Scrutiny Team Review

Review of the general need's caretaking service

Management Response

Prepared by: Claire Williams

Title: Supported Housing Manager

Date: September 2025

1. Introduction

The Scrutiny Panel initiated a review of the General Needs caretaking service following a noted dip in customer satisfaction during 2024.

The review aimed to:

- improve services for customers in block accommodation
- increase customer awareness and involvement

2. Management response

The General Needs caretaking team welcomed this review, which commenced in May 2025.

The Scrutiny Team met with General Needs Caretaking Team Leader, Clive Warren, and Neighbourhoods Team Manager, Jason Humphries, at the start of the process. They conducted site visits and spoke with members of the caretaking team and customers both in person and over the phone.

During the review, the Scrutiny Team was advised of upcoming changes to the management of the caretaking service. These changes aim to create a more consistent, flexible, and efficient caretaking offer across all housing schemes.

Historically, the teams have operated separately, although their responsibilities often overlap—ranging from site inspections and basic maintenance to health and safety checks. Unifying the teams will reduce duplication, improve cover during staff absences, and ensure a more consistent standard of service across both General Needs and Sheltered sites.

This change will also provide better opportunities for staff development through cross-training and the sharing of best practices. To support this transition and provide clear leadership, the newly unified team will sit within the Supported Housing team.

Recommendation	Management response	Actions	Responsible person	Expected completion date	Any barriers	Any notes	RAG
Develop a unified set of standards for both general needs and sheltered housing, incorporating tenant input to ensure transparency and equity.	With the general needs and supported housing caretaker teams due to come together in early October, we will establish a unified set of service standards that will apply consistently across both areas. This work will draw upon the independent customer journey survey currently embedded within supported housing, which will now be extended to the whole team. In addition, tenant feedback collected through the Rant & Rave platform is regularly reviewed and fed into service improvements. We will also consider further mechanisms for capturing tenant input to ensure the standards are transparent, equitable, and reflective of tenant priorities.	Embed the customer journey survey across all of the service. Explore customer feedback opportunities across the service. Review the cleaning schedule with the team	Supported housing manager and caretaking team leaders	01/01/2026	n/a		To start October 2025
		Continue to monitor, record and respond to customer feedback using the rant and rave platform	Supported housing manager and caretaking team leaders	Ongoing	n/a	All feedback submitted through the platform is reviewed on a weekly basis. Scores of 1 or 2 are recorded on the housing management	

						system and automatically trigger direct contact with the customer at the point the feedback is received, ensuring issues are addressed promptly and appropriately.	
		'Meet the team' posters will be displayed on site, and regular 'You said, we did' updates will be provided, with the frequency to be confirmed. Where noticeboards are unavailable, this information may instead be distributed directly to customers. In addition, the 'Your Neighbourhood' section of the Selwood Housing website will be updated to include a dedicated caretaking page.	Supported housing manager and caretaking team leaders	01/12/2025			
Revise cleaning plans to assure that there is adequate time for all tasks, including the management of fly	Cleaning plans will be reviewed and revised to ensure sufficient time is allocated for all required tasks, including the management of fly tipping. As	Review cleaning plans and time allocation of these tasks.	Supported housing manager and	01/01/2026	Fly tipping my not always be down to the customers, items could be		

tipping. This should include new strategies for preventing and reducing the ability for fly tipping to occur.	part of this review, we will work with the caretaker team to identify where adjustments are needed and ensure resources are appropriately prioritised. We will also review the current strategies in place to prevent and reduce fly tipping, to understand if there is more we can do to improve their effectiveness. The impact of these changes will be monitored to ensure they are delivering sustainable improvements and maintaining high standards across our neighbourhoods.	Liaise with the operational teams to agree an approach to mutual engagement to effectively manage fly tipping concerns and develop strategies to try and reduce the amount of fly tipping into the future	caretaking team leaders		left by neighbours or visitors. The use of CCTV, additional lighting or improved fencing may be a good option but would be subject to budgetary constraints		
Upgrade cleaning equipment (such as cordless vacuum cleaners and having specialised deep cleaning tools available)	A sheltered caretaker has begun an equipment audit to establish a clear picture of current resources. A cordless vacuum is already in use, and its effectiveness will be reviewed. The audit will also identify any additional needs, including specialised deep-clean tools, with actions taken to ensure the team has the right equipment to maintain high cleaning standards.	Equipment audit to be completed to provide a clear understanding of current resources, including the effectiveness of the existing cordless vacuum. Any additional equipment needs, such as specialised deep-clean tools, will be identified, and a procurement plan will be developed and recommended to the budget holder for approval.	Supported housing manager and caretaking team leaders	01/12/2025	Budgetary restraints		

		Audit findings and subsequent actions will be communicated to the team, and equipment use will be monitored to ensure high cleaning standards are maintained.					
Ensure all staff receive appropriate training on how to manage challenging situations competently, this should be mandated and regular refresher training given to all caretakers.	We currently offer training to help caretakers manage "challenging situations" competently. We will review records to ensure all caretakers have undertaken this training within the last 12 months and put measures in place for it to be completed annually going forward.	Review training records to ensure all caretakers have completed training on managing challenging situations within the last 12 months. Put in place measures for it to be completed annually going forward	Supported housing manager	01/12/2025			
Improve caretaker accessibility for making repair requests.	We recognise the importance of ensuring caretakers can easily raise repair requests. We will review current processes to remove barriers and streamline reporting, ensuring caretakers have clear guidance, efficient systems, and appropriate access to submit requests. effective and accessible for all caretakers.	Review the current repair request process to identify barriers or inefficiencies. Provide clear guidance to caretakers on how to raise repair requests. Ensure appropriate access and	Supported housing manager and caretaking team leaders	Ongoing			

		training is provided to the caretakers to raise repairs either directly or to the team leader.					
	Increase customer familiarity with the caretaking team, specifically those who visit their homes most often.	Produce and display/distribute 'meet the team' posters	Supported housing manager and caretaking team leaders	01/12/2026	Availability of safe places to display the poster		
Increase opportunities for customers to participate and provide feedback, fostering a caretaking service that meets the needs of all stakeholders (for example a block committee held each quarter).	We are committed to increasing opportunities for customers to provide feedback and help shape the caretaking service without relying on formal meetings. We will focus on accessible channels such as surveys, digital feedback forms, and direct engagement via email or phone. All feedback will be reviewed regularly and used to inform service improvements, ensuring the caretaking service continues to meet the needs of residents effectively.	Explore customer feedback opportunities across the service. Introduce team email address for customer feedback, displayed within the block or scheme.	Caretaking team leaders	Ongoing			
Ensure notice boards in communal spaces display cleaning schedules, repair updates, and checklists.	We will explore the use of notice boards in all communal spaces to display cleaning schedules, repair updates, and checklists, to improve resident awareness. Any implementation will be dependent on compliance with	Review of current compliance regulations with notice boards.	Supported housing manager	01/04/2026	Compliance restrictions.		

	fire safety regulations and consideration of associated costs to ensure that notices are displayed safely and sustainably.						
		Complete an audit of notice boards, considering fire safety, location and size.	Caretaking team leaders	01/01/2026			
Promote the use of environmentally friendly cleaning products where possible	Stock ordering has been delegated to Jamie Cullen. Any cleaning product used is subject to COSHH. Each product has a safety data sheet, from which individual risk assessments are drawn up. There could be cost implications, these products could be more expensive. There would also be a resource requirement as the supporting paperwork would need to be made available. The risk assessments are produced by the H&S team	Review product choices and engage with the H&S team to establish what the organisational objectives are with regard to cleaning products in respect of the environmental strategy.	Supported housing manager	01/04/2026		More environmentally friendly products may be more expensive. However, they may be safer, and the risk assessment process may take less time. Increased costs would be considered in the budget setting prices for 2026/27	
Establish routine window cleaning schedules and inform customers	We will review the provision of routine window cleaning to determine which properties are currently covered and assess any potential impacts on tenancy agreements or service charges.	Review current arrangements to inform a plan for future enhancements	Caretaking team leaders	01/04/2026	Introducing routine window cleaning for properties not currently covered may require consultation with residents, as it could affect existing		

					tenancy agreements and potentially introduce an additional service charge. These factors may limit the speed or scope of implementation		
Introduce regular decoration of communal areas and inform customers.	There is currently a regular programme for decorating communal areas. We will liaise with Asset Management colleagues to confirm the frequency of these works and ensure this information is clearly communicated to customers. Any updates or changes to the programme will be shared to keep residents informed	Communicate with customers the timescales for decoration of communal areas.	Supported housing manager	01/06/2026			