

## Feedback from the BCHG Board January 2024

The Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) results for Quarter 3 are positive with the overall satisfaction at 89.4% against a target of 90%. One indicator, complaint handling, remains low. We are holding a Focus Group inviting for all respondents for us to learn more about your thoughts on complaint handling and this will also be a focus at the 2024 Customer Conference.

The culture strengthening programme that has engaged First Impression Training sits behind the TSM and successfully delivered the first phase to the Homeforce Team. The second phase aims to target sub-contractors, particularly the gas contractor, where attitude related satisfaction is lowest.

It has been a year since the publication of the Better Social Housing Review and guiding principles on repairs are being developed through 'The rethinking repairs and maintenance project.' In advance of this, the BCHG Partnership Repair Board has now completed the design of new standards, and these will be included in the new Repairs and Maintenance Policy alongside a review of repair handling timescales linked to "Awaab's Law."

In quarter three there were eighteen complaints logged, making a total year to date at 57, compared to 45 a year ago. The majority of complaints are for the gas contractor, Sure Maintenance. Whilst there is evidence of a seasonal spike, the primary issues relate to their customer service and staff attitude. Actions are currently being progressed to address this matter with their management.

Previously a self-assessment was presented to Members on the first stage of Awaab's Law related the provision of information, tenant rights, specifically decent homes, complaint handling and health safety. To progress this, recruitment of a pool of customers is taking place to work together with BCHG in co-creating communications targeting those areas.

## Key Board Decisions

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

We have delivered the 2020-2023 EDI Strategy and its activities under its four key objectives of culture, people, data and performance and we continue on our journey of creating a diverse and inclusive environment where customers and colleagues have a sense of belonging where they feel their voice is heard, their opinion matters, and their input and contribution is valued.

The new EDI Strategy was approved by the Board and sets our vision for the next three years under the five headings of Engage and Listen, Lead from the top, Promote who we are, Educate, and Review and Learn. These objectives have been developed using the feedback of customers and colleagues and what is apparent from their feedback is that they value the same things. To be treated with sensitivity and respect, with dignity and kindness and for individual preferences to be taken into consideration.

You can read it [here](#).

### Rent and Service Charge Increase 2024

The Board are required to agree the rent and service charge increase each year, taking into account the guidance set by the Regulator of Social Housing. The Regulator has confirmed that social housing providers can apply the full rent increase in line with the 'Policy statement on rents for social housing' of CPI+1% or 7.7%.

Service charge increases sit outside of the rent guidance, however BCHG has proposed to the Board that the increase remains in line with the rent increase and the Policy for 2024 is a 7.7% increase.

### Fire Safety

The main change made in this Policy update is to include the legislative and regulatory environment that has now been established following the Building Safety Act 2022 and additional guidance in 2023. Accountable Persons, Responsible Persons and Building Safety Managers is clarified within the policy as well as what this means for buildings under 11m, between 11m and 18m and for those over 18m.

For the avoidance of doubt all measurements within this policy reflect the height of the floor structure of the highest habitable floor in the building in line with the Building Safety Act 2022.

The second key change within the policy is how often Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) are carried out within BCHG communal buildings. The BDO Fire Safety Audit in June 2023 concluded that there are well designed controls in place around Fire Safety, such as readily accessible policy and procedure documents, detailed FRA reports with tracking of actions, and regular reporting to H&S Panel, Group Audit Committee and Board. Therefore, in accordance with its methodology BDO provided 'Substantial' assurance over the design of controls.