

Barnsbury HA Board Meeting Summary: October 3, 2025

Attendees:

Board: Richard Hill (Chair), Liz Curran, Micah Gold, Ben Kelly, Matthew Smith, Janice Walsh

Staff: Susan French (CEO), Cheryl Whittle (Operations Director), Lynsey van Aswegen (Finance Director)

Observer: Andrew Edkins

This was Richard's first meeting as Chair.

1. Listening to Residents

The Board discussed the Resident Voice group, which continues to grow. The Board felt that the case studies were useful to see the work being done with residents on benefits and financial inclusion. We will be recruiting a further resident to become a board member later in the year.

2. Resident Services

The Board heard about ongoing work to support residents, including financial inclusion initiatives and efforts to reduce rent arrears. The Staying Connected visits, now a core part of our service, are continuing with well over half of residents visited so far.

3. Garages Project & Village Hall: an update

The long-standing garages project is out to tender, with a decision expected before Christmas. The Board heard about the proposed 'Village Hall', which could be a community space and hub for services. This idea would be developed as part of the garages project, with further consultation with

residents as to how it might work and what they would like to see.

4. Health and Safety: keeping homes safe

The Board heard that property health and safety issues continue to be well managed and under control.

5. Updates

The Board also heard about:

- recent changes to the staff team, including a new Head of Contracts & Compliance who joined in September
- government plans to bring rents in line with formula rents, which would affect many BHA residents. Plans will be announced in the budget
- an updated Health and Safety Policy
- a new policy on the use of AI. There was interest in staff training on AI and data security, and the Board agreed to seek further advice before approving the policy.

6. Board Issues: a new member

The Board welcomed Andrew to his first meeting. The board agreed that, rather than board members being paid (as happens in most other housing associations), we will (with the exception of the Chairs) continue not to pay, but that a fund would be set up so board members could take part in relevant training and development.

8. Next Board Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, December 4, 2025.

If you have a question you would like to put to the Board at or before the meeting, please email at info@barnsbury.org or call us.