

Board Statement on Consumer Standards Self-Assessment

The Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 forms a new era of regulation for the sector, which requires registered providers to give accessible information to their tenants about their rights and how they can make complaints; the objective is to give tenants greater powers and to improve access to quick and fair solutions to problems.

The new set of four standards are:

- **The Safety and Quality Standard** which requires landlords to provide safe and good-quality homes for their tenants, along with good-quality landlord services.
- **The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard** which requires landlords to be open with tenants and treat them with fairness and respect so they can access services, raise concerns when necessary, influence decision-making and hold their landlord to account.
- **The Neighbourhood and Community Standard** which requires landlords to engage with other relevant parties so that tenants can live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods and feel safe in their homes.
- **The Tenancy Standard** which sets requirements for the fair allocation and letting of homes, as well as requirements for how tenancies are managed by landlords.

Under the new standards landlords will need to:

- ensure tenants are safe in their homes;
- listen to tenants' complaints and respond promptly to put things right;
- be accountable to tenants and treat them with fairness and respect;
- know more about the condition of every home and the needs of the people who live in them; and
- collect and use data effectively across a range of areas, including repairs.

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) is clear it will be holding landlords to account by:

- inspecting larger landlords regularly to check they are meeting the outcomes in the standards;
- scrutinise data about tenant satisfaction, repairs and other relevant issues;
- continue to push landlords to protect tenants and put things right when there are problems;
- use a range of tools when needed, including new enforcement powers;
- continue to focus on the financial viability and governance of housing associations as part of its integrated regulation; and
- have inspection programme starting in April 2024 and running in four-year cycles.

The new regulatory changes mean that EPIC needs to continue to take steps to regularly monitor the condition of its homes, ensure complaint processes continue to be accessible and effective, and to ensure that staff are well equipped to engage meaningfully with tenants.

A self-assessment against the new standards was carried out and discussed at Board in May 2024.

The initial self-assessment confirms that EPIC meets all of the specific expectations within each of the standards, however, there remains room for improvement and as a consequence there is a continuous improvement plan to accompany the completed self-assessment.

The Board approved and noted the self-assessment exercise that has been undertaken, noting that EPIC is compliant with the standards, the continuous improvement plan and the publication of a Board statement as presented.