



# Tenant Board

27th August 2025

# Declaration of interest



# Agenda



- ▶ Declarations of interest (2 mins)
- ▶ Action(s) from last meeting (3 mins)
- ▶ Sheltered Housing consultation (20 mins)
- ▶ ASB and Complaints Recommendations (15 mins)
- ▶ Communication Scrutiny (20 mins)
- ▶ Council Housing Assurance Report (15 mins)
- ▶ Updated Complaints Policy (10 mins)
- ▶ Any other business (5 mins)



# Sheltered Housing Consultation

Robert Longfoot – Head of Housing Management  
and Donna Williams – Sheltered Housing Manager



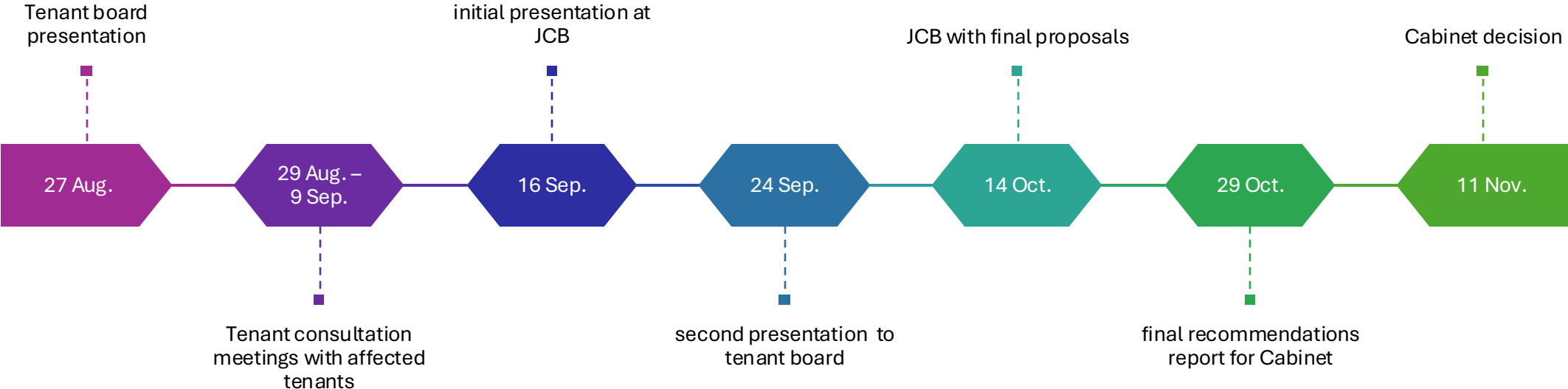
## **Decommissioning Sheltered Housing**

Initial consultation with Tenant Board 27/08/25

Robert Longfoot

1. Introduction
2. Timeline
3. Getting Digital Ready
4. Reasons for change
5. Proposal
6. Feedback and discussion

# Timeline







# Getting digital-ready

Digital Ready (recent upgrade)	Elizabeth Court, Sudbury
Adaptor to be fitted to make digital ready	Cherryfields, Bramford Elizabeth Court, Eye Farnish House, Botesdale Hartismere House, Laxfield Hurstlea Court, Needham Mkt Jubilee Court, Stowupland Partridge Court, Stowmarket St Edmunds Hse, Hoxne St Peters Court, Claydon Weston Court, Stowmarket William Wood House, Sudbury
Upgrading in the next few months:	Playford Court, Sudbury Steeds Meadow, Long Melford Sydney Brown Court, Hadleigh

# In scope

BABERGH SCHEMES	Town	Postcode	Ward	Number of homes
Gayford Court, Magdalen Road	Hadleigh	IP7 5AQ	Hadleigh South	14 Flats
Newell Court, Magdalen Road	Hadleigh	IP7 5AD	Hadleigh South	14 Flats
Parkers Way	Nayland	CO6 4HS	Bures St Mary & Nayland	21 Bungalows
Samford Close	Holbrook	IP9 2PR	Stour	14 Bungalows
Tenterpiece	Lavenham	CO10 9RZ	Lavenham	19 Bungalows
Clover Court / Hartest Way	Gt Cornard	CO10 0LL	Great Cornard	11 Bungalows (dispersed alarms)
<b>TOTAL</b>				93 homes

<https://www.babergh.gov.uk/sheltered-housing>

MID SUFFOLK SCHEMES	Town	Postcode	Ward	Number of homes
Manns Court	Elmswell	IP30 9BZ	Elmswell and Woolpit	15 Bungalows
The Croft	Tostock	IP30 9NX	Thurston	7 Bungalows (dispersed alarms)
<b>Total:</b>				22 Bungalows

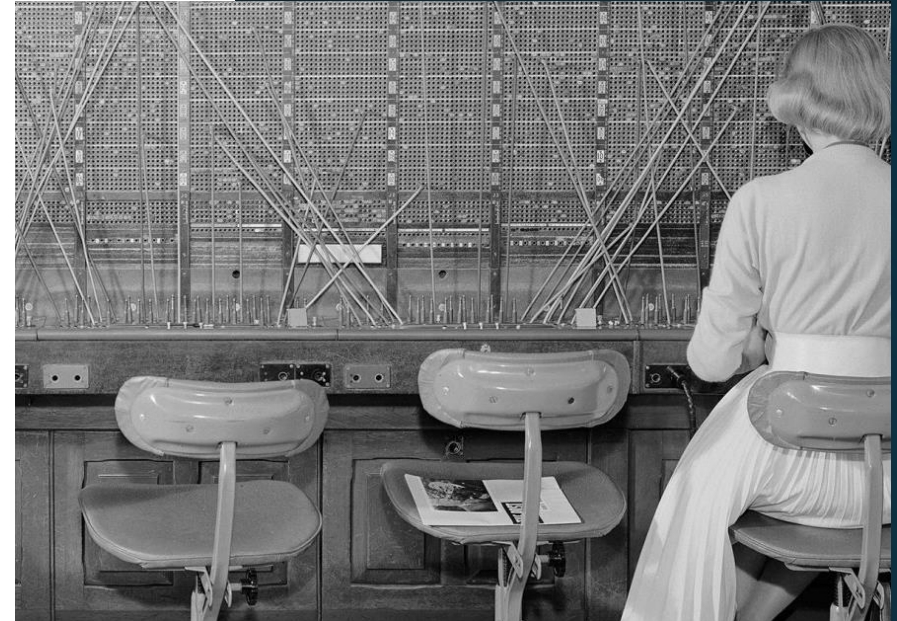
<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/sheltered-housing>

- Consultation
- Propose to decommission the sheltered service at 8 ‘non-integral’ schemes



# Reasons for change

- Digital switch & failure rate (local 3% - nationally 19.93%)
- Financial constraints
- Affordability for tenants
- Low demand for services
- Offering choice



BDC Schemes (93 Homes): 34% of tenants have opted out of the service. Only 20% receive daily welfare checks.

Schemes	Number of units	Tenants have a welfare call every day (Mon - Fri)	Waivers	Sheltered housing charge per property, per week
Clover Ct	11	9%	64%	£20.34
Newell/Gayford	28	29%	32%	£10.68
Parkers	21	10%	29%	£18.61
Samford Close	14	21%	21%	£14.98
Tenterpiece	19	26%	37%	£21.86
<b>Totals</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>34%</b>	

MSDC Schemes (22 Homes): 45% have opted out of the service. Only 27% receive a daily welfare check.

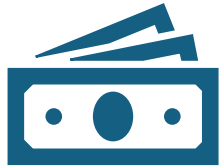
Schemes	Number of units	Tenants have a welfare call every day (Mon - Fri)	Waivers	Sheltered housing charge per property, per week
Manns Court	15	20%	60%	£20.19
The Croft	7	43%	14%	£9.22
<b>Totals</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>45%</b>	

# Proposal

**Our draft proposal that we wish to consult with tenants on the following:**

- **Removal of hard-wired warden call systems, pull cords, pendants and associated equipment**
- **Removal of the sheltered housing service**, including:
  - 5-day per week wellbeing check-in
  - Monitoring of alarm system, including the smoke detectors (they would no longer be linked to any alarm system)
  - Attendance to the scheme by Sheltered Housing Officer (2-3 times per week)
- **Reduction and removal of service charge costs relating to sheltered housing services**
- **Creating a 'local lettings policy'** which will retain the properties as being for occupation by older people and for those with disabilities (see appendix 1) for a minimum period of ten years
- **Tenants wanting to receive a welfare call would be encouraged and supported to obtain a service direct with another provider** (typically between £4-£6 per week)
- **Tenants needing tenancy sustainment support would be able to access our Tenancy Sustainment Service**, where they would be signposted to relevant agencies

# Summary:



## Benefits:

Choice for current and future tenants

More affordable solution

Better use of Council HRA finances



## Risks:

Ensuring wellbeing & safety of vulnerable tenants

Ensure services remain affordable



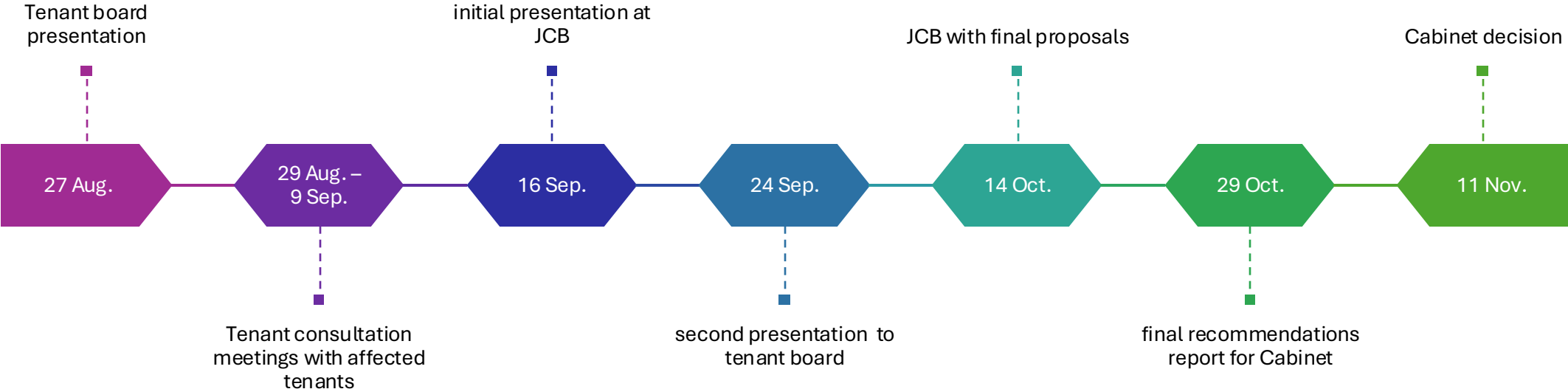
## Mitigations

Tailored response, work with tenants to meet needs

Offer solutions for tenants wanting to remain in sheltered

Low-cost alternatives on market available

# Timeline





# Feedback and discussion



Any questions?



Any concerns?



What would excellent  
tenant consultation  
look like?



Thank you

# ASB Scrutiny Recommendations



- ▶ 35% recommendations completed
- ▶ Deadline for completion is September 2026
- ▶ More work around staff training package around ASB
- ▶ More work to be done around procedures to embed:
  - Case reviews
  - Third party support
  - Lessons Learnt

# Complaints Scrutiny Recommendations



<b>Recommendation</b>
<b>Integrity:</b>
<b>Clear understanding of complaint and what outcome the customer is looking for</b>
<b>Timely response and evidence of actions</b>
<b>Manage and meet expectations</b>
<b>Single point of contact so take responsibility</b>
<b>Learning from complaints is embedded</b>
<b>First time resolution- enabling the teams to deal with customers at Customer Services</b>
<b>Providing reasonable adjustments for vulnerability and escalating works if it becomes more urgent</b>
<b>Pay compensation first - argue later</b>
<b>Think outside the box and consider alternatives</b>
<b>More consistent approach to handling complaints</b>
<b>Ask the right questions</b>
<b>Internal Comms:</b>
<b>Improving communication internally</b>
<b>Better use of CRM</b>

# Complaints Scrutiny recommendations



## External Comms:

Clearly state what is being investigated and how using clear and simple language

Explore suitable methods of communication based on Tenant data

Keeping tenants up to date on their complaint and actions associated

Making tenants aware of our service standards when they report works. E.g this job should be done within 24 hours

Tenant portal could be used to show your communication and journey

## Empathy:

Personal touch - empathy not corporate – apologise firstly for having to complain

Tone of voice

Use senses when apologising - I'm can see / smell etc.

Meaningful response - genuine and human - person not process - understand the stress

Trust and listen to make sure we're treating the cause not the symptoms

## Professionalism:

Contract management

Having policies in place to manage expectations – agreed timescales for appointments

Checklist for when we are speaking to a tenant on what information we need to be collecting - training for new staff and re occurring training on what we need to collect and why

Appointments at suitable times

More inspections of work carried out including when void and hold contractors / DLO to account

Recharge for contractor incompetency

# Customer Services scrutiny methodology



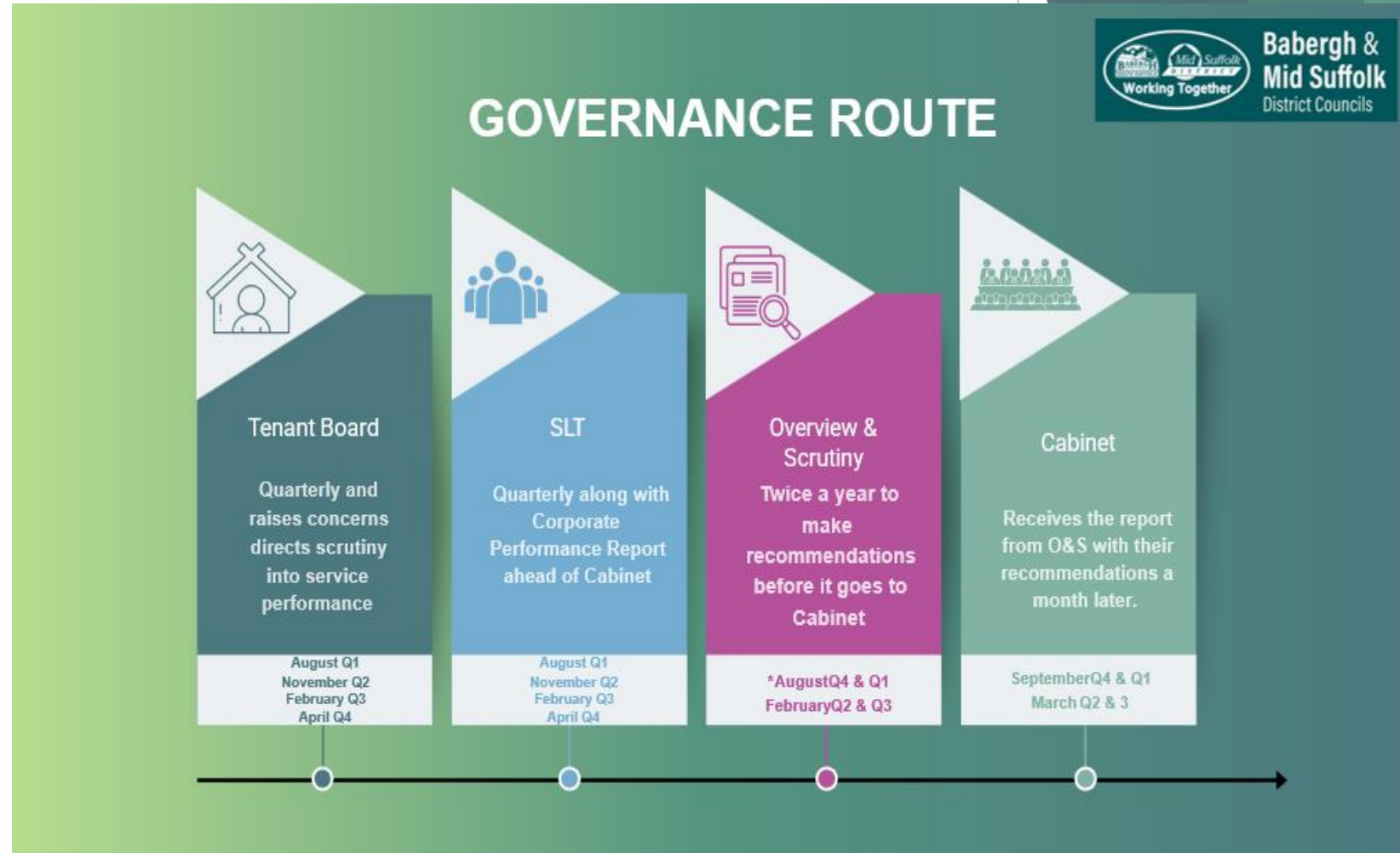
- ▶ All calls and transcripts will be redacted so they do not include personal information
- ▶ 5 Recorded calls max via Click Champ
- ▶ Transcripts
- ▶ Potential for Paula to listen to more calls
- ▶ Do we want to investigate email and live chat communication?
- ▶ Do we want to follow the customer journey when calls are passed on from Customer Services to a different team?
- ▶ Interviewing members of the Customer Service team to understand the job they do
- ▶ Understanding of how Team Leaders review calls in 1-2-1's

# Council Housing Assurance Report



▶ The purpose of this report is to provide members, senior leadership and tenants with a clear view on performance in relation to our landlord service, including our Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) results for the relevant quarter and a RAG status of us being able to evidence we are delivering the outcomes required of us within the Regulator for Social Housing's Consumer Standards.

Tenant Board's comments to be included in report to Overview and Scrutiny



# Complaints Policy



- ▶ Housing Ombudsman review indicated that we needed to make some minor amendments to our policy
- ▶ Tenant Board were sent the amendments made to the complaints policy
- ▶ Does the Board have any thoughts or comments before this is passed to the senior Leadership Team?

# Actions from the last meeting



- ▶ Summaries to be included for Tenant Satisfaction Measures and Transactional survey data going forward
- ▶ Send around Total mobile data- will be sent after the meeting



# Any Other Business



- ▶ Kathy Nixon - Deputy Chief Executive to observe meeting to understand the great work you are all doing
  - 26<sup>th</sup> November and 25<sup>th</sup> March
- ▶ Complaints project to Overview and Scrutiny Project
  - 13<sup>th</sup> October from 9:30am @ Endeavour House
- ▶ ARCH Conference. (Association of Retained Council Housing)
  - 25<sup>th</sup> September 10:15- 15:30
  - YMCA Lincolnshire, The Showroom, Tritton Road, Lincoln LN6 7QY
  - Expenses and travel costs will be paid
- ▶ Mock Inspection – End of October 2025.
- ▶ Charmaine leaving the Tenant Board