

STAR Housing Report to Council.

A Analysis of achievement against KPIs with commentary

- 1.1 As part of the management agreement between STAR Housing and Shropshire Council, various key performance indicators have been set in order to measure the delivery of outcomes by STAR its management of the HRA.

Current Situation

- 2.1 We are in the process of reviewing how we report performance to the Board and other bodies and there is a possibility that this report will change format over the coming months.

3.0 Performance Exceptions Reporting

Voids

STAR/ TSM Ref	Description	Quarter 1 23/24	Quarter 1 22/23	Period 4	Target	Comments
A1 - Allocations and Voids						
A1i	Average time in days to relet empty properties - All Voids	98	72	87	37 (+5)	100 voids relet this year q1 - 136 Period 4
A1i/a	Average time in days to relet empty properties - General Voids	83	56	75	28 (+5)	87 voids relet this year Q1 - 121 P4
A1i/b	Average time in days to relet empty properties - Major Work Voids	220	150	152	52 (+5)	13 voids relet this year q1 - 15 Period 4
A1ii	Rent loss due to empty properties (voids) as a % of rent due	2.9%	2.4%	2.6%	1.5% (+0.2)	

- 3.1 Average time to let a property has increased compared to Q4 23/24 but this can be attributed to the backlog reducing, meaning that a number of the voids that have been outstanding for some considerable time, will have a significant impact on the void turnaround times once let on the system. Number of voids processed in Q1 compared to last year have increased significantly, two extra major works, and time taken to appoint overflow contractors are also contributory factors.
- 3.2 The trend is positive going into Period 4 23/24 though as a push to increase signups has increased the number of quick let properties significantly which has seen relet times on average drop by the end of July. Work has also been done to utilise the system more to get to one version of the truth. Major and Minor voids are now easily identifiable but some consolidation is still required and will be throughout the year.
- 3.3 The average void turnaround time for any voids which have been issued to STAR Housing since April 2023 is 50 days, whilst still above the target. As the backlog decreases this is expected continue falling.

4.0 Complaints

STAR/TSM Ref	Description	Quarter 1 23/24	Quarter 1 22/23	Period 4	Target	Comments
B1 - Customer Service and Information						
CH02 & CH01	% Complaints responded to within Code timescales (10 working days)	79.17%	100%	72%	90% (-5)	19 of 24 (23 of 24 if extensions are taken into account) Q1 - 23 of 32 (24 of 32 if extensions are taken into account) Period 4 (cases for the year CH01) (MIM)
B1ii	Satisfaction with complaint handling <i>Own Survey</i>	100%	69%	90%	70% (-5)	11 of 11 satisfied Q1. 18 of 20 satisfied P4 #% margin of error, therefore between #% & #% satisfied.
B1iv	Number of customers registered to access services online as a % of properties managed	14%	10%	14%	14% (-5)	542 portal users. This is an in time measure so no difference between Q1 and P4.

4.1 Complaints responded to within 10 days has decreased year on year but the indicator is misleading as Code allows extensions to deal with complex issues. If extensions were taken into account complaints responded to in time would increase to 95.83%. Period 4 shows a downwards trend in performance in this area regardless of extensions. Overall satisfaction with complaints handling is up however and significantly above target. The number of tenants using the tenant portal has also significantly increased year on year due to a push from the comms team in this area.

5.0 Repairs

STAR/TSM Ref	Description	Quarter 1 23/24	Quarter 1 22/23	Period 4	Target	Comments
C2 - Repairs and Maintenance						
C2iv/c	% of routine repairs completed on time (28 days)	76%	65%	76%	80% (-10)	1518 of 1992 completed on time Q1. 1952 of 2558 completed on time P4.
C2iv/d	% of programmed repairs completed on time (6 months)	72%	55%	74%	75% (-10)	120 of 167 completed on time Q1. 183 of 246 completed on time P4.

5.1 Repairs performance is improved year on year but down significantly from Q4 22/23. This can be attributed to a number of historical jobs being completed on the system due to a great effort on the repairs team to reduce the WIP. Q1 to P4 shows an improving picture but there are still backlog jobs to be dealt with which may impact performance in future periods. At 30th June, we had 1946 jobs, of which 1000 were overdue, only 156 had future appointments. A healthy WIP would be around 800 jobs, with less than 20 overdue, with 750 with future appointments. At 21st Aug, the WIP was reduced to 1364 jobs, 462 have future appointments and 609 overdue. Our goal is to reduce the WIP to circa 900 jobs for the end of September.

6.0 Compliance

STAR/TSM Ref	Description	Quarter 1 23/24	Quarter 1 22/23	Period 4	Target	Comments
C4 - Servicing and Testing						
C4i/a BS03	% of properties where required asbestos management surveys have been carried out	81%	88%	83%	100% (-0.50)	620 reports due, of which 512 in programme & 38 access letters. (MIM)
C4ii BS01	% of properties with a valid gas safe certificate	100%	100%	100%	100% (-0.20)	(MIM)
C4iii	% dwellings with an electrical safety certificate less than 5 years old	99.2%	98.4%	98.7%	100% (-0.50)	30 are listed buildings/shared ownership.

6.1 Compliance performance has mostly remained consistent moving from Q4 22/23 into Q1. Work is being done within the compliance team to get to one version of the truth using the Housing Management System. Work is ongoing.

B Tenant Satisfaction Measure – results of baseline survey and plans for collection from April 2024

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Following on for the Social Housing White Paper, The Regulator of Social Housing has created a new system for assessing how well social housing landlords in England are doing at providing good quality homes and services. In addition to introducing revised consumer standards, this will involve a set of tenant satisfaction measures that social housing landlords must report on. People will be able to use these measures to understand how well landlords are doing.

1.2 There will be 22 TSM, 12 to be collected through tenant perception surveys and 10 to be collected through management information. The timescale for the roll out of the TSMs is:

- TSMs came into force 1 April 2023
- Data collation to be completed by 31 March 2024
- Submission to the Regulator by “Summer” 2024
- Results published September 2024

This must be repeated every 12 months.

2.0 Current Position

2.1 In October 2022, STAR contracted Aquity to conduct a Baseline survey of 50% of tenants in preparation for the upcoming Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM).

The aim of this survey was to provide data on resident satisfaction, which will allow us to:

- Provide an up-to-date picture of residents’ satisfaction with their homes and with the services provided by STAR
- Introduce the new TSM questions to familiarise residents with them and the organisation with the collection and publication of the required data
- Analyse satisfaction by tenure, area of operation, age range, length of tenancy, and gender, where appropriate

2.2 The survey was undertaken by post and sent out to around 2,000 residents with the aim to complete in excess of 350 responses but ideally up to 520 to give the required margin of error.

A breakdown of the sample is as follows:

Client group	Population	Sample	Total number of interviews	% interviewed	Margin of error
General needs residents	3,700	1,833	377	10.2%	±4.8%
Independent Living	300	151	39	13.00%	±14.6%
Total Rented	4,000	1984	416	10.4%	±4.5%
Shared owners	200	18	1	5.6%	±97.8%
Total Residents	4,200	2,002	417	20.8%	±4.6%

This survey is the first survey to use the new TSM questions and it generally shows good levels of satisfaction with the services provided by STAR Housing.

Summary of Positive Points

- 81% of residents are satisfied with the overall services provided by STAR
- 80% are satisfied with the repairs service in the last 12 months and the safety of their home.
- 79% find STAR Housing easy to deal with
- 78% feel they are treated with respect
- 86% satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live
- Satisfaction at STAR is above the median on most of the measures with the upkeep of the communal areas and how they handle ASB in the top quartile
- Positive Net Promotor Score of 41 for general needs and 50 for independent living residents. To put this in to context, in the commercial sector, it is reported that companies with the most

efficient growth operate with an NPS® of 50 to 80. The average company stutters along at an NPS® of only 5 to 10.

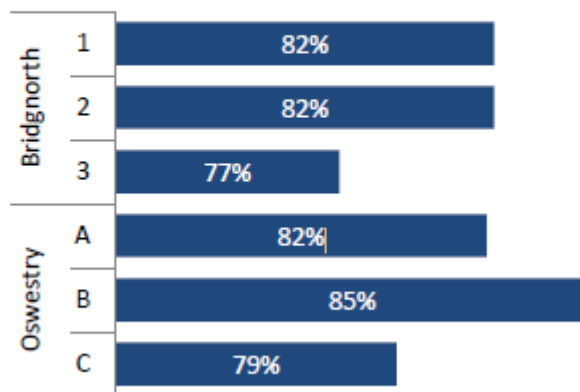
2.3 The levels of dissatisfaction don't exactly correspond with the lower levels of satisfaction, although the most is for the complaints handling whilst there remains dissatisfaction with the repairs service:

2.4 Summary of Negative points

- 39% of residents are dissatisfied with how complaints are handled
- 16% are dissatisfied with Repairs
- 15% dissatisfied with the time taken to complete the most recent repair
- 13% dissatisfied Repairs in last 12 months
- Satisfaction with overall services has dipped by 7% since 2019, however, this is being seen across the sector
- How STAR treats its residents fairly and handles complaints are both in the third quartile
- Keeping residents informed about things that matter to them in falls in to the lower quartile.

2.5 We operate over six patches, three in Bridgnorth and three in Oswestry. The chart below shows that satisfaction is highest in Oswestry patch B (85%), just a little ahead of Bridgnorth patches 1 & 2 and Oswestry patch A (all 82%). Least satisfied are those in Bridgnorth patch 3 (77%).

Figure 2.4: Satisfaction with the overall services by patch



2.6 Bridgnorth Patch 3 covers Alveley, Bridgnorth Town, Worfeld, Tasley and the Grove. The latter two have the highest density of STAR properties. Oswestry Patch C covers St Martins, Oswestry outskirts and Gobowen.

3.0 Plans for 23/24

3.1 STAR Housing have procured Acuity to conduct the TSM surveys again this year. By partnering with Acuity for the TSM surveys, we aim to gather more comprehensive and representative data. While we have traditionally relied on postal surveys in the past, we recognise the need to adapt our approach to ensure a wider demographic is included and to increase the overall number of respondents.

3.2 The decision to switch to a telephone survey was driven by our desire to reach a larger audience and capture a more diverse range of perspectives. By conducting interviews over the phone,

we hope to engage with individuals who may not have participated in previous years or who may have faced barriers in completing postal surveys.

- 3.3 To ensure that our survey results meet the standards set by both the Regulator and Housemark, it is crucial that we achieve enough responses to achieve a sampling error of +4% at the 95% confidence level. This level of accuracy will provide us with reliable insights into our tenant satisfaction levels and enable us to make informed decisions based on robust data. Based on statistical calculations, we have determined that we need 522 respondents.
- 3.4 The telephone interviews will commence on 25th September and we aim to bring an initial report to the customer services committee.

C Outcomes of any service improvement reviews

- 1.1 STAR Housing have begun four key service review since March 2023:

- IT and Business Transformation Review
- Repairs and Maintenance Health Check
- HQN Shropshire Council and STAR Housing Workshop
- Finance Review

- 1.2 All the reviews are currently being undertaken however there are some early recommendations which are detailed below.

2.0 IT and Business Transformation Review

- 2.1 Shaw consulting were appointed to undertake an IT review for STAR Housing, Shaw consulting were asked to review STAR Housing current IT infrastructure and make recommendations on how STAR Housing can best place itself for the future and the new regulatory framework. The first element of the commission has been completed recommending a five year IT strategy and plan. The second element of the commission is starting in October 2023.

3.0 HQN Shropshire Council and STAR Housing Workshops

- 3.1 The Campbell Tickell report on the future of STAR Housing recommended the retention of STAR Housing and made the recommendation that STAR Housing remit needs to be re-aligned with, and clearly delivered against Shropshire Council priorities, through a refreshed partnership-based approach with closer operations and potential development aligned with the Council other owned
- 3.2 The workshops were commissioned to help realise this shared ambition of delivering the key outcomes from the Campbell Tickell report. The workshops aim to begin the work to refresh and realign the relationship and arrangements between STAR Housing and Shropshire Council.
- 3.3 In April 2023 the council and STAR Housing commissioned HQN to facilitate these workshops to assist STAR Housing and the council in developing its shared objectives. These shared objectives will be used as the basis for STAR Housing 2024-2027 Corporate Plan.
- 3.4 In advance of the setting up of the workshops HQN undertook an extensive review of key Star Housing and Shropshire Council housing documents including the Housing Strategy and the existing STAR Housing business plan. Following the review, it was agreed that four workshops would be held. The workshop themes are outlined below:
- 1) Homes
 - 2) Business Planning and Finance
 - 3) Growth
 - 4) Governance

3.5 The workshops were held between May and July 2023 and made a number of key recommendations. These recommendations are being considered by the STAR Housing board, the council and other key stakeholders.

4.0 Repairs and Maintenance Health Check

4.1 In June 2023 following feedback from the TSM and a number of other reviews, STAR Housing commissioned a repairs and maintenance health check. The driver for the health check is to best place STAR Housing to prepare itself for the new approach to social housing regulation to commence in 2024 (including new inspection regime). The review was required to:

- To provide an independent assessment of the extent to which STAR Housing organises, orchestrates and delivers housing maintenance services:
- Shaped around the reasonable expectations of tenants
- Within an overall strategic asset management plan for the stock
- Employs best practice and other standards and approaches that compare favourably with those housing providers considered to be maintenance service exemplars
- In accordance with regulatory requirements (proposed consumer standards)
- Efficiently, economically and effectively

4.2 The review would identify what works well and not so well, improvements that could and should be made and identify priorities for action and potential short, medium and long term plans for the service.

4.3 The review has made a number of key recommendations which include:

- Better communication with tenants
- There is sufficient capacity to manage the responsive repairs effectively and deliver services to agreed standards
- The stock receives the full range of preventative and cyclical maintenance activities necessary to protect the asset base and ensure tenants homes are improved in a timely manner
- IT is used effectively
- The backlog of pandemic related repairs is eradicated

4.4 The key recommendation from the report will now be considered by the Operations Team and taken forward for implementation.

5.0 Finance Review

5.1 STAR Housing have recently begun a review of its finance service to ensure the finance team move from a technical finance function to a business partnering approach. This review has made a number of recommendations associated with the structure of the team, the systems which are being used, internal processes and long-term business planning.

5.2.1 The Corporate Director is in the process of implementing these recommendations and the finding of the report have been endorsed by the STAR Housing board.

D Analysis of the capital programme

1.1 STAR Housing planned maintenance programme continues to progress, albeit at a slower pace than expected. A slower start to the year indicates that several programmes are underspent compared with where we would expect to be at this time in the year but recovery plans are in place to ensure the programme will recover to

target spend and delivery. The Planned Maintenance team have a number of staffing vacancies where recruitment is ongoing, with key post being filled to support the second half of the year.

- 1.2.0 The property investment plan remains an ongoing focus as we continue to strengthen and improve our data and understanding of our properties and our asset data. This was updated in August 2023 to ensure that our component lifecycles are in-line with sector best practice and that cost assumptions are refreshed. This was reported to the Development, Sustainability and Strategic Investment Committee in more detail and will form the basis of the development of the 2024/25 programme which will begin development in October 2023 to align with budget setting.
- 1.2.1 We have received the outcome of a report commissioned by Savills to complete a validation exercise on our stock condition and property data underpinning our property investment plan. The desktop validation of the component data identified that the data collected is accurate, there were a few anomalies identified, but nothing considered to be material to the validity of the 30-year plan. It was recommended that STAR Housing consider changing the life cycles adopted for kitchens (30 years) and bathrooms (40 years) to align to best practice. We were already in the process of completing this transition which will be reflected in any future plans.
- 1.2.2 The kitchen and bathroom programmes have continued with a smooth transition to new contractual providers following termination of the previous contractor. These contracts are being closely monitored and inspected to ensure we deliver high-quality services to customers and cost management is being controlled through improved request for payment processes and increased levels of on-site sign off and inspection.
- 1.2.3 Our stock condition collection programme is progressing but is slightly behind target. We have completed 17% of the required stock condition surveys needed this year to maintain our 100% level. The resource focussed on this work has been at 50% capacity as a role has been held due to the restructure and other resource has needed to support other programmes with Shropshire Council. Recruitment is commencing for a new resource, and it is still expected that we will reach target levels at the year end. We are refreshing our stock condition forms in the meantime to ensure when we accelerate the programme, that our data collection scope improves. EPC surveys remain on-hold because of ongoing data access issues with Elmhurst. Further options are being explored and Board will be updated at the next meeting.
- 1.2.4 We currently have 81 properties (2.36%) of stock that are non-decent. All components are on the programme this year to upgrade, with the target to be at 0% by the end of March 2024.
- 1.2.5 Our Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund pilot in Gobowen has successfully completed and was completed under budget. Initial feedback from customers has been excellent, although we do need to analyse pre and post energy usage through the winter to fully evaluate the success of the project.
- 1.2.6 We continue to progress our aids and adaptations programme and have received 28 referrals to date until 1st August 2023. 12 of these are complete with the remaining in the process of review and planning. £61,000 of our £250,000 budget has been spent so far. Satisfaction for this programme has not traditionally been collected, and is being considered for future collection.

- 1.2.7 We have nine contracts in asset management that are due to expire this year. Good progress has been made across the Asbestos, Windows, Fire, and Air-source heat pump contracts. The Asbestos and Air Source Heat Pump contracts are in the final stages of legal review prior to signing. Fire Safety contracts have been signed and work is commencing, and Window procurement is currently sourcing quotes for review. We have used a balance of frameworks and procurement routes to ensure we have a balanced supply chain including smaller and larger contractors, utilising local contractors where this is appropriate and value for money to do so. A small group of residents were invited to a focus group to support development of the specification for new Kitchen and Bathroom contracts which is a first for STAR and is something we wish to engage residents in more. A more detailed procurement update will be presented to Board in Q4 2023 to provide an overview of the activity and impact on budgets and service quality.

E Consumer Standard Self-Assessment

- 1.1 On 20 August 2023, the RSH published the proposed new consumer regulation framework for consultation. The proposed regulatory framework continues with the principle of co-regulation between the regulator and landlords and builds on the “effective proactive economic regulation when assessing a provider”, which the Housing Association sector is familiar with, but ALMOs and Local Authorities are not.
- 1.2 The RSH are consulting on the proposed standards for a period of 12 weeks. Shropshire Council as the registered provider will be seeking to respond to the consultation. We will work with the Council in any response or submission. Overall response to the proposals have been positive by the sector at large, and it is worth noting that following the consultation on the new TSMs previously, that the changes following consultation were minimal, and the direction of travel and principles remained.
- 1.3 The regulator has set out some principles that the new consumer regulation framework would need to follow. The new standards and requirements would need to: make a meaningful difference to tenants; be deliverable by landlords; and be ‘regulatable’ by the regulator.
- 1.4. The consumer standards are intended to be outcome-focused, meaning that registered providers can meet the outcomes in the most appropriate way for their tenants and their business. The new regulatory standards take account of the RSH revised objectives, which now explicitly include safety, transparency and energy efficiency, and the range of commitments set out in the White Paper. The key points are outlined below:
- The Safety and Quality Standard – requires landlords to provide safe and good quality homes and landlord services to tenants.
 - The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard – requires landlords to be open with tenants and treat them with fairness and respect so that tenants can access services, raise complaints when necessary, influence decision making and hold their landlord to account.

- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard – requires landlords to engage with other relevant parties so that tenants can live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods and feel safe in their homes.
 - The Tenancy Standard – sets requirements for the fair allocation and letting of homes and for how those tenancies are managed and ended by landlords.
- 1.5. The Act amends the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 to give the regulator the power to issue a code of practice on consumer issues. This mirrors the current approach taken by the regulator on consumer standards. The new Code of Practice aims to help tenants and landlords understand how compliance may be achieved with the proposed consumer standards.
- 1.6. The draft code of practice supplements the consumer standards. The code is designed to expand on some of the requirements in the consumer standards. Content is amplified and illustrative examples are used. The code aims to help providers understand what the regulator is looking for when seeking assurance from them on meeting the standards. In essence it sets out good practice rather than regulatory requirements. Providers are advised to have regard to the code when assessing their compliance against the Standards. However, it is the standards rather than the code that registered providers must meet. The code gives examples of how providers might achieve compliance, but they are not intended to be either exhaustive or prescriptive.
- 1.7. It is expected that the new consumer regulation framework will take effect from April 2024. The detail set out in the new regulatory framework is greater than the previous consumer standards, and combined with the introduction of a new regulatory inspection programme below, will certainly present challenges to the Governance and Operations of STAR to adapt and prepare effectively.

2.0 STAR Housing and the council joint approach

- 2.1 It is critical that STAR and Shropshire Council prepare effectively for the introduction of the new regulatory regime, especially given this is a new process for both. This preparation will need to address three key areas:
- Self-assessment against the proposed standards
 - Readiness for inspection
 - Mobilisation of resident scrutiny function
- 2.2 To ensure we remain confident of our compliance status with the propose standard we are preparing for a comprehensive self-assessment of STAR against the Consumer Regulation Standard. The proposed approach will be both resident-led and management-supported to ensure transparency, effectiveness, and adherence to the prescribed standards. The approach will need to be overseen by Shropshire Council as the Registered Provider. We have prepared our proposed approach with the Council who are comfortable with the approach and will form part of the project steering group.
- 2.3 The proposed approach to the self-assessment is summarised below,
- The approach will involve residents at it's heart, ensuring they are actively involved in scrutinising our services

- The review will be coordinated and supported by HQN, an external expert in regulatory self-assessments. They will support, coach and advise residents through the process
 - The process will involve staff interviews, document collation, and review of performance information mirroring the process for an inspection from the regulator.
 - HQN and residents will develop a findings report along with recommendations to provide to STAR, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.
 - STAR will provide a management response to residents on their findings and recommendations.
 - The project will work under oversight of Executive Committee and Shropshire Council
 - The findings and recommendations will be presented to both Customer Service Committee and Board for discussion and noting, along with STAR's proposed action plan to respond to findings.
 - The self-assessment process will collate best practice and also utilise the HQN model assessment toolkit.
 - The project is targeting the findings and recommendation to be available for review by Board in Q4
- 2.3 The outcome of this work will be an overview of our strengths and areas for improvement in relation to the standards – allowing some time to correct or address anything significant identified.
- 2.4 To support readiness for inspection by Shropshire Council and STAR, the Council has put themselves forwards to be part of a pilot inspection to be completed by the regulator in October / November. This work will be developed and prepared in the coming weeks with the regulator and presents a good opportunity for all stakeholders to learn and develop. This will certainly require involvement and input from STAR and could involve the RSH observing relevant meetings and interviewing key Board members.
- 2.5 Resident scrutiny is an essential factor that the regulator will be looking for when completing their inspections and in considering how we are meeting certain standards around engagement. The sector generally has a well-established approach to scrutiny through a range of different governance arrangements. At the heart of many approaches is a resident scrutiny panel through which residents can effectively challenge and scrutinise performance and influence decisions at a strategic level
- 2.6 In the past STAR have had successful Area Panels that over recent years have reduced and there is currently no structured mechanism for residents to hold us to account and scrutinise our services. It is proposed that HQN also support us in the development of a new scrutiny arrangement, including providing coaching and on-going support to the new members.
- 2.7 There are 18 residents who have previously expressed an interest in being part of a resident scrutiny panel who will be invited to take part in the process. We will work to ensure that the panel remains representative of the wider Shropshire and STAR community as the project progresses.

- 2.8 More detailed reports for approval and discussion on the development of the resident scrutiny arrangements will be presented to board and AAB as the work progresses. We would hope that the panel would be fully operational from April 2024.

G Health and safety & compliance

- 1.1. An Interim compliance dashboard is being used to monitor compliance. The categories and KPIs within it are currently the subject of review by Roger Smith, Interim Compliance Manager and Jatender Dhadwal, Principal Consultant from Compliance 100 and may be revised in future reports. A summary of the current position of compliance in each of the key six areas of compliance is set out below. Where further significant progress has been achieved since 31 July, the details will be included within the commentary.
- 1.2. We are continuing to review our approach to reporting and aim to improve transparency as part of this. The language around overdue and outstanding continues to cause confusion. New definitions are being used.
- **Actions:** Any task set out within an action plan in response to recommendations on a risk assessment or survey.
 - **Current Actions:** Actions which are not yet completed.
 - **Closed Actions:** Actions which are no longer current due either to having been carried out/completed or no longer necessary.
 - **Overdue Actions:** Actions that have not been completed before their recommended period
- 1.3. STAR is currently working towards the following general timeframes:
- Very High = Immediate action required
 - High = 30 days
 - Medium = 2 months
 - Low = 4 months
- 1.4. Under certain circumstances, it will not be possible to complete a designated action within the set timescales, (e.g. due to extended lead times on delivery of a replacement part). Where this is the case, particularly for high priority actions, alternative remedial measures should be taken to manage the risk. Where possible, these are set out in the commentary.

2.0 Gas, Oil, Solid Fuel and Air Source Heat Pumps Safety

- 2.1.1 The current position for Gas Safety represents 100% compliance with all of the 3,439 domestic properties currently on the programme holding a Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR) / CP12 that is less than 1 year old. A copy of the LGSR for their home has been provided to every tenant.
- 2.1.2 Gas safety for communal boilers is also at 100% compliance with all 14 of the boilers possessing a gas safety certificate / CP16 that is less than 1 year old. Heating for 27 properties is supplied by communal gas boilers and these properties will not have an LGSR.
- 2.1.3 A further 594 non-gas systems supply heating to properties by other means, (i.e. electric storage heaters, oil, solid fuel, or air source heat pumps). These are subject to similar testing regimes to gas appliances. OFTEC the Oil Firing Technical Association establishes the standards for competence within the domestic oil heating

and cooking industry. **HETAS** - the Heating Equipment testing and Approval Scheme approve biomass and solid fuel domestic heating appliances, fuels and services including the registration of competent installers and servicing businesses. Many of these properties have dual fuel systems and therefore have more than one test and certificate. As a consequence the overall number of tests and certificates relates to individual units of equipment or systems and is a higher number than the overall number of individual properties on STAR's stock list.

Duel Fuel Properties	No. of properties	No. Of systems
Gas & Oil	3	6
Gas & Solid fuel	31	62
Oil with Solid Fuel	15	30
Electric with Solid Fuel	4	8
Solid fuel with air source	19	38
TOTAL	72	144

2.1.4 Of the 594 non-gas systems:

- The 151 Oil systems are 100% Compliant.
- The 333 Air Source heat pumps are 100% Compliant.
- The 35 Electric Storage Heaters are 100% Compliant.
- 72 of the 75 Solid fuel systems (96%) were tested and compliant as at 31 July 2023.
- Of the three remaining properties, two were successfully accessed on the third attempt, their chimney's swept and compliant. At the time of writing, we now stand at 98.7% compliant on solid fuel heating systems.
- The sole remaining property has been inspected but has nesting birds blocking its chimney. This will be dealt with at the end of the nesting season. The heating system will remain unavailable for use until the nest is removed.

3.0 Electrical Safety (Domestic)

3.1 An Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) must be carried out on tenanted properties every five years or on change of tenant. As at the end of July there were 3,960 properties on the testing programme, of which 3,908 (98.68%) held a valid EICR.

Of the remaining 52:

- 3 were with our legal team due to ongoing no access challenges
- 23 had confirmed appointments with residents
- 25 were pending a confirmed appointment. Our operational team continue to exhaust all options to secure appointments.
- 1 visit was abandoned by contractors due to hygiene issues at the property

4.0 Electrical Safety (Communal)

4.1 74 of the 78 Blocks (94.9%) on the Communal EICR programme were compliant with STAR's target of annual testing as at 31 July 2023. The four untested blocks have now been tested and all sites have EICR and communal electrical testing is back at 100%.

4.2 It should be noted that despite the shortfall against the target at month end, STAR remained fully compliant with the requirements set out in BS 7671 Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) wiring regulations (18th Edition) and Part P of the Building Regulations. These set out a requirement for tests to take place within a five-year cycle rather than the annual target set by STAR.

4.3 It is recommended that the target of annual testing for communal areas is relaxed. By moving towards either a 3-year cycle of testing STAR will remain compliant with regulations and accepted best practice while also saving approximately 60% on expenditure.

5.0 Fire Safety

5.1 Positive progression has been made with respect to both Fire Risk Assessments and subsequent Fire Risk Actions. Of the 90 Fire Risk Assessments required, STAR is 100% compliant. This includes 4 additional properties and their FRA added since the last report.

- 2 additional blocks 2 buildings in St Marys Street, Bridgnorth were identified as part of a stock reconciliation process.
- *2 further blocks are being transferred to STAR from Shropshire Council, but FRA have been completed (70 Castle Foregate and Derfald House).*

5.2 The stock breakdown for the 90 FRA is:

- 68 General need blocks
- 11 communal room schemes
- 2 office/depot
- 4 Temporary Accommodation (TA)
- 2 supported schemes
- 1 hostel
- 2 due for transfer from Shropshire Council.

5.3 At the end of July, we reported the following compliance towards Fire Risk Actions:

FRA Action Plan Progress				
	Total Current Actions in July 2023	Actions Completed	Current Actions at Month End	Percentage Completed During Month
High Priority	14	10	4	71.4%
Medium Priority	269	59	210	21.9%
Low Priority	147	25	122	17.0%
TOTAL	430	94	336	21.9%

5.4 All high priority actions from FRA are scheduled to be actioned within one month. Where a specific action cannot be completed in the standard timescale, (e.g., due to lead times on deliveries) interim measures may need to be introduced to manage the risk. The four remaining current high-risk actions relate to emergency lighting, fire alarm installation and a fire door replacement on an electrical cupboard.

5.5 The following presents a breakdown of the type of following actions raised from the recent Fire Risk Assessment reviews:

- 115 Compartmentation surveys, compartmentation remedial works
- 78 Fire Strategies
- 64 Fire Door replacement / upgrade / repair.
- 79 Housing Management actions

5.6 As at 6 September there were 59 fire risk actions overdue. This is significant reduction on the 575 reported to Board in May 2023, and continues to present a downward trend. 3 are high risk, 51 are medium risk and 5 are low risk.

6.0 Legionella

6.1 The current position represents 100% compliance for water risk assessments with all sixteen blocks possessing a current assessment.

6.2 Four high risk remedial actions were overdue at the end of July. These all related to the removal of unused fire hoses at Greenfields Court. Simple removal of the hoses would result in a dead-leg (dead-end) of pipework which would in itself increase the risk of legionella contamination within the building still further. Difficulties in tracing water pipe runs beneath the building and the high probability of simultaneously removing a shared feed made it impossible to remove the dead legs without risk of cutting water supply to individual residents. An alternative solution is being introduced to reduce and manage the risk. The hose reels are being removed on 18 August and replaced with a valve outlet (i.e., a tap) onto which a shorter length of hose can be attached to reach a nearby sink / drain. Water within the pipework will then be flushed through before the hose is removed. This action will be repeated on a regular basis to ensure that the risk continues to be managed. A long-term solution is sought which may include extension of the water pipes and the fitting of a tap above a sink that can allow regular flushing without the need for a hose attachment.

6.3 Following completion of the work described above, Legionella Action Management will be back at 100% compliance.

7.0 Asbestos - Communal Areas

7.1 The Control of Asbestos Regulation 2012 set out a duty to manage the risks arising from asbestos containing materials within the common areas of flats. This includes common parts for access, circulation and storage, e.g., entrance hall, lobby, foyer, lift, stairs, boiler and plant rooms, roof space, communal yards, gardens, store rooms, bike shelters and external outbuildings. Asbestos Management Plan – Each of the 86 blocks with a communal area has an asbestos management plan and we are 100% compliant with this requirement.

7.2 STAR's policy is to also operate a system of annual reinspection. Although this was undertaken in 2021/22, the process had not taken place since then. This was due to issues relating to new IT systems being implemented and a backlog in data needing to be cleansed and transferred to the new system.

7.3 As at 31 July 2023, 69 of the 86 blocks (80.2%) of the communal areas had undergone reinspection. Of the remaining 17 blocks, a further 5 have now been inspected and the final 12 will be completed by late August / early September at which point STAR will be back to 100% compliance.

8.0 Asbestos - Domestic Properties

8.1 A total of 3,751 domestic properties are recorded on our domestic programme as having Asbestos Containing Materials present or suspected as being present. The Compliance team are working through the list to undertake asbestos surveys at all such properties on a five-year cycle. As at 31 July 2023 3,131 out of 3,751 properties (83.5%) have had a survey completed, with the outstanding surveys on a programme to be undertaken.

9.0 Lifts

9.1 Lifts provided for use by workers in workplaces are subject to the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998. In simple terms, LOLER requires a six-monthly programme of inspection and maintenance of workplace passenger lifts.

9.2 A Shrewsbury based lift maintenance company, (Belvidere Lifts) have carried out a survey and inspection of the lift and we can now report full compliance.

H Housing Revenue Account

1.0 Current position

1.1 Like many councils and RP's housing finances are becoming increasingly strained due to a mix of sector wide pressures, including compliance, inflationary pressures, damp and mould and higher interest rates. The key to having a sustainable position in relation to the HRA is to have a clear understanding of the health of the HRA over a 30 year business planning period.

1.2 A key recommendation from recent board meetings and discussions with the council is for STAR Housing to have an industry recognised business planning tool. This will ensure STAR Housing can consider the financial management of the HRA over a 30-year period, undertake appropriate stress testing of the business plan and make medium- and long-term financial decisions.

1.3. STAR Housing have discussed the purchase of a business planning tools with industry recognised providers of business planning software including Brixx, Savills, Capita and Abovo. Following discussions with various providers it was decided that Abovo would be the most appropriate software to use. This was due to its functionality; it is the only software which has been developed for ALMO and councils with HRAs. Brixx which is the system most used by the RP sector is not suitable for councils with HRA and this was confirmed by Brixx following a demonstration of the system.

1.4 Abovo is currently being used by several councils including Oxford, Cornwall and Ealing to support the council with there 30-year business planning forecasting and stress testing. The system is an excel based system which is developed in partnership with the local authority/ALMO and Abovo.

1.5.Abovo enables councils/ALMO to undertake the following in relation to 30 year business planning:

- It enables councils to have a HA business plan models but encompassing local authority housing finance rules
- Integrates with Development Appraisal and Rent Model tools for quick upload without duplication error
- Budgeting flexibility with annual profiling of income and expenditure
- Apply retained RTB receipts to specific development schemes
- Incorporates unique dashboard multi-variable, multi-scenario stress-testing functionality

1.6 The proposed timescale for the implementation is detailed below:

Item	Start	Finish
Data request and review	Aug 2023	Oct 2023
Agree business plan parameters	Oct 2023	Nov 2023
Software Testing	Nov 2023	Nov 2023
Implementation	Dec 2023	Jan 2024

1.7 It is proposed that the system will be implemented by Q4 23/24. This will allow STAR Housing to have a fully functioning business planning tool to support the development and implementation of the annual business plan. The 2025 HRA business plan will be considered by the Board and the council during Q4 along with the annual budgets.

I Strategic Risks

- 1.1 The STAR Housing strategic risk register is reviewed at every Finance, Audit and Risk committee on a quarterly basis and endorsed by the Board. In total STAR Housing has identified 13 strategic risk which effects the HRA and STAR Housing.
- 1.2 The top 3 risks (in terms of revised risk score (greater than 15) are as follows:
1. 9 – Cultural Change – Staffing and Resourcing
 2. 12- Building Safety and Property Compliance;
 3. 13 - Data Management and integrity
- 1.3 Whilst the risk scores have not materially changed since the risk register was reviewed in the summer, the operating environment continues to be uncertain and challenging particularly from an economic, regulatory and operational perspective.
- 1.4 The most recent risk added to the risk register is related to data management and data integrity This has been added to the risk register following recent board discussion on STAR Housing approach to data integrity, recent regulatory judgements from RoSH and discussions with the council.
- 1.5 STAR Housing has organised a risk workshop with the council risk team to consider how STAR Housing and its Board currently manage risk and the board general appetite for risk. The workshop is to be held in December 2023.