Brighton & Hove City Council

PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ADDENDUM

4.00PM, TUESDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2026

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ADDENDUM

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Brighton & Hove City Council

Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item 35

Subject: **Housing Safety and Quality Compliance Bi-annual progress update**

Date of meeting: **3rd November 2026**

Report of: **Chair of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Contact Officer: **Name: Natalie Sacks-Hammond**

Email: Natalie.Sacks-Hammond@Brighton-Hove.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

Key Decision: No

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

1.1 This report provides the Committee with the updated position on the council's housing safety and quality compliance progress following the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) regulatory judgement of August 2024 against their Safety & Quality Consumer Standard. This report forms part of the bi-annual reporting cycle to Cabinet and Scrutiny. The previous progress update was shared with Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 22nd July 2026.

1.2 The updated information and data can be found in the slides at Appendix 1. This includes information on our vision of being a Great Landlord, the inspection visit from the Social Housing Regulator from 19th – 21st October, our approach to ensuring the health and safety of tenants, the Housing (Safety and Quality) Improvement Plan, progress towards compliance, and priorities for 2026 – 2028.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee note and comment on the progress made in addressing the issues identified by the Regulator of Social Housing.

3. Context and background information

3.1 The council's vision is to be recognised as a Great Landlord. Doing the right things because we are driven by what our residents tell us and not just what regulations require of us. This will be achieved through the Housing (Safety

and Quality) Improvement Plan (shared with Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 22nd July 2026) and focusing on being more than compliant by being responsive to resident's voices through the "Creating Homes Together" programme.

3.2 The Social Housing Regulator (RSH) is currently conducting a full inspection against all 5 of the RSH Consumer Standards. The regulatory inspection site visit took place between 19th – 21st October 2026. Preparation prior to the on-site visit was based on:

- The **Safety and Quality Improvement Programme** and the progress made since the judgement.
- The **Consumer Standards and inspection readiness work**, which is helping to evidence compliance and demonstrate control.
- The **Resident Voice programme, Creating Great Homes Together**, which has been developed with residents and is helping to ensure that resident feedback shapes service priorities and improvements.

3.3 The purpose of the **Housing (Safety and Improvement) Programme** is to reset Housing Services after the RSH C3 judgement, by delivering safe, compliant, resident-focused services with sustained improvement. To address root causes of Safety and Quality non-compliance with clear ownership, controls and assurance. There has been significant improvement in electrical safety, smoke alarms, water safety, fire safety actions and repairs backlog control.

3.4 The **Consumer Standards and inspection readiness work** includes an Action Plan that is updated and implemented across Housing services to address gaps and evidence progress against achieving compliance against achieving compliance with RSH Consumer Standards in full. Fortnightly reviews are held where any key decisions or risks can be escalated to the Great Landlord Board. The majority of high and medium priority actions are on track or completed with some actions stalled due to resourcing.

3.5 The**, Creating Great Homes Together (Tenant-led plan)** is co-produced with tenants through citywide workshops. Early delivery includes complaints training, improved responses for pest, damp and mould, implementing estate inspections, stronger repairs supply chain and tenant involvement in procurement.

3.6 The five priority programmes for 2026 – 2028 are:

- **Repairs and Maintenance.** Right First Time, digital tracking, quality assurance.
- **Safer Communities (ASB).** Clearer reporting, consistent timely responses, community commitments.
- **Customer Service.** Ownership, empathy, trauma-informed communication.
- **Complaints.** Early contact, transparency, better tracking and mediation.
- **Tenant Engagement.** Broader participation, training, refreshed engagement strategy.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

4.1 The Council must ensure compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards. It is appropriate to ask Overview and Scrutiny to have a voice on the action being undertaken.

5. Community engagement and consultation

5.1 The Council continues to regularly engage with residents as a priority. Resident feedback is used to inform service delivery and governance. The Creating Great Homes Together programme has involved residents and staff in co-designing improvements that will help shape priorities and support the council's ambition to become a Great Landlord.

6. Financial implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation to note and comment on progress. The housing safety and quality improvement programme is supported through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budgets and capital programme. No additional funding is sought through this report

6.2 The resource constraints outlined in paragraph 3.4 and any further requirements arising from the regulatory inspection may place additional pressure on HRA budgets and programme delivery. The service will need to assess these costs and review existing resources, prioritising statutory safety requirements. Any additional funding required will be subject to the appropriate approval process.

6.3 Future costs will continue to be included in HRA budget reports for annual approval. Officers will closely monitor expenditure and report any variances through the council's monthly Targeted Budget Management (TBM) process.

Name of finance officer consulted: Ferrise Hall Date consulted: 22/10/26

7. Legal implications

7.1 The objectives of the Regulator are set out in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 (as amended). The terms social housing and registered provider are defined in the 2008 Act and the Council is included in that definition. The Regulator has clearly defined objectives and it is against these that they made their assessment. The C3 award was relating to consumer standards (there are other grading criteria (including governance and financial viability). C3 means work needs to be undertaken, by the Council as there were serious failings in the area of consumer standards.

7.2 The appendices demonstrate considerable work has been undertaken. The new grading (when available) will reflect the considered position of the regulator and provide an indication as to whether the Council Is progressing.

Name of lawyer consulted: Simon Court Date 23 October 2026.

8. Risk implications

8.1 Not specifically for this scrutiny report.

9. Equalities implications

9.1 Although this report is to note and does not seek a decision, the Housing Improvement Programme has significant equality implications. Improvements to housing safety compliance, repairs, damp and mould treatment are expected to have positive impacts for all council tenants, particularly older people, disabled residents, people with long-term health conditions, pregnant women and families with young children, who may be disproportionately affected by unsafe or poor-quality housing conditions.

10. Sustainability implications

10.1 Not specifically for this scrutiny report

11. Health and Wellbeing Implications:

11.1 Not specifically for this scrutiny report

12. Conclusion

12.1 The Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee is asked to review this report and feedback on the planning and progress toward achieving full compliance. The Committee's oversight is sought to ensure transparency, accountability, and alignment with regulatory requirements.

Supporting Documentation

1. Appendices

1. Housing Safety and Quality Compliance presentation

Housing Safety and Quality Compliance Bi-Annual Update

Place Overview & Scrutiny

November 2026

Brighton & Hove City Council

Recommendations. Our Vision. Regulator feedback.

Recommendations. That Place Overview & Scrutiny:

1. Note [and comment on] the progress made in improving compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing, Safety and Quality Consumer Standard since the last Cabinet update in May 2026 and Place Overview & Scrutiny Update in July 2026.

Our Vision. Being a Great Landlord

Our vision is to be recognised as a Great Landlord. Doing the right things because we are driven by what our residents tell us and not just what regulations require of us.

This will be achieved through our **Housing (Safety and Quality) Improvement Programme** and fulfilling our ambition to focus on being more than compliant by being responsive to our residents' voices through our **Creating Great Homes Together Programme**.

Regulator of Social Housing (RSH).

RSH regulatory inspection visit 19 to 21 October.

- Evidence submission covering a range of areas, including safety and quality, governance, performance, resident engagement, complaints, compliance, and how we assure ourselves that services are meeting the five Consumer Standards.
- RSH review to identify lines of enquiry and use it to determine the questions they wish to explore during the on-site visit.
- Preparation prior to on-site visit based on:
  - Our **Safety and Quality Improvement Programme** and the progress made since the judgement.
  - Our **Consumer Standards and inspection readiness work**, which is helping us evidence compliance and demonstrate control.
  - Our **Resident Voice programme, Creating Great Homes Together**, which has been developed with residents and is helping us ensure that resident feedback shapes service priorities and improvements.

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Our approach to ensuring the health & safety of our tenants in their homes

Safety first: protecting residents, visitors and staff remains our highest priority.

Investment: continued HRA funding supports Building Safety Act, Fire Safety Regulations and RSH Consumer Standards compliance.

Regulatory progress: sustained improvement since the C3 judgement, including electrical safety, smoke alarms, water safety, fire actions and repairs backlog reduction.

Remaining challenges: improving stock condition data and managing increased repairs demand arising from Awaab's Law.

Strong governance: Housing Compliance Board, Great Landlord Board, Internal Audit, Place Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet provide senior oversight and public accountability.

Risk-led action: inspections and testing translate identified hazards into funded remedial programmes, monitored through to completion.

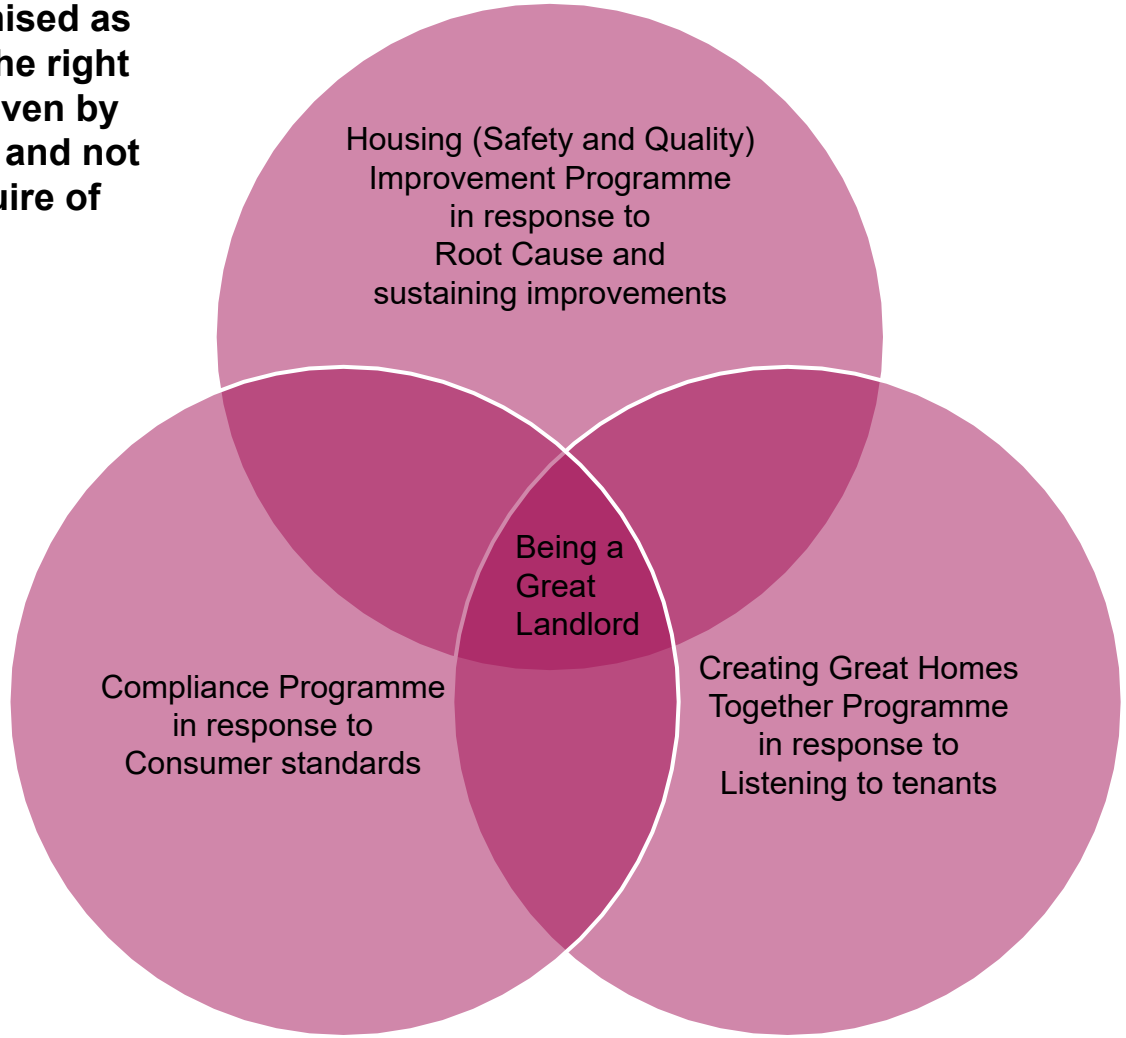
Better intelligence: compliance dashboards, action tracking and independent assurance strengthen data quality, controls and investment decisions.

Resident outcomes: overall satisfaction increased to 71%, satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service rose to 77.3%, and 74% of tenants are satisfied their home is safe.

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Being a Great Landlord

Our vision is to be recognised as a Great Landlord. Doing the right things because we are driven by what our residents tell us and not just what regulations require of us.



Our commitment to achieving our vision of being a Great Landlord will be achieved through our ***Housing (Safety and Quality) Improvement Programme*** which ensures that we sustain our improvements in response to the C3 judgement for the Safety and Quality consumer standard; ensuring that we are 'inspection ready' for the remaining consumer standards through our ***Compliance Programme***; and fulfilling our ambition to focus on being more than compliant by being responsive to our residents' voices through our ***Creating Great Homes Together Programme.***

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Housing (Safety and Quality) Improvement Programme

Purpose

Reset Housing Services after **RSH C3** judgement, delivering safe, compliant, resident-focused services with sustained improvement. Address root causes of Safety and Quality non-compliance with clear ownership, controls and assurance.

Success by March 2027

- Safe homes, checks completed, actions closed.
- Clear resident communication, fewer repeat issues.
- Evidence-led decisions and early risk visibility.

Residents Will Notice

Stronger resident voice shaping priorities and investment • Faster follow-up and clearer updates • Visible **"you said, we did"** learning culture.

Six Improvement Themes

Resident voice • Workforce • Data • Compliance accountability • Prioritisation • Leadership and culture.

Operating Model and Assurance

Clear ownership, routine data checks, learning from complaints, Ombudsman, insight and performance.

Progress So Far

Significant improvement in electrical safety, smoke alarms, water safety, fire safety actions and repairs backlog control. Improved grip on compliance data through NEC Housing business system and strengthened governance.

Governance

Transparent reporting and audit trail to through Housing Compliance Board, Great Landlord Board, CLT, Cabinet and Scrutiny, residents and the Regulators. Completion of Refreshed Internal Audit Position Statement – Housing Health & Safety Regulations, Governance Arrangements.

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Compliance progress so far

Areas	RSH Judgement (August 2024)	Position then (February 2026)	Latest reported position (Sept 2026 – Aug 2026 figures)
Electrical safety (domestic Electrical Installation Condition Report, EICR, and communal EICRs)	Around 3,600 homes without a current EICR and no evidence of a current certificate for over 600 communal areas.	96.1 percent homes with a valid 5-year EICR. 83.3 percent communal areas compliant.	99.6 percent homes with a valid 5-year EICR. 99.3 percent communal areas compliant.
Smoke alarms	Cannot evidence compliance with legal requirements for smoke detectors.	99.6 percent of homes have a working alarm in 12,237 dwellings.	100.0 percent of homes have a working alarm in 12,086 dwellings (excluding voids)
Water safety (risk assessments and remedial actions)	More than 600 buildings require a risk assessment" and "more than 500 overdue water safety remedial actions."	95.8 percent of buildings with a valid assessment. 2,020 overdue actions (Jan 2026). This aligns to the significant increase in inspections.	98.6 percent of buildings with a valid assessment. 830 open actions.
Repairs backlog	A backlog of around 8,000 low-risk, low-priority repairs.	4,279 repairs older than 28 days. Including Damp and condensation demand increase from August 2025 ahead of Awaab's Law.	4,523 repairs older than 28 days. Including surge demand and Damp and condensation from August 2025 ahead of Awaab's Law.
Fire safety remediation	RSH raised concerns about delays in completing over 1,700 fire safety actions identified across the stock.	2,082 live FRA actions. 4 high, 1 medium and 2,077 low risk. Target for BAU is by June 2026	427 live FRA actions. 67 high, 9 medium and 351 low risk. Now into new cycle of fire risk assessments.

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Consumer Standards and Creating Great Homes Together

RSH Consumer Standards Plan. Position and Oversight

- Action Plan updated and implemented across Housing services to address gaps and evidence progress against achieving compliance with RSH Consumer Standards in full. Fortnightly HLT reviews with escalation of key decisions and risks to the Great Landlord Board.

Progress Highlights

- Robust self-assessment demonstrating service grip, capturing progress and clear plans to address identified gaps.
- Majority of high and medium priority actions on track or complete, with some actions stalled due to resourcing.

Creating Great Homes Together (Tenant-led plan)

- Co-produced with tenants through citywide workshops (repairs, customer service, safety, ASB, complaints).
- Early delivery includes complaints training, improved pest and damp and mould responses, implementing estate inspections, stronger repairs supply chain, tenant involvement in procurement.

Five Priority Programmes for 2026 - 2028

- **Repairs and Maintenance.** Right First Time, digital tracking, quality assurance.
- **Safer Communities (ASB).** Clearer reporting, consistent timely responses, community commitments.
- **Customer Service.** Ownership, empathy, trauma-informed communication.
- **Complaints.** Early contact, transparency, better tracking and mediation.
- **Tenant Engagement.** Broader participation, training, refreshed engagement strategy.

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