

Housing Performance Report

Q4 2024-25



Brentwood 2025

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Housing Regulatory Inspection Outcome

In April 2024, the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) introduced an inspection regime for all housing providers. Every eligible landlord will be inspected on a rolling basis at least every 4 years. The RSH sets the standards which social landlords, including local authorities, must deliver to ensure tenants experience high quality homes and services.

The purpose of the inspections are to measure how well the Council is meeting the four consumer standards, which are neighbourhood and community, safety and quality, tenancy and transparency, influence and accountability.

In December 2024, Brentwood Borough Council was notified that their inspection would commence in January 2025. Officers worked tirelessly to ensure all of the relevant information and evidence which had been requested by the Regulator was compiled and submitted.

In February 2025, the Inspectors carried out the on-site proportion of the inspection for two days where meetings were held with Members, the Senior Leadership Team and Housing staff.

Following a period of review and assessment, Brentwood Borough Council has been awarded a consumer grading of C2. A C2 rating – the second highest available, means that the Council in its role as a Landlord is delivering most of the requirements and identifies some areas where improvements are needed.

The inspection identified particular strengths within the Safety and Quality Standard, however it recognises the need to continue to improve across all standards and this will be managed through the Housing improvement board, an update of this can be found at the end of this report. Officers also continue to liaise on a regular basis with the RSH on the progress and improvements made



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Tenancy Management

Rents

Total arrears:	Number of tenants in arrears: 1205
£1,186,536	Total Former tenant arrears: £648k

The collection rate and level of arrears throughout last year was significantly lower than we would have expected. This is due to several factors including but not limited to, inefficient systems for processing arrears and missing payments. Officers were using a process which required two different systems and was not intuitive to identifying those who have paid and those who have not. Whilst this system had worked previously, an issue with your Housing Management System (HMS) meant it was no longer effective. In addition to this, an issue with the HMS not uploading payments made by residents to their accounts meant confidence in what was genuine arrears and what was missing payments resulted in less arrears management work than normal. Both issues are now resolved, and officers are seeing an improvement with tenant communication and payment arrangements.

On average, the housing team are responsible for collecting £270k per week, much of this comes from residents on Housing Benefits and Universal credit. As we see a switch from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit, this is impacting on collection rates as UC pay in arrears and requires the resident to learn how to budget for monthly payments which many are not used to.

Tenancy Audits

We reintroduced tenancy audits this year, and 31% of our tenants and properties have been visited. This will be an on-going rolling process, and the visits are an opportunity to ensure that our properties are being maintained and address any issues, but also to offer support to our tenants and given them the opportunity to raise any issues or questions they may have, We also want to address any missing data including specific needs of our tenants, to keep them safe but also so that these can be considered in our service delivery. This year a particular focus has been on older tenants living in our general need's accommodation and those in our high-rise accommodation.

Lettings

This quarter 20 properties were let, 7 in January, 6 in February and 7 in March. Over half of these properties (12) were within the Independent Living (older persons) stock, this is disproportionally high for the total but is consistent with the winter period. 135 Properties were let across the whole year, with 44 in Independent Living.

Evictions

There have been 2 evictions, 1 was due to rent arrears and 1 in relation to sub letting the property. Eviction is the last resort when dealing with rent arrears, and where possible we will support tenants through payment plans and assistance to sustain their tenancies, but where tenants do not co-operate, we will look to recover the property through the courts.



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Neighbourhood and Community

Estate Management

Housing officers are responsible for the management of circa 190 blocks. Each of these are inspected in person on a rota basis with the large blocks being inspection more frequently than the smaller ones.

On average 70 inspections are conducted each month and during quarter 4 there was a focus on completing 100% of these inspections.

During the inspection, officers will look at communal repairs, caretaking, grounds maintenance, fly tipping and any other item to note. These are then reported to the relevant departments to resolve and progress tracked during the next estate inspection.

Whilst it is not always possible to have clear sites, the aim is to achieve a safe and welcoming environment to all residents.



Anti-Social Behaviour and Community Safety

Several new or revised policies in this area are currently being worked on

Policy schedule: CCTV Policy due September 2025
Domestic Abuse Policy due September 2025.
ASB Policy due December 2025.

To increase resources in this area an ASB & Community Safety Coordinator and two Community Safety Officers have been successfully recruited to and start dates are currently being confirmed.

Performance Indicators Jan-March 2025

Number of ASB cases Recorded	38
Number of closed successfully resolved cases	36
Number of closed unresolved cases	0
Number of cases open	2
Number of evictions for ASB	0
Satisfaction with handling of the cases	New performance indicator with no data yet available



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Repairs

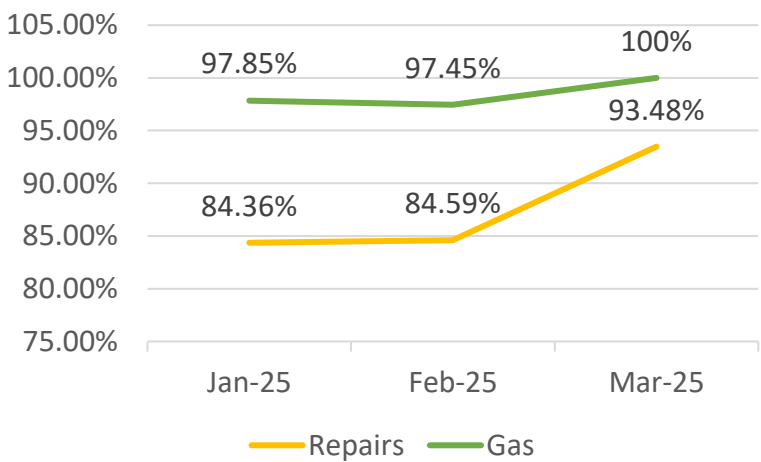
Total Number of Repairs Raised

	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Full year
Repairs (number of)				
Repairs raised	1032	889	874	10290
Cancelled	139	112	68	1604
Outstanding	893	777	806	8686
Completed	784	618	564	8122
Gas (number of)				
Repairs raised	382	268	250	2941
Cancelled	36	31	26	325
Outstanding	3	2	15	28
Completed	343	235	209	2588

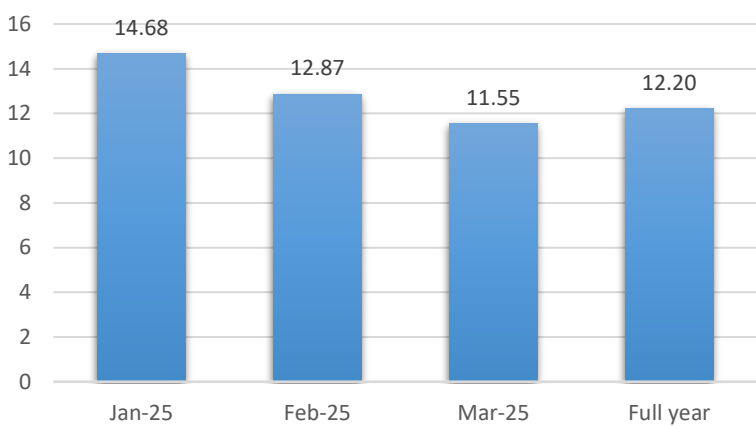
The number of repairs raised is 13,231 and total number completed 10,710. The reason for jobs being cancelled can vary from tenant cancellation, no access or job raised on incorrect workstream. The levels of repairs raised this quarter is in line with this period in other years.

Number of repair completed first time

The targets for the year were 85% (repairs) and 92% (gas). The full year average were 86.51% and 97.38% respectively. However, whilst the average across the year has been met there have been dips in performance particularly on the repairs (excluding gas) and whilst peaks and dips are acknowledged we need to aim for a better level of consistency across the year.



Average number of days to complete a repair



The target for standard repairs is 15 days and therefore in Q4 and as an average across the year this has been met. In relation to gas the target is 6 days and the yearly average was 4.26 days.



Repairs & Void Properties

Appointments Kept

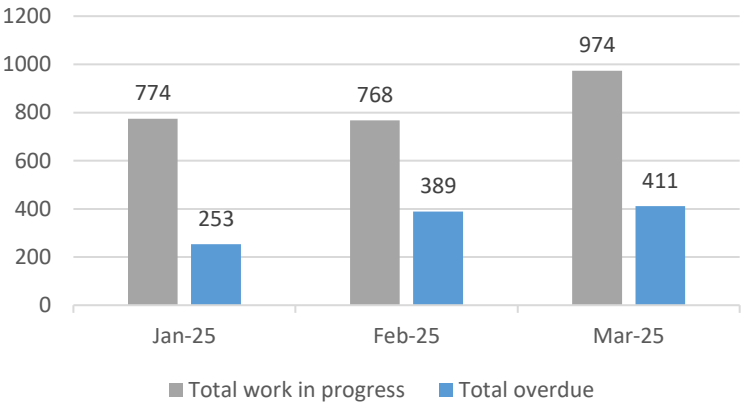
	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Full year
Repairs	97.42%	97.47%	98.41%	98.20%
Gas	100%	99.45%	99.61%	99.79%

Target 99%

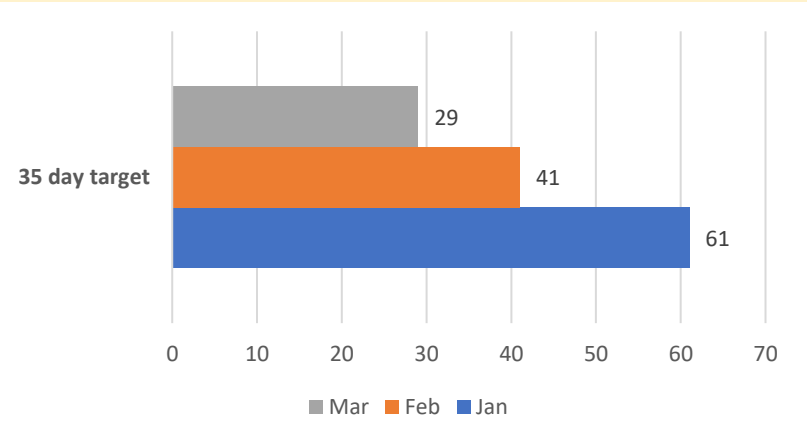
Performance for appointments kept is very slightly under target for the Repairs service and has exceeded target for Gas repairs. Improvements in communication with residents in advance of an appointment having to be cancelled is a priority. The capacity within the scheduling team over this period has had a negative impact.

Works In Progress (WIP)

Work in progress (WIP) is the total number of open repair cases. The volume of open cases has continued to increase in this period. This was due to the limited capacity within the scheduling team at Axis. A recovery plan has been put in place to recover this position in the next quarter (Qtr 1 2025/26) with increased resources introduced and interim support from other teams within Axis to reduce the WIP position.



Void Properties



The chart above shows the total turnaround times for void properties from ending the tenancy and keys returned, to when the property is re-let.

Axis have a target of 9 days for minor voids and 20 days for major works in their part of the process and this has been met consistently. Delays have mainly occurred during the lettings phase, particularly in sheltered where more time is given to make decisions and for less desirable properties where we will often see refusals of offers. Adjustments have been made to the process, such as multiple viewings for 'harder to let' properties to reduce delays in this area.



Repairs – Axis



- Reduction of staffing, February through May operating <80% Capacity
- No resilience to absence
- No resilience to demand



- AXIS CLC Group – new structure
 - IT Development and procurement impacted
 - Recruitment, salary and incentives impacted



- Restructured and recruited to Team
 - new scheduling manager
 - new team lead role (July)
 - 2 new schedulers + (x2) 8 week supporting resource
 - 2 new apprentices
 - 1 improver
 - 2 new operatives



- Focus on WIP reduction – contacting residents
- Maximising productivity – scheduling analyst
- Improving process, and system support



Compliance Dashboard – March 2025



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Tenant Satisfaction Measures 2024/25

TSM Code	TSM measure	Overall	Overall23/24
TP01	Overall Satisfaction	57.8%	56.9%
TP02	Satisfaction with repairs	64.3%	63.3%
TP03	Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair	65.1%	61.5%
TP04	Satisfaction that the home is well maintained	59.8%	53.5%
TP05	Satisfaction that the home is safe	69.8%	65.8%
TP06	Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	47.6%	45.6%
TP07	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them	59.2%	52.0%
TP08	Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	65.5%	62.3%
TP09	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints	25.6%	24.9%
TP10	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	52.8%	53.5%
TP11	Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods	54.9%	48.5%
TP12	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour	54.3%	50.3%



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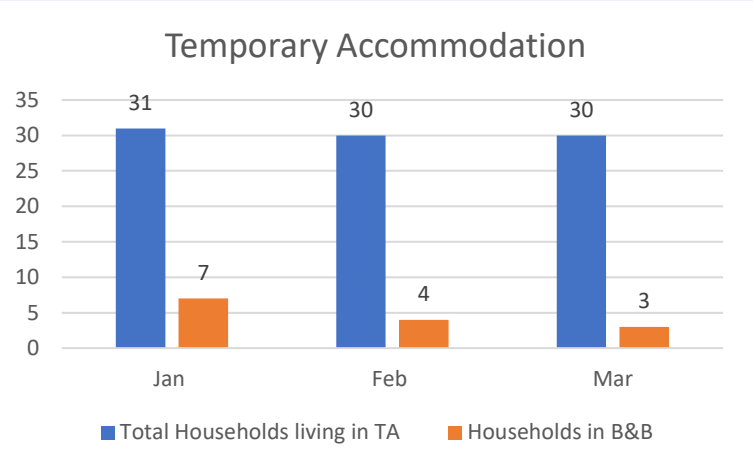
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Housing Register & Homeless

Homelessness & Rough Sleeping



At the end of March, no households had been in B&B over 6 weeks, but all B&B placements were out of borough due to lack of availability in borough.

Total number of approaches, including those asking for advice, this quarter was 252, the highest number of approaches was in January (103) which followed the publication of the judgement by the Local Government Ombudsman. There has been an overall increase in Q4 in the number of placements in TA (up from 23 in April 2024), this is due to a change in processes and increase in approaches, however this is still manageable and to be expected in the current climate.

Housing Register

	Jan	Feb	Mar
Housing Register cases	240	254	262
Transfer cases	263	263	253
Total combined	503	517	515
New applications received	99	65	63

Type of property	Average waiting time
Independent Living	21 Months
Studio	20 Months
1 Bed	3 years
2 Bed	2 ½ years
flat/maisonette	4 years
2 Bed house	3 years
3 Bed	4 years
flat/maisonette	3 years
3 Bed House	
4 Bed	

Due to demand, numbers continue to climb albeit at a slow rate, however waiting times continue to increase particularly for certain types of accommodation



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Housing Improvement Board Update

Key Achievements in the last period

The Council has now had its inspection in relation to the Consumer Standards by the Regulator for Social Housing and were awarded a C2 grade (the second highest) which means that there were some weaknesses in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and some improvements are needed. The judgement recognised that the council:

- Has appropriate systems in place to manage health and safety responsibilities, with a proactive approach to addressing damp and mould issues.
- Is delivering repairs in a timely manner and is working with contractors to improve tenant satisfaction with the repairs service.
- Collaborates with the police and other organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB).
- Offers various ways for tenants to get involved, including newly established Tenant Panels, and is committed to enhancing tenant-led scrutiny.

Planned activities for the next period

- Creating a new tenant Facebook page to increase contact with tenants.
- Introducing a more in-depth performance report which will be shared with Members and tenants.
- Continuing work to modernise our housing management system
- Adding Damp and Mould to our Compliance dashboard for increased overview and scrutiny.
- Stock condition survey results built into financial projections and development of the Asset Strategy.
- Continued roll out of collection and monitoring of KPI's for Anti-Social Behaviour
- Policy Developments relating to ASB and Domestic Abuse.

Overall Status



Following the inspection we have identified the programme as green overall as we have a defined plan to move forward. There has been no trend movement for individual standards as we had been focused on the inspection and therefore ability to move projects on within the action plan was limited.

Standard	RAG	Trend
General	Green	↔
Safety & Quality	Green	↔
Transparency, Influence & Accountability	Yellow	↔
Neighbourhood & Community	Yellow	↔
Tenancy	Green	↔

Risks and Issues

The main risk following the outcome of the inspection is maintaining current areas of success whilst implementing identified improvements. We also need to prioritise improvements, and we have restructured the action plan to focus on items we will be pursuing in 2025/26. Resources remain a risk as there is limited staff outside of business-as-usual activities to undertake improvement work and therefore we are looking to commission some specific external project work to assist in this journey, this will be covered within the 2024/25 financial underspend.

