



Regulator of
Social Housing

Decision

Bolsover District Council (17UC) - Regulatory Judgement: 28 August 2024

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Applies to England

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Our Judgement

	Current grade	Change	Date of assessment
Consumer	C2 Our judgement is that there are some weaknesses in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and improvement is needed.	First grading	August 2024

Reason for publication

We are publishing a regulatory judgement for Bolsover District Council (Bolsover DC) following an inspection completed in August 2024.

This regulatory judgment confirms a consumer grading of C2. This is the first time we have issued a consumer grade in relation to this landlord.

Summary of the decision

From the evidence and assurance gained during the inspection, it is our judgement that there are some weaknesses in Bolsover DC delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and improvement is needed, specifically in relation to outcomes in our Safety and Quality Standard and Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard. Based on this assessment, we have concluded a C2 grade for Bolsover DC.

How we reached our judgement

We carried out an inspection of Bolsover DC to assess how well it is delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards, as part of our planned regulatory inspection programme. During the inspection we considered all four of the consumer standards: Neighbourhood and Community Standard, Safety and Quality Standard, Tenancy Standard, and the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.

During the inspection we observed Bolsover DC's Customer Service Scrutiny Committee, Tenant Participation Development Review Group and Housing Stock Management Group. We met with tenants, officers and elected members. We also reviewed a wide range of documents provided by Bolsover DC.

Our regulatory judgement is based on all the relevant information we obtained during the inspection as well as analysis of information received from Bolsover DC through routine regulatory returns and other regulatory engagement activity.

Summary of findings

Consumer – C2 – August 2024

The Safety and Quality Standard requires landlords to complete all required health and safety checks. Bolsover DC provided evidence to show that overall, it is meeting legal requirements that relate to the health and safety of tenants in their homes and communal areas. Risks and actions identified are completed in reasonable timescales.

Landlords must provide an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which they are responsible. While emergency and urgent repairs are generally delivered in line with Bolsover DC's service standards, it has recently implemented an improvement plan to improve its non-urgent repair performance times. We will monitor the improvements through ongoing engagement.

The Safety and Quality Standard also requires landlords to have an accurate, up to date and evidenced understanding of the condition of their homes at an individual property level based on a physical assessment of all homes and ensure that homes meet the requirements of the Decent Homes Standards. Bolsover DC could evidence that stock survey information has been used to inform and deliver planned maintenance in its homes, seeking to maintain the Government's Decent Homes Standard. However, weaknesses in the accuracy of component replacement records for around 700 homes has prompted Bolsover DC to report these homes as non-decent. A full physical stock survey is underway to enable Bolsover DC to update its understanding of the condition of its homes and if required, maintain the decency position of these homes. We will continue to engage with Bolsover DC on the outcomes of this survey.

The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard includes the requirement for landlords to provide information so tenants can use landlord

services, understand what to expect from their landlord, and hold their landlord to account. It also requires landlords to ensure complaints are addressed fairly, effectively and promptly.

Bolsover DC uses information it holds on tenants' individual diverse needs when responding to service requests but could not demonstrate full coverage of information nor how its services deliver fair and equitable outcomes for tenants. Tenants do not have access to performance information for all relevant landlord services, which has the potential to undermine tenants' ability to hold their landlord to account and influence how services are delivered. While complaint reporting indicates complaints are addressed promptly, there is no evidence of trend analysis, learning or consideration of the fairness and effectiveness of complaints arrangements. We will continue to engage with Bolsover DC as it strengthens its approach to tenant engagement by providing better information to tenants and improves how it uses analysis from complaints to continuously improve outcomes for tenants.

The Neighbourhood and Community Standard states that landlords must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing. Bolsover DC provided evidence that it works with a range of relevant partner organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where it provides homes. We saw evidence that it has oversight of the number of anti-social behaviour cases and hate incidents and that it uses a range of powers where appropriate.

In relation to the Tenancy Standard, we saw evidence that Bolsover DC offers tenancies or terms of occupation that are compatible with the purpose of its accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of its housing stock.

Background to the judgement

About the landlord

Bolsover DC owns and manages around 5,000 social housing homes, providing general needs and older persons/sheltered accommodation.

Our role and regulatory approach

We regulate for a viable, efficient, and well governed social housing sector able to deliver quality homes and services for current and future tenants.

We regulate at the landlord level to drive improvement in how landlords operate. By landlord we mean a registered provider of social housing. These can either be local authorities, or private registered providers (other organisations registered with us such as non-profit housing associations, co-operatives, or profit-making organisations).

We set standards which state outcomes that landlords must deliver. The outcomes of our standards include both the required outcomes and specific expectations we set. Where we find there are significant failures in landlords which we consider to be material to the landlord's delivery of those outcomes, we hold them to account. Ultimately this provides protection for tenants' homes and services and achieves better outcomes for current and future tenants. It also contributes to a sustainable sector which can attract strong investment.

We have a different role for regulating local authorities than for other landlords. This is because we have a narrower role for local authorities and the Governance and Financial Viability Standard, and Value for Money Standard do not apply. Further detail on which standards apply to different landlords can be found on our [standards page \(https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-standards-for-landlords\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-standards-for-landlords).

We assess the performance of landlords through inspections and by reviewing data that landlords are required to submit to us. In Depth Assessments (IDAs) were one of our previous assessment processes, which are now replaced by our new inspections programme from 1 April 2024. We also respond where there is an issue or a potential issue that may be material to a landlord's delivery of the outcomes of our standards. We publish regulatory judgements that describe our view of landlords' performance with our standards. We also publish grades for landlords with more than 1,000 social housing homes.

The Housing Ombudsman deals with individual complaints. When individual complaints are referred to us, we investigate if we consider that the issue may be material to a landlord's delivery of the outcomes of our standards.

For more information about our approach to regulation, please see [Regulating the standards \(https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/how-we-regulate\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/how-we-regulate).

Further information

- [Regulating the standards \(https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/how-we-regulate\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/how-we-regulate)

- [Regulatory standards for landlords](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-standards-for-landlords)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-standards-for-landlords>)
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