

Report To: Board of Management – 20.11.2025

Title of Report: **Joint Report - Strategic Tenant Panel and Taff – No Access in Our Homes**

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Purpose of Report: For Information

Strategic Plan Priority	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homes 2. Customers 3. Performance & Resources
Strategic Risk(s)	<p>Failure in costing for significant expenditure</p> <p>Failure to operate lawfully and in line with Taff Values</p> <p>Failure to keep colleagues, Tenants and Service Users safe</p> <p>Failure to effectively engage tenants, the wider community and other key stakeholders</p> <p>Failure to invest adequately in existing homes</p> <p>Failure in information management, data validation, interpretation</p>
Regulatory Framework	<p>RSL1: The organisation has effective strategic leadership and governance arrangements which enable it to achieve its purpose and objectives</p> <p>RSL3: High quality services are delivered to tenants</p> <p>RSL4: Tenants are empowered and supported to influence the design and delivery of services</p> <p>RSL6: The organisation has a strategic approach to value for money which informs all its plans and activities.</p> <p>RSL9: The organisation provides high quality accommodation</p>

1. Recommendation

1.1 Members are asked to note and invited to discuss the report.

2. Purpose

2.1 This report presents the initial findings from some exploratory research conducted between mid-September and October 2025 on “no access” events at Taff.

2.2 While not exhaustive, this research offers a foundation for further investigation and sits within a broader programme of work initiated by the Exec Director of People and Places, which seeks to improve operational efficiency and tenant wellbeing.

2.3 This work will also contribute to and deliver on the programme of work identified in the Customer Voice Strategy 2025-2030.

3. Background

Problem Definition: No Access

- 3.1 No access or failed access to homes to carry our essential works has long been an issue in social housing. It costs housing providers millions of pounds each year, with average rates of no access ranging from between 10-30%, depending on provider and reason for visit.
- 3.2 “No access” refers to the inability to gain entry to a tenant’s home to carry out inspections, repairs, or compliance checks. This issue is prevalent across housing associations and results in:
- **Financial costs:** Rebooking, operational inefficiencies, and potential penalties for non-compliance.
 - **Health and safety risks:** Unaddressed issues such as damp, mould, gas, and electrical hazards that can significantly impact our tenants
 - **Service delivery challenges:** Reduced ability to meet regulatory obligations and maintain tenant trust.
- 3.3 Given Taff’s size and operational capacity, the impact of no access events is proportionally greater than in larger associations. While no access is tightly defined, for some tenants who have a high percentage of no access events, this can be seen as symptomatic of other underlying issues and challenges.
- 3.4 Therefore, it is important to place no access events within the wider context of what maybe going on in our tenants' lives. This means we take a whole of organisational response in the design of any intervention when addressing and reducing no-access events.
- 3.5 The other significant driver for addressing this issue is linked to current policy settings (apart from the current considerations) around meeting the increasing needs of people impacted by homelessness. This brings with it, its own challenges.

“We recognise that the needs of our future tenants are evolving—particularly among single individuals and families facing high and complex challenges, including a growing number experiencing homelessness. In light of this, I want to stay ahead of the curve and explore innovative approaches to more effectively manage 'no access' situations. (Taff senior manager)

4. What we have recently put in place

- 4.1 In mid-2025 Taff started looking at no access as rates continued to increase. We have worked to create a more non-linear approach to handling no access, including early cross departmental working and regular meetings to discuss cases across Property and Housing Teams.

- 4.2 We have introduced:
- More frequent reminders to tenants, including a text message when the operative is on their way, if the tenant does not answer or grant access, a photograph is taken as evidence of the no-access attempt.
 - Utilised scheduling to avoid times and days where no access is highest
 - Created warning flags on our Housing Management System to alert colleagues to both historic no access issues and any current on-going no access issues.
 - Three attempts are made to gain access before escalation.

4.3 While these methods have reduced our no access rate significantly from 20% to 10%, there remains a stubbornly high number of no access events, especially for compliance related visits (gas and electrical checks for example)

5. The data

5.1 In order to better understand why no access was stubbornly high for a certain cohort of tenants, we took repairs data from a six-month period (since the launch of our new housing management system) and used AI to identify trends and patterns in the data.

Quantitative analysis

5.2 Between 1st April 2025 and 30th September 2025, TAFF has undertaken 5,464 repair related visits with our in-house teams. Of these 5,464 visits, 901 have resulted in no access. Our no access rate is 16.48%, which means roughly 1 in 6 visits results in no access.

Table 1 Frequency of Missed Visit Events per Customers

Missed Visit Events	Number of customers	Percentage
1	236	53%
2	105	23.6%
3	44	9.9%
4-5	35	7.9%
6 or more	25	5.6%

5.3 When we broke this down further and looked at the top 1% (15 properties) and top 5% (68 properties) in terms of missed visits, overall contacts and maintenance orders, over a 6-month period.

Table 2 Top 1 and 5 percent of missed visits

Activity	Top 1%	Top 5%
No Access	20% of all missed visits	45% of all missed visits
Overall contacts with business	7% of all contacts	21% of all contacts
Maintenance orders	10% of all orders	19% of all orders

5.4 One of the key insights we identified is a small cohort of tenant's accounts for a disproportionate number of missed visits. The top fifteen properties alone account for 20% of all missed visits. Sixty-five properties make up almost half of all missed visits. We also found that:

- Most of no access events relate to a small number of our homes – 5% of our homes have 45% of our no accesses over the test period. This group had multiple failed access attempts per home.
- A larger less defined group were associated with at least one failed access attempt.
- The events overwhelmingly relate to compliance related activities.
- There is no strong correlation between ethnicity, preferred language and no accesses.
- Most tenants let us in first time, indicating our general process works for most people.
- The top 5% (65 homes) of properties often had tenants in them that required or were receiving active support.
- Knowledge flow across the business was not always adequate, with properties having an active no access case on-going, but other successful access attempts during that time on record.

5.5 For most of our tenant's standard process works well and there was no need to devise a whole new method of handling no accesses.

5.6 Caveats - the data presented covers only a six-month period, which may not reflect longer-term trends. For some individuals, this timeframe may coincide with particularly challenging circumstances, potentially making the results a temporary anomaly or "blip".

6. Methodology – what we did

6.1 To gain a better understanding of what the initial data was telling us we decided to take mixed methods approach to gather insights. This included,

6.2 **Quantitative Analysis:** Review of existing internal datasets related to no-access events, including appointment logs, tenant demographics, and service history.

6.3 **Qualitative Research:** Semi-structured /informal interviews with Taff colleagues gathering their insights. Targeted engagement with BME community and Strategic Panel.

6.4 We had hoped to interview some of the tenants who present with a high number of no access events. This is to better understand what the barriers they think get in the way of them allowing us access into their properties. We also wanted to ask what they thought would help or what Taff could do differently to make it easier for them to allow access into their homes.

6.5 However, given the complexity of the issues some of the tenants present with we wanted to spend more time in the design and approach of how we will engage with this cohort of tenants. We will report back early next year on what we found.

7. What we found

Qualitative Insights

7.1 We spoke with several teams across the organisation and while there was some variation in how the key themes that emerged were:

- All teams recognised the complexity of issues that these tenants present.
- All the teams have attempted on various occasions to better accommodate tenants either through offering alternative appointments, changing appointments time to suit those working or who have childcare responsibilities.
- While all the teams use housing management system (Rubixx) they often focus on their section of the platform. It could be argued that it inadvertently keeps colleagues siloed across the organisation.
- Where other issues are flagged, referrals are made to the appropriate team i.e. community inclusion. However sometimes information is not updated or missing and time is spent chasing up on that information.
- There were three key issues when it came to data. What data we are collecting? Does the data tell us enough so we are informed (ie risk assessment simply saying you need to take care is not enough)? Why we are collecting it (will it enable us to better meet the needs of the tenant), and accuracy (is it up to date?).
- Of all the teams we spoke to those that, to quote one colleague, “offer a carrot” have better access into these properties.
- Communication across the organisation could be improved.
- Investigate whether similar issues are emerging within specific clusters of tenants and assess whether certain interventions are more effective when tailored to the needs of those tenants.

Quantitative insights

7.2 We went through the data in Rubixx related to occupancy and properties for the top 5% of households who have more than 4 + denied access events. This was to test if we could extrapolate out any further insights for example does household composition make a difference to the number of no access events. We could not find any differences both in presenting issues, family composition and the number of no access events.

8. Actions

8.1 We used AI to identify key themes and actions from the interviews that would support reducing the number of no access events within the top 5 % percent. The table below outlines some options we can implement across the system. It should be noted that there is no one intervention that will address what is a challenging and sometimes complex issue.

Category	Suggested Action	Details
Incremental Changes to Reduce No Access Events (Top 5%)	Early Intervention	Housing officers or community partners engage historically non-compliant tenants
	Multilingual Communication	Offer letters, texts, or voice messages in other languages.
	Alternative Contact Methods	Phone calls instead of letters for tenants with known literacy issues.
	System Flagging	Flag no-access tenants for proactive engagement
	Use Case notes	Provides comprehensive information
Broader Improvement Areas	Improve Communication Design	Simplify rent-related messages; use plain language and multilingual formats Use customer insights/nudge techniques when designing the letters/texts that are sent.
	Strengthen Data Accuracy	Fix duplicate entries, unclear compliance records, and ensure accurate appointment/access data
	Strengthen Data Quality	Ensure notes are clear and unambiguous -
	Support Vulnerable Tenants Proactively	Use flags to trigger early intervention; integrate carers/family contacts into communication plans.