

TENANT TALKS

FEEDBACK 2023



[info/50008/tenant_engagement/2821/city_housing_tenant_talks_workshops](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50008/tenant_engagement/2821/city_housing_tenant_talks_workshops)



6 TENANT TALKS

Thank you for attending the Tenant Talks sessions in 2023. Your views and feedback are essential in assisting us to improve our service. We have gathered feedback from the sessions so that we can respond to issues and concerns that are important to you.

The Tenant Talks sessions were attended by over 30 tenants from across the city and were joined by leaders and officers from across the City Housing team, including: Repairs, Tenancy Sustainment, Housing Management and Tenancy Engagement.

It was clear from Tenant Talks how important it is for you to be able to participate in face-to-face tenancy engagement. We are aware that after the lockdowns over the past few years this was your first opportunity to meet the City Housing team. We would like to assure tenants of our determination to enhance our engagement offer and continue to make a positive difference to citizens' lives.





ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

A substantial portion of tenants advised they have experienced extensive Anti-Social Behaviour in their properties that had not been resolved by our officers. Some feel that this is due to poor communication and contact, not providing appropriate resources for the local teams, and lack of partnership working with West Midlands Police. It was distressing to learn of the detrimental health effects that these cases are having on tenants, and we are determined to improve the customer journey and resolutions offered in complaints whilst maintaining realistic directions. Any tenants that disclosed ongoing ASB (antisocial behaviour) issues in the session were invited to inform the local team with the assurance of an investigation and follow up contact.

YOU SAID	WE DID
<p>Poor communication and accountability with the Anti-Social Behaviour Team Tenants felt they were getting no response after reporting anti-social behaviour or having to chase their ASB officers for updates, causing further disruption to their lives.</p>	<p>Regular monitoring of Anti-Social Behaviour calls and cases are reviewed by the service and the management team, with repeated cases regularly reviewed. Anti-Social Behaviour Officers now have oversight of these issues.</p>
<p>Lack of action against Anti-Social Behaviour Numerous comments were made about the perceived inaction or failure of ASB officers to put a stop to the ASB. Tenants had gathered extensive evidence and were still experiencing the same or if not worse levels of ASB, which had left them feeling distressed and at risk of further anti-social behaviour and abuse from neighbours.</p>	<p>We are currently revising our Anti-Social Behaviour policy, procedure, and service standards to include a comprehensive set of actions to tackle anti-social behaviour, with tenant and staff consultation taking place to maximise full transparency and opportunities for improvement. Tenants are currently provided with ASB surveys at the end of the process to enhance our knowledge</p>
<p>Lack of joined up working between the Police and ASB It was raised that some tenants felt that they were being passed between the ASB team and police with no clear ownership of cases. The lack of joined working means a tenant is getting lost, whilst services have unclear boundaries.</p>	<p>Anti-Social Behaviour officers work extensively with West Midlands Police and will continue to do so to ensure a joined-up approach is taken. The development of the ASB policy will focus firmly on the external Community Safety Partnership Team to ensure agencies are working in partnership effectively to combine strengths and resources.</p>
<p>Lack of security & safety Tenants advised that they feel unsafe in their homes and community due to anti-social behaviour.</p>	<p>We are reviewing our toolkit to support tenants and tackle anti-social behaviour. This review uses our data and feedback from tenants to test new security measures and strategies to tackle ASB hotspots and enhance our approach to these reports.</p>





REPAIRS

A key theme throughout our sessions was the high level of dissatisfaction surrounding the repairs service. Tenants advised of their frustrations around scheduling/missed appointments, poor communication, repeated visits, and unacceptable waits for repair completions in their properties. We have heard your concerns and understand that the repairs service is becoming disruptive and detrimental to tenants' lives when it does not operate effectively. Any specific repairs issues discussed with us at the sessions have been logged, will be actioned, and monitored appropriately.



YOU SAID	WE DID
<p>Damp and mould treatment having limited impact A wide range of tenants had experiences of damp and mould within their properties, which had been reported to the Repairs team. However, as a response to these reports, the most common solution was to paint over the damp. This then returned during winter months, which resulted in further reports to the Repairs team.</p>	<p>We are currently working to develop our initial Damp and Mould Policy which will identify appropriate response times dependant on the risk factor, in line with updated Government Legislation. We are ensuring that this Policy follows a proactive approach, and prioritising damp and mould as a critical issue within our housing stock.</p>
<p>Repeated repair reports We were advised of several accounts where jobs are not resolved during the initial visit.</p>	<p>We are developing a mechanism that will allow the Repairs team and contractors to identify repeated work call outs and target for escalation, to ensure effective oversight of the issue is in place.</p>
<p>Contractors and internal team not communicating effectively When tenants are communicating important information regarding the repair visit, such as required appointment times, this information is not being corresponded correctly, resulting in missed appointments, jobs needing to be rebooked and disruption to tenants' lives</p>	<p>We have developed a quality assurance framework to monitor records and actions being raised. We will escalate issues to managers and contractors, to make certain that we are meeting our landlord obligations and challenge on behalf of our tenants where appropriate to do so. We will make sure that all outcomes are communicated and if we are not able to do something we will be transparent about the reasons.</p>



YOU SAID	WE DID
<p>Stock condition Tenants advised that their repairs issues cannot be resolved by contractors and a broader inspection of the building fabric is required to identify root causes to repairs and damage.</p>	<p>Our contractors are currently attending properties to complete Decent Homes surveys. Once this is finalised, we will have accurate data of our stock and can begin to identify the number of neglected properties required for restoration.</p>
<p>Modernisation Tenants discussed their continuing requests for modernisation and upgrades in the property, such as new bathrooms and kitchens. They do not feel BCC (Birmingham City Council) have acknowledged these requests historically.</p>	<p>Whilst advising of our current surveys as above, representatives from Asset Management informed our tenants that our financial priorities have previously been allocated to Health & Safety following the Grenfell tragedy. We recognise the importance of informing tenants and providing transparency surrounding funds and where they are being spent.</p>





ALLOCATIONS

Several tenants commented that they were seeking to move to alternative accommodation via Birmingham Choice, as their current property is unsuitable for them. Some tenants had been successful in obtaining a suitable property; however, they found this process challenging and have had to seek supported documents to progress their application.



YOU SAID

Supporting information is not being considered by the Allocations team

Participants listed on the Housing Register had information related to their medical issues readily available that was not being considered. However, they were unsure where evidence should be sent, or how to progress their application.

Mutual Exchanges (MX)

Customers were not aware of the mutual exchange process. Those that had experience or knowledge of the service believed they were not supported enough during the process.

Housing Register

Tenants advised of their current unsuitable accommodation and struggle in obtaining a large property.

WE DID

You can amend your housing register application via the www.BirminghamChoice.co.uk

We aim to review any changes or evidence submitted within 56 days and we will write to you with an outcome.

Our mutual exchange policy is currently being reviewed and will include our guarantee to assist tenants with the MX process. Mutual exchange information and other services in relation to our assistance towards alternative accommodation, such as wise move, will be updated and made more transparent on our website.

Whilst we sympathise with the difficulties our tenants face in obtaining suitable accommodation, we believe it is important to educate and inform our tenants about the current housing crisis. Representatives from our allocations team advised tenants of the Housing Register statistics with the aim of creating realistic perspectives and managing expectations in obtaining accommodation during the current climate.

FAQS – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I am experiencing Anti-Social Behaviour in my property; how can I report this?

You can report this via telephone call to our contact centre on **0121 303 1111**. Alternatively, you can report this via web form on your Brum account. If you require more information on Anti-Social behaviour, you can visit our website

What is antisocial behaviour? | Antisocial behaviour | Birmingham City Council

I need to report a repair in my property, how do I do this?

You can use the online link to our website to raise a repair in your property - **Book a repair | Repairs to council properties | Birmingham City Council**.

For alternative contact and emergency repairs, you can call our contact centre on **0121 216 3330**.

How do I find the latest information about the housing register?

You can access your housing register application, upload information, and access the latest waiting time information here: **<https://www.birminghamchoice.co.uk>**

When will the next Tenant Talks workshops be?

Following the positive interaction and feedback we received regarding the launch of 'Tenant Talks,' we are currently working to organise the next sessions and enhancing further engagement with our tenants. We can confirm these sessions will commence in March, June, and October 2024. Additional information will be added to our website once established.

City Housing Tenant Talks workshops | Birmingham City Council

Can I provide feedback on Birmingham City Council before the next Tenant Talks sessions commence?

Yes, you can. We always welcome and encourage tenants to provide feedback on the service they receive, to shape and improve our service. Please follow this link to our website to learn about 'Tenant Satisfaction Measures' and how to complete the survey on your Brum account. **What are tenant satisfaction measures? | Tenant satisfaction measures | Birmingham City Council**





How can I get more involved with tenancy participation activity or community support?

There are a range of opportunities available to contribute and shape how City Housing delivers the service. This can be from arranging litter picks, community events or sitting on City Housing Liaison Board. To sign up or get more information please visit our website - [Local housing involvement | Birmingham City Council](#)

How can I find information regarding Birmingham City Council's financial challenges?

We are updating our website regularly to keep citizens informed on the financial challenges. Please use the following link and associated pages to view information [Commissioners, intervention and improvement | Birmingham City Council | Tenant satisfaction measures | Birmingham City Council](#)

