Housing Scrutiny Commission

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Housing Scrutiny Commission held on Monday 19 October 2026 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G01A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT:	Councillor Hellen Benavides (Chair) Councillor Pascale Mitchell (Vice-Chair) Councillor Andy Bates Councillor Stephanie Cryan Councillor Felix Hamer Councillor Leigh Richman Councillor Janice White Andrew Eke (Co-opted Member) Ina Negoita (Co-opted Member) Brendan O'Brien (Co-opted Member)
OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:	Councillor George Grime (Deputy Executive Member for Tenant & Leaseholder Services)
OFFICER SUPPORT:	Adam Wood (Scrutiny Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

There were no late items of business.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

Councillor Cryan declared she was a ward councillor in Rotherhithe where some of the Major Works projects (Item 6 – Update on Major Works) were located.

Also in respect of Item 6, Co-opted Member Ina Negoita declared an interest resulting from her connection to Devon Mansions and Co-opted Member Brendan O'Brien declared his interest as a resident of a block which, although not directly subject of the reports, was indirectly related.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2026 were approved as a correct record.

5. EMPTY HOMES (VOIDS)

The Commission heard first from the Deputy Executive Member for Tenant & Leaseholder Services (representing the Executive Member for Council Homes, Councillor Popoola). Officers followed including Hakeem Osinaike (Strategic Director of Housing), Ryan Collymore (Director of Repairs and Maintenance) and Abi Oguntokun (Director of Landlord Services). These officers introduced the report requested by the Commission (pages 10 to 15 of the Agenda Pack).

Action (Owner)

- Provide data on additional questions including (Housing Department officers):
    - average cost / per void
    - the number of voids over (a) 1 year old and (b) over 5 years old
- Provide a financial breakdown of the estimated £135,000 weekly cost of voids identifying how much of that figure is (Housing Department officers):
    - cost of bringing voids back into use
    - loss of rent
    - council tax costs
    - temporary accommodation impacts
- Provide further performance information to the Commission, including (Housing Department officers):
    - breakdowns of where properties sit within the void process and progress towards being relet
    - temporary accommodation and supported housing turnaround performance data and explanation for high numbers and/or slow turnaround times
    - why private let properties were hard to fill
- Consider a Housing Scrutiny Commission visit to void properties to see end-

to-end examples of the void process (Commission Chair/Scrutiny Team and Housing Department officers)
- Bring a further update on void performance to a future Commission meeting (Housing Department officers)

6. UPDATE ON MAJOR WORKS

The Commission heard from Hakeem and Ryan about the progress implementing the recommendations on Fair Street/Devon Mansions, Canada and Kirby Estates QHIP Major Works Projects as well as lessons learned and their application to other major works projects in the Borough.

A report and an appendix accompanied this item (pages 16 to 22 and 23 to 39 of the Agenda Pack).

Action (Owner)

- Improve communication with residents affected by major works, including consideration of regular updates/newsletters (Housing Department officers)
- Consider a future scrutiny session involving residents to hear their views including on major works progress (Housing Scrutiny Commission Chair and scrutiny officers)
- Consider the suggestion of using trusted local residents to help improve access to homes for inspections and remedial works (Housing Department officers)

7. WORK PROGRAMME 2026-2027

The draft work programme was considered and agreed with topics provisionally allocated to the dates indicated below. Subsequent follow-up with officers would scope the information needed to confirm topics and how they would be investigated.

1 December 2026 meeting
- Pre-decision scrutiny of the new Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Pre-decision scrutiny of the Council Homes Investment Strategy
- Potential issues regarding the application of Flowcrete

3 February meeting
- Resident Engagement and neighbourhood spaces
- Empty Properties (Voids) – update report only

- Repairs, Damp and Mould (Focus to be confirmed)

23 March meeting

- Empty Properties (Voids)
- Repairs, Damp and Mould (Focus to be confirmed)
- Good Landlord Plan (Update)

Meeting ended at 10.10pm.

CHAIR:

DATED: