

Repairs and Maintenance Group meeting

Minutes

Date	Monday, 13 July 2026
Time	11am – 12.30pm
Location	Magna Carta Room Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone, KT15 2AH

Attendees:

- Daniel Lloyd, Head of Housing Operations
- Simon Allen, Head of Technical Services
- Angela Horsey, Business Development and Policy Manager
- Andrea Norman-Walker, Engagement and Inclusion Officer
- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)

Apologies

- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)
- [REDACTED] (tenant)

1. Welcome and review of previous actions

Andrea Norman-Walker, Engagement and Inclusion Officer opened the meeting and provided updates on actions agreed at the previous meeting:

Solar panels and bird protection

Following feedback from residents, a decision was taken that all new solar panel installations will now include bird protection as standard. It was also confirmed that residents experiencing problems with birds nesting under existing solar panels can report concerns for assessment. Where deemed necessary, bird protection measures will be installed. One of the members reported a significant reduction in pigeon activity following installation of bird protection.

Members welcomed this change as a positive example of tenant feedback leading to service improvements.

Scaffolding removal following roof works

Housing reviewed delays in the removal of scaffolding following roof repairs. Scaffolding may remain in place for up to six weeks to allow inspections and any necessary snagging works to be completed. This does not result in any additional cost to the Council or, subsequently, to residents. Simon will explore whether inspections can be carried out sooner, potentially reducing the timeframe to around four weeks.

Contractor communication

A letter revised by the Group was sent to all contractors reminding them of their responsibilities regarding appointments and communication with tenants. Contractors responded positively and committed to reinforcing expectations with their staff. Residents were encouraged to continue reporting communication failures so contractors can be held accountable.

Group Governance

The revised Terms of Reference were approved by members. The group continues to seek volunteers for Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary roles. Andrea reassured members that administrative support will continue even when those positions filled.

Improved ventilation fans

Following discussion at previous meetings, at the proposal of Simon Allen, Head of Technical Services, Housing has standardised the use of modern DMEV (Decentralised Mechanical Extract Ventilation) fans. These fans run continuously, automatically adjust to humidity levels, reduce condensation and mould, and improve ventilation. They will now be the standard replacement fan installed in council properties. Members welcomed this service improvement, which was introduced in response to their proposal.

Providing information to tenants on damp and mould issues

The new Damp and Mould Policy has been approved by the Housing Committee and published. It is on the Council's website. Information will also be promoted through future tenant newsletters.

Repairs reporting form improvements

Feedback from members of the Group resulted in improvements to the online repairs reporting form. A new "Other" category has been added to allow issues that do not fit existing categories to be reported, and its subcategories allow users to upload photographs and provide additional descriptions.

Complaints Policy consultation

Andrea reported that the second round of consultation on the policy generated significant feedback from the group. She thanked everyone who took the time to share their thoughts and suggestions. A summary of the responses will be circulated to panel members before the final review of the policy.

2. Repairs complaints

Simon provided a detailed explanation of tenant rights when repair obligations are not met.

Council responsibilities:

The council is legally responsible for:

- keeping homes safe and secure.
- maintaining structures and exteriors.
- maintaining heating, hot water, sanitation, electrical installations, gas and water supplies.

Repairs timescales:

Current categories:

- Emergency Repairs – 4 hours
- Routine Repairs – 15 working days
- Planned Works – 90 days

Complaints process

Where repairs are not completed within agreed timescales, residents can:

1. submit a complaint as Stage 1; online – through One Account, by telephone, via email – to Listening@runnymede.gov.uk, through housing officers, face-to-face if preferred,
2. escalate the complaint to Stage 2 if dissatisfied with the response from Housing provided by the relevant service lead,
3. Stage 2 is responded to by the Corporate Head of Housing,
4. refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman if concerns remain unresolved.

Simon emphasised that it would always be preferred to get the opportunity to resolve issues before they escalate.

Repairs Performance Monitoring

Simon reported that a new KPI has been introduced to monitor whether the first agreed appointment is kept by the contractors. It is hoped that this will help improve contractor accountability and reduce missed appointments.

Repairs and contractor issues raised by members

Several operational concerns were highlighted, including:

- Delays with gas safety inspections managed by SureServe,
- Engineers attending wrong addresses,
- Contractors arriving without the correct materials,
- Lack of communication regarding cancelled appointments,
- Delays in completing repairs due to staffing issues,
- High temperatures in sheltered housing properties during hot weather.

Simon acknowledged these concerns and committed to investigating them when they are reported. He also informed the Group that our contractor, KinCraig, has come to the end of its contract. New contracts for kitchens, bathrooms, voids, and minor repairs are currently being procured, likely on two-year terms due to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Feedback on the Repairs Policy and the Damp and Mould Policy

The revised Repairs Policy has now been approved.

Repair categories;

- Emergency: 24 hours.
- Significant/Urgent: 5 working days.
- Routine: 20 working days.
- Planned Works: 90 days.

Simon explained that introducing the new five-day category aligns with Awaab's Law requirements and places greater emphasis on addressing more serious repairs promptly.

Feedback from the Group resulted in the following improvements of the Repairs Policy:

- Appointment monitoring KPI introduced,
- Improved reporting routes,
- Greater emphasis on communication and updates.

The policy is expected to come into effect on 1 August 2026.

The Damp and Mould Policy has also been approved by the Housing Committee.

Communication Strategy Consultation

Daniel Lloyd presented early proposals for a new Housing Communication Strategy.

Key Objectives

- Improve how information is shared with residents
- Make communications more timely, accessible and relevant
- Improve contractor communications
- Ensure residents help shape future communications.

Potential Communication Methods

- Newsletters,
- Emails,
- Text message alerts,
- Surveys and feedback forms,
- Estate inspections,
- Resident drop-in sessions,
- Estate walkabouts involving residents, councillors and contractors.

Residents were invited to provide feedback on:

- What information they want,
- How they want to receive it,
- How often they want updates,
- What standards they expect from both the council and its contractors.

Daniel offered to share the presentation with the Group. The Group was also asked for feedback.

Resident Engagement Strategy Review

Angela presented plans to refresh the Resident Engagement Strategy.

Feedback Themes from Residents:

Members highlighted the need for:

- Better two-way communication.
- Clear follow-up on issues raised.

- Greater transparency.
- Clear timescales for responses.
- Better reporting on how tenant feedback influences decisions.
- Improved accountability, including clearer information about how rent income is spent.

Suggestions by members of the Group:

- Traffic light system (Red/Amber/Green) to track actions,
- Better reporting on how housing income is spent,
- Clear feedback loops showing results from tenant engagement.

A revised draft strategy will be circulated to engaged tenants for feedback before being presented to Housing Committee in September.

Service Standards Review

Housing plans to reintroduce published service standards. Members considered future service standards covering:

- Response times to calls and emails,
- Complaint handling times,
- Communication expectations,
- Repairs and estate services,
- Feedback and resident engagement commitments.

Residents supported the idea of clear, measurable standards that can be monitored and reported against. It was agreed that Angela would prepare the first draft of the Service Standards, which would then be circulated to tenants for feedback.

Any Other Business

Responding to a question, it was explained that housing services are expected to continue largely unchanged during the transition to the new West Surrey authority.

Residents requested continued transparency around budgets, spending and performance reporting.

Next meeting is on 14 September at 11am. Tea/coffee will be available from 10.30am.

Actions:

- Explore whether inspections can be carried out sooner to enable the earlier removal of scaffolding.
- Recruit a Chair and Vice Chair (Secretary).
- Include damp and mould information in the next all-tenant newsletter.
- Circulate the Complaints Policy feedback summary.
- Circulate the Communication Strategy presentation for feedback.
- Draft the Engagement Strategy and circulate it for feedback.
- Draft the Service Standards and share them for feedback.