

ORWELL RESIDENTS GROUP MEETING MINUTES

Monday 17th November 2025 6pm - 8pm
Crane Hill Lodge

			Action by
1.0	Attendees	Mary Ager (MA) Val George (VG) (TEAMS) Jackie Millar (JM) Maggi Miller (MM) John Burman (JB) Michelle Lunt (ML) Sarah Parramint (SP) Claire Townley (CT) Steve Crissall (SC)	
	Apologies		
2.0	Minutes from last meeting	The minutes of the meeting held on 10th October 2025 were agreed. Still looking for members of Independent East Complaints scrutiny is now ready to sign off, Zoe has changed some bits on the template letters. Due to a complicated process, Complaints will only deal with repairs for Support & Care as the safeguarding issues go through the CQC.	
3.0	Steve Crissall (Property Services) Presentation- Awaab's Law	<u>Background</u> For 18 months we have been preparing and had been planning to do a scrutiny on Awaab's law. This is a response to Awaab Ishak who died in 2020 with respiratory issues due to mould, despite complaints to their housing association. There is a big focus on potential hazards that require us to react within appropriate timescales and timely responses. We will be doing internal training for teams in house. Our process map has been produced on the back of it, as well as our systemic changes.	

Overview of guidance- How are things changing?
Hazard types

Emergency hazard (imminent and significant risk to harm)
For the response time to be within 24 hours (Orwell is 6 hrs)

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Damp and mould growth
- Gas leaks
- Serious electrical problems
- Major leaks
- Broken boilers
- Structural defects
- Total loss of water supply.

Significant hazards (significant risk to harm)
For the response time to be within 10 working days.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Excess cold or heat
- Asbestos and other pollutants (e.g., carbon monoxide, lead)
- Fire and electrical safety issues
- Risk of falls (on stairs, level surfaces, or between levels, such as from windows)
- Structural collapse
- Domestic hygiene, pests, and refuse issues
- Crowding and lack of space

Process

- **Response** within 3 working days,
- **Inspection** by landlord to investigate severity.
- **Full written report** outlining findings from investigation.
- **Remedial work notification** of what needs to be done within 24 hours
- **Working timeframes** to be finished within 5 working days, if not possible no more than 12 weeks.
- **Alternative accommodation** required while further work is being carried out such as a major leak. Whilst making sure we work with the customer

Guidance

- It is the landlord's responsibility to fix the issue and identify if it's a significant or emergency hazard. We need to be sure that the customer isn't in breach of their contract for the damage.

Preparation

- Record keeping
- Photographic evidence
- Reviewing and upgrading ventilation system
- Identify at risk properties (older buildings. Poorly insulated)

SCS reports and Customer Insight in papers helped us to make sure that issues are picked up on.

Future- 2026

We expect these hazards to fall under Awaab's Law.

- Excess cold or heat
- Pets, refuse and other domestic hygiene hazards
- Sanitation, drainage, and personal hygiene hazards
- Baths, level surfaces, and stairs
- Structural collapses, including explosions.
- Fire and electrical hazards

Questions & Comments

Read somewhere that part of it is the insulation so will there be remedial work for this?

We get a complete variety of hazards, but D&M is very much focused on at the moment. Properties that have been built since 60s (broadoke) have been the highlight recently following the news reports.

Mapping- will be circulated after the meeting

SC: With our own interpretation, we produced own process map to be used on a regular basis.

The ORG agreed that the process map articulated the law and there were no gaps.

4.0	Website- test	SP gave the ORG some tasks to locate damp and mould information on the website and rate how easy and how long it was to find. The ORG were asked to tell us what they liked about the current damp and mould information, what additional details would they like to see on the website, and how else we could improve the way we share this information.	
5.0	KPIs	<u>Highlights</u> SC explained about the changes in our voids regarding the volume of empty properties, which are currently at 110. We have been under resourced in ORS operatives to share repairs and voids. The turnaround has been slower than we had liked at a 65% and 85% working capacity. A decision was made to focus on repairs to honour our existing customers. From May/June we started to outsource our contractors for our voids which has costed £500.000 to do. It's still ongoing as the problem is empty properties are still adding up. We hope by December and into next first quarter of next year that we will have a maximum of 50 properties empty at one time not 110 as current. Although we have 2 ASB high risk cases, we have learnt from the other 4 organisations with Independent East Resident's Voice that some were in the number of 200+ and although we don't want any cases, compared to others ours is minimal. With Tenancy Sustainment, if a customer drops out there's not a lot we can do, but from our transactional surveys, most are grateful for the service they've been given. As the colder months are coming, although we try to remind our customers to check heating before it's needed and prevent D&M to save backlog, we expect an increase in complaints. We want to use My Orwell Voice to drip feed information to remind customers to check heaters etc. Customers are being encouraged by Companies to make a disrepair claim. Currently we have 17 which is low, but we're expecting them to take advantage of our minimal staff around the Christmas period too.	

6.0	IE residents voice panel	Previously all 5 housing associations in Norfolk & Suffolk including Orwell were working with Creative Bridge. We have since started to facilitate TPAS to facilitate these meetings last year. The IEVRP decided to focus on ASB and D&M from the back of the TSMs. Although the TSMs don't mention these categories, some of the wording aligns to these (e.g. feeling safe in home) <u>Methodology</u> TPAS ran these meetings with just the customers, they requested in depth presentations from each housing association. This was followed with more questions. <u>Recommendations and report</u> • We should be transparent with residents about the cost of the damp and mould service and to produce educational material on damp and mould, including an easy-to-digest online video. • Annual gutter clearing should be introduced as a preventative measure. Hygrometers or monitors should be installed in homes where damp and mould have been reported. • A window inspection programme is needed to ensure compliance with the requirements of Awaab's Law. • A specialist team should be created to deal with damp and mould, named the Healthy Homes Team, to help prevent stigma around this topic. We will continue to listen to the customer voice to collect feedback, be transparent with our data and tailor the services to a customer's individual needs and situation (young children, elderly, mental health etc)	
7.0	Any other business	ML spoke of us working with TPAS on the future of the ORG as regulations state we should be more customer-led. The vouchers were given to the ORG to thank them for this year.	

8.0	Date and venue of next ORG meeting	Monday 15th December 2025 6-8pm CHL We will be visited by Wendy our Chief Executive and the CIC as well as normal Christmas fun! <i>Next year- asked for H.Os to come join and do a presentation</i>	
9.0	Date and venue of next CHAT meeting	Saturday 6th December 2025 10-12pm CHL	