

Panel Meeting
Thursday 9th July – 11am
Holywood & Teams

Present:

Lesa Flanagan, Senior Engagement Officer
(CHAIR)
Ashleigh Mulgrave, Tenant Engagement Officer
Paul Fagan, Communications and Marketing
Officer
Bobby McConnell, Tenant Board Member
Dean Kelly Tenant Advocate
1x Fergus Fold
1x Knockmoy Fold
2x Woodgate Lodge
1x Ravenhill Reach Court
1x Tonic Fold
1x Spafield Fold
1x Fletcher Lodge
1x Carrickblacker Fold
1x Longlands Road
1x Loopland Fold
1x Valley Fold
1x Rosseden Drive – Online
1x Millbrae - Online
1x Gleann Si
1x Scrabo Fold
1x Claremont Court
1x White Glen
1x Clifton House
1x Drumcor Court
1x Forthriver Fold
1x Rathain Fold - Online
1x Tobar Fold

Apologies:

1x Knockmoy Fold
1x Brownhill Fold
1x Ballyvarnet Lodge
1x Spafield Fold
1x Weavers Court
1x Cromlyn Fold

1. Welcome and Housekeeping

Lesa Flanagan introduced herself as Senior Engagement Officer and Chair of today's Panel Meeting. She opened by welcoming and thanking everyone in attendance. Lesa noted the apologies received.

Today, we are continuing with our themed Panel Meeting format. This quarter, the focus is on the Tenant Engagement Team, discussing the Tenant Satisfaction Survey and beginning our research for the Tenant Engagement Strategy which is due for renewal.

Lesa reminded everyone to switch their phones to silent and noted that no fire drills are scheduled today.

Lesa explained that everyone should have received in advance of this meeting a copy of the Agenda, the May Easy Read scorecard and previous minutes, there are no outstanding actions from the previous minutes.

This is a public forum, and we would like to remind everyone that we are unable to discuss any personal or scheme specific issues due to GDPR. Everyone will have the opportunity to discuss personal/scheme issues with a member of staff before or at the end of the

	meeting. If you have a first time repair, please call the office to report. Lesa gave a round of introductions of Radius staff. All actions were agreed, and the group was happy to move on with the days agenda.	
2.	Performance Scorecard	
	Displayed on screen was a new version of the performance scorecard, Lesa explained that Tenant Engagement are always looking at ways to be as open and accountable with performance scores and giving a further breakdown of the amount of jobs logged each month for each category is a good way of remaining open and giving tenants the opportunity to scrutinise service delivery. Assets The first item on the agenda was the Easy Read Scorecard, beginning with the Assets section. Emergency repairs, which should be responded to by contractors within 24 hours, is sitting at 93.7%. If an emergency job has been logged our contractors aim to visit you within 24 hours. The contractor's priority is to make the repair safe and let Radius know if additional work is required to fully rectify the repair. The number of emergency jobs logged were 3445 and 3227 of those were attended to within the timeframe required. Urgent repairs, which should be responded to by contractors within 4 working days, is 91.2%. If an urgent job has been logged our contractors aim to visit you within 4 working days. The number of urgent jobs logged were 3920 and 3573 completed. Routine repairs, which should be responded to by contractors within 20 working days, is 89.5%. If a routine job is logged our contractors have 20 working days to attend the job. The number of routine jobs logged were 3763 and 3369. When the relevant contractor attends, they will begin work on the repair logged, if additional work is required they will contact Radius to action this additional work. We understand that some jobs aren't completed on time and there can be a number of reasons for this including requiring multiple tradesmen involved in the job, special parts needing ordered, access issues or incorrect job logged at the beginning with the customer service centre, contractors grouping jobs together especially in rural areas and attending particular areas certain days. Lesa explained that Contractors don't just work for Radius Housing and many of the Measured Term Contractors have contracts with the NIHE and other Housing Associations. A member asked if there is a breakdown explaining why the emergency repairs were not completed? Lesa responded breakdowns of all response repairs would be with the Assets Department. There could be a number of reasons as to why emergency repairs were not completed, this is raised at the monthly performance meetings with the individual contractors. Another member asked if repairs logged could be broken down by region? Lesa replied that yes, the Assets team have this information. When the monthly meetings are held with contractors, Radius can identify regional issues through these meetings and are able to speak to the individual contractors working within a particular area. The same member asked what is the difference between rural and urban response repair jobs when it comes to completion times? Contractors likely group jobs together for one area as they also work for other housing associations, particularly in more rural areas. There are only three or four major contractors in Northern Ireland with the capacity to manage a housing association's repair stock on this	

scale. Lesa explained that contractors are also struggling with keeping tradespersons as many of the skilled workers are either in Canada, Australia or the mainland so it can be very difficult at times to have sufficient trades persons to deal with the amount of work. The member then asked if the current repairs delivery model is not working, should it be reviewed? Should more emphasis be placed on Radius Direct? Lesla replied that using Radius Direct is the long-term aim, but it is still in the early stages. Radius Direct is currently focusing on void properties. Recruitment is ongoing, although attracting skilled tradespeople remains challenging due to the limited labour pool. At the next panel meeting we will invite the Service Delivery Manager of Radius Direct to attend and provide further information. Invitation sent to JP Darragh to attend next meeting. It was also noted that larger contractors often subcontract work, and subcontractors don't always follow the guidelines set within the contract such as cold calling without an appointment, wearing ID badges etc. Action: Lesa to ask whether a regional breakdown of repairs can be provided for the next panel meeting. A member asked who sets the repair targets, and why is the emergency repair target not 100%? The targets are set by Department of Communities, which is actually lower than Radius' target. A 100% completion target for emergency repairs is not considered realistically achievable. Lesla asked the group if they found it useful to have the figures broken down to show the number of repair jobs logged. All agreed that this was very useful and helped them to understand the figure better. Another member commented that if a contractor walks away from a job, they should have to repay the money and face contractual consequences. It was noted that this is unlikely to be legally possible under the current contractual arrangements but will be noted for the Assets team to see if such wording can be included when the next Measured Term Contract is up for renewal.. A member asked why have some repairs jobs not been completed? Lesla replied that there can be a number of reasons, including: The incorrect repair may have been logged, the job description may have been inaccurate, resulting in more than one contractor being required or delays in sourcing necessary parts, the job requires Manager approval due to the costs involved and above the limit of what an Asset Officer can approve. A member noted that the data suggests that Radius' repair targets are being met, but the number of repairs logged in a single month seems high. Lesla explained that a single property may have three or four separate repair jobs logged. In addition, Radius has general homes, Independent Living Schemes and Housing with Care Schemes, some Radius properties are now 40/50 years old meaning repairs are needed more frequently as components deteriorate over time and some repairs become major due to the age of the property. Another member asked how are quality checks carried out on repairs, and how do we ensure the work is necessary? Asset Officers post-inspect 10% of repair jobs valued at under £1,000. All jobs over £1,000 are inspected. Asset Officers also regularly visit schemes and properties to carry out pre & post inspections where required. Contractors may identify additional work while on site, but these repairs must be formally logged before payment can be authorised and the Asset	LF LF
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Officers try and pre inspect additional jobs raised by the contractor to ensure legitimacy of the repair jobs. The appointment of a new Senior Head of Assets Shane McAuley is expected to provide greater capacity for monitoring contractor performance.

A member from Tonic Fold brought up the issue of the Fire Alarm going off for no reason in the middle of the night and how this issue has been ongoing for a long period of time. Lesa apologised and said this shouldn't be happening and that the member can speak to the Senior Head of Assets outside the meeting as unfortunately we are unable to speak about individual scheme issues during this meeting.

Health & Safety

Our target to ensure all assessments and paperwork are completed on time is 100%.

Emergency lighting & fire risk assessments are sitting at 100%, with gas safety out of target due to an ongoing access issue, and the fire alarm servicing is due to paperwork not uploaded in time when figures were collated. 389 fire alarm services were completed, 2 were out of target and completed in June.

Emergency lighting all 409 were carried out within the timeframe.

For Gas Servicing 9370 were due with 9366 completed on time, with 4 outstanding for a number of reasons including no access. Radius are following the policy and procedure as servicing of gas boilers annually is a legal requirement.

Lesa asked at this stage if there were any questions in regards to the Repairs section of the scorecard. Everyone was happy to move on at this point.

Communities

The next section of the Scorecard focused on Communities, with Lesa giving an update on Tenancy Checks and Relets.

The target for Tenancy Checks for the financial year is 15% of general needs properties, and by end of May the figure was 3.3%

Tenancy checks are carried out to ensure homes are allocated properly and meet the needs of an individual, prevent fraud and unlawful subletting. They are also an opportunity to ensure tenants have all the support they need, including financial support, and that they are on all the benefits they are entitled to. The target for the year is to carry out tenancy checks in 15% of Radius properties

The figure seems quite low but by end of May we are only 2 months into the new performance year which starts 1st April – 31st March, so at the next meeting the aim is to have approximately half of the target Tenancy Checks carried out.

Tenancy fraud in Northern Ireland costs an estimated £9.9 million annually, with the Northern Ireland Audit Office warning that up to 4,000 social homes may be affected. The Department for Communities (DfC) is actively overhauling its strategies to combat. By carrying out these checks it helps identify whether the correct person is living within their home but also ensure the property remains suitable for an individual and if they require any additional support from Radius or other support services.

For relets, the target is that a Radius property is relet within 35 days. Within General Needs and Independent Living Schemes, relets are sitting on average 46 days. Radius' aim is to get houses ready to be let as soon as possible due to the housing crisis and demand for housing as well as generate income. In May 21 properties were relet within target and 25 were out of target.

There are a number of reasons why it takes longer for some homes to be relet than others which can be anything from the condition the home was left at the end of tenancy to bring it back to a lettable standard.

It can be an opportunity for the Assets Team to carry out maintenance such as detailed work taking place in kitchens, bathrooms, flooring etc and this all takes time.

Another reason could be a hard to rent area or there's currently not a demand with anyone waiting on the housing waiting list, the NIHE & Landlords are working hard to inform people on the waiting list that housing is available outside their selected areas but most people want to stay within their selected area due to family commitments, schools, gps etc.

The Arrears figure of 4.04% is very good and within the target set. In the summer months arrears levels are more under control with the Income Team & Financial Inclusion Team working closely with tenants to ensure rent is paid on time or that there are measures in place if a tenant falls behind that payment plans are introduced very quickly before a tenant falls further into arrears. In the winter time the arrears figures increase with factors such as Christmas and the additional burden of electric and heating costs on families. A member suggested that Radius should include information in the next Newsletter about comparing prices of heating fuel. Tenant Engagement to include in an upcoming Newsletter.

A member of the group asked if there any data available on how many people have been caught committing tenancy fraud?

Lesa responded that this information is not available to provide due to the sensitive nature.

Another member asked is tenancy fraud more common in urban or rural areas?

It occurs equally in both urban and rural areas.

A member asked if tenants have the option to pay by Direct Debit then this would help reduce rents not being paid?

Lesa replied that having a Direct Debit mandate in place does not necessarily resolve payment issues, as payments cannot be collected if sufficient funds are not available in the account.

Members were reminded that Radius has Financial Inclusion Officers who can support tenants by checking that they are receiving all the benefits and financial assistance to which they are entitled. Members were encouraged to make other tenants and residents within their community aware of this service.

Corporate Services

The next item on the Easy Read Scorecard, Corporate Services. So far in the financial year there was 30 official complaints were received across the 8 different departments within Radius, with the majority being Assets related. Following Assets, would be complaints within the Communities department.

90% of those complaints were responded to within the policy requirement and 33% of those complaints received, or 10 complaints, were upheld. This means that after an investigation was carried out the complaint was found to be valid and Radius were at fault and/or mistakes were made, with learnings required to prevent/reduce the complaint from happening again. The majority of complaints are repairs or anti-social behaviour related.

Lesa asked at this stage if there were any questions in regards to the Corporate Services section of the scorecard.

	A member asked if we record the number of complaints that progress to Stage 2? Lesa responded yes, the number of complaints escalated to Stage 2 is recorded but as they can be much longer term it would be difficult to reflect this during these meetings.	
3.0	Communications and Marketing	
	Radius Website Paul explained that the new website has been live for approximately three months. Feedback was invited from members on their experience of using the site, including what they liked, what could be improved, and any additional features they would like to see. One member noted that they use the website when needing to complete a specific task but feels it looks good overall. Paul also noted that much of the information shared on Radius's Facebook page directs users to the website for further details. Members were encouraged to provide any feedback on the website to Lesa or Ashleigh. Tenant Portal Paul explained that the Tenant Portal App has now launched and thanked the members of the Tenant Executive Committee for testing the Tenant Portal within the office a few weeks back. While a significant number of tenants have registered for the portal, many are still choosing to contact Radius by telephone rather than using it to report issues. A member asked can users add comments or messages through the portal when reporting a repair? Paul explained that No, the portal is not designed to include that Several members confirmed that they have been using the portal and have had a positive experience. It was also acknowledged that some tenants simply prefer speaking directly to a member of staff. These insights were welcomed as valuable feedback. Bobby McConnell, Tenant Board Member, asked if there is a QR code that people can scan to download the app? Paul responded that yes, a QR code is included in the tenant newsletter, along with step-by-step instructions on how to download and use the portal. It was suggested that the IT team attend the next meeting to help members download and set up the portal. Those present agreed this would be beneficial. Tenant Engagement to invite IT to attend at the end of the next panel meeting. It was noted that the portal is still in its early stages, and its use and effectiveness will continue to be monitored. Members were also advised that their tenant reference number is included on communications received from Radius. If they do not have this number, they can contact the Customer Service team, who will verify their identity and provide it.	
4.0	Tenant Engagement	
	Tenant Participation Accreditation	

Radius Housing has been awarded the Supporting Communities Tenant Participation Platinum Award, recognising sector-leading excellence and exceeding regulatory standards. We are proud to be recognised as a leader in tenant participation across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This achievement reflects the invaluable contribution of our tenants, who continue to help shape and improve our services. There were a number of active tenants who were asked a series of questions on how they are involved so as always, a big thank you. We hope to have a celebration event at the end of July so watch this space.

Bobby made the room aware Martin Pitt passed on his thanks to Lesa and Ashleigh, and those involved in the Focus Groups for the TP Accreditation and the Tenant Satisfaction Survey Focus Groups.

Lesla asked if everyone receives the newsletter every month. Everyone in the room agreed they received this. Lesla explained this can also be got on the website every month along with 13 other languages.

Tenant Satisfaction Survey

The Tenant Satisfaction Survey is a survey carried out by an external partner, Service Insights, that helps us understand tenants' experiences of our services and identify where we are doing well and where improvements can be made. The feedback gathered plays an important role in shaping and improving the services we provide. Each year, 10% of our tenants are randomly selected to take part in the survey, ensuring that a representative range of views and experiences is captured from across our communities.

1,401 tenants shared their feedback during February and March 2026. Findings also highlight opportunities for improvement, particularly in complaints handling, aspects of repairs (including timeliness) and demonstrating responsiveness to tenant feedback.

The key findings were added to the July Newsletter and a recommendation from the report was to add a performance page within the Radius website, so this is something Radius are investigating further. The results were displayed on the PowerPoint and showed there is always room for improvement. Radius have worked very hard since the results of the previous results were published to improve these scores. We know as an organisation and a landlord Radius need to get better especially in areas of higher dissatisfaction.

A member asked is it possible to receive a breakdown of these percentages for General Needs (GN) and Independent Living (IL)?

Lesla replied that the data is currently broken down into three categories: General Needs (GN), Over 55s with Scheme Co-ordinator and Over 55s without a Scheme Co-ordinator. It is also analysed by Area Housing Team, allowing comparison of satisfaction levels across different areas.

See below the breakdown of the figures from the recent Tenant Satisfaction Survey categorised in General Needs, Independent Living (over 55's with a Scheme Coordinator on site) and Category 1 (over 55's with no Scheme Coordinator on site).

Figure 46: Overall satisfaction by tenancy type

	Satisfaction	Counts
All Respondents	72.0%	1,400
General Needs	68.3%	947
Independent Living	82.2%	348
CAT 1	71.4%	105

	Tenant Satisfaction Focus Groups Last week was a very busy week with four focus groups taking place in Holywood which involved 17 staff members from Assets, Communities, Corporate services and Customer Service Centre coming together to focus on key drivers of overall satisfaction which include operational communication, the day to day process of service delivery – for example, when a tenant calls in to report a repair do all tenants receive a consistent standard. The tenant focus groups involved 24 tenants focused on day to day issues of repairs, communication, staffing issues and issues of inconsistency in different areas whether this was a different contractor or staff members. In the coming weeks Simon, who was leading the focus groups from Service Insights, will be going through all the recordings to link the issues between staff and tenants, identify patterns or similarities from the different groups and put together a number of recommendations to be given to the Chief Executive and Senior Management. This will then be shared in the August or September newsletter. Tenant Engagement Strategy Radius Housing intends to commence the review and development of its new Tenant Engagement (TE) Strategy in Q3 of 2026. This work will be informed by lessons learned from the current strategy, tenant, resident, staff and stakeholder feedback, and emerging best practice across the housing sector. Aim To identify best practice in tenant engagement across Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Great Britain and European housing providers, and to ensure that Radius tenants, residents and stakeholders play an active role in informing the future Tenant Engagement Strategy. We have a number of active tenants who were involved in the last strategy which mainly took place online as this was back in 2021: Bobby, Vincenzo, Muriel, Gerry, Mary Smith and Dean. Tenants will be involved throughout the scoping and research process by: • Participating in focus groups to identify priority research areas. • Joining a focus group to review findings. • Assisting in assessing examples of best practice and their suitability for Radius. • Participating in consultation events on draft recommendations. • Providing feedback on proposed strategic priorities before final approval.	
6.0	Meeting End	
	The meeting came to an end at 12:30pm. The next area panel meeting will be on 22 nd October and will be themed around Radius Direct.	