

Report for:

HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Date of Meeting: 3rd June 2025

Subject: **MID DEVON HOUSING (MDH) SERVICE
DELIVERY REPORT FOR Q4 AND OUTTURN
2024-25**

Cabinet Member: Councillor Jane Lock, Cabinet Member for Housing,
Assets and Property

Responsible Officer: Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health

Exempt: None

Wards Affected: All wards

Enclosures: Annex A: Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) –
performance data for 2024-25: Quarters 1, 2, 3, 4
and end of year outturn

Annex B: Tenancy Enforcement Activities –
performance data for 2024-25: Quarters 1, 2, 3, 4
and end of year outturn

Annex C: Rent Recovery – performance data for
2023-24: Quarters 1, 2, 3, 4 and end of year outturn

Annex D: Building Repairs and Maintenance –
performance data for 2024-25: Quarters 1, 2, 3, 4
and end of year outturn

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

This report has been presented in support of a previous commitment to provide a quarterly update to Members on activity undertaken by Mid Devon Housing (MDH), including some relating to enforcement.

It also contains relevant information relating to performance as measured in line with the guidance relating to the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) requires registered providers of social housing (RPs) to provide

a report on a set of TSMs which includes perception and performance data, and 2024/25 is the second year in which MDH and all other providers have to do so.

The aim of this report is to provide an update on relevant data, some of which is required as part of the TSM submission, where available, in order to provide assurance. It is hoped that the data will also provide some indication of the final outturn expected at the end of the year.

Recommendation(s):

That the PDG notes the outturn performance for Quarter 4 and end of year 2024/25 as provided in Annexes A, B, C and D

Section 2 – Report

1 Introduction

- 1.1. MDH has approximately 3,000 homes in its management located across the District.
- 1.2. This report provides a summary of activity and performance for Q4 ending 31 March 2025 and the previously reported data for Q1, Q2 and Q3 for comparison.
- 1.3. In accordance with this, data for Quarters 1, 2, 3 and 4 including the overall end of year outturn for 2024-25 is provided on the following Annexes:
 - Annex A: Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)
 - Annex B: Tenancy Enforcement Activities
 - Annex C: Rent recovery
 - Annex D: Building Repairs & Maintenance

2 Assurance requirements and reporting

- 2.1 RPs are now required by the RSH to provide effective assurance to Members and this should include relevant, updated performance data relating to service delivery.
- 2.2 The RSH takes a co-regulatory approach which means that Members are responsible for ensuring that MDH is meeting their standards. There are currently 4 consumer standards which were recently implemented following the implementation of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. Currently, RPs such as MDH are expected to have due regard to the required outcomes and specific expectations as set out in these standards, which are:
 - The Safety and Quality Standard
 - The Tenancy Standard
 - The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
 - The Neighbourhood & Community Standard

- 2.3 The Rent Standard, an economic standard, also applies and MDH is required to have regard to this.
- 2.4 Members also have a responsibility to ensure that MDH is being open and accountable with regard to how the organisation meets its objectives. In line with the principles of co-regulation, RPs are also required to support tenants so that they can shape and scrutinise service delivery and hold Members to account.
- 2.5 Performance data recorded in support of the TSMs is shown in the report. The aim is to ensure that Members can be reassured that data is being collected. Some of the data in this report will be included in the data submission which will be made to the RSH by the 30th June 2025.
- 2.6 Perception data to inform our return to the RSH, in line with the new regulatory requirement, is collected quarterly, although MDH may review our approach to this. Information is collected by a third party contractor. In 2024-2025, data was collected in quarters 2, 3 and 4 due to contractual delays. In 2025-2026, data will be collected in quarters 1, 2, 3 and 4.
- 2.7 During the survey, individual tenants were given an opportunity to provide limited feedback in response to some questions and were able to do this anonymously, if they wanted. Many tenants chose to give their name and address and Officers have followed up on the previous quarterly data and are currently working through Q4 comments.
- 2.8 This work was procured by a partnership involving MDH and two other local authority providers with retained housing stock. As a result, there will be opportunities for local benchmarking alongside national benchmarking once all RSH has collected all relevant data and it has been published, provided that all partners wish to participate in this.
- 2.9 Work is now ongoing with regard to a procurement process involving all three local authorities in respect of the survey required this year, 2025/26. It is expected that the same contractor will be used.
- 2.10 The work of different teams within MDH is shown in the annexes as set out below. Information is provided on key areas of work. It is important for Members to be assured that the homes in management are safe and secure and to understand how teams are performing in relation to certain indicators relating to tenancy and estate management. There are legislative and regulatory requirements which RPs must adhere to. However, it is also important that service delivery also takes account of MDH's own policies and good practice.

2.11 This service delivery report sets out the following specific data:

- 12 performance data TSMs
- 10 perception survey data TSMs (annual survey data)
- Tenancy enforcement data
- Rent collection and debt data
- Full repairs data including Decent Homes
- Voids data (metrics determined by updated Voids Management Policy)

2.12 The TSMs include three measures designed to demonstrate how RPs are performing with regard to service delivery in connection with complaints. If a tenant remains dissatisfied following the conclusion of their complaint, they can escalate that complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS). In the new regulatory framework, recently introduced, the role of the HOS has been expanded. Every year, RPs must undertake a review of compliance against the Complaints Handling Code, issued by the HOS. There is now also a requirement to submit an annual complaints performance and service improvement report to the PDG, in support of this. This report is on the agenda for this meeting.

2.13 In addition, it should be noted that there is a Memorandum of Understanding between the HOS and the RSH which allows the transfer of information with the aim of ensuring that any regulatory failings associated with service delivery as performed by RPs are identified and dealt with in the most appropriate way.

2.14 MDH provides a detailed report on complaints data and key issues of learning to inform service improvement on an annual basis. The latest annual report is provided as a separate agenda item for this meeting. As required, this report will be published on the section of the website relating to complaints alongside the response of the PDG and the Cabinet to this.

3 Performance and context

3.1 Annexes A to D contain comments and informative narrative on performance provided against specific metrics and there is further context provided below.

3.2 The results of the 2024/25 TSM results will be published on the website in due course. However, it is important to note that the results increased for each TSM question compared to 2023/24. The smallest increase was +3.4% for how the tenant feels their landlord listens and acts. The biggest increase was for how satisfied tenants are with their communal areas, this raised by +15.7%.

3.3 MDH will focus on any TSM results where the score was 60% or less. There were three TSMs which fell below 60%. These were; satisfaction with the landlords approach to anti-social behaviour (56%), satisfaction with how the

landlord listens and acts (54%) and satisfaction with the approach to complaint handling (37%).

3.4 A total of 2,818 tenants were eligible to respond to the survey. The total sample size achieved was 519. The methodology used by our contractor was in line with the relevant regulatory requirements. Mixed methods were used to collect the responses with the following results:

- Telephone survey 410 respondents
- Online survey 109 respondents

3.5 Representative checks were carried out to ensure that the survey was representative of the tenant population as a whole. The characteristics by which representativeness was determined were:

Tenancy Type

FLEXI 2
FLEXI 5
Introductory Tenancy
Secure

Population	Sample
1%	1%
15%	15%
4%	3%
80%	81%

Ward

Bradninch
Cadbury
Canonsleigh
Clare & Shuttern
Crediton Boniface
Crediton Lawrence
Cullompton Padbrook
Cullompton St. Andrews
Cullompton Vale
Halberton
Lower Culm
Sandford & Creedy
Silverton
Taw Vale
Tiverton Castle
Tiverton Cranmore
Tiverton Lowman

Population	Sample
4%	4%
1%	1%
2%	3%
3%	3%
7%	7%
3%	3%
2%	1%
7%	7%
0%	0%
2%	1%
8%	8%
4%	4%
2%	2%
3%	3%
1%	1%
7%	7%
15%	15%

Tiverton Westexe
Upper Culm
Upper Yeo & Taw
Way
Yeo

18%	18%
3%	3%
4%	5%
1%	1%
3%	3%

Length of Tenancy

< 1 year
1 - 3 years
4 - 5 years
6 - 10 years
11 - 20 years
Over 20 years

Population	Sample
7%	4%
19%	21%
11%	12%
19%	21%
21%	21%
23%	21%

Age Group

0 - 24
25 - 34
35 - 44
45 - 54
55 - 59
60 - 64
65 - 74
75 - 84
85 +

Population	Sample
2%	1%
11%	10%
16%	16%
15%	15%
10%	9%
10%	10%
17%	18%
13%	14%
6%	6%

Property Type

Bedsit
Bungalow
Flat
House
Maisonette

Population	Sample
0%	0%
34%	37%
19%	17%
46%	46%
0%	0%

Gender

Female
Male

Population	Sample
61%	62%
39%	38%

- 3.7 MDH team leaders meet with senior managers on a monthly basis to discuss performance against a range of indicators across the business. This delivers a greater understanding and insight and ensures that performance is routinely monitored which in turn delivers an understanding of any pressures. This informs the allocation of resources, as appropriate.

4 Building Services

- 4.1 Performance relating to this area of work is dependent upon having a full complement of operatives who have the necessary skills to manage the workload. Unfortunately, there were some challenges with regard to recruitment last year due to prevailing market conditions. This, combined with issues such as long term sickness, can have an impact on the ability of the team to manage the priorities. For this reason, priority was given to completing the most urgent works to ensure that they were completed on time, as well as to those routine repairs having the most impact upon tenants. Similar issues also affected the administrative team responsible for processing repairs requests. Taking these resourcing issues into account, managers are satisfied that with the level of performance, especially as targets have been met, although, there is, of course, always room for improvement to ensure that 100% of repairs are completed on time.
- 4.2 Customer satisfaction with planned maintenance remains strong despite some challenging performance issues associated with a very limited number of contractors.

5 Building Services – Voids Specific

- 5.1 The team which manages this work has been busy this year managing a large number of voids in both the housing revenue account and on behalf of the general fund strategic housing functions. The condition of the properties being returned has, on occasions, been poor, and it is a combination of these factors which has impacted the ability of the team to achieve set targets. Standard and major voids have been prioritised in order to ensure that the supply of available homes is maintained. However, some work, including that relating to decarbonisation, has taken longer than hoped due to external resourcing issues and therefore the target relating to the turnaround time for these properties was missed.

6 Tenancy and Estate Management

- 6.1 The Neighbourhood team works in partnership with other agencies to manage tenancy-related issues and those on the MDH estates, including anti-social behaviour. A new Officer was recruited and commenced work at the beginning of May 2024, although, the team has still faced periods of staff absence. The

team is now back up to full capacity in regards to Neighbourhood Officers, however the apprentice supporting the team has now moved over into the rent corrections team, which will impact the Neighbourhood Officers in terms of admin support. Annex 2 shows performance with regard to some of the tools available to the team. Many of these can be used to support the management of reports of nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

- 6.2 In line with good practice, our Officers aim to address reported issues at the earliest opportunity. This may involve a variety of approaches, such as collaborative working with partner agencies, informal mediation by team members or referrals for formal mediation where appropriate. As a result, the data presented may not fully capture the breadth and complexity of the work involved in managing cases of nuisance and anti-social behaviour.
- 6.3 Addressing tenancy fraud remains a key priority, which is reflected through the higher cases logged in 24/25 (6 cases) compared to 23/24 (4 cases). All cases in 24/25 were referred to an external investigator. This type of fraud can take various forms, but fundamentally, when a property is occupied by someone who does not have a legal right to reside there, it reduces the availability of housing for those in genuine need. To safeguard housing resources, Officers take a proactive approach by promptly investigating any concerns raised and making appropriate referrals for further investigation and action where necessary.

7 Income Collection

- 7.1 The Income Neighbourhood team reduced the level of debt attributed to current dwelling tenants from 2.22% in Q1 to 1.55% by close of Q4. This outturn is well within the target of <5%. This compares to 2.21% in 23/24 and is particularly encouraging given the in-year rent error judgement and pressure to support the resolution of the historic formula rent issue whilst managing a cohort of tenants challenging MDH on their rent and rent payment position, especially those tenants we have overcharged. The team continues to engage with tenants and supports those that may be experiencing financial difficulties.
- 7.2 In managing rent arrears, the team adopts a supportive and empathetic approach, working proactively with tenants to address any financial difficulties they may be facing. Tenants are encouraged to engage with the service, and where appropriate, are offered referrals to debt counselling and money advice services. The overarching goal is to foster a culture where all tenants are supported in maintaining their rent payments. To help achieve this, the team provides realistic and manageable repayment plans tailored to their individual circumstances.

8 Recommendation

- 8.1 The following recommendation is made:

That the PDG notes the outturn performance for Quarter 4 and the end of year outturn 2024-25 as provided in the Annexes A, B, C and D.

Financial Implications

The activity of MDH is funded through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The HRA is ring fenced and subject to specific financial controls. The Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) charges a mandatory membership fee based on the number of homes in the management of the registered provider (RP) of social housing.

Legal Implications

The tenancy agreement defines MDH's relationship with tenants and sets out the rights and responsibilities of both parties. This takes account of legal and regulatory requirements. The Council is an RP and therefore is required to comply with the regulatory framework operated by the RSH. The regulatory framework has been reviewed. The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard contains provisions relating to the management of complaints. There is also a requirement for MDH to manage complaints in accordance with the Complaints Handling Code (the Code) which is issued by the HOS. Landlords are expected to self-assess against the Code. Landlords are required to use the learning from complaints to drive service improvement. Following publication of the Social Housing White Paper in late 2020, the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, has now been implemented and gone into statute.

Risk Assessment

The Council has approximately 3,000 homes in management and the performance of MDH impacts upon the lives of many thousands of tenants and their families. This represents a huge responsibility and investment, consequently a major area of risk. Not providing an effective housing management service has the potential to result in failure to meet legal and statutory obligations including those relating to health and safety issues, repairs obligations, tenancy fraud, and reputational issues which could result in our tenants feeling stigmatised. Failure to collect rental income could impact the ability to fund necessary management and maintenance activities.

Finally, a failure to provide adequate information on service performance for the purposes of governance and scrutiny is a specific area of non-compliance with the requirements of the RSH. This regulator has new powers to impose performance improvements and potentially fine registered providers where performance is poor and/or adequate assurance is not provided.

Impact on Climate Change

None directly arising from this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

MDH has a collection of housing related policies. The use of these helps to ensure that service delivery is consistent and fair. These are currently being reviewed with the

aim of aligning them more closely with the Regulatory Standards. There is a regulatory requirement for registered providers of social housing to tailor their services to meet the needs of tenants. MDH requests diversity data from tenants to enable compliance to be monitored. MDH is required to work with people from all sections of society and having an agreed policy ensures that all tenants and other stakeholders are treated in the same way with adjustments being made to meet their needs, as necessary. The Housing Ombudsman Service Complaints Handling Code which MDH adhere to also requires landlords to have an awareness of accessibility so residents are easily be able to access the complaints procedure via several routes.

Our “Getting to Know You” project has been designed to refresh our knowledge relating to the diversity of our tenants and over the next two years, we will be surveying them in an effort to better understand their needs.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

Homes and the Environment are a priority for the Council and this includes increasing the supply of affordable homes in the District and also supporting and growing active tenant engagement

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 22 May 2025

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 22 May 2025

Chief Officer: Richard Marsh

Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director

Date: 22 May 2025

Performance and risk: Stephen Walford

Agreed by the Chief Executive

Date: 22 May 2025

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health

Email: snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 255255

Background papers:

Mid Devon Housing Strategies and Policies:

[Procedures, Policies and Strategies - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://www.middevon.gov.uk/procurement-procedures-policies-and-strategies)

The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing:

[Regulatory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-framework-for-social-housing)

Tenant Satisfaction Measures:

[Tenant Satisfaction Measures Standard - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tenant-satisfaction-measures-standard)

Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code:

[Complaint Handling Code | Housing Ombudsman Service \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/complaint-handling-code)