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Housing**

Rethinking repairs and maintenance: how we can work in partnership to improve repairs and maintenance services

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The Better Social Housing Review



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What was the review?



All social housing should feel like a home for those who live there, a place for people to feel comfortable and safe, to live well and thrive.

But for some tenants in England living in social housing that isn't the case. This review, run by an independent panel, gathered insights and testimonies on how to change social housing for the better by reaching out to people with direct experience of social housing, as well as organisations with a role in providing and managing it. The panel has published its findings and recommendations for change to the social housing sector and the government. All the recommendations have been accepted by both the National Housing Federation and Chartered Institute of Housing and they are collaborating on an action plan to put them all in place.

[THE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS](#)

www.bettersocialhousingreview.org.uk

Recommendation 3



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3. Housing associations should partner with tenants, contractors and frontline staff to develop and apply new standards defining what an excellent maintenance and repairs process looks like.

Each housing association should ask tenants, frontline staff and contractors to work together to review how the organisation deals with maintenance and repairs. They should develop new standards together to be applied to review the organisation's performance and then develop an annual plan for continuous improvement.

Project structure



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Project

Workstreams

Key thematic areas of focus

**Rethinking Repairs and
Maintenance**

Residents and RP staff

**Contractors and service
providers**

**Improving cultures and
behaviours**

**Structuring your
engagement**

**Understanding your
performance**

**Inclusivity and tackling
discrimination**

Involving colleagues

Closing the loop

**Early market
engagement and
procurement**

**Building a sustainable
relationship with good
working practices**

**Practicing continuous
improvement**

Our work and final report



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Guiding principles for partnering with residents and colleagues



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12 guiding principles across 6 themes, covering:

1. Improving cultures and behaviours
2. Inclusivity and tackling discrimination
3. Structuring your engagement
4. Involving colleagues
5. Understanding your performance
6. Closing the loop

Principles 1 and 2 (Theme 1)



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Improving cultures and behaviours

- Tackle stigma and insist upon empathy, understanding, and professionalism in every interaction you and your operatives have with residents
- Make every contact count, using the contact points your colleagues and operatives have with residents to understand if their diverse needs are being met and if repairs need to be made.

Principles 3 and 4 (Theme 2)



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Inclusivity and tackling discrimination

- Use a range of information to know your silences and inequities. Providers need to understand who among their residents are receiving poorer outcomes and ensure that they actively include these residents in their engagement activities.
- Follow best practice in inclusion by design, which actively designs out barriers to resident engagement, and make sure residents who receive poorer outcomes from repairs and maintenance services are included.

Principles 5 and 6 (Theme 3)



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Structuring your engagement

- Give your residents the freedom to scrutinise different parts of your repairs and maintenance service, and support them to do so
- Commit to engaging throughout the whole repairs and maintenance cycle, especially influencing how the service is designed and procured during procurement, and at key milestones in service delivery.

Principles 7 and 8 (Theme 4)



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Involving colleagues

- Involve colleagues from all areas of the organisation. Providing colleagues with meaningful, structured opportunities to feed in their views can help reveal deficiencies in the service or ways that it could work better.
- Reflect their contributions in workload models and professional development frameworks.

Principles 9 and 10 (Theme 5)



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Understanding your performance

- Take a hybrid approach to KPIs, recognising the value of externally verified, benchmarkable data as well as the creation of bespoke KPIs that measure what matters most to residents.
- Work with your residents to define what else they need to scrutinise repairs and hold your performance to account.

Principles 11 and 12 (Theme 6)



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Closing the loop

- Make your performance and how you are improving your repairs and maintenance service transparent and visible.
- Allow your residents and colleagues the space to challenge and scrutinise how you are delivering change.

Accessing and using the principles



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Our guiding principles and good practice has been published on CIH's website – it is freely available to all: <https://www.cih.org/policy/campaigns/better-social-housing-review/rethinking-repairs-and-maintenance>

We are encouraging landlords across the sector to:

1. Read and implement the guidance in full, following the principles through their consecutive steps.
2. Self-assess their current practice against the principles to understand what they are already doing, and how they might be able to adopt some of the principles and practice that they aren't.

Turning the principles into practice



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Collaborative Engagement

- *How can we strengthen the partnership between residents, tenant panels, and landlords to put these principles into practice?*
- *What tools or resources would help you feel more empowered in these collaborations?*



Making RERAM Accessible

- *What adjustments to RERAM guidance would make it easier for you to use in day-to-day interactions?*
- *Do you have ideas for making RERAM more resident-friendly or accessible?*



Thank You for Listening

Feedback welcome to policyandpractice@cih.org, addressed to Eve or Matthew

