Open Agenda

Housing Scrutiny Commission

Monday 19 October 2026
7.00 pm
Ground Floor Meeting Room G01A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Membership
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
Ina Negoita
Brendan O'Brien

Reserves
Councillor Mohamed Deen
Councillor Callum Fowler
Councillor Tori Griffiths
Councillor Sean Hannigan
Councillor Andy Higson
Councillor Rachael Penny
Councillor Lina Usma

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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Contact
Adam Wood on 020 7525 0265 or email: adam.wood@southwark.gov.uk

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Members of the committee are summoned to attend this meeting
Althea Loderick
Chief Executive
Date: 9 October 2026

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Housing Scrutiny Commission

Monday 19 October 2026
7.00 pm
Ground Floor Meeting Room G01A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Order of Business

Item No.	Title	Page No.
1.	**APOLOGIES** To receive any apologies for absence.	
2.	**NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT** In special circumstances, an item of business may be added to an agenda within five clear working days of the meeting.	
3.	**DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS** Members to declare any interests and dispensations in respect of any item of business to be considered at this meeting.	
4.	**MINUTES** To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2026.	1 - 9
5.	**EMPTY HOMES (VOIDS)** To receive information on the performance and delivery of the Voids Improvement Programme (*with accompanying report*).	10 - 15

Item No.	Title	Page No.
6.	**UPDATE ON MAJOR WORKS** To receive information on progress implementing the recommendations on Fair Street/Devon Mansions, Canada and Kirby Estates QHIP Major Works Projects as well as lessons learned and where/how these have been applied to other major works projects in the Borough (*with accompanying report*).	16 - 39
7.	**WORK PROGRAMME 2026-2027** To consider the work programme for the 2026-2027 year.	40 - 46

Date: 9 October 2026

Agenda Item 4

Housing Scrutiny Commission

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Housing Scrutiny Commission held on Tuesday 14 July 2026 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 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)

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:
Councillor Reginald Popoola (Executive Member for Council Homes)

OFFICER SUPPORT:
Adam Wood

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Co-opted Member Brendan O'Brien.

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

There were no disclosures.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2026 were noted.

5. PROGRESS ON THE GOOD LANDLORD PLAN

The Chair introduced the item, thanking officers for the report which the Commission had received, *Good Landlord Plan Progress Update*, and accompanying *Financial Appendix*.

The Chair then invited the Executive Member for Council Homes, Councillor Reginald Popoola, to communicate the administration's priorities and add any comments to the report. Alongside Councillor Popoola were senior officers introducing the report: Hakeem Osinaike (Strategic Director of Housing), Ryan Collymore (Director of Repairs and Maintenance), Abi Oguntokun (Director of Landlord Services), Candida Thompson (Director of Housing Needs and Support) and Dominic Cain (Director of Customer and Exchequer).

Councillor Popoola spoke first, outline the Joint Administration's three priorities: repairs (in particular, getting the right information to get the work done first time); reducing the number of Voids; and rebuilding trust with residents.

Officers then focused on the report. Hakeem Osinaike spoke first to thank the Commission for requesting the report and the invitation to address members, adding that work had progressed and discussions with the Regulator for Social Housing were now focused on moving to C2 from an initial C3 (bordering C4) judgement. Hakeem reaffirmed the Council's commitment to becoming a good landlord and acknowledged the work needed to address the three priorities outlined by Councillor Popoola. The response from residents was a part of the work – responses from the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey over the last three years showed increased resident recognition of improving services. Hakeem then passed to officers for summary updates relating to their areas of responsibility.

Abi Oguntokun discussed the work carried out in Landlord Services including:

- redesigning the estate inspection process with residents and stakeholders through a focus group
- using data and reporting tools, including Fix My Street, to target resources on waste and environmental issues
- continuing the programme of inspections and repairs to improve the safety and accessibility of estates' play areas
- implementing and embedding the revised anti-social behaviour procedure
- strengthening oversight of ASB risk assessment processes and system coding

- allocating additional resources to reduce and clear communal repair issues on estates
- progressing waste and environmental improvement work
- completing ongoing play area works
- implementing the Resident Engagement Strategy approved in December
- continuing training for resident board members so they can scrutinise services, challenge performance and support strategic decision-making
- establishing a new resident advisory panel to strengthen resident influence at a strategic level
- improving “You said, We did” feedback to close the communication loop with residents

Ryan Collymore then focused on Better Homes and Better Repairs outlining the work undertaken. This included:

- improving compliance measures and setting up a project to increase the likelihood of accessing properties (a key issue was gaining access to undertake works needed)
- increasing electrical testing to 88%
- using stock condition survey results to shape the Council Housing Investment Strategy due to go to Executive in December – this was currently showing an estimated decency rate of 92%
- improving emergency and non-emergency repairs
- strengthening resident communication
- progressing the Voids Improvement Programme now underway
- consulting residents on the Repairs Policy before it being considered at September Executive

Dominic Cain explained the progress in Better Customer Service including:

- reducing overdue stage 2 complaints, aiming to clear the backlog by September
- rolling out customer service training to all operatives in the contact centre
- improving repairs diagnosis at the first point of contact
- strengthening quality assurance and service improvement in the contact centre
- providing staff with better tools to resolve enquiries first time
- improving online access to service charge information
- managing contact centre resources flexibly to maintain reasonable waiting times

Candida Thompson referenced progress in the Better Customer Service ‘pillar’ of work and Housing Needs and Support. These included:

- maintaining faster stage 1 complaint response times and preventing new backlogs - stage one complaints were at their highest in May 2025 with over 740 complaints in the backlog, since reduced to zero in September 2025

and maintained at zero since then
- embedding quality assurance to identify trends and root causes, and help teams learn and improve
- reviewing the casework system to track complaint actions and resolutions so that stage one complaints are not escalated to stage two
- expanding face-to-face homelessness advice through Bournemouth Road and family hubs (in Peckham and Bermondsey) including through collaboration with Social Care
- developing a new governance, assurance and performance framework to align resident priorities, regulatory requirements and the Council's outcomes including work mentioned setting up a resident advisory panel to strengthen resident-led scrutiny

Hakeem reported the progress made on new homes despite pressures from construction costs and borrowing rates. New ways of working would include partnerships with developers. Lastly, Hakeem addressed the need for estate renewal and the work being undertaken to bring older homes up to current building safety regulations.

The Chair then invited Commission members to ask officers and the Executive Member questions – a summary of these (and responses) is listed below, grouped by theme when appropriate.

Questions relating to Finance explored:
- HRA sustainability given the potential for industrial action, new costs emerging from the Stock Condition Survey and/or implementing the second stage of Awaab's Law
- detail regarding the services or activities which would be reduced to fund improvements to Housing's processes and IT, or other spend
- how contract management, voids, new-build oversight and frontline staff would be adequately resourced
- why HRA income was projected to rise by only 3.2% despite rent certainty and rent convergence changes
- the financial impact on the Council of heat network regulation requirements
- the proportion of spending which was statutory

Officers responded, noting that:
- statutory obligations remained the first priority
- the Stock Condition Survey indicated over 90% of homes were currently considered decent, higher than previously estimated – although this was based on data collected from 30% of Southwark homes, the sampling had been selected to be representative of the total population of homes
- high-rise building safety works remained a significant financial risk
- the Plan and its activities relating to frontline staff, Voids, IT projects etc were funded although the HRA was being managed flexibly so that

investment could be redirected if new issues emerged (from the Stock Condition Survey, for example)
- the Council, through various boards, worked with residents to explore how priorities might be ordered (albeit with health and safety the most important of these)
- the Department would share more detailed breakdowns of future savings with the Commission – there had been reductions in some areas, e.g. the kitchens and bathrooms programs, to achieve the work required under other parts of the HRA especially when these were statutory or involved health and safety, although most savings were achieved through greater efficiencies rather than stopping providing services
- the council had been preparing for additional Awaab's Law requirements and had a Damp and Mould team in place to deal with obligations – work was not complete but the gaps needing work were known
- contingency plans existed for industrial action – in the event of strikes, services for residents would continue as best they could
- the focus was on meeting health and safety obligations first, then exploring what services, processes or initiatives might be affordable with teams expected to achieve efficiency savings rather than simply stopping services
- rental income growth was outstripped by inflationary cost increases and the gap was widening, exacerbated by HRAs having to pay for new, additional costs such as subscriptions to regulatory bodies

In response to a question on what the council was doing about St James Estate residents facing rent increases and potential eviction, the Executive Member for Council Homes cited his meetings with key personnel and the TRA in support of the Council's work preventing the eviction of approximately 180 households. He also noted the Council was using multiple services to support affected households and that upcoming meetings had been planned for the Leader to meet with residents.

To questions regarding the Voids programme, Ryan responded noting that:
- a 'One Voids' team coming under one director (Ryan) was being re-established
- a key-to-key process would oversee the keys being obtained from the resident services officers and those keys then being issued to lettings officers
- challenges around key management, meters and pest control (among others) were now understood and the next few months would be used to develop the service
- he was confident about the Council's ability to deliver the changes needed because they had a much clearer understanding of the issues and how these could be overcome, and also because in the future oversight would focus on the key-to-key voids process, rather than on each team's contribution
- if the Commission wanted, it would be possible to provide regular updates

on Voids including descriptions of the key issues, the number of voids and their status
- future reporting on Voids could include days for completion although this may show an increase before a reduction as the backlog would 'inflate' the average times required

In response to a question about new homes progress, costs and value, Hakeem responded that:
- 3,000 new homes had been built of which 800 were on site
- the money funding the new homes came from HRA borrowing, the GLA's Affordable Housing Grant, Right to Buy receipts, and Section 106 receipts
- value for money would be determined by the people living in the homes – with 23,000 households on the waiting list and over 4,000 households in temporary accommodation, 3,000 new homes was a small but important step

On potential fatigue with resident engagement, Abi noted that:
- the Resident Engagement Strategy had tried to avoid this through widening the pool of residents involved (e.g. by limiting board representation to unique residents so that the same people were not assigned multiple roles)
- additional methods had been employed to encourage a wider pool of residents engaging and to limit the impact of engaging e.g. through arranging meetings at more convenient times, door-knocking in areas with low representation and targeting younger people (a currently underrepresented group)

Councillor Popoola added that some groups were underrepresented in resident engagement (especially regarding age, race and LGBTQ status) and this created challenges for policy development and, ultimately, for building trust. He noted therefore, the strategy's importance for increasing and broadening resident representation and engagement.

Asked what success would look like after one year and after four years of the administration, Councillor Popoola responded that:
- success after one year would include reducing voids and increasing meaningful resident participation
- longer-term success would mean better repair performance, cleaner estates, a stronger HRA, and improvement in the council's C3 rating

Responding to why Executive Reports on estate regeneration, on DPAs, and on allocations policy had been removed from the forward plan:
- Councillor Popoola wanted more time for the allocations policy to focus closely on need
- Hakeem said he we would find out why reports on estate regeneration and

DPAs had been moved

On whether the removal of housing list-based incentives for engaging with the Council might be reconsidered, officers responded that the new policy (still to go before the Executive) focused on those with the greatest need for housing keeping contributions in the form of voluntary work or engagement as separate activities.

To a question on staff wellbeing and support, including how staff might be feeling and how they could be helped to feel more empowered to do their jobs, officers responded that:

- they were aware of workload pressures and that additional staff recruitment and service redesign were planned which would help increase capacity
- in terms of listening and supporting staff to deliver, a service-wide away day had helped and feedback from staff was being used to identify and respond to challenges
- for repairs, where work was not routed through the Council's own staff operatives and contractors were instead used, these contractors received training on Southwark's ways of working and expectations
- staff survey feedback was used to create action plans and address issues staff experienced

On whether incentives and recognition schemes such as an estate or area-based competition could improve outcomes, officers noted that similar ideas had been used before and could be effective. £100,000 was allocated for various rewards and incentives including a payment of £100 to volunteers for participating in board meetings.

When asked about information-sharing between RSOs and ward councillors, Councillor Popoola responded that RSOs were keen to provide updates, including on meetings which ward councillors were unable to attend. Part of building trust was the development of excellent relationships between officers, ward councillors and TRAs so that issues could be resolved quickly and effectively. Officers also noted that in the new estate inspection process, ward councillors would be invited to estate inspections and would be forwarded copies of Estate Inspection Reports.

To a question on how Southwark's housing staffing levels compared with those of councils graded C1 by the Regulator of Social Housing, and relatedly, how – in the absence of additional funds – resources could be switched to provide the major works contract management needed to gain a higher grading, officers responded that:

- the department was not under-resourced and staffing levels were not hindering high quality services – instead, more efficient ways of working were necessary

Additional questions and comments included:

- whether more specific data illustrating projections and trajectories of strategy outcomes of strategies could be included in future reporting
- whether more reference could be made to street properties or properties in general as the commonly used term ‘estates’ did not capture the locations of all the Council’s housing
- whether call centre staff – in the main brilliant – could be reminded not to put voicemail on or to cut people off

6. WORK PROGRAMME 2026-2027

The Chair invited Commission members to propose scrutiny topics for potential inclusion in the 2026-2027 work programme. The topics suggested included:

- pre-scrutiny of the Council Housing Investment Programme, housing-related finances including HRA sustainability
- ongoing progress updates on Voids
- Allocations policy
- estate maintenance – a deep dive to include residents and understand their concerns but also to share good practice across the estates and potentially also contribute to efficiency of service work
- Repairs, damp and mould review
- estate management review
- resident engagement and governance
- readiness for re-inspection by the regulator
- Council engagement with TMOs
- temporary accommodation
- lifts and doors
- a 1-year review of Plentific (e.g. in early 2027) including comparison of costs and standard of work e.g. DLO vs contracted works
- review of how staffing resources are deployed via (1) benchmarking – internally with other Council departments and (2) externally, what other Councils are doing but with additional focus on staff welfare and the pressure RSOs are under as their workload assumes new aspects of the GLP (for example)
- review of RSO satisfaction and wellbeing – exploring potential of a Service Level Agreement; understanding the challenges they face perhaps through on-site scrutiny work or by inviting them to Scrutiny
- “Follow a complaint” – the journey from the moment it is logged to its resolution
- Major Works programmes including Chilton Grove, Canada Estate, Devon Mansions, Kirby Estate and Arica House
- broaden scrutiny methods and/or incorporate more ways for residents to undertake scrutiny – particularly regarding place-based, resident-focused

issues, TRA work etc

The Chair thanked members for their attendance and contributions.

Meeting ended at 9:45pm.

CHAIR:

DATED:

Agenda Item 5

Meeting Name:	Housing Scrutiny Commission
Date:	19 October 2026
Report title:	Void Performance
Ward(s) or groups affected:	All wards and council tenants and leaseholders
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	**N/A**
From:	Ryan Collymore, Director of Repairs and Maintenance

Executive summary

1. This report provides an update on performance and delivery of the Voids Improvement Programme and responds the questions presented.
2. The programme is focused on reducing turnaround times, increasing housing supply, reducing rent loss and improving customer outcomes through a redesigned end-to-end operating model.
3. There are currently 1,486 General Needs and Sheltered void properties, of which 872 are awaiting demolition and **479** including squatted properties are actively progressing through the re-let process.
4. There **522** void Temporary Accommodation properties going through the relet process. This gives an overall total of 1001 active voids.
5. TA Supported hostels, TA Hostels & TA private(PSI/SLA) represent a further 81 empty units. Some of these properties are hard to fill as you must meet a certain criteria to be eligible.
6. Progress has been made in strengthening governance, accountability and lifecycle tracking.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

7. To note the current position of the Voids Improvement Programme as at 1 October 2026.
8. To note progress made in void management, reducing turnaround times and strengthening governance arrangements.
9. To note key priorities through to March 2027.

Background

10. Effective management of void properties is critical to maximising housing stock and supporting Housing Revenue Account sustainability.
11. The Voids Improvement Programme was established to improve the customer journey from tenancy termination through to occupation by a new resident.
12. The programme supports wider Good Landlord Plan objectives and increases the supply of homes available for letting.

General need Void position comprising, 1,486 units :

Category	Units
Awaiting Demolition	872
Awaiting Disposal	24
Long-term works	94
Squatted	**27**
Currently being assessed	16
Major voids	**169**
Minor voids	**283**
Total GN & Sheltered Voids	**1,486**

*

Temporary Accommodation properties comprising, 522 empty units:

TA Supported Hostels	54
TA Estate voids (non street property)	**441**
TA Hostels	3
TA private sector lease	24

Total active voids (inc squatted) comprising, 1001 units :

		Pending	In relet process
TA Supported Hostels	54	32	22
TA Estate voids (non street property)	**441**	419	22
TA Hostels	3	3	0
TA private sector lease	24	24	0
General needs	**479**	353	126
	1001	**831**	**170**

Of the 831 Voids, operational teams are reporting performance on

Turnaround Performance:

Void Type	**Volume**	**Average Days Empty**
Major	**169**	**318**

Minor	**283**	**142**

13. Turnaround performance remains impacted by historical backlog cases and complex major void works.

Long term voids:

Works Required (major investment, back from TA, ex-squatted)	**94**
Squatted Properties	**27**
Other (earmarked for TA, decant, etc.)	**16**
Total	**137**

14. Major voids generally remain in the system longer due to the scale and complexity of works required, contractor dependencies and the need for additional inspections and approvals.

15. Ward-level data is currently unavailable, pending housing. management system

16. Void status breakdown by property, currently unavailable pending reporting developments

Turnaround times are void date to let date, not key to key:

	Performance Indicator	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	(All Outturns YTD or as at Period End, unless otherwise stated) Commentary
Turnaround time - **GN VOIDS**	Av. relet time, void date to let date (calendar days) **ALL** MINOR VOIDS	136.32	130.74	130.05	154.46	158.64	161.40	
	NEW Minors (void this year)				77.00	86.63	94.50	87 Minors let, 69 Majors let, plus 37 Non Active, 109 New Build & 25 Sheltered let **= 327 lets**
	Av. relet time, void date to let date (calendar days) **ALL** MAJOR VOIDS	178.11	173.65	173.80	192.87	204.07	209.90	
	NEW Majors (void this year)		42.00	42.00	42.00	96.83	91.00	14 NEW Minors & 8 NEW Majors let.
	Av. relet time, void date to let date (calendar days) ALL MINOR & MAJOR VOIDS	149.75	150.32	151.03	169.20	178.79	182.85	

	Performance Indicator	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	(All Outturns YTD or as at Period End, unless otherwise stated) Commentary
Turnaround time - **GN VOIDS**	Av. relet time, void date to let date (calendar days) **ALL** MINOR VOIDS	99.50	97.34	106.63	111.60	116.25	117.25	115.46	117.95	118.55	120.54	123.82	123.94	
	NEW Minors (void in 25-26)			63.00	68.25	72.33	74.05	81.10	91.37	100.46	105.83	114.00	115.54	136 Minors let,183 Majors let, plus 100 Non Active, 403 New Build & 75 Sheltered let **= 897 lets**
	Av. relet time, void date to let date (calendar days) **ALL** MAJOR VOIDS	184.88	172.61	179.25	170.30	170.00	163.77	166.28	165.88	164.19	165.93	168.37	172.09	81 NEW Minors & 97 NEW Majors let.
	NEW Majors (void in 25-26)			72.80	71.56	79.33	90.00	96.89	102.76	110.92	118.03	124.62	130.47	Targets set for CDP quarterly: Minors 45/ 40/ 35/ 28 = 37 YTD Majors 130/ 120/ 110/ 100 = 115 YTD
	Av. relet time, void date to let date (calendar days) ALL MINOR & MAJOR VOIDS	146.32	138.20	149.22	145.01	147.39	144.41	144.87	145.80	144.60	147.18	149.49	151.56	

Voids Improvement Programme Progress

17. As part of the Voids Improvement Programme, we are implementing a new end-to-end operating model that manages each property through the

complete void journey, from tenancy termination to handover for letting. Clear pathways have been established for minor and major voids, with target timescales of 28 days and 100 days respectively. This provides teams and contractors with clearer expectations, responsibilities and timescales for delivery.

18. We are also strengthening oversight and control through an enhanced Voids Tracker, which will act as the single source of truth for all void properties. Lifecycle milestones will be tracked throughout each case, enabling earlier identification of delays, clearer accountability and more reliable performance reporting. A specialist void support team from Lumensol is being introduced to provide additional capacity and expertise, with a particular focus on progressing aged and complex backlog cases.

19. Alongside these changes, we are introducing more structured contractor performance management and regular governance reviews to improve productivity, resolve blockages and maintain delivery against agreed timescales. Formal quality assurance and handover processes will ensure works are completed to the required standard before properties are returned for letting. Together, these measures are intended to increase throughput, reduce turnaround times and rent loss, and improve outcomes for residents waiting for a home. The programme has shifted focus from managing individual repair activities to management of the complete void journey.

Key Risks and Challenges

20. Voids performance has been affected by the nature and volume of properties within the overall caseload. A significant proportion are awaiting demolition and are therefore not available to progress through the normal re-let process. In addition, properties requiring complex major investment works take longer to complete because of the scale of works, specialist requirements, inspections and approvals involved. Squatted properties also create further delays, as possession and access issues must be resolved before repairs can begin.

21. These challenges have been compounded by a historic aged backlog, which continues to increase average turnaround times while teams manage both older cases and new demand. Repair and contractor capacity pressures, together with constraints on internal resources, have limited the pace at which works can be surveyed, commissioned, completed and handed back for letting. Collectively, these factors have reduced throughput and contributed to performance remaining below the required standard.

22. The quality and consistency of voids data has made it difficult to report performance accurately and provide a reliable end-to-end view of case progression. This is partly due to the way existing systems are configured and the absence of a single shared system that all teams involved in the voids

process can access and update regularly. This creates gaps and delays in information, limits effective performance monitoring and reduces confidence in reported figures.

Focus to March 2027

23. Our focus through to March 2027 is to put in place the leadership, systems and operational controls needed to sustain improvement in the voids service. We will recruit a Head of Voids and Lettings to provide clear senior accountability across the full journey from tenancy termination to re-let. Alongside this, we will implement a new voids management system to provide a consistent view of every property, improve workflow management and support timely intervention where cases are not progressing as planned.

24. A key priority will be to reduce the aged backlog while increasing the throughput of major voids. Operational performance will be supported by the full mobilisation of four term contractors, alongside clearer expectations, active performance management and escalation where delivery falls behind agreed milestones. This increased capacity and stronger contractor accountability will help accelerate completion and handover, reduce overall turnaround times and minimise void rent loss by returning more homes to use sooner.

25. Delivery will also be strengthened by the recruitment of eight of the twelve approved posts within the dedicated Voids Recovery Team, providing additional capacity to drive case progression and resolve operational blockages. We will align voids delivery with the area-based repairs and landlord services model, improving coordination between repairs, housing management and lettings teams at a local level. Strengthened governance arrangements and performance reporting will provide greater visibility of progress, risks and delays, enabling decisions to be taken quickly and ensuring that improvement actions remain on track through to March 2027.

Conclusion

26. The current Voids Recovery Programme continues to make progress, with a clear distinction emerging between historic backlog properties and current operational demand. However, overall voids performance remains below the required standard, reflecting the scale of the historic backlog, the complexity of major works and ongoing capacity pressures across internal teams and contractors. The volume of properties awaiting demolition, sale or significant investment also means that the total number of void homes does not directly represent the number available to progress through the normal re-let process. This clearer understanding of the caseload is enabling the service to target the principal barriers affecting turnaround times and focus recovery activity where it will have the greatest impact.

27. The Voids Improvement Programme provides a structured route to recovery through stronger leadership, a new end-to-end operating model, defined minor and major void pathways, improved systems and data, tighter contractor management and enhanced governance. The focus to March 2027 will be on reducing the aged backlog, increasing the throughput of major voids, minimising rent loss and embedding the service within the area-based repairs and landlord services model. Sustained delivery against these priorities will be essential to return the service to a stable business-as-usual position and make more homes available sooner for residents in housing need.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
	None

AUDIT TRAIL

This section must be included in all reports.

Lead Officer	Ryan Collymore, Director of Repairs and Maintenance	
Report Author	Ryan Collymore, Director of Repairs and Maintenance	
Version	Final	
Dated	09/10/2026	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	**Comments Sought**	**Comments Included**
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director, Resources	No	No
List other officers here		
Executive Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		9 October 2026

Agenda Item 6

Meeting Name:	Housing Scrutiny Commission
Date:	19 October 2026
Report title:	Update Report – Implementation of the Recommendations from the Review of the Canada Estate 2017/18, Fair Street/Devon Mansions 2018/19 and Kirby Estate 2018/19 QHIP Major Works Projects
Ward(s) or groups affected:	Rotherhithe London Bridge and West Bermondsey North Bermondsey
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	N/A
From:	Ryan Collymore, Director of Repairs and Maintenance

RECOMMENDATION

This paper recommends:

1. That the Housing Scrutiny Commission (HSC):

    - considers, notes and comments on the progress made in the Action Plan submitted by the Director of Repairs and Maintenance, in response to the outcome of the Task and Finishing Team's (TFT) Internal Review of the Canada Estate (Phase 2) 2017/18 QHIP Major Works Project, Fair Street/Devon Mansions 2018/19 QHIP Major Works Project and the Kirby Estate 2018/19 QHIP Major Works Project
    - considers, notes and comments on the progress made, the issues and challenges faced and, the next steps for each of the individual QHIP Major Works Projects, as set out in the body of this report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. At its meeting on 28 July 2025, the HSC considered two reports relating to the Canada Estate (Phase 2) 2017/18 QHIP, Fair Street/Devon Mansions 2018/19 QHIP and the Kirby Estate 2018/19 QHIP Major Works Projects as below:

    - Outcome of the Review of the Canada Estate 2017/18, Fair Street/Devon Mansions 2018/19 and Kirby Estate 2018/19 QHIP Major Works Projects
    - Management Response to the Outcome of the Review of the Canada Estate 2017/18, Fair Street/Devon Mansions 2018/19 and Kirby Estate 2018/19 QHIP Major Works Projects

3. The purpose of this report is to:

- update the HSC on the progress that has been made in relation to the Action Plan previously submitted by the Director of Repairs and Maintenance, in response to the recommendations contained in the TFT's Internal Review of the Canada Estate (Phase 2) 2017/18 QHIP Major Works Project, Fair Street/Devon Mansions 2018/19 QHIP Major Works Project and the Kirby Estate 2018/19 QHIP Major Works Project
- update the HSC on specific issues and challenges faced and, the next steps for each of the QHIP Major Works Projects.

CONSIDERATIONS

Action Plan

4. The Action Plan, which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report, sets out management's response to each of the 36 recommendations made by the TFT in its outcome report and demonstrates how the lessons learned are being embedded across current and future projects.

5. Currently, 28 of the 36 recommendations made in the TFT's report have been addressed and completed. Good progress is being made with most of the remaining recommendations however, the target dates for some, have been revised for reasons set out below and in the Action Plan.

Canada Estate (Phase 2) 2017/18 QHIP Major Works Project

6. A Canada Estate Residents Meeting was held on 8 September 2025 to consult with residents on next steps, attended by the then Cabinet Member for Council Homes, ward councillors and officers. In addition, the then Cabinet Member for Council Homes, ward councillors and officers attended the Canada Estate T&RA AGM on 9 September 2025. The outcome of the two meetings resulted in a mandate from residents to proceed as follows:

    - liaise with and arrange for the contractor (Durkan) to return to carry out the identified remedial works
    - carry out surveys of all homes on the Canada Estate to identify:
        - outstanding defects resulting from the QHIP works
        - major works required that were not in the scope of the original QHIP project
        - any response repair requirements
    - set up a Residents Panel to work with officers to ensure the completion of the remedial works (defects)
    - further independent review of the lounge/balcony windows in the two tower blocks to see how we can improve access to clean the windows.

7. In response to the mandate from residents above, we have:

    - met with Durkan who has agreed to return to carry out the remedial works once the final Schedule of Defects has been issued
    - completed the surveys to those homes on the Canada Estate where we were granted access (see below)

- issued the final Schedule of Defects to Durkan (and are waiting for a proposed timeline from Durkan to commence the remedial works)
- held the first meeting with residents who put themselves forward for the Residents Panel
- received the report of Hallas & Co Limited following its review of the lounge/balcony windows (including how they can be cleaned) in the two tower blocks. The report is currently under review.

8. It had always been intended that we would recruit a Clerk of Works and Building Surveyor to carry out the surveys of the homes on the Canada Estate. Unfortunately recruiting to these two posts proved to be very challenging and led to a significant delay in progressing the surveys. The surveys, which were carried out by the council's dedicated Clerk of Works, commenced during the week beginning 15 June 2026.

9. The original target date for completing the surveys was 31 July 2026 but, this was subsequently extended to 14 August 2026 to allow for residents who were away on holiday. Unfortunately, take up has been very low, and, to date, we have completed around 50 surveys (approximately 30%) of the homes in the two high-rise blocks (Columbia and Regina Point) and 12 surveys (approximately 13%) in the low-rise blocks.

10. Residents in the high-rise and low-rise blocks have been written to on three separate occasions encouraging them to make appointments for the surveys to be carried out. Although not a preferred option, in an attempt to gain access to more homes, we did an element of 'cold calling' which, did result in access for further surveys. Without this, the success rate would have been much lower.

11. In all three letters that were sent out, we explained to residents the importance of allowing us access to carry out the surveys. We provided residents with the direct email address and mobile telephone number for the Clerk of Works to enable them to make direct appointments for the surveys to suit their respective preferences. The letters further explained that once the contractor has been back to rectify the defects included in the Final Schedule of Defects, any remaining defects will have to be rectified and paid for by the Council.

12. We did receive some isolated individual requests for appointments after the 14 August completion date, which were accommodated but, now that we have issued the Final Defects Schedule to Durkan, under the terms of the contract, it will be difficult to 'add-on' any further works. We will naturally, continue to liaise with Durkan to ensure that as many defects as possible are rectified before the contract is completed.

13. The projected next steps and timeline for the Canada Estate are set out below:

Activity	**Date**
Durkan to review the Final Defects Schedule and provide timeline for commencing remedial works	30 October 2026

Meet with residents in the two tower blocks to discuss the situation with the lounge/balcony windows	End October 2026
Residents Meeting (in preparation for start of remedial works)	Mid/end November 2026
Newsletter to residents (in preparation for start of remedial works)	Mid/end November 2026
Estimated commencement of remedial works	December 2026
Completion, inspection and approval of remedial works	February 2027
Resolution and agreement of Final Account	March 2027
Issue final service charge invoices to leaseholders	June 2027

Fair Street/Devon Mansions 2018/19 QHIP Major Works Project

14. A meeting was held with Fair Street/Devon Mansions residents on 27 October 2025 to discuss with residents the outcome of the reviews and the next steps. The meeting was attended by the then Cabinet Member for Council Homes, ward councillors and officers and the next steps were agreed as below:

    - meeting with consultant/contractor to be held as soon as possible to agree on the following:
        - post inspection of all internal works completed as part of the QHIP (by Council's own Clerk of Works)
        - issuing Schedule of Defects and agreeing timescale for completing, inspecting and 'signing off' the works (Council's own Clerk of Works to inspect completed defects works)
        - provision of all necessary information to substantiate works claimed for (deadline set at 14 November 2026)
        - agree issue of Practical Completion and Final Account
        - post inspection of all works completed in communal areas
    - sending out letters to all residents asking them to report any issues/defects with the works
    - setting up a Residents Panel to work with officers to ensure the completion of the remedial works.

15. In response to the next steps above, we have:

    - met with the consultant and contractor to discuss all outstanding matters and how to bring these to a conclusion
    - issued and delivered the 'defects' letter to residents
    - held the first meeting with residents who put themselves forward for the Residents Panel
    - delivered the October 2025 and July 2026 newsletters to all residents included in the Fair Street/Devon Mansions project providing an update on progress and inviting residents to join the Residents Panel
    - commenced the post inspection surveys for properties where internal works (such as replacement kitchens, bathrooms, windows, doors etc) were carried out

- analysed the substantial amount of information provided by our consultant (by the 14 November deadline). Whilst this has been helpful, there is clearly still a lot of information to be provided. This has been, and continues to be a significantly onerous and time-consuming process

16. In previous meetings with residents, the general feeling was that, recognising the scale and scope of the task of requesting, collecting and reviewing the documentation provided by the consultant and the contractor, required to verify and substantiate the cost of the works claimed and paid for, it would likely be some time before the Council would be able to report back on progress. With the benefit of hindsight however, we recognise that it would have been prudent to issue further correspondence to residents between the October 2025 and July 2026 newsletters, advising that the process was ongoing, even if there was no substantial update available.

17. The internal post inspection survey works began at the end of July 2026 but, disappointingly, take up has been very low. Letters were delivered to all homes where internal works were completed but, to date, we have only been able to complete around 25 surveys. We have recently sent out a further letter to residents asking them to make appointments for the post inspection. We have set a completion date of 30 October to carry out as many more post inspection surveys as we can.

18. All letters that have been sent out to residents set out the importance of allowing us access to carry out the surveys. We provided residents with the direct email address and mobile telephone number for the Clerk of Works and explained that once the contractor has been back to rectify the defects included in the Final Schedule of Defects, any remaining defects will have to be rectified and paid for by the Council.

19. We will continue to liaise with residents to allow us access to carry out the surveys in their homes to ensure we obtain details on as many defects as possible before the 30 October completion date. Once we have issued the Final Defects Schedule to Equans, under the terms of the contract, it will be difficult to ‘add-on’ any further works. We will naturally, continue to liaise with Equans to ensure that as many defects as possible are rectified before the contract is completed.

20. The projected next steps and timeline for the Fair Street/Devon Mansions QHIP Major Works project are set out below:

Activity	**Date**
Final deadline for submission of contract information by consultant/contractor	30 September 2026
Complete the analysis of additional contract information	30 October 2026
Complete post inspections of internal works	30 October 2026
Post inspection of works in communal areas	30 November 2026
Issuing Schedule of Defects (internal works)	18 December 2026
Newsletter to residents (update on above activities)	December 2026

Next Residents Meeting	December 2026
Equans to review the Final Defects Schedule and provide timeline for commencing remedial works	15 January 2027
Estimated commencement of remedial works	15 February 2027
Completion, inspection and approval of remedial works	March 2027
Issue Practical Completion and agree Final Account	End April 2027

Kirby Estate 2018/19 QHIP Major Works Project

21. The works on this project are complete, the 12-month Defects Liability Period (DLP) has expired, and the Making Good Defects Certificate (MGD) has been issued.

22. Although the MGD has been issued, some defects in the works can still be rectified through the respective warranties applicable, for example, to the new replacement windows. Although very few, we continue to carry out remedial works to homes on the Kirby Estate that are covered by the warranties.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
[For 5 March 2026 Housing Scrutiny Commission meeting] Update Report – Implementation of the Recommendations from the Review of the Canada Estate 2017/18, Fair Street/Devon Mansions 2018/19 and Kirby Estate 2018/19 QHIP Major Works Projects (Implementation of the recommendations from reviews of the Canada Estate Fair Street Devon Mansions .pdf)	Scrutiny Team, Governance and Assurance	Adam Wood 020 7525 0265

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Management Action Plan - Response of TFT Findings and Recommendations

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Ryan Collymore
Report Author	Paul Murtagh
Version	Final
Dated	28 September 2026
Key Decision?	No

CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	**Comments Sought**	**Comments Included**
Director of Law and Governance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Resources	No	No
List other officers here		
Executive Member	Yes	No
Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team		9 October 2026

Common Findings	Recommendations	Management Response/Target Date	Evidence / Additional Information
The procurement process for the projects does not provide for a true assessment of the quality of the tenderer's submission. As such, the award of the contracts was essentially based on price only.	**Recommendation 1:** Future tenders should be awarded on the basis of the 'most advantageous tender' (MAT) where, the award criteria include a 'true' assessment of quality which, forms an integral part of the tender evaluation and subsequent award of the contract.	Implemented for all future tenders. **Completed**	
The contracts for the projects have not been formalised.	**Recommendation 2:** For future contracts, processes should be put in place to ensure that, wherever possible, contracts are formalised before works commence on site.	Implemented for all future tenders. Example – recently procured Consultancy Contract. **Completed**	
The Preliminaries document used for the projects is out-of-date.	**Recommendation 3:** The Preliminaries document used for this project should be reviewed and updated to ensure it remains robust, relevant and fit-for-purpose for future projects of a similar nature.	This is accepted and is being implemented for all future contracts. As an example, we have worked with our consultant to update and review the preliminaries document for the Chilton Grove QHIP Restart Project. This will be used as the baseline template for all future projects. **Completed**	The Chilton Grove preliminaries document was reviewed and updated prior to tenders been invited. This document will be used as a baseline template for future projects to ensure it remains fit for purpose.
The Specification (Materials and Workmanship) document used for the	**Recommendation 4:** The Specification (Materials and Workmanship) document should be	This is accepted and is being implemented for all future contracts. As an	The specification document was reviewed and updated prior to any new tenders

projects requires updating and standardising.	reviewed and rewritten to ensure it remains robust, relevant, specific to the scope of works, up-to-date and fit-for-purpose.	example, we have worked with our consultant to update and review the specification document for the Chilton Grove QHIP Restart Project. This will be used as the template for all future projects. **Completed and ongoing for future individual projects**	being invited. This process will be done on a project-by-project bases. Due to specialised fire remediation projects in the capital programme for the next two years, each project will be unique. Therefore, the specification document will be reviewed and updated for each project to reflect the specific needs of the project.
The Schedule of Rates (SoR) used for the projects is linked and referenced to the LBS' Specification (Materials and Workmanship) document.	**Recommendation 5:** The Schedule of Rates (SoR) should be reviewed and updated for future projects, to reflect the changes made to the LBS' Specification (Materials and Workmanship) document.	This is accepted and is being implemented for all future contracts where a SoR is deemed appropriate for the type of work we are doing. **Completed and ongoing for future individual projects**	The Chilton Grove QHIP Restart Project is an example of where, on review, we deemed that a SoR was not appropriate for this work. It was agreed that a bespoke detailed specification of the works was more appropriate for this project. In the next 2 years, the majority of the works are fire remediation works, which will require a combination of bespoke specifications and SoRs, depending on the scope of the works.
There is no approved Gateway 3 for the contract variation costs for the three projects.	**Recommendation 6:** On the assumption that it is deemed fit-for-purpose, officers should be instructed that for future projects, the Gateway process must be adhered to. The use of the 'one-page' report should be scrapped to avoid doubt and confusion.	The use of the 'one-page' report has been scrapped, and greater control measures have been introduced to monitor, verify and approve variations. Staff have been instructed on their responsibilities under the Gateway process.	All contract variations, which will have a financial impact on the contract are discussed at the Major Works Highlight Report Monthly Review Meeting. Approval for variations are submitted formally to the Director of Asset Management and the Strategic Director of Housing.

		Completed	
Consultancy contracts have no provision for a formal contractual default process. This means that currently, consultants cannot be held meaningfully accountable for the additional cost of the works on a project that it may, at least in part, have been responsible for.	**Recommendation 7:** Consultancy contracts should be reviewed and amended to ensure that the consultant is held liable for its failings in carrying out its professional duties. This may be in the form of a prescribed formal contractual default process or, some other legally binding agreement. At worst, the consultant must not be in a position where it can claim fees against the cost of additional works arising from its own failings.	The recently procured JCT Consultancy Agreement (Public Sector), which is now being used for consultants for all current and future major works contracts, provides that consultants will not be entitled to additional fees if such services have not been instructed in writing by the Client (Clause 6.2A, 2.1) and/or, there is a need for additional services due to any act, negligence, omission or default on the part of the consultant (Clause 6.2A, 2.2). In addition, there are KPIs in the contract that the consultants are required to meet. A failure of 3 KPIs within any reporting period will lead to the Council requesting an improvement plan from the consultant. After this, if there is further failure of the 3 KPIs, the Council will be entitled to terminate the contract without prejudice.	

		Completed	
There are no clear incentives for consultants to manage the costs of major works projects. If the cost of the works increases, generally, so do the consultants' fees.	**Recommendation 8:** Future consultancy contracts should be 'incentivised' in a way that the consultant is rewarded for ideas that reduce the cost of the works included in the contract (value engineering options such as alternative design solutions, alternative suppliers/manufacturers etc.)	The incentivisation of future contracts is not always straightforward and will be dealt with on a contract-by-contract basis. As a minimum, for each individual project the consultant will be required to submit a 'Value Engineering' review of the project to establish whether there are any opportunities to reduce the cost of the works or improve project delivery. **Completed and ongoing for future individual projects**	All instructions given by consultants must be checked and authorised by Southwark staff. Cost implications and reasons for the instructions must be provided.
There are concerns with the quality of new window installations and accountability under the FENSA self-certification scheme.	**Recommendation 9:** The use and suitability of the FENSA self-certification should be reviewed and, if appropriate, additional measures be put in place to improve its validity including, for example, additional independent quality checks during the installation process.	We have reviewed and updated the specification for future window replacement projects. We will also be increasing the level of inspections to be undertaken (during and on completion of the works) including, in-house (by our own Clerk of Works) and through	We have not had any new window replacement projects since the review.

		independent bodies where appropriate. This process will be implemented for all future window replacement projects. **Completed**	
The quality of the new window installations carried out under the Canada Estate project has been raised by several residents.	**Recommendation 10:** The LBS should consider the outcome of the Pellings LLP overview of the quality of the replacement windows and decide whether a more extensive specialist survey of the installations is required.	Post completion surveys have now been completed by the Council's own Clerk of Works. A Schedule of Defects has now been collated and issued to the contractor to remedy. The Council will closely monitor the remedial works to ensure that the issues with the windows are rectified. **Revised Target Date: 08/01/27**	Information will be provided on the outcome of the remedial works in future updates after the works have been completed and inspected.
The communications between residents and the LBS' Project Team were tense, challenging and occasionally hostile.	**Recommendation 11:** The lessons learned from the projects in relation to the breakdown in communications between residents and the LBS' Project Team (in respect of both sides) should be used to inform and improve communications on future projects.	We have introduced robust procedures to ensure the involvement of residents at an early stage and for the duration of future projects. This will help ensure clarity and transparency in all decisions taken in relation to the works.	On the Consort Estate, various meetings have been held with the T&RA, homeowner representatives and local ward councillors to discuss the works. Monthly progress reports (in a format agreed with the above) are shared, which include details of instructions issued (variations etc) and financial information, in a clear and transparent manner.

		An example of this is the Consort Estate (Fire Safety and Refurbishment) project. **Completed and ongoing for future individual projects**	T&RA representatives are invited to block handovers and their feedback from the handover process (and from the monthly progress reports above) is documented, analysed and responded to. Resident representatives have expressed their satisfaction with these new consultation initiatives and our response to their concerns.
There is a lack of clarity around the roles of the respective PM and CM. This is particularly pertinent to the accountability of the internal Project Team for the management of the project in terms of the performance of the contractor and the CA, the control of budgets and project spend, the authorisation of additional works and representing the interests of residents.	**Recommendation 12:** The role of the posts in the LBS Project Team (and their respective Job Descriptions) should be reviewed to ensure that the postholders have clearly defined responsibilities and accountabilities. Staff should be given the necessary support and training to ensure that they are able to fulfil their roles.	The roles of staff for new projects have been reviewed and updated to ensure staff can adequately fulfil their roles. **Completed**	We have produced a 'Green Book' for all staff in the Planned Maintenance Team which, sets out the roles and responsibilities of each postholder within the team. We have also completed a skills analysis to help identify training needs for existing staff (see response to Recommendation 13).
The role of the internal Project Team is crucial to the success of future major works programmes. There are currently gaps in the skill sets of some officers responsible for the management of housing major works projects.	**Recommendation 13:** A skills appraisal of all staff responsible for the management and delivery of housing major works projects should be undertaken to ensure that staff have the appropriate qualifications and experience to carry out their roles.	We have carried out a skills and 'gap' analysis of the Planned Maintenance Team to help identify training and development needs for existing staff We are using this information to help us 'upskill' staff involved in the delivery of major works projects. **Ongoing**	The Planned Maintenance Team is undergoing a period of transition as below: • several members of the team have recently retired or left • a newly appointed Interim Assistant Director is reviewing the structure of the team, the roles and responsibilities of individual roles and relevant Job Descriptions • information from the skills and gap analysis has been gathered and a

		Revised Target Date: 31/03/27	• Skills analysis information gathered and a training plan will be developed once budget is confirmed • new staff that have joined the team already have the required competencies. There are significant challenges that affect the transition of the team including changes in legislation relating to fire safety and the level of fire remediation works required in the housing stock which, requires specialised skilled staff.
There is an absence of robust, relevant stock condition and other supporting data to inform major works projects.	**Recommendation 14:** Future major works projects of any kind should be based on priorities emanating from robust stock condition information or, based on regulation relating to the safety of the buildings (including fire) and the residents in them.	The Council has commissioned an independent Stock Condition Survey (SCS) of its social housing stock. This will be used to inform all future major works programmes. The SCS is a four-year project due to be completed March 2029. **Ongoing and on schedule**	The SCS started across the borough in October 2025 and met its initial target of inspecting a representative 20% internal survey sample of our homes in the first six months. 25% of the external fabric and mechanical and electrical infrastructure has also been surveyed. This data will anchor the new 5-year Council Homes Investment Strategy, which will be brought to Cabinet in December 2026 (this is under review). The Strategy will detail the next planned maintenance programme and set out the pathway to an increase in decent homes, alongside meeting all our building and fire safety and compliance responsibilities.
Findings Specific to the Canada Estate (Phase 2) 2017/18 QHIP Major Works Project	**Recommendations**	**Management Response/Target Date**	

A considerable length of time has passed since the works included in this project were completed however, the identified defects and remedial works remain outstanding. The Council is currently involved in ongoing discussions with the contractor to agree a way forward.	**Recommendation 15:** The Council should endeavour to reach an agreement with the contractor on a way forward as soon as possible to facilitate the completion of the outstanding defects and related remedial works on the Canada Estate.	Negotiations with the contractor are ongoing. The final Schedule of defects has been issued to the contractor, and we are awaiting a programme/timeline for the completion of the remedial works. **Revised Target Date: February 2027**	The council has reached an agreement with the contractor, and, on 15 June, we started the surveys of the properties to gather the necessary to compile a final Schedule of Defects to issue to the contractor. Initial deadline for completion of surveys was 31 July (subsequently extended to 14 August) but, we have picked up a few further requests for surveys that came in after the deadline. Take up on the surveys was very low – around 30% on the two tower blocks and 13% on the low-rise blocks. We have issued the final Schedule of Defects to Durkan and expect the remedial works to start in December 2026.
Concerns have been raised that residents continue to climb through the lounge windows in the high-rise blocks to clean their windows.	**Recommendation 16:** The LBS should write to all residents in Columbia Point and Regina Point to make them aware of the dangers of trying to access the balconies in their homes.	A letter was sent out to all residents in July 2025. **Completed**	We recognise that some residents in the two high-rise blocks are experiencing difficulties cleaning the external side of their balcony windows, and we are currently exploring options to support affected residents. However, in considering any potential solution, resident safety must remain the priority. Any measures introduced must not make it easier or

Some properties in the low-rise blocks suffer from damp and mould problems which, some residents believe is due in part to the poor-quality construction of the cavity walls.	**Recommendation 17:** The LBS should carry out further inspections of the cavity wall construction to the low-rise blocks on the Canada Estate every two years to monitor potential issues with water penetration and to assess the efficiency of the remedial works undertaken.	This will be monitored through reports received by the Council's Damp and Mould and Repairs Teams. **Completed and ongoing**	The Damp and Mould Team is monitoring any reports of dampness in these blocks and will action accordingly.
The LBS had to replace fire resisting front entrance doors to the flats in the two high-rise blocks because, it could not provide the necessary accreditation for the doors that had been replaced in 2010.	**Recommendation 18:** The LBS must put in place robust processes and procedures to obtain, maintain and retain all necessary documentation for key components such as fire resisting doors. This should include clear 'signposting' processes for all staff involved in the maintenance and repair of the LBS housing stock and clear lines of responsibility.	All documentation is now entered onto 'True Compliance', the Council's new platform for recording and storing relevant fire and safety related documentation. **Completed**	All relevant staff have been consulted and informed of the new procedures and reminded of their respective responsibility to follow them.
Significant delays and associated additional costs have been incurred on this project due to the length of time taken to make key decisions affecting the progress of the works.	**Recommendation 19:** Key issues that will have a significant impact on cost, progress with the works, the LBS' reputation etc, should be prioritised to ensure that decisions are made quickly and efficiently. Project management procedures should be reviewed to provide the necessary guidance and support to staff managing projects in dealing with key issues.	New procedures are now in place as below: • Non -critical variations follow standard GW3 process. • Critical/urgent variations – urgent approval from appropriate level of senior management. Retrospective	

		GW3 to follow as soon as possible afterwards. **Completed**	
The need for additional consultation with residents has led to significant delays and associated additional costs.	**Recommendation 20:** The LBS should ensure that there is clarity around the level and scope of consultation with residents (and their representatives) on future major works projects. There needs to be clear guidance on the level of involvement residents can have in the decision-making process and the extent to which they can be involved in the day-to-day management of projects.	Adopting the principles of 'Putting Residents First', we have introduced robust procedures to ensure the involvement of residents at an early stage and for the duration of future projects. This will help ensure clarity and transparency in the decision-making process and help manage resident expectations. **Completed**	An example of this is the Consort Estate (Fire Safety and Refurbishment) project set out in Recommendation 8 above, where the revised process has been successfully implemented.
Concerns have been raised about the conduct of members of the T&RA and, a considerable amount of bad feeling remains.	**Recommendation 21:** The LBS should undertake a 'deep dive' audit into the relationship between residents and officers for the duration of this project and, the respective conduct of officers and members of the T&RA.	A Code of Conduct for the T&RA's has been developed and agreed with all T&RAs. The efficiency and success of this new Code of Conduct will be monitored. **Completed and ongoing**	It is reassuring that we have had no such issues with the current major works projects that are ongoing on the Consort Estate and Honiton & Priory Estate. The Housing department has developed a new model code of conduct for resident meetings, and this is in the process of being agreed by the resident forums. So far it has been adopted at all the 5 housing management boards. This sets out the escalation process for complaints and recognises complaints can be about staff and residents. A new piece of work emerging is how we create processes for

			resident about resident complaint resolution in situations where residents are brought together by the landlord which will strengthen our overall approach to conflict. There is a staff working group looking at competency and conduct. This group will also consider the behaviours of staff in meetings and the response to poor resident behaviours. It is being proposed that we will do some engagement with residents about what this code should be and the group is continuing to plan and look at what is happening in other boroughs. On review of Putting residents First we have agreed with the Major works Board that we will review Putting residents first at their Autumn meeting so that the new approach is ready for implementation of the new Strategy which will be agreed in December.
Findings Specific to the Fair Street/Devon Mansions 2018/19 QHIP Major Works Project	**Recommendations**	**Management Response/Target Date**	
The quality of the concrete works/brickwork repairs carried out under the QHIP is generally inconsistent. The pointing to the external brickwork in places, for example, is sub-standard and	**Recommendation 22:** Once the extent of the sub-standard work to the concrete/brickwork to the external façade has been identified, the LBS should ensure that the contractor and the CA are held to account for carrying out all	To be carried out as part of the Making Good Defects provision within the contract.	Obtaining the required information from the contractor and the CA has proved to be very challenging. Analysing the information received has also been time consuming and onerous. We are at a position now where we probably have all

is totally unsympathetic to the original character of the buildings.	necessary remedial works in accordance with their contractual obligations.	**Revised Target Date: 31/01/27**	the information that is available but, there are still considerable gaps. We will now be arranging for joint inspections (the council, Calfordseaden and Equans) of the external elevations of the blocks in Devon Mansions to confirm what was done and identify any defects. This will take time and the target date has been revised to 30 November 2026.
The flat roof coverings to Block 4 Devon Mansions (Flats 43-54) were replaced and the brick tank rooms on the roof were demolished. Unfortunately, the roof to the block continues to suffer leaks causing distress and disruption to residents.	**Recommendation 23:** The remedial works to the roof coverings to Block 4 Devon Mansions should be completed urgently and signed off by the CA and the material supplier providing the insurance-backed warranty. The contractor should be held accountable for all damage caused by the leaks and for any claims made against the LBS for damages and/or losses suffered by affected residents.	The remedial works have now been completed and continue to be monitored. **Completed**	Works completed and Langley, the warranty provider has confirmed that the warranty is still valid. Processes are being developed to ensure that this warranty (and warranties in general) is properly maintained and protected.
	Recommendation 24: All other flat roofs replaced as part of the QHIP works should be thoroughly inspected and signed off by the CA and the material supplier to ensure that the works are up to the required standard and the respective warranties can be issued.	All roofs have been inspected and appear to be in good order. Ongoing discussions with warranty providers to reissue and update the warranties. **Ongoing**	Inspections completed but we are still waiting for warranty providers to reissue and update the warranties.
Arrangements will need to be made to issue Practical Completion (PC) for this project.	**Recommendation 25:** Before issuing PC, the CA and the LBS should carry out a comprehensive post-inspection process to ensure that all	This process is underway with the commencement of the post-inspection	PC for this project will not be issued until the necessary post-inspections are completed and subsequent remedial works carried out. As stated previously, it

	defects and issues with the works are identified and collated into a Schedule of Defects to be served on the contractor. The CA should monitor the remedial works undertaken to ensure that all works are carried out to an acceptable standard within a reasonable timeframe.	work. A Schedule of Defects is being prepared. **Revised Target Date: 31/01/27**	has taken much longer than expected to obtain from the contractor and the CA the required information on the extent of the works that were carried out under this project. We are still awaiting further work sheets/work logs that have been identified as missing.
The preferred specified methods for access to the blocks of flats in this QHIP project were found to be unsuitable.	**Recommendation 26:** LBS should ensure that robust processes and procedures are in place before making key decisions on health and safety matters such as the preferred methods for access and working at heights including, risk assessments, options appraisals, and appropriate professional expert advice.	This will be a key consideration for all future Feasibility Studies. The brief for the consultants will be updated as appropriate to reflect the importance of this. **Completed**	New procedure demonstrated and discussed with T&RA at Consort where, residents challenged the need for and use of a full scaffolding system.
The CA recommended the use of a 'pilot' block of flats to help inform the scope of the works for this project however, the LBS rejected this proposal.	**Recommendation 27:** Wherever possible and appropriate, LBS should endeavour to use 'pilot' blocks/properties for future major works projects especially, on complex sites such as Fair Street/Devon Mansions. Pilots are useful in identifying potential issues, as well as providing opportunities for residents to see how the works will be carried out, the expected quality of the works and the disruption the works may cause. It will also help manage resident expectations.	The principle is sound but may not always be practical. To be assessed on a project-by-project basis. **Completed**	This approach has worked well at Consort Estate as, there are multiple blocks of the same design. Once the scaffolding had been erected and works on the pilot block commenced, findings from inspections and tests, including photographs, were shared and discussed with the T&RA and set the standard for the rest of the blocks. Residents were also given the opportunity to inspect via the scaffold with appropriate training (though the offer was not taken up).
There is a lack of available information to evidence the locations and numbers of the concrete and brickwork repair works undertaken on this project.	**Recommendation 28:** Prior to issuing PC, the CA must obtain, confirm and provide all necessary evidence to justify the cost of the concrete	This process is underway and will be completed as part of the Making Good	Obtaining the required information from the contractor and the CA has proved to be very challenging. Analysing the information received has also been time

	works and brickwork repairs carried out under this QHIP project. The LBS should seek to recover the cost of any unsubstantiated works from the contractor and the CA.	Defects provision within the contract. **Revised Target Date: 31/01/27**	consuming and onerous. We are at a position now where we probably have all the information that is available but, there are still considerable gaps. We will now be arranging for joint inspections (the council, Calfordseaden and Equans) of the external elevations of the blocks in Devon Mansions to confirm what was done and identify any defects. This will take time and the target date has been revised to 30 November 2026.
	Recommendation 29: For future projects, where works such as concrete repairs that will subsequently be covered up (by decoration for example), wherever possible, there should be robust systems in place to accurately photograph and record the location, scope, and quantity of the works to facilitate a robust audit trail.	This will be a key consideration for all future Feasibility Studies. The brief for the consultants will be updated to reflect the importance of this recommendation. **Completed and ongoing**	In the case of new contracts (Consort Estate for example), detailed concrete and brickwork survey results are shared with the CA and Council staff with photographs identifying the areas and quantities, before the contractor can commence works. The reports are also shared with the T&RA and their comments taken on board.
The remaining manufacturer's warranty for the flat roof coverings to Blocks 4 and 5 Devon Mansions was found to have been invalidated by the LBS' failure to adequately maintain the roofs in accordance with the requirements of the warranty.	**Recommendation 30:** To ensure that the cost and purpose of manufacturer's warranties is justified, the LBS should ensure that robust processes and procedures are in place to maintain the warranties in accordance with the warranty provisions. This includes clear 'signposting' processes for all staff involved in the maintenance and repair of the LBS housing stock and, robust procedures for making claims under the warranty, with clear lines of responsibility.	There is a clear signposting (flag) system in place and staff awareness has been raised on how this system should be used and the importance of doing so. **Completed**	It is part of the Planned Maintenance Team's procedures to add flags to 'iworld' after completion of a project. Repairs colleagues will check this information before carrying out works that could invalidate a warranty. This procedure has been reinforced with the Repairs Team and the Customer Services Centre.

The TFT was unable to establish why officers were instructed to use Langley products for all future flat roof replacement projects).	**Recommendation 31:** The use of nominated or sole providers of services, supplies, goods etc should be reviewed to ensure that there are tangible benefits to the LBS in their application. There should be a register of nominated or sole providers that is accessible to all officers with procurement responsibilities. All such arrangements should be validated and approved by the Procurement Team and notified to the relevant committees.	The future use of nominated or sole providers of services, supplies, goods etc will be strictly in accordance with the Council's Procurement Regulations. Any decisions taken around sole providers will be appropriately evidenced, approved, registered and documented. **Completed**	
Residents expressed concerns that reports they made of serious breaches of health and safety during the project were ignored.	**Recommendation 32:** All reports and incidents of breaches of health and safety should fully investigate and documented, with appropriate action taken (with due regard to the appropriate legislation) to prevent further recurrence. An audit trail of all incidents should be maintained on site and included in the project documentation.	The Council, its consultants and contractors have legal obligations in respect of breaches of health and safety. The Council will ensure these obligations are met through robust site processes and procedures including random site health and safety audits. For all projects, health and safety issues must be recorded at site level. Health and safety is a standing item on the agenda for the monthly site progress meetings.	

		Completed	
Several tenants in Devon Mansions were told that their kitchens and bathrooms would be upgrades as part of the QHIP project. All internal works to the flats in Devon Mansions were omitted but, tenants do not appear to have been informed of this.	**Recommendation 33:** The LBS should write to tenants in Devon Mansions who were previously told that their kitchens and bathrooms would be upgraded to inform them of the current position.	The Assistant Director Planned Maintenance has written to residents across the borough to inform them of the suspension of the QHIP. **Completed**	
Structural defects to the stair core landings to blocks in Devon Mansions identified in 2018 have not been addressed. There is a potential risk to the structural integrity of the stair core landings in Devon Mansions and, a potential risk to the safety of residents in the blocks.	**Recommendation 34:** The LBS should review the position with the structural defects to the stair core landings to the flats in Devon Mansions and develop an Action Plan for any subsequent interim and long-term remedial works.	The Council has commissioned structural surveys of all the stair core landings to the blocks in Devon Mansions to identify the full extent of the problem and the necessary remedial works. The completion of this survey and the subsequent remedial works identified will address this recommendation. **Revised Target Date: 31/10/26**	The scope of the structural survey was extended to include the requirements of the Building Safety Team for Visual Structural Reports (VSR) to support the Building Safety Cases for HRBs. This has lengthened the process considerably.
Devon Mansions requires significant future investment to bring the buildings up to the required standard. A piecemeal approach to future major and planned maintenance works to Devon Mansions would be a mistake.	**Recommendation 35:** The LBS should take a 'holistic' approach to future works at Devon Mansions and develop an overarching asset management strategy for its future maintenance and investment needs.	A Working Group of senior managers from various teams in Housing has been set up to review the various issues the Council is facing at Devon Mansions.	This 'holistic' approach requires input and information from various sources including the Stock Condition Survey, the structural survey etc. The SCS for Devon Mansions started in April 2026 and will run through to September 2026. The data from the SCS and structural surveys will form part of the overall asset management strategy

		The Working Group will be submitting a report to the Housing Senior Management Team on the various options for addressing the current issues. **Revised Target Date: 30/11/26**	which is scheduled to go to cabinet in December 2026. The boroughwide Stock Condition Survey has surveyed 63 homes at Devon Mansions so far, as part of the initial representative sample of homes across the borough. The survey has inspected the condition of key components with the homes, including an energy assessment and reported back on any HHSRS hazards. There is a lot going on at Devon Mansions. In addition to the SCS, we are currently carrying out structural surveys of the flats and communal areas including, Visual Structural Reports (VSRs) to assist the Building Safety Team with its Building Safety Case submissions. The target date has been revised accordingly.
Some residents on the Kirby Estate have complained about problems with damp and mould which, some of the attribute to the impact of the replacement windows.	**Recommendation 36:** For all future major works projects, residents should be given a copy of the LBS Damp and Mould Advice and Guidance leaflet.	This recommendation has been implemented. **Completed**	

Agenda Item 7

Meeting Name:	Housing Scrutiny Commission
Date:	19 October 2026
Report title:	Housing Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2026-2027
Ward(s) or groups affected:	N/a
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	No
From:	Head of Scrutiny

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Housing Scrutiny Commission notes the scrutiny topics selected by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2026-27 municipal year as detailed in Appendix 1.

2. That the Commission notes these topics are subject to scoping exercises and will therefore develop and change as scoping progresses.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The general terms of reference of the scrutiny commissions are set out in the council's constitution (overview and scrutiny procedure rules - paragraph 5). The constitution states that:

   Within their terms of reference, all scrutiny committees/commissions will:

   a) review and scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the council's functions

   b) review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the executive and council officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time in areas covered by its terms of reference

   c) review and scrutinise the performance of the council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas

   d) question members of the executive and officers about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects and about their views on issues and proposals affecting the

area

e) assist council assembly and the executive in the development of its budget and policy framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues

f) make reports and recommendations to the executive and or council assembly arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process

g) consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants

h) liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working

i) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the scrutiny committee and local people about their activities and performance

j) conduct research and consultation on the analysis of policy issues and possible options

k) question and gather evidence from any other person (with their consent)

l) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the scrutiny process and in the development of policy options

m) conclude inquiries promptly and normally within six months

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

4. The commission has within its remit the executive portfolio elements listed below:

Council Homes (Councillor Reginald Popoola)

Portfolio

- **becoming a better landlord** – to provide better homes, better estates and a stronger voice for tenants and leaseholders
- **management of the council's homes** – including council homes, sheltered and extra care homes, council owned temporary accommodation, high needs hostels and homes and sites for Gypsy, Roma and traveller communities
- **housing allocations** – lettings policy and allocation policy. Allocation of council, social rent and key worker homes to Southwark residents, supporting them to find a home the right size for their needs
- **housing maintenance** – including repairs and major works, heat networks, communal repairs, gas and electrical safety and refurbishment of empty council homes
- **empty council homes** – ensuring quick turnaround of voids and bringing

more council homes into use
- **fire safety** – ensuring council homes meet fire safety standards and leading our work on fire safety, cladding and remediation for private sector and housing association residential buildings
- **tenants and residents' halls** – including their maintenance, ongoing improvement and ensuring they are the best possible facilities for residents of our estates and broader community
- **garages** - on estates and owned by the council
- **Tenant and Leaseholder involvement** – working close with the Deputy Executive Member for Tenant and Leaseholder Services, including services and advice for council tenants, leaseholders and freeholders and support for tenants and residents associations and tenant management organisations, including Getting Involved Grants

Public Works and New Homes (Councillor Alexandra Austin)

Portfolio

- **new council homes** – the council's work to build thousands of new council homes; including new council homes for older people; net-zero homes
- **new affordable homes** – including housing association social rent homes; keyworker homes; community land trusts and housing cooperatives; homes for refugees; and temporary accommodation
- **homelessness** – including support for people who are at risk of being or who become homeless; working to end rough sleeping; securing good quality temporary accommodation
- **empty homes and short-term lets** – tackling empty homes across the private rented sector

Tenant and Leaseholder Services (Councillor George Grime)

Portfolio

- focusing on improving Southwark Housing's performance in those day-to-day areas that matter most to tenants and leaseholders including the responsive repairs service, maintenance and care of estates and communal areas of blocks of flats, speedy letting of empty properties, and developing an effective planned maintenance service.

5. The work programme is a standing item on the Housing Scrutiny Commission agenda and enables the Commission to consider, monitor and plan issues for consideration at each meeting.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Council Constitution • Section 3.3 – Executive Portfolios • Section 9 - Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules	Southwark Council Website	Everton Roberts 020 7525 7221
Link: Council Constitution		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Housing Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2026-2027

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Everton Roberts, Head of Scrutiny	
Report Author	Adam Wood, Scrutiny Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	9 October 2026	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	**Comments Sought**	**Comments Included**
Director of Law and Governance	No	No
Strategic Director of Resources	No	No
Executive Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team		9 October 2026

Appendix 1

Housing Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2026-2027

Meeting	Agenda items	Comment
14 July 2026	Progress on the Good Landlord Plan	To receive a report, *Good Landlord Plan Progress Update*, noting the Plan's status and progress.
19 October 2026	Empty Homes (Voids)	To receive information on the performance and delivery of the Voids Improvement Programme (*with accompanying report*).
	Update on Major Works	To receive information on progress implementing the recommendations on Fair Street/Devon Mansions, Canada and Kirby Estates QHIP Major Works Projects as well as lessons learned and where/how these have been applied to other major works projects in the Borough (with accompanying report).

Appendix 1

Upcoming Meetings	Agenda Items	Comment
To be allocated	Empty Properties (Voids)	[To be discussed / allocated to a Commission meeting at 19 October 2026 meeting]
	Repairs, Damp and Mould	[To be discussed / allocated to a Commission meeting at 19 October 2026 meeting]
	Good Landlord Plan - Staff Resources	[To be discussed / allocated to a Commission meeting at 19 October 2026 meeting]
	Resident Engagement and Governance	[To be discussed / allocated to a Commission meeting at 19 October 2026 meeting]
	Major Works – Update	[To be discussed / allocated to a Commission meeting at 19 October 2026 meeting]
	Issues resulting from use of Flowcrete	[To be discussed / allocated to a Commission meeting at 19 October 2026 meeting]
	One-year Review of Plentific	[To be discussed / allocated to a Commission meeting at 19 October 2026 meeting]
	One-year review of the Housing Regulator report and progress made	[To be discussed / allocated to a Commission meeting at 19 October 2026 meeting]
	Allocations Policy	[Following a call-in, OSC has taken responsibility for this topic]

HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION

MUNICIPAL YEAR 26/27

AGENDA DISTRIBUTION LIST (OPEN)

NOTE: Original held by Scrutiny Team; all amendments/queries to Adam Wood Tel: 020 7525 0265

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Councillor Hellen Benavides (Chair)	1	Shehu, Sarauniya – Executive Office	
Councillor Pascale Mitchell (Vice-Chair)	1	Tim Wright – Green Group Office	
		Arthur Holmes – Labour Group Office	
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Councillor Andy Bates			
Councillor Stephanie Cryan		Everton Roberts – Head of Scrutiny	
Councillor Felix Hamer		Adam Wood – Scrutiny (Spares)	10
Councillor Leigh Richman			
Councillor Janice White			
Co-opted Members			
Andrew Eke (Tenants Forum)			
Ina Negoita (Homeowners Forum)			
Brendan O'Brien (Southwark Tenant Management Organisation Committee – STMOC)			
RESERVES		**Dated: 09 October 2026**	
Councillor Mohamed Deen			
Councillor Callum Fowler			
Councillor Tori Griffiths			
Councillor Sean Hannigan			
Councillor Andy Higson			
Councillor Rachael Penny			
Councillor Lina Usma			