

Watford Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Scrutiny Task Group Scope and Terms of Reference

Scrutiny review title	Tenants' experiences in social housing
Scrutiny proposer	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Details of specific area for review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any interim data for tenant satisfaction measures programme (note first results to be published Autumn 2024). • Responsiveness to repair requests. • Review of the damp and mould processes. • Effectiveness of Gateway structure, or similar tenant engagement processes, in engagement and tenant-led scrutiny.
Why this has been proposed for review, including the council priorities it supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WCH owns and manages over 5,300 homes in Watford and other providers also own many units. • National issues around damp and mould. • Understand tenants' views and how these are taken forward.
Purpose / objectives of the review, including key questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well are tenants' views understood and acted upon? • How successful are the tenant-engagement structures and processes? • How effectively are complaints dealt with? • How robust are the measures in place to respond to issues with damp and mould?
Any areas excluded from the scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual casework.
Desired outcomes / indicators of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wider understanding of the context of the social rented sector in Watford. • An understanding of complaints processes. • An understanding of repairs processes. • An understanding of the response to issues with damp and mould within the social rented sector. • Developing recommendations which contribute to resident satisfaction in the social rented sector.
Timescale and key dates, including proposed meeting format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task group to be established in July 2023. • Consider a scrutiny in a day approach, October 2023. • To go to WBC Cabinet and the social housing providers in January 2024.
Key departmental lead officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justine Hoy, Associate Director of Housing and Wellbeing • Liz Smale, Housing Strategy Officer • Joanna Harding, Environmental Health Manager
Witnesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives of WCH and other registered providers • Cabinet member for Housing

<p>What activities need to be taken to achieve the outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing background briefing on social housing landscape in Watford. • Review of relevant WCH and other providers' policies on: repairs, housing maintenance complaints, management of damp and mould issues. • Review of feedback from tenant engagement structures.
<p>Key policies / documentation / baseline information needed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background briefing on establishment of WCH and how the relationship is managed. • Briefing on tenants' satisfaction measures • WCH Customer Experience Strategy • WCH complaints and escalation process
<p>Any other sources of evidence (e.g., site visit)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any previous consultations run with social tenants.
<p>Risks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of involvement of social housing providers in working with local councillors to address residents' needs and concerns. • Lack of opportunity to ensure robustness to damp and mould agenda.