

## City of London Corporation Committee Report

<b>Committee(s):</b> Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 30/06/25
<b>Subject:</b> Tenant Handbook Revision	<b>Public report:</b> For Information
<b>This proposal:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes</b></li> <li>• <b>provides statutory duties</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse Engaged Communities</li> <li>• Providing Excellent Services</li> </ul>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	Yes
<b>If so, how much?</b>	Approx. £6,000
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	Housing Revenue Account
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	No
<b>Report of:</b>	Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services
<b>Report author:</b>	Zoe Gayle, Service Improvement Manager, DCCS (Housing Services)

### Summary

Housing has undertaken a comprehensive update of the Tenant Handbook to better meet the needs of its diverse tenant base. This update follows consultation with both residents and staff to ensure that the revised document is clear, accessible, and aligned with the way tenants prefer to receive information. The updated handbook includes new policies, procedures, and guidelines that reflect current best practice and regulatory requirements.

### Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the update to the Tenant Handbook and the engagement undertaken with residents and staff to inform its content and format.

# Main Report

## Background

1. The Tenant Handbook is a key document that provides tenants with essential information about their rights, responsibilities, and the services available to them. The previous version of the handbook, released in 2016 has become outdated and does not fully reflect recent changes in policies, procedures, and regulatory requirements. Recognising the need for an update, the Housing Services initiated a review process to ensure that the handbook remains a valuable resource for tenants.

## Current Position

2. The updated Tenant Handbook has been designed to be accessible to all tenants. Easy-print and translated versions are available, and QR codes with links to relevant websites have been included for digitally engaged tenants. Nevertheless, tenants are also informed that they can still access information through the estate office, ensuring no one is disadvantaged by the shift to a more digital format.
3. The new Handbook has been comprehensively updated to include important sections on balcony and fire safety, and storage in communal areas. These updates ensure that tenants have clear guidelines and information on maintaining safety and compliance within their homes and shared spaces, in accordance with the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 and the Housing Act 2004.
4. Additionally, as part of our commitment to transparency, we have referred to our service standards throughout the handbook. This inclusion provides residents with a clear understanding of what they can expect from us in various service areas, in line with the Consumer Standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing. These standards ensure that tenants receive high-quality services and that their needs and concerns are addressed effectively.
5. Residents were engaged through consultation exercises, including surveys and focus groups, helping to shape the final version based on their needs and preferences. Staff across Housing Services were consulted throughout the revision process, providing some insight into the common queries and difficulties tenants face.

## Options Explored

6. The Housing Services considered several options for updating the Tenant Handbook:
  - a. **Minimal Revisions:** Making only essential updates to comply with regulatory changes. This option was deemed insufficient as it was felt that it would not address the broader needs of tenants.
  - b. **Comprehensive Update:** Undertaking a thorough review and update of the entire handbook, incorporating feedback from residents and staff. This option

was selected as it ensures the handbook is fully aligned with current best practice and tenant needs.

- c. **Hybrid accessibility:** While a digital-only version was considered, a hybrid approach was adopted to ensure accessibility for all tenants, including those who may be digitally excluded. This balanced option maximises tenant engagement and understanding while future-proofing the document for further digital enhancements.

## Recommendation

7. The Housing Service proposes that Members note the updated Tenant Handbook and the consultation process that informed its development. To ensure the highest quality, we will request a sample of the updated handbook from the suppliers. If the sample meets our standards and is satisfactory, we will proceed with the printing and rollout of the handbook to all tenants. The revised handbook will be distributed to all tenants and made available online, ensuring easy access to the information.

## Key Data

**Consultation Process:** Residents and staff members participated in the consultation process through surveys, other internal feedback opportunities and two focus groups facilitated by the Resident Involvement Manager.

**Feedback Integration:** Following resident focus groups, feedback received was shared with staff and further changes were incorporated into the final version of the handbook.

**Accessibility Improvements:** The handbook has been designed to be accessible to all tenants, with easy-print and translated versions available. QR codes and website links are included for digitally engaged tenants, while ensuring that information remains accessible through the estate office for those who prefer in-person support.

## Corporate & Strategic Implications

**Strategic implications** - The updated Tenant Handbook supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2024-2029 by promoting excellent services and supporting people to live healthy, independent lives.

**Financial implications** - The cost of updating and distributing the handbook has not yet been accounted for within the existing budget. However, three quotes have been sourced from the corporate platform, Print Marketplace averaging at £5,600.

**Resource implications** - No additional resources are required beyond those already allocated.

**Legal implications** - The updated handbook ensures compliance with current legal and regulatory requirements.

**Risk implications** - The comprehensive update mitigates the risk of tenants being unaware of their rights and responsibilities.

**Equalities implications** – The handbook has been reviewed to ensure it complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010, with positive impacts on all protected characteristics.

**Climate implications** – None identified

**Security implications** – None identified

## **Conclusion**

8. The updated Tenant Handbook represents a significant improvement in the information and guidance provided to tenants. The extensive consultation process with residents and staff has ensured that the handbook is comprehensive, user-friendly, and aligned with the needs of our communities. Members are asked to note the report and acknowledge the collaborative effort that has gone into this important update.
9. Please contact me if you would like a copy of the current handbook, we will have copies available at the meeting should you prefer.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Summary of Consultation Feedback
- Appendix 2 – New Tenant Handbook

### **Zoe Gayle**

Service Improvement Manager  
Department of Community and Children's Services

T: 020 7332 1121

E: [zoe.gayle@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:zoe.gayle@cityoflondon.gov.uk)