



Minutes from the:

## ***St Albans City & District Council Tenant and Leaseholder Forum***

1. **Date / Time:** 27 February 2025, 6 pm – 7:30 pm
2. **Attendees:** Five tenants and leaseholders Representing properties in Aldwick Court, Haig House, Aldwick Court, Haig Close, and Tennyson Road.  
Although a quorum (six attendees) was not met, it was agreed that the meeting would proceed, with actions and discussions shared in the minutes for wider review and no votes were taken.

*Tenants are passionate about sharing their perspectives and providing valuable insights to enhance resident engagement. Likewise, the Council is committed to listening to their lived experiences and using them to inform better decision-making—a collaborative effort that benefits everyone.*

3. **Disclosure of personal and / or pecuniary interests:** No personal or pecuniary interests were declared.

### **4. Minutes of the previous meeting (including matters arising)**

The forum noted that the minutes from the previous meeting held on 16 January 2025 had been published online, despite the meeting not having met quorum [as will these minutes] given the value of the content.

### **5. Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) Results for 24/25**

- The survey was sent to 4,023 tenants; with 753 responses received, producing a credible 19% response rate.
- Weighting applied to avoid demographic bias (to statistically match the characteristics of the respondents with the overall tenant population).
- Concerns raised by group that 19% is not representative of all tenant views and discussed opportunities to increase engagement.
- Issues highlighted regarding digital access being a potential barrier, particularly for elderly tenants unfamiliar with QR codes.
- Tenants suggested alternative survey methods, including door-knocking, whilst understanding this would come at an increased cost.
- Calls for clearer communication and a more streamlined process next year to avoid any duplication and cost.
- The actual results demonstrated a picture the group recognised and help focus attention for future Forum meetings, particularly around repairs and complaints.

## **6. Tenant Engagement & Communication**

- Introduction of a customer engagement platform expected by summer – received positively as it will help this Forum gain broader, real time tenant insights.
- Recommendation to highlight surveys and key updates in newsletters.
- The Forum warmly welcomed the opportunity to pilot the launch of the system with a bespoke, closed group for trialling key features.
- Discussion on generational differences in engagement and the need for tailored communication for harder to reach groups.

## **7. Repairs & Complaint Handling**

- Overall tenant satisfaction declined from 62% (2023) to 55% (2024).
- Key concerns: repair delays, lack of updates, ineffective complaints process.
- Tenants requested clearer timelines and better tracking of repair requests.
- SW confirmed the Council is reviewing complaint handling processes and updates will be shared with this group and is a possible Focus Group topic later this year.

## **8. Council Housing Perception & Benefits**

- Discussion on tenant responsibility and perception of social housing.
- Tenants suggested promoting Council housing benefits (e.g. security of tenure, lower rent etc) in newsletters.
- Acknowledgment of social housing stigma and the need for positive engagement.

## **9. Leaseholder Concerns**

- Leaseholders feel overlooked, with questions raised about service charges vs. services received.
- Proposal for clearer communication on cleaning schedules and estate maintenance.
- Tenants suggested a noticeboard system to track cleaning schedules, which we will update this group on at future meetings.

## **10. Building Safety**

- Concerns were raised about fire safety, and associated evacuation procedures. Requested Housing Officers review the fire safety plans with regard any vulnerable tenants.
- Issues with faulty fire alarms and inadequate communication during tests at Aldwyck Court. Agreed to refer this issue to the compliance team and update



will be provided at the next meeting.

## **11. Customer Journey & Service Improvements**

- Tenants called for a review of the customer journey from issue reporting to resolution.
- Concerns over some communication gaps between tenants and Council departments.
- Proposal for 'secret shopper' calls to assess staff service levels agreed by Forum members journaling their customer journey with real, live issues they report.
- Review of MyStAlbans service highlighted inconsistent response times.

## **12. Actions Agreed**

- Improve survey participation through diverse collection methods.
- Enhance repair response times and complaints process by reporting performance and facilitating Focus Groups.
- Strengthen communication via regular newsletters and digital platforms.
- Review cleaning and service charge discrepancies for leaseholders.
- Ensure fire safety measures are clearly communicated, with a plan being presented to the next Forum meeting.
- Evaluate response time expectations for MyStAlbans.

## **13. Conclusion**

- The tenants are passionate about sharing their perspectives and contributing valuable insights to improve resident engagement. The Council is equally committed to listening to their lived experiences, using these to shape better-informed decisions – a collaborative effort that benefits all.
- The forum focused on key themes of respect, communication, repairs, and service improvement.
- Tenants stressed the importance of meaningful engagement and timely follow-up.
- The Council reaffirmed its commitment to improving communication and addressing concerns.

## **14. Date of Next Meeting**

- Date / Time: 27 March 2025, 6 pm – 7:30 pm