



Minutes from the:

St Albans City & District Council Tenant and Leaseholder Forum

Date / Time: 26 June 2025, 6 pm – 7:30 pm

1. Attendees

Two tenants attended the meeting, representing Aldwick Court and Masefield Road. Council officers included the Resident Engagement Officer.

As the meeting was not quorate, formal decisions could not be made.

However, the forum proceeded informally to enable discussion and capture feedback

Tenants provided constructive feedback and raised several important issues. Officers shared updates and committed to taking forward key actions. The Council reaffirmed its commitment to listening, learning from resident experience, and improving services through respectful, two-way communication.

2. Declarations of Interest

No personal or financial interests were declared. One attendee referenced previous financial support received from a councillor. This was acknowledged by the officer present and deemed not to present a conflict of interest.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

As the meeting was not quorate, the minutes of the Forum held on 29 May 2025 could not be formally approved. However, key updates were shared. Officers confirmed that regeneration works at Haig Close have been approved and that further information is being sought regarding planned works in the Cotlandswick area. Some attendees reported receiving recent email updates about ongoing projects. Officers are committed to ensuring that previous minutes are published online and circulated consistently, in line with expectations of transparency and regulatory good practice.

A wider discussion took place on the importance of mutual respect between residents, contractors and Council teams. It was acknowledged that cultural change is taking place and must be embedded across all services.

4. Tenancy Sustainment Policy

An overview was provided of the Council's new Tenancy Sustainment Policy, which outlines support available to tenants who may be at risk of losing their tenancy. The policy does not apply to leaseholders. It sets out how welcome visits will be used to identify needs early, and explains the roles of different



teams, including Housing Officers, Income Officers, the Community Protection team and relevant external services. Officers explained how support may vary depending on the type of need, including issues such as mental health, addiction, or anti-social behaviour.

The demoted tenancy process was explained, including how secure tenants involved in serious breaches may be moved to a less secure tenancy for a minimum of 12 months, with the opportunity to return to a full tenancy if behaviour improves. The consent process was also discussed, including how carers or family members may be involved in cases where the tenant is unable to sign independently.

Residents raised concerns about the complexity of tenancy documents and the language used in policies. There was feedback that some tenants do not fully understand their rights and responsibilities at sign-up. It was suggested that printed handbooks and plain English summaries should be provided more consistently, and that more support should be available through face-to-face engagement, community days and targeted communication. Attendees emphasised the link between tenancy sustainment and community cohesion.

5. Resident Engagement

Officers reaffirmed the Council's commitment to meaningful resident engagement. Current activity includes regular drop-in sessions and the use of CX Feedback to better understand the lived experiences of tenants. A data review is underway, led by an intern working to strengthen the Council's understanding of vulnerable tenants. This work will inform future CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system improvements. Officers acknowledged that better use of data is essential to identifying need and delivering earlier, more proactive support.

6. Mystery Shopping and Customer Feedback

Recent mystery shopping results have been reviewed by management. Residents shared both positive and negative experiences. Some praised the service provided by waste contractors, while others raised concerns about the voicemail service, particularly out-of-hours access and the lack of follow-up. Officers agreed to escalate these concerns.

Suggestions were made to improve how voicemail messages are triaged, including clear messaging on expected response times. Residents also emphasised the need for consistent communication across Council and contractor teams and called for stronger follow-up, particularly in cases involving rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, or multiple vulnerabilities.

7. ISO 9001 and Service Continuity

A discussion took place about the Council's alignment with ISO 9001 quality



standards. Residents queried whether responsibilities are appropriately transferred when staff are absent, and highlighted cases where services appeared to stall. Officers acknowledged the issue and confirmed that internal processes are being reviewed to improve service continuity, resilience and accountability.

8. Ombudsman and Complaints Handling

Residents raised concerns about inconsistent Stage 2 complaint responses. Examples included delays, responses being issued on the deadline day, and a lack of empathy or ownership in some replies. Officers confirmed that the complaints process is under review and that new templates are being developed to ensure responses are consistent, timely and in line with Housing Ombudsman guidance. There is a clear intention to raise standards and ensure complaint handling reflects the Council's values.

9. Grounds Maintenance and Estate Services

Concerns were raised about the quality of grounds maintenance. Residents noted that litter is not always cleared before grass cutting takes place, and that some complaints have gone unanswered. Officers confirmed that these issues would be escalated and discussed with the relevant contractors to ensure improvements are made.

10. Next Steps

A feedback session with Morgan Sindall will be scheduled once further tenant insight has been gathered. The upcoming Community Day at Caledon Community Centre, London Colney, on 19 July 2025, will be promoted more widely to encourage greater attendance. Recruitment to the Forum continues, with a focus on attracting leaseholders and tenants from underrepresented areas. A full review of the Repairs Handbook is underway, with the aim of improving accessibility and clarity. Issues relating to voicemail access and out-of-hours communication have been logged for review. Work is ongoing to update tenant data and feed it into the new CRM system. Grounds maintenance concerns will be investigated and reported back.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next Tenant and Leaseholder Forum will take place on Thursday, 31 July 2025, 6 pm – 7.30 pm