

# Delivering for tenants

The Foundations of an Effective Local Authority Landlord Service



Funded by  
UK Government

**London Housing  
Directors' Group**



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# Foreword

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London needs more and better council homes. Boosting provision of council housing is essential for supporting the capital's future prosperity and Londoners' wellbeing. Ensuring a high-quality landlord service is a fundamental part of London boroughs' vision for council housing in the 21st century.

Boroughs stand proud of our track record of mobilising a new era of council housing development and delivering 13,000 starts. Our joint work to develop a pathway to net zero for existing homes shows there is no shortage of ambition. We are determined to build on this progress, ensuring that we rise to the challenges of an uncertain and volatile economic context and unprecedented levels of housing need. Our homes and services must be of good quality; our relationship with tenants and leaseholders positive and built on partnership.

Collectively as housing leaders we have taken the time to stand back and think about how we can go forward. The tragic death of Awaab Ishak and the subsequent coroner's verdict raised extremely serious questions regarding the state of housing and landlord practices, serving to underline the importance of reflecting on how we can improve standards and services for our residents, and the severe consequences of poor standards within the home.

This paper is the result of that work. It sets out the principles that, collectively, London local authorities agree should underpin a high-performing council landlord service. It is one that delivers a high standard of service on behalf of residents, where the tenants' voice is heard and acted upon, and where the landlord service is delivering as part of the local authority's wider objectives.

This project defines best practice principles that hold up a high-performing service under a clear set of five 'foundations': (1) vision and strategy, (2) leadership (3) management, (4) performance and compliance, and (5) assurance. These principles have been defined and translated into an outline assurance framework that councils can use to demonstrate compliance. It seeks to be aspirational, to go beyond our statutory and regulatory responsibilities, and to define those principles that will deliver the highest standard of service possible, delivered in collaboration with tenants.

London Housing Directors are clear that achieving high-quality landlord services for tenants is of paramount importance to us as a professional network. This report lays out the framework to achieve this and drive forward change across the sector. Working closely with the Social Housing Regulator and Housing Ombudsman we intend to continue listening, learning and adapting as we raise standards and outcomes for Londoners.

The report was produced by the London Housing Directors' Group, with support from London Councils. We are grateful for funding from the UK government through the Local Government Association's Housing Advisers Programme. The report was developed with consultancy support from Savills.

**Jamie Carswell and Joanne Drew**

Co-Chairs, London Housing Directors' Group

# Introduction

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Together, London's local authorities let more than 390,000 social rented homes and provide services to 410,000 leaseholders. The residents of these properties rightly expect their local authority landlords to provide them with good quality homes and neighbourhoods, responsive and accountable services, and value for money.

Landlord services are generally understood to contribute to the delivery of wide-ranging non-housing priorities across local authorities; including environmental sustainability; digital connectivity; individual and community wellbeing; safer neighbourhoods; and area regeneration. Therefore, they are never a standalone activity, and they look for impacts that go beyond day-to-day property management. Their focus is people, place and property in the round.

In recent years the spotlight has fallen on all providers of social housing, putting into sharp focus what is expected of them and where, in some cases, they are falling short.

The London Housing Directors' Group, supported by London Councils, has worked with local authority staff, councillors and residents to illustrate principles, actions and practices that should support effective delivery of local authority landlord services. These have been grouped by theme, giving five 'foundations' that hold up a high-performing local authority landlord service:

- Vision & strategy,
- Leadership,
- Management,
- Performance & compliance, and
- Assurance.

They aim to support councils to create solid

foundations for their services and include plenty of scope for aspiration and diversity of approach.

Landlord services relate to council-owned social housing, and privately-owned properties where the council is the freeholder. Activities covered by landlord services are lettings and tenancy management, repairs and maintenance, estate management, capital investment/major works, and administration of rent and service charges. Facilitation of resident involvement in delivery and oversight of these functions is not a service but is central to the landlord functions undertaken for tenants and leaseholders. Community development activities in areas where health, employment and financial resilience is poor is a key function of a landlord service.

Homelessness and housing advice, development of new social and market homes, and housing strategy are not part of the landlord service, although they may sit within the same department.

Effective service delivery is, to some extent, for landlords to define with their residents. Core expectations are set out in the Consumer Standards that all registered providers must adhere to. In general, key features of effective service delivery would include:

- Achievement of strategic and operational objectives/targets set for the service
- Alignment of activities and priorities with resident, regulatory and statutory expectations

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- Undertaking necessary repairs in good time
  - Keeping communal spaces clean and presentable
  - Maintaining quality, condition and safety of assets over the longer term
  - Responsiveness to, and clarity of communication with, residents
  - Supporting resolution of disputes and anti-social behaviour
  - Joined up, co-ordinated actions and interventions
  - Maximising rental collection and minimising void periods
  - Maximising value derived from revenue and capital expenditure
  - Proactively putting things right when they go wrong.

Our intent is that the foundations will be adopted by local authorities to support continuous improvements, delivering on their ongoing commitment to serving their residents and in the light of changes in the regulatory framework for social housing and updated health and safety expectations.

Alongside the foundations we have developed an assurance framework to assist local authorities in undertaking an open, evidence-based assessment of the strength of the five foundations within their own landlord service. This is published as a separate document on the London Councils' website. We suggest that local authorities will benefit from development of an action plan following assessment against the assurance framework, to support continuous improvement.

Our intention is that the components of the foundations are forward looking and stretching, and that local authorities will work towards full adherence over time. They are intended to be aspirational and go beyond the minimum statutory and regulatory requirements placed on local authority landlords.

# Development of the foundations



The concept of the five foundations was initiated by the London Housing Directors' Group. The foundations presented here were developed between April and July 2022, primarily by using focus groups, workshops, interviews and a survey to generate and refine ideas.

Most stock-owning boroughs participated in some way in the project; with tenants, officers (from local authority Chief Executives through to heads of service) and councillors considering what it means to be a good local authority landlord and sharing experiences and ideas around delivery of landlord services, the content of the foundations, and how they could be used.

Opportunities to participate included:

- Focus groups with housing directors and heads of service
- Focus group with tenants
- Interviews with chief executives and

executive directors

- Discussions with councillors with responsibility for housing
- A survey of each borough.

Views of boroughs and residents were supplemented with interviews and conversations with:

- Housing Ombudsman Service
- Regulator of Social Housing
- London Tenants Federation
- Association of Retained Council Housing.

## Tenants

Tenants of London local authorities who participated in the focus group each had extensive experience of local self-organisation and participation in formal and informal resident involvement structures, as well as being recipients of landlord services.

Drawing on these experiences, the tenants' comments centred around the following



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themes:

- The need to get the basic landlord functions right
- Difficulties and concerns relating to delivery of services by contractors
- The need for clear service standards, reporting of performance, and benchmarking against other landlords
- Concerns about the ways in which decisions are taken about service delivery, property investment and the future of estates
- The effects of culture and attitudes within local authorities on service delivery and resident experience
- The importance of having formal feedback and resident engagement arrangements in which tenants have confidence, and can see how their views have been considered when setting policy and service delivery priorities
- The effects of the Cabinet structure and local electoral cycles on priorities, decision making and oversight
- The importance of the landlord service contributing to the environmental sustainability agenda.

### Councillors

Councillors highlighted the similarities and differences between them, as elected representatives, and board members of companies. Councillors have a very broad remit, do not necessarily have professional expertise in the services they oversee, and may not have experience in corporate governance and scrutiny. Consequently, they are reliant on the diligence and openness of senior officers, and keenly feel the weight of responsibility to

ensure properties are safe and well managed.

### Officers

Directors, assistant directors, and heads of service with responsibility for all or parts of London boroughs' landlord services drew on their operational experience to highlight areas of strength and confidence, challenges, and professional aspirations. Key points that emerged were:

- The size of the social housing stock; the proportion of residents who live in it; the political composition; and the presence of cross-borough/shared service arrangements all have a bearing on the attention received by the housing service, the outcomes it is expected to deliver, corporate culture and access to skills.
- Resident engagement is highly valued as a means to inform services for tenants and leaseholders, and there is a pressing need to strengthen engagement further and improve resident satisfaction.
- A range of accountability and reporting structures/arrangements are in place across boroughs, and confidence in their effectiveness varies.
- Obligations to large numbers of leaseholders differentiate local authority landlord services from most housing association services and sit outside of social housing regulation.
- Fragmentation of core services across council departments and other service providers poses challenges to coordination, prioritisation and knowledge sharing (i.e. where the landlord service relies on council functions that it does not control, such as centralised income collection teams or anti-



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social behaviour interventions).

- The ability to link with non-housing services within the local authority is a strength that should be maximized (e.g. liaison with children's and adult services to look to residents' wider needs and proactively improve wellbeing rather than seeing housing in isolation).
- The emphasis on singular, high-profile issues at corporate level (such as building safety), while understandable and important, can impede higher-level consideration of the housing service in the round.
- Proactive management and shaping of corporate culture help to shape the resident experience and ability to attend to newly emerging problems or crystallising risks.
- Skills shortages (staff, members and contractors) have an impact on delivery and oversight of core services in some boroughs, including around management of data, risk, contract management (in particular where aspects of housing and property management are provided under contract), and routine and specialist property management.
- Reliance on under-resourced corporate services, such as IT, finance and procurement, affects access to key skills and functionality, and in turn speed and effectiveness of service delivery.
- Competing priorities for Housing Revenue Account funding (e.g. between existing and new build homes) can create challenges for meeting resident and regulatory expectations around the landlord service.
- Similarly, focus on the role and impact of the landlord service can get lost in

discussions on the split between HRA and General Fund activities.

### Stakeholders

The Housing Ombudsman Service and Regulator of Social Housing only get involved with local authority landlords when a problem or concern has been highlighted to them. Both have published insights into root causes behind service failures; and these are valuable for understanding features that support an effective landlord service. Points raised by these statutory bodies include:

- Listening to tenants is critical to ensuring tenants receive good housing services.
- Culture underpins the ability to hear tenants' voices and deal with issues as they arise.
- Councillors and management teams must have appropriate oversight and understanding of performance, effectiveness of procedures, and compliance; and be confident in the level and nature of assurance provided.
- Without good quality reliable data, landlords cannot know that they are providing good quality landlord services.
- Good governance and leadership are vital to ensure all the points above are addressed.

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There are many areas of consensus between the groups who have shared their experiences and opinions to inform development of the principles included in this report. There were a few areas where distinct points were raised or a different emphasis given, but no particular areas of disagreement. All perspectives have been incorporated in drafting this report.



# Working with the foundations supporting local authority landlord services

Local authorities are democratic institutions, where directly elected Cabinets, Mayors and Committees shape and are accountable for a range of services delivered or commissioned by officers.

Provision of social housing is a regulated activity with a range of outcomes, and some practices, mandated by the regulator, law and the Housing Ombudsman. Within these requirements, for the most part, local authorities have freedom to determine what and how they deliver.

Local authorities all have different frameworks and ways of working – and the interface of policies, controls, resourcing, and behavioural norms shapes the services delivered and residents' experiences of these.

Whilst structures vary – and need to do so according to local need and preference – there is wide agreement that the five foundations are required to support any effective local authority landlord service.

The five foundations supporting an effective landlord service are:

## Foundation

### Vision & strategy

### Definition and reason for inclusion

Clear articulation of what a service aims to deliver and be like in the future brings clarity on what residents can expect and what staff are working towards. It enables different participants to align behind a unity of purpose; shows what priorities, policies and resourcing need to aim towards; and sets out what, in time, elected members will be accountable for delivering.

### Leadership

In a local authority elected members, senior officers and managers marshal the efforts of all involved in the council landlord service towards achievement of the agreed goals. In exercising leadership, they set expectations and the tone for delivery of landlord services.

### Management

The ways in which priorities, resources and staff are coordinated and aligned have a strong bearing on capacity for operational delivery and achievement of agreed outcomes.

### Performance & compliance

Regular and accurate reporting of performance and compliance with statutory/regulatory requirements enables local authorities to get and share a timely view on progress towards delivery of their own objectives as well as how far they are meeting expectations set by others. With such information to hand, appropriate targets can be set, and action can be taken in good time to keep progress towards achievement of shorter term aims and the longer-term vision on track.

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## Assurance

Delivery of multimillion-pound services, to thousands of households, within a regulated environment with statutory, moral and fiscal obligations is a complex operation. Elected members, senior leaders and operational staff all need comfort that various systems are working as they should, and that objectives and targets will be achieved. Assurance to the local authority provides evidence on the robustness of processes, conduct of activities, and credibility of information. As such it goes beyond reliance on the confidence placed in others and the provision of reassurance.

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It is envisaged that each London borough will consider and agree how it will work with the five foundations.

Where the five foundations are to be adopted, an initial assessment of the starting position can be undertaken and reported.

The level and nature of evidence required to demonstrate the actions, practices and outcomes should be considered. Evidence should be clear and deep enough to command the confidence of residents and external observers – a statement of reassurance should never be enough. This will vary for the different principles and will ideally align with assessed risk. An action plan can then be prepared to strengthen the foundations where required.

To embed the foundations over time, they should be widely discussed with members, staff and residents, and there should be regular review of progress against the action plan and the impact of those actions.

Taking account of its constitution, each borough should be able to set out where members, senior officers, operational officers, residents, and external parties fit into the creation and maintenance of the foundations. Processes and reporting required can be mapped against existing operating frameworks and governance structures. It is possible that assessment against the five foundations will highlight areas where decision-making and accountability could be strengthened or clarified.

Sharing of positions and practices between boroughs will help create peer support networks and maintain awareness of what good looks like as practices develop over time. It will also create opportunities to tackle challenges arising through collaborative or coordinated action.

In the sections that follow, we set out each of the five foundations and the principles, actions and practices that each need to comprise if they are to support effective landlord services.

# Vision & strategy

Clear articulation of both what the service provides now and what it aims to deliver in the future brings clarity on what residents can expect and what staff are working towards. It enables different participants to align behind a unity of purpose; shows what priorities, policies and resourcing need to aim towards;

and sets out what, in time, elected members will be accountable for delivering.

In a local authority the vision for landlord services may be set by politicians and fleshed out by officers, or it may be proposed by officers for approval.

Principle	Detail (actions and practices)	Expected outcome
1.1 The local authority sets a clear and realistic vision for its landlord service	The vision is publicly available and regularly refreshed	Members, staff and residents understand the vision for the service; and progress towards its achievement can be demonstrated
1.2 The needs and aspirations of diverse groups of residents are clearly seen to inform landlord service priorities	Formal and informal feedback from residents (such as complaints and comments raised on estate/ward walks) is recorded, responded to, shared, and used to shape service priorities	Officers and accountable people are aware of feedback received and engage positively with residents around this  Residents from diverse demographics and geographies can see their needs and opinions reflected in decisions and priorities
	Where the needs and aspirations of different groups are in tension, there is clarity over how opinions are mediated, and decisions reached	Residents express satisfaction with decision making processes
1.3 The landlord service strategy and priorities are appropriately resourced	Financial plans are aligned with strategy, service needs are prioritised with account taken of capacity, and constraints/opportunities are transparently presented	Service quality is aligned to make best use of capacity

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## **PRACTICE EXAMPLES**

The following examples illustrate how local authorities are addressing some of the principles, actions and practices that form the vision and strategy foundations.

### **1.1 Southwark - Southwark Conversation & thematic follow ups**

In 2018 Southwark Council held extensive discussions with local people about change in the borough. Responses covered topics including housing, community, the public realm and listening to residents. Thematic follow-ups planned for 2022 will revisit these topics, and aim to identify priorities that can inform medium to long-term action plans that will run beyond political timeframes.

### **1.2 Sutton Housing Partnership – Estate Champions Programme**

Sutton Housing Partnership has put in place a series of estate-based community walkabouts with residents and ward councillors to identify problems and concerns. These are held principally in communal areas and estate open spaces, with action plans published subsequently so that action to address the problems can be tracked.

### **1.3 Brent – Spotlight**

Brent's monthly Spotlight newsletter keeps housing residents informed on topics that are known to be important to them. This newsletter is accompanied by live sessions that give tenants and leaseholders an open forum to meet and highlight concerns to senior managers (directors). The forum is also used to feed back the results of the Satisfaction of Tenants and Residents Survey and the supporting action plan.

## LEADERSHIP

In a local authority elected members, senior officers and managers marshal the efforts of all involved in the local authority landlord service towards achievement of the agreed goals. In exercising leadership, they set expectations and the tone for delivery of landlord services.

Principle	Detail (actions and practices)	Expected outcome
2.1 Corporate culture is proactively managed to include openness and honesty and problem solving	Officers and elected members create and sustain a safe environment in which concerns can be raised and there is accountability for responses	Concerns and problems are raised early on
	Difficulties in service delivery and operational management are routinely reported and recorded	Concerns and problems are tackled early on
	Problems are identified proactively rather than reactively, with preventative measures put in place in advance of issues being identified.	Concerns and problems are tackled in a strategic and proactive way
2.2 The landlord service has a strong voice across the wider council	Officers in the corporate leadership team and elected members are familiar with the activities, responsibilities/ duties and contributions of the landlord service and the regulatory requirements on it.	Corporate services align with the needs of the landlord service
	Housing's contribution to local priorities and outcomes is reflected in wider corporate strategies	The impact of landlord services is maximised and understood
	Members and senior staff participate in horizon scanning	Landlord services are forward-looking; and understanding of the changing context is brought to bear on resourcing, decision making and communications with staff



<p>2.3 Corporate culture is proactively managed to include partnership working, inclusivity and task ownership</p>	<p>Officers are empowered to resolve problems reported to them, including through coordinating activities outside of their own department</p>	<p>Residents' queries and problems are resolved promptly</p>
	<p>Liaison between inter-related services is routine and there is clarity on relevant service standards and expectations</p>	<p>Holistic improvements in quality of life</p>
		<p>Local authority services within and outside of the housing department are responsive to the needs of landlord functions that use and rely on their activities</p>
		<p>Residents see and experience a seamless landlord service</p>
	<p>Officers, members and active tenants share knowledge and collaborate with people involved with social housing outside of the local authority</p>	<p>Service changes are implemented to drive performance improvement, and are informed by good and emerging practice from elsewhere</p>
<p>2.4 Leadership and professionalism are highly regarded and are practiced at all levels</p>	<p>Good practice in leadership is nurtured and demonstrated</p>	<p>The values of the council and landlord service are understood and adhered to</p>
	<p>Members and officers demonstrate core leadership values</p>	<p>Officers feel confident, included and inspired, and demonstrate professionalism</p>
	<p>Attainment of professional qualifications and membership of professional bodies is supported</p>	

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## **PRACTICE EXAMPLES**

The following examples illustrate how local authorities are addressing some of the principles, actions and practices that form the leadership foundation.

### **2.1 Islington - Creating a culture of openness and problem solving**

Islington wanted its landlord service to have a culture of shared responsibility and accountability without any practice of attributing blame for difficulties to others. Service leaders sought to learn from colleagues in children's social care, who had established reflective practice and supervision in a high-stakes environment. These approaches promote individuals, teams and managers to focus on professional practice and performance improvement, enabling actions to be thought-through and accountable within a supportive environment.

### **2.2 Southwark - Senior Leadership Team meetings**

Southwark's Senior Leadership Team meetings bring together senior officers and elected members, with a view to extending visibility and understanding of housing issues beyond the portfolio holder. Members of the Chief Officer Team meet with the Cabinet to cover agendas that include horizon scanning and discussion of policy questions that will, in time, be addressed in Cabinet reports. These meetings are chaired by the Leader and give an opportunity to talk about policy purpose and aim in advance of proposals being firmed up and presented for approval.

## MANAGEMENT

The ways in which priorities, resources and staff are coordinated and aligned have a strong bearing on capacity for operational delivery and achievement of agreed outcomes.

Principle	Detail (actions and practices)	Expected outcome
3.1 Corporate services have sufficient flexibility to align with the needs of the landlord service	Procurement functions and policies facilitate access to technical skills and enable prompt access to services when required	Landlord services have access to required technical skills and facilities, at the point when they are required  Officers and members feel confident in the skills and services procured
	There is proactive liaison with, and monitoring of, service delivery between the landlord service and other customer-facing services	Services address customer needs
	Human Resources, legal and finance functions report and operate in a manner that provides the personnel, reporting and advice required by the landlord service	Landlord services have access to staff with the required skills and aptitudes  Business planning includes opportunities for a range of officers, members and residents to contribute. Refinements to the draft plan are made over time informed by their contributions, and in the approved plan resources are clearly and closely linked with delivery of strategic aims and statutory requirements  Financial reporting gives meaningful insight into the current and projected financial positions, and the depth of awareness is reflected in management decisions and scrutiny
	Modern IT services are available, that meet requirements for functionality, data management and user support	Data is accurately maintained, reported and deployed; delivering high levels of compliance and value for money investment in properties  Records of interactions with tenants are accurate and inform the actions of staff/contractors, as

well as providing insights that improve service performance (e.g. by harnessing repairs reporting to identify wider defects within a block)

3.2 The service is able to recruit and retain the skills and aptitudes required to operate a modern, compliant housing function

The landlord service is sighted on its staffing needs and is able to articulate and monitor the impact of different methods for meeting these requirements

There is sufficient flexibility in recruitment policies that the landlord service can engage with all required sections of the labour market

Staff with up-to-date professional skills in risk, data management, contract management and asset management are available to the landlord service

Staffing levels meet requirements (as far as possible)

Staff skills keep pace with changing needs (e.g. digital and technical property disciplines)

Landlord services have access to required technical skills and facilities, at the point when they are required

Risks are well controlled, minimising incidences of harm, non-compliance, and unnecessary expenditure

Modern practices in asset management deliver high levels of property safety and value for money investment in property

Services delivered under contract meet needs and expectations

3.3 Local knowledge is valued and widespread

Resident and contractor feedback on local issues is recorded and shared with front-line teams

There is a culture of respect and partnership between staff (and contractors) and residents

Strategies and policies are developed through co-production; with account taken of the diversity of residents' views and experiences

Value for money in remedial works, and smaller problems are addressed before they escalate

Estate management decisions are informed by local knowledge

Residents feel a sense of ownership of directions taken and see their priorities reflected in actions or understand why their views have not been incorporated into policy/service delivery approaches

The sense of ownership and recognition of priorities is felt equally by residents from diverse demographics and geographies

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## **PRACTICE EXAMPLES**

The following examples illustrate how local authorities are addressing some of the principles, actions and practices that form the management foundation.

### **3.1 Kingston & Sutton – Shared service/staffing on highways**

Kingston and Sutton councils worked together to improve their capacity to recruit and retain skilled and committed staff in their highways functions. By operating a shared service, the two councils were able to create roles with sufficient scale to merit employment of full time staff, and with sufficient breadth and challenge to attract a strong pool of potential applicants and reduce turnover of staff.

### **3.2 Greenwich – Building fire safety and compliance skills in house**

Faced with difficulty recruiting people with the necessary technical skills and aptitude to meet its requirements on property compliance, Greenwich Council has initiated a programme to grow its own staff team. By focusing apprenticeship training on this important area, the council is seeking to build a sustainable team that meets its specific requirements within an efficient cost base.

### **3.3 Hammersmith & Fulham - Disabled People's Housing Strategy**

Hammersmith & Fulham worked with disabled residents to co-produce a housing strategy, which sets out how the council will work to ensure the best housing outcomes for disabled residents in the borough. By working closely with residents on the strategy and its delivery, the Council was able to ensure that its housing and related services matched what disabled residents need and want.

### **3.4 Hillingdon – Driving staff connection with new technology**

Over a 12 week intensive programme, Hillingdon introduced the 'Perform Plus' platform in order to focus on 'what matters' and improve outcomes and performance across key landlord services. Through this programme, staff at all levels have received coaching on understanding the relationship between behaviours, performance and skills in order to inform decision making and define interventions needed. Staff facing barriers and problems are empowered to troubleshoot together, sharing and comparing ideas and resolutions with other teams, especially where interfaces are critical. Real time performance and data updates are available from the platform which is readily accessible with user specific dashboards.

## PERFORMANCE & COMPLIANCE

Regular and accurate reporting of performance and compliance with statutory/regulatory requirements enables local authorities to get and share a timely view on progress towards delivery of their own objectives as well as how far they are meeting expectations set by others. With such information to hand, appropriate targets can be set and action can be taken in good time to keep progress

towards achievement of shorter term aims and the longer-term vision on track.

The constitution of each local authority will set out how decisions are made (including detail of delegations) and how the council is accountable for these decisions. Where councils fulfil statutory or regulated functions it is particularly important that the location of decision making powers and accountabilities are clear.

### Principle

### Detail (actions and practices)

### Expected outcome

4.1 Performance reporting is comprehensive, covers all services that make up the landlord function, and includes multiple sources of information

There is a codified framework for performance reporting, that articulates the nature and purpose of reporting to members, senior officers, local managers, residents etc

Review of performance is efficient, with attention to detail at the right levels and duplication of activity minimised

Different sources of management information are combined to cross-check the position reported

Performance reports reflect the experience of services felt in homes and communities

4.2 The landlord service is accountable to residents

Performance information is publicly reported in a clear and timely manner

Residents feel informed and are confident in their landlords' delivery

Benchmarking information is available alongside performance reporting

Members, staff and residents have a clear picture of their comparative performance and adopt realistic targets

4.3 Records are accurately kept and used in service planning, delivery and accountability

IT capability supports robust data management and service administration

Rates of compliance are high

Investment in property represents good value for money

Services are delivered right first time, and resident satisfaction reflects this

There is a strong performance reporting culture, with proactive reference to trends, targets and triggers

Difficulties are anticipated, escalated in a timely manner, and promptly responded to

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Performance information is reported in a format that can be easily understood by people who do not have technical expertise

Members, residents, and landlord service staff have a clear understanding of performance

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4.4 The landlord service has access to specialist and technical skills when required

Procurement facilitates prompt access to specialist services when an unanticipated need arises

Property is compliant and service standards are maintained over the longer term

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4.5 Service delivery and performance action plans are actively used

Action plans are appropriately resourced and monitored

The aims of action plans and performance improvement programmes are met

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There is a culture of learning from mistakes and service failures experienced by the service and by other providers

Approaches are regularly refined, strengthened and improved





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## **PRACTICE EXAMPLES**

The following examples illustrate how local authorities are addressing some of the principles, actions and practices that form the performance & compliance foundation.

### **4.2 Wandsworth – Annual report to residents**

The landlord service publishes an annual report to residents which includes a summary of the previous year's activity and performance information based on regulatory (Consumer) and internal service standards. The service areas included in this report are subject to an annual review by a resident focus group. The report is published in the September issue of Homelife – the council's quarterly housing newsletter.

### **4.4 Islington - Homes and Safety Board**

Islington's Homes and Estates Safety Group is part of the oversight of the landlord service. It meets quarterly to look at all aspects of landlord compliance, and also has regular liaison with the fire brigade. Using a model common in safeguarding boards, it is chaired by a housing professional who is independent of the council, and other board members include the portfolio holder, the corporate director responsible for housing, and the housing director. Structuring the board in this way gives the council access to high-level health and safety skills relevant to the landlord service, and robust oversight of compliance that includes an independent mindset.

### **4.5 Hammersmith & Fulham - Action Plan on damp and mould**

Hammersmith & Fulham council developed a damp and mould action plan when weak performance on preventing and remedying damp and mould was identified and then highlighted in reports by ITV News and the Housing Ombudsman. Informed by lessons learned by the council and others on effective ways to address such issues, the plan includes a capital works programme to address the causes of damp and mould; actions to maintain up-to-date knowledge of its properties; and creation of a dedicated team to manage damp and mould issues. Resources are aligned to deliver these actions, and progress against the plan is regularly report to senior officers and elected members.

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## ASSURANCE

Delivery of multimillion-pound services, to thousands of households, within a regulated environment with statutory, moral and fiscal obligations is a complex operation. Elected members, senior leaders and operational staff all need comfort that various systems are working as they should, and that objectives and targets will be achieved. Assurance to the local authority provides evidence on the robustness of processes, conduct of activities, and credibility of information. As such it goes beyond reliance on the confidence placed in others and the provision of reassurance.

Where authorities have good assurance on these matters, they will know that residents can trust information and opinion on current and future service quality and plans covered in annual reports, scrutiny groups etc. In future, when the Regulator of Social Housing begins to proactively regulate its Consumer Standards, local authorities with robust accountability, risk and assurance frameworks will be well placed to approach regulatory scrutiny with confidence.

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### Principle

5.1 There is clarity on the shape of accountability structures and the frameworks that sit under these

### Detail (actions and practices)

People involved in oversight of the landlord service have, or have access to, sufficient experience to understand relevant matters

Elected members and senior officers are clear about who/which body is accountable for different aspects operational delivery, including statutory and regulatory requirements.

### Expected outcome

Councils have clear and accurate insight into their landlord operations

Work programmes and performance improvement plans include adoption of good and emerging practice

Areas of difficulty or underperformance are identified promptly and planned interventions support quick resolution

All key issues receive attention by the right people in good time, so that the local authority is sure that policy and regulatory requirements are met

Interventions are promptly initiated to maintain compliance and support performance improvement

Information on scrutiny and assurance is shared with the right individuals and groups so that oversight is comprehensive and joined up

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Where line management responsibility for landlord services is divided, there is a single senior officer with cross-cutting accountability for the council landlord

Functions comprising the landlord service can be viewed as a whole, with queries and problems addressed promptly and comprehensively

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It is possible for the accountable person or committee to get a holistic overview of the landlord service's finance, performance, objectives and obligations

The local authority has a clear view on its progress towards achieving strategic objectives, and policy and regulatory requirements are met

Oversight of the landlord service is comprehensive and joined up

Realistic service planning delivers performance improvement

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5.2 A risk-based assurance framework is in place, documented, and widely understood

Risks associated with landlord services are identified and recorded at service and corporate level in line with responsibility/delegation

Appropriate controls and mitigations are in place for the risks faced

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Risks and controls are regularly reviewed, discussed and revised

Controls and mitigations are effective at protecting the local authority and residents from negative operational, financial, reputational and other impacts

Controls and mitigations are adapted as context/needs change

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Risk registers are used to inform agendas for senior officer, committee and lead member/cabinet meetings

Officer and member time is appropriately focused on the priority issues and challenges facing the landlord service, enabling their management and resolution

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Assurance activities are appropriately scoped in advance, take residents' service priorities and concerns into account, and are delivered by people with the requisite skills, knowledge and experience

Attention is focused on all key issues, with effective controls in place and competence to manage key risks

5.3 There are learning and development programmes in place for staff, elected members and active tenants	Personal development opportunities around scrutiny skills, effective assurance, external policy agendas, statutory requirements, and professional practice are routinely available	Members and residents involved with oversight and scrutiny are able to interpret and probe information sufficiently to get to the heart of key issues
	Knowledge and skills are kept up to date	Members and residents involved with oversight and scrutiny are supported to give informed consideration to matters on the horizon and the changing operating environment
	Independent input and expertise is available to members and residents	Members and residents are not solely reliant on officers to tell them what they need and how to approach particular tasks
5.4 Assurance and accountability frameworks are known to be effective	There is periodic independent review of accountability structures, delegations, controls framework etc	The type and depth of assurance is appropriate for the landlord service, the risks faced, and its changing needs/activities/context  Assurance addresses concerns flagged formally or informally by residents
	Decisions taken and the reasons for them are recorded, tracked and communicated	Focus on progress towards longer term objectives is sustained

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## **PRACTICE EXAMPLES**

The following examples illustrate how local authorities are addressing some of the principles, actions and practices that form the assurance foundation.

### **5.2 Greenwich - Housing Assurance Framework**

Greenwich Council has documented its Housing Assurance Framework, which shows how assurance will be sought and cross-referenced for all aspects of the landlord service. This makes it easier to check that there is a thread running through assurance activities and that no gaps are evident. It also bolsters understanding of where accountability sits.

### **5.3 Waltham Forest – Cabinet Commissioner for Shaping Places**

Several elected members in Waltham Forest hold the post of Cabinet Commissioner. They are not members of the Cabinet and do not have voting rights, but they report directly into the Leader to ensure links are made between different portfolios. The Commissioner for Shaping Places has defined responsibilities for improving housing estates. As well as benefitting from the links made by these members, the council sees the knowledge, skills and expertise of its elected members growing in thematic areas which in turn is good training for effective future portfolio holders. This is similar to the appointment of junior cabinet members used in some other local authorities, with a view to building capacity in priority areas and supporting succession planning.

# Conclusion and next steps for London boroughs

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The five foundations have been co-produced in collaboration with those with a strong interest in the effective delivery of local authority landlord services in London. They reflect the experiences and opinions of officers, residents and elected members.

Expectations on all social landlords are changing, with a sharp focus on property condition, resident experience and accountability coming from residents, members, the media, the Housing Ombudsman and (soon) the Regulator of Social Housing. In that context, local authority landlords face a dual challenge of ensuring they get the basics right whilst aiming to make the greatest possible contribution to the wellbeing of their residents and communities.

The elected status of local authority members and the governance models in operation do have a bearing on the approach to, and skills available for, decision making and oversight in landlord services. Similarly, the political

model has a bearing on the priorities adopted for housing and the policies that individual authorities are permitted to adopt. These are all fixed features of the democratic system, and account must be taken of them in the methods adopted to ensure decision making and accountability relating to the landlord service are robust.

The foundations provide a framework for establishing and checking the presence of solid foundations for the effective delivery of local authority landlord services. They also allow space for aspiration by councils, and they will be most effective if approached with an intention to challenge and grow.

There is a strong appetite for sharing ideas and peer support between London local authorities, and the opportunity exists to build on this as boroughs begin to work with the framework to ensure the foundations for delivery of effective landlord services are in place and ready to face the future.





# About the London Housing Directors' Group

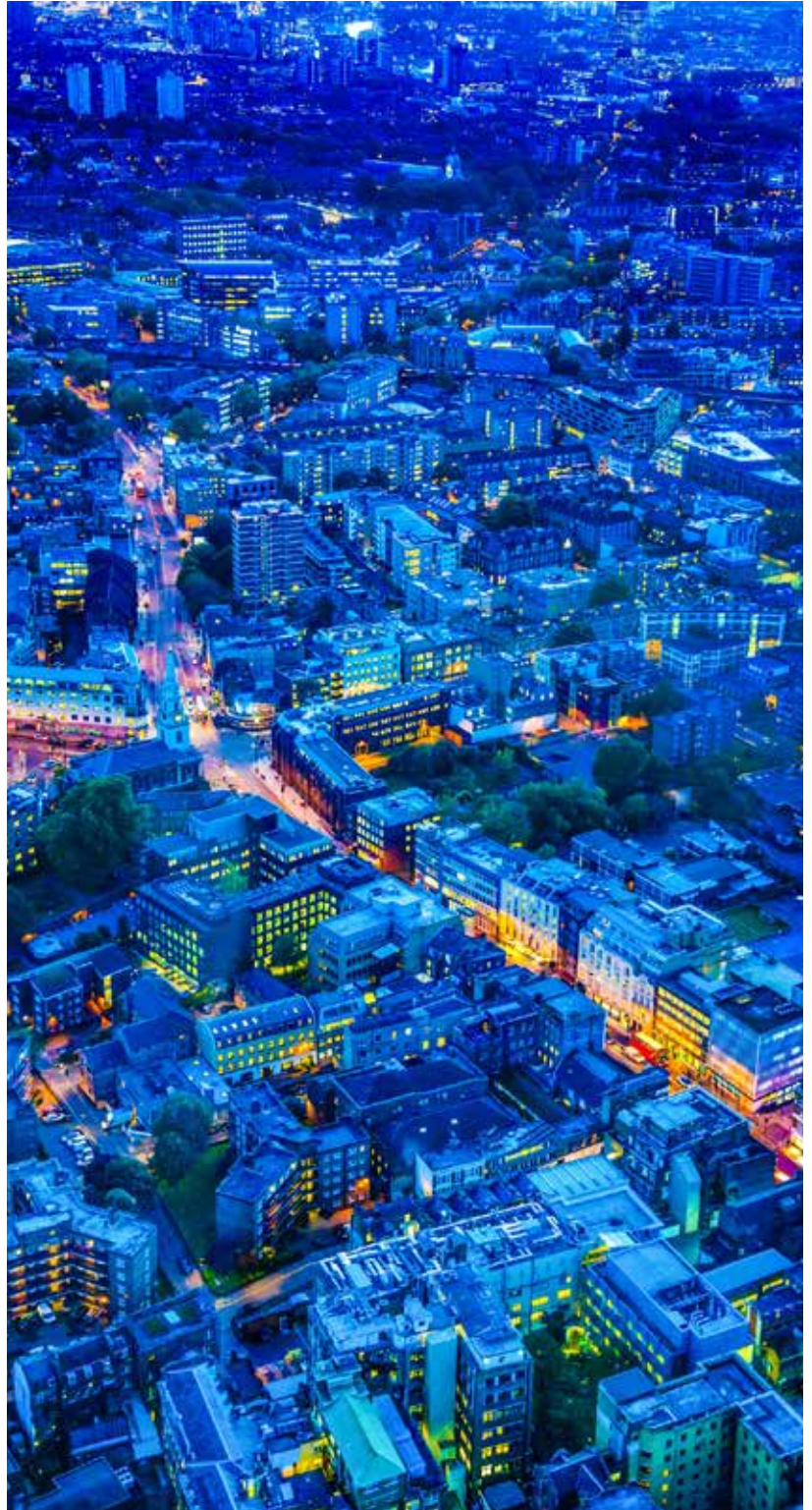
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The London Housing Directors' Group is the professional network of senior housing officers from across London's 33 local authorities.

Collectively, the group's members are responsible for managing more than 390,000 social rented homes and providing services to 410,000 leaseholders, as well as delivering London's wider strategic and operational housing objectives.

It provides a convening and research role for Directors, as well as supporting engagement with stakeholders and developing and overseeing shared services.

Its staff and budget are hosted by London Councils.





# Assurance Framework

The Foundations of an Effective Local Authority Landlord Service

## Introduction to the Foundations Framework

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The London Housing Directors' Group and London Councils have worked with local authority staff, councillors and residents to illustrate the principles, actions and practices that should give strength to the foundations that support effective delivery of local authority landlord services.

The foundations are set out in the accompanying report, *Delivering for tenants, The Foundations of An Effective Local Authority Landlord Service*.

We have developed this assurance framework to assist local authorities in undertaking an open, evidence-based assessment of the strength of each of the foundations within their own area.

The foundations, and this framework, have been voluntarily adopted by local authorities to support continuous improvements in the light of changes in the regulatory framework for social housing, updated health and safety expectations, and their own ongoing commitment to providing good services to their residents.

For each of the foundations, the principles and expected outcomes detailed in the report are listed, alongside space for local authorities to input:

- Their own sources of assurance that they are undertaking the suggested actions and practices, and achieving the expected outcomes
- Evidence of adherence
- Areas identified for improvement.

The appendix includes some examples to show how a self-assessment might be completed. In particular it illustrates possible ways an authority might get confidence that components of each of the foundations are in place and working well, and sources of evidence that could confirm components of the foundations are in place. These examples are included only to guide local authorities as they adopt this new framework – the foundations do not set any requirements to have particular documents or processes in place.

When thinking about the evidence and level/types of checks (assurance) they could use to show that the foundations are in place, individual local authorities should think about the consequences if they do not deliver the principles and stated outcomes. Once they understand the amount and impact of risk faced by the council and its residents, they can then decide on the amount of checks and intervention required to minimise the chance that these consequences will occur.

Our intention is that the principles are forward looking and stretching, and that local authorities will work towards full adherence over time. We suggest that local authorities will find it helpful to develop an action plan following assessment against the assurance framework, to support continuous improvement. Involvement of residents will be a valuable part of self-assessment (e.g. through resident scrutiny groups or less formal interactions), as will external review (through peer challenge and/or professional advisors), to bring fresh perspectives and insight, and therefore to test the strength and transparency of assessment undertaken and conclusions reached.

## Self-assessment against The Foundations of an Effective Landlord Service

Date of assessment \_\_\_\_\_

## Vision and strategy

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
1.1	The local authority sets a clear and realistic vision for its landlord service	The vision is publicly available and regularly refreshed	Members, staff and residents understand the vision for the service; and progress towards its achievement can be demonstrated			
1.2	The needs and aspirations of diverse groups of residents are clearly seen to inform landlord service priorities	Formal and informal feedback from residents (such as complaints and comments raised on estate/ward walks) is recorded, responded to, shared, and used to shape service priorities	Officers and accountable people are aware of feedback received and engage positively with residents around this  Residents from diverse demographics and geographies can see their needs and opinions reflected in decisions and priorities			
		Where the needs and aspirations of different groups are in tension, there is clarity over how opinions are mediated, and decisions reached	Residents express satisfaction with decision making processes			
1.3	The landlord service strategy and priorities are appropriately resourced	Financial plans are aligned with strategy, service needs are prioritised with account taken of capacity, and constraints/opportunities are transparently presented	Service quality is aligned to make best use of capacity			

## Leadership

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
2.1	Corporate culture is proactively managed to include openness and honesty and problem solving	Officers and elected members create and sustain a safe environment in which concerns can be raised and there is accountability for responses	Concerns and problems are raised early on			
		Difficulties in service delivery and operational management are routinely reported and recorded	Concerns and problems are tackled early on			
		Problems are identified proactively rather than reactively, with preventative measures put in place in advance of issues being identified.	Concerns and problems are tackled in a strategic and proactive way			
2.2	The landlord service has a strong voice across the wider council	Officers in the corporate leadership team and elected members are familiar with the activities, responsibilities/duties and contributions of the landlord service and the regulatory requirements on it	Corporate services align with the needs of the landlord service			
		Housing's contribution to local priorities and outcomes is reflected in wider corporate strategies	The impact of landlord services is maximised and understood			
		Members and senior staff participate in horizon scanning	Landlord services are forward-looking; and understanding of the changing context is brought to bear on resourcing, decision making and communications with staff			
2.3	Corporate culture is proactively managed to include partnership working, inclusivity and task ownership	Officers are empowered to resolve problems reported to them, including through coordinating activities outside of their own department	Residents' queries and problems are resolved promptly  Holistic improvements in quality of life			
		Liaison between inter-related services is routine and there is clarity on relevant service standards and expectations	Local authority services within and outside of the housing department are responsive to the needs of landlord functions that use and rely on their activities			

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
			Residents see and experience a seamless landlord service			
		Officers, members and active tenants share knowledge and collaborate with people involved with social housing outside of the local authority	Service changes are implemented to drive performance improvement, and are informed by good and emerging practice from elsewhere			
2.4	Leadership and professionalism are highly regarded and are practiced at all levels	Good practice in leadership is nurtured and demonstrated	The values of the council and landlord service are understood and adhered to			
		Members and officers demonstrate core leadership values				
		Attainment of professional qualifications and membership of professional bodies is supported	Officers feel confident, included and inspired, and demonstrate professionalism			

## Management

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
3.1	Corporate services have sufficient flexibility to align with the needs of the landlord service	Procurement functions and policies facilitate access to technical skills and enable prompt access to services when required	Landlord services have access to required technical skills and facilities, at the point when they are required  Officers and members feel confident in the skills and services procured			
		There is proactive liaison with, and monitoring of, service delivery between the landlord service and other customer-facing services	Services address customer needs			
		Human Resources, legal and finance functions report and operate in a manner that provides the personnel, reporting and advice required by the landlord service	Landlord services have access to staff with the required skills and aptitudes  Business planning includes opportunities for a range of officers, members and residents to contribute. Refinements to the draft plan are made over time informed by their contributions, and in the approved plan resources are clearly and closely linked with delivery of strategic aims and statutory requirements  Financial reporting gives meaningful insight into the current and projected financial positions, and the depth of awareness is reflected in management decisions and scrutiny			
		Modern IT services are available, that meet requirements for functionality, data management and user support	Data is accurately maintained, reported and deployed; delivering high levels of compliance and value for money investment in properties  Records of interactions with tenants are accurate and inform the actions of			



#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
			staff/contractors, as well as providing insights that improve service performance (e.g. by harnessing repairs reporting to identify wider defects within a block)			
3.2	The service is able to recruit and retain the skills and aptitudes required to operate a modern, compliant housing function	The landlord service is sighted on its staffing needs and is able to articulate and monitor the impact of different methods for meeting these requirements	Staffing levels meet requirements (as far as possible)  Staff skills keep pace with changing needs e.g. (digital and technical property disciplines)			
		There is sufficient flexibility in recruitment policies that the landlord service can engage with all required sections of the labour market	Landlord services have access to required technical skills and facilities, at the point when they are required			
		Staff with up-to-date professional skills in risk, data management, contract management and asset management are available to the landlord service	Risks are well controlled, minimising incidences of harm, non-compliance, and unnecessary expenditure  Modern practices in asset management deliver high levels of property safety and value for money investment in property  Services delivered under contract meet needs and expectations			
3.3	Local knowledge is valued and widespread	Resident and contractor feedback on local issues is recorded and shared with front-line teams	Value for money in remedial works, and smaller problems are addressed before they escalate			
		There is a culture of respect and partnership between staff (and contractors) and residents	Estate management decisions are informed by local knowledge			
		Strategies and policies are developed through co-production; with account taken of the diversity of residents' views and experiences	Residents feel a sense of ownership of directions taken and see their priorities reflected in actions or understand why their views have not been incorporated into policy/service delivery approaches			

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
			The sense of ownership and recognition of priorities is felt equally by residents from diverse demographics and geographies			

## Performance and compliance

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
4.1	Performance reporting is comprehensive, covers all services that make up the landlord function, and includes multiple sources of information	There is a codified framework for performance reporting, that articulates the nature and purpose of reporting to members, senior officers, local managers, residents etc	Review of performance is efficient, with attention to detail at the right levels and duplication of activity minimised			
		Different sources of management information are combined to cross-check the position reported	Performance reports reflect the experience of services felt in homes and communities			
4.2	The landlord service is accountable to residents	Performance information is publicly reported in a clear and timely manner	Residents feel informed and are confident in their landlords' delivery			
		Benchmarking information is available alongside performance reporting	Members, staff and residents have a clear picture of their comparative performance and adopt realistic targets			
4.3	Records are accurately kept and used in service planning, delivery and accountability	IT capability supports robust data management and service administration	Rates of compliance are high  Investment in property represents good value for money  Services are delivered right first time, and resident satisfaction reflects this			
		There is a strong performance reporting culture, with proactive reference to trends, targets and triggers	Difficulties are anticipated, escalated in a timely manner, and promptly responded to			
		Performance information is reported in a format that can be easily understood by people who do not have technical expertise	Members, residents, and landlord service staff have a clear understanding of performance			
4.4	The landlord service has access to specialist and technical skills when required	Procurement facilitates prompt access to specialist services when an un-anticipated need arises	Property is compliant and service standards are maintained over the longer term			
4.5	Service delivery and performance action plans are actively used	Action plans are appropriately resourced and monitored	The aims of action plans and performance improvement programmes are met			

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
		There is a culture of learning from mistakes and service failures experienced by the service and by other providers	Approaches are regularly refined, strengthened and improved			

## Assurance

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
5.1	There is clarity on the shape of accountability structures and the frameworks that sit under these	People involved in oversight of the landlord service have, or have access to, sufficient experience to understand relevant matters	Councils have clear and accurate insight into their landlord operations  Informed, proactive challenge drives performance improvement			
		Elected members and senior officers are clear about who/which body is accountable for different aspects operational delivery, including statutory and regulatory requirements.	Attention and appropriate intervention is focused on all key issues, with flows of information operating effectively			
		Where line management responsibility for landlord services is divided, there is a single senior officer with cross-cutting accountability for the council landlord	Functions comprising the landlord service can be viewed as a whole, with queries and problems addressed promptly and comprehensively			
		It is possible for the accountable person or committee to get a holistic overview of the landlord service's finance, performance, objectives and obligations	Attention is focused on all key issues, with flows of information operating effectively  Realistic service planning delivers performance improvement			
5.2	A risk-based assurance framework is in place, documented, and widely understood	Risks associated with landlord services are identified and recorded at service and corporate level in line with responsibility/delegation	Appropriate controls and mitigations are in place for the risks faced			
		Risks and controls are regularly reviewed, discussed and revised	Controls and mitigations are effective at protecting the local authority and residents from negative operational, financial and other impacts  Controls and mitigations are adapted as context/needs change			
		Risk registers are used to inform agendas for senior officer, committee and lead member/cabinet meetings	Officer and member time is appropriately focused on the priority issues and challenges facing the landlord service,			

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
			enabling their management and resolution			
		Assurance activities are appropriately scoped in advance, take residents' service priorities and concerns into account, and are delivered by people with the requisite skills, knowledge and experience	Attention is focused on all key issues, with effective controls in place and competence to manage key risks			
5.3	There are learning and development programmes in place for staff, elected members and active tenants	Personal development opportunities around scrutiny skills, effective assurance, external policy agendas, statutory requirements, and professional practice are routinely available	Members and residents involved with oversight and scrutiny are able to interpret and probe information sufficiently to get to the heart of key issues			
		Knowledge and skills are kept up to date	Members and residents involved with oversight and scrutiny are supported to give informed consideration to matters on the horizon and the changing operating environment			
		Independent input and expertise is available to members and residents	Members and residents are not solely reliant on officers to tell them what they need and how to approach particular tasks			
5.4	Assurance and accountability frameworks are known to be effective	There is periodic independent review of accountability structures, delegations, controls framework etc	The type and depth of assurance is appropriate for the landlord service, the risks faced, and its changing needs/activities/context  Assurance addresses concerns flagged formally or informally by residents			
		Decisions taken and the reasons for them are recorded, tracked and communicated	Focus on progress towards longer term objectives is sustained			

## **Appendix**

### **Examples of sources of assurance and evidence of adherence**

## Vision and strategy

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
1.1	The local authority sets a clear and realistic vision for its landlord service	The vision is publicly available and regularly refreshed	Members, staff and residents understand the vision for the service; and progress towards its achievement can be demonstrated	<p>Vision set out clearly in periodically refreshed</p> <p>Landlord Service Strategy and published on website</p> <p>Inclusion of vision statement on annual residents' survey and newsletter</p> <p>HRA business plan shows how vision is to be achieved</p>	<p>The document "Our vision for landlord services" can be found in PDF format on the <a href="http://thiscouncil.gov.uk">thiscouncil.gov.uk</a> website</p> <p>2022-23 annual residents survey found 87% of residents recognised the key priorities in the vision document</p> <p>HRA business plan 2022-25 narrative, pp6-8, reported to Cabinet on 24 April 2022</p>	<p>Cabinet approval to be included on forward agenda planner</p> <p>Publication of a summary document could make the vision more easily accessible to a wider range of tenants</p>

## Leadership

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
2.1	Corporate culture is proactively managed to include openness and honesty and problem solving	Officers and elected members create and sustain a safe environment in which concerns can be raised and there is accountability for responses	Concerns and problems are raised early on	<p>Employee surveys include questions relating to confidence in raising concerns and the extent to which senior leadership listen to their views</p> <p>Where possible, examples of issues raised are fed back through 'you said, we did' briefings</p> <p>Whistleblowing policy is in place and annually reviewed</p>	<p>2021-22 staff survey shows 85% of staff describe themselves as confident to raise concerns. This is up from 75% in 2020-21</p> <p>55% of staff said that senior leadership always listen to their views. This is down from 75% in 2020-21</p> <p>Bi-monthly You Said We Did updates can be found on the culture pages of the intranet at <a href="http://intranet.council.gov.uk/culture">intranet.council.gov.uk/culture</a>. 5 examples have been included in 2021-22</p> <p>Whistleblowing report and policy review presented to Cabinet on 19 Jun 2022</p>	<p>2022-23 listening performance to be minimum 65%. Director of People to review the drop in performance and report an action plan to the Senior Leadership Team by September 2022</p>



## Management

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
3.1	Corporate services have sufficient flexibility to align with the needs of the landlord service	Modern IT services are available, that meet requirements for functionality, data management and user support	<p>Data is accurately maintained, reported and deployed; delivering high levels of compliance and value for money investment in properties</p> <p>Records of interactions with tenants are accurate and inform the actions of staff/contractors</p>	<p>Specialist and independent reviews are undertaken to provide assurance on data governance in areas such as landlord health and safety compliance, stock condition, rents and tenant data</p> <p>IT Strategy in place which describes hardware, software and human resourcing requirements</p> <p>Compliance with IT Strategy</p>	<p>Data governance review on Health &amp; Safety completed by ABC Consultants in January 2022 and reported to SLT on 15 February 2022</p> <p>Resourcing requirements are on p7 of the IT Strategy 2021-25 which can be found at <a href="http://intranet.council.gov.uk/IT">intranet.council.gov.uk/IT</a></p> <p>Internal audit report on IT Strategy presented to Scrutiny Committee on 15 March 2022, with substantial assurance on all areas</p>	Instruct external review of rents and GDPR compliance for tenant data

## Performance and compliance

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
4.2	The landlord service is accountable to residents	Benchmarking information is available alongside performance reporting	Members, staff and residents have a clear picture of their comparative performance and adopt realistic targets	<p>Local and national benchmarking against Tenant Satisfaction Measures or similar is reported annually</p> <p>Explanations are provided where there is a significant difference between council performance and comparator organisations</p>	<p>Shadow TSM report presented to Housing Scrutiny Committee 15 July 2022, alongside comparative figures from LB X and LB Y</p> <p>Summary report shared with staff in e-bulletin 18 July 2022</p>	<p>Identify an appropriate peer group e.g. other West London boroughs; boroughs with a similar size stock holding for presentation to Scrutiny by the end of 2022, before 2023 targets are set by Heads of Service</p> <p>Include TSM reporting in Annual Report to Residents 2022-23</p>

## Assurance

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
5.1	There is clarity on the shape of accountability structures and the frameworks that sit under these	Elected members and senior officers are clear about who/which body is accountable for different aspects operational delivery, including	Attention and appropriate intervention is focused on all key issues, with flows of information operating effectively	There is a published statement which explains how accountability and scrutiny in respect of landlord services is	n/a	Draft and publish a landlord accountability and scrutiny statement by December 2022

#	Principle	Detail (actions & practices)	Expected outcomes	Sources of assurance	Evidence of adherence	Improvement required
		statutory and regulatory requirements		<p>undertaken, explaining the role of councillors, officers and residents</p> <p>Where management is outsourced (for example to an ALMO), contractual or service agreements confirm that the council remains accountable for the landlord service and this is reflected in reporting arrangements</p>	<p>SLA with our ALMO – statement on landlord accountability at p30</p> <p>Review of ALMO performance reporting, provided by XYZ Consulting to Housing Scrutiny 27 April 2022</p>	<p>Amend Housing Scrutiny Terms of Reference in line with XYZ Consulting recommendations, by December 2022</p>

Funded by: UK Government  
Funded by: Local Government Association  
Supported by: London Councils  
Developed by: Savills

images: iStock  
published: April 2023



Funded by  
UK Government

