

Meeting minutes

Meeting: Customer Involvement Panel
Date: 12 June 2025
Venue: Wednesfield Board Room
Time: 10:00 – 14:00

In attendance:

Louise Talbot (LT)	-	CIP Tenant member – Chair
Irene Chesire (IC)	-	CIP Tenant member
Juliet Logan (JL)	-	CIP Tenant member
Mike Modelsky (MM)	-	CIP Tenant member
Richard Hall (RH)	-	CIP Leaseholder member
Sandra Roe (SR)	-	CIP Tenant member
Theresa Phillips (TP)	-	CIP Tenant member

Wolverhampton Homes Staff in attendance:

Ian Gardner (IG)	-	Director of Property Services (item 3)
Simon Banfield (SB)	-	Head of Assets and Stock Investment (item 3)
Andrew Finch (AF)	-	Customer Experience Manager (item 4)
Charlotte Palmer-Hollinshead (CPH)	-	Communications Business Partner (item 6)
Jenny Billingsley (JB)	-	Communications and Engagement Manager
Katie Dugmore (KD)	-	Talent Attraction and Resourcing Specialist
(notes)		

1.0	Apologies and Introductions Louise Talbolt	
1.1	Mark Cooper, Gemma Taylor, Alzie Logan, Amen Amiebenomo and James Lavelle	
2.0	Minutes of the previous meeting – 10 April 2025	
2.1	Agreed as an accurate record.	
2.2	Meeting dates for 2026 confirmed (every 8 weeks, excluding half-term). Dates will be circulated - no further action required.	
3.0	St Mary's University, Damp and Mould Research Project – Silvia Riva IG provided an overview of the project. WH and CIP will work with St Mary's University on a research scoping project in collaboration with the University of Wolverhampton. Focus: Persistent minor damp and mould complaints, largely due to poor ventilation practices.	

	<p>Aim: Understand customer perception, underlying causes, and improve targeting of interventions.</p> <p>A draft scope is being developed. Silvia will engage residents for insight and report back to CIP.</p> <p>SR explained that Research will take place via online focus groups between June and July. Dates to be confirmed shortly.</p> <p>Key aim: Capture customer experiences, explore reasons for reporting, and co-produce solutions. Tenant voice central to the project's success.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR to confirm focus group dates. If delayed, sessions will be scheduled for September. • MM, TP, and SR expressed availability and flexibility. 	
4.0	Directorate and Head of Service Q&A – Ian Gardner, Director of Property Services and Simon Banfield, Head of Assets and Stock Investment	
4.1	<p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wolverhampton City Council as the Landlord and shareholder. WH delivers core services (e.g., ASB, repairs, compliance) on behalf of the Council under a management agreement. • Strategic asset management is overseen by the Head of Assets and Stock Investment; funding decisions go through full council sessions. • WH manages contractors like Wates and United Living on the Council's behalf. 	
4.2	<p>Operational Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers often report / request issues outside standard repair scope (e.g., full kitchen refits). • Communication and expectations need to be improved. 	
4.3	<p>Repairs Service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource strain post-pandemic: demand has increased by 60%. • Recurrent issues with plastering, aging kitchen fittings, and damp/mould. • Roughly £2M/year spent on damp and mould, with £300k on treatment. Improvements include installation of fans and wall insulation. • Current vacancies: 63 (mostly trade roles). Recruitment and retention remain challenging. 	
4.4	<p>Inspection & Communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat callouts linked to trade shortages and training. 	

<p>4.5</p> <p>4.6</p> <p>4.7</p> <p>4.8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection summaries to be digitised and customers will receive written updates. • Where summaries are not issued to the customer – this will be followed up. <p>Panel Response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel supports electronic inspection summaries. <p>Stock Surveys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past 2 years: focus on houses and low-rise flats. This year: pivot to high-rise. • Surveys run on a 5-year cycle. • Purpose: Assess stock condition, ensure safety, meet decency standards. <p>Additional Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Revenue Account – demands on this have increased. • Concerns raised over repair effectiveness. IG clarified that stats show good emergency repair performance but acknowledged planned works do not reflect as strong a position. <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIP to send follow-up questions for IG and SB to be submitted for written responses to KD. • Follow up on adaptation concerns for Irene (wheelchair access and housing transfer) – KD. • Theresa to send details of the replaced roof on soon-to-be-demolished bungalows to Simon Bamfield. 	
<p>5.0</p>	<p>Customer Resolution performance and stats – Andrew Finch</p> <p>Refer to Presentation.</p> <p>Overview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members were provided with an overview of the complaints policy; full version available via provided link on presentation. • July meeting: review of case studies and feedback from CIP. <p>Feedback Requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the policy understandable? Any gaps? <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 to Stage 2 Transition: AF explained that the transition involves liaising with the local service manager to formulate a response. • Stage 2 Review: Always conducted by a different person to ensure impartiality. • Independent Review: Stage 2 includes an independent review at a senior manager level, requiring director sign-off. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority of complaints are received online or via email; low seasonal variation, except for ASB and heating. Repair complaints mostly relate to WH, with a small number relating to external contractors. <p>Customer Communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LT raised the need for automated messages during high call volumes e.g. weather related increases. Acknowledgement emails could improve perception and reduce frustration. <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request feasibility of automated responses acknowledging complaint receipt. 	
6.0	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) – Matt Beddoes, Refer to presentation	
6.1	<p>Presentation made to members.</p> <p>Discussion Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Drive Tenant Meeting Room: MM mentioned that the paint has been peeling for a while. The process was smooth with Bethany Hinton, and it was managed quickly. Tracker Maintenance: Keeping a tracker on medium and easy tasks to ensure they are being managed effectively. CSR Application Process: Applications must go through SMT. Garden Area: Looking at making the garden area more child friendly. Tenant Applications: Continue forwarding applications for tenants. Mention this in the "Let's Talk" session and speak to the CRO. Bushbury Concerns: JL mentioned issues in Bushbury, mainly affecting elderly and disabled residents. The Council has installed slides, which has caused some problems. Communication: this should inform customers about the application process for funding. Consider using letters and social media platforms.. Positive Feedback: CIP is very positive about the CSR feedback, and this proves is much improved. 	
7.0	<p>Matthew Pickerill – Update on activity since December 2024</p> <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract Division: The work has been split into two areas to ensure the right experts are in place. New Contract: The first contract was awarded to Krinkles UK in April 2025. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements: New machinery has been introduced, and CIP has noted visible improvements. 	

7.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staffing: Transition from seasonal to permanent staff has improved retention and local knowledge. ○ Customer Liaison: A Customer Liaison Officer is now in place for ground maintenance contracts with key contacts for site inquiries. <p>Q&A: Glentworth Gardens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: Concerns about areas being missed – would CIP be able to be provided with a list of designated works to be able to provide feedback? • Answer: The council and WHS are responsible for different parts. Maps are checked and reviewed. New technology should help rectify missed areas quickly. Any missed Alison is the point of contact for contractors. Please report any missed areas. • Community Issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: Reports of neglected community areas and ineffective communication between WHS and WCC. What can be done? • Answer: The council and WHS handle different areas. Maps are reviewed regularly. New technology should address missed areas. Site contact should be informed of any issues. 	
7.2	<p>Tree and grounds maintenance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds Maintenance Contract: tender valuation completed. • New Contract: Starting 01 July 2025 for tree maintenance. Two companies will handle inspection and work, streamlining the process. 	
7.3	<p>Additional Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather Impact: Favourable weather has helped monitor new contractors. • Customer Feedback: Ensuring customers report issues. Overall, the situation is positive, and monitoring continues. 	
8.0	<p>Tenant Satisfaction Measures update – Charlotte Palmer Hollinshead, Communications Business Partner</p>	
8.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results for 2024 – 2025 were shared with WH this week (all managing agents and WH specific) • Publication due 23 June 2025 and will be available on the website. Link will be shared with CIP. • Comms campaign being developed to ensure customers are signposted to these. • Full overview will be presented to the next CIP meeting with highlights shared including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overall satisfaction 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increases compared to the previous years (e.g., listens and acts) ○ Areas where this has stayed the same (e.g., easy to deal with) ○ Decreases compared to the previous year (e.g., approach to ASB) ○ Recommendations for improvement: repairs and maintenance, communication and customer contact, and communal areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TSM data is used to drive decisions (e.g., looking to develop a dashboard that provides better analysis and decision-making within wards). Pilot to be developed for a specific ward area – if successful then to be rolled out. 	
9.0	Mystery Shopper and Educational Workshops – Jenny Billingsley	
9.1	<p>Educational Workshop ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously discussed with CIP with emerging / recurring themes with the proposal for the themes be developed into customer educational workshops. • Repairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review the new repairs handbook. ○ Clarify customer vs. WH responsibilities. ○ Ideas: Guided sessions through the handbook, interactive workshops, tips on basic repairs. • Accessing Financial Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Money Smart team to provide face-to-face sessions on income maximisation, budgeting, and accessing benefits. ○ Consider including a "cooking on a budget" section (potentially in collaboration with an external organisation). • My Account: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Face-to-face sessions on downloading and using the app, including a guided tour of its key features. • Anti-Social Behaviour: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interactive sessions covering ASB information from the ASB video, including how to report and manage ASB. 	
9.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIP Feedback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Positive feedback for the ideas presented – clarification given that these ideas are in development stages but wanted to capture customer feedback early on. Project will be developed with input and sign off by SMT. ○ LT suggested including form-filling assistance, linking with the Money Smart team. ○ Deadline to be provided for CIP to submit their ideas. ○ KD will feed into CIP and collate feedback by 14 July. 	

<p>9.3</p>	<p>Mystery Shopper Programme: JB presented scope and development of this programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Test WH service area delivery. ○ Gain insights into how services support residents. ○ Implement necessary improvements and changes. ○ Identify areas of success and potential enhancement. • Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh approach to this to strengthen this approach. • Consider establishing a sub-group in addition to CIP. • Acknowledge this will mean time and commitment. • Service areas to potentially include Repairs, Contact Centre, Complaints, Financial Support. • SMT members engaging with trades to support team engagement and understand customer perspectives. • Quarterly cycles of Mystery Shopper Programme. • Structured approach to activities. • Understand each services view of the customer journey. • MSP to verify if the customer journey aligns with service views. • Develop Mystery Shopper Programme activities and feedback processes. • Report results to SMT. • Action Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel to suggest names for the programme. • Suggestions: "Check-in Champions" (Jenny) and "Tenant Talks" (Mike). • CIP to creatively think about programme name and provide suggestions to KD by 14 July 2025. • CIP to creatively think about educational workshops and feedback any ideas to LT. • Jenny to further develop programme and feedback to CIP later in year <p>It was agreed both Educational Workshops and Mystery Shop programmes were of benefit to customers but would take some time to bring to fruition.</p>	
<p>10.0</p>	<p>Open Discussion: Panel Review and Scrutiny Items - Louise Talbot</p>	
<p>10.1</p>	<p>Session Structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed how future sessions will be structured, focusing on actioning items during meetings rather than just providing updates. 	

10.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates will still be provided, but there will be a greater emphasis on starting new pieces of work. • July session will begin with AF discussing complaints and reviewing case studies. <p>Scrutiny Ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RH: Review of leaseholder pre-sale packs. • TP: Examination of the Disability Act and how WH implements the current policy. • MM: Review of rent arrears letters, with a suggestion to involve the Money Smart team. 	
10.3	<p>Terms of Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlighting important points and ensuring discussions are relevant to WH and the broader context. • Emphasised the importance of attendance: members missing three consecutive meetings will be removed from the CIP panel. • Minutes will be a condensed version of the meeting discussions. • Mentioned the need for acronyms to be sent to CIP members. 	
10.4	<p>Expenses and Accessibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irene: Raised the issue of travel expenses for attending meetings. KD to investigate how this can be managed. • Wheelchair Accessibility: Discussed the need for wheelchair-accessible taxis. Theresa will provide details for a local service. 	
10.5	<p>Feedback on TPAS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TPAS overview provided – who will be undertaking a review on behalf of the Council and WH will be included. • Feedback and introduction to TPAS will be made at the July meeting which will focus more on scrutiny. • TPAS will also hold separate meetings with WH, Julie Haydon, and KD. • Members are encouraged to bring any questions for Kevin to the meeting. 	
11.0	A.O.B.	
11.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Feedback and Closure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TP emphasised the importance of providing feedback on CIP meetings and ensuring proper closure. ○ There will be official closure to the meetings, including summaries of each meeting. 	
11.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positives and Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discussed the gas safety video and the good neighbourhood agreement as positive outcomes from CIP. 	
11.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback on CIP Meetings: 	

11.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Emphasised the need for feedback on CIP meetings to continually improve the process. • Voids Visit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ KD asked the panel if they preferred to see voids at the arising stage or upon completion. ○ Noted that viewing voids at the arising stage means visiting active work sites, which may not be ideal for those with mobility issues and may require approval from Health and Safety. ○ The panel agreed on viewing images of the properties prior to visiting a completed void. 	
12.0	Date of the next meeting	
12.1	10 July at 10:00hrs	

Please refer to actions table below:

Actions	Responsible	By when
Confirm focus group dates with St Mary's University	KD	Completed
Request feasibility of automated responses acknowledging complaint receipt	KD	July 04
Suggest names for the Mystery Shopper Programme	CIP	July 14
Creatively think about educational workshops and feedback any ideas to LT	CIP	July 14
Get images of voids properties from Zac Beech for the panel to visit once void is completed.	KD	September 2025