midland heart

HomeChecker

Providing on the ground, first line assurance

The challenge from our Board

There has been an intensive, sector wide focus on the quality of housing across the country.

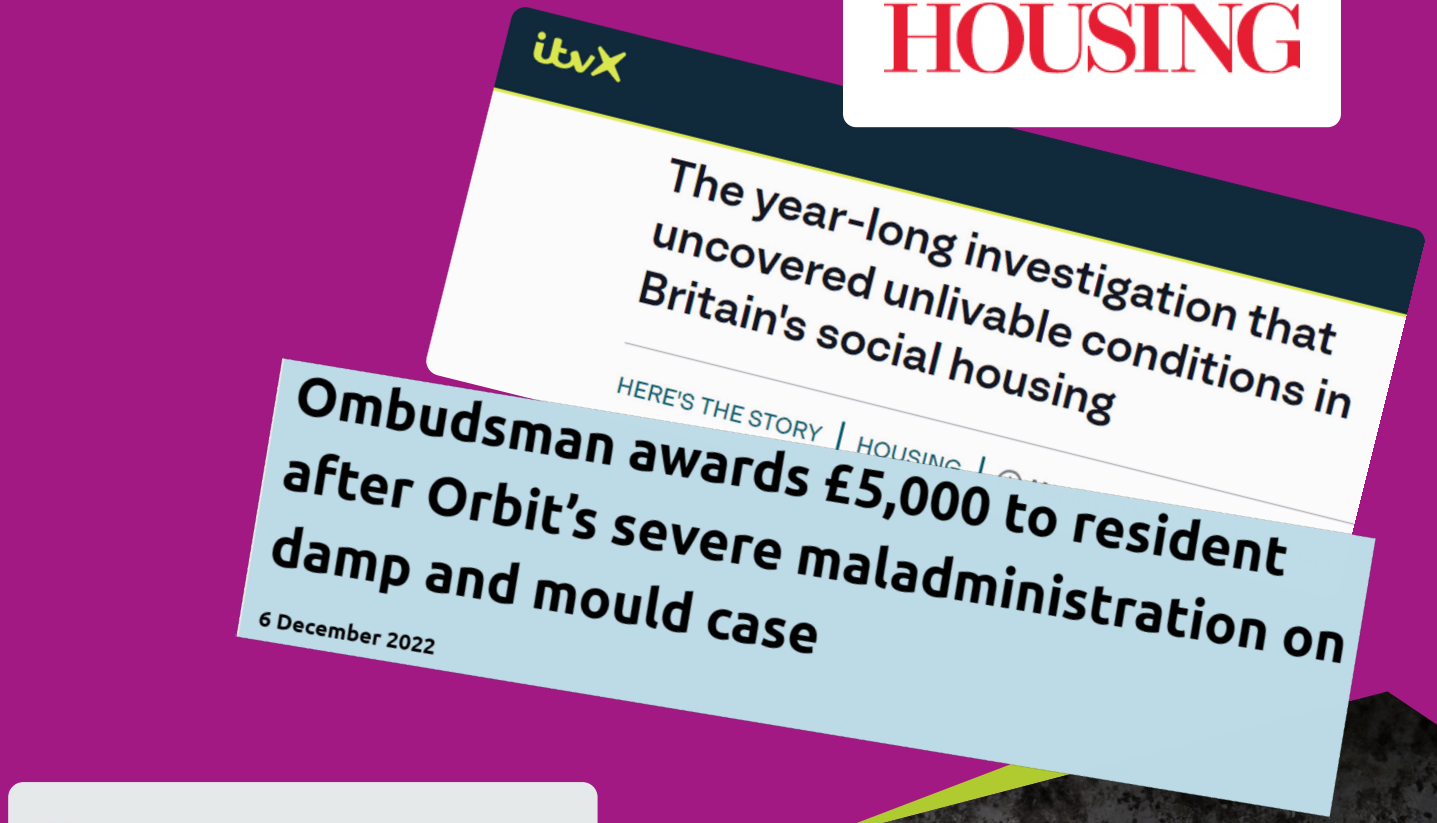
We challenged ourselves to understand how we can know, outside of our stock condition survey cycle, that we did not have a property that was in poor condition and not being reported to us.

We wanted to be confident that we were aware of any property and/or tenancy-associated issues that went unreported to us.

Our response was to launch HomeChecker, a form used to highlight any safeguarding concerns that arise during a property visit, so these can be addressed and the necessary support provided.

This put us in a strong space to respond to the learning from the coroner investigation into the tragic death of Awaab Ishak.

Fundamentally, this was about having more real time on the ground physical inspections through home visits.



Our response

Launch of HomeChecker

Launched in the summer of 2022, HomeChecker is now our single most important frontline risk assessment.

HomeChecker must be completed by all colleagues visiting a tenant's home.

Each property is scored from 1 - 4, 4 being high risk.

Oversight of HomeChecker is primarily reported through Operations Committee and the Board.

Headline results

		August 22-July23	August 23-July24
	No. of completed forms	71,948	84,056
	Met action threshold	168	77
	High risk cases that we were not aware of	42	53
	No. of colleagues completing a form	357	345
	Fire doors reported as damaged on flats that are covered by the FSO	1063	532
	high risk damp and mould cases	19	13

Key reasons for high risks cases (4s) - 2023/24

Of the 77 homes assessed as a 4 (a high risk case), we were already aware of 24 of these as high risk and had open cases to manage the situation. The main reasons for raising a high-risk concern were:

- Hoarding.
- Safeguarding e.g. signs of self-neglect and concerns about lone children.
- Tenancy breach e.g. overgrown gardens and cleanliness.
- Repairs issues – most commonly damp and mould cases in our process, damage to doors etc.

There were 53 homes that were rated as high risk that we were not already aware of.

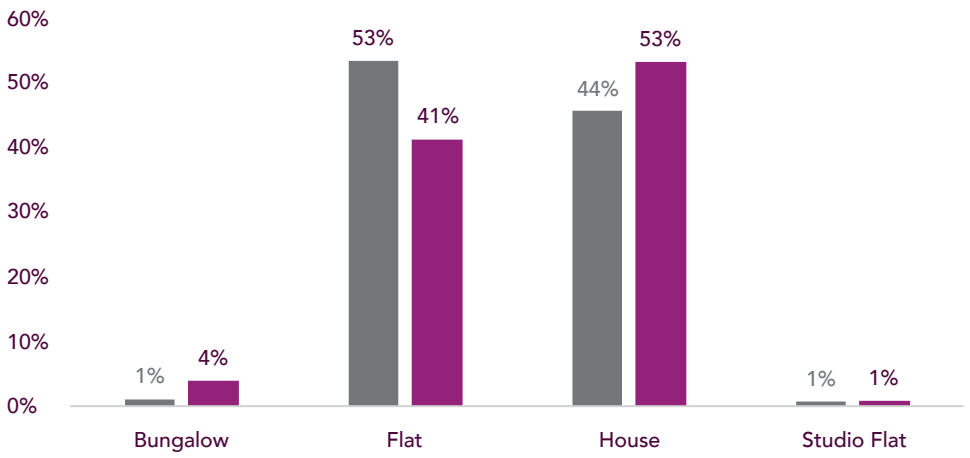
- The main reason in these cases related to tenancy breaches such as poor property conditions, i.e. hoarding (30 cases.)
- Safeguarding was the next largest concern (10 cases).
- This was followed by 13 homes where there were unreported repair issues, such as damp and mould and leaks.

We have segmented high risk cases in terms of age, ethnicity and property type profiles. There are no standout variations compared to our general tenant profiles. The proportion of high risk cases were slightly higher for tenants aged 45 to 54 and, as expected, higher for flats than houses.

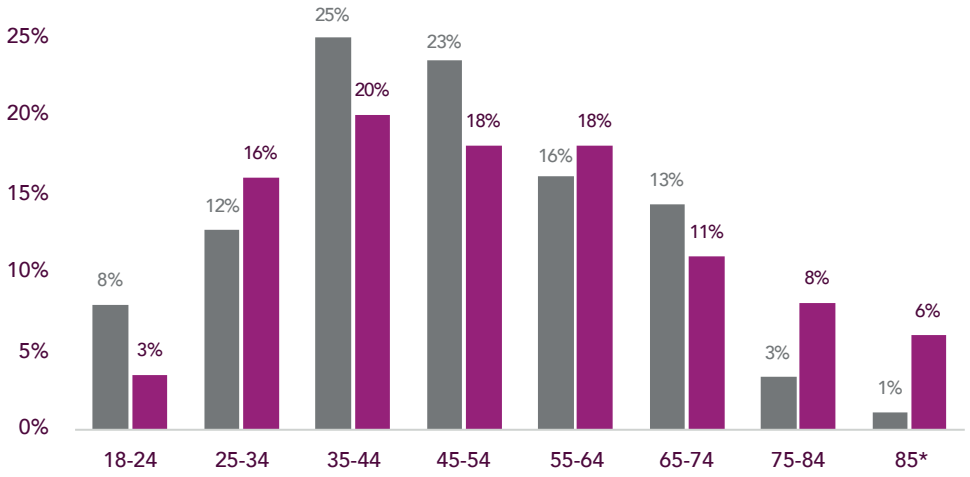
Tenants who live in a flat are more likely to trigger a high-risk intervention. The likely reason for this is that local authority nominations for flats tend to be tenants with higher levels of need and hoarding behaviour tends to be from single people.

Rating 4 - HomeChecker FY23/24

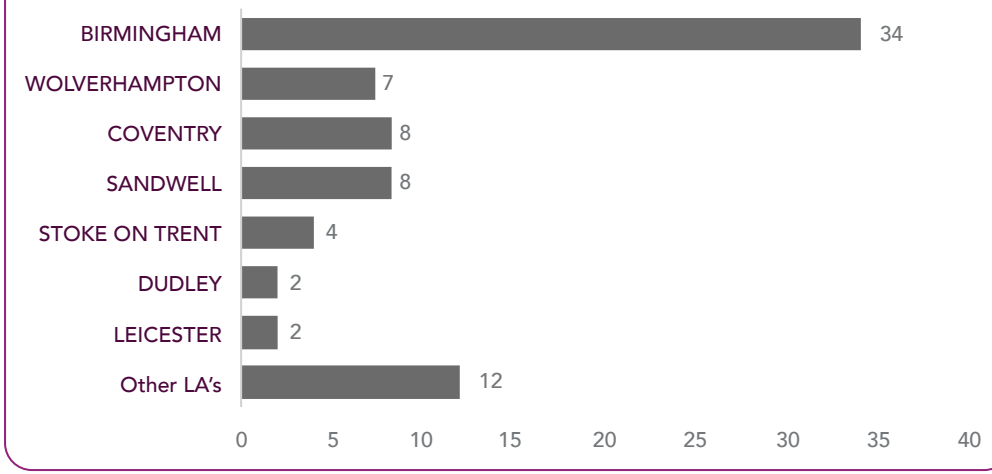
Property Type



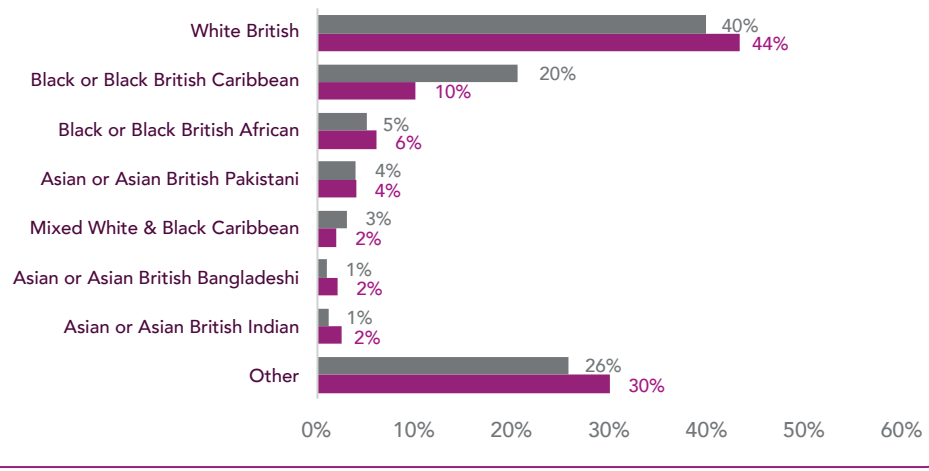
Age Range Group



Local Authority



Ethnicity



* 6 cases were duplictaed across Local Authorities

Silent tenants

An important objective of HomeChecker is to ensure we have visibility of the condition of our homes and identify any tenants that might need help on at least an annual basis.

Alongside HomeChecker we have assessed which homes we have visited in the last year and considered where we have undertaken:

- A gas service
- Completed a repair raised
- Completed a stock condition survey or an EICR

Excluding tenancies that are less than one year old, over the past year we have reduced the homes we have not visited in the last 12 months from 571 homes to just 1.

- Using the intelligence from this approach, we can understand more about how we can target communications to high-risk tenancies and properties to promote how we can help and support, and encourage tenants to approach us if they are struggling with sustaining their tenancy.

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