

Minutes – Independent Living Panel

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to: Housing Engagement Board

Date of Meeting: 03 July 2026 (rescheduled from 23 June 2026 due to extreme temperatures)

Subject: Independent Living Panel – Tenant Led Scrutiny

Staff Attendees: Lydia McLeod (Landlord Services Manager)
Emma Neale (Tenant Engagement Officer)
Vicki Hibbs (Independent Living Team Leader)

Involved Tenant/Leaseholder Attendees: DG, SM, AM, MW, WM

1. Introductions and housekeeping – 10am

Staff introductions and key housekeeping information.

2. Purpose of the panel and minutes from the previous meeting – 10:35am

Discuss the purpose of the Independent Living Panel and review the minutes from the previous meeting.

Purpose of the Panel

To strategically review all elements of the Independent Living (IL) service to achieve service improvements.

3. Actions from the Previous Panel – 10.40am

Fire Doors

Recommendations – Soft closing doors to reduce noise, automatic doors/lighter doors to make it easier for residents to open them. – Kat Orton, Jen Hawkins to be invited to the next Independent Living meeting to discuss the issues around fire doors.

Update on the fire door inspections / findings of the report.

Tenant Alterations

Recommendations – raise awareness of what changes need permission and how to do this.

Service Standards – Equipment Failures

Recommendations – more awareness of expected timeframes to fix/replace equipment, e.g. lifts, laundry facilities.

Older machines, take longer to source parts, independent living trying to replace all these machines as budgets allow. Repair are based on how long it takes to source parts, There is no time limits in service agreements for repairs.

Use of Laundries

Recommendations – clearer guidelines as to what the machines can be used for, when and by whom. Clear specifications for how many machines for each scheme. Vicki Hibbs to issue new guidelines, Independent Living panel to review and feedback on before the next meeting. 17/07/26 – deadline
Vicki Hibbs to speak with NABCEL about mop heads being washed in independent living washing machines

Communications – drainage

Recommendations – raise awareness of what can be flushed into the waste systems and what cannot be flushed. – awareness into what you can and can't flush in the independent living newsletter.

4. New Matters for Consideration – 11.10am

• **Use of Guest Rooms/Formal Warden Properties**

Lydia explained how the introduction of Awaabs law and the timings around making safe emergency hazards, may mean moving tenants out of their homes and the lack of housing stock for us to move tenants into. Former warden homes cannot be let due to the size of them, therefore the council has been using these properties as temporary accommodation for our tenants only when we need to decant temporarily.

Tenants who pose a risk would not be moved to any Independent Living complex.

Occasionally guest rooms within complexes are used but these are mainly for one night only due to no cooking facilities.

Independent Living panel were asked to give feedback on the above.

Vicki Hibbs stated that to rent out the spare rooms, the procedure has been made more secure following an incident where in one scheme a visitor stole, shower curtains, duvets etc. Panel to email Tenant engagement team with any thought around this before the next meeting.

- IL Tenant Newsletters
 - IL Officer and Wellbeing Officer duties and timings – This should be on all notice boards within independent living complexes. Officers should also put on when they are on annual leave and who is covering to inform tenants. Cannot be held to account due to emergency's / sickness / annual leave.
 - Can we include well being officers and where they will be covering.
 - Vicki Hibbs stated that Independent Living Officer and well-being officers both attend the first post tenancy visit.
 - Contents of newsletters (cross working with Communications Panel) Is the independent living panel newsletter working for tenants / residents. Vicki Hibbs to email the latest version Emma Neale to distribute this for feedback. Subscription service hard copies or emails for tenants to opt in and out of the newsletter Vicki Hibbs to take this back to schemes.
- Cleaning

Lydia has received lots of complaints from the areas that NABCEL clean. Independent Living tenants to part of the tender process for when the contract is up for renewal – looking at the specification of the cleaning contracts.
- Grounds Maintenance is up for renewal in 2027, the contract we have now is very basic, up to 16 grass cuts a year, gritting on independent living exits only. No weed killing is included, general purpose does not get any gritting. What do tenants want to see in the new specification bearing in mind the higher the specification will increase service charge costs.
- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

We have recruited for a ASB Support Officer, do independent living tenants know how to report –

MW stated she doesn't believe independent living tenants know how to report it correctly.

DG stated she didn't know until Vicki Hibbs informed her that she can use her lifeline to report ASB and request for emergency wardens to attend. Vicki Hibbs suggested a flow chart on every notice board within schemes so it is always visible, on how to report, what will happen and within what timeframe. If tenants want wardens from a life line call they can always have one.
- IL Open Forum
 - Officer surgeries – Vicki Hibbs stated we need to get better at communicating the wellbeing officer surgery (happens once per month) Well being officers are now more pro active and knock doors in complexes to offer their services.
 - Sharon Merry suggested staff photos of who is who in each complex. Cat 1's need more communication around staff, drop-in surgery's and newsletters. Vicki Hibbs to action.

5. Any other business – 11.45am

Vicki Hibbs stated our recommendations for washing machine considerations worked well and Vicki Hibbs wanted to express her thanks.

DG stated that independent living officers do not know about issues with general purpose tenants (in mixed complex's.) Housing officers and independent living officers do not talk to each other about issues within blocks.

Lydia and Vicki confirmed that we do need to get better at this.

An opportunity to raise any individual concerns or queries.

WM raises the issue of how hot independent living complexes are in summer especially during the heatwave we had had, and the effects on our vulnerable tenants, the briefing paper states a practical guide on how the council can combat this and stop any potential Awaabs law case from being triggered. John Sweeney to be invited to the next Independent living meeting to discuss **WM** suggestions,

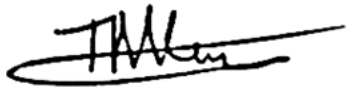
Minutes Authorised – T.Venus

Tenancy Services and Engagement Team Leader (Reviewed 31/07/2026)

Minutes Taken By: Engagement Officers

Date – 3rd July 2026

Signed -

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'T. Venus', written over a horizontal line.