

metroSTOR Webinar Summary and Transcript

Tenant Satisfaction Measures:

Responsible Neighbourhood Management

29.01.26

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metroSTOR Webinar Summary

Overview

On 29 January 2026, metroSTOR hosted a webinar examining how housing providers can strengthen performance against the neighbourhood-related Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). The session focused on using TSM data to understand how estates operate day-to-day, rather than treating the measures as a compliance exercise.

The webinar was chaired by Nigel Deacon of metroSTOR, with contributions from David Done OBE, Chair of Gateway Housing Association, and Emily-Rae Baines, Founder and Director of Golden Thread Housing Solutions.

Purpose of the session

The session explored what sits behind TP10, TP11, TP12 and NM01, and how landlords can use these measures to inform better neighbourhood management and long-term estate planning. Key themes included:

- Moving beyond scores to understand lived experience
- Using TSMs as an early-warning system
- Applying professional curiosity to ask better questions about what is really happening on estates
- Linking resident satisfaction to estate design, management and investment decisions

Board-level perspective

David Done focused on TP10, satisfaction with communal areas, and why it matters at board-level. He highlighted that communal areas:

- Are highly visible to residents and central to day-to-day experience
- Sit at the intersection of safety, satisfaction and cost
- Often reveal deeper, structural issues when performance is consistently low

David emphasised that repeat problems are rarely accidental. Persistent low performance usually signals underlying design, capacity or investment issues rather than isolated service failures. He noted that many estates are facing pressures they were never designed for, including higher-density living, increased waste volumes, tighter fire-safety requirements and new demands such as safe charging for electric bikes and scooters.

Without a strategic, long-term approach, boards risk layering short-term fixes onto already constrained spaces. Over time, this can lead to rising dissatisfaction, higher costs and a risk of managed decline, driven not by neglect but by reactive decision-making on pressured estates.

As David summarised from a board perspective:

“TSMs are not just performance data — they are one of the clearest early-warning signals boards have about how estates are really working.”

Operational and estate-level insight

Emily-Rae Baines examined TP10, TP11, TP12 and NM01 together, arguing that they collectively describe the lived reality of neighbourhoods. She emphasised that:

- Communal areas are an extension of the home, shaping pride, wellbeing and trust
- Dissatisfaction often shows up through visible issues such as overflowing bins, fly-tipping and broken lighting
- Perception-based scores should be tested against operational reality

Emily-Rae stressed that TSMs should be treated as a snapshot, not an answer in themselves. She encouraged landlords to apply professional curiosity by overlaying survey results with:

- Complaints and service requests
- Missed collections and estate inspection findings
- Caretaking and housing officer feedback

This approach helps build a clearer, evidence-based picture of where intervention and investment will have the greatest impact. As Emily-Rae noted:

“The data is the snapshot. The job is to apply professional curiosity and build the picture of what’s actually happening on estates.”

Planning for long-term improvement

Both speakers emphasised the need to move from reactive fixes to planned, programme-based investment in estates. Practical considerations discussed included:

- Treating estate management with the same strategic importance as building safety and repairs
- Using evidence to support board-level decision-making
- Recognising that estate walkabouts only build trust when they lead to visible action and follow-through
- Being transparent with residents, particularly where service charges and mixed tenure are involved
- Collaborating across landlords and partners in complex estate environments

Value for money was framed not simply as cost control, but as reducing repeat spend, recurring failure and inefficient use of resources through better-designed, longer-term solutions.

Key takeaways

The webinar reinforced that neighbourhood-related TSMs are most effective when used as an insight and planning tool rather than a scorecard. When combined with professional curiosity, operational intelligence and leadership oversight, they can help organisations:

- Identify patterns and emerging risks early
- Avoid managed decline on pressured estates
- Target investment more effectively
- Improve resident satisfaction and trust
- Strengthen long-term resilience and regulatory confidence

The session concluded with a shared view that home does not stop at the front door, and that well-managed communal spaces are central to delivering safe, sustainable and satisfying neighbourhoods.

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Nigel Deacon

Thanks for joining us today. This session is about Tenant Satisfaction Measures, but not in the sense of scores, targets or compliance. What we want to explore is what they are actually showing us about how estates are working day-to-day. We keep hearing the same issues surfacing across different organisations, things like communal-area safety, anti-social behaviour and waste. These are not new problems.

They are long-standing, visible issues that residents experience well before a survey link lands in their inbox. One thing the TSMs have done is make those issues harder to ignore, turning lived experience into something that boards, regulators and teams can see and measure. Today is not just about the framework itself. It is about what sits behind the scores and what the data is telling us operationally and strategically.

Organisations are beginning to respond, so we are looking forward to hearing from David on why communal areas matter at board-level and why a planned approach beats reacting late. Then we will hear from Emily-Rae Baines on what neighbourhood-management data can change in practice, with a practical blueprint and time for discussion.

Rather than doing a long introduction, I will hand straight over to David.

David Done

Good morning everybody. It is really good to be here. My name is David Done. I have worked in the housing sector for well over 40 years now, which I still find amazing. I can honestly say I enjoy what I do today as much as I ever have.

Over those 40 years, I have worked at senior level, including being a Director of Housing for a London borough, a CEO of a housing association and a board chair. I am probably best known for being Chief Executive of Richmond Housing Partnership, which I started from scratch from a stock transfer and then ran for around 20 years, building a really successful social landlord. At the time, it was recognised for great customer service, being an inspirational place to work and using technology in an innovative way, particularly leading the way around digital technology and digitalisation in the sector.

I left RHP about three years ago and since then I have developed a portfolio career, made up of board-level work with housing associations, a national charity and a number of commercial companies. Currently I have four active roles. I am Chair of Gateway Housing Association, which is a community-based organisation working around Tower Hamlets. I sit on advisory boards for a number of commercial companies, including metroSTOR. I have also recently taken on a chief executive role with a for-profit provider.

Today I can speak from a broad point of view, rather than an operational one. As Nigel mentioned, the focus of this morning's session is Tenant Satisfaction Measure TP10, the proportion of tenants who are satisfied that their landlord keeps communal areas clean and well-maintained. I want to explain why, in my opinion, this measure really matters at board-level.

It is about much more than keeping estates looking clean and tidy. It is about quality of life and how residents experience their homes every single day. I am going to cover three things: why boards should pay attention to this particular TSM, why it is becoming even more important and why a planned, strategic approach is better than reacting to issues as they arise.

Boards should care because the TSMs are not just performance data. They are one of the most direct insights we have into how residents actually experience our service. TP10 is particularly valuable because communal areas are highly visible. They are shared by many people and residents notice immediately when something goes wrong. It also cuts across multiple functions: housing management, estates, repairs and fire safety. Crucially, it sits at the intersection of safety, satisfaction and cost. Poorly managed communal areas undermine all three.

This is not a 'nice-to-have' measure. It is a core test of how well our organisations are performing and delivering for residents. Traditionally, communal areas have often been treated as operational problems, something teams respond to, patch up and move on from. What the TSMs show at board-level is that repeat issues are rarely accidental. They usually point to deeper causes: infrastructure that no longer works, unclear responsibilities for shared spaces and environments that allow poor behaviours to take hold.

From a board perspective, persistent low scores are a red flag. They are not just about satisfaction. They raise questions about whether estates are being managed in a way that is sustainable over time.

This issue is only going to become more important because many estates are operating under pressures they were never designed to accommodate: higher-density living, increased volumes of waste, tighter fire-safety expectations and new demands such as safe charging of electric scooters, bikes and cars. These pressures put strain on corridors, storage spaces, plant areas and car parks, which are increasingly serving multiple and sometimes competing purposes.

Without a clear strategic view at board-level, the risk is that we keep adding requirements to spaces that are already under pressure. Over time, that can lead to higher dissatisfaction, more frequent and tougher enforcement action and increased costs. In the worst cases, estates can slip into a form of managed decline, not through neglect, but through the combined impact of well-intentioned decisions taken without a long-term, whole-estate perspective.

Early board and executive oversight can make a real difference. I am not saying boards need to design bin stores or lighting layouts, but they do need to set direction and ask better questions. Are we seeing patterns or just isolated complaints? Which estates are most at risk of future failure? Are we investing reactively or planning for how people live now and in the future?

Boards set the tone for organisations. If the message is simply to stay compliant and keep costs down, that is what the organisation will deliver. If the message is to design for safety, respect and long-term use, behaviours will change.

Where boards take a strategic approach, organisations tend to see three benefits. Better resident experience because communal areas feel safer, calmer and better cared for, which feeds through into better scores and higher trust. Better use of money because there are fewer repeat issues, fewer call-outs and less time spent firefighting. Stronger regulatory confidence because there is clearer oversight and evidence that boards understand the business and the associated risks.

In summary, TP10 is not a tick-box exercise. It is a clear signal about how well estates are working now and how resilient they will be in future. Organisations that do well will move from reactive fixes to planned interventions, treat communal areas as assets and bring safety, satisfaction and sustainability into a single strategic conversation in the boardroom.

Thank you. We will have questions later on, but for now over to Emily-Rae.

Emily-Rae Baines

Thanks David. I am going to build on the points David has set out. I will focus on the operational impact of the TSM scores, but with a slightly wider perspective. I will look at TP10, TP11, TP12 and NM01 as well. I have included what they actually are for anyone who does not have them memorised.

I am Emily-Rae Baines. I run Golden Thread Housing Solutions. We are a small consultancy focused on practical, tangible service improvements rooted in resident feedback, which is why I am passionate about Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

The things I am going to cover are: what the data is telling us, what it means operationally and what it means for people living in homes, on estates and in blocks, as well as for staff and teams working on those estates. I also want to reflect on where we could focus efforts to make the biggest difference for social housing tenants.

This slide is only a small snapshot, but the data from a HouseMark report shows we are very much in the middle of the range as a sector when it comes to satisfaction with communal-area management, satisfaction that we make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods and satisfaction with how we handle anti-social behaviour.

It is important to consider these measures together because they paint a picture of the neighbourhoods people are living in. One question I would put to everyone on this call is: are we really happy sitting in the middle of the road on something so important? If we reflect on our core purpose as social landlords, it is to provide homes that are safe, well-maintained and affordable. Does the concept of home finish at the front door?

We saw during Covid that communal spaces were an important extension of home. They supported wellbeing, social interaction and relationships, and they also raise safety considerations.

When things go wrong, dissatisfaction often shows up as overflowing bins, fly-tipping and broken lights. For tenants, it can also be about a lack of pride, embarrassment about having people over and disillusionment about reporting issues.

Organisationaly, we should use the TSMs as a temperature check. Yes, they provide a snapshot, but it is an important snapshot. The point is to take that data and apply professional curiosity: what is actually going on in our organisation? If you overlay complaints, service requests, missed collections, anecdotal information from housing officers, caretaking feedback and other operational intelligence, you can build a clearer picture of what is happening on estates and where investment should be targeted. That evidence base can then go to boards and executive teams so they can have more strategic conversations and get ahead of issues, rather than being reactive.

TSMs are perception-based, so you should expect the operational picture to align. For example, if anti-social behaviour cases are rising, satisfaction may fall. If communal repairs are slipping, satisfaction may fall. If you cannot evidence proactive estate inspections, or if issues identified on inspections are not being actioned, then quality assurance is missing. Often this is made more difficult by multi-layered management arrangements: multiple landlords within regeneration areas, managing agents, mixed tenure and similar complexities. When entering those arrangements, it is important to consider not only how places are designed, but how they will be managed going forward.

From a local authority perspective, there is a role for local government too. Local authorities should take time to think about how placemaking translates operationally. What is the plan over the next five years? How will you keep estates as places people want to use and enjoy, or invest so you can get ahead of issues tenants are experiencing?

When I was Head of Housing at Brent, we saw a rise in service requests and complaints, particularly around waste. We commissioned a full review of blocks and estates with communal bins, initially to check capacity: was the right capacity present, was it damaged and was it being used properly? We completed this over a year, then set a longer-term programme to replace damaged and missing bins.

Just by replacing bins, we saw a 27 per cent increase in satisfaction. We surveyed tenants before and after. We also monitored other measures such as repeat collections due to failures and reductions in pest-control requests. That is a strong evidence base and I would encourage people to consider something similar. Taking a longer-term view on estate investment is the only way to treat these satisfaction measures with the seriousness they deserve.

We often talk about building safety and repairs because the risk is obvious. Estate management can have just as much influence on satisfaction, but it is often not invested in with the same priority. That needs to shift.

For many residents, especially those not in frequent contact about tenancy issues, their relationship with the landlord is shaped by what they see in communal areas. That becomes their overall perception of you as a landlord. If you get it right, you can shift pride in where people live and refocus on your core purpose.

One final point is about equality and diversity. When you layer in protected characteristics, you see how factors like pests, missed bins and e-scooters can shape people's day-to-day lives in different ways.

My encouragement is to do things differently. Estate improvements need to be treated as a planned works programme. Organisations need a longer-term view, whether over five years or seven years. We need better business plans and we need to set aside resources to invest in estates because they are an extension of home and they carry their own risks.

Practically, the best way to start is to use the TSMs as the snapshot, apply professional curiosity, overlay your indicators like complaints and service requests, build the picture, then use the evidence to inform boards and executive teams so decisions are targeted to the estates that need them most. Every estate has a lifecycle, so how can you get upstream and take pressure off services where you are currently reactive? That includes employer requirements and regeneration plans, but also thinking programme-wide, standardising installations in new builds where appropriate and using capital spend strategically so it supports improved infrastructure elsewhere.

Collaboration matters too, especially where there are multiple landlords. I brought stakeholders together and asked: how can we pool our resources and commit to shared infrastructure? How can we work our housing offices together so residents have a regular point of contact and we reduce boundary issues where someone says, "That is not on my side, so I will leave it"?

Collectively, as a sector, I do not think we should be comfortable with 50 or 60 per cent satisfaction on something this fundamental. These are people's lives and it is the foundation for how they experience home. We should be prioritising it.

On my last slide, I tried to include a bit of humour. It is hard when talking about these issues, but the headline was from a newspaper. While I was at Brent, I was asked to comment on a story about a giant rat mauling a pigeon outside a bin store on one of our estates. It was one of the most difficult quotes I have ever given.

I hope that has been useful. It would be really helpful to hear other people's challenges and views, what you are doing as organisations and whether David and I can add anything further.

Nigel Deacon

Excellent points, thank you. If we stop treating the satisfaction measures as a scorecard and start treating them as an early-warning system, what types of risk do you think they are flagging for boards?

David Done

In a funny way, Nigel, I would turn that around. I think it is about reducing risk rather than creating it. The TSMs around communal areas and estates are a brilliant early-warning sign, and the key word is early. Too often boards hear about problems too late, when teams are already firefighting.

The value of the TSMs is that they alert you to issues you can act on in a planned, strategic way. The trick is not to treat them as isolated data points. Look for trends over time and connect the dots between what the TSMs are telling you and the lived experience of residents and staff.

Doing that can build trust. If residents can see the board is paying attention to trends and developing plans based on what you learn, it shows you are taking resident experience seriously.

There are risks too. Boards are not always used to doing this, so there is a risk of misinterpreting data or reacting in a knee-jerk way. There is also a risk of boards using the information to micromanage, which you do not want because it undermines governance. Overall, though, the benefits of using TSMs as early-warning signs outweigh the risks.

Nigel Deacon

That is helpful, thank you. We also see scores clustering around the same estate-level issues. How confident should boards be that these are isolated service failures rather than symptoms of deeper design or investment decisions?

David Done

In my experience, one of the biggest frustrations for residents and staff is that the same old problems happen over and over again. Boards need a mindset focused on the long-term viability and sustainability of the places they are responsible for.

We need to stop treating problems as one-off issues. We need to connect the dots and ask where the common themes are, where the trends sit and which estates need the most attention. Not every estate will require huge investment, but some will, so we need to be clear about where that is the case.

Boards should take the lead by treating tenant satisfaction data as strategic intelligence. Use it to identify where to focus, think about long-term resilience and invest in solutions that remove recurring problems. It is challenging because of day-to-day pressures, but if boards and executive teams do not lead it, nothing changes.

Emily-Rae Baines

I agree. From a local authority perspective, there is also something about the governance context. Your 'board' may be a cabinet member or ward councillor, and they can be directly affected because councillors and MPs may live in these neighbourhoods too. They see the issues residents face.

Unfortunately, the strategic conversation still often is not happening. It can remain reactive, with solutions appearing only when pressure builds or leaders experience the issue directly. We can be much smarter. It saves money, time and effort in the long run if we use the data, use the intelligence, think strategically and prioritise estates and neighbourhoods.

David Done

For me, the key point is that this is a leadership issue for boards. Boards need to recognise they have to break the cycle, otherwise we will spend the next ten or 20 years doing what we have always done. The benefit of the TSMs, and emerging technology, is that it helps us identify trends and longer-term issues and move towards longer-term plans and solutions.

Emily-Rae Baines

It is great collecting the data, but it would also be really good if board members actually walked around estates more frequently, even once every six months, to check whether the data reflects what is happening. Sometimes it is treated as "that is what the data says" and nothing more. People can also respond in the moment, so it helps to see things first-hand.

David Done

That is a great point. It reminds me of the importance of boards hearing real stories about people's experiences on estates. One way is getting out and doing walkabouts. It can be challenging in a very large organisation, so being clear about which areas need the most attention is important. Bringing lived experience alongside the data is the critical point.

Emily-Rae Baines

Nigel, can I add that this extends to leadership teams too. People want visibility. They want to know that, at all levels, leaders care enough to come and have a look. There is no greater assurance than going and seeing for yourself without micromanaging. As a non-executive director, I have a board meeting shortly and afterwards we are doing an estate walkabout.

It is important. I do estate walkabouts regularly. People appreciate seeing leadership around. You can invite residents to join in, even if they are just passing by. Visibility matters.

Nigel Deacon

Thank you. We will go next to Beverley.

Beverley

Walkabouts are great. The problem I have found is that new directors or executive members join, they want to go on estates, we take them to areas needing investment, they do a walkabout and it is all positive, but then nothing happens. Walkabouts have to lead to action and follow-through. Otherwise, it can be a let-down for residents and staff.

We can identify areas to invest, whether it is bins, anti-social behaviour, redecoration and so on. But much of what we see on estates is service-chargeable. If we do the work, it comes out of residents' pockets. The challenge is keeping service charges manageable.

Nigel Deacon

Really important point. What do we think?

David Done

I recognise what you are saying, Beverley. This is not easy. One issue I try to challenge is value for money. The best test of value for money is the people paying, whether through service charges or otherwise.

We need to be much better at explaining why work needs to be done, why we are taking a certain approach and why it represents good value for money. Problems occur when you spend money and do not explain it, then people simply see higher charges. Many people can accept paying for works if they understand the benefits for them and for the community.

Emily-Rae Baines

It does get more complex when leaseholders are involved. If you identify priorities with residents from the beginning and have transparent conversations about cost, it helps. In some situations, where you are improving a site and getting upstream, charges might not change drastically, but the investment still needs to be made. That is often a board-level conversation.

I would never advocate charging social housing tenants to benefit leaseholders, but there is a balance. It comes down to what residents want, what has the greatest impact and what is the most ethical approach.

We saw this at St Raphael's Estate in Brent. Anti-social behaviour was a significant issue and residents wanted CCTV. The extra charge did not matter to them because it gave comfort. In other estates, residents did not want it. Sometimes that reflected a lack of confidence in how charges were being managed and communicated.

David Done

We all know the biggest source of complaints, particularly from leaseholders, is when the same old problems keep happening and people cannot see value for money. If we can demonstrate we are taking a longer-term strategic approach and addressing recurring issues, we have a better chance of building support.

Nigel Deacon

Great point, thank you. Next.

Kirsty

My question is how we can influence boards to prioritise this area. Even where some work is service-chargeable, we still need people on the ground to manage, monitor and follow-through. Budgets are reduced and priorities conflict, so how do we influence that?

Emily-Rae Baines

You have to take time to build the case. Bring in different perspectives and link it to the organisation's strategic objectives so it is clearly aligned to board direction. Set out the tangible risks: if we do not take action, this is what will happen and this is what you are liable for.

Then show the human impact. Bring resident stories through complaints and feedback. Build the picture of why it would make things more efficient, strengthen front-line services, reduce wastage and optimise how resources are used. If you layer that evidence, a board would struggle to say no without a valid reason, particularly if resident scrutiny groups have made recommendations. Good practice is to explain a decision not to proceed and the reasons why.

David Done

I agree. A lot depends on the approach the executive takes. The executive needs to see this as critical and bring it into the boardroom, having the conversations we have been discussing.

As a board chair, I also recognise we need to support boards to develop a mindset and skillset that takes a longer-term view. For understandable reasons, the sector has been dominated by short-term issues in recent years and we have had to respond to serious problems. The effect is that we can lose sight of longer-term priorities, so there needs to be a reset.

One role for a board chair is working with board members and the executive team to take that broader view and ensure we have people around the table who think that way.

Nigel Deacon

Excellent points, thank you.

Emily-Rae Baines

A quick point on CCTV. It can be expensive, but we had a good experience using temporary cameras for a month. Residents felt listened to. We fed back the data, involved the police and it stopped the behaviour in a particular stairwell. It was a temporary measure, so you do not always have to go straight to a full consultation and long-term installation.

Nigel Deacon

Any further comments on that?

Emily-Rae Baines

That is a great intervention and a good demonstration that it does not take a lot to make a difference. It comes down to using intelligence. Know when a solution is right, know when you need longer-term investment and plan for it. It does not need to be immediate, but starting the conversation now can mean that in three years' time you are ready to go with clarity on what you need.

Nigel Deacon

Last takeaway, David.

David Done

In summary, I recognise we are at a crossroads as a sector. We have data and technology that gives us an incredible opportunity to do things differently.

From my point of view, I want to see a cultural shift in how we look at estates, communal areas and neighbourhoods. We should be much clearer about how we use investment effectively to stop recurring issues that we have been dealing with for the past ten or 20 years.

Nigel Deacon

Emily, your final takeaway.

Emily-Rae Baines

My final takeaway is that landlords should not assume home stops at the front door. Communal spaces should be places people can use, meet, spend time and feel pride in. Unless you get the infrastructure right, they will not be that for many people.

Nigel Deacon

Thank you very much, David. Thank you very much, Emily-Rae, that was really helpful. Thank you to everybody who joined and contributed. I will share some resources over the next few days and details of further events we have planned. Thank you and stay safe. Enjoy the rest of your day.

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