



### **Tenant Voice Panel Local Offer Questions June 2021**

The Local Offers are a set of promises on how we will deliver our services, reviewed on an annual basis, they form part of the regulatory framework. Twice a year we present our self-assessment to the Tenant Voice Panel, who ask a series of questions to determine compliance and if they feel we are failing in any area they may request an officer to attend a meeting to explain further or refer an area of service for Tenant Scrutiny. The following relates to our Year End self-assessment.

You can find our self-assessment documents by clicking this link:

<https://www.berneslaihomes.co.uk/about-berneslai-homes/berneslai-homes-performance/berneslai-homes-performance-reports/berneslai-homes-performance-reports/>

Remember we do work with the Tenant Panel members but may not be able to implement all their suggestions, and where we can't, we provide a reason why.

Below are the questions/comments asked by the Panel at their meeting in June 21 and our responses;

Local Offer		TVP Comments 24/6/2021	Response from Berneslai Homes
T1	We will relet empty homes in an average 23 calendar days	<p>Agree that the local offer has not been met and understand that all lettings were suspended in line with Covid guidelines in March 20 and that a task and finish group are working hard to bring the figure down. We agree with your approach.</p> <p>Dearne and Central are particularly high, is there any specific reason for this?</p> <p>Are there differences in performance between the 2 Contractors?</p>	<p>This is down to the number of long-term bedsits we have managed to let and although detrimental to our average relet times helps minimise the amount of rental income lost to the company.</p> <p>No real differences between performance of Construction Services and Wates</p>
T2	<p>We will publish the following range of information about our lettings on our website and on request:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The average length of waiting time by band for applicants rehoused.</li> <li>• The number of different property types in areas.</li> <li>• The number of lettings in the previous year by property type and priority band.</li> </ul>	<p>Agree that the local offer is being met.</p> <p>It's really useful that the information is published on the website, but are tenants/applicants advised of where to find this?</p> <p>Do they know when/how to look for this information?</p> <p>Could this be promoted more proactively?</p>	<p>At the moment applicants are only signposted to this information in a reactive manner i.e. if they ask us where they have come on a property.</p> <p>It would be useful to share this information as proactively as possible, at the moment we are not able to do this automatically and we do not want to introduce a process which increases inbound telephone contact to the team, we will investigate ways we can make the information more prominent i.e. a link on the Homeseeker website</p>

T3	<p>We will make sure that we receive and make nominations for the housing association vacancies we are entitled to which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of new scheme first lettings</li> <li>• 50% of all other vacancies.</li> </ul>	Agree that the local offer is being met.	
T4	We will make every effort to contact at least 85% new tenants within 28 days of their tenancy starting and arrange any support they need to manage their tenancy	<p>Agree that globally the target has been reached, however area breakdown shows North &amp; Penistone, Central and North East are below target, is there any reason for this?</p> <p>Are appointments made on sign up?</p> <p>How are the contacts that are made recorded and monitored for these stats?</p>	<p>Reasons are mainly down to new tenants not moving in at the beginning of their tenancy. The real value in doing these is when the tenant has been in occupation for a couple of weeks.</p> <p>Not as a matter of course but this is something we will discuss further with teams</p> <p>We record and monitor these via our Northgate System and appropriate reports that are generated. This show numbers both in and out of target with reasons for going over.</p>
T5	We will assess 85% of new housing applications received within 20 days of receipt	Agree that the local offer has not been met. We acknowledge that as of 31st March 2021 72% of all new housing applications were being assessed within 20 days or receipt, with the overall average time to assess being 23 days which is adrift of target.	<p>We are not currently meeting this offer and only a minority of new housing applications are assessed within 20 days of receipt however the overall average time to assess is 24 days.</p> <p>Regarding the referencing this is one of many aspects of the assessment process we will look to improve over</p>

		Are applications accepted if the applicant can not provide a reference from their previous landlord?	the coming months, at the moment an applicant would be pended, and references “chased” which is inefficient and hinders our ability to meet other team targets
--	--	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Local Offer		TVP Comments 24/6/2021	Response from Berneslai Homes
NC1	We will continue with our estate walkabouts in every area at least once a year and publish what we found and what we're doing on our website and social media within 15 working days.	<p>Agreed that this offer is being met.</p> <p>Do you monitor attendance and what are the monitoring arrangements for the Walkabouts?</p> <p>Do all reports get published, can we find out what actions are noted and taken?</p>	<p>Whilst we monitor attendance at walkabouts since the end of March 2020 due to Covid whilst residents weren't encouraged to attend due to the restrictions in place.</p> <p>When the inspections recommenced in August 2020, we encouraged feedback and input from residents through Social Media and our website.</p> <p>The outcomes are published on our website and through Social Media, however, in the Central Team there has recently been a delay in updating the estate inspection outcomes in 21/22 although this has been discussed with the Team who are addressing this.</p>
NC2	We will acknowledge ASB complaints within three working days	Agree that this local offer is not being met.	Whilst we appreciate that this wasn't being met at the start of the year on 20/21. Monitoring and reporting systems were introduced towards the end of 20/21 so this is now reported as part of the local offers and apologise for the delay.
NC3	We will remove graffiti within five working days and offensive graffiti within one working day of finding it.	Agree that this local offer is being met.	

NC4	<p>We will remove fly tipping and rubbish within 5 working days of it being reported to us.</p> <p>Performance 2020/21 - 95% against 5 working day target and average 1.98 working days.</p>	Agree that this local offer is being met.	
NC5	<p>We will hold local meetings and events in line with our new engagement framework and embed this throughout the year.</p> <p>Outcomes will be promoted on our website and through Social Media.</p>	Agree that this local offer is being met.	

Local Offer		TVP Comments 24/6/2021	Response from Berneslai Homes
IE1	<p>We will meet the following standards for our main telephone service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The repairs hotline 787878 will be available 24/7.</li> <li>The general enquiry phone line 775555 will be available Monday to Friday 8am until 8pm and Saturday 8am until 1pm.</li> <li>We'll answer at least 80% of our phone calls within 20 seconds and we'll answer at least 95% of all phone calls.</li> </ul>	<p>Agree this local offer is not being met.</p> <p>We acknowledge that this is an ongoing issue, with only 56% of the 167,895 were answered in target and 10% of calls were abandoned. The average wait time for calls to be answered was almost 2 minutes (117 seconds). There has been some instances (around 10% of all calls) where wait times have been over 5 minutes.</p> <p>We would like to request an update on the review please, including the review of the SLA.</p>	<p>Barnsley Council have developed an improvement plan that they are currently working to, with a view of improving performance. This is part of a bigger piece of work across the council in standardising customer service offer.</p> <p>We can update the TVP regarding the action plan BMBC have developed to improve performance and our plans to support ongoing improvements – we would prefer this to be after September. In terms of a revised SLA we do not anticipate this will be progressed until early 2022 (or even later)</p>
IE2	<p>We'll reply to our letters within five working days and we'll acknowledge e-mails to our group inboxes within one working day and provide a full response in five working days. We will respond to E forms within the time promised on each form.</p>	<p>Agree that the offer is being met.</p>	
IE3	<p>We'll answer 75% of stage one complaints in 10 working days and 75% of stage 2 complaints in 15 working days.</p>	<p>Agreed that the offer is being met.</p> <p>Why is the target set at 75%?</p>	<p>We changed the timescales for responding to stage 2 complaints in April 2021 from 15 working day to 20 working day. This was to bring our policy in line with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling</p>

			<p>Code and in recognition the complexity of stage 2 complaints and focus on thorough and quality complaint investigations to take place.</p> <p>The Housing Ombudsman acknowledge that not all complaints will be investigated and responded to within the timescales listed. This is acceptable providing we have good reason for the delay and provide the customer with a holding letter to explain the reasons, e.g complexity, key staff absent on leave, evidence to be obtained from third party etc. The target is therefore set at 75% to reflect this.</p>
IE4	By the end of September 2020, we will: agree with a panel of tenants and then publish our service improvement and improvement plan for 2020/21. This plan sets out how tenants can be involved in developing our service improvement plans for the coming year; agree and publish our Service Excellence Assessment Programme.	Agree that this local offer is being met	
IE5	By December 2020, we will review our Customer Panel process to ensure it is reflective of the current climate	Agree that this local offer is being met	
IE6	We will demonstrate how we have achieved Value for Money across all	Agree that this local offer is being met	



	<p>service areas in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By explaining our achievements in our Annual Report online will explain how we spend our money broken down into the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repairs</li> <li>• Rent arrears and collection</li> <li>• Resident Involvement</li> <li>• Anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Tenancy Management Lettings</li> <li>• Supported Housing</li> <li>• Estate Services</li> </ul> </li> <li>• By publishing an efficiency register on our website by July each year.</li> <li>• By sharing information on social media sites.</li> </ul> <p>By publishing Board reports on our website</p>		
IE7	In 2020/21 we'll involve tenants and residents in any reviews or changes to our access to service offer which will include our telephone , face to face and online service	Agree that this is being met and that it is an ongoing process and welcome the opportunity to be consulted about this.	
IE8	To make sure we have a strong tenant voice, we will work with tenants to respond to the outcomes from the Green Paper, A new deal for social housing, and we will publish our new Customer Involvement Strategy.	Agree that this local offer is being met.	
IE9	By April 2021 we will agree a new range of Local Offers for the 2021/22 year.	Agree that this local offer is being met.	



Local Offer		TVP Comments 24/06/2021	Response from Berneslai Homes
H1	<p>When you report your repair, where possible we'll make an appointment and we'll complete it in the following times:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24 hours for emergency repairs</li> <li>• Three working days for urgent repairs</li> <li>• Seven working days for priority repairs</li> <li>• Twenty five working days for routine repairs.</li> </ul>	<p>Agree that this local offer is not being met and that you made and kept appointments for 98.15% of all responsive repairs. Completion performance in time 99.46% of 24 hour repairs 92.33% of 3 day priority 95.10% of 7 day priority 92.77% of 25 day priority</p>	<p>Given all the challenges and changes this year we think this is good performance. The implementation of Northgate, in the medium term for repairs, will drive efficiencies in this area.</p>
H2	<p>We will complete at least 81% of repairs right first time which means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We turned up on time.</li> <li>• We completed the repair first time or returned to complete it in a reasonable time.</li> <li>• We did the work to the tenant's satisfaction.</li> </ul>	<p>Agree that this local offer is not being met and you completed 78.55% or repairs right first time.</p>	<p>There have been changes to the repairs survey to align with APSE questions required for the PRIP 2020. From mid-November onwards the survey will be presented differently</p>
H3	<p>We will complete major adaptations in 60 calendar days of your request and minor adaptations in 10 calendar days of your request.</p>	<p>Agree that this local offer is not being met. You completed major adaptations in 146.37 calendar days of request and minor adaptations in 7.75 calendar days of request.</p> <p>We'd like to find out more about this and ask that a member of staff comes to speak with us about the process.</p>	<p>Meeting to be set up.</p>
H4	<p>When we let homes, they will meet our empty property standard, which is about the property being safe, clean and secure</p>	<p>As no survey has been carried out again, how is the information collected for this local offer?</p>	<p>All empty properties are surveyed by the contractor or by the Asset Management team a void log /survey sheet is placed on all houseflies.</p>

			<p>This is the Final Void Inspection sheet and Void Instruction Log. These are the contractor's sheets and signed when complete.</p> <p>A handover of all Major Works voids is carried out. All major works voids are checked by A/M with the contractor in attendance when the works are complete to confirm this.</p>
H5	When new heating appliances are fitted we will ensure customers are aware of how to use them	<p>Agree that this offer has been met.</p> <p>If possible, we suggest that a series of simple how to guide for basic diagnostics, are produced.</p>	Some work done on this but waiting to see which methodologies are going to be used in future carbon reduction initiatives
H6	We will continue to implement the outcomes from the former Challenge Berneslai Tenant Scrutiny report into Air Source Heating and ensure any relevant findings and recommendations are taken forward.	Agree that this offer has been met.	