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Regulator of Social Housing

Decision

Brighter Places (L3758) - Regulatory Judgement: 30 September 2026

Updated 30 September 2026

Applies to England

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Our Judgement

	Grade/Judgement	Change	Date of assessment
Consumer	C2 Our judgement is that there are some weaknesses in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and improvement is needed.	First grading	September 2026
Governance	G1 Our judgement is that the landlord meets our governance requirements.	Assessed and unchanged	September 2026
Viability	V2 Our judgement is that the landlord meets our viability requirements. It has the financial capacity to deal with a reasonable range of adverse scenarios but needs to manage material risks to ensure continued compliance.	Assessed and unchanged	September 2026

Reason for publication

We are publishing a regulatory judgement for Brighter Places following an inspection completed in September 2026.

This regulatory judgement confirms a consumer grade of C2, a governance grade of G1 and a financial viability grade of V2.

Prior to this regulatory judgement, the governance and financial viability gradings for Brighter Places were last updated in November 2025 following a stability check to confirm a G1 grade for governance and a V2 grade for

financial viability. This is the first time we have issued a consumer grade in relation to this landlord.

Summary of the decision

From the assurance gained during the inspection, based on the evidence provided by Brighter Places, we have concluded that there are some weaknesses in Brighter Places delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and improvement is needed, specifically in relation to outcomes in our Safety and Quality Standard and the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard. Based on this assessment, we have concluded a C2 grade for Brighter Places.

Our judgement is that Brighter Places meets our governance requirements. Brighter Places has provided evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of its governance arrangements and that it continues to effectively manage the risks of its activities, allowing it to deliver its strategic objectives. Based on this assessment, we have concluded a G1 grade for Brighter Places.

Our judgement is that Brighter Places meets our financial viability requirements and has the financial capacity to deal with a reasonable range of adverse scenarios, but it does need to manage material risks to ensure continued compliance. With increased spending on existing homes, Brighter Places has reduced capacity to manage adverse events. Brighter Places is also reliant on the delivery of a significant asset disposal programme to achieve its strategic objectives. Brighter Places has provided appropriate assurance that it has access to sufficient liquidity and adequate funding in place. Based on this assessment, we have concluded a V2 grade for Brighter Places.

How we reached our judgement

We carried out an inspection of Brighter Places to assess how well Brighter Places is delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and meeting our governance and financial viability requirements, as part of our planned regulatory inspection programme. During the inspection, we considered all four of the consumer standards: Neighbourhood and Community Standard, Safety and Quality Standard, Tenancy Standard, and the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.

During the inspection we observed a board meeting and customer experience committee meeting, spoke with tenants, held meetings with

Brighter Places including its non-executive directors, interviewed staff, and reviewed a wide range of documents provided by Brighter Places.

Our regulatory judgement is based on a review of all of the relevant information we obtained during the inspection as well as analysis of information supplied by Brighter Places in its regulatory returns and other regulatory engagement activity.

Summary of findings

Consumer – C2 – September 2026

During the inspection, Brighter Places provided evidence-based assurance that it has appropriate systems in place to ensure the health and safety of its tenants in their homes and associated communal areas. Brighter Places is meeting landlord health and safety requirements including acting to resolve issues identified during assessments. Brighter Places regularly obtains independent assurance across all statutory compliance activities including making sure the information it holds is correct.

There is evidence that arrangements are in place to ensure there is an accurate record of the condition of Brighter Places' homes, including a process for keeping this information up to date through a programme of physical inspections. Brighter Places uses the information it has on the quality and safety of its homes to make decisions on future investment to maintain and improve the condition of its homes. We found evidence of weaknesses in the management of damp, mould and condensation by Brighter Places. The volume of open cases remains relatively high and Brighter Places has not demonstrated sustained compliance in meeting the legally required timescales to investigate, identify and repair hazards like damp and mould. While some recent reporting periods show compliance, others show a minority of emergency cases which are not being resolved or made safe within required timescales and where investigations and tenant contact do not consistently meet targets. While Brighter Places has strengthened its operating model, increased contractor capacity, improved governance oversight and implemented a range of service improvements, further evidence of sustained improvement is required.

We also found evidence of weaknesses in the provision of an effective, efficient and timely repairs service. Repairs performance has improved significantly following changes to the delivery of the service and this has increased tenant satisfaction as well as reducing a backlog of repairs. We

have seen evidence that the changes made are improving operational performance, however this is not yet reflected consistently in the outcomes for tenants.

We found that Brighter Places addresses complaints fairly, effectively and promptly, and that it is taking action to address increased levels of complaints. We saw evidence that Brighter Places undertakes work to understand why complaints are made and to use any learning to improve the experience for tenants raising complaints.

During the inspection we saw evidence that Brighter Places works in partnership with relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour, including hate incidents, in the neighbourhoods where it provides social housing.

In relation to the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard, there is evidence of Brighter Places using the information it holds to tailor its services to meet tenants' diverse needs and deliver fair and equitable outcomes. Relevant tenant information is currently collected through a number of methods, including a two year 'Data Collection Programme' and operational touchpoints such as repairs and complaints interactions. Brighter Places was able to evidence that it holds accurate and up to date information on a significant proportion of its tenants via these collection methods.

We found evidence that tenants have a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise Brighter Places' strategies, policies and services. These opportunities have directly influenced how Brighter Places delivers its services to improve outcomes for tenants, including tenant input into the recent repairs contractor procurement process. Work is ongoing to strengthen the effectiveness of tenant influence and scrutiny, and to support engagement arrangements to deliver the intended outcomes. Brighter Places will need to be able to evidence that recent, and upcoming, changes are embedded and delivering strengthened scrutiny.

During our inspection we saw evidence that Brighter Places' approach to lettings and allocations is transparent, and that measures are in place to ensure terms of tenancy are appropriate and meet the needs of tenants. There are a range of measures in place to support tenancy sustainment, including successfully helping tenants to access financial support.

Governance – G1 – September 2026

Based on the evidence gained from the inspection, we have assurance that Brighter Places' governance arrangements enable it to effectively

manage its risks and adequately control the organisation, allowing it to deliver its strategic aims.

Brighter Places has provided assurance that its board proactively reviews its approach to delivering against its strategy. It regularly considers alternative options to ensure it is achieving value for money and is making the best use of its resources, with a balance between building new homes, investment in existing homes and the delivery of effective landlord services to residents.

Brighter Places was able to provide evidence that it has established, and maintains clear roles, responsibilities and accountabilities within its leadership and governance structure. Continuing governance improvement is evidenced through in-depth periodic external governance reviews.

Board member skills, experience and knowledge are aligned with the activities of the organisation and there is a structured approach to developing and appraising skills that feeds into a comprehensive recruitment and succession planning programme.

Brighter Places has a risk management and control framework that aligns to its strategic risks. There is evidence of robust discussion and board challenge of the controls and assurance on strategic risks. There is also evidence of risks being managed effectively in practice, including its approach to risks arising from its strategic asset disposal programme.

There is evidence that Brighter Places' board proactively seeks and gains an appropriate level of assurance across a range of areas. This was evidenced by enhanced board visibility and reporting of asset disposal performance.

Board ownership of stress testing, mitigation strategies and wider governance oversight of risks through regular and structured review was evident through our inspection. Reporting to board provides sufficient detail for the board to ensure effective oversight.

Viability – V2 – September 2026

Based on the evidence gained through the inspection we have concluded that there is appropriate assurance that Brighter Places' financial plans are consistent with, and support, its financial strategy. Brighter Places has appropriately evidenced that it has an adequately funded business plan, sufficient security in place to support its financial plans, and is forecast to continue to meet its financial covenants under a reasonable range of adverse scenarios. Brighter Places' board has effective oversight of covenant compliance with performance reported regularly.

Brighter Places is increasing its investment into existing homes, putting pressure on its financial performance. Achievement of financial targets also relies on a significant asset disposal programme. At the same time, Brighter Places is delivering a development programme, although at lower levels than in previous years. When set in the context of the wider economic pressures and factors noted above, Brighter Places' capacity to respond to adverse events is reduced.

Background to the judgement

About the landlord

Brighter Places owns and manages around 3,300 social homes, primarily across Bristol and the surrounding areas.

Brighter Places is a charitable co-operative and community benefit society with a relatively simple group structure comprising one active subsidiary. Its main purpose is the provision of social housing for general needs, but it also provides homes for shared ownership.

Brighter Places aim to deliver 355 new social homes in the next five years.

At 31 March 2026, Brighter Places employed the full-time equivalent of 108 staff.

Our role and regulatory approach

We regulate for a viable, efficient, and well governed social housing sector able to deliver quality homes and services for current and future tenants.

We regulate at the landlord level to drive improvement in how landlords operate. By landlord we mean a registered provider of social housing. These can either be local authorities, or private registered providers (other organisations registered with us such as non-profit housing associations, co-operatives, or profit-making organisations).

We set standards which state outcomes that landlords must deliver. The outcomes of our standards include both the required outcomes and specific expectations we set. Where we find there are significant failures in landlords

which we consider to be material to the landlord's delivery of those outcomes, we hold them to account. Ultimately this provides protection for tenants' homes and services and achieves better outcomes for current and future tenants. It also contributes to a sustainable sector which can attract strong investment.

We have a different role for regulating local authorities than for other landlords. This is because we have a narrower role for local authorities and the Governance and Financial Viability Standard, and Value for Money Standard do not apply. Further detail on which standards apply to different landlords can be found on our standards page (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards).

We assess the performance of landlords through inspections and by reviewing data that landlords are required to submit to us. In Depth Assessments (IDAs) were one of our previous assessment processes, which are now replaced by our inspections programme from 1 April 2024. We also respond where there is an issue or a potential issue that may be material to a landlord's delivery of the outcomes of our standards. We publish regulatory judgements that describe our view of landlords' performance with our standards. We also publish grades for landlords with more than 1,000 social housing homes.

The Housing Ombudsman deals with individual complaints. When individual complaints are referred to us, we investigate if we consider that the issue may be material to a landlord's delivery of the outcomes of our standards.

For more information about our approach to regulation, please see Regulating the Standards (https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/how-we-regulate).

Further information

- Regulating the standards (https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/how-we-regulate)
- Regulatory standards for landlords (/government/admin/collections/1550109)

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