24. In summary, the landlord failed to identify the causes for damp and mould in the property on its initial visits which caused a delay in rectifying the issue. It also failed to communicate with the resident about the outcome of the survey and what repairs it had ordered. It did not acknowledge its failings and made no attempt to put things right. Therefore, there was maladministration in its handling of the residents reports of damp and mould in the property. We have ordered it to pay £600 compensation to the resident for the time, trouble, distress, and inconvenience this caused. This is in line with the Housing Ombudsman's remedies guidance.

Complaint handling

25. The Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code in place at the time of the complaint (the Code) said that a complaint investigation must consider all information and evidence carefully.
26. All the information in the stage 1 complaint response was not up to date because the landlord had already replaced the extractor fans at that time. It also did not mention the other work that it would be completing following the survey. This failure meant that the resident was not aware of the issues at the property and what work the landlord intended to do to address them. This caused her inconvenience because she then asked her own surveyor to inspect the property.
27. The Code also said that complaint handlers should have access to staff at all levels to facilitate quick resolution of complaints and have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly. Had this been the case the landlord may have avoided the adverse impact in the form of time, trouble, and inconvenience experienced by the resident.
28. The stage 1 complaint response said that it was "beyond the remit" of the complaint handler to award compensation. The complaint handler should have had the authority to look at the whole complaint, decide if there had been any service failures, and make appropriate remedies including consideration of compensation. Instead, it told her that she should approach the relevant department or submit an insurance claim. However, the resident had mentioned in her complaint that she had already submitted an insurance claim. These failures to fully investigate and use the complaint process to put things right cost the resident further time and trouble because she had to escalate the complaint.
29. The Code also said that to optimise complaint handling, complaint handlers should be able to act sensitively and fairly and be trained to deal with distressed and upset residents.
30. Our Spotlight report on damp and mould also said that landlords should review their initial response to reports of damp and mould to ensure that they avoid apportioning blame or use language that leaves residents feeling blamed,
31. In the stage 2 complaint escalation request the resident told the landlord how she had felt following a particular visit by 2 staff members. She said she felt that her situation had been "downplayed" and that she felt that she might be "stupid", "silly", and "overreacting". She also told it that she had had chest infections since moving into the property and this was not usual for her.

However, the landlord did not address these parts of her escalation request at all in its response. It therefore missed further opportunities to put things right including ensuring that its staff were aware of how their language regarding issues around damp and mould might affect residents. This failure caused the resident further distress and cost her time and trouble escalating the complaint to this Service. A recommendation regarding this is therefore made below.

32. In summary, the landlord's failure to follow the Code meant that it did not use the complaint handling process to address all issues and it did not use any remedies to put things right. Therefore, there was maladministration in its handling of the resident's complaint. We have ordered it to pay £200 compensation to her to reflect the time, trouble, distress, and inconvenience this caused.

Determination (decision)

33. In accordance with paragraph 52 of the Scheme there was maladministration in the landlord's:
 - a. Handling of the resident's reports of damp and mould.
 - b. Complaint handling.

Orders

34. Within 4 weeks of the date of this report a senior manager must apologise to the resident in writing for the failures identified.
35. Within 4 weeks of the date of this report the landlord must pay the resident directly £800 compensation comprising:
 - a. £600 for the distress, inconvenience, time, and trouble caused by its handling of her reports of damp and mould.
 - b. £200 for the distress, inconvenience, time, and trouble caused by its handling of her complaint.
36. Within 4 weeks of the date of this report the landlord must inspect the guttering at the property to ensure that it has addressed the issues identified by its surveyor. If the guttering still needs repair, it must complete the necessary repairs within a further 4 weeks.
37. The landlord must provide the Ombudsman with evidence of compliance with these orders by the above deadlines.

Recommendation

38. The Ombudsman previously ordered the landlord to undertake a case review which included an assessment against our Spotlight report on damp and mould. Some of the issues identified in this case are similar. The landlord has demonstrated compliance with the previous wider order made on case 202216635. Therefore, we have not made any orders on this case, which would duplicate those already made. It should, however, consider whether there are any additional issues arising from this later case that require further review and/or action.

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**DISPOSAL OF HRA ASSETS – DEMOLITION OF DERELICT GARAGES TO
CREATE CAR PARKING SPACES.**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillors Harvey and Hartnett
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Parry
Report Author	Job Title: Housing Property Services Manager Contact email: andrew.rainbow@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 534074 Ext 1678
Wards Affected	Matchborough and Woodrow wards
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	
Key Decision - No	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	
This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph(s) 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee RESOLVE that:-

- 1) The 8 garages located at Ashorne Close, Matchborough (as shown on the plan at Appendix 1) be declared surplus to requirements and demolished on the grounds of structural safety.**
- 2) Subject to planning permission the garages be replaced with 10 parking spaces as shown on the plan at Appendix 2**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As the housing stock ages many of the garages built in the seventies are nearing the end of their lives and becoming uneconomic to repair. This report seeks permission from Members for the demolition of 8 dilapidated HRA garages located on Ashorne Close in Matchborough and for the creation of 10 parking spaces.
- 2.2 Officers intend to bring a further report later in the year to look at the adoption of a strategy for managing dilapidated HRA garages going forward. In the meantime, these garages are being reported to Members on the basis that they are unviable, and action is required to address this.

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- 2.3 The 4 garages at the rear of 23 and 24 Ashorne Close are in a dilapidated state of repair. Repairs to concrete garages cannot be undertaken due to parts not being available.
- 2.4 The proposal is to demolish these 4 garages. The gardens of numbers 23 and 24 Ashorne Close will be affected through the demolition process, and going forward these will have new fencing installed, be re-turfed and offered to occupiers of numbers 23 and 24 Ashorne Close as additional space or alternatively retained as open space.
- 2.5 On the area outside the curtilage of the properties 4 new tarmac parking bays for the public will be created
- 2.6 A similar process will be followed for the garages located outside numbers 62 to 64 Ashorne Close. These garages are also in a dilapidated state and do not appear to be being used. By demolishing the garages and increasing the size of the footprint they cover it will be possible to replace them with 6 tarmac parking bays for use by the public.
- 2.7 By taking these actions the Council will be supporting the effective management of the HRA assets by eliminating the dilapidated garage structures, reducing the potential for anti-social social behaviour, improving the street scene for residents and providing additional parking places. Currently there is a lack of parking spaces in the vicinity of Ashorne Close.
- 2.8 Officers have made preliminary enquiries to assess any impact on the owners/occupiers of the 5 properties directly affected and will carry out further consultation to follow this up, assuming that Members approve the recommendations in the report.
- 2.7 A planning application will be required prior to demolition, as the garages are owned by the council, this would need to be considered by the Planning Committee.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The amount charged by the council to rent a garage at this location is £12.32 per week, currently only 2 out of the 8 garages are let. So, the actual income is £22.64 per week. Whilst on paper demolishing the garages will result in a loss of potential income for 8 garages of £98.56, this has to be balanced against the fact that the garages are in a

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dilapidated state and are beyond economical repair as set out in paragraph 2.3

- 3.2 There is sufficient funds in existing budgets to cover the costs of the proposed works.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The demolition works proposed falls under Class B2(b) of Part 11 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015. As such the Council will have to submit an application for prior approval before commencing the works.
- 4.2 Two of the garages are subject to licence agreements. The individuals affected have been notified of the proposal to demolish. Formal notice will have to be given to terminate those licences in due course. The occupants of 23 and 24 Ashorne Close have also been notified of the proposed demolition works.

5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 5.1 The relevant council priority would be Communities and housing.

6. Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 There are no expected climate change implications for the disposal of these garages and the repurposing of the land into additional tenant garden space and public parking provision.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

- 7.1 No implications have been identified for Local Government Reorganisation.

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8. Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 8.1 There are no equalities implications arising directly from this report; however, the effective utilisation of HRA assets will benefit the residents of Redditch through the provision of appropriate housing and a more pleasant street scene.

9. Operational Implications

- 9.1 We have a budget in place ready to use, this is a small budget. There will be some disruption to property frontages whilst work is underway. Prior to any work there will be a round of public consultation.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 If no action is taken the unviable condition of the garages will continue to have a negative impact on the surrounding area and the structures may be subject to further dilapidation.

Immediate risks are demolition of concrete garages and construction of new parking bays.

11. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 - Plan showing demolition of garages.
Appendix 2 - Plan showing Car parking improvements.
Appendix 3 – Site location plan.
Appendix 4 – Exempt information.

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2nd September

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillors Sharon Harvey and Bill Hartnett	April 2025
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Simon Parry	May 2025
Financial Services	Debra Goodall	May 2025
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings Claire Green – Principal Solicitor – Contracts, Commercial and Procurement	21st May 2025
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green	
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Eccles	April 2025

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Key

- Remove the slabs and resurface to full construction
- New 1m wide link footway
- Soft landscaped areas
- Existing footways
- Resurfacing of the car parking area
- 1.2m buffer strip
- New kerb edging
- New retaining wall to separate the car park and path with a hoop top finish

Date	Rev	Details

Project:

**Ashorne Close
Car Parking Improvements**

Drawing:

Proposed Layout

Drawn:	JH	Scale:	1/500 @ A3
Surveyed:	OS	Date:	Mar 2025

Drawing No: **P2101/69/5**

Engineering and Design Services
Town Hall
Walter Stranz Square
Redditch
Worcs B98 8AH



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Garages and steps to be removed to allow for tandem car parking

New 1m link footpath

Remove turning point. New 1.5m link footpath and drop kerb to be installed. Grass the remaining area.

Key

- Garages to be demolished Total 8
- Remove the slabs and resurface to full construction
- Soft landscaped areas
- Existing footways
- Resurfacing of the car parking area
- 1.2m buffer strip
- New retaining wall to separate the car park and path with a hoop top finish
- New car parking spaces
- New kerb edging
- New boundary fence to property No. 23 and 24
- New link footpath
- Reduce the footway in length to the same length as the car parking space. Resurface as blacktop.

19/05/2025	A	Multiply amendments following a site visit
Date	Rev	Details

Project:

**Ashorne Close
Car Parking Improvements**

Drawing:

General Layout

Drawn:	JH	Scale:	1/500 @ A3
Surveyed:	OS	Date:	Mar 2025

Drawing No: **P2101/69/3A**

Engineering and Design Services
Town Hall
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Key
Garages to be demolished. Total No.8

Date	Rev	Details

Project:
**Ashorne Close
Demolition of garages**

Drawing:
Site Location Plan

Drawn:	JH	Scale:	1/500 @ A3
Surveyed:	OS	Date:	May 2025

Drawing No: **P2101/69/4**

Engineering and Design Services
Town Hall
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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive
2025****2nd September****Disposal of Housing Revenue Account Assets.****53 Parsons Road, Southcrest, Redditch.****53 Crabbs Cross Lane, Crabbs Cross Redditch.**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sharon Harvey and Bill Hartnett
Portfolio Holder Consulted	YES
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Parry
Report Author	Job Title: Housing Property Services Manager Contact email: andrew.rainbow@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 534074 Ext 1678
Wards Affected	Central, Astwood Bank and Feckenham wards
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Council Priorities	Community and Housing
Key Decision - Yes	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	
This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph(s) 1, 2 and 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS**The Executive Committee is asked to RESOLVE that:-**

- 1) 53 Parsons Road, Southcrest, Redditch be declared surplus to Council requirements.**
- 2) Authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer and to the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services to dispose of the site at market value.**
- 3) Any HRA capital receipt received from the sale of No. 53 Parsons Road, Southcrest be allocated to the HRA Capital Programmes.**
- 4) 53 Crabbs Cross Lane, Crabbs Cross, be declared surplus to Council requirements.**
- 5) Authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer and to the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services to dispose of the site at market value.**

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- 6) Any HRA capital receipt received from the sale of 53 Crabbs Cross Lane, Crabbs Cross be allocated to the HRA Capital Programmes.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 **53 Parsons Road, Southcrest, Redditch** is owned by Redditch Borough Council (RBC) and is an HRA asset. The property is currently void and has been since 2019. Given its current condition and location, Officers do not consider that it is suitable to remain as part of the HRA stock.
- 2.2 The property is a two-bedroom, traditionally constructed detached house, located adjacent to the now disused Redditch railway line. In late 2022 the property was vandalised and stripped of all metals and copper pipework. In doing this the vandals caused significant flooding which was only reported weeks later. The damages caused to the property from vandalism and flooding was significant. To improve the property and bring it to a point where it would be fit for habitation would cost circa £105,000.00. The figure is inclusive of energy efficiency measures and external works to gardens.
- 2.3 The property is a two-bedroom, traditionally constructed detached house with no cavity, and a floor area of approx. 36m², as such considered to be very small in line with modern day standards.
- 2.4 Officers do not consider that the refurbishment of the property would represent value for money especially given access to the property is very limited currently. There is no vehicle access to the property.
- 2.5 Officers have considered options for the property, including redesigning and extending and or undertaking works to enable a driveway to be constructed, but these options would not provide a cost-effective way forward to re-use the property.
- 2.6 **53 Crabbs Cross Lane, Crabbs Cross, Redditch**, is owned by Redditch Borough Council (RBC) and is an HRA asset. The property is currently void and has been since 2022. Given its current condition and location, Officers do not consider that it is suitable to remain as part of the HRA stock.
- 2.7 The property is a two-bedroom traditionally constructed semi-detached house, with a floor area of approx. 46m², considered very small in line with modern day standards. One must enter the first bedroom to

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access the second bedroom. To improve the property and bring it to a point where it would be fit for habitation would cost circa £125,000.00. inclusive of energy efficiency measures and external works to gardens.

- 2.8 Officers do not consider that the refurbishment of the property would represent value for money.
- 2.9 Officers are therefore seeking a decision from Members that the two properties be declared as surplus with the intention that they are then sold on the open market following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing. On balance officers are of the view that selling and re-investing the proceeds into the HRA account to be used towards future investment in the housing stock is going to bring a greater economic benefit than using HRA funds to refurbish. Whilst this might not normally be the case, in this instance the very dilapidated state of both properties means that they are not economical to bring back into service.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The rules under which the HRA operates mean that the income generated from the sale of the properties must be re-invested back into the HRA Capital Account. Officers intend to use the monies towards investment in adding to the existing housing stock.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council is under a duty to achieve best value when it disposes of property.
- 4.2 The legal power to enable a Council to dispose of HRA property is section 32 of the Housing Act 1985. That section also stipulates that such a disposal shall not be made without the consent of the Secretary of State which can be obtained by making an application if it is not already covered by a general consent (General Housing Consents 2013).

5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Council Priorities

- 5.1 The two council priorities of relevance to this report are: -

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Communities and Housing.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 There are no expected climate change implications for the disposal of either property.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

- 6.1 There are no implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.2 There are no equalities implications arising directly from this report; however, the effective utilisation of the HRA benefits the residents of Redditch through the provision of appropriate housing which meets the needs of our tenants.

Operational Implications

- 6.3 In writing this report officers have noted that there is not currently an overall policy in place covering the disposal of HRA assets. Such a policy could be beneficial in streamlining the process and enabling officers to act more swiftly in certain cases. As such officers intend to bring a further report to Members later in the year to look at establishing an HRA disposal policy.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There will be a risk of further dilapidation and vandalism if the properties are not sold, particularly in relation to 53 Parsons Road.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

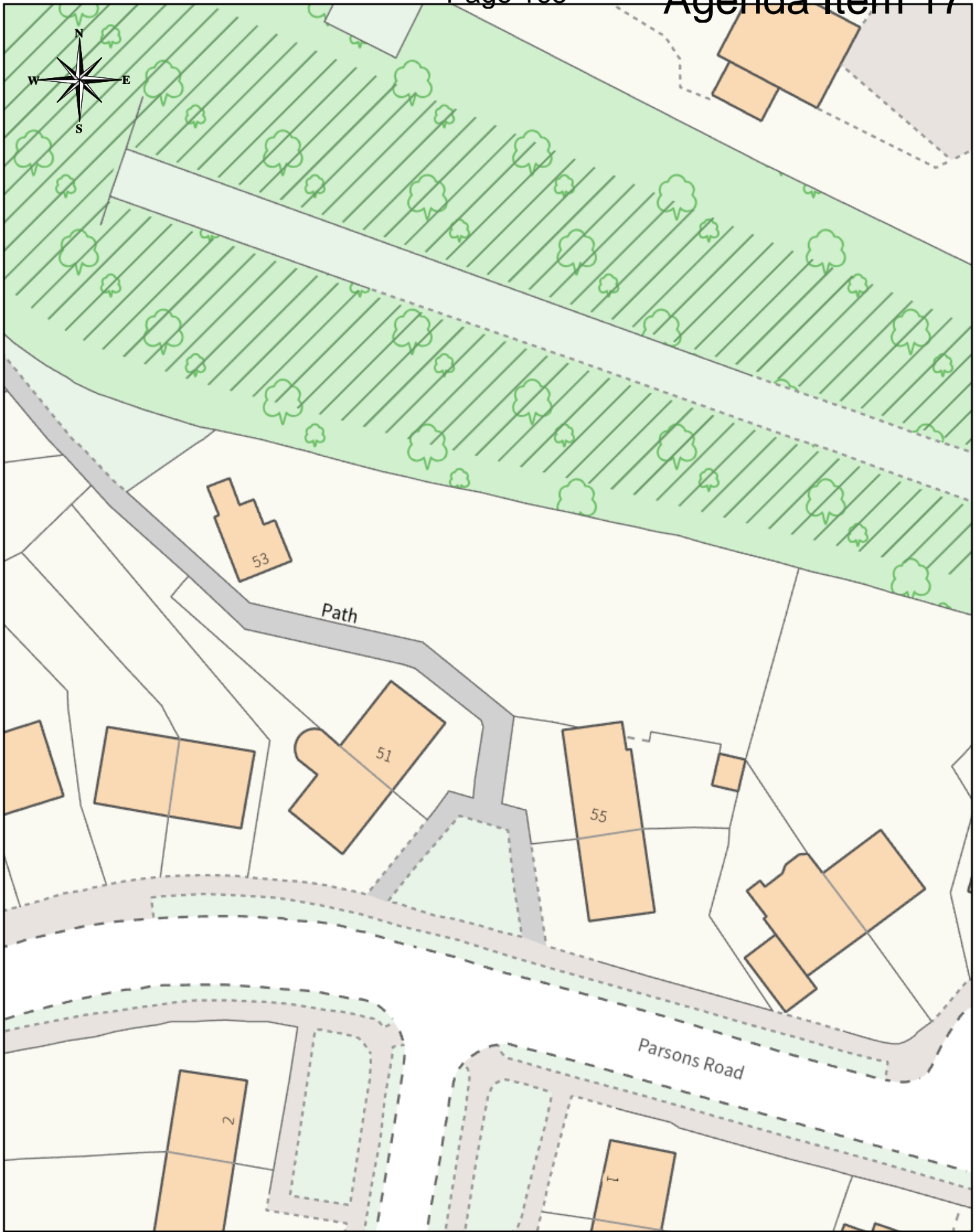
Appendix 1 - Site plan 53 Parsons Road
Appendix 2 - Site plan 53 Crabbs Cross Lane
Appendix 3 - Exempt Information
Appendix 4 - Exempt Plan

**Executive
2025****2nd September**

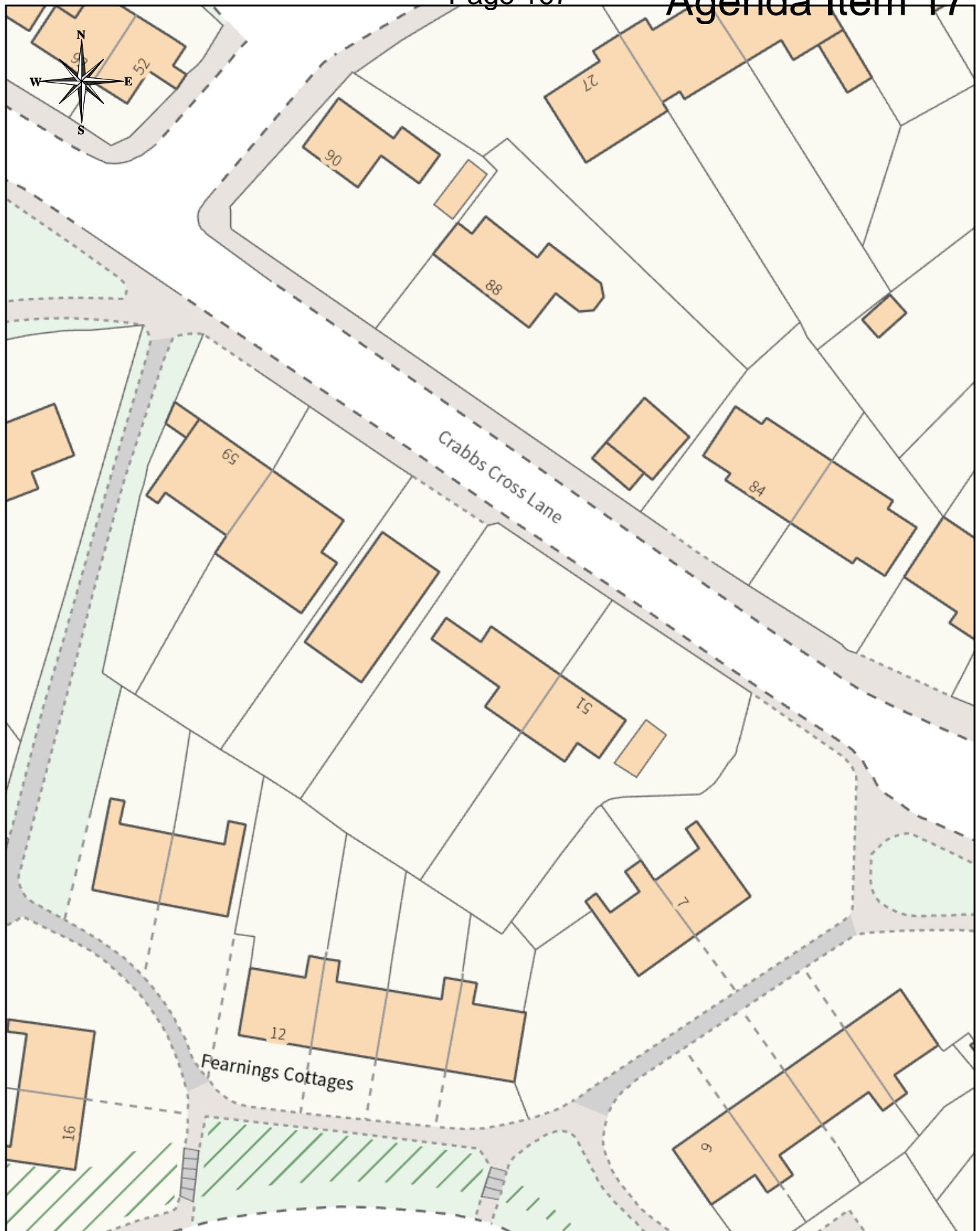
9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Bill Hartnett	08/05/2025
Assistant Director	Simon Parry	08/05/2025
Lead Officer	Andrew Rainbow	10/04/2025
Financial Services	Deb Goodall	15/04/2025
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings	20/05/2025
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Rebecca Green	14/04/2025
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Eccles	15/04/2025

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