

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.