

**Consultation on our
Corporate Strategy 2025-30 and
Business Plan 2025-26**

February 2025

**Healthier homes, fairer services, and trusting
relationships**

Housing Ombudsman Service

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Who we are

Our role

Our role is set out in the Housing Act 1996 and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme approved by the Secretary of State. The Ombudsman:

- makes the final decision on disputes between residents and member landlords
- sets and monitors compliance with a statutory Code of Practice for complaint handling by its members which promotes a positive complaint handling culture
- may issue Good Practice on the delivery of housing activities and order self-assessment against this
- orders reviews of policy and practice where the Ombudsman believes an issue in an individual complaint may give rise to further complaints
- investigates the root causes of complaints at both member and sector level, producing reports to share learning, improve services, and prevent recurrences

Our service is free to households eligible to use it. Our decisions are independent, impartial, and fair.

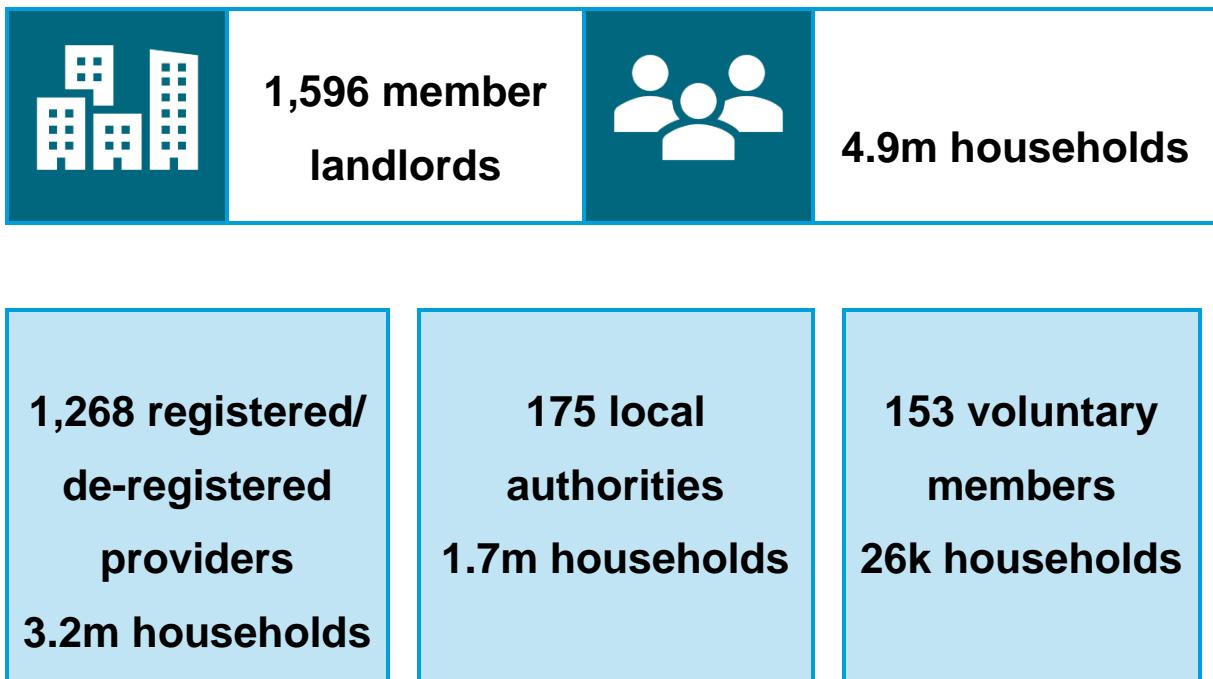
Our membership

Membership of the Scheme is compulsory for social landlords, primarily housing associations who are or have been registered with the Regulator of Social Housing and local authority landlords. Additionally, some private landlords are voluntary members. The activities of members who are managing agents or selling some new homes fall within our Scheme. The Scheme is funded by subscriptions from members paid on a per housing unit basis.

We investigate complaints across a range of tenures, including social and private tenants, shared owners, and leaseholders of member landlords.

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Membership as of 31 March 2024



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How to respond

This consultation consists of 2 surveys.

Survey 1: Corporate Strategy 2025-30 consultation

This survey asks for your views on the Housing Ombudsman's Corporate Strategy 2025-30. It introduces 4 strategic objectives and a strategic enabler. Each section sets out the aims and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) we will use to measure the success of each over the next 5 years.

Survey 2: Business Plan 2025-26 consultation

The second part asks for your views on the Housing Ombudsman's Business Plan 2025-26. This gives more detail on planned activities between April 2025 and March 2026 to deliver the strategic objectives and enabler in year one.

How to take part

You can take part in the consultation online by completing both surveys to have your say on what we are doing this year, and over the next 5 years.

This consultation will run until 31 March 2025.

Thank you for taking part in this consultation and helping the Ombudsman to make the housing sector thrive.

Other ways to take part

If you need help completing this form, please call us on 0300 111 3000

You can also email your response to consultations@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Our phone line opening hours are:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9am - 5pm

Thursday 9am - 3.30pm

Lines are closed for staff training every Thursday from 3.30pm to 5pm.

Calls are recorded for training and monitoring purposes.

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Alternatively, you can download a copy of this consultation document and return to us by post at:

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PO Box 1484, Unit D

Preston, PR2 0ET

For more information about our role and how we work, visit our website at
www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

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Foreword

We want to see the housing sector thrive – for our work to support it during challenging and changing times, to grasp new opportunities, and to champion healthier homes and fairer services.

I also want to see residents know their rights and be treated fairly and respectfully, whether their complaint comes to us or not, helping to make relationships between residents and landlords stronger and more trusting.

Our Corporate Strategy 2025-30 consolidates the considerable changes over the last 3 years which have made our service become more relevant to residents and landlords. This strategy continues to be driven by the devastating events at Grenfell Tower and Awaab Ishak's inquest which have seen our role, powers, and approach evolve.

It also looks to the future with the aim of developing the relationship between landlords and the Ombudsman. We will continue to provide accountability, redress, and transparency, but also do more to strengthen local resolution, build trust, and move from transactional engagement based on individual complaints to strategic support through our Centre for Learning for housing professionals and governing bodies.

The strategy also seeks to reimagine our relationship with residents, creating simpler and easier access to housing redress – doing so in a way that is person-centred, with faster decisions, and offering a genuine alternative to legal action. This builds on our work to meet the unprecedented volumes of casework we have seen, with someone contacting us every 30 seconds, doubling the average number of investigations being completed each month to 600 cases.

Finally, it deepens our relationship with the wider regulatory system given the unique and independent perspective we offer by providing insight, open data, and alerting it to emerging concerns for enforcement and regulatory bodies as well as policymakers. This could extend to an expanded relationship with the courts.

This would be success by 2030.

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This matters because of the scale of the housing emergency. Our work involves the consequences of that emergency every day – from the human impact of poor housing or stretched services, to the interdependencies between housing, health, and welfare.

Too often the housing experience in this country across sectors can fall short of what people, communities, and the economy require in the 21st century.

The government is developing a long-term plan for housing, and it provides a decisive opportunity to build a fairer and stronger housing offer. Maintaining existing homes must be a key part of this.

This could involve more and better-quality homes, both new and existing, as well as improved services and outcomes for residents. Significant steps have already been taken towards a more universal offer in the rented sector, from Awaab's Law and Decent Homes to energy standards.

An independent and impartial Ombudsman has a crucial role in supporting this future.

We look forward to hearing your views.



Richard Blakeway

Housing Ombudsman

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Our journey

Five years ago, in 2020-21 we received 16,337 enquiries and complaints. This year we are forecast to handle more than 43,000 cases. This decade will continue to see high but unpredictable complaint volumes in this sector. The reasons for this are a negative 'push' and a positive 'pull'. The negative drivers include aging homes, outdated service models, and stretched landlord budgets alongside policy changes introducing high property condition standards and clear expectations to fix homes that fail to meet these. The positive is that the complaint procedures are more accessible to residents who are also more aware of their right to escalate an unresolved dispute to the Ombudsman.

At the mid-point of this decade, we have sought to do 3 things:

- improve local complaint handling so that complaints are handled fairly and resolved sooner by ending the postcode lottery on complaint handling through the statutory Complaint Handling Code
- share learning from complaints to improve service and prevent complaints from coming to us, including targeted interventions with individual landlords where we are seeing repeated problems
- expand our service to investigate higher volumes of casework

We have been resilient in the face of volatile casework volumes. We introduced triaging of cases and prioritised investigating high-risk cases. This has been successful with all such investigations completed within 6 months. We have also focused on reducing the wait time for investigations into other cases. We have substantially reduced the age of our caseload, bringing it to under 12 months old. We determine on average 600 formal investigations every month, but we want to do much better and reduce the time we take to investigate all cases, high-risk or not.

Our Corporate Strategy sets out the ambition to reduce investigation times over the next 5 years. This will be done in stages to ensure improvements are sustained, customer satisfaction remains high, and quality is maintained. We want to avoid creating new pressures that divert resources elsewhere.

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We have responded to surges in casework volumes so far by recruiting more caseworkers. This will remain important but new approaches will be explored alongside this. In 2025-26 we will focus on trialling new approaches to case investigations and increasing our efficiency. These include the completion and evaluation of a pilot on faster and earlier resolution techniques, and at the start of quarter 3 2025-26, we will introduce a target for the proportion of all cases investigated within 6 months.

Other more efficient ways of working include improved file preparation and more concise reports. We will also test reducing tasks for caseworkers, including moving compliance monitoring into a single team. New approaches to gathering evidence from landlords will also be explored, with delays to evidence being experienced on most cases.

The benefits from these trials will allow us to continue to stretch our timeliness targets in 2026-27, with the aim of reducing the maximum time for all investigations from 12 to 6 months for 95% of our cases by 2029-30 (see table 1 below). Meanwhile, we are confident we can reduce the time taken to investigate 90% of our high-risk cases during 2025-26 and have cut this target by a third.

The impact of our own timeliness improvements will be enhanced by further work to help strengthen landlords' own complaint handling and address the causes of complaints through our Centre for Learning. The cumulative effect will improve residents' experiences of living in their home.

Underpinning all the above will be our transformation programme. Launching at the start of 2025-26 this will drive further efficiencies and greater effectiveness from our processes and our systems, ensuring that these are future-proofed. It will also ensure we support our people to drive an organisation that is innovative and continuously improving.

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Table 1: Case time performance and targets

KPI: Casework	2022-23 (actuals)	2023-24 (actuals)	2024-25 (target)	2025-26 (target)	2025-30 (ambition)
Determination timescales for high-risk cases	N/A	N/A	95% in 6 months	90% in 4 months	95% in 3 months
Cases determined within 6 months by 2024-25	54%	18%	30%	TBC for start Q3	95%
Cases determined within 12 months by 2024-25	87%	62%	80%	80%	99%

PART 1

Corporate Strategy 2025-30

Tell us your views on our new Corporate Strategy for 2025-30.

The strategy introduces 4 objectives and an enabler with the key aims and measures of success for each.

Context for our Corporate Strategy

2025-30

Housing Ombudsman context 2023-24	
Complaint handling	Systemic powers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> received 40,876 enquiries and complaints, of which 8,176 were accepted for investigation (60% increase) issued 5,465 determinations (107% increase) 58% reduction in older cases (older than 12 months) made 21,740 remedies, including £4.9m of financial compensation upheld 85% of investigated cases achieved resident satisfaction KPI targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> carried out 4 special investigations into individual landlords leading to a total of 43 recommendations issued 137 wider orders relating to policy or practice to prevent a recurrence for other residents published a Spotlight report on attitudes, respect and rights and evaluated the impact of the knowledge and information report consulted on our Complaint Handling Code and our approach to good practice
Learning	Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> issued 3 learning reports on topics including service charges and pest infestation registered 1,773 landlord staff members on our Centre for Learning platform published our Annual Complaints Review alongside 271 individual landlord reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> hosted 26 Meet the Ombudsman events, reaching over 6,000 residents Hosted over 200 Members Responsible for Complaints at our first annual conference attended 128 conferences and events met with our Resident Panel group 4 times on topics such as enquiries and access
Evolving 2025-30 provider operating environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> normalisation of proactive consumer regulation including publication of tenant satisfaction measures ongoing mergers in housing associations and in-housing of local authority housing management ongoing financial, supply chain, skills, and resourcing pressures ongoing focus on building safety remediation and energy efficiency 	

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- emergence of higher property condition standards such as Awaab's Law and the revised Decent Homes Standard
- commitments to increase housing supply
- increasing additional needs of residents and pressure on related statutory services
- increasing use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to support service delivery
- convergence in landlord duties and rights to redress between the social and private rented sectors

Resident context

- imbalance of power with limited choices for residents
- variable service standards and delivery across landlords
- ageing homes and quality issues with some new builds
- cost of living pressures
- release of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry report
- continued high levels of awareness of their right to complain and the Ombudsman
- ongoing media coverage and high-profile social media activists

Corporate strategy on a page

Vision			
Healthier homes, fairer services and trusting relationships			
Mission			
Improving landlords' services and residents' lives through housing complaints			
Values			
Fairness	Learning	Openness	Excellence
Strategic objectives			
Provide an excellent, person-centred service	Drive positive local complaints handling cultures	Support better services through our insights, data, and intelligence	Extend our powers and engage with partners to support closing gaps in redress
Strategic enabler			
Organisation design			
Enabling strategies			
People	Environmental, social, and governance	Digital, data, and technology	

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Mapping of strategic objectives to our organisational values

	Fairness	Learning	Openness	Excellence
Provide an excellent, person-centred service.	X	X		X
Drive positive local complaints handling cultures.	X	X	X	
Support better services through our insights, data, and intelligence.	X	X	X	
Extend our powers and engage with partners to support closing gaps in redress.	X			

Strategic objectives

Strategic objective 1: Provide an excellent, person-centred service

Being in a dispute can be a challenging and emotional experience. As an alternative resolution provider, we can put people at the heart of our process and level the playing field between those with access to professional resources and those without, providing a genuine alternative to the court through a non-adversarial process.

During 2025-30 we want to improve the resident's experience as they journey through our service. Our impartiality does not mean we lose empathy for or sight of the person at the centre of the dispute. We also want to find the most effective way to resolve disputes at the earliest opportunity and to prevent recurrences for other residents to ensure fair service delivery for all. We also want to help landlords to strengthen their relationships with their residents by developing more restorative remedies and helping them to learn where things went wrong in individual cases. We will also continue to review our approach to investigation where new requirements are placed on landlords, for example, in relation to property condition.

SO1: Aims and measures of success	
<p>Aim 1.1: Our services are human-centric, trusted, and provide a positive customer experience for residents.</p> <p>Measures of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased resident satisfaction with our service provision • maintained casework quality 	<p>Aim 1.2: Our service uses a range of techniques to provide resolution at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Measures of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased resident and landlord satisfaction with our service provision • reduced casework timescales
<p>Aim 1.3: Our remedies are effective, appropriate, restorative, and complied with by landlords.</p> <p>Measures of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased resident and landlord satisfaction with our service provision 	<p>Aim 1.4: We continue to develop our approach to casework to drive fairness in service delivery and reflect changes to landlord duties.</p> <p>Aim 1.5: Our investigations support landlords to understand what led to</p>

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• maintained or increased compliance with our orders	service failure, prevent future complaints, and fulfil their obligations. Measure of success: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• our individual investigations lead to fairer service delivery
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How far do you support objective 1 on a scale of 1 to 5*?

*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.

Do you have any comments or observations on objective 1?

Strategic objective 2: Drive positive local complaint handling cultures

A positive complaint handling culture is based on ensuring resident awareness of and access to the complaints process, being fair, putting things right, and learning from outcomes. Our Complaint Handling Code (Code) empowers all landlords to resolve complaints themselves so fewer escalate to our service.

In 2025-30 we want to build on our Code compliance monitoring work. In 2024-25 this focused on complaint handling policies. During the strategy period we will focus on governing body scrutiny and oversight, with a particular focus on the Member Responsible for Complaints and testing compliance in practice where we have concerns. We will continue to take our approach of learning first – highlighting to landlords where they need to improve before we take further action, sharing best practice and guidance from our cross-sector oversight, and producing a variety of learning tools hosted on our Centre for Learning.

SO2: Aims and measures of success	
<p>Aim 2.1: We evolve our duty to monitor compliance with the Complaint Handling Code.</p> <p>Aim 2.2: We expand our Centre for Learning content to support better local complaint handling.</p> <p>Aim 2.3: We focus on leadership and governance, in particular the role of the Member Responsible for Complaints in supporting positive complaint handling cultures.</p> <p>Measure of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">social landlords demonstrate positive complaint handling cultures, compliance with the Complaint	<p>Aim 2.4: Residents are aware of their right to complain, are adequately supported in accessing the complaints process, and are signposted to the Ombudsman.</p> <p>Measure of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">maintained or increased resident awareness of their right to complain

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Handling Code, and practice aligns with policy	
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How far do you support objective 2 on a scale of 1 to 5*?

*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.

Do you have any comments or observations on objective 2?

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Strategic objective 3: Support better services through our insights, data, and intelligence

Complaints are more than individual transactions – they are strategic tools for learning. Complaints can be an early indicator of potential issues.

Over this strategy period landlords' operating environment will remain uncertain and pressurised. We want to use our insights, data, and intelligence to extend learning into the system – providing horizon-scanning that identifies emerging risks, identifying programmes or policies that need to be reviewed, and informing future budget allocation and service development at both landlord- and sector-level.

SO3: Aims and measures of success	
Aim 3.1: We hold individual landlords to account where there are repeated service failures by engaging with them to address root causes.	Aim 3.3: we share information with regulators, enforcement bodies, and other delivery partners to promote accountability.
Aim 3.2: We promote fairer outcomes in services where systemic failings are identified.	Measure of success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we play an active role in the system of landlord accountability
Measure of success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our work drives fairer services and healthier homes 	
Aim 3.4: We are proactive in sharing our work with elected representatives, think tanks, and public policy makers to inform debate and policy proposals.	Aim 3.5: We help to stimulate debate and support better understanding of the social housing sector by allowing open access to our casework data.
Measure of success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our work is used to inform policy debate 	Measure of success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our data is used by a wide variety of stakeholders
How far do you support objective 3 on a scale of 1 to 5*?	
<p>*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.</p>	

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Do you have any comments or observations on objective 3?

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Strategic objective 4: Extend our powers and engage with partners to support closing gaps in redress

Housing is arguably one of the most complicated sectors in England. The boundaries between public and private have become blurred and gaps in redress remain. In addition, residents within the social sector currently have uneven rights when it comes to obtaining information from their provider, depending on whether their landlord is a local authority or housing association.

During this strategy period we will discuss widening access to fair, independent, and impartial Ombudsman-level redress for residents with partners from across the sector, supported by straight-forward customer journeys and consistent outcomes. We will also take on a new area of complaints relating to the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs) scheme – enabling tenants to come to us where they are dissatisfied with the outcome or handling of their request for information related to the management of their housing.

SO4: Aims and measures of success	
<p>Aim 4.1: We will discuss gaps in independent, impartial, and accountable Ombudsman-level redress for residents, supported by straight-forward customer journeys and consistent outcomes with partners from across the sector.</p> <p>Deliverables (no measures of success):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• collaboration on the design and implementation of the Private Rented Sector Landlord Ombudsman if the Renters' Rights Bill receives Royal Assent and we are the scheme administrator	<p>Aim 4.2: We design and implement the STAIRs appeals service for housing associations.</p> <p>Measure of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an effective STAIRs service from the go-live date (detailed KPIs to be confirmed in advance of go-live)
<p>How far do you support objective 4 on a scale of 1 to 5*?</p>	

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*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.

Do you have any comments or observations on objective 4?

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Strategic enabler: Organisation design

Our people are our greatest asset. To deliver our strategy successfully, we need to ensure we have access to colleagues who support our values, are keen to learn, and are willing to adapt as we grow and change. We also need to update our systems as these have not kept pace with our expansion to date, nor the customer service expectations of our residents and landlords. Additionally, we need to revisit our structures and processes to ensure these are optimised to meet the expectations of a larger and growing organisation.

All of this combines into an overarching enabler looking at our organisation design to ensure that this supports the delivery of our strategy and embeds our culture. The scale of our ambitions as set out in our strategic objectives and the change required to deliver means we are treating these enablers as a transformation programme.

Strategic enabler: Aims and measures of success	
<p>People</p> <p>Aim E1.1: We are a learning organisation, delivering continuous improvement and innovation.</p> <p>Aim E1.2: Our people processes are values and behaviours-driven, health and wellbeing are prioritised, and we are inclusive and value the benefits that diversity brings.</p> <p>Aim E1.3: We provide colleagues with clear pathways for career and skills development.</p> <p>Aim E1.4: Colleague engagement is regularly checked and actively managed in our remote organisation.</p> <p>Measures of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • colleagues support our values and behaviours, and engagement 	<p>Structures and processes</p> <p>Aim E2.1: We develop our governance, organisation design, and management practices to meet the needs of a larger and more complex organisation.</p> <p>Aim E2.2: We build trust in our service through ethical practices and gaining external accreditations in key areas.</p> <p>Aim E2.3: We develop our approach to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) and increase our reporting.</p> <p>Measures of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our organisation is more effective and efficient, while continuing to meet the expectations of an arm's length body • stakeholders trust the quality of our work and the insights this provides

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<p>scores increase across all directorates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• colleagues participate in valued learning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• we are transparent about the impact of our organisation on the world
<p>Systems</p> <p>Aim E3.1: We seek digital, data, and technology developments which drive efficiency, support scalability, ensure compliance, and meet customer needs.</p> <p>Measure of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• systems and technology are efficient to use and effectively capture information	
<p>How far do you support our strategic enabler on a scale of 1 to 5*?</p> <p>*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.</p> <p>Do you have any comments or observations on our strategic enablers?</p>	

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Key performance indicators and fees

Key performance indicators

In setting our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), we have taken a balanced score card approach allocating each of our strategic measures of success to 1 of the 4 quadrants of customer service, internal processes, learning and growth, or stakeholders. Each measure speaks to our vision and is supported by one or more indicators setting the desired level of performance by 2030. Some of our indicators will require defining, baselining, and analysing in year one. The annual business plans will set out the target level of performance that will move us towards our strategic ambitions by 2030. Further indicators will be added for STAIRs when this workstream goes live and for any other new areas of responsibility.

We have also identified some sector-wide indicators that speak to the wider system change we are part of and link to our vision of healthier homes, fairer services and trusting relationships, but which are not directly attributable to our work alone. We expect that these will show improvements over the lifetime of the strategy. The planned uplift to property condition standards may mean performance gets worse before it gets better.

Sector-wide indicators	Current level
Improvement to the tenant satisfaction measure TP04: proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied their home is well maintained	70.8% social rent (median points)
Improvement to the tenant satisfaction measure TP08: proportion of respondents who report they agree their landlord treats them fairly and with respect	76.8% social rent 59.1% shared ownership (median points)
Improvement to the tenant satisfaction measure TP09: proportion of respondents who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are satisfied with their landlord's approach to complaint handling	34.5% social rent 19.2% shared ownership (median points)
Reduction to tenant satisfaction measure RP01: proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	0.5%

Key performance indicators	
Customer service (SO1, SO4)	Internal processes (SE1, SE2)
<p>Increased resident and landlord satisfaction with our service provision (aims 1.1, 1.2, 1.3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improved resident satisfaction scores at enquiry over the lifetime of this strategy (measured from 2024-25 baseline) improved resident and landlord satisfaction scores following investigation over the lifetime of this strategy (measured from 2024-25 baseline) <p>Maintained casework quality (aim 1.1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintained or improved quality scores for investigations (measured from 2024-25 baseline) <p>Reduced casework timescales* (aim 1.2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% of <u>high-risk cases</u> determined within 3 months by the end of the strategy period 95% of cases determined within 6 months by the end of the strategy period 99% of cases determined within 12 months by the end of the strategy period 	<p>Colleagues support our values and behaviours, and engagement scores increase across all directorates (aim E1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased colleague engagement survey scores over the lifetime of this strategy (measured from 2025-26 baseline) <p>Colleagues participate in valued learning and development (aim E1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased proportion of colleagues undertaking non-mandatory learning and development activities over the lifetime of this strategy (measured from 2024-25 baseline) increased colleague satisfaction with learning and development provision over the lifetime of this strategy (measured from 2024-25 baseline)

<p>Maintained or increased compliance with our orders (aim 1.3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% compliance by target date (measured from 2024-25 baseline) • 99% compliance within 3 months of target date (measured from 2024-25 baseline) <p>An effective STAIRs service from the go-live date (aim 4.2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STAIRs targets (to be confirmed) 	<p>Stakeholders trust the quality of our work and the insights this provides (aim E2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we obtain external accreditations or comply with recognised good practice in areas where the benefits outweigh the costs • all colleagues commit to upholding our Code of Ethics • we are peer-reviewed and publish the outcome of this
<p>Learning and growth (SO2, SO3)</p>	<p>Value for money (SE2, SE3)</p>
<p>Our individual investigations lead to fairer service delivery (aim 1.4, 1.5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be developed with residents and members 	<p>Our organisation is more effective and efficient while continuing to meet the expectations of an arm's length body (aim E2):</p>
<p>Social landlords demonstrate positive complaint handling cultures, compliance with the Complaint Handling Code, and practice aligns with policy (aim 2.1, 2.2, 2.3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members Responsible for Complaints report maintained or increased positive impact of our work on their landlord's complaint handling (independent survey – baseline in 2025-26) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduced cost per DR case over the lifetime of the strategy • reduced cost per enquiry over the lifetime of the strategy • unqualified accounts each year <p>We are transparent about the impact of our organisation on the world (aim E2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESG strategy is produced, and milestones are met

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduction in Complaint Handling Failure Orders (CHFOs) issued for non-engagement with compliance monitoring activity within timescales (baseline in 2024-25) reduction in CHFOs issued for compliance in policy over the lifetime of the strategy (baseline in 2024-25) landlords non-compliant in complaint handling practice implement all recommendations <p>Maintained or increased resident awareness of their right to complain (aim 2.4):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintained or increased resident awareness of their right to complain and the Ombudsman over the lifetime of the strategy (independent survey – baseline in 2025-26/use MHCLG awareness raising campaign data) <p>Our work drives fairer services and healthier homes (aim 3.1, 3.2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased proportion of landlords that agree their services are fairer and their homes are healthier as a result of our thematic work over the lifetime of the strategy (independent survey, baseline 2025-26) 	<p>Systems and technology are efficient to use and effectively capture information (aim E3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> overall positive return on investment for all system, data, and technology projects
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- increased proportion of individual landlords that agree their services are fairer and their homes are healthier as a result of our further investigations (independent survey, baseline 2025-26)
- increased proportion of landlords that find our Centre for Learning tools are helpful in driving fairer services and healthier homes (independent survey, baseline 2025-26)

We play an active role in the system of landlord

accountability (aim 3.3):

- information is shared with regulators, enforcement bodies, and other delivery partners

Our work is used to inform policy debate (aim 3.4):

- our work is referenced in policy development and public debate

Data is used by a wide variety of stakeholders (aim 3.5):

- increased use of our data each year (baseline number of views in first full year of availability)

How far do you support the KPIs on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'not support' and 5 is 'fully support'?

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*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.

Do you have any comments or observations on our KPIs?

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Part 1 consultation questions (Corporate Strategy)

How far do you support each objective in the Corporate Strategy on a scale of 1 to 5*?

*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.

Strategic objective 1

Comments:

Strategic objective 2

Comments:

Strategic objective 3

Comments:

Strategic objective 4

Comments:

Strategic enabler

Comments:

Key performance indicators

Comments:

Is anything missing or are there any other observations you would like to make?

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PART 2

Business Plan 2025-26

Tell us your views on our Business Plan 2025-26.

It sets out the key actions that we will take between April 2025 to March 2026 to deliver our strategic objectives and enablers.

Business Plan 2025-26

Strategic objective 1: Provide an excellent, person-centred service

Aims and measures of success	Activities
<p>Aim 1.1: Our services are human-centric, trusted, and provide a positive customer experience for residents.</p> <p>Measures of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased resident satisfaction with our service provision maintained casework quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> options appraisal on preferred option for our enquiries service resident and landlord research to support development of a customer charter, customer service offer, and channel strategy design approach to customer co-creation implementation of our updated quality strategy and assurance framework
<p>Aim 1.2: Our service uses a range of techniques to provide resolution at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Measures of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased resident and landlord satisfaction with our service provision reduced casework timescales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> trial techniques for early resolution which maintain quality and impact continue to evolve Dispute Support and Resolution (DS&R) ways of working, processes, systems, and structures to be able to maximise our effectiveness and efficiency
<p>Aim 1.3: Our remedies are effective, appropriate, restorative, and complied with by landlords.</p> <p>Measures of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased resident and landlord satisfaction with our service provision maintained or increased compliance with our orders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> research on effective restorative orders, focused on rebuilding trust where the relationship between the landlord and residents has broken down

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<p>Aim 1.4: We continue to develop our approach to casework to drive fairness in service delivery and reflect changes to landlord duties.</p> <p>Aim 1.5: Our investigations support landlords to understand what led to service failure, prevent future complaints, and fulfil their obligations.</p> <p>Measure of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> our individual investigations lead to fairer service delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> development and implementation of guidance in response to new landlord duties and expectations ongoing cyclical review of existing guidance discovery exercise on creation of a sector compensation calculator work with residents and members to develop our metrics for the impacts of individual investigations and fairer services
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KPIs

Increased resident and landlord satisfaction with our service provision

(aims 1.1, 1.2, 1.3):

- improved resident satisfaction scores at enquiries (increasing by 5% on 2024-25 year-end position)
- maintained resident and landlord satisfaction scores following investigation (80% for cases upheld, 60% for cases not upheld)

Maintained casework quality (aim 1.1):

- maintained quality scores for investigations (95%)

Reduced casework timescales (aim 1.2):

- 90% of [high-risk cases](#) determined within 4 months
- 50% of cases are determined within 6 months*
- 80% of cases determined within 12 months

* Subject to confirmation following the evaluation of our early resolution trial and other measures to increase output

Note: Targets may need to be revisited following confirmation of the start and scope of Awaab's Law

Maintained or increased compliance with our orders (aim 1.3):

- 95% compliance by target date
- 99% compliance within 3 months of target date

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Our individual investigations lead to fairer service delivery (aim 1.4, 1.5):

- this target will be developed over the year after engaging with residents and members to understand what fairer service delivery means to them and set appropriate measures for following years

How far do you support the actions planned in 2025-26 under objective 1 on a scale of 1 to 5*?

*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.

Do you have any comments or observations on objective 1?

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Strategic objective 2: Drive positive local complaint handling cultures

Aims and measures of success	Activities
<p>Aim 2.1: We evolve our duty to monitor compliance with the Complaint Handling Code.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we embed our approach to compliance in policy and begin to test compliance in practice
<p>Aim 2.2: We expand our Centre for Learning content to support better local complaint handling.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we use information gathered from year one duty to monitor submissions to produce content for the Centre for Learning aimed at complaint handlers
<p>Aim 2.3: We focus on leadership and governance, in particular the role of the Member Responsible for Complaints in supporting positive complaint handling cultures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we explore how we can support complaint handling professionalisation in the sector
<p>Measure of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> social landlords demonstrate positive complaint handling cultures, compliance with the Complaint Handling Code, and practice aligns with policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we design dedicated tools aimed at those holding the Member Responsible for Complaints role we commission research to identify organisations with positive complaint handling cultures and the common behaviours, processes, and practices demonstrated by their governing bodies and senior leaders
<p>Aim 2.4: Residents are aware of their right to complain, are adequately supported in accessing the complaints process, and are signposted to the Ombudsman.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue targeted awareness raising activities based on EDI and geographical analyses of residents accessing our service less frequently than others
<p>Measure of success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintained or increased resident awareness of their right to complain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reshape our Meet the Ombudsman events increase the volume and range of support for residents who are making a complaint on our website
KPIs	

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All of the following targets will be developed over the year supported by engagement with Members Responsible for Complaints, creation of a robust surveying methodology and/or use of existing survey results, and analysis of our data to set the current baseline and stretching targets for the following years.

Social landlords demonstrate positive complaint handling cultures, compliance with the Complaint Handling Code, and practice aligns with policy (aims 2.1, 2.2, 2.3):

- Members Responsible for Complaints report maintained or increased positive impact of our work on their landlord's complaint handling
- reduction in CHFOs issued for non-engagement with compliance monitoring activity within timescales
- reduction in CHFOs issued for compliance in policy over the lifetime of the strategy
- landlords non-compliant in complaint handling practice implement all recommendations

Maintained or increased resident awareness of their right to complain (aim 2.4):

- maintained or increased resident awareness of their right to complain and the Ombudsman

How far do you support the actions planned in 2025-26 under objective 2 on a scale of 1 to 5*?

*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.

Do you have any comments or observations on objective 2?

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Strategic objective 3: Support better services through our insights, data, and intelligence

Aims and measures of success	Activities
<p>Aim 3.1: We hold individual landlords to account where there are repeated service failures by engaging with them to address root causes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review our approach to holding individual landlords to account in the light of proactive consumer regulation and begin to implement the conclusions
<p>Aim 3.2: We promote fairer outcomes in services where systemic failings are identified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review our approach to thematic work and its interaction with our other powers and publications, and begin to implement the conclusions
<p>Measure of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> our work drives fairer services and healthier homes 	
<p>Aim 3.3: We share information with regulators, enforcement bodies, and other delivery partners to promote accountability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we map stakeholders, make contact, and begin to share relevant work
<p>Measure of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we play an active role in the system of landlord accountability 	
<p>Aim 3.4: We are proactive in sharing our work with elected representatives, think tanks, and public policy makers to inform debate and policy proposals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we map stakeholders, make contact, and begin to share relevant work
<p>Measure of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> our work is used to inform policy debate 	
<p>Aim 3.5: We help to stimulate debate and support better understanding of the social housing sector by allowing open access to our casework data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no activities in 2025-26

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Measure of success: <ul style="list-style-type: none">our data is used by a wide variety of stakeholders	
KPIs	
<p>The following targets will be developed over the year supported by engagement with landlords. We will create a robust surveying methodology and analysis of our data to set the current baseline and stretching targets for following years.</p>	
Our work drives fairer services and healthier homes (aims 3.1, 3.2): <ul style="list-style-type: none">increased proportion of landlords that agree their services are fairer or their homes are healthier as a result of our thematic workincreased proportion of individual landlords that agree their services are fairer and their homes are healthier as a result of our further investigationsincreased proportion of landlords that find our Centre for Learning tools are helpful in driving fairer services and healthier homes	
We play an active role in the system of landlord accountability (aim 3.3): <ul style="list-style-type: none">information is shared with regulators, enforcement bodies, and other delivery partners	
Our work is used to inform policy debate (aim 3.4): <ul style="list-style-type: none">our work is referenced in policy development and public debate	
How far do you support the actions planned in 2025-26 under objective 3 on a scale of 1 to 5*?	
<p>*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.</p>	
Do you have any comments or observations on objective 3?	

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Strategic objective 4: Extend our powers and engage with partners to support closing gaps in redress

Aims and deliverables/measures of success	Activities
<p>Aim 4.1: We will discuss gaps in independent, impartial, and accountable Ombudsman-level redress for residents, supported by straight-forward customer journeys and consistent outcomes with partners from across the sector.</p> <p>No measures of success.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> collaborating on the design and implementation of the Private Rented Sector Landlord Ombudsman if the Renters' Rights Bill receives Royal Assent and we are the scheme administrator
<p>Aim 4.2: We design and implement the STAIRs appeals service for housing associations.</p> <p>Measure of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an effective STAIRs service from the go-live date (more detailed KPIs to be confirmed in advance of go-live) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete work to design the STAIRs appeal service consult on changes to the Scheme to enable delivery of STAIRs plan for implementation
KPIs	
Not applicable for 2025-26.	
How far do you support the actions planned in 2025-26 under objective 4 on a scale of 1 to 5*?	
<p>*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.</p> <p>Do you have any comments or observations on objective 4?</p>	

Strategic enabler: Organisation design

Aims and measures of success	Activities
<p>People</p> <p>Aim E1.1: We are a learning organisation, delivering continuous improvement and innovation.</p> <p>Aim E1.2: Our people processes are values and behaviours-driven, health and wellbeing are prioritised, and we are inclusive and value the benefits that diversity brings.</p> <p>Aim E1.3: We provide colleagues with clear pathways for career and skills development.</p> <p>Aim E1.4: Colleague engagement is regularly checked and actively managed in our remote organisation.</p> <p>Measures of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • colleagues support our values and behaviours, and engagement scores increase across all directorates • colleagues participate in valued learning and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begin the workforce and talent development programme • understand options to provide more flexibility in grading • benchmark our current total reward package • look at tools to support more effective remote working • review approaches to effectively tracking colleague engagement and deploy • explore approaches for flexible resourcing • design and implement other areas in accordance with strategic milestones
<p>Structures and processes</p> <p>Aim E2.1: We develop our governance, organisation design, and management practices to meet the needs of a larger and more complex organisation.</p> <p>Aim E2.2: We build trust in our service through ethical practices and gaining external accreditations in key areas.</p> <p>Aim E2.3: We develop our approach to ESG and increase our reporting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review our organisational design and begin to implement the changes required for successful strategic delivery • transition from a corporation sole to a body corporate and embed excellent governance to support this new structure

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<p>Measures of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> our organisation is more effective and efficient, while continuing to meet the expectations of an arm's length body stakeholders trust the quality of our work and the insights this provides we are transparent about the impact of our organisation on the world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore ways to improve our workload and capacity planning and explore models linked to demand scenarios continue to research alternative fee regimes and their potential for application to social housing providers gain reaccreditation on our IT systems and evaluate progress on moving towards other schemes
<p>Systems</p> <p>Aim E3.1: We seek digital, data, and technology developments which drive efficiency, support scalability, ensure compliance, and meet customer needs.</p> <p>Measure of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> systems and technology are efficient to use and effectively capture information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a digital, data, and technology strategy, including the potential for use of AI and automation to support our new organisation design and strategic ambitions begin to deliver against early strategic milestones
<p>KPIs</p>	
<p>The following targets are for achievement over the lifetime of the strategy, recognising that our transformation programme could have a negative impact before there is sustained improvement. During 2025-26 we will establish current baselines and analyse our data to set the current baseline and stretching targets for following years. We will also begin the activities that will increase trust in our service and increase transparency about our impact on the world.</p> <p>Colleagues support our values and behaviours, and engagement scores increase across all directorates (aim E1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased colleague engagement survey scores over the lifetime of this strategy (measured from 2024-25 baseline) <p>Colleagues participate in valued learning and development (aim E1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased proportion of colleagues undertaking non-mandatory learning and development activities over the lifetime of this strategy (measured from 2024-25 baseline) 	

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- increased colleague satisfaction with learning and development provision over the lifetime of this strategy (measured from 2024-25 baseline)

Our organisation is more effective and efficient while continuing to meet the expectations of an arm's length body (aim E2):

- reduced cost per DR case over the lifetime of the strategy
- reduced cost per enquiry over the lifetime of the strategy
- unqualified accounts each year

Stakeholders trust the quality of our work and the insights this provides (aim E2):

- we obtain external accreditations or comply with recognised good practice in areas where the benefits outweigh the costs
- all colleagues commit to upholding our Code of Ethics
- we are peer-reviewed and publish the outcome of this

We are transparent about the impact of our organisation on the world and increase our reporting (aim E2):

- ESG strategy is produced, and milestones are met

Systems and technology are efficient to use and effectively capture information (aim E3):

- overall positive return on investment for all system, data, and technology projects

How far do you support the actions planned in 2025-26 under strategic enablers on a scale of 1 to 5*?

*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.

Do you have any comments or observations on our strategic enabler?

How far do you support the KPIs for 2025-26 on a scale of 1 to 5*?

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*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.

Do you have any comments or observations on our KPIs?

Fees

Our fee is set to breakeven taking one year with the next, allowing for future liabilities, capital investment, and maintaining sufficient reserves to remain a going concern.

We acknowledge that our fee has risen sharply in recent years, driven by significant increases in demand. Our priority when looking at our operations is to maintain an acceptable level of service delivery for residents and landlords, rather than keeping the fee at a certain level. We do, however, aim to achieve operational efficiencies over the lifetime of this strategy thus reducing the cost per case. As a result, if demand increases necessitated a fee increase, this would be less than it otherwise would have been.

Our maximum fee for 2025-26 will be £8.03 per home. The exact fee will be confirmed when we publish our final Business Plan following Secretary of State approval.

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Our budget and fee are broken down as follows.

	Unit Cost
2024-25 Budget	£9.16
Deferred income reduction	-£1.13
2024-25 Chargeable Fee	£8.03
Pay award and National Insurance Increases	£0.37
Less impact of increased unit numbers	-£0.21
Underlying budget	£9.32
Transformation	£0.69
Net increase in temporary roles	£0.05
Temporary and transformation budget	£0.74
2025-26 Budget	£10.06
Deferred income reduction	-£2.03
2025-26 Chargeable Fee	£8.03

By Directorate	Fee
Dispute Support and Resolution	£5.70
Quality, Engagement and Development	£1.24
Finance and Corporate Services	£1.14
Transformation	£0.48
Staff Costs Total	£8.56
Non Staff Costs	£1.50
2025/26 Budget	£10.06
Deferred income reduction	-£2.03
2025/26 Chargeable Fee	£8.03

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The underlying budget has grown as a result of National Insurance increases and to allow for an anticipated pay award. For 2025-26 we are also budgeting for temporary posts and one-off expenditure items to undertake a transformation programme across all aspects of the business – supporting our people, processes, systems, and governance. This will provide us with the strong foundations necessary to achieve our strategic ambitions.

Deferred income has increased from 2024-25 due to recruitment shortfalls within the Dispute Support and Resolution directorate. In response, we have continuously learned and improved on our recruitment approach throughout the year with increasing levels of success. Our recruitment plans for 2025-26 are realistic as they are based on success rates at the end of the year.

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Part 2 consultation questions (Business Plan)

How far do you support each objective of the Business Plan on a scale of 1 to 5*?

*1 is strongly do not support, 2 is do not support, 3 is neither support nor do not support, 4 is support, 5 is strongly support.

Strategic objective 1

Comments:

Strategic objective 2

Comments:

Strategic objective 3

Comments:

Strategic objective 4

Comments:

Strategic enabler

Comments:

Key performance indicators

Comments:

Is anything missing or are there any other observations you would like to make?

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