



ASPIRE PANEL MEETING - MINUTES

22 July 2026 5.30pm

Panel Attendees

Bob McGechan (Chair)
Reza Chenanei
Denise Cowgill
Andrzej (AJ) Czajkowski
Jo Hague
Anna Olejarz
Anne-Marie

Elizabeth Whitworth
Mike Rogers
Stephen Prasher
Michael Stonebridge
Kylie Timperley
Christine Woolridge

Apologies

Peter Wilkins

SHG Attendees

Officers present for the whole meeting: Christian Hartley, Assistant Director - Customer Excellence, Louise Evans, Customer Engagement Team Leader and Rebecca Parry, Governance Officer.

Officers present for their item only: Suzie Bonner, Home Ownership Manager, Emma Crick, Head of Property Management, Lucy Darbyshire, Senior Customer and Colleague Communications Partner, Steve Healy, Repairs Contract Manager and Kara Mello-Baron, Customer Communications Partner.

Others present for the whole meeting: Claire Blacka, Independent Mentor. Emma Flynn, TPAS.

01	Welcome and introduction from Chair	Action owner
	The Chair opened the meeting with introductions and confirmed the format for the session. It was noted that Emma from TPAS was observing the meeting via Teams as part of the SHG TPAS Accreditation process.	
02	Minutes and Action Monitor from previous meeting	

	The minutes were agreed. The Chair highlighted that the action related to Fire Door Specification in high rise buildings is still outstanding from the February ASPIRE Panel. This will be raised at the next Building Safety Panel. A Panel member queried whether automatic responses are issued when CX Feedback surveys are completed. It was noted that this does not currently happen for every survey, and the Panel requested that the function is applied consistently. It was confirmed that the Customer Engagement Team has reviewed this and identified that the setting had not always been enabled. This will now be applied consistently across relevant surveys.	MR Cust. Eng.
03	Leaseholder and Shared Ownership Information Session (Assurance)	
	Emma Crick, Head of Property Management and Suzie Bonner, Home Ownership Manager Bonner provided an overview of Stockport Homes Group's (SHG) approach to Leaseholders and Shared Owners following a request from the Panel. The purpose of the session was to give an overview of the Leasehold and Shared Ownership (LHSO) service including the different legal relationships, responsibilities and customer expectations involved. It was explained that most Leaseholders came through the Right to Buy process, while Shared Owners purchase a percentage of their property and pay rent on the remaining share. The home ownership customer base is significant, with around 461 Right to Buy Leaseholders and 509 Shared Owners, approaching 1,000 homes, for comparison SHG manage around 11,500 social rented properties. It was explained that for all social rent customers there is one version of a tenancy agreement whereas LHSO customers will have very specific lease agreements issued across different periods of time for individual properties. The Home Ownership Manager summarised the variation between leases, lease lengths, ground rent, lease extensions and forthcoming legislation changes, acknowledging the challenges for those who have a lease of under 90 years. It was noted that new shared ownership model leases are now generally 990 years, while older leases may be shorter leading to mortgage challenges and Leaseholders requiring an extension to the lease. The Panel queried when the changes to lease length happened, explaining that their property was purchased in 2021 and only issued a	

99-year lease, they also requested confirmation on what the team are doing proactively to support those nearing the 90-year lease length. Reference was made to those who purchased their Leasehold properties in 2018 and have not yet received communication from SHG on the process involved in lease extension.

The team confirmed that lease extension queries can be raised with the home ownership team, and that solicitor and valuation input may be required. The team will be taking a proactive approach to contact customers who are nearing this lease length to explain their options and next steps.

Ground rent was discussed. It was confirmed that council-owned Right to Buy leases are typically charged at around £10 per year. Some externally owned land arrangements may involve higher charges, depending on the head lease. Proposed national changes to ground rent and leasehold reform were noted, including the potential for caps and future movement towards peppercorn rent.

The Panel queried whether Shared Owners living in houses would own the Freehold if the property has been stair-cased to 100%.

It was explained that most are freehold, however if the land is owned privately this may not be the case and individuals would be required to contact the landowner if they wanted to purchase the freehold.

The Panel Members with specific queries agreed to the sharing of their contact details with the Home Ownership Team.

The Panel queried the financial cost and length of time required to complete a lease extension.

It was explained that the cost of the lease extension would depend on the value of the property. A RICS valuation would need to be completed and there would be Solicitor fees incurred for both parties. The time to complete this would likely be a few months with a variable cost.

The Panel queried whether SHG or SMBC would increase the ground rent from £10 per annum, it was confirmed that this would not happen.

Customer satisfaction for Shared Owners was discussed in comparison with social rented customers. It was noted that satisfaction among Shared Owners remains lower than social rented tenants, although scores had improved across most measures between

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	February 2025 and January 2026. The response rate to the shared ownership survey was around 10%, and free-text responses were used to identify themes and follow up individual issues. Key improvement themes were identified, including clearer communication about repair responsibilities and service charges, better signposting for who customers should contact, proactive information about lease extensions, and improved onboarding information for new shared owners. It was noted that a shared ownership newsletter has already been issued and is expected to become a six-monthly publication, alongside wider communication for leaseholders. The Panel queried whether this data was available for Leasehold customers too. It was confirmed that satisfaction data is captured for this group, their responses are recorded against slightly different performance indicators. The Panel requested that further information on the forthcoming LHSO Customer Focus Group is shared with those who have expressed an interest. The Panel expressed concerns regarding the relationship between property developers and SHG, specifically regarding the twelve-month snagging period that applies to all new build properties. It was agreed that this topic can be included on the agenda for the forthcoming LHSO Customer Focus Group.	LE EC/SB
04	DMC and Awaab's Law Performance Update (Assurance)	
	Steve Healy, Repairs Contract Manager provided an overview of damp, mould and condensation performance and preparations for Awaab's Law. It was explained that the key requirements include responding to emergency hazards within 24 hours, investigating significant hazards within 10 working days, communicating clearly with tenants, issuing reports and taking account of customer vulnerabilities when handling cases. It was noted that performance on emergency hazards was strong, with 100% compliance reported from January to date. A June figure showing 80% compliance was explained as being linked to a	

miscategorised case, which was being reviewed and evidenced so that the position could be corrected.

In relation to significant hazards, it was explained that earlier performance had been affected by system issues, duplicate records, no-access cases and cases not being closed down correctly, tenant appointment preferences outside the 10-working-day window, and a large number of referrals from stock condition surveys. It was highlighted that significant improvements have been made since April 2026 with performance much closer to target and 1,779 cases had been attended since October.

The Panel were informed on difference between how performance is measured externally and internally. Housemark measure refers to works being initiated within five working days, SHG measures whether works have commenced within five working days. It was noted that data gaps between internal systems, the principal contractor and subcontractors had made it difficult to evidence performance fully, manual checks suggest the service is meeting the required timescales.

Actions taken include the appointment of a DMC coordinator to monitor the dashboard, manually check compliance and maintain up-to-date reporting. It was also noted that a full process review has been completed to clarify ownership of each stage and improve accountability, consistency and data handling.

The Panel were informed that inspection report layouts are being reviewed following feedback from customers and the feedback team. Customer feedback, complaints and deep dives are being used to identify learning.

Phase two of Awaab's Law will widen the scope of hazards from November 2026, including issues such as excess heat and cold, falls risks, hygiene, pest control, fire and electrical safety. The service is reviewing lessons from phase one and considering the resource impact on call handling, operatives and contractors.

The Panel queried contractor data, system compatibility and readiness for phase two. It was confirmed that contractor management arrangements had been strengthened through the principal contractor model. Structural works and pest control were identified as the more

	challenging areas, due to the need to appoint external contractors to complete works.	
05	Customer Input into Annual Report (Consultation)	
	Lucy Darbyshire, Senior Customer and Colleague Communications Partner introduced the annual report consultation session, supported by Kara Mello-Baron, Customer Communications Partner. The purpose of the session was to gather customer views on what to include in SHG's next annual report. The Panel were asked what information matters most, what the report should look and feel like. What considerations should be made to ensure it is clear, accessible and useful. The Panel suggested a range of content for inclusion, including compliance information, future plans, customer feedback, regulator feedback, anti-social behaviour, survey outcomes, finances, external recognition, performance indicators, repairs and maintenance, community initiatives, resident voice, environmental challenges and how customer feedback influences decisions and policy changes. The Panel then took part in a prioritisation exercise, using high, medium and low categories to identify what must be included, what should be included and what would be a useful addition. It was noted that this feedback will help shape both the content and order of information in the annual report. Further details of the exercises can be found here ASPIRE Annual Report Consultation Notes (for Mins).docx	
06	ASPIRE Panel Update Report	
	Christian Hartley, Assistant Director – Customer Excellence presented the ASPIRE Panel Update Report. It was noted that since the last meeting SHG alongside SMBC have been awarded a C1 grading following the inspection by the Housing Regulator. Thanks were given to the Panel for their contributions during the inspection process. The Panel all agreed that the Update Report was well received to see how their contributions have been taken forward by the organisation.	
07	Activity of the members since the last meeting	

	The Chair invited members to provide updates on activity undertaken since the last meeting. The Chair updated that they had attended part of the National Federation of ALMOs Conference and SHG are always highly regarded. The Panel discussed the recent TPAS Conference, and it was agreed that sharing details and encouraging participation will be managed more effectively for future conferences. The Panel discussed the dispatch of papers two weeks prior to the meeting. This will be raised with the Governance Manager.	RP
08	Chair's review of the meeting	
	The Chair thanked the Panel for their participation. The Chair gave thanks to TPAS for observing and invited their feedback. Emma Flynn from TPAS was very grateful for the opportunity to observe.	
09	Vice Chair Vote	
	The Chair updated that there had been one application for Vice Chair and so Mike Rogers has been formally appointed as Vice Chair for the ASPIRE Panel. The Panel congratulated Mike.	
10	Meeting close	
	The Chair thanked attendees for their contributions and formally closed the meeting.	