



**YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND A  
VIDEO CONFERENCE MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF PHOENIX COMMUNITY HOUSING  
TIME: 6.30PM – 9PM  
DATE: 26 OCTOBER 2020**

**The agenda has been split into Open, Confidential and Private & Confidential,  
Board Decisions & Discussions and Information.**

<b>AGENDA</b>				
Item	Page	Report		
1		Apologies for Absence and Quorum	Open	
2		Introductions and Declarations of Interest	Open	
<b>OPEN SESSION</b>				
<b>Board Decisions</b>				
3		Minutes of Previous Meeting 29 September 2020	Chair	
4		Matters Arising	Chair	
5		Policies	CL	
6		Customer Contact and Complaints Performance and Complaints review and self- assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Code on Complaints Handling	LY/SL	
<b>Board Discussions</b>				
7		Strategic Business Renewal Group Update	SB	Open
8		Sustainability Strategy Update 2021-2025	SW	Open
9		Corporate Plan progress on milestones and targets for Quarters 1 and 2 2020-21	SL	Open
<b>Board Information (Bound Separately)</b>				

10		Management Accounts to October 2020	CS	Open
11		Community Engagement & Empowerment Strategy update	KM	Open
12		Chief Executive's Update	JR	Open

**Please inform Anne McGurk, if you would like the Board to spend more time discussing a Board Report.**



<b>DATE:</b> 26/11/2020	<b>PHOENIX COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM NO.</b> 1
<b>Open or Confidential</b>	<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence &amp; Quorum</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Kevin Kelly, Governance Manager, 07515605102</b>	
<b>Lead Board Members</b>	<b>Anne McGurk</b>	
<b>This item is for</b>	<b>INFORMATION</b>	

**If you are unable to attend, please ensure you provide your questions, comments and views on the Board Papers to Kevin Kelly by Lunchtime Thursday 26 November 2020.**



<b>DATE:</b> 26/11/2020	<b>PHOENIX COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM NO.</b> 2
<b>Open or Confidential</b>	<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Introductions and Declarations of Interest</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Kevin Kelly, Governance Manager, 07515605102</b>	
<b>Lead Board Members</b>	<b>Anne McGurk</b>	
<b>This item is for</b>	<b>INFORMATION</b>	

<b>DATE:</b> 26/11/2020	<b>PHOENIX COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM NO.</b> 3
<b>Open or Confidential</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Minutes of the Video Conference meeting 29 September 2020</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Kevin Kelly, Governance Manager, 07515605102</b>	
<b>Lead Board Members</b>	<b>Chair</b>	
<b>This item is for</b>	<b>DECISION</b>	

**Present**

Anne McGurk (AMcG)	Chair
Carmen Simpson (CS)	Vice Chair
Cllr Sue Hordijkeno (SH)	Board Member
Simon Barlow (SB)	Board Member
Peace Ayiku-Nartey (PAN)	Board Member
Lucy Ferman (LF)	Board Member
Kerry Heath (KH)	Board Member (Joined the meeting item 13 – 7.30pm)
Michael Tisdell (MT)	Board Member
Cllr Olurotimi Ogunbadewa (OO)	Board Member

**Officers and Advisors**

Jim Ripley (JR)	Chief Executive
Chris Starke (CS)	Director of Finance
David Westworth (DW)	Director of Customer Services
Lesley Johnson (LJ)	Director of Property and New Business
Nick Edwards (NE)	Assistant Director of ICT & Facilities
Say Leddington (SL)	Head of Risk, Performance and Monitoring (except item 16)
Jonathan Lawn (JL)	Head of People Services and Communications (except item 16)
Leon Yohai (LY)	Head of Housing Management (after item 7 and except item 16)
Scott Wise	Interim Strategic Asset Manager (item 17 only)
Kevin Kelly (KK)	Governance Manager – Minutes
Ysatiz-Mariah Bartley	Governance Co-ordinator (up to item 2)

**Apologies**

Simone George (SG)	Board Member
Mark Gayfer (MG)	Board Member

	<b>Chair &amp; Vice Chair Election</b>	
	Kevin Kelly explained that as the meeting was the first Board one following the Annual General Meeting, the first item on the agenda was to elect the Chair and Vice-Chair. He added that Anne McGurk and Carmen Simpson had both indicated they were willing to stand again for Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. He further added that under the rules the Chair and Vice-Chair positions were for Tenant Board Members. Kevin Kelly asked if there were any other nominations. He noted there were no other nominations and asked the Board if they agreed to elect Anne McGurk as Chair and Carmen Simpson as Vice-Chair. <b>The Board agreed.</b>	<b>KK</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence &amp; Quorum</b>	
1.1	Anne McGurk, noted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the meeting had been duly and properly convened;</li> <li>• each Board Member had been given proper notice of the meeting and of the matters to be discussed; and</li> <li>• a quorum of the Board was present.</li> </ul>	
1.2	Apologies as noted above.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Introductions and Declarations of Interest</b>	
2.1	Anne McGurk, Chair, welcomed everyone.	
2.3	Chris Starke and Lesley Johnson declared an interest as PAS Board Members. Carmen Simpson declared an interest as PAS Board Chair. Cllr Olurotimi Ogunbadewa declared that he was Chair of the LBL Council Planning Committee and a member of the LBL Council select committee for housing. Kevin Kelly read out a comment from Kerry Heath, who would be joining the meeting late: "I work with Potter Raper and Pennington Manches in my day job at Hexagon." Jonathan Lawn declared an interest in item 16 and stated he would leave the meeting for that discussion.	
<b>9</b>	<b>Policies</b>	
9.1	Say Leddington presented the report.	
<b>9.2</b>	<b>The Board approved the following policies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Assignment.</b></li> <li>• <b>Eviction.</b></li> <li>• <b>Garages.</b></li> <li>• <b>Recharges to Residents.</b></li> <li>• <b>Rent Arrears.</b></li> <li>• <b>Succession.</b></li> </ul>	<b>SL</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Review of Corporate Plan, Vision and Strategic Priorities</b>	

10.1	Say Leddington presented the report. She noted that the plan would require refreshing if the new business opportunity went ahead.	
10.2	Peace Ayiku-Nartey noted the new key projects supporting mental health and stressed the importance of providing briefing and training for staff and residents.	
10.3	Lucy Ferman noted the HR & Remuneration Committee supported the deferral of the People Services Strategy.	
10.4	Simon Barlow noted the reference to environmental works being deferred and stated he was keen for this project to progress due to the wellbeing benefits for residents. Say Leddington replied that it was planned to defer works whilst resident consultation took place this year. Anne McGurk stated she was keen for the environmental works to start as soon as possible.	
<b>10.5</b>	<b>The Board noted the review of the Corporate Plan 2020-25 and approved the addition of 2 new key projects and the deferral of 5 key projects and 3 strategies.</b>	<b>SL</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>CoVid-19 Experience and Satisfaction Survey with tenants and leaseholders</b>	
15.1	Say Leddington presented the report. She highlighted the recommendations from the survey including work on promoting mental health and wellbeing which were reflected in the corporate plan.	
15.2	Simon Barlow thanked the team for the work that went into the survey and noted the positive messages from residents and improved satisfaction with Phoenix as a landlord .	
15.3	Cllr Sue Hordijkenko noted that the claimant count had increased by 230% in Lewisham. Anne McGurk noted this as a reminder of the impact of CoVid-19 on our residents.	
15.4	Peace Ayiku-Nartey referred to resident communications and the importance of having protocols in place for how we communicate with them in future and learn from the feedback.	
15.5	Carmen Simpson noted that there was a need to identify what areas of the business may need additional resources, for example dealing with increased ASB and mental health issues.	
15.3	<b>The Board noted the findings of the CoVid-19 Experience and Satisfaction Survey with tenants and leaseholders and agreed the recommended actions in response to it.</b>	<b>SL</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Voids, Lettings and Tenancy Sustainability Report 2019-20</b>	
18.1	Leon Yohai presented the report. He noted that performance on relet times had deteriorated due to the pandemic but efforts were being made to bring this back in line with revised targets.	
18.2	Simon Barlow stated his concerns about the ongoing situation regarding the mobilisation of contractors and the	

	impact of longer turnaround times for voids on meeting housing need.	
18.3	<b>The Board noted the performance for Voids, Lettings and Tenancy Sustainability/General needs for 2019-20.</b>	
<b>20</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
20.1	None.	

**Approval**

Approved by (Chair)	
Date	

## Open - Matter's Arising and Action Trackers from Previous Meetings

Board Meeting	Item	Action	Officer	Deadline	Status	Commentary
January 2020	5. Resident Scrutiny Panel Review Report – The role of Housing Officers & Phoenix's Approach to 'At Risk' Residents	<b>The Board noted the full review report on the findings and agreed to review the responses to the recommendations made by the Resident Scrutiny Panel on the role of Housing Officers and Phoenix's Approach to 'At Risk' Residents review and report back to the May 2020 Board meeting.</b>	DW	End of December 2020		The Housing Team did start a time and motion study to look at Housing Officer patches, however the review is currently on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
January 2020	6. Resident Scrutiny Panel Review Report – Void Standard	<b>The Board noted the full review report on the findings and agreed to review the responses to the recommendations made by the Resident Scrutiny Panel on the Void Standard Review and report back to a future Board meeting.</b>	DW	End of December 2020		The review of the void standard was put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic- but work restarted on it this Quarter (Q3).





<b>DATE:</b> 26/11/2020	<b>PHOENIX COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM NO.</b> 4
<b>Open or Confidential</b>	Open	
<b>Report Title</b>	Matters Arising of Minutes of Meeting 29 September 2020	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Kevin Kelly, Governance Manager, 07515605102	
<b>Lead Board Members</b>	Anne McGurk	
<b>This item is for</b>	INFORMATION	

<b>DATE:</b> 26/11/2020	<b>PHOENIX COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM NO.</b> 5
<b>Open or Confidential</b>	<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Policies</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Chantel Lynch, Service Improvement &amp; Scrutiny Manager, 020 3121 0211 / 07515 605 017</b>	
<b>Lead Board Members</b>	<b>Anne McGurk</b>	
<b>This item is for</b>	<b>DECISION</b>	

## 1 Recommendations

### A. The Board approves the following eight policies:

**Decant and Temporary Transfers, Door Entry Fob Management, Electric Showers and Pumps, Lightning Protection Systems, Passenger Lift Maintenance, Allocations & Lettings Picture Version, Garage Policy Picture Version, Connected Together Policy (12- month pilot).**

#### **Executive Summary**

##### **Decant and Temporary Transfers Policy**

The policy was scheduled for review as part of good practice. A sentence has been added to make it clearer that the tenant is responsible for paying rent, service charges and Council Tax at their main home whilst Phoenix pays the Council Tax on the decant property (temporary accommodation).

The legislation in the policy has been updated – the Data Protection Act 2018, the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, the Coronavirus Act 2020.

The reference to other documents and associated policies and procedures has also been updated.

The changes to the policy have not been consulted on as they are minimal.

##### **Door Entry Fob Management Policy & Picture Version**

The policy was scheduled for review as part of good practice.

The colour of the fobs issued to residents has been amended. Blue fobs will continue be used as the principal keyholder fob and wherever possible additional fobs will be red.

Three sentences have been added to explain that:

- if there is anti-social behaviour on a specific estate, the trade times may need to be deactivated.
- staff fobs will be deactivated if they are not returned within one working day of leaving the organisation.
- three fobs will be issued to new tenants at no charge.

The legislation in the policy has been updated – the Equality Act 2010, Data Protection Act 2018, Coronavirus Act 2020.

The reference to other documents and associated policies and procedures has also been updated.

The changes to the policy have not been consulted on as they are minimal.

#### **Electric Showers and Pumps Policy & Picture Version**

The policy was scheduled for review as part of good practice. The legislation in the policy has been updated – the Data Protection Act 2018 and Coronavirus Act 2020.

The reference to other documents and associated policies and procedures has also been updated.

The changes to the policy have not been consulted on as they are minimal.

#### **Lightning Protection Systems Policy & Picture Version**

The policy was scheduled for review as part of good practice.

The policy has been strengthened to include that Phoenix will sample check records relating to lightning protections systems to ensure that they are kept up to date and are correct.

The legislation in the policy has been updated – The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Equality Act 2010, Data Protection Act 2018 and Coronavirus Act 2020.

The reference to other documents and associated policies and procedures has also been updated.

The changes to the policy have not been consulted on as they are minimal.

#### **Passenger Lift Maintenance Policy & Picture Version**

The policy was scheduled for review as part of good practice.

The policy has been amended to reflect that Phoenix has lifts on different servicing schedules (for example, those in blocks are on different schedules to those at the Fellowship) due to insurance requirements and manufacturing guidance. Phoenix will continue to carry out inspections and will meet legal requirements.

The legislation in the policy has been updated – The Data Protection Act 2018 and Coronavirus Act 2020. The reference to other document and associated policies and procedures has also been updated.

The changes to the policy have not been consulted on as they are minimal.

### **Allocations & Lettings Policy Picture Version**

The Allocations & Lettings Policy was approved by Board in July 2020. The picture version of the policy has been reviewed as part of good practice and no amendments have been made.

### **Garage Policy Picture Version**

The Garage Policy was approved by Board in September 2020. The picture version of the policy has been reviewed as part of good practice and no amendments have been made.

### **Connected Together Policy (12- month pilot)**

This is a new policy for the 12-month pilot of the Connected Together programme. The aim of the policy is to support fair distribution of devices funded from social value donations from our suppliers.

The policy provides criteria for residents (tenants and leaseholders) to access the fund and requirements to provide feedback and take part in consultation/involvement opportunities at least twice annually with Phoenix as part of the initiative.

Informal feedback has been received from 6 digital champions on the Connected Together Policy and 36 residents have responded to the Connected Together Survey. The policy has been shared with and supported by Strategic Business Renewal Group.

The pilot programme and the policy will be reviewed in 12 months.

### **Policies Due for Review On Hold**

The parking scheme was suspended during the first Covid-19 lockdown and the suspension still remains in place. The agreement with current parking services provider Wing will expire on 31 December 2020. Wing have advised that they will no longer be operating the service in the Phoenix area and have agreed to terminate the contract with immediate effect. As a result, we need to review the scheme, its operation and whether an alternative provider can be found. Any review of the policy would be dependent on the outcome of the review.

## **2 Corporate Plan Implications / Strategic Objectives**

**Strategic Objective: Sustainability and safety for our business, environment and community**

**2020-21 Corporate Objective: • Deliver priorities for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion getting to know our residents and staff better so we can adapt our services to meet needs and work together to build sustainable communities in our area.**

### 3 Background including appendices

In Phoenix's delegated authorities, (approved by the Board in May 2018), the Board is required to approve policies (amended following a timetabled review) after they have been approved by the Executive Team (ET) and residents have been consulted (on resident facing policies).

The following policies are available on request:

- Appendix A – Decant and Temporary Transfers Policy
- Appendix B – Door Entry Fob Management Policy & Picture Version
- Appendix C – Electric Showers and Pumps Policy & Picture Version
- Appendix D – Lightning Protection Systems Policy & Picture Version
- Appendix E – Passenger Lift Maintenance Policy & Picture Version
- Appendix F – Allocations & Lettings Policy Picture Version
- Appendix G – Garage Policy Picture Version
- Appendix H – Connected Together Policy (12-month pilot)

### 4 Communications & Consultation Implications

Online policy consultations are developed using Survey Monkey. Residents are asked questions to seek their views on policy criteria and policy changes as well as their general feedback and comments.

Online policy consultation has enabled wider resident consultation and work in this area will be further developed in Quarters 3 and 4.

The policies have been developed in consultation with senior and team managers and other key members of staff across the business. The Executive Team have reviewed and recommended the policies for approval.

### 5 Other Implications

#### Legal

All policies are reviewed to ensure Phoenix meets current legislation.

#### Equality & Diversity

All policies are reviewed to ensure Phoenix meets good practice and legal requirements related to Equality and Diversity.

#### Value for Money

The policies deliver value for money by providing clear policy guidance.

### 6 Risk Implications

The policy changes fit in with the risk appetite agreed by the Board:

- Risk adverse for resident leadership and compliance.
- Cautious approach for achieving budget and legal.



- Balanced approach for resident satisfaction, people capability and controls, technological and reputation.

**7 Sustainability Implications** - none

**8 Resource Implications**

**Finance** - none

**Staff** - none

**Property** - none

**IT** - none

**9 Confidentiality** - open

**Approval**

Approved by (Chair)	
Date	<a href="#">Click here to select date</a>

<b>DATE:</b> 26/11/2020	<b>PHOENIX COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM NO.</b> 6
<b>Open or Confidential</b>	<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Customer Contact and Complaints Performance and Complaints review and self- assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Code on Complaints Handling</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Leon Yohai, Head of Housing 07515605024 Say Leddington, Head of Performance Risk and Monitoring 07515605061</b>	
<b>Lead Board Members</b>	<b>Michael Tisdell Simon Barlow</b>	
<b>This item is for</b>	<b>DECISION</b>	

**1 Recommendations**

- A. Discuss customer contact and complaints performance.**
- B. Approve the self-assessment with the Housing Ombudsman code for Complaints Handling to be published in December 2020.**
- C. Approve the proposed changes to the Complaints policy and notes the further guidance and policies being developed to support it.**

**Executive Summary**

Annually the board receives a more detailed performance report on customer contact and complaints. This year we have also included our self-assessment and review of our complaints processes against the new Housing Ombudsman Code on Complaints Handling

**Performance**

The performance report in Appendix 1 highlights performance in customer contact and complaints in 2019-2020 and Quarters 1 and 2 2020-21. It shows:

- The reduction in direct customer contact since the pandemic, (49% less calls because all calls were transferred to our out of hours service between April and July and less face to face contact because our offices were closed).
- The potential insight we can gain from CRM to better understand customer contact and shape our services. As well as use it to proactively manage contact with residents for example through compliance cases, survey follow ups and “Getting to Know You calls”. All of which have been introduced this year.
- The number of calls taken of those received was below target for 2019-2020 (84%) but since calls have been taken by the contact centre working at home, from August, performance has exceeded targets at, 97%.
- The increased use of email for customer contact (30% of all contacts which resulted in cases being raised were by email during 2020-21 and 73% of all complaints.
- The complaints performance across Phoenix departments was below target in 2019-20 and whilst there have been improvements in 2020-21, ongoing focus is required across the business to deliver further improvements and meet aspirations.

- The most common theme identified in learning from complaints is communication internally and with residents. This will need to be considered further as we continue to deliver our service improvement plan across Phoenix.

### **The Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code**

The report sets out our self-assessment against the new code which is designed to help achieve consistency across the sector and is, in large part, a response to the Green Paper and findings from the Grenfell Enquiry.

### **Complaints Policy**

The report sets out how proposed changes to the complaints policy, so we meet the code.

## **2 Corporate Plan Implications / Strategic Objectives**

**Strategic Objective: Excellent Services delivered with empathy and openness**

**2020-21 Corporate Objective: • Improve customer experience and refresh our service standards so everyone knows what to expect from us and can provide feedback on how we are performing.**

## **3 Overview**

### **3.1 Performance**

Annually the board receives a more detailed performance report on customer contact and complaints. Full details of performance are set out in Appendix 1 of this report for discussion.

### **3.2 The Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code**

In September the Board received an update on the new Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code which was published in July 2020. The new Code is designed to help achieve consistency across the sector and is a response to the Green Paper and findings from Grenfell.

Since the Code was published, we have been working towards the milestones reported to board in September for completing the required self-assessment and improving how we handle complaints. The self-assessment can then be published as required by the 31 December.

Section 4 of this report summarises how we have consulted residents and staff on the new Code.

A copy of the code is here:

<https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/landlords/complaint-handling-code/>.

Overall the Code formalises good practice in complaints handling and sets out the consequences if landlords do not meet this good practice. Consequences include:

- Failure orders and orders to rectify if landlords do not comply.
- Investigation of systemic failures this could include referral to the Social Housing Regulator.

Appendix 2 sets out our self-assessment (using the template provided by the Ombudsman).

Overall, it shows we meet the Code but need to enhance how we meet it, to demonstrate consistency; as well as promote how we handle complaints, so residents know what to expect. The need for consistency and clearer information is reflected in our current performance as well as resident feedback.

To support the Code, we have revised our complaints policy (see below) and refreshed our service improvement plan. Key actions on the Service Improvement Plan include:

- Formal accredited training on investigating complaints for all managers,
- More guidance for service managers on complaints handling (see section below),
- Review the complaints process for Hazelhurst Court our Extra Care Scheme,
- Reporting against this code every quarter to board, including both performance information and any emerging risks complaints have identified,
- Embedding new approach to training and induction,
- Embedding new processes for escalation and support in complaints handling,
- Asking the scrutiny panel to check progress against this self- assessment and our service improvement plan,
- Exploring further involvement opportunities for residents in monitoring complaints; such as mystery shopping.

These activities are also summarised at the bottom of our self- assessment so will be publicly available.

### 3.3 Complaints Policy

To support how we meet the code, the complaints policy has been amended and is appended as Appendix 3. The key changes are:

- Adopting the definition of a complaint set in the code (but also including a simpler definition, as recommended by residents).
- Aligning our response times to those in the code. This will provide more time to respond to stage 2 complaints- an increase from 10 to 20 working days) however we will aim to respond sooner wherever possible and continue to monitor average time to respond at each stage.
- Align performance reporting to the requirements in the Code.

In addition, we are updating guidance to support the policy - some of this is through knowledge articles on CRM to guide service managers as they investigate and respond to complaints. Others are separate documents and include:

- How to investigate a complaint- completed,
- Making reasonable adjustments to enable us to meet everyone's needs (policy and revised guidance)- due to be completed by Dec 2020, for approval in January 2021.
- Dealing with vexatious complainants - due to be completed by Dec 2020,

- Exercising discretion- due to be completed by Dec 2020
- Identifying learning- completed.

Once the policy is approved, we will also need to review our phoenix standards related to complaints, leaflets and website so everything aligns, and we can promote it with consistency and effectiveness.

#### **4 Communications & Consultation Implications**

Residents are consulted on customer experience throughout the year after they have received services and we are also tracking overall satisfaction during these surveys, this year, for the first time. Results for each service area are collated and published internally and on our website; as well as being shared and discussed at team meetings.

The Gateway Committee has been involved in shaping our new Resident Portal and a group of residents is helping to test it.

The self- assessment for the Complaints Handling Code has been shaped by ongoing feedback from complaints surveys, our initial feedback from residents on the Green Paper and specific surveys on the Code - one for staff and one for residents; as well as feedback from scrutiny panel members and the Gateway Committee. The Residents Communication Group has also considered revised templates for complaint replies and provided feedback.

The scrutiny panel last considered complaints in 2016 but has more recently, in September 2019, received training to support them in their role as a Complaints Panel and 1 member attended the 'Ombudsman briefing' on the Code.

A senior managers meeting, along with specific team meetings, have also taken place to raise awareness of the Code. In teams where there are higher volumes of complaints weekly meetings are being held to discuss progress resolving cases and the importance of meeting the Code requirements. The ET are also championing complaints handling and reviewing overdue cases.

Finally, when we publish the self-assessment, we will promote it to residents again to invite ongoing feedback.

#### **5 Other Implications**

##### **Legal**

Meeting and enhancing how we meet the Code will support us in meeting all our legal requirements. To help us assess how we meet it officers have attended seminars hosted by lawyers.

##### **Equality & Diversity**

CRM includes alerts if a resident is "at risk" or has a disability and includes contact guidance where residents have shared this information with us so we can tailor our services to meet their individual needs.



The Equality Impact Assessment of Complaints (See Appendix 1) for 2020-21 (April to September) showed residents aged 31-59 and were overrepresented amongst complainants and residents over 60+ in age were underrepresented. There were no other significant differences highlighted in the EIA.

The revised guidance on making reasonable adjustments to meet individuals needs will support how we meet our equality responsibilities as required in the Housing Ombudsman Code and the Equalities Act 2010.

**Value for Money**

The insight from CRM and learning from complaints has the potential to deliver significant added value to our services.

Currently our complaints handling, and monitoring is focused on the process to improve consistency once this is achieved added value will be able to be achieved.

**6 Risk Implications**

The recommendations and activities in this report support the Board’s risk appetite in the following areas.

- Resident Leadership (Risk averse)
- Resident Satisfaction (Balanced)
- Reputation (some appetite)
- Compliance (non-H&S) (Balanced)
- People Capability and Controls (Balanced)

It is important that progress is achieved to ensure the Board’s risk appetite for satisfaction (balanced) is not exceeded and satisfaction with complaints handling improves.

**7 Sustainability Implications**

There are no specific recommendations in this report however some complaints may include sustainability implications or learning outcomes.

**8 Resource Implications**

**Finance-** there are no specific recommendations

**Staff-** there are no specific recommendations

**Property-** there are no specific recommendations

**IT-** refresher training has been arranged for December 2020 for complaints on CRM.

**9 Confidentiality**

Open

**Approval**

Approved by (Chair)	
Date	<a href="#">Click here to select date</a>



## Appendix 1 Customer Contact and Complaints 2019-20 – 2020-21 (April – September)

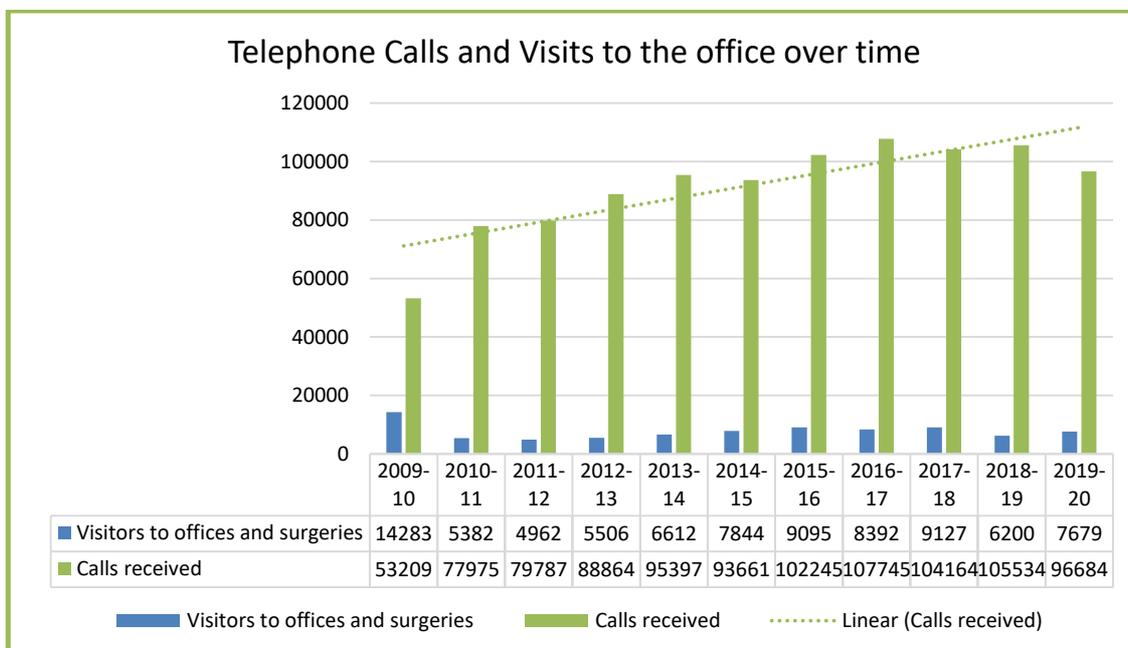
This report is made up of 2 parts, as outlined below, both summarising performance in 2019-2020 and Quarters 1 and 2 2020-21.

Part 1 Customer Contact-	Part 2 Complaints-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone and Visits</li> <li>• CRM contact</li> <li>• ICT Portal</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Survey Results</li> <li>• Contact/visit Reasons</li> <li>• Service Areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints received</li> <li>• Learning</li> <li>• Repiles</li> <li>• Resolution</li> <li>• Service areas</li> <li>• Equality Impact assesment</li> <li>• Satisfaction</li> </ul>

### PART 1 - Customer Contact

Contact with customers exists across a range of channels. Some triggered by Phoenix others by a resident or customer. The full scope and channels for contacts were not fully mapped or quantified for 2019-20, however a more indepth look at customer contact can be measured for the period April to September 2020. Caution should be taken when comparing 2020-21 figures to the previous year due to the impact of the pandemic and subsequent lockdown periods.

In 2019-20 Phoenix received 12 times more contact by telephone calls than face to face visits at the Green Man regarding our services. Many residents contact us to use non landlord services at the Green Man including digital inclusion sessions, the training kitchen, the Credit Union and café.



**Note to graph:**

(1) This only includes contact with our customer contact teams. This means calls to direct line numbers or visits to residents in their homes are not included.

(2) It is not possible to differentiate calls from leaseholders and tenants



**Appendix 1 Customer Contact and Complaints 2019-20 – 2020-21 (April – September)**

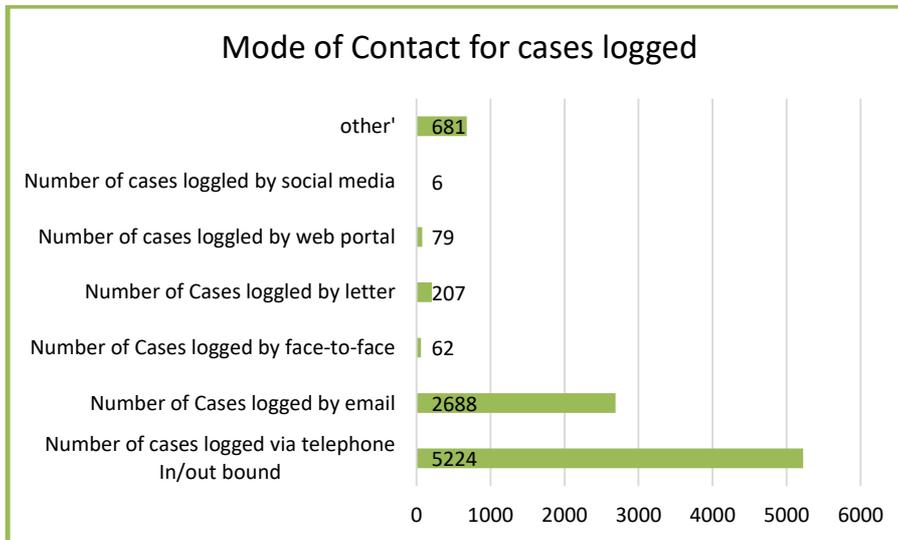
The graph above looks at the number of calls received along with the number of visits recorded by Front of house. In 2019-20 359 visits were recorded from leaseholders and 567 from non residents. Meaning 88% of visits were from Phoenix tenants. 37% of calls received were regarding a repair in 2019-20.

During April to June contact services were heavily impacted by CoVid 19 restrictions, with inbound telephone calls being out sourced for both general enquiries and repairs.

Between April and September 2020 the total calls received, excluding out of hour calls, was 49% less than the same period in 2019-20.

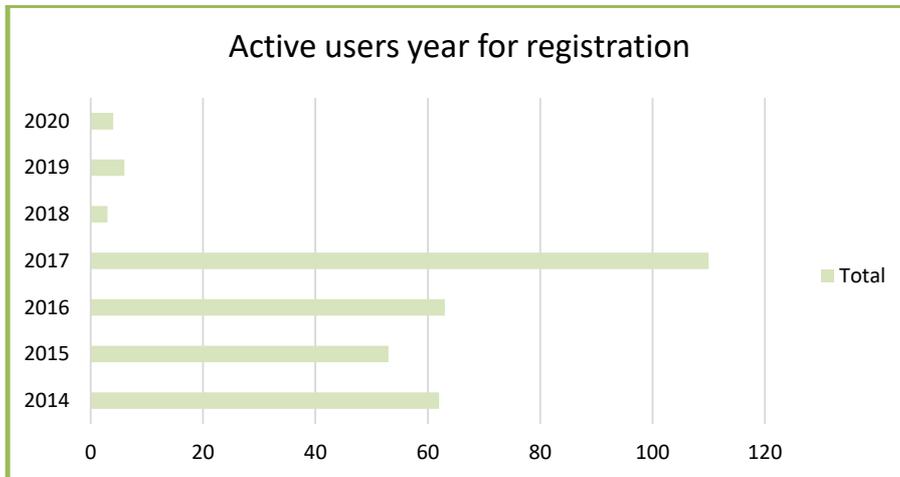
Contact Services resumed taking calls in house in August. Between August and September 2020 the team received 12,102 calls answering 97.43%. Compared to the same period in 2019, when 16,177 calls were received with 78.26% being answered. A similar improvement was achieved on non transferred calls, in August and September 2020 only 606 calls were transferred compared to 1,882 in the same period 2019.

The graph below looks at the mode of contact for cases that have been raised on CRM for the period April to September 2020. Even during this difficult time Phoenix residents largely favour contact via the telephone although increasing numbers are now contacting via Email.



There were 756 records of current residents who have the Self-Service Portal. Of which 301 are classed as active users. The graph below looks at these active users and what year they registered. Numbers are not an accurate indicator of demand as the service is limited to some service areas and has not been actively promoted, however with the completion of the “Digital Together Sprint” to roll out a new Resident Portal, we expect the numbers of users to increase.

**Appendix 1 Customer Contact and Complaints 2019-20 – 2020-21 (April – September)**



These figures along with the EIA (Equality Impact Assessment) of current users will be used as a baseline to track the impact of the new portal.

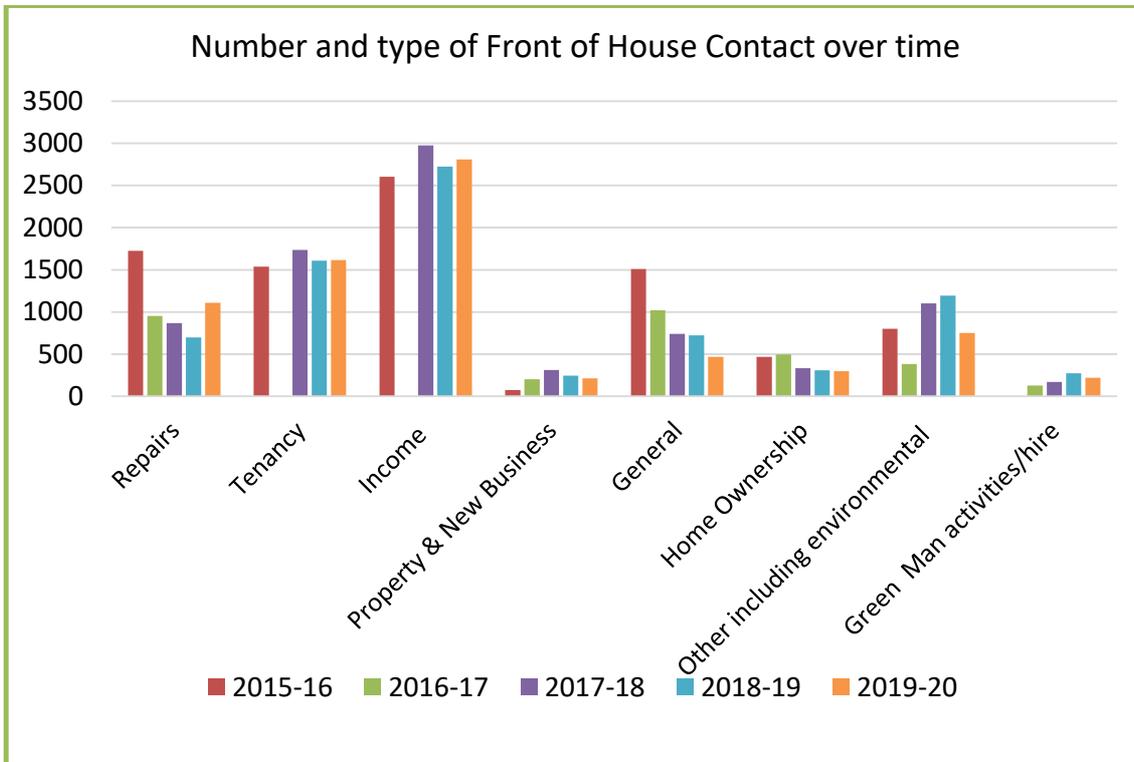
**Purpose of contact**

**Visits**

The purpose of contact has not been recorded consistently over time by phone or face to face at the Green Man. The Graph below shows the number of Front of House contacts and the main reason for the contact. Some general trends can be identified:

- Income is consistently the most frequent reason for face to face contact
- Increase in face to face contact for repairs (till the pandemic). (This could have been changing, checking or raising a repair issue).

**Appendix 1 Customer Contact and Complaints 2019-20 – 2020-21 (April – September)**

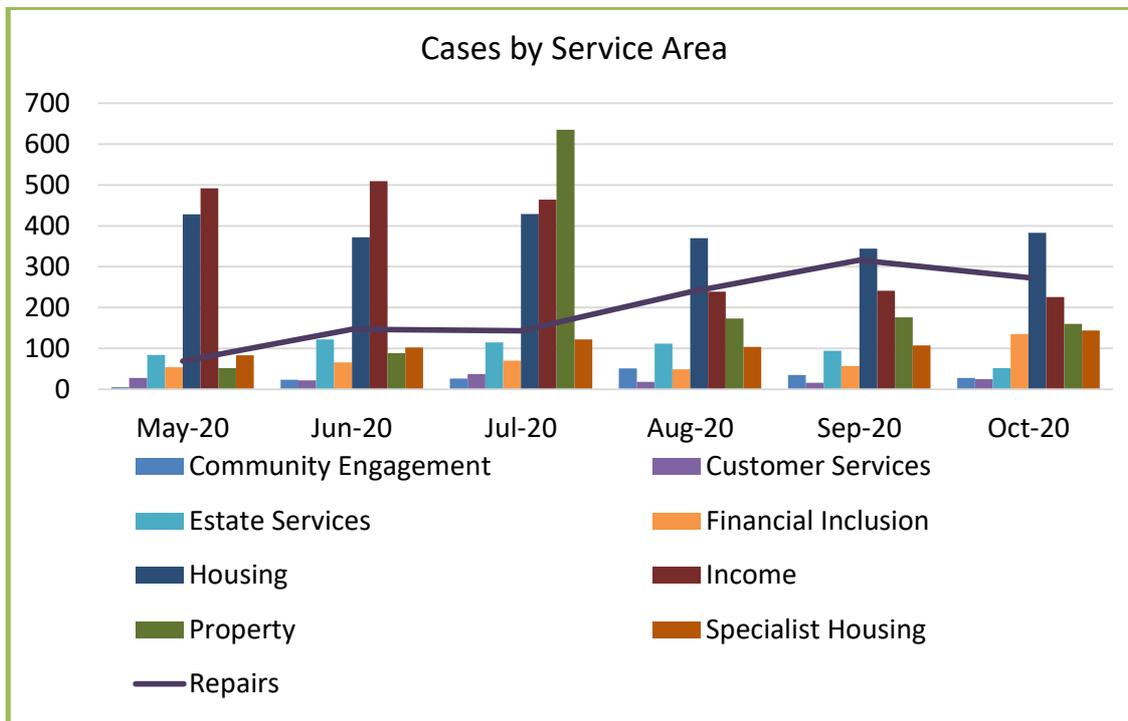


**Contact April – September 2020-21**

With CRM we are now able to drill down, further on cases raised, this can be done by service area, type, origin and tenure to name a few. The graph below looks at cases by service area. It shows the impact of the lockdown restrictions on contact; with repair contact dropping down in May before beginning to increase in late summer following restrictions being lifted and more non-emergency repairs being completed.

Financial inclusion contact has grown over the period in line with Government updates on employment and benefit schemes being introduced. The spike in July for the service area Property is due to a compliance sprint being added, many of these cases are internal cases where a home requires a landlord health and safety check and so should not be considered as external contact with customers.

## Appendix 1 Customer Contact and Complaints 2019-20 – 2020-21 (April – September)



### Communications

All streams of social media have seen increases in reaching greater audiences

Year - Period	Twitter followers	Youtube views	Linked in connections	Instagram followers
2018-19	2917	3089	671	*No data recorded
2019-20	3300	2207	1247	770
2020-21 (Q2)	3353	3602	1510	955

However it is unclear whether these numbers represent residents or other customers and stakeholders.

The number of email addresses we hold for residents are also increasing and now via CRM we are able to start to record resident preferences across different communication channels.

Year - Period	Emails held – Leaseholders	Emails held - Tenants
2019-20	571 (66%)	2561 (48%)
2020-21 (Q2)	622 (72%)	2757 (52%)



## Appendix 1 Customer Contact and Complaints 2019-20 – 2020-21 (April – September)

Two exercises in Quarter 2 and 3 should increase these further one is the follow up on email addresses to enable residents who indicated an interest in doing feedback surveys on line to take part and the Data Quality Project from the Digital Together Project; which has piloted contacting residents to gain their email addresses to maximise sign up to the new Residents Portal.

### Contact and Communication during the Lockdown

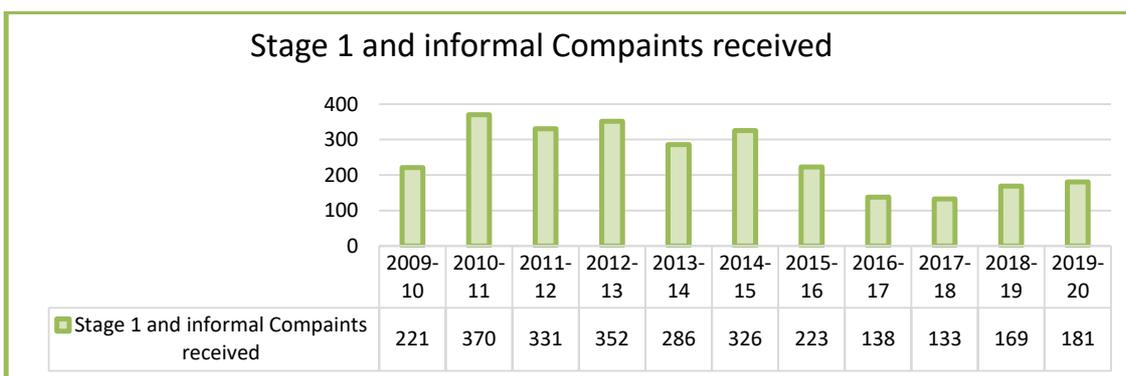
A survey was carried out with Phoenix tenants and Leaseholders in June/July 2020 assess the impact of pandemic and shape our recovery plans. A section of the survey focused on Communication and Contact.

The following points/outcomes are from the survey results:

- 51% of tenants and 28% of leaseholders who communicated with friends and family by phone, only communicated in this way- for tenants these respondents were represented in all age groups, but slightly higher among older households and significantly higher amongst single person households over 65.
- A significantly higher number of lone parent tenant households and a significantly lower number of tenant single person households over 65 used video calls during the lock down.
- 3% of tenants and 1% of leaseholders said they did not communicate with anyone during the lockdown.

### PART 2 –Complaints

Over time customer contact through complaints has generally reduced. This is illustrated in the graph below. The definitions of what is a stage 1 and an informal complaint has changed over the years so the two types of complaints are combined to enable comparisons.

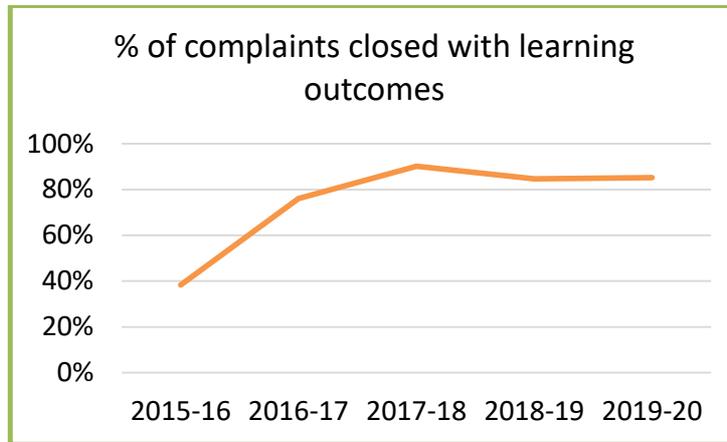


Between April and September 2020 73% of all complaints were made via Email.

Learning outcomes identified for complaints over time shows the number of cases where learning has been assessed has remained consistent. The learning identified in most cases relates to communications, reminders of existing processes or standards or highlights the need to map and consistently monitor processes.



## Appendix 1 Customer Contact and Complaints 2019-20 – 2020-21 (April – September)

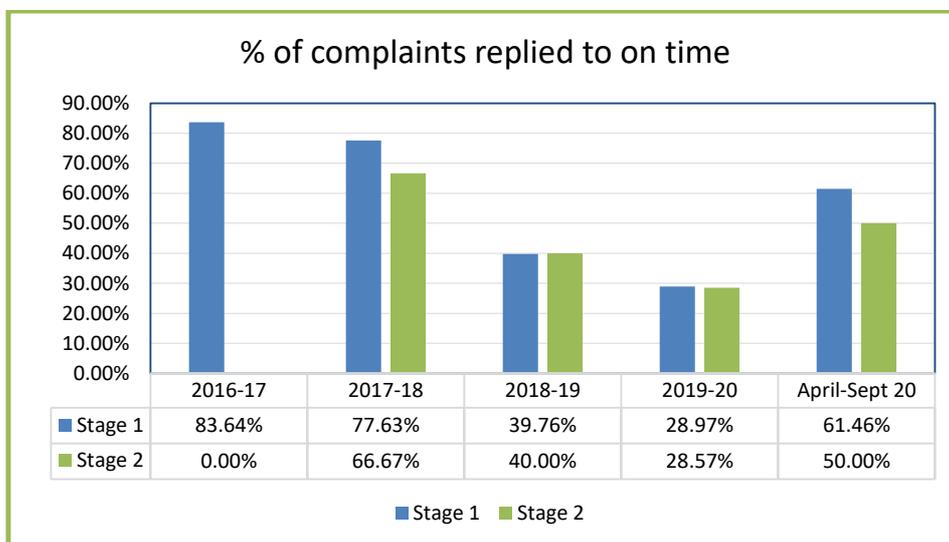


Between April and September 2020 of 114 complaints were resolved, with learning identified from 109, 95.6%.

### Process change

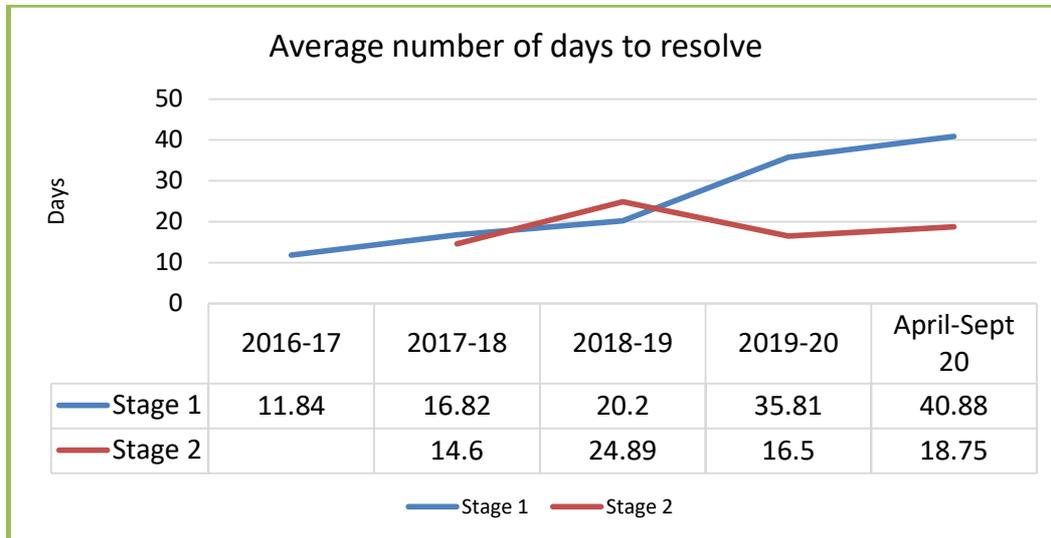
With the introduction of CRM complaint cases are automatically issued with SLA's to drive compliance with completion and replies within target dates. All complaints are now more visible to all managers.

### On time, over time by stage



Between April and September 2020 there is a clear increase in the number of complaints being replied to on time. This can be attributed to more active monitoring by the Monitoring Team as well as CRM. CRM creates response dates automatically with the system and make it easier to monitor and track complaints. We would expect these percentages to grow as more information is captured on CRM and understanding of the system grows. Refresher training on both cases and complaints on CRM is being carried out this Quarter.

**Average resolution over time by stage**

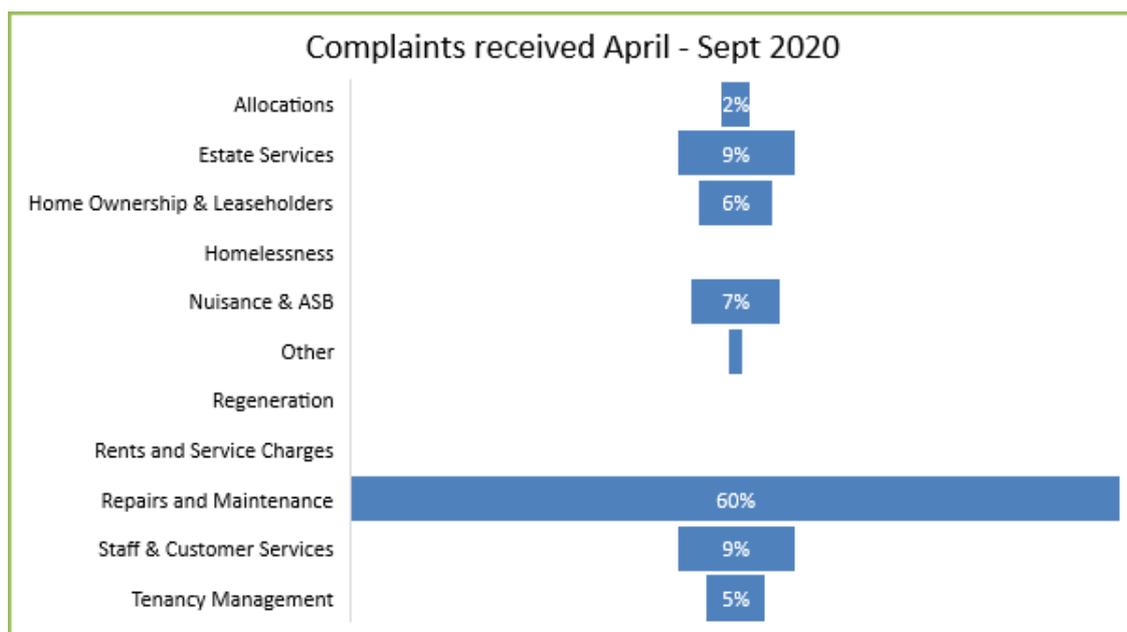
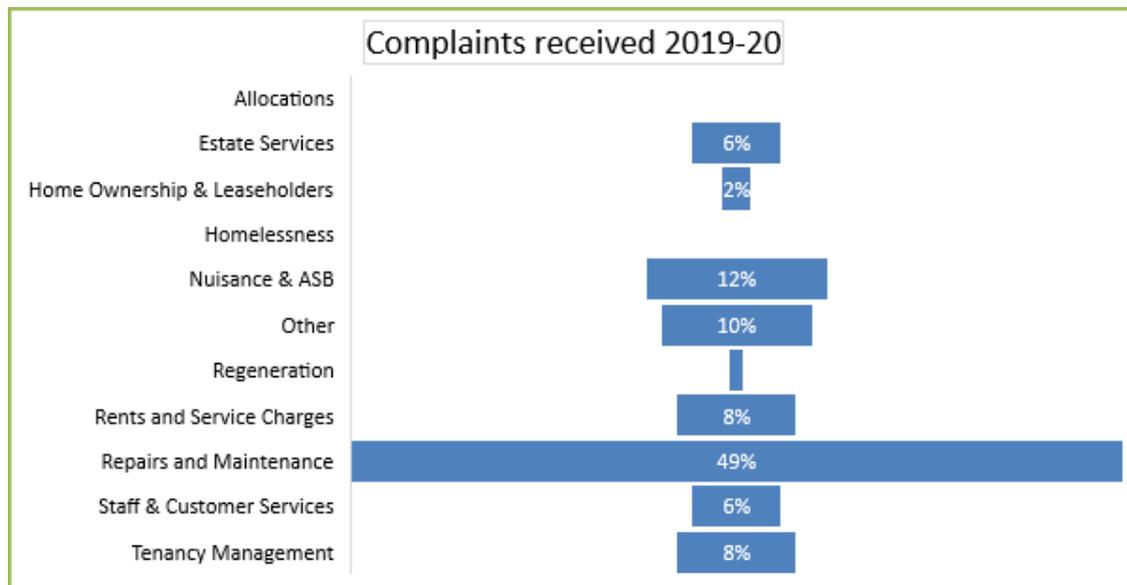


The graph above outlines the number of days on average it is taking for complaints at stage 1 & 2 to be closed/resolved. The higher numbers of average days to resolve complaints in 2019-20 and April to September 20 are due to some complaints being closed that had been open for an extended period of time.

**Complaints received by service area**

The two graphs below illustrate the main service area each complaint concerns. The results are in percentages to assist in comparisons. The graphs show repairs and maintenance continues to be the most common area of complaints. Rent and service charges received 8 complaints in 2019/20 however year to date (September 2020) no complaints have been assigned to rent and service charge areas, this could be attributed to CoVid 19 and the more supportive approaches to collection, adopted by the team during the pandemic.

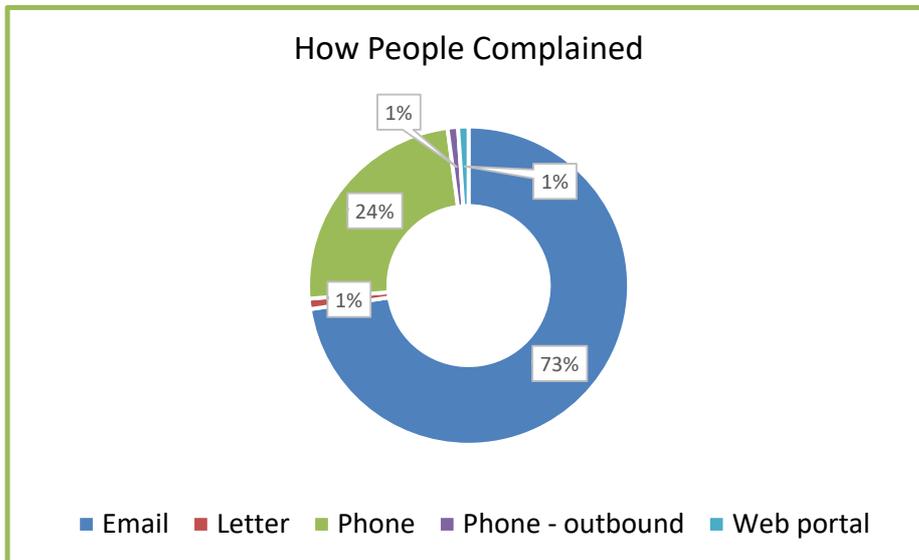
**Appendix 1 Customer Contact and Complaints 2019-20 – 2020-21 (April – September)**



**How people complained**

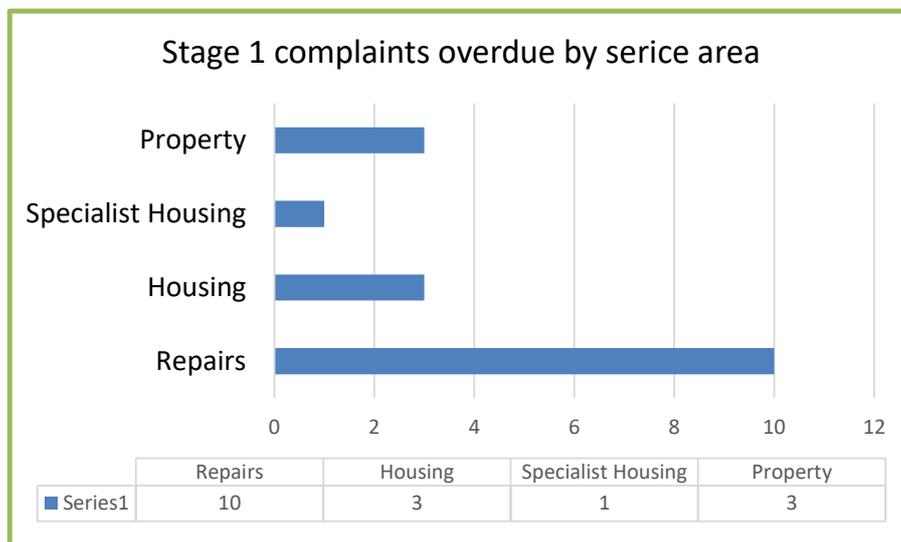
The pie chart below shows how people complained between April and September 2020; it shows the most common way of complaining is via email.

**Appendix 1 Customer Contact and Complaints 2019-20 – 2020-21 (April – September)**



**Complaints open and overdue resolution at end of September 2020**

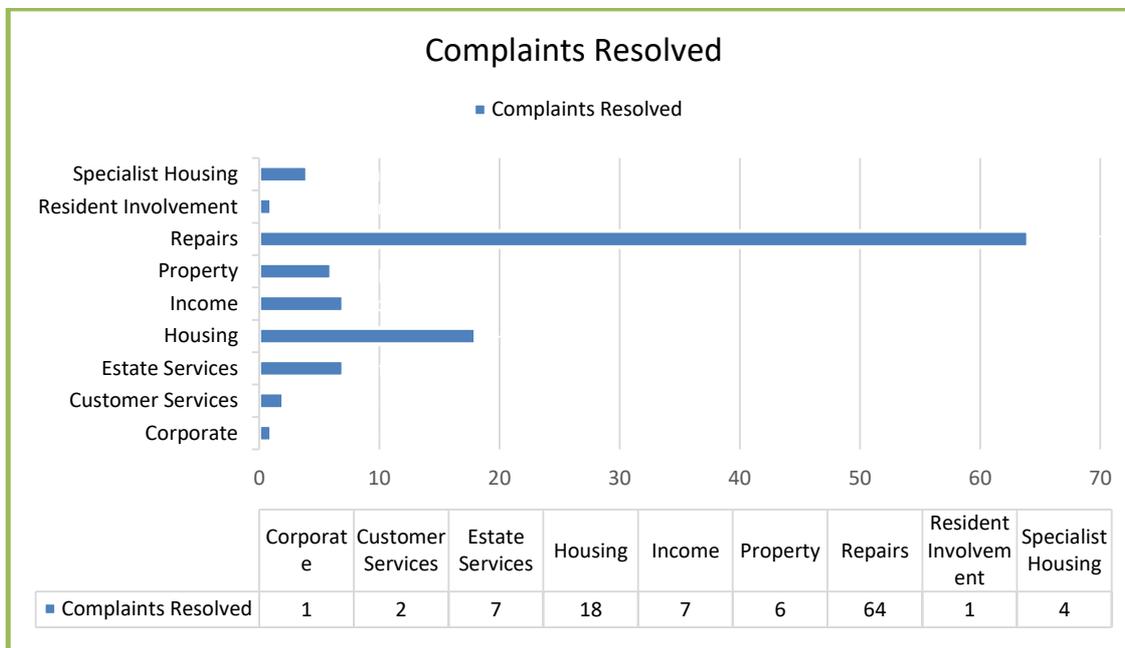
The graph below outlines the stage 1 Complaints that were open and overdue a resolution at the end of September. The number of open and over due has increased in Quarter 2 to 17 from 13 in Quarter 1.



- 2 stage 2's were also overdue at the end of September 2020.

## Appendix 1 Customer Contact and Complaints 2019-20 – 2020-21 (April – September)

### Resolved in period by service area.



Repairs and maintenance consistently have the highest number of complaints. 64 repair complaints were resolved up to September in 2020-21. In 2019-20 93 stage 1 complaints were received for Repairs and Maintenance.

### EIA on complaints

A Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was carried out on the Phoenix Residents who complained between April and September 2020. This was based on lead tenants and Leaseholders. Due to the relative low number of complainants the Margin of Error equated to + or – 10.2%, so only results outside of this measure should be considered. The below table summarises the outliers between the Phoenix lead residents and those who complained.

- A positive variance means complainants make up a higher proportion than all lead residents
- A negative variance means complainants make up a lower proportion than all lead residents

Demographic		Demographic of Phoenix Lead residents as of Q2 2020	Representation of Demographic of lead household Complainants	Variance of Sample VS Stock	
Age	31-59	58.35%	72.53%	14.18%	
	60+	31.65%	18.68%	-12.97%	

## Appendix 1 Customer Contact and Complaints 2019-20 – 2020-21 (April – September)

Demographic		Demographic of Phoenix Lead residents as of Q2 2020	Representation of Demographic of lead household Complainants	Variance of Sample VS Stock	
Gender	Female	66.57%	75.82%	9.26%	
	Male	33.43%	24.18%	-9.26%	

\*A full breakdown is available upon request

The EIA shows residents aged 31-59 and were over represented amongst complainants and residents over 60+ in age were under represented. There were no other significant differences highlighted in the EIA.

### Complaints Satisfaction (As of Quarter 2, 2020)

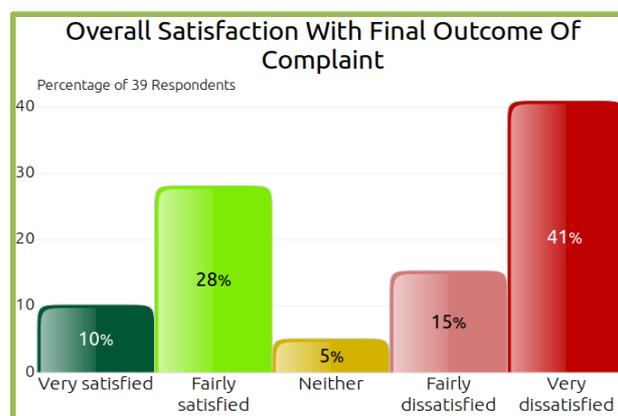
37% of all closed complaints between April and September have been surveyed. Below is a summary of results and comments left by those surveyed.

Although the number of responses are low they provide relevant insight to how we need to improve and the feedback and comments show similar trends from previous years emphasising the need to deliver a more customer focused complaints service; aligned with the new Complaints Handling Code published by the Ombudsman.

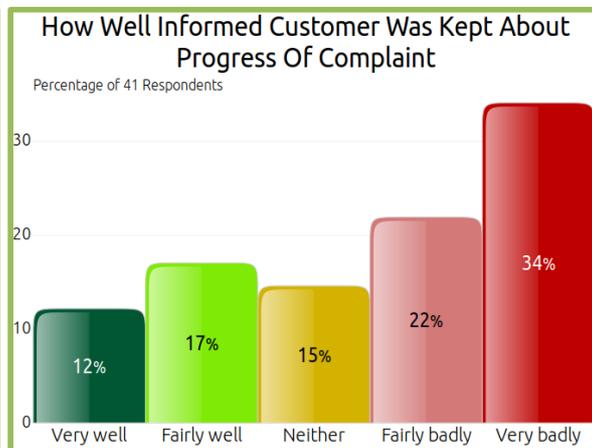
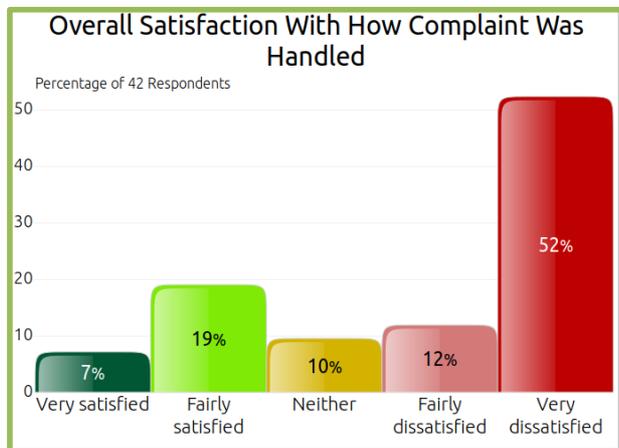
Plans for achieving this have been set in a service improvement plan and our self assessment against the Code.

26.19% (11/42) of respondents said they were very or fairly satisfied with the way their complaint was handled by Phoenix at the end of Quarter 2, compared to 30% (14/46) in 2019-2020.

The graphs below show satisfaction across outcome, handling and being kept up to date with complaints:



Appendix 1 Customer Contact and Complaints 2019-20 – 2020-21 (April – September)



Comments left by those surveyed (April – September 2020):

*'The complaints service was non-existent. Phoenix should have actually contacted me about the complaint.'*

*'Phoenix need to communicate. For example, I had visits from workmen without Phoenix letting me know they were coming.'*

*'Phoenix tried to brush off the complaint, I felt fobbed off.'*

# Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code:

## Self-assessment form

2<sup>ND</sup> DRAFT

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
<b>1</b>	<b>Definition of a complaint</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?  <i>“An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.”</i>	Y	
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	Y	
	<b>Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?</b>  <u>Evidence relied upon</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparison to the Housing Ombudsman guidance.</li> <li>• Asking our residents and staff in surveys.</li> <li>• Consulting with residents from our Gateway Committee, Scrutiny Panel and Policy Working Group.</li> </ul>	Y	
<b>2</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	Y	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	Y	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?- we have guidance and will set a policy in January 2021		<b>N</b>
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	Y	
	<u>Evidence relied upon</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Phoenix Flyer</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints Survey results</li> <li>• Handbook</li> <li>• Leaflet</li> <li>• Policy</li> <li>• Performance</li> </ul>		
<b>3</b>	<b>Complaints team and process</b> <i>*Service Manager or Executive Team Member replying to complaint</i>		
	Is there a complaint officer* or equivalent in post?	Y	
	Does the complaint officer* have autonomy to resolve complaints?	Y	
	Does the complaint officer* have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	Y	
	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?	N	
	Is any third stage optional for residents?	N/A	
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	Y	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	Y	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?  Most complaints are resolved at stage 1. From 2020-21 from April to September this was 97%. 3% were resolved at stage 2		
	<u>Evidence relied upon</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality checks-these show we need to improve consistency</li> <li>• Staff survey- these show we need to improve consistency</li> <li>• Policy</li> <li>• KPIs</li> </ul>		
<b>4</b>	<b>Communication</b>		
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	Y	
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	Y	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	Y	

	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	Y	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one? <u>April September 2020</u>	97%	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two? <u>April September 2020</u>	3%	
	<p>What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?*</p> <p><u>April September 2020</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage one- 61%</li> <li>    Stage one (with extension)- 39%</li> <li>• Stage two- 50%</li> <li>    Stage two (with extension)- 50%</li> </ul> <p><i>*Our policy during this period included a shorter response time for stage 2 complaints than the Code (10 working days).</i></p>	See below	
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	Our policy and procedures say we must but we need to improve, consistency of doing this.	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	Our policy and procedures say we must but we need to improve, consistency of doing this.	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction <u>April September 2020</u>	26% (11/42)	
<b>5</b>	<b>Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service</b>		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	Y	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	n/a	
<b>6</b>	<b>Fairness in complaint handling</b>		

	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	Y	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand? We need to ensure advice is consistent^	Y^	
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate? There was one case April to September 2020 where we did not escalate in a timely manner  What was the reason for the refusal?	0  n/a	n/a
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	n/a	
<b>7</b>	<b>Outcomes and remedies</b>		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	Y	
<b>8</b>	<b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?  <b>Trends in learning identified</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate, communicate, communicate</li> <li>• In ASB and repair cases need to update tenants more regularly</li> <li>• Training needed for customer services in repairs diagnosis</li> <li>• Value of regular toolbox talks for Phoenix Repairs Service on procedures to follow in residents' homes</li> <li>• Benefits of joint working arrangements (more collaboration between teams)</li> <li>• Need for some process reviews</li> </ul> <b>Examples of learning related to complaints process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to improve ownership of complaints</li> <li>• Need to improve the timeliness of responses</li> <li>• More guidance on allocation of complaints (may link to complaints ownership, too)</li> <li>• Some more guidance may be helpful on investigating cases of staff conduct</li> </ul> <b>Examples of learning completed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates to customer services and a toolbox talk on carbon monoxide</li> </ul>	Y	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phoenix Repairs Service now have access to our database, for logging and recording complaints (which we call CRM).</li> <li>• Toolbox talks in caretaking and PRS</li> <li>• A review of Gold Membership has started</li> <li>• The follow-on process was changed for responsive repairs</li> <li>• BIC (British Institute of Cleaning) training has been arranged</li> <li>• Re-procuring some contracts</li> </ul>		
<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) residents? In newsletters and on website- but we need to include more examples</p> <p>b) the board/governing body? An annual performance report.</p> <p>c) In the Annual Report? Yes however we need to include more examples</p>	Y	
<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</p> <p>It has helped us raise the profile of the importance of good, customer focused complaints handling with Board, Executive, managers and staff. We have seen some improvements and are committed to making more.</p>	Y	
<p>What changes have we made?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewed of our policy and procedure with residents</li> <li>• Used the universal definition of a complaint but also included a shorter, simpler, definition underneath it; agreed with residents- because we received some feedback that the definition was too wordy.</li> <li>• Provided more examples of exclusions in our policy and on our website- this was recommended by residents.</li> <li>• Review of process on our database, for logging and recording complaints (which we call CRM).</li> </ul>		

- Reviewed our letter templates and website content with residents on our Residents Communications Group.
- Updated our procedure for logging complaints on our database and the manual for doing this.
- Refocused our KPIs on responses as well as final resolution and closure of a complaint.
- Amended our complaint KPIs to align with the Code
- Reviewed training on complaints handling and decided to make it mandatory for all managers, at induction for all staff and specific training for our contact centre.
- Used the Code to help us consider our culture and use it to plan future discussions about how we structure our services to residents.

Actions we will take to improve how we meet the Code

- Ask residents again in a year for their feedback.
- Deliver our complaints service improvement plan- this is summarised below.

Complete new guidance

Review the complaints process for Hazelhurst Court our Extra Care Scheme

Report against this code every quarter to board

Embed new approach to training and induction

Embed new processes for escalation and support in complaints handling

Ask our scrutiny panel to check progress against this self- assessment and our service improvement plan

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### Responsible Officer

Director of Customer Services

### Aim of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to explain how we manage complaints.

### The Policy

We listen to our residents and customers concerns, have a positive approach to complaints and welcome them.

#### A complaint is defined as

An expression of dissatisfaction however, made about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by Phoenix, our own staff, or those acting on our behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.

This means If you are unhappy with the service you received from Phoenix , or we failed to do something you expected us to do, you or your representative can make a complaint.

Any of our staff will accept a complaint, in any format from any tenant or leaseholder or their representative, (someone acting on their behalf).

We will also accept complaints from other customers. Customers who are not tenants or leaseholders cannot use the services of the Housing Ombudsman.

We will investigate your complaints promptly, politely and fairly and use them as a learning opportunity to improve our services.

#### Responding to complaints, comments and compliments

We will acknowledge your complaint within two working days and provide you with the written response within ten working days at stage one and twenty working days at stage two. If this is not possible, we will contact you to explain when you can expect a reply and provide the reasons for the delay. If you request it, we will extend our response times and agree to a timing based on your needs.

Any complaint relating to safeguarding or urgent health and safety issues will be addressed as a priority.

You can seek independent advice and guidance concerning your complaint at any time by contacting the Housing Ombudsman on the contact details provided further below.

## Process for complaints

We have a 2 stage internal complaints process, however, there are three stages available to you to address your complaints. Each stage is described below.

1. Making a complaint
2. Escalating a complaint
3. Referring a complaint externally to a designated person, panel or the Housing Ombudsman

## Making a complaint

If you are not satisfied with the response to an enquiry or a service received or not received from us or any of our agents or subcontractors, you can make a complaint to any of our staff in any format:

- In person
- Via a representative
- By phone
- By email- [complaints@phoenixch.org.uk](mailto:complaints@phoenixch.org.uk)
- By post
- Via our website
- Via any of our social media platforms

We will only consider complaints made within six months of the event which leads to the complaint, unless it relates to a safeguarding or Health and Safety issue, or there is a reasonable explanation for the delay.

The Service Manager responsible for the area your complaint relates to will respond to your complaint by:

- Contacting you to discuss the matter and how you would like it to be resolved
- Investigating the matter fairly.
- Providing a clear response on all points raised and explaining what we will do to try to address the issues you have raised.
- Contacting you before sending the final response to discuss the findings and explaining how you can escalate your complaint if you are not happy with our response.

At any time whilst your complaint is being investigated or responded to you can contact the Service Manager- at stage 1 or the Executive Team Member at stage 2.

## Exclusions

We will consider each complaint individually and will usually accept any complaint, however there are some cases where we cannot use this policy to resolve a complaint they include:

- Where legal action has begun.
- Reports of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) including reports of harassment, bullying, discrimination or victimisation. Reports of ASB are dealt with under our ASB Strategy. We will investigate complaints about how we handle ASB case under this policy.

- Whistleblowing. These are dealt with under our Whistleblowing Policy.
- Appeals where an appeal process exists. E.g. a recharge appeal or an appeal about rehousing which is made to the London Borough of Lewisham.
- The complaint is about a policy- we will consider a complaint about how a policy is applied.
- It involves a complaint about the amount of service charges or rent charged, which must be made by application to the First Tier Tribunal (Property Chamber). This does not include complaints about incorrect charges, services paid for but not received or the quality of service.
- It has already been dealt with under this policy within the last six months.
- It relates to a criminal offence that is being dealt with by the police. Or it relates to an insurance claim.

In all cases, we will check whether the issue raised can be considered using this policy; explain the reasons why if it cannot be used and provide alternative options to address the issue. If we advise we are unable to deal with your complaint under this policy and you disagree either party can seek independent advice from the Housing Ombudsman.

### Escalating a complaint

In the following situations, your complaint will be escalated to a member of the Executive Team, who has not previously been involved in the complaint:

- You remain dissatisfied and tell us why within 28 days of receiving our complaint response. We will increase this time if it is reasonable to do so.
- You can escalate the matter through any of our staff in any format.
- There is a petition from a group of residents, which is submitted by one, named person. A petition is any complaint signed by at least five residents (or all the residents in a block) who are all affected by the same complaint.
- There is a serious allegation about a member of staff.

The Executive Team Member will respond to your escalated complaint by:

- Contacting you to discuss the complaint and how you would like it to be resolved
- Carrying out a review of the stage one response
- Investigating the matter fully and impartially.
- Providing a clear response on all points raised and explaining what we will do to try to address the issues.
- Contacting you before sending the final response to discuss the findings and giving you the opportunity to provide feedback before any final decisions are made.
- Explaining how you can refer your complaint to a Designated Person, Tenants Panel or the Housing Ombudsman Service if you are not happy with our response.

### Referring a complaint

If you remain dissatisfied after our response to your escalated complaint, you can refer the matter to these external parties:

- A Designated Person (a local Councillor, MP or Tenant Panel) – you can refer your complaint to your choice of Designated Person after receiving our response to your escalated complaint.
- The Housing Ombudsman Service – you have the choice to refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman after receiving our response to your escalated complaint or after a response from a Designated Person. In either case, the Housing Ombudsman requires you to wait eight weeks after receiving our response to your escalated complaint before referring the matter to them.
- You can however contact the Housing Ombudsman to discuss and seek advice concerning your complaint at any time. The contact details are as follows:

**Post:**

Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152,  
Liverpool L33 7WQ

**Phone:**

0300 111 3000

**Email:**

[info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

### **Supporting staff to resolve complaints**

- We will provide support and training to all our staff to act sensitively and fairly when receiving a complaint and specific training to service managers investigating and responding to complaints.
- We will empower service managers to resolve complaints promptly and fairly and if needed escalate concerns to a member of the Executive Team.

### **Courtesy and respect**

Those making a complaint can expect to be treated with courtesy, respect and fairness at all times. We expect that you will treat our staff with the same courtesy, respect and fairness.

We will not tolerate threatening, abusive or unreasonable behaviour from anyone. If we experience this behaviour, we will cease communication immediately and review our communication approach with you. Where appropriate, we will consider a remedy linked to your tenancy agreement or lease or legal action.

### **Repetitious and vexatious complaints**

Vexatious complaints may include a person making serial complaints about different matters, raising the same or similar matters repeatedly, making persistent and unreasonable demands on staff. In response, we will tell you the impact you are having and agree a different way to respond to you. If this continues, we may refuse to deal with your complaint, limit the ways you can complain, amend our published target response times, or respond without a full investigation.

## Monitoring, Performance and Learning

We will analyse complaints to identify any trends and ensure that all individuals have equal access to the complaints process. This will include completing an annual equality impact assessment.

We will identify lessons learnt and any emerging risks; reporting findings and performance to all residents, managers, staff and the Board. This will include completing an annual self-assessment of how we meet the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code using residents' feedback. We will publish this on our website and in our annual report.

Any performance issues relating to partnering agencies or contractors will be raised with our partners at liaison meetings or contract meetings.

We will also use learning from complaints to set service improvement plans and revise our policies and procedures and will work with the Housing Ombudsman to resolve complaints and respond to any recommendations or learning the Ombudsman identifies to improve our services both directly and through a review of any reports it publishes.

Overall, we will learn from your complaints and work with you to improve services and resident satisfaction.

## Review

We will review this policy every three years, or sooner if there are changes to legislation or good practice.

## Associated documents, policies and procedures

- Complaints Procedure
- ASB Strategy
- Equality and Diversity Charter
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Compensation Policy
- Phoenix Standards (Standard 1 – Tenant Involvement & Empowerment, Dealing with Complaints).
- Complaints Procedure
- Tenants Handbook
- Leaseholders Charter
- How to investigate a complaint
- Making reasonable adjustments (to enable us to meet everyone's needs)
- Dealing with vexatious complainants and unacceptable behaviour
- Exercising discretion
- Identifying learning

## Definitions

Term	Description
Comment	An idea, suggestion, observation or opinion on how we could improve our services.
Complaint	Any expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by us or our staff and contractors affecting a customer.
Compliment	Feedback which informs us that we have provided a service well or tells us how helpful a member of staff has been.
Vexatious complaint	A complaint that is not made in good faith and pursued repeatedly regardless of its merits
Equality Impact Assessment	An assessment to check we do not unlawfully discriminate against any protected characteristic. This means checking our services and policies do not exclude anyone or prevent equal access by everyone.
Self-Assessment	Checking how we meet a set standard in this case we mean the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
Designated Person	Means an MP, Local Councillor or a designated Tenant Panel who can act as a Designated Person within the meaning of the Localism Act 2011. When acting as a Designated Person they are deciding whether a complaint can be resolved locally or needs to be referred to the Housing Ombudsman Service, on the basis that the complaint has completed the final stage of our complaint's procedure.
Housing Ombudsman Service	The Housing Ombudsman Service is set up by law to look at complaints about the housing organisations that are registered with them. The service is free, independent and impartial. The Housing Ombudsman Service resolve disputes involving tenants and lessees of social landlords.
Resident	Includes tenants, lessees and freeholders (who receive a service from us).
Tenant Panel	A Tenant Panel is a group of tenants recognised by a social landlord for the purpose of referring complaints against the social landlord. A Tenant Panel acts as a Designated Person who can consider an individual complaint after it has completed the landlord's internal complaints procedure. Our Resident Scrutiny Panel has met the criteria to perform this role and has been recognised by the Board to act in this capacity.
We/us/our	Refers to Phoenix Community Housing.
You/your	Any individual who has a complaint, comment or compliment for us.

Document Type:	Policy
Title:	Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy
Author:	Customer Experience Manager
Department Owned By:	Customer Services
Data Protection Impact Assessment:	No
Equalities Impact Assessment:	Yes
Approval Date:	
Approved By:	Board
Implementation Date:	
Status:	Final
Version No:	V3
Last updated:	
Issue Date:	
File Path:	S:\Policies and Procedures Manual\Department-Customer Services\Complaints\Complaints Comments etc\Policy\Complaints Comments and Compliments Policy FINAL

<b>DATE:</b> 26/11/2020	<b>PHOENIX COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM NO.</b> 7
<b>Open or Confidential</b>	<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Strategic Business Renewal Group Update</b>	
<b>Lead Board Members</b>	<b>Simon Barlow</b>	
<b>This item is for</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	

Previous agreed minutes are available on request. Please contact Carole Olaizola [Carole.Olaizola@phoenixch.org.uk](mailto:Carole.Olaizola@phoenixch.org.uk) or Say Ledington [say.ledington@phoenixch.org.uk](mailto:say.ledington@phoenixch.org.uk).

The Strategic Business Renewal Group was set up after the May Board to monitor our service response during the pandemic and to take a strategic overview of our renewal plans. The Group is accountable to the Executive Team (ET) and Board.

The Group comprises senior officers and 4 nominated Board members. It meets every 3 weeks currently.

In each meeting it has received updates and steered progress in priority areas agreed in its first meeting:

- Re-opening the office and contact centre
- Compliance
- Income collection
- Repairs

It has also received updates on risk and performance information across the business. As a result of these updates, it identified and agreed further renewal streams and areas for scrutiny at subsequent meetings and to date has considered:

- Development progress and risks
- Community engagement
- Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour
- Mental Health & welfare (residents and staff support)
- Resident leadership
- Hazelhurst Court

The Group has also:

- Steered the analysis of and recommendations from the Coronavirus Satisfaction and Experience Survey (reported to the September Board).

- Considered the outcomes of the staff experience survey and how it was being used to shape our plans for reopening the office.
- Considered and steered revised KPIs and Corporate Plan (both considered at the September Board).
- Considered risks and in its last meeting received specifically an update on how we were mitigating risks across our development programme
- Reviewed benchmarking reports from HouseMark and other learning.

## Key outcomes from areas considered

### 1. Reopening the office and contact centre

The office is now, and remains, open for essential staff and appointments with residents. A risk assessment is in place and limits numbers of people who can use spaces in the Green Man - for example a limit of 20 people in the office area of the Green Man at any one time. This is co-ordinated by our Facilities Team on site and via rotas agreed with teams.

The Contact Centre is operational with staff taking calls from home. Performance to date on call answering during the pandemic is exceeding our out of hours provider during the period they covered the service during the first lockdown. Contact centre staff have been given additional computer equipment to support providing these services from their home.

### 2. Compliance

Overall the position continues to improve. Compliance has improved in areas of gas, electrical, asbestos and lifts and got slightly worse, but not materially, in areas of water and fire. All regulatory returns have been provided to the Regulator on time, reports were:

- **Current repairs performance-** All emergency repairs within a reasonable timescale
- **Statutory gas compliance-** Most statutory gas checks without a material backlog developing
- **Statutory fire compliance-** All statutory fire checks
- **Asbestos, electrical, legionella and lift safety checks-** Most asbestos, electrical, legionella and lift checks without a material backlog developing
- **\*Care, supported and other accommodation for vulnerable people, where the provider is the landlord-** provider is the landlord-Maintaining safe staffing levels and essential service delivery

\*This is Hazelhurst Court

### 3. Income

Overall position for rent collection has improved from a low of 95.47% in May to 100.53% (at the end of October). The numbers of Universal Credit claimants has increased from 681 (March 2020) to 1,115 at the end of September. The numbers

of people where we have requested APA's (Alternative Payment Arrangements) has increased from 96 to 335, over the same period.

Leasehold collection original targets set in March 2020 have been met.

Void loss has increased from 0.24% at the end of March to 0.40% at the end of September. More detailed updates are included in the performance report.

#### **4. Development**

The Group noted positive liaison and working with internal and external stakeholders, like the GLA (Greater London Authority) and Lewisham Council to minimise development risks as well as updating new tenants and shared owners of delays in completing their homes.

The Group also looked at the importance of monitoring and minimising the financial impact of the slippage in the programme as well as pursuing new opportunities to ensure schemes can be substituted if needed.

The Group also discussed and reviewed contract management of our development schemes during the pandemic.

#### **5. Community Investment**

The Group considered all activities that have been adapted as a result of the pandemic and new services introduced.

##### Some adapted services are:

- Digital support - phone & video
- IAG (Information and Guidance) - phone & video
- Training - online
- Community Chest voting and mobilising new projects

##### Some new services include:

- Volunteering - Lewisham Local and FareShare – food delivery/befriending service/back office functions.
- Connecting the unconnected. Digital devices for shielding, low income, limited social networks, Phoenix Academy - £18.5k social value.
- Summer Fun online and activity bags which were collected.
- Supporting LBL – 100 apprentices in 100 days and Government Kick Start scheme for 18-24 year olds - Phoenix has offered 5 apprentice places.

The Group asked about resources and noted some savings are likely in training due to lack of onsite costs for food, facilitators and space, which means they can target more people.

The Group noted the importance of measuring the impact of all activities and evaluating training.

## 6. Tackling ASB

The Group considered both performance and case studies. There were 167 open cases (end of September 2020), this peaked at 174 at the end of July. More cases were received in Quarter 1 than we usually receive in a year.

Many cases are the product of more time spent at home or old cases re-occurring, however some are complex and serious such as animals being stabbed and hate crime.

Cases are complex and have been harder to resolve remotely and it is harder for managers to support and advise staff dealing with challenging cases remotely.

Legislation prevents us seeking possession in all but the most serious cases; however, we can seek injunctions, and this is progressing in 4 cases currently.

The Group asked about support for staff when dealing with ASB from home. Support through our employee assistance scheme is available for staff and additional seminars on wellbeing, run by MIND, have been provided for all staff.

## 7. Mental Health and Well Being

How to support residents and staff during the pandemic and beyond (as unemployment, debt etc increases) is a much-discussed topic. The Group is steering initiatives in these areas.

## 8. Repairs & Phoenix Repairs Service (PRS)

The Group receives feedback on repairs service levels during the pandemic. Currently a full service is being provided in line with service priorities notwithstanding the second lockdown period.

Risk assessments are in place for the safety of staff and residents for all repairs.

## 9. Planned Repairs

The Group receives an update on planned works. These are expected to achieve targets by the end of the year, but the Group noted the potential risk moving forward with supply chains which could affect delivery if the lockdown were to be extended.

## 10. Hazelhurst Court (Extra Care arrangements)

The Group noted the effective joint working between Phoenix and Notting Hill Housing Trust during lockdown.

**The Group also acted as a sounding board and considered:**

### (a) Coronavirus Satisfaction and Experience Survey

Full report steered by Group, reported to the September Board.



**(b) Staff survey**

Insight is helping plan the return to the office and future ICT needs of staff.

The importance of the risk assessment for returning to the office and potential value of an open day (timed drop in day) for staff to get a feel for the new environment.

Aspirations from a very high percentage of staff to work flexibly in the future- a mix of at home and in the office.

**c) Revised KPIs and Corporate Plan**

Full reports steered by Group reported to the September Board.

Finally, the Group has taken the opportunity to feedback thanks to staff for their hard work and commitment.

<b>DATE:</b> 26/11/2020	<b>PHOENIX COMMUNITY HOUSING</b> <b>Board</b>	<b>ITEM NO.</b> 8
<b>Open or Confidential</b>	<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Sustainability Strategy Update 2021-2025</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Scott Wise, Interim Strategic Asset Manager, 07515 605197</b>	
<b>Lead Board Member</b>	<b>Kerry Heath</b>	
<b>This item is for</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	

## 1 Recommendations

- A. Board to note Sustainability Strategy Update and proposed approach to be adopted to realise Phoenix vision to achieve Net Zero Carbon by 2050.
- B. Board to note the stakeholder consultation proposed prior to finalisation of the Sustainability Strategy Update 2021-2025 planned for March 2021.

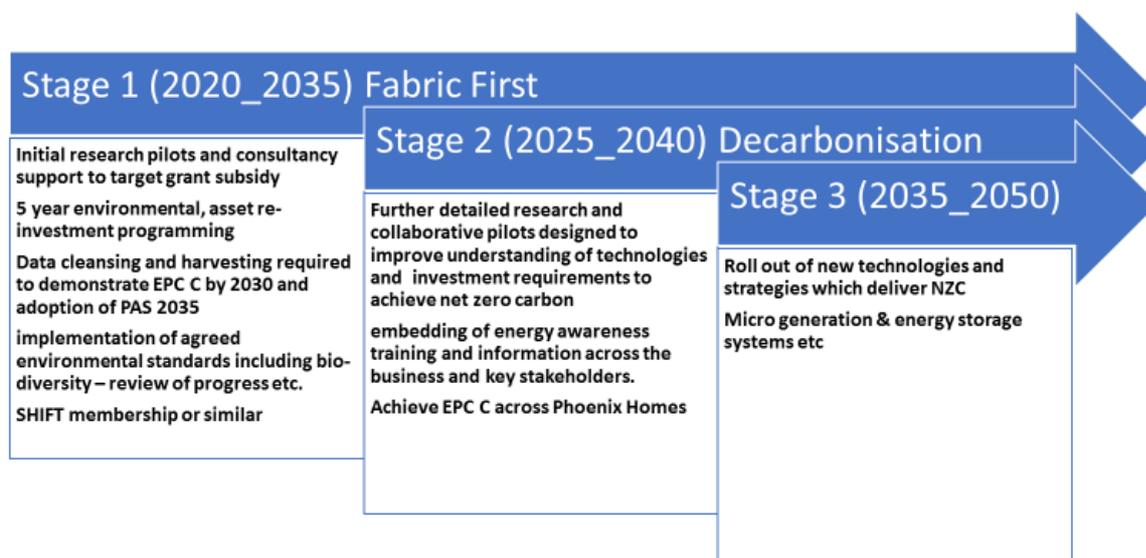
### Executive Summary

In January 2018 Phoenix approved the Sustainability Strategy 2018-2023 including a schedule of proposed activity (copy available on request). The Sustainability Strategy Update 2021-2025 reviews progress to date and sets out the staged journey being planned in order that Phoenix can achieve the business objective of Net Zero Carbon by 2050.

In summary, the Sustainability Strategy Update will focus on the following areas;

- A plan illustrating a proposed staged approach (below).
- Improved Data Quality and Management.
- Peer benchmarking via membership of SHIFT or similar index to monitor the Carbon Footprint of Phoenix.
- Collaborative working with key partners to facilitate shared technological learning, pilots, risk share and grant applications etc (eg LB Lewisham, Lewisham Homes, London Energy Transformation Initiative, the National Housing Federation, Consultancy support etc).
- Option appraisal and analysis of potential routes to achieving an average stock rating of Energy Performance Certification C by 2030.
- Continued delivery of successful initiatives including continuous stakeholder communications.
- Review strategy periodically to ensure it is aligned to the business plan, targets and latest technology, legislative and funding environment.

## Staged approach – The route to Net Zero Carbon by 2050



The staged approach set out in this plan illustrates how the strategy will be delivered in overlapping phases concentrating initially on data management and investment planning moving through shared research and learning with peer organisations and consultants finally gaining a wider understanding of the technologies and process that will need to be implemented for Phoenix to achieve the challenging net zero carbon target.

It is proposed to share the approach outlined in this report across the business and wider stakeholders prior to seeking Board approval.

Board is asked to consider whether the scope of the update proposed is appropriate..

## 2 Corporate Plan Implications / Strategic Objectives

**Strategic Objective: Sustainability and safety for our business, environment and community**

**2020-21 Corporate Objective: • Set a new sustainability strategy and start piloting new ways of building and maintaining our homes and delivering all our services to meet carbon zero targets.**

## 3 Background including appendices

Appendix A - Draft Sustainability Strategy Update 2021\_2025

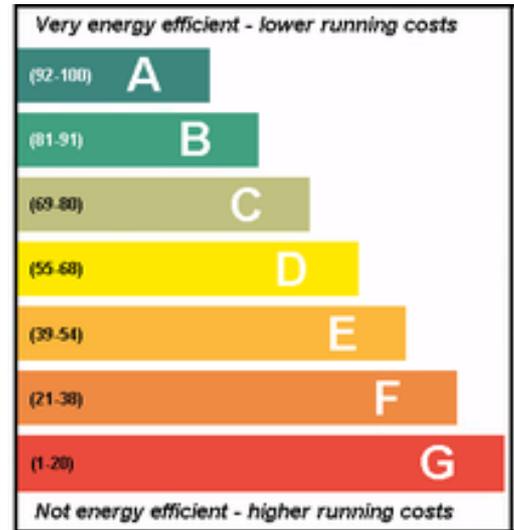
Available on request;

**Sustainability Strategy 2018-2023**

**Sustainability Strategy 2018-2023 – progress report**

### 3.1 Energy Performance

Landlords are required by law to provide tenants with a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) when letting accommodation. EPCs are a rating scheme of the energy efficiency of residential buildings in the European Union. The building is given a rating between A (Very efficient) - G (Inefficient), the EPC will also include tips about the most cost-effective ways to improve a home's energy rating (see diagram). Government now expects that all Social Housing Providers will meet EPC C by 2030. The Climate Change Act 2008 was amended in 2019 requiring the eradication of CO2 emissions and that Social Housing Providers should achieve Net Zero Carbon by 2050 to assist with this ambition.



3.2 Due to these changes it is necessary to review the previous approach identified by Phoenix and establish an approach more capable of meeting these challenges which will include the need to liaise and consult with a wider set of stakeholders including residents and operational colleagues.

3.3 Currently the average SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) score of the 25% of Phoenix assets which have a valid Energy Performance Certificate is 70 which falls within the EPC Band C. Usually assets can achieve SAP C with a modern domestic boiler, loft and/or wall insulation and modern energy efficient light bulbs.

3.4 As well as maintaining the cultural and corporate targets initiated in the original strategy including a focus on residents and the environment, the update will begin to describe the journey Phoenix will need to take in order to prepare the business to achieve this ambitious objective.

3.5 It will also be important to establish the systems and information required to be able to measure progress and performance toward achieving this target.

## 4 Communications & Consultation Implications

4.1 This report is recommending a further consultation cycle including the Gateway Committee prior to seeking final sign off in March 2021.

4.2 The Sustainability Strategy Update will include consultation and communications proposals for a whole business approach.

## 5 Other Implications

### Legal

It is likely that the new Decent Homes standard will include a requirement that social housing homes achieve EPC C by 2030. Future governance

requirements are likely to require greater detail around the evidence of energy performance of Phoenix homes and the wider business.

## **Equality & Diversity**

To be completed as part of stakeholder consultation.

## **Value for Money**

Initial costs to achieve EPC C by 2030 have been estimated at c. £6million and are to be accommodated in the latest 5 year and future investment plans. Costs for achieving zero carbon will be identified over the coming years and included in future investment plans as set out in the staged plan. Affordability may be more achievable if government grants are available.

## **6 Risk Implications**

- 6.1 The Phoenix appetite for risk in this area is - No appetite for any activity or decisions that could lead to any regulatory attention as a result of non-compliance.
- 6.2 As well as issues around data quality and management, uncertainties also exist around the future of the gas and electric grids to deliver future home energy requirements, with Brexit and the COVID pandemic presenting further uncertainties around development of these polices. There may also be issues around the energy performance of portfolios being acquired as part of the wider growth strategy. Future costs associated with Zero Carbon target are currently identified in the corporate risk register.
- 6.3 The Sustainability Strategy Update will be assessed in line with the risk appetite matrix.

## **7 Sustainability Implications**

- 7.1 The Strategy Update begins to highlight how Phoenix can achieve decarbonisation and will enable the organisation to measure reductions in CO2 emissions and environmental impact. The Environmental Improvements programme and use of the Pattern Book will ensure investment proposals are aligned to the Strategy Update.

## **8 Resource Implications**

### **Finance**

Costs associated with achieving Net Zero Carbon will be continuously monitored and reviewed as part of the rolling 5 year investment planning process and proposed staged plan.

## Staff

Much of the activity contained in the strategy update will be accommodated in existing roles. However, the breadth of activity and monitoring required by the strategy update requires a further resource review which may include additional posts and/or consultancy support.

## Property

The Sustainability Strategy Update forms an integrated part of the suite of Property strategies including the Development Strategy and Asset Management Strategy.

## IT

Increased usage of Keystone energy module and stock condition data is anticipated to assist with investment modelling using alternative technology costs. A review of Keystone is proposed to see whether it will support the details included in PAS 2035, the publicly available specification which outlines the necessary standards for the future of Retrofit.  
(Keystone is currently capable of holding Reduced data Standard Assessment Protocol data used to generate Energy Performance Certificates)

## 9 Confidentiality

Open

## Approval

Approved by (Chair)	
Date	<a href="#">Click here to select date</a>

## Phoenix Community Housing Sustainability Strategy Update 2020 2025

### **1 Vision – Corporate plan**

- 1.1 Phoenix's vision includes a target of achieving Net Zero Carbon by 2050 as required by the Climate Change Act 2008. Achieving Net Zero Carbon will involve research, planning and significant financial investment. This strategy update sets out the steps proposed to prepare the business for achieving this radical target, establishing the systems and information required to be able to measure progress and performance and make the correct strategic investment decisions in the future
- 1.2 Since its inception Phoenix have improved the energy efficiency of our homes via Decent Homes Works and energy efficiency programmes which have benefited residents, helping them to keep their homes warm and healthy at affordable costs.
- 1.3 Sustainability presents many opportunities for Phoenix as set out in the current [Sustainability Strategy 2018-2023](#). This updated strategy will target further improvements required to deliver Net Carbon Zero by 2050 that in turn will help to maximise wellbeing for our residents, increase the affordability of their energy costs, potentially achieve cost savings for the organisation in the long term and potentially generate additional investment income through grant funding. This strategy describes the opportunity for residents, staff and suppliers to work together to create a sustainable environment in which to live, work and thrive.
- 1.4 This strategy is intended to align with our Asset Management Strategy and action plans that set out our approach in more detail.

### **2 Benchmarking**

- 2.1 We can only manage what we measure: in 2016 Phoenix identified the SHIFT performance index (run by Sustainable Homes) as a means to measure and monitor progress towards best practice on sustainability in comparison with peer organisations. This strategy recommends inclusion in such a benchmarking index in order to baseline and monitor continuing improvement in reducing the organisation's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and enhancing sustainability, environmental outcomes and credentials.

### **3 Existing Phoenix Initiatives**

- 3.1 As well as uplifting the energy efficiency of our homes, Phoenix is committed to delivering environmental and sustainable improvements that enables residents, staff and stakeholders and the wider community to live and thrive within the limitations of the planet. Every member of Phoenix's board and staff and residents have a role working together to achieve this commitment and delivering this Strategy.

3.2 This approach has already delivered significant benefits for our residents and business including:

- £69,539 worth of savings, discounts, grants and debt write-offs to Phoenix residents, leaseholders and the wider community since winter 2017 via the Phoenix energy café and Phoenix Energy Champion
- 16% increase in waste recycling at the Green Man through changes in waste management and increased staff awareness.
- Electric van pilot introduced in environmental services team. Estimated saving of £1,267 p.a. in running costs compared to diesel van.
- 319 trees and new hedgerows planted in green spaces 2019-20
- Piloting of wild grass meadows on green amenity spaces to encourage wildlife and reduce the environmental damage and cost of mowing.
- Reduced use of potentially harmful chemicals: restricted use of 'Roundup' weed killer
- 50 secure bicycle storage facilities to new build developments
- Introduction of staff sustainability pledge to raise awareness of environmental and sustainability issues

3.3 Phoenix will continue to build on these outcomes so the Strategy Update will set some ambitious targets and activities.

#### **4 Meeting Government targets**

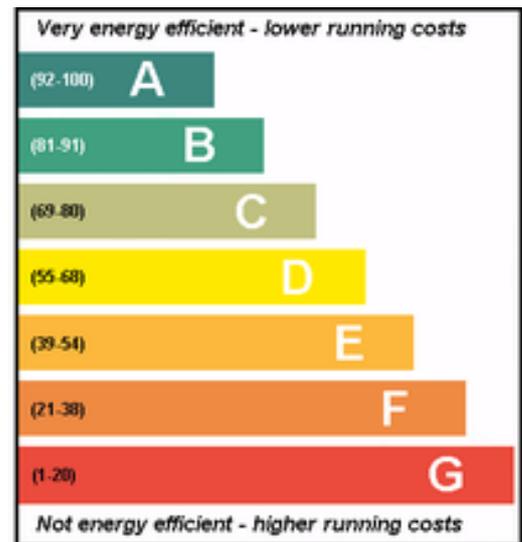
4.1 Every Phoenix resident should have the ability to be warm in their home without having to pay high heating bills. There is growing awareness of the physical and mental health consequences of living in a cold home. To help reduce carbon emissions Phoenix will improve the efficiency of our homes through energy improvement works and continue to work with residents to help inform and guide them to purchase and use energy in their homes in the most cost effective way.

4.2 As the first step Phoenix aims to meet the UK Government's target, as set out in its Fuel Poverty Strategy, to achieve a minimum energy efficiency band C rating for our homes by 2030 (See section 5). And from that we'll work towards achieving the UK Government's target to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to Net Zero Carbon by 2050.

4.3 The Government has yet to set out its road map and any potential support/funding to meet these targets. Therefore, we do not know whether we are looking at hydrogen instead of gas supplies, all electric or local energy generation.

## 5 Energy efficiency of homes

5.1 Landlords are required by law to provide tenants with a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPCs) when letting accommodation. EPCs are a rating scheme of the energy efficiency of residential buildings in the European Union. The building is given a rating between A (Very efficient) - G (Inefficient), the EPC will also include tips about the most cost-effective ways to improve a home's energy rating (see diagram). Government now expects that all Social Housing Providers will meet EPC C by 2030. The Climate Change Act 2008 was amended in 2019 requiring the eradication of CO2 emissions and that Social Housing Providers should achieve Net Zero Carbon by 2050 to assist with this ambition.



5.2 Phoenix manages around 6,100 homes and of these, Phoenix is responsible for managing the energy efficiency of 5,300 homes. Many of these properties already meet the Government's target and have achieved EPC band C. There are approximately 1,500 homes that will require works to improve them to reach this target by 2030 and a pro-active programme of activity is being established to ensure delivery of this target. Usually assets can achieve SAP C with a modern domestic boiler, loft and/or wall insulation and modern energy efficient light bulbs.

## 6 Opportunity and Risk

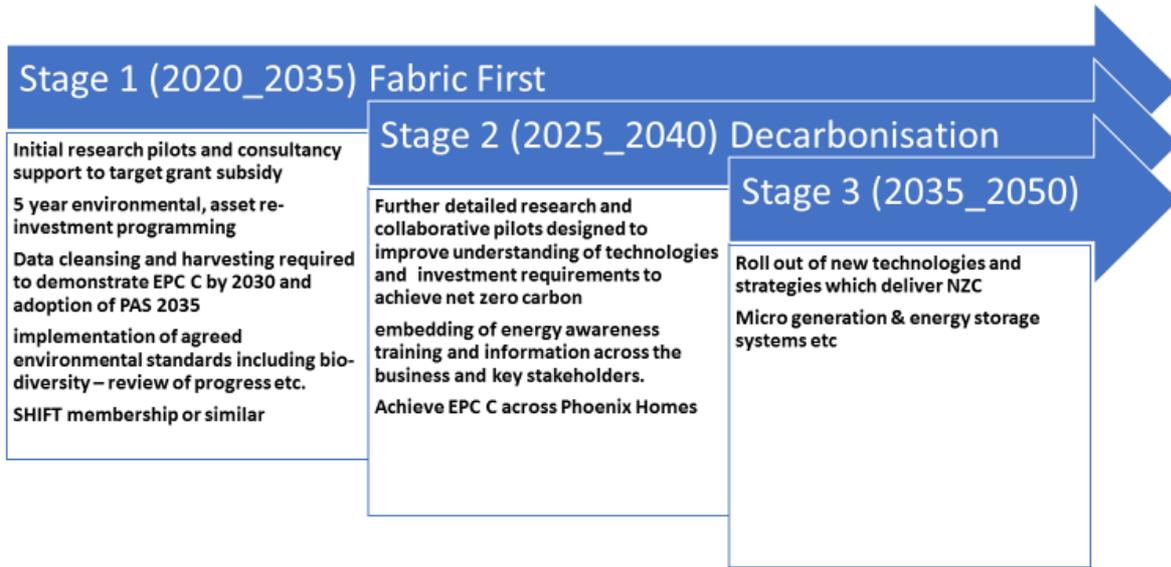
6.1 The Government's election manifesto pledged £3.86bn for a social housing decarbonisation fund over 10 years supported by emerging initiatives (BEIS). Uncertainties exist around the future of the gas and electric grids to deliver future home energy requirements with Brexit and the COVID pandemic presenting further uncertainties around development of these policies. There may also be issues around energy performance of portfolios being acquired as part of the Phoenix growth strategy.

## 7 Phoenix Early progress

7.1 This updated sustainability strategy will set out progress already made from the original strategy and how the organisation will start exploring, developing and learning the responses required to address the challenges contained within the Government's climate change targets. To achieve these goals Phoenix will integrate sustainability across all the organisation's activities and

outputs across Development, Re-investment, Corporate culture and improved data quality, capture and analysis.

## 8 Staged approach – The route to Net Zero Carbon by 2050



8.1 The staged approach set out in this plan illustrates how the strategy will be delivered in overlapping phases concentrating initially on data management and investment planning moving through shared research and learning with peer organisations and consultants finally gaining a wider understanding of the technologies and process that will need to be implemented for Phoenix to achieve the challenging net zero carbon target.

8.2 Implementation of these stages will take place across the following themes:

### New homes and Development

The Passivhaus model coupled with low carbon heating technologies will help ensure Phoenix new developments are approaching the net carbon zero requirements and minimising future investment requirements.

For Phoenix new developments there is a need to specify the correct level of energy data required at an asset level when development information is handed over to the wider business.

### Corporate Culture - Our offices and operations

Helping residents to reduce energy use

We're committed to providing seasonal energy advice café at least 100 our residents every year. £69,000 in resident cost reduction for energy and water over the last 3 years.

Procurement - Influencing our suppliers

SHIFT (or similar peer carbon footprint index membership)

## **Re-investment – including collaborative research and partnership working**

Phoenix are planning pilot projects including the modification of a void as an energy technology lab which will help the business learn how different solutions can be installed and actively monitored.

Larger projects are to be initiated working in collaboration with the London Borough of Lewisham and Lewisham Homes supported by specialist sustainability consultants to optimise learning opportunities, access to government funding and share risks associated with exploration of unproven technologies. Further shared learning will be undertaken with other sub regional Asset Management Groups including the National Housing Federation, London Energy Transformation Initiative

Work is also required to accumulate greater quantities and quality data regarding the energy performance of Phoenix assets. Increasingly it will be necessary to assemble more detailed information to apply the PAS 2035 retrofit standard. PAS 2035 is the publicly available specification which outlines the necessary standards for the future of Retrofit.

Research will include an assessment of sustainability technology including hydrogen, ground sourced heat pumps, air sourced heat pumps and opportunities and techniques to deliver carbon offsetting.

Specialist Consultancy support

## Appendix 1 – Stage 1 - Revised/New Actions

1 Energy - data management improvement plan to be developed to include the following;

A Data cleanse of existing energy datasets is underway including processes which will ensure a consistent approach to lodging of energy performance data.

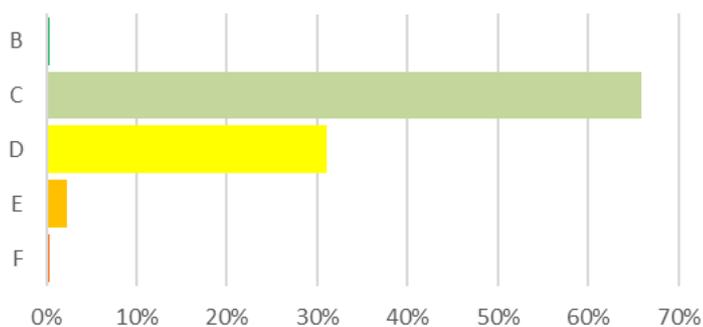
Further validation work is required to check for obsolete data and to ensure all available information is included in the dataset especially from new build assets where information is currently held in spreadsheets.

This review is also recommending that where possible EPCs should be requested to ensure that the overall score can be continuously shown to improve as investment is carried out either via voids, other improvement programmes or new developments and to improve the proportion of assets with up to date energy information currently c. 25%.

An associated process map is being developed to instruct contractors how EPCs are to be captured and transferred to the Keystone Energy module. A table of the current performance of EPC data held in the Keystone energy module is illustrated below.

### Phoenix SAP Profile September 2020

(1327 assets)



EPC Band	Number of Phoenix Homes with EPC unvalidated
B	5
C	874
D	413
E	30
F	5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1327</b>

Target date Autumn 2021

2 Outstanding Action - Ravenscar Business Case Executive Summary

Create pilot options for retrofitting existing homes that do not have a gas supply including the current opportunity at Ravenscar Road to test measures, impacts, costs and scalability and undertake post occupation analysis to ensure new systems and technologies' workability and affordability with residents. (i.e. does not increase fuel costs to residents)

Target date Summer 2021 – Lead Adam Pope

3 Capture improvements in Energy performance for Voids and Major works

Revise Void and Major works standards to enhance sustainability and energy performance of building elements during major works and internal refit opportunities including void standard review and energy improvement measures Schedule of Rate pick list.

Target date March 2021 (for implementation of 2021-2022 programme)

4 PRS training requirement

Draft specification and amendments to Contractor (PRS) Task Order – PRS capability development/training etc

Target March 2021

6 Refine Performance monitoring

Energy data to be recorded and reported by archetype and globally on the Keystone Energy module and to be considered as a corporate KPI

Target March 2021

6a Properties at SAP E and below

Pro-actively pursue measures to address properties falling below SAP E including a review of whether escalating to improvement is appropriate – flag to ensure captured at void for energy upgrade.

Target March 2021

7 Responsive Boiler replacement –

At the September 2020 board meeting it was agreed to demonstrate better value for money by not replacing operational equipment based on age information. Instead, PCH will provide a resource for the Phoenix gas contractor to replace equipment – central heating boilers - based on efficiency and repair history.

Policy to be implemented from April 2021

7a Scenario modelling – for alternative technology – Affordability Options Appraisals

Review our Asset Management data and model financial implications of alternative energy efficiency approaches through Keystone, for example reviewing all boiler renewals in the next 5 years and in higher risk blocks and create options to accommodate alternative technology investment profiles

<b>Operational Assumptions</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26 onwards</b>
Energy efficiency works	£250k	£500k	£500k	£500k	£500k

Target March 2021

<b>DATE:</b> 26/11/2020	<b>PHOENIX COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM NO.</b> 9
<b>Open or Confidential</b>	<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Corporate Plan progress on milestones and targets for Quarters 1 and 2 2020-21</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Say Leddington Head of Performance, Risk and Monitoring 0203 121 0193 Say.leddington@phoenixch.org.uk</b>	
<b>Lead Board Members</b>	<b>Anne McGurk</b>	
<b>This item is for</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	

**1 Recommendations**

- A. The Board discussed and notes progress in delivering the corporate plan 2020-25 for Quarters 1 and 2 2020-21.**

**Executive Summary**

The Board receives a progress update on key projects, milestones and performance indicators in the Corporate Plan every 6 months. This report covers Quarters 1 and 2 2020-21 and reflects progress against the revised corporate plan agreed by the Board in September 2020.

The operating environment for Quarters 1 and 2 have been unprecedented and challenging yet during this time new opportunities have been seized and both resilience and determination demonstrated to deliver our plans and maintain services.

**Overall**

Key outputs and outcomes to highlight in the delivery of the plan to date include:

- Continued financial strength, demonstrated by increasing rental income collection from 95.47% (at its lowest in May 2020) to 100.53% in October 2020 and exceeding leasehold service charge collection targets at levels set prior to the pandemic.
- Completing final grant draw down and receipt for the Fellowship Inn from the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- Continued delivery of our Digital Together projects and extended them to enable resident events and consultation to proceed with no additional costs or slippage to the overall programme.
- Successfully invoking our business continuity plan, supporting and resourcing staff to work from home (where possible), and enabling our governance structures to continue to operate effectively.
- Contacting over 1800 residents by phone to check on their welfare and completing a satisfaction and experience survey to steer our renewal plans.
- Increasing resident satisfaction to 85% for tenants and 71% for leaseholders.

- Maintaining Investors in People Gold as well as positive staff engagement through the pandemic.
- Completing small restructures in safety and compliance and income collection teams to support service delivery.
- Setting renewal strands with milestones and risk management activity to support recovery and innovation as well as flexibility to move between tiers and lockdown conditions.
- Resourcing our contact centre to work from home and take calls from August 2020; resulting in improved performance compared to our out of hours service and our performance in 2019-20 (pre- pandemic).
- Completing a range of engagement activities and consultations and the continuing the Academy.
- Reviewing 17 policies, progressing both our Development Strategy and Sustainability Strategy as well as continuing plans to meet new fire safety and building safety requirements.
- Progressing new build development opportunities and stock transfer opportunities and ensuring that the risk of loss of development grant is minimised.

Due to the challenging internal and external operating environment; there has been some slippage in some activities and, as noted in the separate performance report on the agenda for this meeting, there are areas where we are working hard to either maintain or improve performance. Key areas to highlight are:

- Ensuring we maintain decency standards and complete fire safety works, as planned, by year end. This is on track currently but faces some risks which we are mitigating through ongoing liaison and implementation of contingency plans with contractors and Phoenix Repairs Service.
- Maintaining landlord safety compliance- our position overall has improved but faces risks due to the national lockdown and the reluctance of some residents to allow us access to their homes.
- Need to reduce void turn around-this is expected to improve by December as a new contractor completed mobilisation in October 2020.
- Slippage in development handovers- ongoing monitoring of progress to minimise slippage and contractors' risks.
- Managing the increased needs of our community- we know our community are likely to have been impacted more than other communities as it is one of the most deprived in London and against some indicators nationally. This is reflected in a 67% increase in open ASB cases reported compared to 2019-20; over 10,000 cases being raised on our CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system and follow ups from our survey to support people with financial inclusion, employment and to get connected, digitally.
- Maintaining a safe environment at Hazelhurst Court extra care scheme.
- Ensuring resident leadership is not diluted and all resident voices are heard.
- Need to improve the consistency of customer contact and complaints handling to fully meet our Phoenix standards and the Housing Ombudsman's new Code for Complaints Handling.

The new Social Housing White Paper was also published on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November 2020 and a summary of the proposals will be provided to the Board separately.

Below is a summary of KPI performance, key projects and policies to support the delivery of the priorities.

### Key Projects

In setting the key projects, milestones and performance indicators to support the delivery of the 2020-21 Corporate priorities the Board agreed 11 key projects. Progress is summarised below:

✓ ▲	Ongoing and on track	7
◀ ▶	Some delays	4
x	Deferred	0

Key Project	Progress
1. Steered by resident and staff feedback deliver our renewal plans prioritising the safety of residents and staff, securing the ongoing viability of our business and resident leadership and continuing to prepare for the future.	✓ ▲
2. Deliver community and staff initiatives to promote wellbeing and mental health awareness in response to staff and resident feedback surveys	✓ ▲
3. Getting to know our residents better so we can improve our services	◀ ▶
4. Delivering actions from our governance reviews and reviewing our subsidiaries, including how our repairs services are delivered.	✓ ▲
5. Enhancing our approach to resident safety	✓ ▲
6. Delivering Digital Together projects.	✓ ▲
7. Building 200 new homes.	◀ ▶
8. Development Strategy	✓ ▲
9. Setting our Sustainability Strategy to help us achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050.	✓ ▲
10. Delivering our fencing programme	◀ ▶
11. Delivering our environmental programmes	◀ ▶

One of the projects the Board agreed to defer to 2021-22 was “Reviewing all our service standards”. With the Social Housing White Paper now published we will need to start this process in Quarter 4.

Structures below ET to support the greater delegation from the Board continue to operate including:

- Project Board to look at all the strands relating to our Digital Together programme.
- Safeguarding Panel, with terms of reference reviewed in Quarter 2 2019-2020.
- Procurement Working Group, with terms of reference set 2018-19.
- Development and Acquisition Risk Panel, with terms of reference set 2018-19.
- The Information Governance Group set up in 2017-18 to support our project to enhance and maintain data protection compliance, terms of reference set 2017-18.
- Business Renewal Operations group, terms of reference set 2020-21.

In addition, we have started to explore structures for delivering the building safety and fire safety requirements as part of the key project- “Enhancing our approach to resident safety”

Projects (Key projects, projects monitored by ET and business as usual ones)

✓	Completed	14
▲	On track	113
◀▶	Some delays	41
x	Deferred	1
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>169</b>

As it is part way through the year and many projects are business as usual, a high number are on track rather than complete at this stage of the year, and 41 have some delays. The risks linked to project slippages have been highlighted.

The project identified for deferral is “*Implement changes to the Governance Structure for Home Makers and PAS as part of the review of Board effectiveness*” and is highlighted in the governance report elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.

KPIs

	Met	58
	Nearly met	11
	Not met	35
	Out of tolerance (and not met)* included	15
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104</b>

A more detailed report on KPIs is included on the agenda for this Board meeting. It includes actions being taken to bring indicators back on track and explaining the impact of the pandemic. There are also more indicators to support the plan and our Phoenix Standards that will be summarised in the annual report and KPI report for residents at year end.

Policies and Strategies:

✓	Completed	17
✓ ▲	On track	34
◀▶	Some delays	0
x	Deferred or off track	1
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>

The number of policies due for review this year is high, reflecting a 3-year cycle in policy reviews; this has also meant a number do not require significant change. An additional 7 policies and 2 strategies are also on the agenda for this meeting. Work is progressing on the Asset Management strategy which has been deferred till 2021-22 and 2 other key strategies were deferred by the Board in September 2020.

The additional policy that has been deferred is the parking policy. This is noted in the policy report elsewhere on this agenda. The full policy log is available on request.

### **Assurance**

Examples of assurance to the Board on progress delivering each priority is available on request, including more detailed reports considered by the Board, audits, performance and Scrutiny Panel reports.

The Scrutiny Panel has continued to assess how we are meeting the Phoenix standards and made recommendations for improvement through their scrutiny reports and by specifically looking at the performance indicators that support the Standards.

## **2. Corporate Plan Implications / Strategic Objectives**

**Strategic Objective:** Resident Leadership and effective governance

**2020-21 Corporate Objective:** • Deliver service improvements and efficiencies in response to satisfaction surveys, insight and scrutiny as well as changes to our legal and regulatory framework.

## **3 Background including appendices**

Updates on the Corporate Plan Priorities and KPIs, milestones and projects for 2020-25 are reported by exception to the Board every 6 months.

In September 2020 the Board considered a review of the Corporate Plan 2020-25 and approved the addition of 2 new key projects and the deferral of 5 key projects and 3 strategies in response to the pandemic. Progress in this report is against the revised corporate plan.

## **4 Communications & Consultation Implications**

The Board Away Day and subsequently the Corporate Plan Steering Group looked at the Corporate Plan, Budget for 2020-21, stress tests, emerging risks and changes to our operating environment. Since then a Board Working Group has steered the financial plan assumptions and the Strategic Business Renewal Group has looked at our response to the pandemic and future plans.

## **5 Other Implications**

There are no other specific implications in this report. However, the delivery of the Corporate Plan has implications covering all three of the areas below:

**Legal-** Some actions will require us to follow the law and good practice as well as obtain legal advice before and as part of proceeding.

**Equality & Diversity-** there is a specific annual corporate priority to:



*“Deliver priorities for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion getting to know our residents and staff better so we can adapt our services to meet needs and work together to build sustainable communities in our area”.*

As well as this priority, the Equality Impact of other projects, proposed changes or actions will need to be assessed.

**Value for Money-** there is a specific annual corporate priority to:

*“Deliver our Value for Money and efficiency plans, so we can deliver our ambitions and confidently maintain our financial viability in the long term”.*

As well as this priority, the VFM implications of other projects, proposed changes or actions will need to be assessed.

Value for Money outcomes will continue to be reported against each of the Corporate Plan priorities.

## 6 Risk Implications

The Corporate Plan reflects the risk appetite agreed by the Board in July. Risk management is embedded into the golden thread on page 4 of the plan and the section of the Plan- “Monitoring the delivery of the Corporate Plan” (page 8) sets out how the combined monitoring of the Corporate Plan and Risk Management Strategy provides the Board with assurance that we are delivering the Corporate Plan.

## 7 Sustainability Implications

There are no specific sustainability implications in this report. However, the Corporate Plan has both strategic and corporate priorities linked to sustainability and a key project- “Setting our Sustainability Strategy to help us achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050”.

## 8 Resource Implications

**Finance-** budgets for delivering the Corporate Priorities are included in the 2020-21 budget and updated 40-year financial plan, which was approved by the Board in September 2020.

**Staff-** staff resources for delivering the corporate priorities are included in the 2020-21 budget.

**Property-** priorities are identified in the plan and should result in ongoing improvement and investment in our homes that is both innovative and efficient as well as based on measurement and appraisal of the returns on our assets and their environmental impact.



**IT-** the delivery of our ICT plans and Digital Together Programme provide a framework to support all our corporate priorities and gain efficiencies; whilst providing our residents with greater choice in how they access our services.

## 9 Confidentiality

Open

### Approval

Approved by (Chair)	
Date	<a href="#">Click here to select date</a>