Report to: Cabinet Meeting: 15 September 2026

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Lee Brazier, Housing

Director Lead: Suzanne Shead, Director - Housing

Lead Officer: Nicola Priest, Housing Regulatory Compliance Manager, 01636 655526

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open report / Non-Key Decision
Report Title	Regulator of Social Housing Inspection Outcome Report
Purpose of Report	To advise Members of the outcome of the recent inspection of housing services carried out by the Regulator of Social Housing and the details of the improvement plan to be approved.
Recommendations	That Cabinet: a) note the outcome of the inspection and the feedback from the Regulator; b) approve the housing improvement plan set out in section 2.4; c) note the process and time frame for achieving C1 regulatory grading set out in 2.5; and d) note that progress against the action plan will be presented to Policy and Performance Improvement Committee and Tenant Influence and Assurance Board quarterly.
Alternative Options Considered	Not applicable
Reason for Recommendations	The recommendations support housing services in meeting the following aims of the Community Plan; Ambition 2: Increase the supply of housing, in particular decent homes that residents can afford to buy and rent, as well as improving housing standards and, Ambition 7: Be a top performing, modern and accessible Council that get its everyday services right for the residents and businesses that it serves.

1.0 Background

1.1 In April 2024, a new inspection regime was introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) for social housing local authority landlords. Prior to this, the last housing inspections were carried out by the Audit Commission in 2010, before it was abolished under the Localism Act 2011.

1.2 Planned inspections are generally undertaken on a four-year cycle, unless they are scheduled outside of this, on a risk basis or following a self-referral to the Regulator for a potential breach of the standards. Since April 2024, the Council's housing services and the Housing Performance Improvement Board have been preparing for expected inspection, which was announced in mid-January 2026.

1.3 Following notification of the inspection, the process included regular briefing and progress meetings with inspectors, agreed timelines for data submission, and an onsite inspection. Further details are set out below.

- 9 context documents were provided by 6th February 2026
- 66 scoping documents were provided by 13th March 2026
- 27 additional documents were provided throughout March and April prior to the onsite inspection
- Onsite inspection took place between 29th April and 1st May 2026
- 103 documents were provided on 8th, 14th and 22nd May 2026 to evidence matters discussed as part of the inspection meetings
- The RSH inspection board met on 29th June 2026 to decide the outcome and grading
- The result was published on RSH website on 29th July 2026.

As part of the process, the inspectors observed a Policy, Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting and a Tenant Engagement Board meeting. The onsite inspection consisted of 14 individual meetings involving Members (including the lead member for complaints), the Chief Executive, the Director of Housing, Heads of Service, Council colleagues, officers within the housing directorate and involved tenants.

1.4 The inspection programme assesses Local Authority Social Housing Landlords against four standards;

- **Neighbourhood and Community** – themes are safety of shared spaces, local cooperation with relevant partners, anti-social behaviour and hate incidents within social housing neighbourhoods and domestic abuse involving tenants.
- **Safety and Quality** – themes are stock quality and decency, health and safety, repairs, maintenance and planned improvements and adaptations.
- **Tenancy** – themes are allocations and lettings, tenancy sustainment and evictions, tenure / tenancy terms and mutual exchange.
- **Transparency, Influence and Accountability** – themes are fairness and respect, diverse needs, tenant engagement, information about landlord services, performance information, complaints and Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

The Regulator also checks complaints with the Rent Standard that sits within the Economic standards.

Whilst the Council is required to show it meets all the standards, the Regulator being particularly focused on Safety and Quality and Transparency, Influence and Accountability.

1.5 There are 4 consumer grades; the Council was awarded a C2.

C1 – Overall delivering outcomes and identifies and remedies problems
C2 – Some weaknesses in delivering outcomes, improvement needed
C3 – Serious failing, significant improvement required
C4 -Very serious failings, fundamental change required

1.6 The C2 grading reflects the hard work and effort teams put in every day to deliver housing services, either directly or indirectly to tenants. It also reflects the preparations and delivery when the RSH inspectors were on site. It should be noted that preparation for the inspection was supported by colleagues across the Council in Transformation, Public Protection and ICT.

1.7 The outcome of the inspection was met positively from officers, managers, the Portfolio Holder for Housing, the Leader of the Council, the of Chair of the Tenant Influence and Assurance Board and Senior Leadership Team. The RSH was clear the Council is a strong C2, with full awareness of the areas of improvement even before the inspectors were on site. The outcome reflects where housing services are now, and work continues to achieve a C1 grading over the remainder of the financial year.

1.8 In summary, the five areas for improvement which have formed an action plan are set out below.

Safety and Quality Standard

1. Complete full stock condition surveys and Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) surveys to give an updated, accurate decency figure
2. Improve repairs and damp and mould data integrity and reporting
3. Introduce third party oversight of compliance (health and safety) functions

Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard

4. Increase service standards and performance monitoring of these.
5. Increase formal scrutiny programme by tenants of housing services.

1.9 In addition to the areas for improvement, the inspection identified several strengths. Below are the main examples.

Safety and Quality

- Repairs – the service is meeting tenant needs with many ways to report repairs and strong tenant satisfaction.

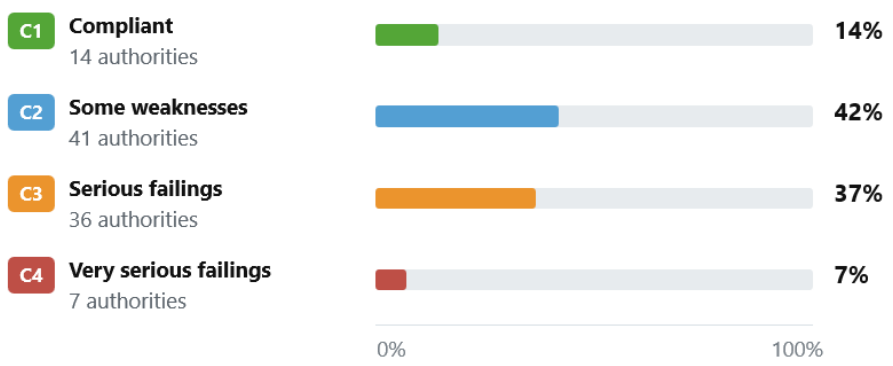
- Stock decency – legal obligations are being met, with robust reporting and governance, low overdue remedials and significant work on compliance data integrity.

Transparency, Influence and Accountability
- Fairness and respect – High TSM results above sector medians, high commitment, respectful officers with high levels of mutual trust between officers and tenants, diverse needs taken into account and a good amount of data on tenant circumstances.
- Engagement with tenants – clear evidence of wide influence with service and performance information available in hubs.
- Complaints – positive to see higher volumes in complaints and improvement in performance along with a new structure, positive use of diversity information to understand how services are received by tenants.

Tenancy
- Meeting requirements with clear published policy and procedures, appropriate arrangements in place to ensure correct tenancy is awarded.

Neighbourhood and Community
- Tenant feedback informed improvements and access was straight forward with improving satisfaction year on year.

1.10 To put the Council's performance into context of the broader sector, at the end of July 2026, 98 local authority housing providers had been inspected since April 2024. Below shows those outcomes and how the Council compares.



1.11 Below shows how the Council compares across the East Midlands Combined Council Authority, with future Nottinghamshire Unitary LGR peers highlighted in bold.

C1 — compliant	C2 — some weaknesses	C3 — serious failings	C4 — very serious failings	Non-stock holding — 5 councils
Derby City Council North East Derbyshire District Council	**Bassetlaw District Council** Bolsover District Council Charnwood Borough Council Chesterfield Borough Council High Peak Borough Council **Mansfield District Council** Melton Borough Council **Newark and Sherwood District Council** North Kesteven District Council **Nottingham City Council*** South Holland District Council South Kesteven District Council	**Broxtowe Borough Council** Leicester City Council Sheffield City Council South Derbyshire District Council	No councils listed	Amber Valley Borough Council Derbyshire Dales Borough Council Erewash Borough Council **Gedling Borough Council** **Rushcliffe Borough Council**

Ashfield District Council remains the only Nottinghamshire-boundary authority still awaiting inspection.

2.0 Proposal/Options Considered

2.1 Following inspection and grading, the RSH meets with landlords periodically to follow progress against any identified improvement actions. For a C2 grading, this is typically every 2-3 months from publication of the outcome. The first meeting has been set for 7th October 2026.

2.2 The RSH inspection team are already aware that the Council is keen to achieve a C1 grading and will be supporting the service to achieve this. When local authorities merge under LGR, the Regulator will advise what if any grading the new unitary authority will take on.

2.3 The Assistant Director of Housing Strategy and Service Development will oversee completion of the action plan set out below which will be presented to the Regulator at the engagement meeting on 7th October 2026.

2.4 **Inspection Improvement Plan**

Priority Rating	Consumer Standard	Head of Service Owner	Action	Planned Completion Date
High	Safety and Quality Standard	Building Safety & Asset Management	Complete remaining Housing, Health and Safety Ratings System (HHSRS) assessments and outstanding stock condition surveys to achieve 100% stock condition information to inform future investment decisions.	30/09/2026
High	Safety and Quality Standard	Repairs and Empty Homes	Improve repairs reporting and data quality through continued development of NEC (Housing Management System) inc. completion of v25.2 upgrade.	31/10/2026

High	Safety and Quality Standard	Repairs and Empty Homes	Implement NEC (Housing Management System) Damp & Mould case management and reporting processes.	30/11/2026
High	Safety and Quality Standard	Building Safety & Asset Management	Implement third-party assurance regime across compliance functions contracts	28/02/2027
High	Safety and Quality Standard	Building Safety & Asset Management	Implement formal monitoring of outstanding Fire Risk Assessment actions, including recording mitigations in place whilst work is completed.	31/12/2026
High	Safety and Quality Standard	Building Safety & Asset Management	Introduce performance reporting for smoke alarms and Carbon Monoxide detectors within current compliance reporting schedule.	30/09/2026
High	Tenancy Standard	Housing Income and Leaseholder Management	Develop Service Standards or Tenant Charter framework for key housing management services, co-produced with tenants. Mapping each standard to a measurable indicator and reporting mechanism.	30/09/2026
High	Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard	Housing Services	Implement annual scrutiny programme to underpin strong resident challenge of housing services.	30/08/2026
High	Safety and Quality Standard	Building Safety & Asset Management	Develop and implement formal contractor code of conduct and monitoring arrangements for the code.	30/09/2026
High	Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard	Housing Services	Improve information available to all tenants inc. enhanced explanation and context to support understanding of performance information, publishing of Tenant Board minutes and key tenant information on website and promotion via other communication channels.	31/03/2027

2.5 The Council will meet with the Regulator at intervals agreed at the engagement meeting on the 7 October 2026 and this will include a discussion around timeframes for re-assessment. Based on other registered providers who have been through the regulatory process, it is expected to take between six and nine months to achieve a regrade.

2.6 Progress against the improvement plan will be overseen by Housing Performance and Improvement Board, with regular updates to this Committee and Tenant Influence and Assurance Board.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Implications Considered Yes – relevant and included / NA – not applicable			
Financial	Yes	Equality & Diversity	N/A
Human Resources	N/A	Human Rights	N/A
Legal	N/A	Data Protection	N/A
Digital & Cyber Security	N/A	Safeguarding	N/A
Sustainability	N/A	Crime & Disorder	N/A
LGR	N/A	Tenant Consultation	N/A

Financial Implications – FIN26-27/5897

3.1 There may be additional costs associated with some of the improvements identified at 1.8, but these will be met within existing resources.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Newark and Sherwood District Council (37UG) - Regulatory Judgement: 29 July 2026 - GOV.UK