



Scrutiny Panel Meeting Minutes



Date of Meeting	23 April 2026
Location	Bradbury Court, Papworth Everard
Present	Tenants: Linda Moss (chair), Alex Winters, Colin Hayward, Jenny Victor, Margaret Parker Staff: Tracey Croucher (minutes), Ian Cunningham, Damond Ferguson, Damian King, Sophie Hughes
Apologies	N/A

	Meeting Notes	Action	Deadline Date
1	Apologies & Welcome LM welcomed everyone to the meeting. As there were new members of the housing team attending LM asked for everyone to introduce themselves.		
2	Confidentiality of panel Panel members were reminded to maintain confidentiality of meeting discussions and circulated information. Policies and proposals must not be shared with tenants until finalised. LM asked members to dispose of papers securely, or they may provide them to TC for disposal.		
3	Actions from last meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Agenda item 5 – Agenda planning – panel met 26 January and have requested changes to Maintenance Report and KPI data for today's meetingb. Agenda item 7 – Anti-social behaviour policy – minor changes required at the last meeting, panel approved pending these changes		



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	<p>c. Agenda item 9 – KPI data – panel met 26 January, changes requested for today's meeting</p> <p>d. Agenda item 10 – Scrutiny review – panel met with DF/CB on 2 February – on agenda for discussion at today's meeting</p> <p>e. Agenda item 11 – AOB – damp and mold policy – noted by the panel that there is no damp and mold policy on the website – DF to update panel today</p> <p>f. Agenda item 11 - AOB – insurance information – panel have requested information be available to tenants when they are taking out home contents insurance – IC/DF to update panel today – welcome pack to include detailed housing info for home contents insurance - IC confirmed a review of the sign up process will take place this year and this information will be included as part of this.</p> <p>CH requested that it be recorded that both he and AW attended the Housing and Property Committee meeting on 28 January. While he found the session informative, CH confirmed that he does not intend to participate in future meetings.</p>		
4	<p>Maintenance Report</p> <p>Panel members were provided with a maintenance report from DF in their meeting papers. The panel had made recommendations for a number of changes to this report which have been actioned. DF stressed that for some of the areas where further information was requested that it is a starting point and this will develop with time.</p> <p>DF went through some areas of the report with the panel.</p>		



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Warm Homes

Work has been completed on 26 homes, with 7 remaining outstanding as detailed in the report. AW noted some communication challenges involving the contractor, Dodd Group, particularly in relation to the identified point of contact. DF advised that recent staff sickness had affected response times and communication with tenants. DF confirmed a meeting with EON in the second week of March, where these matters were discussed. EON has since confirmed that they have addressed the concerns with Dodd Group and expect communication to improve going forward.

For the 2026-27 financial year, 36 homes have been identified for works under the Warm Homes funding programme. With a full year available for delivery, it is anticipated that both the process and associated communications will be more streamlined.

LM noted that hoarding in some properties has contributed to delays and expressed surprise that this had not always been identified prior to works commencing. IC advised that the issue has predominantly related to items stored in loft spaces. Where identified in advance, support has been provided to tenants to assist with clearance and removal. It was agreed that processes will be reviewed to strengthen early identification, including clarifying guidance on appropriate use of storage areas, particularly loft spaces.

CH noted that rodent activity has resulted in some access issues and asked whether vulnerable tenants are being identified and supported where necessary. IC confirmed that this is the case.



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Capital work

DF informed the panel that at the time of writing the report some capital work had not been completed. He has requested that £280,000 of the budget is deferred to the financial year 2026-27.

AW commented that the patio replacement works at Southbrook Field appear to be behind schedule and highlighted some communication issues. AW emphasised the importance of improved tenant communication when decisions are made on safety grounds, noting that earlier engagement could have supported a more positive perception among tenants. DF acknowledged the points raised.

The panel had requested additional data relating to post-inspections of capital works. DF has provided initial information, which represents a starting point for further development. CH noted that the information provided was a positive initial step.

DF informed the panel that the 2026-27 capital programme budget is currently with the Board of Trustees for final approval. As a result, work on the programme cannot commence at present, and it is anticipated that delivery is unlikely to begin until July. DF also noted that there are ongoing budgetary challenges for the current financial year.

AW asked whether this would be communicated to tenants. DF confirmed that some tenants are already being contacted regarding potential delays or non-commencement of works. It was acknowledged that this may impact satisfaction levels and could lead to an increase in complaints. DF added that the 2026-27 budget is expected to be lower than the previous year, following significant investment in 2025-26, meaning fewer works are required.



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<p>CH and AW recommended that tenants are kept as fully informed as possible through clear and timely communication.</p> <p>Stock condition surveys DF informed the panel that, due to staffing capacity and technical issues, the KPI for stock condition surveys has not been met. Work is underway to address these challenges as a priority and to restore performance as soon as possible.</p> <p>Damp and mould DF provided the panel with initial data but noted uncertainty as to whether this fully met the panel's requirements. He explained that the current legislation is complex and gave a brief overview of the different types of surveys required at various stages. DF also advised that further updates to the legislation are expected in October.</p> <p>AW commented that the data provided represents a strong starting point and that there is an opportunity to develop the approach collaboratively moving forward. DF confirmed that he has already amended the recording spreadsheet in response to the panel's data requests.</p> <p>CH noted that regulatory requirements specify action within 10 days and suggested that this be reflected within the dataset. DF agreed that a "target met" column could be incorporated.</p> <p>In relation to the Damp and Mould Policy, DF acknowledged that this is not currently available on the website and requires updating to reflect current legislation. He advised that any revisions must be approved by the Board prior to submission to the Scrutiny Panel, and that the aim is for the Board to consider the updated policy at its September meeting.</p>	<p>DF to add target met column</p>	<p>Next meeting</p>
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	<p>The panel agreed that will discuss further what information they need and for what purpose. An agenda setting meeting will be arranged shortly.</p> <p>Recruitment DF updated the panel on recruitment activity, confirming that both the Asset Surveyor and Assistant Surveyor posts have been appointed to. Subject to completion of HR processes, both postholders are expected to commence on 5 May.</p> <p>AW welcomed the appointments, noting that the Assistant Surveyor role presents a positive opportunity to support on-the-job training and professional development.</p> <p>Contractor Q&A This item forms one of the recommendations arising from the deep dive review. DF advised that, due to staffing capacity and time constraints, the current timescale has not been met. The matter was discussed further under agenda item 10.</p> <p>JV asked whether alternative options are available to bring in additional staff during periods of resource pressure. DF advised that it can be challenging to secure bank staff within the housing sector, and that the use of temporary staff is generally associated with additional cost.</p> <p>JV also enquired about how work is prioritised in times of shortage. DF confirmed that priority works are identified and managed as effectively as possible within available resources.</p>		
5	<p>Existing policy review</p> <p>Vehicle electrical charging point policy The panel were provided with the Vehicle Electrical Charging Point Policy for</p>		



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<p>review and comment. DF advised that no substantive amendments had been made, as this is part of the standard three-year review cycle.</p> <p>AW referred to section 2.4(c), which states that charging must take place in an allocated space, and queried how this would apply in areas with communal, unallocated parking. IC advised that this need to be considered on a case-by-case basis and that, in some locations, installation of charging points would not be feasible. AW recommended that this limitation be clearly communicated to tenants, particularly given that the Mobility Vehicle Scheme is encouraging uptake of electric vehicles and tenants may otherwise assume charging provision is available.</p> <p>DF noted that where funding is available, communal charging infrastructure could be considered. He also advised that, in a recent development, infrastructure has been installed to allow for potential future charger installation.</p> <p>LM queried wording in the policy statement (point 2, third paragraph) regarding “consider any guidance and abide by any regulations”, seeking clarification on the distinction. DF confirmed that guidance is advisory in nature, whereas regulations must be complied with.</p> <p>CH referred to section 2.7 and queried the specific reference to OVO. DF advised that this was included due to the quality of information provided but agreed to amend the wording to state that general guidance can be found online, including on OVO’s website.</p> <p>The panel recommended that information regarding electric vehicles and charging considerations be included in the next tenant newsletter, considering increased promotion through the Mobility Scheme.</p>	<p>DF to provide information</p>	<p>For July newsletter deadline</p>
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	<p>The policy was approved, subject to the minor amendments agreed during the meeting.</p>	<p>for July newsletter</p> <p>DF to make changes to policy</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p>
6	<p>New policy review There were no new policies for tenant scrutiny review.</p>		
7	<p>Annual tenant satisfaction survey results and next steps The Panel received a detailed report from Acuity outlining the findings of the 2025–26 Annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey.</p> <p>AW welcomed the comprehensive level of detail included within the report, noting this as a positive development for the panel. AW and CH advised that they had previously reviewed the report and attended a presentation by Acuity at the Housing and Property Committee. Both agreed that the findings and supporting information would assist the Scrutiny Panel in identifying potential areas for future deep dive reviews.</p> <p>IC highlighted a number of key areas from the report and advised that the 2026 survey would be undertaken earlier in the year, as Acuity had identified that response rates are typically higher during the summer months than in winter. It was noted that the survey questions are perception-based and therefore do not always identify the underlying causes of specific issues. A debrief session with Acuity is planned to review the survey data alongside benchmarking information from other organisations to help inform future survey activity.</p>		



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	<p>IC also advised that the annual Housing Officer home visit programme will be used to gather more qualitative feedback from tenants, particularly in relation to how safe tenants feel in their homes and what factors influence these perceptions. This information will complement the survey findings.</p> <p>The Panel was informed that incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) have increased. Although historically ASB levels have been relatively low due to the size of the housing stock, wider pressures such as the cost of living, fuel costs and neighbour disputes are contributing to the rise. SH has been supporting Housing Officers to further develop their skills in managing ASB cases. It was acknowledged that ASB cases can be lengthy due to the evidence and legal requirements involved. AW suggested that tenants should be provided with clearer explanations regarding the reasons for delays and the evidence required and that officers should check tenants' understanding of the process.</p> <p>IC advised that 2026–27 is expected to present a number of challenges, including budget pressures, ongoing cost of living impacts and increasing charges. It was noted that general needs tenants continue to report the lowest levels of satisfaction, which may reflect factors such as the age and condition of housing stock and the differing circumstances faced by younger tenants and families. In contrast, newer tenants appear to report higher levels of satisfaction with services.</p> <p>The Panel noted that the survey results would help inform the selection of topics for future deep dive reviews.</p>		
8	<p>KPI Review – Quarter 3 data – October to December</p> <p>IC presented the latest KPI data and confirmed that the additional information previously requested by the Panel had now been incorporated. It was noted that</p>		



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<p>the KPI reporting format is aligned with the Housing and Property Committee to ensure consistency and avoid duplication.</p> <p>Under repairs and maintenance, IC advised that a new main board KPI has been introduced for reactive repairs. It was noted that an appointment with a Papworth Trust operative is scheduled at the point each repair job is raised.</p> <p>JV asked whether tenants are encouraged to provide photographs to support first-time fixes and help operatives attend with the correct equipment and materials. DK confirmed that, where possible, tenants are asked to submit photographs and that this assist with planning, logistics, timings and ensuring the appropriate materials are available for the repair visit.</p> <p>The Panel discussed the current telephone system arrangements, noting that there are currently two incoming lines in place: one for repairs and one for rent and income enquiries. The Panel suggested that consideration be given to introducing a third line for the Asset Team.</p> <p>IC advised that the effectiveness of the recent deep dive recommendations, including improvements to processes and communication, would be reviewed before determining whether the introduction of an additional telephone line would be beneficial.</p> <p>LM reported that, during a recent call to the repairs line, the phone rang 11 times before an update on queue position was provided. LM noted that this waiting time should be reduced, as tenants may abandon calls before reaching the queue information, which is reflected in the call data.</p>		
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	<p>IC advised that a significant number of properties currently require substantial works before they can be re-let, with many homes being returned in poor condition. It was noted that decisions are being made on a case-by-case basis regarding the future use and required investment for some properties. A considerable amount of work is ongoing behind the scenes across a number of property-related areas.</p> <p>IC also explained the distinction between management voids and business case voids:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Management voids are properties where a decision has been made not to re-let the home immediately, or where the property is being used as decant accommodation.• Business case voids are properties where options are still being considered regarding future use, investment or disposal.		
9	<p>Allocation of responsive repairs</p> <p>DK attended the meeting to provide the Panel with a verbal overview of the process for allocating reactive (responsive) repairs.</p> <p>DK advised that, over the last six months, there has been a significant focus on improving response times for reactive repairs. The current process was outlined as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A repair is reported by the tenant.• Information is gathered from the tenant to assess the nature and urgency of the repair.• The job is immediately logged onto the system.• A repair order (RO) number is issued to the tenant.• The repair is allocated to an operative and an appointment is arranged at the time of reporting.		



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- Where works are passed to an external contractor, confirmation of the appointment slot is requested so this can be recorded alongside completion details.
- Routine repairs with a 30-day target are generally booked between 20 and 30 days in advance, with the aim of maintaining flexibility within the remaining timeframe should appointments need to be rearranged.
- Repairs in outlying areas are coordinated where possible to maximise the efficient use of operatives' schedules.
- Weekly meetings are held with operative supervisors to plan workloads for the week ahead.

CH commented that repair order numbers are not always provided to tenants, based on his experience, and asked whether the customer service team uses a checklist when handling calls to ensure this information is consistently communicated.

AW also noted that appointments are not always arranged at the point the repair is reported, again based on personal experience.

DK further explained the process following completion of a repair. Operatives complete a pronto form upon finishing the work. Where additional works are required, the operative updates the form accordingly and this is returned to the team, who then arrange a follow-on appointment once any required parts have been received.

AW raised concerns regarding recent cold-calling activity undertaken by internal teams relating to access to attic spaces, believed to be connected to inspections



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	<p>of felt and/or roof slates. DF confirmed awareness of the activity and the reasons for the work being undertaken.</p> <p>The Panel asked whether tenants could be copied into correspondence where a contractor is unable to resolve an issue at a property. DK advised that it remains the organisation's responsibility to keep tenants informed and provide updates directly.</p> <p>DK noted that significant progress has been made in improving processes and communication within internal teams; however, further work is required with external contractors to strengthen consistency and communication standards.</p> <p>The Panel suggested that the quarterly newsletter could be used to provide tenants with additional information about the repairs service. This could include advising tenants that they may request a call ahead from operatives to provide an estimated arrival time, which would assist tenants who are working or have other commitments. The Panel also recommended providing clearer guidance on what repairs services can and cannot be provided when tenants report issues.</p> <p>The panel requested that TC give DK the deep dive recommendations to be discussed at quarterly meetings document. TC to action.</p>	<p>DK to provide information for July newsletter</p> <p>TC</p>	<p>For July newsletter deadline</p> <p>As soon as possible</p>
10	<p>Scrutiny review action plan – capital works communication</p> <p>The Panel reviewed the action plan arising from the deep dive review into communication within the capital programme between the Trust, contractors and tenants.</p> <p>Recommendation 1 – Develop a standardised stock condition survey</p> <p>DF advised the Panel that additional hazards will become reportable later in the year under Awaab's Law and suggested that the implementation timescale should</p>		



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	<p>align with these changes. The Panel agreed to revise the target completion date to October 2026.</p> <p>Recommendation 2 – Contractor Q&A sessions DF informed the Panel that no progress had yet been made on this recommendation and requested that the timescale be extended to October 2026. It was agreed that an interim update would be provided at the July meeting.</p> <p>Recommendation 3 – Communication schedule The Panel agreed that the existing timescale for this recommendation should remain unchanged.</p> <p>Recommendation 4 – Create a shared folder for tracking capital works MF advised that initial work had commenced on this recommendation. However, as changes to the finance system are due to take place in July, it was noted that further development at this stage may prove inefficient depending on the outcome of the system changes. The shared folder is currently being utilised and the Panel agreed to move the target timescale to October 2026.</p> <p>Recommendation 5 – Include completed capital works in the quarterly newsletter The Panel provided positive feedback on the information included within the April newsletter regarding completed capital works. It was agreed that this would remain an ongoing item throughout the year.</p> <p>The meeting closed promptly at 1.00pm due to four members of staff attending training scheduled for 1.30pm.</p>		
11	<p>Any Other Business TC remained with the Panel for a discussion regarding the Intensive Housing Management charge introduced from 1 April.</p>		



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<p>During the discussion, AW read out a statement outlining their views on the charge and raising a number of questions for the Trust. AW requested that the statement be forwarded to Chris Bull, Director of Housing and Property, and asked that a written response be provided. AW requested the statement be documented in the minutes, all panel members agreed.</p> <p>Statement from AW: <i>When I first raised concerns about this charge and asked what would tenants get for this service, I was told that that was still being decided. Instead, what tenants are getting for this charge is what they apparently already receive.</i></p> <p><i>This only applies to Supported Living and Independent living tenants, correct? How many tenants are supported, how many are independent living? Which equals how much extra revenue?</i></p> <p><i>I would like a more detailed written explanation than provided in the rent letters 'What is Intensive Housing Management', a more in-depth description and explanation of the 6 sections under the 'This can include'. With the same for the 'frequently asked questions' 6 sections of 'What does the IHM charge pay for. I would like to then have a breakdown of how much time is spent on those criteria within Supported Living, how much with Independent Living and how much is spent on general living in the KPIs. As general needs can also need a higher level of support during their tenancies. So, we can see if this is the most efficient usage of the money that you are claiming from those Supported and Independent Living tenants. If it is value for money, or if giving better information to these tenants and finding out what those tenants require would be a better use of the money. As you are only charging this money to these groups that you are not therefore providing</i></p>	TC to provide CB with AW statement and request written response	As soon as possible
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the same amount of support at any time to any general needs housing, within the areas you are stating.

Suggesting in the rent letter that tenants contact you to better understand what the services are does not mean they will get adequate and equal explanations depending on which staff they contact, or the tenant's level of understanding. So, in writing please.

As you did not clearly tell tenants to just add the IHM charge to the service charge and put that amount as the Service Charge on the housing benefit or UC updates there has been some confusion. This confusion has created a different level of acceptance of the IHM Charge from Universal Credit. When a tenant tried to update their information by phone, not understanding to just add the IHM to the service charge and give that figure without explanation of the IHM, the IHM amount was rejected. It needed to be far clearer in the rent letter.

I note that the arguments/points that you made in your rent increase letter for the IHM are a direct response to the concerns that I raised when discussing this with you. Your stance is whether we use the services or not we need to pay for them, but not that general needs should also pay a fee whether they use it or not. Which a tenant remarked to me that it is a tax on being disabled, from a disabled charity. You note a new Housing Support Officer role that you are not funding by IHM. Please explain, is this a new member of staff that you are paying for, or a member of staff you already have? You already offer budgeting and money advice by signposting, as asked by me earlier please clarify in writing. Explain benefit checks and applications and what you would actually do in writing. You already give support for and prevention of rent arrears, what is new here. Accessing external advice services, you already signpost so what extra are you providing here, in writing.



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You say there is a IHM Transitional Support Fund which is response to feedback Colin provided to you. What is your long-term plan for that. You were aware that both the Labour Government and the Conservatives wished to cut disabled support previously. The support from Motability is being eroded due to monetary issues. The prices of food, fuel etc is constantly going up and benefits are not matching this. Along with the issues in the Middle East at the moment which has already impacted cost of living and according to experts the full pain of that is more likely to hit by the end of this year, even if a resolution is reached. Much worse will come if it does not. I mentioned this to a member of staff, who rightly said that Papworth Trust could not foresee the current issues in the Middle East. However, even Motability have been able to see the issues and be forced to cut money and services causing more difficulty for disabled people. Do you have a contingency for tenants that may not need help during the Transition but will get into difficulty as they pay this increased amount to you and they become more financially challenged. It is a fact that life for disabled people is more expensive and difficult than for able bodied people.

You also need to take into account that you have increased the rent, the service charges and introduced the IHM. Your reasoning with the IHM was that most of your tenants would not be hit by that as they receive benefits. What number of tenants do not receive housing benefit? Your statement that support for tenants because of IHM will not be funded by IHM, does not feel as if it is to reassure tenants even when accurate but feels like an attempt to soften the blow by pointing out how much you will not charge to make better your increased charges.

You then state that the money is necessary to 'Maintain service quality', 'Keep schemes safe and well managed', 'Protect future investment in improving homes' and 'Remain financially sustainable'. Please explain better in depth in writing what



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you mean by these statements and confirm how these will benefit only Supported Living and Independent living homes. As you otherwise create a two-tier system. You need to fully understand the pressure that this could put on your tenants. To understand the real and actual risks to people who are struggling or to understand the risks of homelessness due to current financial issues disabled people have. You could better widen your understanding of actually losing your home and homelessness by talking to several of your tenants that have been homeless, I can think of three at this moment in time. What that actually involves for a disabled person. What support the tenants do and don't get while being made homeless. What that would involve with your relationship with the council and the possible costs involved to the trust in the legal steps you may need to take.

Yes, other housing providers do charge the money and supply different services than you do.

Rent and Service charges are increased in most years, are you planning for the IHM to increase also? You just state that 'This represents a change in how enhanced housing management services are funded, rather than a recurring increase of this size each year'.

I am asking for these issues to be in writing to understand very clearly what you are charging for and intending to achieve.

As you and the board have already decided to implement this charge my statement will do little to change the fact you have charged it. However, it is very important that we make sure that the money you are charging is spent in the best way possible, benefits the tenants that are paying it to the best level possible and provides the best value of money to the tenants. That tenants fully understand what they are being charged for, how much signposting versus in person support



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	<i>that involves and do they want that service from you as they are paying for it, or do they want or need something else.</i>		
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