

Improving Your Homes: Newham Housing Services Improvement Plan



October 2025

BACKGROUND

In 2024, the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) inspected Newham Council's Housing Services and found serious failings in how we were delivering against the social housing consumer standards and it awarded the lowest C4 grading.

In its report, the RSH highlighted failings in the following two required standards:

- Safety and Quality
- Transparency, Influence and Accountability standards

While no failings were identified under the Tenancy standard, one failing was identified under the Neighbourhood and Community standard.

The Regulator found that while the council's approach to complaints handling is accessible and publicised - and therefore broadly aligning with the requirements of

the consumer standard - there are a high number of complaints that relate to repairs. For instance, currently, 100% of Housing Ombudsman cases relating to damp and mould are upheld.

For this reason, this Newham Housing Services Improvement Plan also includes work that will be undertaken to tackle damp and mould and how we learn from complaints.

We have created this plan to improve things and get things right. We will:

- Deliver improved service outcomes for residents
- Ensure that risks to residents' safety are appropriately managed and mitigated
- Deliver the changes expected by residents and by the RSH



UPDATES - OCTOBER 2025

The Council first published *Improving Your Homes: Newham Housing Services Improvement Plan* in May 2025. This was in response to the Regulatory inspection and C4 grading and set out the actions the Council would take to improve things and put things right.

The Improvement Plan was originally published following a period of getting to the root causes of what led to the C4 judgement and an understanding of what was needed to improve.

Since publication in May 2025, the Council has delivered 80% of the actions it set out to deliver in the first 6 months of the plan. The Housing Service has also learnt more about how it will deliver the actions it planned for later phases, from October 2025 onwards. As the Council learns more about the homes it manages and the people who live in them, it has greater certainty over how achievable the plans it set out in May are.

So this update to the Improvement Plan reflects this learning. Some actions are likely to take longer than originally planned and the updated timeframes are reflected here. Some actions can be delivered more quickly than originally planned, with more confidence in the service as it learns more about its buildings and people. New actions also emerge that will strengthen improvements.

The following pages highlight the work that has been done and the work there is still to do to make the improvements residents deserve. The Council will continue to review this improvement plan every 3 months and will keep residents updated on progress.



Improving Your Homes: Newham Housing Services Improvement Plan

SECTION 1: REGULATORY INSPECTION



REGULATORY INSPECTION

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Newham is responsible for around 19,000 tenanted homes and around 7,300 leasehold properties with most landlord services provided directly by the Council.

A safe and warm home is central to a feeling of security and safety and all life chances flow from having access to good quality housing. A past lack of investment in homes the Council manages has led to a decline in building quality. This makes homes more difficult to keep safe and warm and the impact of this has been felt by residents. It's vital that we reverse this.

For residents, there is no alternative to using landlord services, so they must work for everyone. Making our landlord services inclusive means making sure anyone who needs to use them can do so as easily as possible.

REGULATORY FAILINGS AND ISSUES

The Council was told on 14th March 2024 that the London Borough of Newham would undergo an inspection under the Regulator's new powers, with a visit in May 2024 and the sharing of evidence required in advance.

Following the inspection, the Council received a grade of C4, the lowest possible grade. The C4 rating means that the RSH considers there to be systemic issues, and serious failings in compliance with the consumer standards.

The final report and grading was published on 16th October 2024.

In its report, the Regulator highlighted failings in the Safety and Quality, and Transparency, Influence and Accountability standards. No failings were identified under the Tenancy standard and one related to the Neighbourhood and Community standard.



REGULATORY INSPECTION

The full list of failings is shown below.

SAFETY AND QUALITY STANDARD

- Over 40% of homes had not had an electrical condition test for more than 11 years
- Over 9,000 overdue fire safety remedial actions, of which over 8,000 were overdue by more than 12 months
- Unable to provide sufficient assurance that it is effectively mitigating safety risks for all homes affected
- Unable to evidence that the relevant regulations are being met for smoke and carbon monoxide alarms
- Serious failings in identifying and meeting all legal requirements that relate to the health and safety of tenants in their homes and communal areas
- Does not have up to date stock condition information on the majority of its homes as only c. 40% have been surveyed within the last five years
- Stock condition surveys have not all included an assessment of hazards using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System
- Around 20% of homes do not meet the requirements of the Decent Homes Standard
- Only 67% of non-emergency repairs were completed within target timescales
- 5,400 open repairs, of which 49% were outside of target dates, some of which were from earlier than 2024
- Lack of evidence that the council had been transparent with its tenants about

the health and safety issues identified and keeping tenants informed when things go wrong

TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND INFLUENCE STANDARD

- Very limited mechanisms in place at this time to ensure information about its tenants remains up to date
- Only able to provide limited evidence of how it tailors services for its tenants
- Limited evidence that Newham Council provides a range of relevant and accessible information for tenants about its landlord services
- Limited evidence that Newham Council provides a range of relevant and accessible information for tenants about how it is performing
- No evidence of it keeping tenants informed when things go wrong
- Failed to follow our technical requirements for collecting its TSM (Tenant Satisfaction Measures) data
- Limited meaningful opportunities for tenants to influence and scrutinise strategies, policies and services
- Limited options for tenants to participate in tenant led activities and opportunities

NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY STANDARD

- Potential under reporting of hate crime incidents

REGULATORY INSPECTION

We have looked into why these failings happened and we found that we need to improve in the following ways.

RESIDENT SAFETY

- Improve how we use data and information on our homes so we can make sure we are keeping buildings and residents safe
- Make better use of our housing systems to record information on compliance inspections and any actions required
- We need to have the right building safety skills and ways of working in the housing service

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

- Carry out stock condition surveys on all our homes more frequently including health and safety issues
- Have a clearer approach to completing outstanding repairs
- Improve how we use data and information on the performance of our repairs service

RESIDENT PARTICIPATION AND TRANSPARENCY

- Have a plan and approach to keeping residents informed
- Have a plan and approach for understanding residents' needs and how we keep information updated
- Check how well we are doing at meeting residents' needs
- Work with residents to design the information on our services and how to access them
- Improve how we share how we are doing and what we are doing to improve our services
- Co-produce our resident involvement strategy with those it affects

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- Improve our processes for identifying and responding to reports of hate incidents

SECTION 2: ACHIEVING COMPLIANCE



ACHIEVING COMPLIANCE

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Housing Services Improvement Programme sets out how we will achieve compliance with the consumer standards and how:

- i. The Council will markedly improve both the quality and the consistency of the services it provides to residents.
- ii. Boards and Councillors who govern the Council's service delivery can ensure that the consumer standards are being met and can be open and accountable in how the Council is meeting its objectives.

The programme has been shaped into four themes to align to the consumer standards and the enablers needed for the improvement:

1. Ways of Working
2. Safety and Quality
3. Neighbourhood and Communities
4. Transparency and Resident Access



OBJECTIVES

For the Improvement Plan to be a success, the following objectives will need to be achieved:

Objective 1: The Council meets the outcomes of the Regulator of Social Housing consumer standards within an agreed timeframe

Objective 2: Tenant satisfaction as measured under the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM), including that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them, reaches the current quartile 1 performance (64.1%) of London councils benchmarking by 27/28

Objective 3: Boards and Councillors who govern the Council's landlord services have the right level of assurance that consumer standards are being met within a timeframe agreed with the RSH

Objective 4: Health and safety risks resulting from outstanding compliance actions are mitigated within an agreed timeframe with the RSH

Objective 5: The Council has accurate, up to date and evidenced understanding of the condition of their homes that reliably informs their provision of good quality, well maintained and safe homes for tenants

Objective 6: The Council has accurate, up to date and evidenced understanding of the diverse needs of tenants

SAFETY & QUALITY (COMPLIANCE & SAFETY) IMPROVEMENTS

What we said we will do	Our target date	What we have done so far
Complete a review of how we make sure we complete all legal requirements that relate to the health and safety of tenants in their homes and communal areas	June 2025	Completed
Carry out an electrical condition test on homes that have not had one for 10 years	June 2025	We have completed testing on 96% of homes. 4% of homes are not completed as we have not been able to access the property
Improve how we use information to make sure each home has a working smoke and carbon monoxide alarm	June 2025	We have confirmed that 94% of our homes have working smoke alarms and 99% have working carbon monoxide alarms
Put safety measures in place for any buildings where there are outstanding compliance actions	August 2025	Completed
Improve how we use information that is collected during communal block health and safety inspections	December 2025	This work is underway and will be completed on time
Put in place recommendations from the review of how we make sure we complete all legal requirements that relate to the health and safety of tenants in their homes and communal areas	<i>Original date: December 2025</i> New date: March 2026	The review has been completed and we are now working through all of the recommendations
Carry out an electrical condition test on homes that have not had one for 5 years	June 2026	Electrical testing has started on homes that have not had one for 5 years. There may be some homes that we might not be able to access within the time frame
Complete any work that is needed following a fire risk assessment including replacing or repairing fire doors	March 2029	We have nearly halved the number of overdue fire risk assessment actions identified at the time of the inspection

SAFETY & QUALITY (STOCK CONDITION & REPAIRS) IMPROVEMENTS

What we said we will do	Our target date	What we have done so far
Improve how we plan for improvements to our homes by using data and information more effectively	May 2025	The investment plan has been updated with the latest information and will reflect recent government legislation on Decent Homes Standards
Complete any repairs that were not carried out on time when we were inspected	May 2025	All repairs that were not carried out on time at the point of inspection are now complete
Put new contracts in place to carry out stock condition surveys	September 2025	Contracts are in place and work will start in October 2025
Improve how we manage damp and mould cases and be ready for Awaab's Law	October 2025	Detailed action plan is in progress and improved systems are in place to meet the requirements of Awaab's Law
Complete any damp and mould cases that were not carried out on time when we were inspected	October 2025	98% of open cases from the time of the inspection have now been completed. 2% of cases are still open because of access issues.
Improve how we use property data and information so that we can improve how we maintain our homes	November 2025	This work is underway and will be completed on time
Redesign and implement delivery model for Property Services	December 2025	A draft plan has been completed and is being reviewed in line with the new Housing Service Model
Improve or replace the housing systems we use for property information including compliance and stock condition	December 2026	A suggested design has been completed and plans are being developed
Carry out stock condition surveys including checking for health and safety issues across all our homes	March 2027	Over 8,758 (39%) of Newham's homes now have a current stock condition survey and this work is on track for completion as planned
Bring all our homes up to the decent homes standard	March 2029	The investment plan has been developed and will be implemented from early 2026, using the stock condition information referred to above

TRANSPARENCY AND RESIDENT ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

What we said we will do	Our target date	What we have done so far
Set out a new plan and approach to communicating with residents	March 2025	A new Communications Plan has been set out and is being implemented
Set up a new Resident Challenge Board	April 2025	The Board has been set up and have met regularly since April. The board has issued 81 recommendations so far
Carry out our tenant satisfaction surveys on time	June 2025	The surveys were carried out and completed on time
Co-produce a new Housing Resident Involvement Strategy	September 2025	This has been completed with over 100 tenants and leaseholders involved
Improve how we share performance reporting and information for residents	November 2025	We have launched new webpages that include clear performance reporting. These will be reviewed when the new performance reporting framework is in place
Set out an approach for how we collect, use and keep resident data up to date	December 2025	6000 tenancy audits have taken place so far to ensure data is up to date An improved approach to managing resident data is being designed as planned
Set out how we make sure services meet residents' needs and improve how we deliver them, so residents are treated with fairness and respect	<i>Original date: December 2025</i> New date: April 2026	In depth research has been completed to inform a new Diverse Needs Strategy We will launch a consultation on the strategy in January 2026
Update our information on landlord services and make sure it is accessible	<i>Original date: October 2025</i> New date: September 2026	This work commenced later than planned and the timeline has been updated

NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

What we said we will do	Our target date	What we have done so far
Improve how we manage domestic noise complaints	July 2025	We have developed a new domestic noise policy and set up an out of hours noise team
Improve how we identify and manage cases which involve a hate incident	December 2025	This work is underway and will be completed on time
Established a new Strategic Antisocial Behaviour Oversight Board to support improvements across the council <i>(new action)</i>	June 2025	The group has been established and includes representation from Community Safety and Housing for improved strategic alignment between the two teams. The group will oversee agreed work and make recommendations for further improvements
Review and update the Housing Service Domestic Abuse Policy <i>(new action)</i>	March 2026	This work is underway and will be completed on time

WAYS OF WORKING IMPROVEMENTS

What we said we will do	Our target date	What we have done so far
Review our HRA Business Plan to make sure we can invest in our homes and meet the decent homes standard	<i>Original date: July 2025</i> New date: December 2025	The target date has been revised to allow us additional time to consider Government consultations on the Decent Homes Standard
Deliver a new performance reporting framework	<i>Original date: August 2025</i> New date: December 2025	Work to review our performance data and reporting framework is underway
Commission an external review of failings and external support services for the improvement plan	August 2025	This has been completed
Produce a framework for how we manage and govern data	December 2025	Work is underway for completion as planned
Deliver a new performance reporting framework and monitoring for PFI and Local Space homes	December 2025	Work is underway for completion as planned
Produce and regularly review our policies	February 2026	This work is on track and will include development of a policy review schedule
Recruit to new management structure	March 2026	A new Director of Housing Services has been appointed and will start work in December 2025. We will be recruiting to other senior roles in early 2026.
Put in place a new housing services structure and roles	March 2026	Work is underway on a new Service Operating Model, this will be completed by March 2026 and will lead to the new structure that will be put in place by the Summer of 2026.
Set out an approach for how we use knowledge and information to deliver and improve our services	March 2026	Work is underway for completion as planned

SECTION 3: GOVERNANCE & SCRUTINY



GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY

The improvement programme has been developed as the Council's Housing Services Improvement Programme.

To ensure the improvement plan receives the right oversight, assurance and challenge, a Housing Strategic Improvement Board has been established.

Co-chaired by the Council's Chief Executive and the Cabinet Member for Council Housing Improvements, membership also includes:

- The Corporate Director of Inclusive Economy and Housing as deputy-chair
- Relevant senior officers
- The Cabinet Member for Housing Need, Homelessness and Private Rented Sector
- An independent Board Member who also sits on the Council's independently

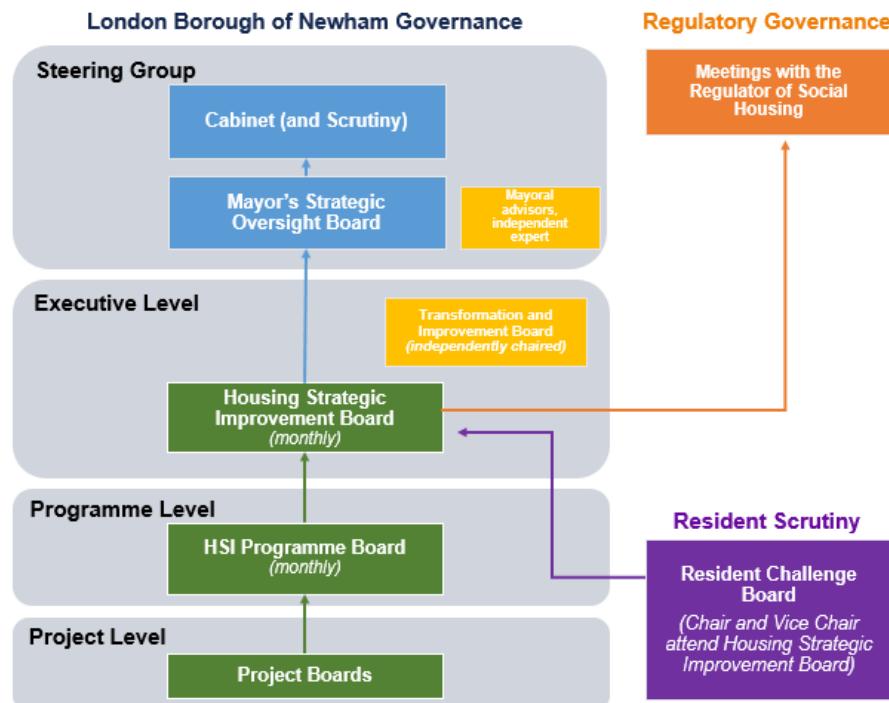
chaired Transformation and Improvement Board.

- The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Resident Challenge Board

The Board leads on planning and monitoring progress of the improvement programme, monitors safety and stock condition issues, ensures there is effective engagement with residents and provides assurance to the Mayor of Newham in line with the Council's governance arrangements.

Our organisational governance reporting arrangements also includes quarterly reporting to Cabinet, Scrutiny and Audit, the Mayor's Strategic Oversight Board, a newly created Resident Challenge Board as well as regular meetings with the Regulator for Social Housing.

The governance structure is shown below:



RESIDENT CHALLENGE BOARD

A Resident Challenge Board has been set up to provide oversight, feedback and scrutiny of the Housing Services Improvement Programme. The resident-led panel provides input on service delivery and helps to drive improvements.

The panel has a scrutiny function that allows participants to conduct scrutiny exercises either together as a whole group or in smaller subgroups. The Panel has been designed with support from Tpas who have informed the structure, terms of reference and support the design of any training requirements.

The Resident Challenge Board have met 7 times so far and have submitted 81 recommendations across 2 key areas of the improvement programme:

- Vulnerability Screening for Person Centred Fire Risk Assessment
- Repairs Backlog

Their current topic is:

- Resident Participation and Transparency. This work stream includes delivery of the Housing Resident Involvement Strategy and Communications Plan

The Resident Challenge Board has its own webpage where anyone can access meeting information and view the recommendations:

www.newham.gov.uk/residentchallengeboard



EVIDENCING COMPLIANCE

Improvement will be measured by achieving the following outcomes and measures which will be developed following reviews and with residents.

OUTCOMES

1. Properly resourced housing services
2. A culture that reflects high performance, learning and resident focus
3. Robust policy framework to meet legal and regulatory standards
4. Governance and reporting structures for effective oversight, insight and foresight
5. All properties have an up-to-date stock condition survey
6. Data relating to assets and compliance is robust and maintained
7. Delivery of the repairs service is effective and responsive to changing legislation (e.g. Awaab's Law)
8. All properties have valid, up to date health and safety certificates
9. Risks are well managed and mitigated with appropriate assurance
10. A clear approach to ASB and hate incidents
11. The Resident voice influences decisions, service delivery and priorities through scrutiny, feedback and learning mechanisms established throughout governance framework
12. The Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey approach and reporting is robust, compliant and timely
13. Data and systems are robust to understand diverse resident needs and

- deliver a tailored service with fair and equitable outcomes
14. Effective complaints handling which meets the expectations of the Housing Ombudsman complaints handling code and consumer standards

MEASURES

1. Reduction in stage one repairs complaints being upheld (repairs stage 1 complaints in 23/24 - 1,148 and 66% upheld)
2. Improved satisfaction with 'How satisfied were you with how we kept you informed about the progress of the work' from 79% at the end of March 2024 to 82% at the end of March 2025
3. Reduction in disrepair cases (baseline of 436 disrepair cases opened in 2023)
4. Repairs KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)
5. Compliance with existing H&S KPIs; new H&S KPIs to be established following delivery of landlord compliance review
6. Increase in satisfaction with 'Landlord's approach to handling ASB' from a baseline of 58% to quartile 1 performance of 59.7%
7. Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations
8. Improved satisfaction with 'Overall service from their landlord' from baseline of 59% to q1 performance of 78%
9. Improved satisfaction with 'Landlord keeps them informed about things that matter' from baseline of 62% (q3) to 71.7% (q1)
10. Service level performance reporting against protected characteristics (specific measures to be designed)

EXTERNAL ASSURANCE AND REVIEW

Three areas of external assurance have been commissioned in response to the Regulatory Judgement.

1. **Investigation into corporate reporting and governance arrangements.** To examine corporate reporting and the governance arrangements surrounding housing services, the consumer standards, and information provided to Members and Cabinet as part of this process. To determine what lessons

should be learnt to improve compliance in the future. In particular, the review will consider whether information held should have highlighted issues of non-compliance with the consumer standards earlier and whether the information held was sufficiently robust, accurate and transparent to allow proper governance, oversight and scrutiny.

2. **Strategic partner assurance.** External support and challenge to ensure the

improvement plan is robust. 1. Providing external challenge in respect of root cause and diagnostics analysis of our current position. 2. Providing external challenge in the development of improvement plans, and the wider programme planning process. 3. Providing external quality assurance of those plans, specifically in relation to their adequacy, deliverability and sustainability. 4. Providing expert advice in respect of all aspects of our improvement journey.

3. **Landlord compliance review.** To undertake an in-depth review and

assessment of nine main health and safety compliance areas. Deep dive into our data capture, and review of the quality of data used in the management of each risk area. Assess the accuracy of recording and reporting procedures across the nine areas. Assess whether there are adequate processes and procedures to manage hazards and ensure safe systems of work. Escalation of any newly identified areas of non-compliance of regulatory risks, supporting the development of a risk management framework and the redefining of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for these service areas.

TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURE

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) are collected by landlords according to requirements set by the regulator in the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard. TSMs include information from tenant surveys and those generated from management information held by landlords on areas including repairs and maintenance, complaints and engagement, respectful and helpful engagement and building safety.

TSMs are intended to be a tool to allow tenants to scrutinise their landlord's performance, give insights to landlords on where they might look to improve their services, and provide a source of intelligence to the Regulator on how far landlords are meeting the outcomes of the new consumer standards. They are a key measure for evidencing improvement and compliance with the consumer standards.

The full results from the TSMs survey for 2024/25 are shown in the tables below, but the key TSM scores were:

71% of council tenants were satisfied with the overall landlord service by the Council. The figure for 2023-24 was 59%

72% of council tenants, who had received a repair in the last 12 months, were satisfied with the overall repairs service. This equals the score for 2023-24

63% of council tenants were satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them. The figure for 2023-24 was 54%

84% of respondents said their landlord treats them fairly and with respect

Table 1 below shows the full tenant satisfaction measure results for 2024/25 from the tenant perception survey:

** The median is the middle number in a range of values sorted from lowest to highest, or the other way round. It is an alternative measure to the mean, which can sometimes be affected by extreme high or low values.*

		Newham		London Councils average (median)
TSM no.	Tenant satisfaction measure	2024-25	2023-24	2024-25
TP01	Overall service from their landlord	71%	59%	62%
TP02	Overall repairs service	72%	72%	65%
TP03	Time to complete their most recent repair	65%	62%	62%
TP04	Home is well maintained	67%	61%	63%
TP05	Home is safe	77%	71%	69%
TP06	Landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	63%	54%	53%
TP07	Landlord keeps them informed about things that matter to them	77%	62%	73%

TP08	Landlord treats them fairly and with respect	84%	73%	72%
TP09	Landlord's approach to complaints handling	45%	27%	27%
TP10	Landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	78%	70%	63%
TP11	Landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood	70%	57%	67%
TP12	Landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour	68%	58%	59%

Table 2 shows the results from the Council's reporting processes:

		Newham		London Councils average (median)
TSM no.	Tenant satisfaction measure	2024-25	2023-24	2024-25
CH01	Complaints relative to the size of the landlord (Stage 1) – complaints per 1000 homes	174	84	76
CH01	Complaints relative to the size of the landlord (Stage 2) – complaints per 1000 homes	8	7	18
CH02	Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales (Stage 1)	68%	72%	70%
CH02	Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales (Stage 2)	33%	69%	71%
NM01	Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord (cases per 1000 homes)	560	149	24
NM01	Anti-social behaviour cases relative - hate crimes only (cases per 1000 homes)	0	0	0
RP01	Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard*	26%	29%	7%
RP02**	Repairs completed within target timescale - non-emergency repairs	84%	67%	84%
RP02**	Repairs completed within target timescale – emergency repairs	99%	96%	94%
BS01	Gas safety checks (completed)	100%	100%	100%
BS02	Fire safety checks (completed)	100%	98%	99%
BS03	Asbestos safety checks (completed)	99%	82%	99%
BS04	Water safety checks (completed)	100%	98%	99%
BS05	Lift safety checks (completed)	99%	91%	96%

