



Regulatory Consumer Standards

Magenta Living Self-Assessment 2017/18



The Regulator's Consumer Standards

These standards apply to all registered housing providers. Providers' boards are responsible for ensuring their organisation meets the consumer standards. The regulator's role is limited to setting the consumer standards and intervening only where failure of the standard could lead to risk of serious harm to tenants, known as serious detriment.

Whilst there is no regulatory requirement placed upon Magenta Living to publish a formal self-assessment against the Consumer Standards, as a transparent organisation, Magenta Living has produced this document to highlight how we continue to work in partnership with tenants to deliver services that comply with regulators expectations. This process also offers assurance to the Board that we continue to comply with the Consumer Standards.

The following is the latest biennial self-assessment of how Magenta Living performs in relation to these Consumer Standards. It aims to identify where we meet requirements and where we need to make improvements and covers:

- **Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard**
- **Home Standard**
- **Tenancy Standard**
- **Neighbourhood and Community Standard**
- **Rent Standard**

Magenta Living recognises that the regulator's expectations are the same across all the consumer standards and the board of Magenta Living understands that it is equally important that the organisation complies with all regulatory requirements.

We recognise the publication of the Social Housing Green Paper in August 2018 could impact on the next self-assessment which is due in 2019/20. We will work hard to ensure Magenta Living is abreast of changes in regulation.

Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

Magenta Living recognises that compliance with the outcomes set out in the consumer standards, including how tenants are listened to, reflects the culture of this organisation. Magenta Living treats the required outcomes as what would be expected to be achieved in the ordinary course of a well-run business rather than viewing them merely as a tick box exercise. During the year 2017/18 the Board reviewed its Vision and on 1 April 2018 our new Vision of Vibrant...homes, lives, neighbourhoods was introduced which will be achieved through the strategic objective of excellent services and neighbourhoods for our customers through our values of being:

- **Ambitious**
- **Adaptable**
- **Accountable**

The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard requires registered providers to have clear mechanisms in place for tenants to complain, and to respond to complaints promptly and effectively. Magenta Living recognises the importance of getting the system and culture right on complaints handling and that how the organisation responds to complaints about service delivery directly affects the level of trust and confidence tenants have in us as their landlord and can consequently impact on their perception of the organisation`s reputation. We aim to ensure that we clearly understand the messages that tenants are giving through having systems and processes that are clear and comprehensive and that key staff know how to implement these processes to achieve compliance with the standard.

Customer service, choice and complaints

Registered providers shall:

Provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants in the delivery of all standards.

Magenta Living has several different communication channels available to their tenants including; online via a tenant portal, in writing, freephone telephone 24/7; social media sites, email, Live Chat and in person Monday-Friday 8:45am-5pm. We commit to delivering service standards which support the provision of accurate and speedy responses.

The telephone response target for 2017/18 was less than 120 seconds. We exceeded this target with an average response rate of 67 seconds for the 134,560 calls received by Magenta Living. The introduction of more communication channels and choices for customers has seen some steady reduction in the number of telephone contacts.

We listened to our customers, who wanted us to focus on the quality of responses for our customers and thus spend more time in resolving an enquiry. We assessed satisfaction levels with Contact Centre services by asking the customers who have called to complete a short after call automated survey comprising of 4 short questions. One of the questions relates specifically to how satisfied the customer was with the speed of response. The survey confirmed that 96% of customers were happy with the response time which endorsed the fact that customers valued quality and resolution over speed of response. This was further supported by 95.7% customer satisfaction with the overall service.

Based on such positive feedback, we spent more time engaging with customers and in resolving enquiries. Quality performance was measured against a target of 91% and included audit checks of call recordings and outcomes achieved for customers. The Contact Centre delivered an excellent quality customer service in 2017/18 with performance of 94.1% compared with the previous year's performance when we achieved 90.7%. Emergencies are responded to on a 24/7 basis by the Contact Centre which ensures prompt action is taken, that customers are kept fully informed and timely advice is provided.

For those with sight or hearing impairments we tailor our mode of communications in accordance with the known tenant profile and we offer; Braille, large print material, web accessibility, audio tapes and type talk.

Below are the alternative format requests for 2017/18:

- **Large print docs - 161**
- **Braille - 1**
- **Compact discs - 13 Tenants**
- **Compact discs - 1 Leaseholder**

Alternative languages include:

- Bengali - 7 customers
- Chinese Traditional/Simplified - 7
- Hungarian - 5
- Kurdish - 2
- Polish - 35

In addition to the above, during 2017/18 we provided a community alarm service for 2,297 elderly and/or disabled people who can contact us in cases of emergency through this chosen form of communication on a 24/7 basis.

Following the Grenfell tragedy, Magenta Living has also improved its access to the information held about tenants within its high-rise stock. In the past, important Information relating to our sheltered high-rise schemes e.g. layout, use of oxygen in home and details of those with restricted mobility, were held in external Gerda Boxes. This approach has now been extended to include all high-rise schemes across our stock. We now have a robust process in place to ensure details of those most likely to be at risk in case of fire or utility failure are communicated to emergency services via the on-site Gerda Boxes. These are regularly updated through reports generated from our database and spot checks are carried out across high rise stock.

Have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly.

Magenta Living has an approach to complaints that is clear and accessible that ensures the customer experience of complaints is a positive one and that issues are properly resolved.

We operate a two stage complaints process which involves the customer throughout ensuring that the best outcome is reached. Customers are also involved in the decision making process for complaint hearings and training, advice and support is provided to those customer representatives. In the initial stage, we aim to quickly resolve complaints within a working day. However, if the customer remains dissatisfied the complaint will be further investigated and escalated to Stage Two as necessary.

Stage Two complaints are in the form of a hearing. They are heard by a panel of our customers and a Board member involved in the decision making process to ensure an independent outcome is reached. The panel is trained on a regular basis and is supported by the Customer Experience team. If the customer remains unhappy with the outcome they are provided with advice and details relating to the Ombudsman Service. Examples of performance in this area appear under section entitled.

Providers shall offer a range of ways for tenants to express a complaint and set out clear service standards for responding to complaints, including complaints about performance against the standards, and details of what to do if they are unhappy with the outcome of a complaint.

Involvement and empowerment

Registered providers shall ensure that customers are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and get involved with:

The formulation of their landlord's housing related policies and strategic priorities.

Our Tenant Engagement Strategy ensures that Magenta Living has the framework for customer engagement in place that not only satisfies all regulatory requirements but is a platform for excellence in achieving customer engagement, by listening to all to ensure real influence.

The Customer Engagement Policy, approved in July 2017, ensures Magenta Living offers opportunities for engagement in a dynamic context and enables a value for money approach, seeks to support neighbourhood working and aims to utilise technology wherever appropriate.

Customers are involved in a variety of roles, branded as '**Compass**': as Directors on our Board; on a Scrutiny and Consultation Panel (SCP); as a complaints panel; via an independent 'Umbrella Group' of representatives; as Block Champions within blocks of flats; as street representatives; as Tenants and Residents Associations; and at a very local and neighbourhood level alongside front line staff, for instance via regular estate walkabouts. Clearly involvement is mainstreamed in our approach.

Recent examples of policies where customers have been extensively involved via the SCP have included Complaints Policy; Motorised Scooter Policy; Safeguarding Policy; and the Rechargeable Repairs Policy.

The making of decisions about how housing related services are delivered, including the setting of service standards.

Our entire approach to developing and introducing policies demonstrates how customers' views are a key factor in decision making. Every customer-facing policy we introduce and review follows an outlined procedure. Each policy of the organisation is only approved after Board or ELT Board has been satisfied that effective and appropriate customer consultation has taken place, a fact that is built into the policy template to ensure that customers have not only been consulted but that decision makers are satisfied this has effectively happened. Each customer-facing policy reviewed also has an equality assessment carried out with a representative group of customers to ensure it is in tune with needs and accessible to all. By taking this approach to policy development we are confident customers are always effectively involved in decision making.

The scrutiny of their landlord's performance and the making of recommendations to their landlord about how performance might be improved.

Apart from performance information on the company web site the SCP is the main vehicle for customers to scrutinise services of Magenta Living. This group utilises a task and finish approach with a fluid membership designed to ensure a widespread range of views are taken on board and opportunities to participate are maximised.

Issues to be reviewed by the SCP are identified from a variety of sources including being highlighted through customer feedback on complaints which is regularly monitored and all customer-facing policy updates. Scrutiny reviews including recommendations for improvements in service provision conducted by this Panel are reported to where they can be actioned appropriately, where necessary this may include to the Magenta Living Board.

On a more practical level we are also embracing new technology to enable tenants to interact with us and comment on performance. An example is provided by block champions (tenants who review services provided in blocks of flats) who are using our website to report back on standards of cleaning performance in real time. A short video highlighting the role of block champions can be viewed [here](#).

The management of their homes, where applicable.

Magenta Living actively encourage customers to become more involved because their feedback influences the way we manage their homes via our 'Compass' menu of involvement, which is extensively promoted to customers.

Locally there are over 16 Tenants and Residents Associations (TRA) whom we support as well as street and block champions in areas where a TRA is not appropriate. An independent Umbrella Group brings representatives together where trends in service are discussed and relevant items identified for scrutiny.

The management of repair and maintenance services, such as commissioning and undertaking a range of repair tasks, as agreed with landlords, and the sharing in savings made.

Where specific improvements are undertaken we ensure we hold meaningful consultation with customers to ensure the changes meet their needs, for example we are consulting on an improvement programme to low-rise blocks of flats following the successful upgrade of all our high-rise blocks. A team of Customer Liaison Officers are employed to ensure customers are consulted regarding materials used and changes to specifications.

Agreeing local offers for service delivery.

Magenta Living consults and involves customers on a local basis through estate walkabouts, as block champions, lone voices, and tenants and resident's associations.

Many of our neighbourhoods have community facilities ranging from purpose-built community centres to converted shops, houses or offices. Here representatives are supported to act as community hubs where customers can get involved to shape local services and responses in order to ensure that issues in these areas are prioritised. In neighbourhoods without such facilities, we can hold trailer roadshows with a portable trailer to act as a focus for customers to engage, such as a recent event at Fieldway Court, Birkenhead following the purchase of YHG stock in the area.

Specific neighbourhood based working and relevant community offers are agreed in consultation with customers, local neighbourhood staff and informed by customer insight data to target specific customers. The Community Regeneration Team works with Neighbourhood Management Officers to engage with residents in ways that are appropriate locally.

In a local neighbourhood we target services, projects and partnerships with community, private sector and statutory agencies based on the intelligence we have regarding the demographics of that community to achieve the largest social impact. In addition to this insight information, agreement of such offers with local community representatives and empowerment of members of the local community is fundamental to our approach.

Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants

Registered providers shall:

Treat all customers with fairness and respect.

Magenta Living treats all its customers according to their individual needs. To this aim our Equality and Diversity Policy is designed to ensure that all customers are treated with dignity, fairness and respect. As an organisation we aim to be non-discriminatory in every aspect of our business. Staff and external contractors receive training and awareness sessions on Magenta Living's Professional Boundaries and Safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities and their relationships with our customers.

Demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs.

We conduct Equality Assessments for all Magenta Living Policies to ensure we are acting fairly and equitably and not inadvertently disadvantaging customers with protected characteristics. We work with tenants to meet their needs where it is reasonable to do so and in agreement with individuals. We offer services to assist our customers to live independently that include adaptations, tenancy support services, alternative suitable accommodation, safeguarding and signposting to statutory agencies. Staff have access to tenant data and we utilise a flagging system for tenants most at risk from harm or of causing harm. This enables staff to deliver effective and targeted services that reflect the diverse needs of our tenants. For example, in the event of a utility failure in an area, our emergency response team will first check levels of vulnerability and triage those most at risk for a priority response.

Last year staff, contractors and customers reported 535 tenancy concerns relating to our tenants. Each concern was fully assessed by the

Specialist Housing Services team and resulted in provision of additional tenancy support, service adjustments, safeguarding or other interventions. Of those concerns raised, approximately 20% related to mental health needs which is an increasing need amongst our customers. Formal referrals were made to the local authority through their Safeguarding Framework involving 33 adult cases and 57 child cases.

Specific expectations

Customer service, choice and complaints

Registered providers shall provide tenants with accessible, relevant and timely information about:

- How tenants can access services
- The standards of housing services their tenants can expect
- How they are performing against those standards
- The service choices available to tenants, including any additional costs that are relevant to specific choices
- Progress of any repairs work
- How tenants can communicate with them and provide feedback
- The responsibilities of the tenant and provider
- Arrangements for tenant involvement and scrutiny

Magenta Living aims to be transparent about its services and publishes information about its services in its annual report, within tenancy agreements, newsletters (3 per year), social media and also through resident's groups and resident involvement activities. We have a 24 hour contact centre, using a freephone number to both landline and mobile phone users, which tenants can use to enquire about services including repairs.

Providers shall offer a range of ways for tenants to express a complaint and set out clear service standards for responding to complaints, including complaints about performance against the standards, and details of what to do if they are unhappy with the outcome of a complaint.

Customers can contact us in a variety of ways to raise complaints, compliments, enquiries etc. through the following options:

- Telephone through our Contact Centre which is operational 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
- E-mail through our dedicated feedback address
- Online by completing the user-friendly form on our website
- Social Media platforms
- Post to our office

- Face to face by visiting our customer hub, located in our head office or by speaking to one of our members of staff
- Community Alarm, speaking to one of our specialist advisors, based in the CCTV Control room within our Contact Centre
- Web services
- Live Chat was under construction in 2017/18

For those customers with accessibility issues/sensory impairments, we tailor our communication in accordance with our customer profile. In addition to the above, we can offer communication through braille, large print, hearing loops, audio tapes and type talk amongst others.

In addition to this we have a translation service available for those tenants whose first language is not English and who prefer to communicate in their preferred language.

The overarching aim of the service is to improve our services based upon feedback and to provide timely and satisfactory resolutions to complaints. In 2017/18, 48% of informal complaints were resolved within one working day. The average time taken to satisfactorily resolve complaints was 6.6 working days compared to 10 working days in 2016/17. Of these, 55% were upheld resulting in 15 changes to procedures and working practices ranging from minor amendments to more significant reviews in service delivery.

Where a customer wishes to appeal a resolution, they must have good cause to do so and communicate this to Magenta Living. Before a complaint is escalated to Stage Two, an independent review of the original investigation is conducted.

Providers shall inform tenants how they use complaints to improve their services. Registered providers shall publish information about complaints each year, including their number and nature, and the outcome of the complaints. Providers shall accept complaints made by advocates authorised to act on a tenant's/tenants' behalf.

Complaints details, learning points and changes to services are regularly communicated at a senior and strategic level within the organisation and performance is monitored against standards. Customers involved in the complaints process are kept fully informed and offer feedback.

The number and types of complaints are formally published each year and this feedback, in conjunction with other relevant performance data, informs how we develop our services, policies and procedures.

All compliments are relayed to relevant teams and last year we received 338 compliments with recognition given to staff who delivered excellent customer services.

The procedure also makes provision for complaints made by advocates, authorised in writing to act on a customer's behalf, in addition to local councillors and Members of Parliament.

The Complaints Policy review took place towards the end of the financial year for implementation in 2018/19. Both staff and customers were

involved in reviewing the policy and in carrying out the Equality Assessment process.

Involvement and empowerment

Registered providers shall support their tenants to develop and implement opportunities for involvement and empowerment, including by:

Supporting their tenants to exercise their Right to Manage or otherwise exercise housing management functions, where appropriate.

Magenta Living has not yet encountered any such requests from tenants but would fully explore the option should it arise.

Supporting the formation and activities of tenant panels or equivalent groups and responding in a constructive and timely manner to them.

Magenta Living's community regeneration team work closely with customers to set up appropriate mechanisms to facilitate effective involvement in service provision. The team of specialist staff works alongside local neighbourhood officers to engage customers and encourage involvement, offering support and capacity building training to facilitate this interaction.

Dedicated funding is administered by the Umbrella group, with support from Magenta Living officers, which shares good practice and offers peer to peer support and encouragement.

The SCP is the main vehicle for scrutiny and Policy consultation with the SCP being serviced by Magenta Living staff.

The provision of timely and relevant performance information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in a form which registered providers seek to agree with their tenants. Such provision must include the publication of an annual report which should include information on repair and maintenance budgets.

The SCP is a refreshed approach to, and builds upon, our previous nationally recognised scrutiny function. When an issue is identified as a scrutiny topic, officers work closely with the involved customers to examine all aspects of that area of service provision as well as looking at good practice examples regionally and / or nationally. This includes providing access to all relevant performance information.

An annual performance report, including repairs and maintenance budgets alongside all aspects of service delivery, is issued to all tenants in summary form with a fuller, more detailed stakeholder report being shared with involved customers, available via our website and on demand.

Involved customers regularly review feedback information to highlight topics for the SCP to scrutinise.

Providing support to tenants to build their capacity to be more effectively involved.

Magenta Living works with all involved customers to appropriately build their skills and capacity to empower them to be effective in their chosen roles. In addition, each Tenants and Residents Association undertakes an annual health check where relevant training is identified and organised. We also encourage peer to peer learning via the Umbrella group.

A key objective of our community learning provision is to increase the digital inclusion of customers to enable them to participate via online channels.

Registered providers shall consult with tenants on the scope of local offers for service delivery. This shall include how performance will be monitored, reported to and scrutinised by tenants and arrangements for reviewing these on a periodic basis.

Magenta Living continues to deliver service standards which apply to all tenants.

However, we also understand that services need to reflect local circumstances and we consult tenants on a neighbourhood basis to ensure our services are delivered optimally.

We have aligned our service provision so that each neighbourhood has an identified Neighbourhood Management Officer. This Officer is the public face of Magenta Living locally, whilst behind the scenes our Community Regeneration Team negotiates offers informed by neighbourhood profile information. This enables us to consult with communities and align services regarding local priorities.

We also work closely with residents in providing 15 community facilities which act as community hubs and are run by resident volunteers. These range from purpose-built community centres to converted shops and houses and even community garden projects. A mobile trailer enables consultation in neighbourhoods where there is no permanent facility.

Further examples are provided by our block champions and the management of our grounds maintenance contract. Block champions volunteer to inform us that standards are being maintained with both high and low-rise flats and have provided a good example of technology assisting to achieve value for money in that they now feedback via an online platform. Similarly, residents update us on management of our grounds maintenance contract on a voluntary basis.

Where registered providers are proposing a change in landlord for one or more of their tenants or a significant change in their management arrangements, they shall consult with affected tenants in a fair, timely, appropriate and effective manner. Registered providers shall set out the proposals clearly and in an appropriate amount of detail and shall set out any actual or potential advantages and disadvantages (including costs) to tenants in the immediate and longer term. Registered providers must be able to demonstrate to affected tenants how they have taken the outcome of the consultation into account when reaching a decision.

Magenta Living will always consult tenants when considering any significant changes to their management or landlord and comply with the above. An example of this is:

In 2018 Magenta Living took on ownership and management of over 400 properties from another registered provider, Your Housing Group, following an extensive consultation exercise, which set out the costs and benefits of the transfer proposal and after providing specific newsletters and several open-day opportunities for tenants to discuss the implications of the transfer.

Registered providers shall consult tenants at least once every three years on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the organisation's housing management service.

We currently achieve top peer group performance with regard to listening to tenant's views and we aim to maintain such a performance level.

Both our Customer Engagement Strategy and Customer Engagement Policy are reviewed on a 3-yearly basis with a view to ensuring engagement continues to be relevant in the prevailing circumstances. Consultation includes the SCP and other channels as appropriate.

These policies encompass arrangements for all levels of involvement, branded as Compass, including scrutiny (SCP) and link to our Governance arrangements. They are communicated to all tenants via newsletters and our website.

Understanding and responding to diverse needs

Registered providers shall demonstrate how they respond to tenants' needs in the way they provide services and communicate with tenants.

The following are examples of how we respond to the individual needs and expectations of our customers:

- Magenta Living has developed various services in response to tenants needs and that are accessible to tenants via our website and a variety of other communication methods upon request.
- We carry out an assessment of needs for applicants to identify the level of housing support that may be necessary to help more vulnerable individuals sustain a tenancy. The assessment considers all aspects of a tenancy and the environment including accessibility, suitability of the property and location and potential risks. We record contact details and any adjustments required for the new tenant through a central database. This ensures communications are consistent from Magenta Living and service delivery reflects the specific needs of the individual. Where appropriate we will also liaise directly with external statutory and other agencies to deliver an integrated service.
- For existing tenants whose circumstances may change, a needs assessment will also be carried out and similar adjustments made.
- We provide a range of supported housing services including tenancy support, sheltered housing, extra care housing (opened in 2017/18) and Syrian Refugees. We also have client specific schemes; mental health; entrenched drinkers (opened 2017/18); young single parents; homeless 16 and 17 year olds and those with learning disabilities. We provide move on accommodation and have also allocated several properties to the local authority for use for homeless families to assist with their homelessness duties. We further provide assistive technology in homes to promote independence and deliver a robust adaptations service to our tenants.

- We have a comprehensive framework in place to ensure staff appropriately respond to concerns about our customers. This may result in a range of agreed actions being taken that include: -
 - A referral for our internal tenancy sustainment service
 - Provision of adaptations
 - Provision of emergency community alarm
 - Referral for 'at risk' trips and falls
 - Provision of assistive technology
 - Urgent rehousing within ML stock
 - Inclusion on ML Vulnerable Tenants list (priority in emergencies)
 - Signposting to other services
 - Adult or child safeguarding referral to the local authority
 - MARAC involvement

- All staff and Board Directors receive equality and diversity training as part of their induction and periodic refresher training
- Magenta Living collects customer profile information for all protected characteristics and uses it to pitch our services appropriately
- All new and reviewed policies go through equality analysis using our customer profile and where available service user profile prior to approval
- Customer satisfaction is monitored across the protected characteristics to highlight potential concerns
- Magenta Living is an active member of Wirral Hate Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) with staff trained to report hate incidents and respond to incidents raised by other partners
- Magenta Living are active members of Wirral Domestic Abuse MARAC with staff regularly reporting domestic abuse incidents and responding to incidents raised by other partners
- We encourage the use of positive images representing protected characteristics in all our publications
- Our style guide provides guidelines for staff to write in plain English and to follow Royal National Institute for Blind best practice
- Our public meeting rooms all have induction loops fitted, portable induction loops are available for other rooms

- All our offices and community facilities have had an accessibility audit and work has been carried out to make them accessible
- Our computer systems record insight data information to ensure that relevant adjustments to services can be made to reflect individual needs
- We offer telephone translation to people whose first language is not English
- All front-line staff receive training on dementia awareness, mental health, safeguarding, and any other relevant training requirement
- We include a range of adapted accommodation within our new build schemes for people with disabilities

What can Magenta Living do better?

Whilst we are proud of our achievement in leading our peer group regarding listening to our customers, we recognise the importance of reviewing our approach and looking to expand our involvement offer even further, and particularly to groups that are under-represented, we have recently explored a number of new avenues of involvement:

- Looking to utilise technology to enable more effective involvement, our block champions (customers who inspect their blocks of flats) and street champions (customers who report issues within their locality) have recently begun reporting online via our website and are reporting success, in that they can report back at whatever time is appropriate to them, rather than having to attend formal meetings. Those of our customers who are online are enjoying this approach, while others are being encouraged to take part as we offer training and affordable recycled laptops via our partnership with a Credit Union.
- We also use insight data we hold to ensure we are targeting our services appropriately to our neighbourhoods. Effective targeting of our services is not only a key part of our value for money approach but also enables us to direct community investment resources effectively to offer opportunities such as training and skills and apprenticeships to customers who need them. As a social landlord our role is about more than simply being a landlord and we aim to create social value for our customers in how we deliver our services. We demonstrate social value to customers alongside value for money through an annual social value statement, Magenta Communities.
- Customers are an integral part of our approach to developing policies and improving services. Engagement at Magenta Living is an evolving blend of traditional mainstreamed involvement and new approaches that keep such involvement relevant and vibrant. Working in partnership with all relevant stakeholders we are continually looking to increase effective engagement.

Home Standard

The board of Magenta Living recognises that complying with health and safety obligations remains its most fundamental responsibility and they understand their statutory responsibilities including, but not limited to, gas safety, fire safety, electrical safety, asbestos, Legionella and lift safety. As such the Executive Leadership Team and Board of Magenta Living has ensured that they are assured that robust compliance systems are in place to meet all obligations. We also understand that breaches of the consumer standards arising from a failure to meet health and safety requirements have a greater potential to meet the regulator's 'serious detriment' test.

Quality of accommodation

Registered providers shall:

Ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard.

Magenta Living utilises a stock condition database which has recently in 2018 been refreshed with a 40% independent stock condition survey carried out by Savills. The data contained within the stock condition database forms a key component of Magenta Living's capital investment strategy and its 30 year investment cost plan. Through this process Magenta Living produces regular performance management reports ensuring that Magenta Living adheres to the Government's Decent Home Guidance. 100% of our stock currently meets the Decent Homes Standard.

In order to maintain satisfactory living conditions for tenants the number of responsive repairs completed in 2017/18 was 27,739.

Meet the standards of design and quality that applied when the home was built, and were required as a condition of publicly funded financial assistance, if these standards are higher than the Decent Homes Standard.

Through its capital investment standards strategy, Magenta Living ensures that its development and investment standards are complimentary and consistent. Magenta Living implements the use of a common standard of components and service delivery for both new and existing stock which is higher than the requirements of the Decent Home Guidance. The majority of new build developments are constructed to Regulators Design and Quality standards. Where this is not achievable, for example, where the properties are purchased "off the shelf", then the properties are still constructed and fitted out to standards which far exceed the Decent Homes standard. In 2017/18 we completed 184 new build properties.

In agreeing a local offer, ensure that it is set at a level not less than these standards and have regard to section six of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance.

Magenta Living continues to utilise the ‘Magenta Living Home Standard’ as its local offer service standard commitment to customers. The Magenta Living Home Standard incorporates all areas of repairs, maintenance and investment, ensuring that an equitable level of service is provided to all customers in accordance with the standards agreed through a wide variety of customer empowerment events. Both the voids lettable standard and repairs policy have been refreshed in 2018 at a Scrutiny and Consultation panel with tenants and residents.

Repairs and maintenance

Registered providers shall:

Provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time.

Through the Magenta Living Home Standard, Magenta Living implements a robust service standard and performance management framework ensuring that services are delivered in accordance with customer expectations. Magenta Living also undertakes regular value for money assessments of its repairs and maintenance services. Through its approach to Value for Money, Magenta Living is able to both measure and be self aware of its performance. In doing so, Magenta Living is able to provide informed customer feedback and, where necessary, make improvements and efficiencies in service provision.

Performance levels for the year 2017/18 included:

Repair performance indicator	2017/18 actual performance	Target
Repairs Completed in Target	91.81%	98%
Repairs Completed in One Visit	91.83%	91%
Repair Appointments made and kept	97.19%	97%
Average days to respond to responsive repairs	16.34days	9.31 days
Tenancy satisfaction with recent repair	92.07%	95%

Meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.

Magenta living has a centralised dedicated Compliance team who manage the statutory maintenance contracts. This team is multi-disciplined with staff holding the relevant qualifications for their specialist area, such as gas and asbestos qualifications. The main contracts managed by this team are:

- Gas Servicing
- Fire Risk Management
- Management of Asbestos
- Legionella
- Electrical Safety

Members of the Compliance team are also part of a Health and Safety group who meet regularly with the Safety Health and Environmental Manager, to discuss wider issues that may have arisen and any changes of legislation, and requirements for the future that may affect Magenta Living. This information is then fed into the corporate Health and Safety Meetings held Bi Monthly.

In 2017/18 Magenta Living were 100% for gas servicing compliant.

Magenta living is working with Savills UK who are the market leaders in fire safety. Savills UK are undertaking all of Magenta Livings Fire Risk assessments which enables us to provide assurance that we comply with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, ensuring that our statutory undertakings are executed. This information and any works programmes are managed by the Compliance Team with external assistance being provided by Savills UK who validate and check this data for us. Following the assessments, a works programme is to be undertaken to further improve the safety of any properties that may require upgrades of elements such as Fire Doors and passive fire resistance. These works will be categorised into High, Medium and Low risk timescales and are expected to be completed within 6-36 months.

Specific expectations

Quality of accommodation

Registered providers may agree with the regulator a period of non-compliance with the Decent Homes Standard, where this is reasonable. Providers shall ensure their tenants are aware of the reasons for any period of non-compliance, their plan to achieve compliance and then report on progress delivering this plan.

Through a robust strategy of stock classification Magenta Living is able to identify and develop investment and management strategies for any properties that are or are anticipated to fall below the Decent Homes Standard.

The only properties that fall below the Decent Homes Standard are those that are currently subject to investment and have been identified for immediate future investment.

Magenta Livings Asset Management team have implemented a model to evaluate the net present value (NPV) of all properties based on its income and expenditure over the next 30 years. This will be used to ensure investment spend is targeted to increase and maintain the NPV on estates and be a tool to identify underperforming properties with a negative NPV. Magenta Living will then be able to decide on the future sustainability of these properties.

Repairs and maintenance

Registered providers shall ensure a prudent, planned approach to repairs and maintenance of homes and communal areas. This should demonstrate an appropriate balance of planned and responsive repairs, and value for money. The approach should include: responsive and cyclical repairs, planned and capital work, work on empty properties, and adaptations.

Magenta Living employs a strategy of stock classification for all areas of asset resource management, covering responsive repairs, compliance maintenance, cyclical repairs, planned and capital investment. This strategy ensures that resources are managed in a consistent and complimentary manner so as to deliver effective and measurable value for money asset management service.

Registered providers shall co-operate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets tenants' needs.

Magenta Living works in partnership with the Local Authority and other appropriate support agencies, to provide a service that meets the current and future needs of Magenta Living's customers.

In 2017/18 Magenta Living carried out 331 major and 842 minor adaptations at a combined cost of approximately £325,000. Additionally, we work collaboratively with Wirral Council in processing tenant requests for adaptations that are funded as per a sharing arrangement with Wirral Council.

We have an excellent relationship with Occupational Therapist (OT) managers with whom we liaise on a regular basis. To alleviate pressures on OT services, we have trained and advanced Trusted Assessors who not only assess for adaptation needs but also carry out trips and hazards assessments. The latter is a preventative measure that was introduced in collaboration with local GP practices aimed at reducing A&E admissions due to trips and falls and in maintaining independence in the home.

We also recognise the pressures experienced by Health partners with delayed discharges and A&E presentations and we have delivered a jointly funded service that provides fully furnished accessible, accommodation. This is temporary provision for those unable to be discharged to their home for safety reasons or because they require adaptations in their substantive home. The temporary provision enables required works to be completed ready for the individual to return home reducing the need to remain in hospital unnecessarily. This is a cost effective model and in partnership with Wirral Community Health Foundation Trust, we are seeking to extend the principles to include several other housing providers in Wirral.

What can Magenta Living do better?

Magenta Living continues to strive to deliver a first-class service in which customers views and opinions are central to future developments and service delivery. We will build on existing feedback mechanisms ranging from forums such as the Umbrella Group and the Customer Maintenance Group and learning from best practice within the Housing Repairs and Maintenance sector.

During 2017/18 we reviewed the responsive repair priorities with our tenants and customers and the following was agreed:

Repair Priorities

Out of hours repairs - will be attended within 3 hours and the repair completed where possible.

Urgent repairs - will be attended and the repair completed the same day of being reported where possible.

Routine repairs - will be completed within 21 working days of being reported.

Scoping required - Repairs where the work needs scoping prior to completing. The contact centre will arrange a 30 minute appointment made by the contact centre within the first 5 days agreed with the tenant. The technician will vary the order and set to be rescheduled (or go on hold for authorisation) this will be reappointed to complete the repair for up to the remaining period within the 21 day priority.

Vulnerable repairs - these can be arranged from day 4 (raised on the routine priority code and the vulnerability must be described in the description).

Repair Types

Urgent Repairs

- If the door requiring repair is the only access into property
- Internal uncontrollable flooding including roofing
- Total loss of electricity or a partial loss of electricity causing a health & safety concern
- Breaches to the security of the property including doors and reachable windows
- Sole accessible toilet, no flush in concealed unit toilet (cannot be manually flushed)
- Total loss of water to the property (if kitchen cold tap is still running)
- Take away/make safe. Any Magenta Living property items that would cause damage or harm to the tenant or the public without reasonable actions undertaken by the tenant.
- Complete drainage blockage to amenities or sewage discharge internal or external

Routine Repairs

- Individual amenities blocked
- Minor plumbing
- Minor electrical faults
- Minor roofing repairs
- General joinery repairs
- General plastering repairs
- External works that are not considered health & safety concern with reasonable avoidable actions
- Fixtures & fittings repairs

Appointment Availabilities

- Morning 8:00-13:00
- Afternoon 12:30 – 17:00
- School Run 09:30 – 15:00
- All day 08:00 – 17:00
- Evening - Tuesday & Thursday after 17:00 (when all other reasonable avenues have been explored)
- Saturday Mornings – 08:00 – 13:00 (when all other reasonable avenues have been explored)

Rechargeable Repairs

A rechargeable repair is one that is the responsibility of the tenant. It may have been caused by neglect, misuse or by accidental damage of any tenants of the property or a guest. We advise when the repair is a tenant`s own responsibility and what priority category this falls under. Tenants have the opportunity to undertake the repair at their own expense or Magenta Living may agree to do this based upon individual circumstances and tenants will be charged for it.

Fire Safety

Magenta Living has always complied with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Following the Grenfell Tower fire our approach to Fire Safety has been strengthened further. A dedicated fire safety project group has been set up to oversee and manage all areas of fire safety throughout the business, recommendations from the Independent review of Building Regulations has/is being implemented, budgets and resources are being made available to ensure our ongoing commitment is shown. Staff are being given information and empowerment powers to raise

concerns with direct lines of communication set up to senior management. Regular reporting to Board on this and other compliance areas has been expanded to give a full view of any risks and how we plan to improve and remove these for our customers. Magenta Living is working with Savills UK who are the market leader in fire safety who are undertaking all of our Fire Risk Assessments and providing ongoing advice and support in this area.

Tenancy standard

Allocations and mutual exchange

Registered providers shall let their homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way. They shall take into account the housing needs and aspirations of tenants and potential tenants. They shall demonstrate how their lettings:

- Make the best use of available housing
- Are compatible with the purpose of the housing
- Contribute to local authorities' strategic housing function and sustainable communities

In 2017/18 Magenta Living let 1,048 properties. Magenta Living let the majority (approximately 7/10) of its available homes through the Merseyside sub-regional, choice based allocations system, Property Pool Plus (PPP). This operates across five local authority areas and allows each authority to address its' strategic priorities.

Some properties, which are let at Affordable Rents, have presented an increased risk to applicants who are dependent upon Welfare Benefits. The high rent levels can result in an increased level of debt over a relatively shorter period if benefit issues are encountered. This circumstance also represents an increased risk to Magenta Living's financial stability. Consequently, we have given consideration to such properties being provided to applicants who are in employment. However, employed applicants do not attract high priority within the PPP system. Magenta Living has therefore in limited cases been marketing and allocating outside the PPP system, using Magenta Living's own housing need criteria. This approach will also assist Magenta Living in achieving its aims to develop sustainable and balanced communities within larger, new build developments from the onset as well as contribute to the aims of the strategic housing authority.

Magenta Living is constantly monitoring and reviewing its approach to allocation and lettings as the social housing market is influenced by changes in society, new technology and changes in Government policy. There are fundamental policy changes which are yet to be implemented and which are likely to impact on demand for social housing and the ability of Magenta Living to fund housing provision and associated services.

After some detailed high level discussions with the local authority, Magenta Living Board approved withdrawal from PPP for the following reasons:

- The disproportionate high costs to Magenta Living of participating in PPP
- The increasing administrative burden imposed upon Magenta Living
- The lack of flexibility in responding and adapting to the current housing environment and the nuances this creates, for example, low priority given to those in employment meaning that little consideration is given to the aim to creating balanced communities

A formal, six months' notice of withdrawal, as prescribed by the PPP agreement, was served for implementation from 1 April 2018. Transitional arrangements were agreed with the local authority to ensure we continued to run advertisements and applications running on PPP, to put in place alternative arrangements and to publicise the changes in readiness for a planned implementation from 2 July 2018.

The 2005 Stock Transfer Agreement included provision for an allocations process to be employed in the absence of an alternative approach agreed by Wirral Council and Wirral Partnership Homes (now trading as Magenta Living). The provisions of the Deed are reflected in the new Allocating Homes Policy which was approved by Board in February 2018, modified to reflect the changing housing environment.

The Sub Regional PPP Board recognised the reasons for our withdrawal from the scheme and these reasons resonated with other PPP members and a review was subsequently commissioned by Liverpool City Region for completion. Magenta Living's new arrangements due to be implemented in July 2018, will be regularly reviewed and as such, due consideration will be given to any resultant changes to PPP following the commissioned report.

There should be clear application, decision-making and appeals processes.

For 2017/18 Magenta Living fully complied with the choice based lettings (PPP) system which meets all the above requirements and is compatible with our charitable aims. We will continue to meet these requirements following our withdrawal from the scheme in July 2018 and staff have been developing new internal processes and procedures in addition to a draft Service Level Agreement and Nominations Agreement with Wirral Council. We also have a 100% nomination agreement with Cheshire West and Chester Council and participate in their Cheshire Homes choice based letting process and fully comply with the standards required by the regulator.

Registered providers shall enable their tenants to gain access to opportunities to exchange their tenancy with that of another tenant, by way of internet-based mutual exchange services.

An online mutual exchange module is part of the Merseyside sub regional, choice based allocations system, Property Pool Plus (PPP) and has been promoted amongst our own, and other social landlord, tenants. This approach provides greater freedom of movement and self-determination for customers and represents value for money for Magenta Living in terms of meeting rehousing needs.

We will continue to be part of Wirral Council's Online **mutual exchange module** following the withdrawal from PPP.

Tenure

Registered providers shall offer tenancies or terms of occupation which are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of their housing stock.

Magenta Living provides a range of tenancy and occupancy agreement options which are tailored to meet the needs of particular groups of applicants and types of housing scheme.

All new tenants will commence with a "Starter Tenancy" prior to its conversion to an assured, an affordable or fixed term agreement. We have developed supported housing schemes that enable vulnerable people to live within a community setting and issue either license agreements or starter tenancies dependent upon the conditions of the household (such as shared facilities etc). We work closely with health and social care partners to ensure occupancy terms within supported housing schemes provide the maximum tenure protection for our more vulnerable customers.

We are currently exploring the use of vacant three bedroom properties as affordable shared accommodation options and wider choices for young people. Such properties are in low demand in certain locations in Wirral because of under-occupancy charges, but we are likely to address unmet need for younger and future customers through such considerations. In all circumstances we seek legal advice to ensure we are consistent in our approach and that our agreements meet the legal requirements.

They shall meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements or terms of occupation.

Magenta Living regularly reviews its agreements and seeks appropriate legal advice before implementing any changes to existing documents.

Magenta Living receives regular advice notes and updates from legal advisors to ensure that all changes to legislation and significant legal precedents are considered in the standard documents.

Specific expectations

Allocations and mutual exchange

Registered providers shall co-operate with local authorities' strategic housing function, and their duties to meet identified local housing needs. This includes assistance with local authorities' homelessness duties, and through meeting obligations in nominations agreements.

Most lettings are achieved within the sub-regional choice based system PPP. This system reflects the Local Authority assessment of housing need. There are concerns that the social housing market has changed because of Welfare Reform and Registered Housing Providers now have an increased focus on the need to sustain tenancies and increase the proportion of employed people accessing housing stock to mitigate income maintenance risks. In order to maximise the use of our stock, Magenta Living is now letting an increasing proportion of its stock through alternative mechanisms including making use of Rightmove. We also have an agreement in place to support the local authority with their homelessness duties whereby we provide 16 properties of mixed sizes for use as temporary accommodation. Furthermore, we are a participating member of Wirral's Housing Priority Panel in assessing people ready to move on from hostel settings to permanent accommodation. Successful applicants are given top priority for rehousing and as the largest Registered Provider in Wirral, Magenta Living is a major contributor of move on (with transitional support) for homeless people.

Measures are already in place to ensure such translation services are available and that Magenta Living website is continuously updated to ensure accessibility for all. Magenta Living continues to work with the statutory authorities to develop appropriate housing for minority groups which need support. For example, last year saw the fourth and final tranche of families rehoused and supported by Magenta Living in collaboration with the local authority Syrian Refugee Programme.

Registered providers shall develop and deliver services to address under-occupation and overcrowding in their homes, within the resources available to them. These services should be focused on the needs of their tenants and will offer choices to them.

These priorities are reflected in the PPP system. In addition, Magenta Living will consider 'management moves' in particular cases. Transfers promoted to mitigate the Spare Room Subsidy impacts have proved very costly and this has influenced Magenta Living practice.

Registered providers' published policies shall include how they have made use of common housing registers, common allocations policies and local letting policies. Registered providers shall clearly set out, and be able to give reasons for, the criteria they use for excluding actual and potential tenants from consideration for allocations, mobility or mutual exchange schemes.

Magenta Living fully complied with the PPP system and allocations policy which has its own specific **web site**.

Registered providers shall develop and deliver allocations processes in a way which supports their effective use by the full range of actual and potential tenants, including those with support needs, those who do not speak English as a first language and others who have difficulties with written English.

Measures are in place to deal with this concern when it arises such as translation services and the website has been updated to ensure accessibility for all. Magenta Living continues to work with the statutory authorities to develop appropriate housing or minority groups which need support. More progress has been made over the past 18 months, partly influenced by austerity impacts.

Registered providers shall minimise the time that properties are empty between each letting. When doing this, they shall take into account the circumstances of the tenants who have been offered the properties.

In relation to its void programme, Magenta Living has experienced several challenges such as legislative changes relating to Housing Benefit, private sector competition, refusals of major works programmes by tenants, and subsequent high turnover of properties. These have all contributed to a longer than wanted void period (the time taken between one rent paying tenant and the next) which impacts directly on the organisation's Void Rent Loss. Past performance has improved with:

	2016/2017	2017/2018
Void Turnaround	22.25 days	16.3 days
Void Rent Loss	3.0%	2.9%
No. of Working Voids	202	206
No. of Strategic Voids	191	143
Tenancy Turnover	8.43%	8.0%

During 2017/18 the average number of void days for minor voids fell to 16 days. However, there were a relatively small number of properties in this classification and therefore these figures do not give a completely clear picture of performance due to the number of major voids requiring substantial work.

I. Working Voids

During 2017/18 the number of working voids was 206 at year end. The slight increase is due to the number of voids requiring major improvements works.

II. Strategic Voids

During 2017/18 the number of strategic voids reduced from 191 to 143. There will be further reductions with the imminent demolition of 50 designated properties in our Crossways estate as part of a regeneration programme.

Welfare reform has impacted on demand for some property types and some geographical locations. Wirral's population is ageing at a faster rate than the national average and competition from the private rental sector is intensifying causing reduced demand and higher turnover. We are consequently exploring alternative use of properties and reviewing services that will meet the expectations of future customers such as shared accommodation, enhanced lettable features, wi-fi, accessibility, scooter storage and improvements to on-line services.

Registered providers shall record all lettings and sales as required by the Continuous Recording of Lettings (CORE) system.

Magenta Living has systems in place to complete all regulatory returns, accurately and within the prescribed timescales.

Registered providers shall provide tenants wishing to move with access to clear and relevant advice about their housing options.

Such advice is available through the PPP allocation system and is also provided directly by Magenta Living on request with information available on the website.

Registered providers shall subscribe to an internet based mutual exchange service (or pay the subscriptions of individual tenants who wish to exchange), allowing:

- A tenant to register an interest in arranging a mutual
- Exchange through the mutual exchange service without payment of a fee
- The tenant to enter their current property details and the tenant's requirements for the mutual exchange property they hope to obtain
- The tenant to be provided with the property details of those properties where a match occurs

Registered providers shall ensure the provider of the internet based mutual exchange service to which they subscribe is a signatory to an agreement, such as HomeSwap Direct, under which tenants can access matches across all (or the greatest practicable number of) internet based mutual exchange services.

An online mutual exchange module is part of the Merseyside sub regional, choice based allocations system, PPP.

Registered providers shall take reasonable steps to publicise the availability of any mutual exchange service(s) to which it subscribes to its tenants.

Such advice is available through the PPP allocation system and the **Magenta Living website**.

Registered providers shall provide reasonable support in using the service to tenants who do not have access to the internet.

Magenta Living invites tenants to access the service through our Customer Hub, via our 24/7 locally based Contact Centre, face to face where support and guidance is given with using the system.

Tenure

Registered providers shall publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions, and tackling tenancy fraud, and set out:

- The type of tenancies they will grant
- Where they grant tenancies for a fixed term, the length of those terms
- The circumstances in which they will grant tenancies of a particular type
- Any exceptional circumstances in which they will grant fixed term tenancies for a term of less than five years in general needs housing following any probationary period
- The circumstances in which they may or may not grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term, in the same property or in a different property
- The way in which a tenant or prospective tenant may appeal against or complain about the length of fixed term tenancy offered and the type of tenancy offered, and against a decision not to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term
- Their policy on taking into account the needs of those households who are vulnerable by reason of age, disability or illness, and households with children, including through the provision of tenancies which provide a reasonable degree of stability
- The advice and assistance they will give to tenants on finding alternative accommodation in the event that they decide not to grant another tenancy
- Their policy on granting discretionary succession rights, taking account of the needs of vulnerable household members

Magenta Living's Tenancy Policy is currently being reviewed to reflect the tenancies available to customers.

As a part of this review Magenta Living have developed a suite of Tenancy Agreements, Occupation agreements and Licenses to ensure that customers are offered an appropriate tenure type dependent on their circumstances. The types of tenure on offer also attempt to make best use of the Housing Stock in terms of offering the right property to the right people at the right time.

Fixed Term Tenancy guidance addresses when a fixed term tenancy should be granted, how the tenancy is ended and what circumstances a new tenancy would not be granted.

A review mechanism exists which gives customers the option to have the decision re-considered.

Magenta Living is clear about its approach to requests for succession to a tenancy and has developed guidance and procedure to support the approach.

Registered providers must grant general needs tenants a periodic secure or assured (excluding periodic assured shorthold) tenancy, or a tenancy for a minimum fixed term of five years, or exceptionally, a tenancy for a minimum fixed term of no less than two years, in addition to any probationary tenancy period.

Magenta Living comply with this and it is included in the Tenancy Policy.

Before a fixed term tenancy ends, registered providers shall provide notice in writing to the tenant stating either that they propose to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the existing fixed term or that they propose to end the tenancy.

The Tenancy Policy outlines the options available and the impact will be reviewed in 2018/19. Guidance and procedures have been developed to ensure consistency in granted fixed term tenancies.

Where registered providers use probationary tenancies, these shall be for a maximum of 12 months, or a maximum of 18 months where reasons for extending the probationary period have been given and where the tenant has the opportunity to request a review.

Magenta Living has comprehensive Starter Tenancy guidance in place to ensure all tenants on starter tenancies are treated fairly and consistently in accordance with the regulation.

Where registered providers choose to let homes on fixed term tenancies (including under Affordable Rent terms), they shall offer reasonable advice and assistance to those tenants where that tenancy ends.

This aspect is addressed in the Tenancy Policy and Fixed Term Tenancy guidance.

Registered providers shall make sure that the home continues to be occupied by the tenant they let the home to in accordance with the requirements of the relevant tenancy agreement, for the duration of the tenancy, allowing for regulatory requirements about participation in mutual exchange schemes.

Magenta Living has a system of tenancy inspections and occupancy checks in place. It is anticipated that all tenancies are routinely visited in a five-year cycle. Some tenancies may require more attention and will be visited more frequently. Other data such as repair history may be considered in future to ensure that resources are being targeted appropriately. The regime is continuously being scrutinised to ensure that resources are being targeted appropriately.

Registered providers shall develop and provide services that will support tenants to maintain their tenancy and prevent unnecessary evictions.

The Magenta Living tenancy enforcement approach includes tenancy sustainment measures, such as none legal inventions, referrals to support agencies both statutory and non-statutory. Dedicated staff members deliver tenancy support and signpost to specialist agencies. A comprehensive, staffed Financial Inclusion and Welfare Benefits Team is in place and these services are always recommended to the tenant before and after court applications are made.

Registered providers shall grant those who were social housing tenants on the day on which section 154 of the Localism Act 2011 comes into force, and have remained social housing tenants since that date, a tenancy with no less security where they choose to move to another social rented home, whether with the same or another landlord. (This requirement does not apply where tenants choose to move to accommodation let on Affordable Rent terms).

This is addressed in the Tenancy Policy and we are fully compliant.

Registered providers shall grant tenants who have been moved into alternative accommodation during any redevelopment or other works a tenancy with no less security of tenure on their return to settled accommodation.

Magenta Living has such arrangements in place and has exercised them frequently over the past few years when work has been undertaken on various schemes.

What can Magenta Living do better?

Magenta Living can improve by using its own data to analyse the performance of neighbourhoods. This would allow more effective decision making about the resources required to manage those neighbourhoods in the most efficient way.

Ensuring appropriate policy management is in place remains an issue, in large measure due to frequently changing government policy, notably welfare reform, which impacts, often tangentially, on housing policy. Frequent updates and changes can be confusing for tenants and applicants and for members of staff. A new policy management structure has been introduced which ensures all Magenta Living policies remain up to date and contemporary. Like all housing associations, Magenta Living will consider the issues raised in the August 2018 Green Paper particularly about fixed term tenancies and will respond accordingly as the legislation advances.

The social housing market in Magenta Living's area of operation is changing rapidly and this presents challenges for policy implementation and stock use optimisation. A project is in place to explore more imaginative approaches to void management and property marketing. We also have an options analysis process for specific properties that do not perform well financially, with a low or negative Net Present Value. Through the use of a DRIPS model, we will more effectively determine decisions on whether to Dispose, Repair, Improve, Postpone or sell specific properties.

An ongoing dialogue with the Local Authority and other agencies needs to be maintained as the Liverpool City Region policy agenda develops.

Magenta Living is developing an approach to areas of low demand which are displaying some signs of decline in demand.

Magenta Living is keen to encourage mutual exchange as it reduces costs and void rent loss while still allowing tenants choice.

Neighbourhood and Community

Neighbourhood management

Registered providers shall keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes that they own clean and safe. They shall work in partnership with their tenants and other providers and public bodies where it is effective to do so.

Magenta Living has set service standards available on our website. We are committed to keeping our neighbourhoods and communal areas clean and safe.

An Environmental Services Team is fundamental to our role as a housing provider positively affecting the quality of life on estates and residents' enjoyment of their home and neighbourhood. The team delivers a wide range of traditional and non traditional services across neighbourhoods. Their focus is to join forces with other local housing providers and partners to keep neighbourhoods green, clean and safe for all to enjoy. Some examples of our work are:

- Several neighbourhoods are taking part in The RHS Britain in Bloom 'It's Your Neighbourhood' awards. Residents are successfully winning national prizes for turning grey areas into green vibrant spaces for communities to come together and enjoy. The groups entering the competition are expanding from individual communal gardens into revamping areas that were once 'grot' spots for environmental crimes. They share gardening skills and plant flowers to attract wildlife and grow fruit and vegetables too. Residents can help themselves to the healthy home grown produce; learn about gardening and make new friends at the same time. Feedback from the RHS judges and communities is positive.
- Refresh is an award winning partnership between Magenta Living, and Environmental Network (WEN). An up-cycling project using unwanted materials and furniture from empty properties and the Bulky Environmental Refuse Team (BERT). Refresh prevents items going to landfill, minimising waste and deters fly tipping. It encourages residents and the wider community to volunteer, donate and up-cycle furniture by providing residents with renovated and refreshed furniture for use in their homes. Magenta Living has also used the service to furnish some of their own properties to provide an attractive and much needed support for new tenants. Refresh will move into a working shop premises to ensure the project is sustainable long term and will continue to assist people in need and help to tackle poverty.
- The team are proactive in tackling flytipping by using CSI tactics to deal with the issue by using Trash Tracker. The team visit fly tipping sites cordon it off with crime scene tape while thorough investigations take place. Live pictures are taken and educational flyers distributed. Trash Tracker looks to get prosecutions and high profile press cases with convictions working closely with WBC Enforcement Waste Team. The initiative has been shared with other registered housing providers across the North West. This is so we can share our best practice when trying to deal with the financial burden of fly tipping that blights neighbourhoods nationwide.
- The team continue to work in partnership with Neighbourhood Management Teams, WBC Enforcement Officers, MFRS, Police & local communities to host many regular events i.e. Arson Awareness events, clean-up operations, rubbish amnesty days, anti-dog fouling and litter campaigns. They are key partners to support Operation Banger which has been successful in reducing illegal bonfires for the Halloween and Bonfire period for several years across Wirral.

- Supporting vibrant neighbourhoods the Mobile Cleaners are recruiting more Block Champions and Neighbourhood Champions utilising their customer relations and contacts. The Champions are volunteer residents that monitor services in our blocks of flats and surrounding areas. A promotional Block Champion DVD has been produced demonstrating how the volunteers are involved and the difference they have been able to make to where they live. The target is to have a Block and Neighbourhood Champion in every scheme.

Local area co-operation

Registered providers shall co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas where they own properties.

Magenta Living, as a major stakeholder in many neighbourhoods locally, aims to be a catalyst for positive change, through our brand, Magenta Communities. Our community regeneration activities look to support, encourage, contribute to and empower local people to promote social, economic and environmental wellbeing, creating social value in our operations.

Through all our local activities we aim to engage with customers and a range of community partner organisations to create social value. We measure the impact we make building communities by calculating how we have created social value. Using HACT (Housing Associations Charitable Trust) methodology, we have used their 'wellbeing valuation' tool to demonstrate the social value of our contribution to community activities in local neighbourhoods.

Using HACT wellbeing valuation during 2017/8 we calculated a social value in excess of £17m. created within our neighbourhoods in areas of our operations including the broad headings of community regeneration, neighbourhood environment and financial inclusion.

We also make use of a bespoke neighbourhood insight toolkit to emphasise our understanding of local issues that impact on the day to day lives of our customers. This toolkit comprises of information from our 22 neighbourhoods and ranks each location based on:

- HACT socio-economic information
- A basket of local performance indicators
- Experian data
- Net present value of properties figures

This assists us in identifying where support may be required thus enabling community regeneration activities to be prioritised. Some examples of community regeneration activities which create social value are listed below:

Hubs at the heart of the Community – we have 15 community properties which range from purpose built community centres to converted offices and shops. Local community volunteers and community enterprises run the centres and determine the activities that take place at each based on what local people want or need. The range of activities includes:

- Advice and signposting
- Digital inclusion
- Engaging people with disabilities
- Volunteering
- Training and skills development
- Activities for children and younger people
- Healthy living and wellbeing events
- Drop in sessions for partner organisations
- Employment and training events
- Community events
- Consultation meetings

Magenta Living therefore can display a thorough understanding of what is required at the local neighbourhood level and has experience of listening to customers within communities and offering them the chance to develop local solutions for local circumstances.

We are a partner in a range of activities designed to increase employment, develop employability skills and develop enterprise within our communities. We recognise that assisting residents to become more economically active is probably the biggest impact we can achieve and we run a series of projects, events and campaigns aimed at getting people into work.

As well as using our procurement activities to encourage local jobs and apprenticeships, we also work with a Job Centre Plus adviser to assist our tenants in accessing employment advice, assistance and opportunities. This groundbreaking arrangement is geared to helping tenants who are often quite a way from the labour market take steps towards gaining employment.

We also have in-house apprenticeships within Magenta Living and we actively encourage applications from our tenants, in fact ten per cent of our workforce started through the apprenticeship route. We also host career take-off events aimed specifically at young people by bringing together several organisations to offer a comprehensive range of employment and training opportunities.

In terms of environmental Impact we offer advice on combating fuel poverty, support community environmental projects, hold an annual garden competition and encourage recycling and composting.

Some examples of partnerships which create social value for our customers include:

- Hosting the local smoking cessation agency and directing their services towards our customers who smoke
- Supporting local women's organisations
- Engaging disabled and older customers via a social enterprise
- Working in partnership with local schools and special schools
- Working with the local Older Persons Parliament
- Working with the Wirral Youth Voice
- Partnering a Credit union to offer sustainable banking, savings and credit to customers
- Partnering to create a social supermarket and working with several food poverty organisations

Anti-social behaviour

Registered providers shall work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behavior in the neighborhoods where they own homes.

In addition to a comprehensive dedicated Tenancy Enforcement Team, Magenta Living also has an in-house out of hours security team and a recently established CCTV control centre. Customers are able to report incidents of Anti-social behaviour 24/7.

Policy and procedure continues to evolve and is heavily influenced by performance reviews, facilitated by a sophisticated database and the inputs from customers.

We liaise and work with many organisations to assist us with our prevention and enforcement including:

Merseyside Police, Fire and Rescue Service, Social Services, Environmental Health, Wirral Council and Wirral Ark, a local charity who assist ex-offenders, people with drug and alcohol issues and homeless / rough sleepers and others as appropriate.

Interventions issued in 2017/18 include:

- 30 Notices seeking possession
- 6 Possession order
- 3 Evictions
- 147 Warnings issued
- 314 Perpetrator interviews
- 6 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts issued
- 12 Surrender of property

An example of partnership working is when we received numerous complaints of youth disorder on a mixed tenure estate. There were reports of criminal behaviour, drug offences and anti-social behaviour. A campaign “Claim back your community” was launched working side by side with Merseyside Police. We worked closely together carrying out joint home visits, witness statements, impact statements, evidence gathering and targeting resources. We followed up with tenancy action and as result several households were evicted from the area.

Staff involved in the campaign were recognised by receiving a police commendation and being shortlisted for a national housing award.

This brand has been adopted by the team and has been used in other areas to combat ASB.

Specific expectations

Neighbourhood management

Registered providers shall consult with tenants in developing a published policy for maintaining and improving the neighborhoods associated with their homes. This applies where the registered provider has a responsibility (either exclusively or in part) for the condition of that neighborhood. The policy shall include any communal areas associated with the registered provider’s homes.

Housing Services have been re-configured, allowing staff to be more accountable. Each Neighbourhood Housing Officer (NHO) is responsible for a geographical area. This set-up has allowed for the NHO to act as a conduit between our tenant and the business. Customers have benefited from a consistent approach to the management of their tenancies.

Effective and informative benchmarking and experience sharing with similar organisations enhances our processes. Services are available to customers who struggle to maintain their gardens due to ill health or infirmity and the tenancy management service has a specific objective to ensure that customers meet their tenancy obligations and co-operate in maintaining neighbourhood standards.

Local area co-operation

- Registered providers, having taken account of their presence and impact within the areas where they own properties, shall:
 - Identify and publish the roles they are able to play within the areas where they have properties
 - Co-operate with local partnership arrangements and strategic housing functions of local authorities where they are able to assist them in achieving their objectives

Magenta Living, as a key stakeholder in local neighbourhoods, aims to maximise the impact of the work we do by creating social value from our operations, procurement, supply chain and presence. We work closely in partnership with local people, statutory agencies, community organisations, social enterprises and the private sector.

Understanding and measuring our social value is important, enabling us to prioritise our activities to those where we can have the biggest and most sustainable levels of impact.

Working in partnership, understanding our role and its limitations and taking strategic, evidenced decisions based on customer insight and social value information enables us to take a value for money approach to investing in local neighbourhoods.

Anti-social behaviour

Registered providers shall publish a policy on how they work with relevant partners to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) in areas where they own properties.

Magenta Living has a comprehensive policy and customer involvement is robust and influences both policy and practice.

In their work to prevent and address ASB, registered providers shall demonstrate:

- **That tenants are made aware of their responsibilities and rights in relation to ASB**

These are promoted via residents groups, newsletters, Magenta Living website and at tenancy commencement.

- **Strong leadership, commitment and accountability on preventing and tackling ASB that reflects a shared understanding of responsibilities with other local agencies**

The Wirral Respect consortium is chaired by a member of Magenta Living's Senior Leadership Team and the organisation is represented on the Safer Wirral Partnership Board.

This is a changing environment with new responsibilities and developing relationships. Our ASB manager sits on the multi-agency working groups to ensure a joined up approach to reducing ASB and crime in the neighbourhoods managed by the organisation.

- **A strong focus exists on preventative measures tailored towards the needs of tenants and their families**

The Tenancy Enforcement team has a strong preventative element and referrals to support agencies are considered as part of the case management. Interventions such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and Restorative Justice practices are used to prevent the incidents of ASB.

- **Prompt, appropriate and decisive action is taken to deal with ASB before it escalates, which focuses on resolving the problem having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available**

Magenta Living can evidence that the full range of options are available and are utilised as appropriate. All ASB activity is recorded and monitored using up to date, real time software.

- **All tenants and residents can easily report ASB, are kept informed about the status of their case where responsibility rests with the organisation and are appropriately signposted where it does not**

A 24/7 response service is provided when necessary. A comprehensive recording and monitoring system is in place. Key details of ongoing cases are available to customers 24/7 through the customer contact centre outside office hours. Customers have agreed challenging response standards which are monitored and reported.

- **Provision of support to victims and witnesses**

Every case is evaluated and monitored in this regard and a comprehensive record kept. Victims of domestic violence (DV) and hate crime are signposted to the appropriate support organisation.

In 2017/18 the number of DV cases reported involving Magenta Living tenants was 165 with 11 cases of hate crime.

What can Magenta Living do better?

The Estate Inspection regime is being reviewed as part of our VFM strategy and to work more effectively in each local neighbourhood. It will be tailored to the areas individual needs with an aim to improve customer Involvement and efficiency.

Magenta Living continues to develop new approaches to sustainable tenancies and communities but there is a tension between these changed approaches and the stated requirements of strategic partners. Attempts are still being made to arrive at greater consensus about arrangements to meet the perceived challenges of Welfare Reform and changing social housing markets.

There are still concerns about service reductions in other agencies, particularly the Police Service and Local Authority. Magenta Living is increasingly being asked if they can contribute financially to services or initiatives that are not our responsibility and may not directly benefit our tenants.

Apart from the caretaking, cleaning and community engagement the Environmental Services team are diversifying skills and are maximizing revenue for the business by delivering void clearances and valet cleaning in-house. The aim is to turn voids around swiftly and deliver a high quality cleaning standard ready for customers to move into their new home.

Rent standard

1. Required Outcome

Registered providers shall charge rents in accordance with the government's direction to the regulator of May 2014 and the Rent Standard Guidance.

2. Specific Expectations

- 2.1 Registered providers shall ensure they meet the following requirements, which derive from the governments direction to the regulator of May 2014, and the "key requirements" set out in the Rent Standard Guidance that accompanies this standard.
- 2.2 Subject to paragraphs 2.3, 2.5 and 2.6, registered providers shall set rents for low cost rental accommodation with a view to achieving the following:
- (a) Rents conform with the pattern produced by the rents formula set out in the Rent Guidance ("formula rents") with a 5% upward tolerance on individual rents (10% for supported housing and sheltered housing) ("the limit of the rent flexibility level"), but subject to the maximum rent levels specified in that Guidance ("rent caps").
 - (b) Weekly rent for accommodation increases each year by an amount which is no more than CPI + 1%.
 - (c) Weekly rent for accommodation which is above the limit of the rent flexibility level increases each year by an amount which is less than CPI + 1%, until it reaches the limit of the rent flexibility level.
 - (d) Rent caps increase annually by CPI + 1.5%.
 - (e) Formula rents increase annually by CPI + 1%.
- 2.3 The requirements of paragraph 2.2 do not apply to accommodation let on Affordable Rent terms. Subject to paragraph 2.6, where accommodation is let on Affordable Rent terms, registered providers shall set rents with a view to achieving the following:
- (a) Rent for accommodation (inclusive of service charges) is set at a level which is no more than 80% of the estimated market rent for the accommodation (inclusive of service charges), based on a valuation in accordance with a method recognised by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.
 - (b) Rent for accommodation increases each year by an amount which is no more than CPI + 1%.

- (c) Rent for accommodation is re-set, based on a new valuation, each time the accommodation is:
 - (i) Let to a new tenant, or
 - (ii) Re-let to the same tenant (but where a probationary tenancy comes to an end and the registered provider re-lets the accommodation to the same tenant the provider is not required to re-set the rent).
- 2.4 Affordable Rent terms can only be used in relation to accommodation provided pursuant to a housing supply delivery agreement entered into between a registered provider and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) or the Greater London Authority (GLA).
- 2.5 The Rent Standard shall not apply to rental accommodation let by registered providers to a social housing tenant household during a financial year where the household income was £60,000 or more in the tax year which ended in the financial year preceding the financial year in which the Rent Standard will not apply.
- 2.6 Where the application of the Rent Standard would cause providers to be unable to meet other standards, particularly in respect of financial viability, including the risk that a reduction in overall rental income causes them to risk failing to meet existing commitments such as banking or lending covenants, the regulator may agree to waive specific requirements of the Rent Standard for a period of time.
- 2.7 Registered providers shall provide clear information to tenants that explains how their rent and any service charge are set, and how they are changed, including reference to the CPI benchmark to which annual changes to rents should be linked (except where rents are controlled under different legislation).

Central to all Magenta Living services is its ability to finance the costs. To ensure that sufficient income is generated through rent and service charges it employs the following approach:

The basic principle of Magenta Living's approach to rent setting is to abide by any Government pronouncement on how Social Housing rents are to be set. Magenta Living's rent policy is explicit in stating that we will not deviate from the government's target rents or the guideline annual rent adjustments. In addition, all new affordable rents are set in accordance with the appropriate regulations i.e. 80% of an appropriately assessed market rent.

Magenta Living successfully collected 100.4% of the rent due in the year 2017/18 and we are in the top quartile for rent collection in Housemark LSVT organisational groups. The ongoing approach to financial inclusion has resulted in shared benefits to Magenta Living and its tenants, our total gains for maximising resident's income was £2.2 million.

For further information on this self assessment contact:

anitakenton@magentaliving.org.uk

August 2018



Magenta Living
Partnership Building
Birkenhead
CH41 5AA

Registered in England: 491 2562
NHF Registered: 86239
Registered charity: 1106969

 0808 100 9596

 magentaliving

 magentaliving

 magentaliving.org.uk

 MagentaLive

 contactus@magentaliving.org.uk