

# Building maintenance maps

## Description

These maps show the factors which influence whether housing's quality, safety and sustainability are maintained or improved once built.

We created these maps as tools to:

- consider emerging issues, by identifying where they appear on the map and following the arrows backwards to find a root cause
- review future interventions, by identifying what they would impact and considering the related factors which may enable or pose a risk to their success.

## How to use these maps

Each shape includes a factor that will influence whether a home is maintained. These factors are linked by arrows. Follow the arrows to understand how different factors influence each other.

For example if you have a 'legal or personal responsibility to identify issues' it may influence whether you 'look to identify issues and opportunities for improvement' which in turn influences whether 'issues and opportunities to improve the building are identified'.

There are 3 overarching groups of factors:

1. Identifying issues
2. Taking action to maintain
3. Effectively completing works

## Maps in this series

### General factors map

The first map in this pack, shows the factors which influence housing maintenance in general.

### Housing type specific maps

Then we have created a series of 6 maps which show the specific considerations within different housing types. These maps include roles and responsibilities involved in maintenance for the type of building. They also highlight the factors which have a significant impact on whether properties' quality and safety is maintained through occupation.

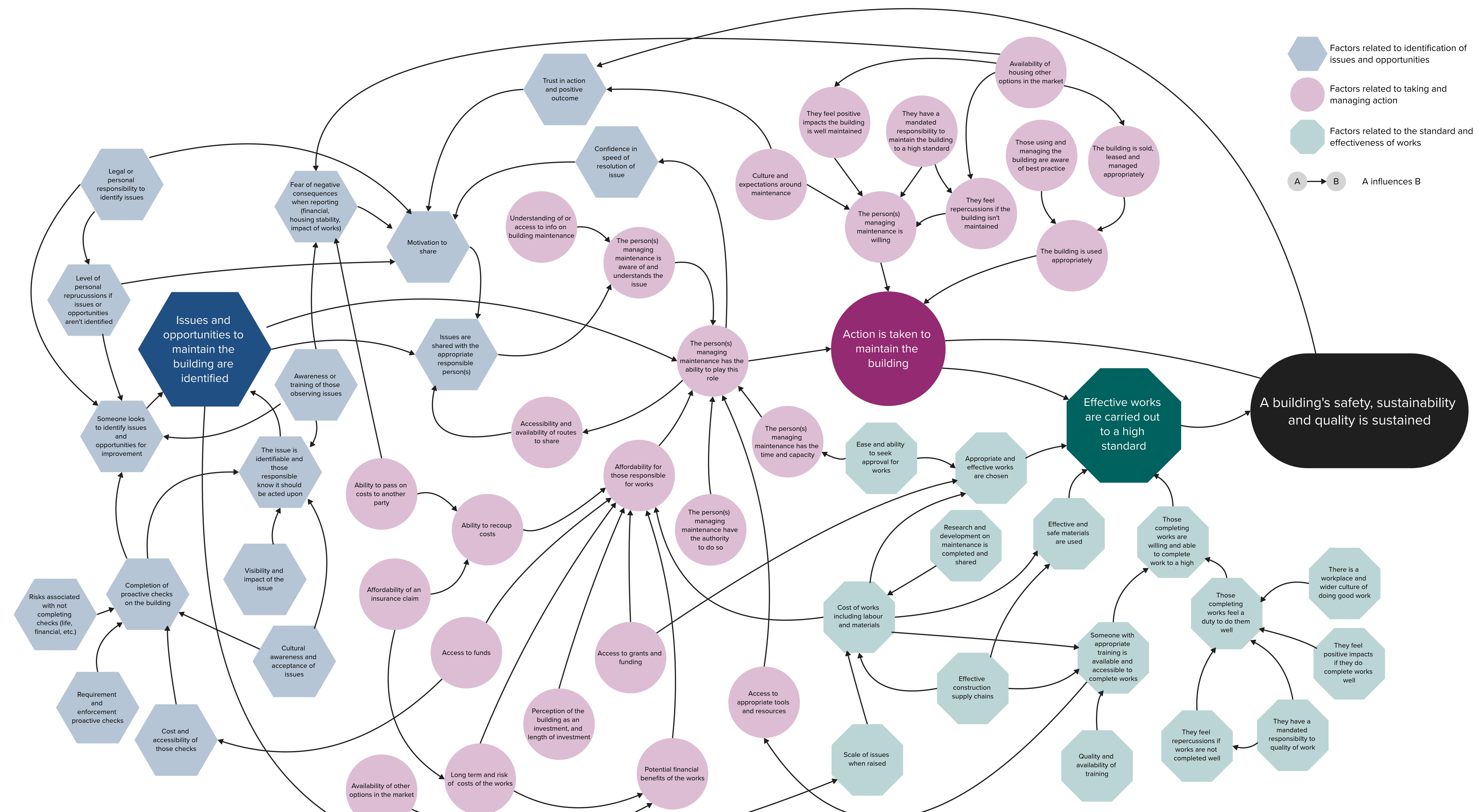
The housing types included are:

1. Owned occupied homes (which includes freeholder residents in individual homes, and commonholders, leaseholders and shared owners maintaining their own properties)
2. Shared spaces and facilities in multiple occupancy buildings like blocks of flats (freeholders, commonholders, leaseholders and shared owners where they share facilities)
3. Private rented homes
4. Social rented homes
5. Residential healthcare and educational facilities (These are grouped as they follow similar processes)
6. Licensed buildings with property guardians

### Share your feedback

If you have any feedback or ideas for improvements, please email us at [SystemDesignTeam@communities.gov.uk](mailto:SystemDesignTeam@communities.gov.uk)

# Factors influencing property maintenance



## Owner occupied properties

### Roles

#### Owner

Lives in the property. Feels most impact of quality in experience, improvements for investment and cost of bills. Responsible for all maintenance and improvement.

Includes freeholders of houses, and leaseholders, commonholders and shared owners within their own dwellings.

#### Assessment contractor

Individuals with specific expertise and accreditation (electrical, gas, environmental). Hired to carry out inspections of properties.

#### Works contractor

Hired to complete works on properties. Most commonly sole traders or small companies.

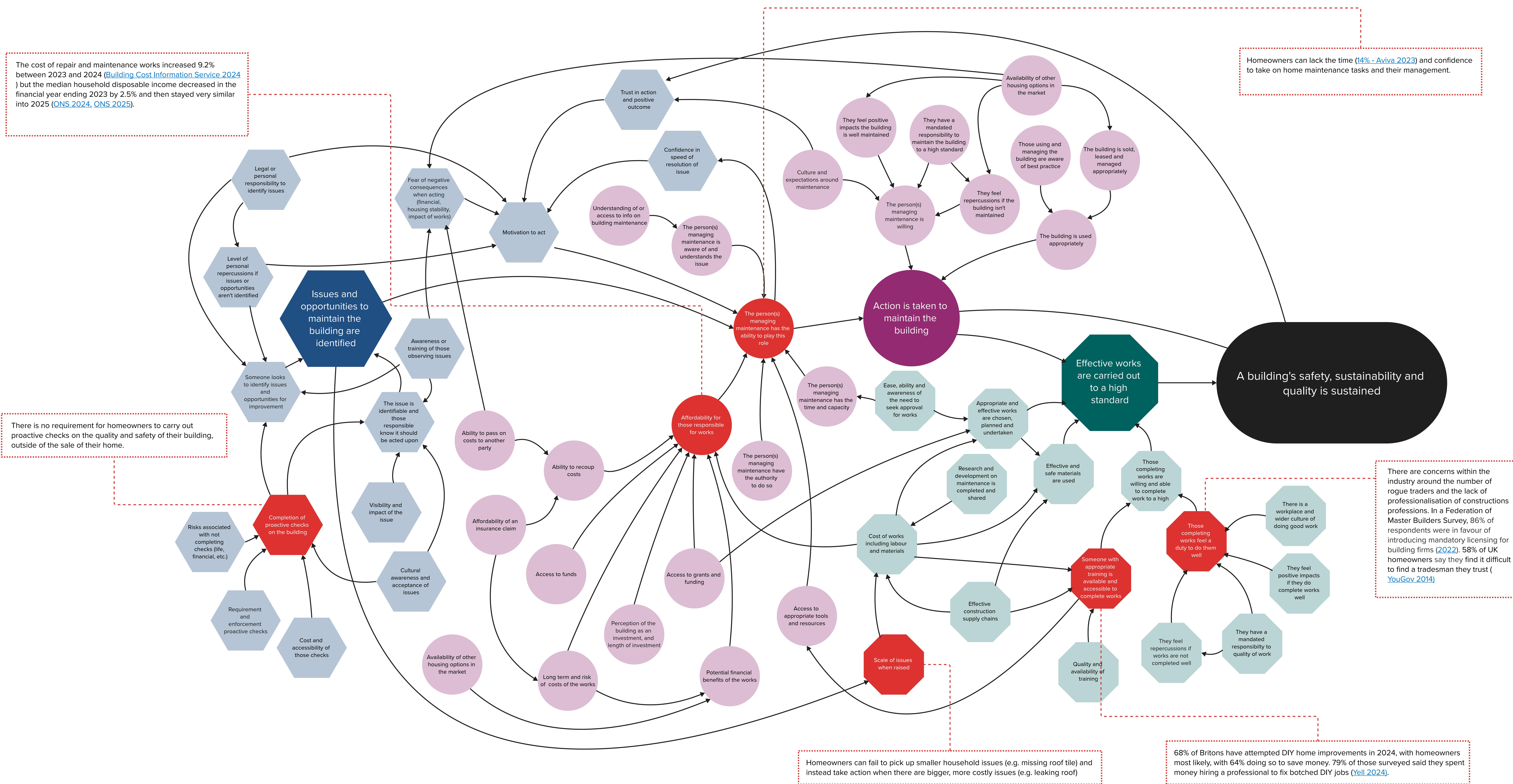
#### Courts and Trading Standards

Routes for redress where there are issues with works completed.

#### Local authority

Should ensure all buildings used for residential purposes meet housing safety standards. Has a legal duty to keep housing conditions in their area under review and identify any action needed.

- Factors related to identification of issues and opportunities
- Factors related to taking and managing action
- Factors related to the standard and effectiveness of works
- Key current pain points



# Multiple occupancy buildings

## Roles (Not all roles are present in all buildings, and this will depend on the ownership and management structures)

**Leaseholder**

Owns the property within a building for a fixed term, but not the building or land. Must pay ground rent to the freeholder. Responsible for maintenance of their own property.

**Tenant**

Lives in the property. Feels most impact of quality in experience and cost of bills. Responsible for identifying issues, minor maintenance (as in their contract) or resolving issues caused by guests.

**Landlord**

Owns and rents the property. Responsible for its maintenance to a suitable level for habitation including energy performance and safety. Subject to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and Homes Act 2018.

**Freeholder**

Owns the freehold of a property which can include a building and other property or land. Responsible for repairs and maintenance to the building's structure and shared parts of the building, such as lifts and communal stairways.

**Collective of enfranchised leaseholders**

Has purchased or extended their lease to the freehold of their property, including the right to maintain the property.

**Commonholder**

Owns the property within a building for a fixed term and a share of the building or land through a commonhold association. Responsible for the maintenance of their own property.

**Managing agent**

A company that may manage a property on behalf of a freeholder or resident-led management organisation. Takes care of day-to-day responsibilities including maintenance and management.

**Section 24 appointed manager**

A manager appointed by the First-Tier Tribunal to take over the landlord's right to manage the building. The manager carries out their functions as a tribunal appointed official and not as the manager of the landlord or the landlord's obligations under the lease.

**Resident-led management organisation**

A company or organisation which manages the building as directed by residents and leaseholders. This may include Resident Management Companies, Right-to-Manage Companies, Commonhold Associations, or Share of Freehold Companies. These organisations may manage the maintenance and service charge collection in a building, or may appoint a managing agent to do this on their behalf. Tenants Associations when recognised have a legal right to have surveys conducted on the building, influence contractors chosen and be consulted on building management.

**Works contractor**

Hired to complete works on properties. Most commonly sole traders or small companies.

**Assessment contractor**

Individuals with specific expertise and accreditation (electrical, gas, environmental). Hired to carry out inspections of properties.

**Local authority**

Should ensure all buildings used for residential purposes meet housing safety standards. Has a legal duty to keep housing conditions in their area under review and identify any action needed.

**Courts and Housing Ombudsman**

Routes for redress where there are issues.

Factors related to identification of issues and opportunities

Factors related to taking and managing action

Factors related to the standard and effectiveness of works

Key current pain points


While freeholders, when managing a building, are responsible for maintaining common areas and make decisions on the costs and scale of works undertaken, it is leaseholders who are responsible for paying these costs through service charges or increased insurance rates. They should consult before doing any work that will cost each leaseholder more than £250 in total or £100 per year.

As there are no mandated proactive checks on shared spaces, identifying issues falls to the day-to-day manager of the building and residents. Residents may be less likely to identify issues in shared spaces where they spend less time and feel less duty. Safety and quality risks in large buildings may be complex and harder to identify for those who have not had training or guidance.

In buildings comprising of multiple dwellings the impacts of shared structures may not be as directly identifiable e.g. it may be hard for a resident to identify the cause of increased energy or water bills beyond their own properties where these aren't significant hazards.

The responsible person for the building, which may be the freeholder, must conduct a 'suitable and sufficient' fire risk assessment. Freeholders have no obligation to do proactive checks on the structure of the building. Where there is a Tenants Association, they have the right to appoint a surveyor to assess the building where there are concerns or to query a service charge.

From resident engagement in remediation, we have heard that communication between managing agents, RTM/Resident Management companies and freeholders and the people who live in buildings as leaseholders is often poor and complex. This is particularly the case for tenants who may get second hand information from landlords. Who do residents need to contact in which situation may not be clear and response times and quality are variable.



# Roles

**Tenant** (blue hexagon) Lives in the property feels most impact of issues and responsible for identifying issues, minor maintenance (as in their contract) or resolving issues caused by guests.

**Landlord** (pink hexagon) Owns and rents the property. Responsible for its maintenance to a suitable level for habitation including energy performance and safety. Subject to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and Homes Act 2018.

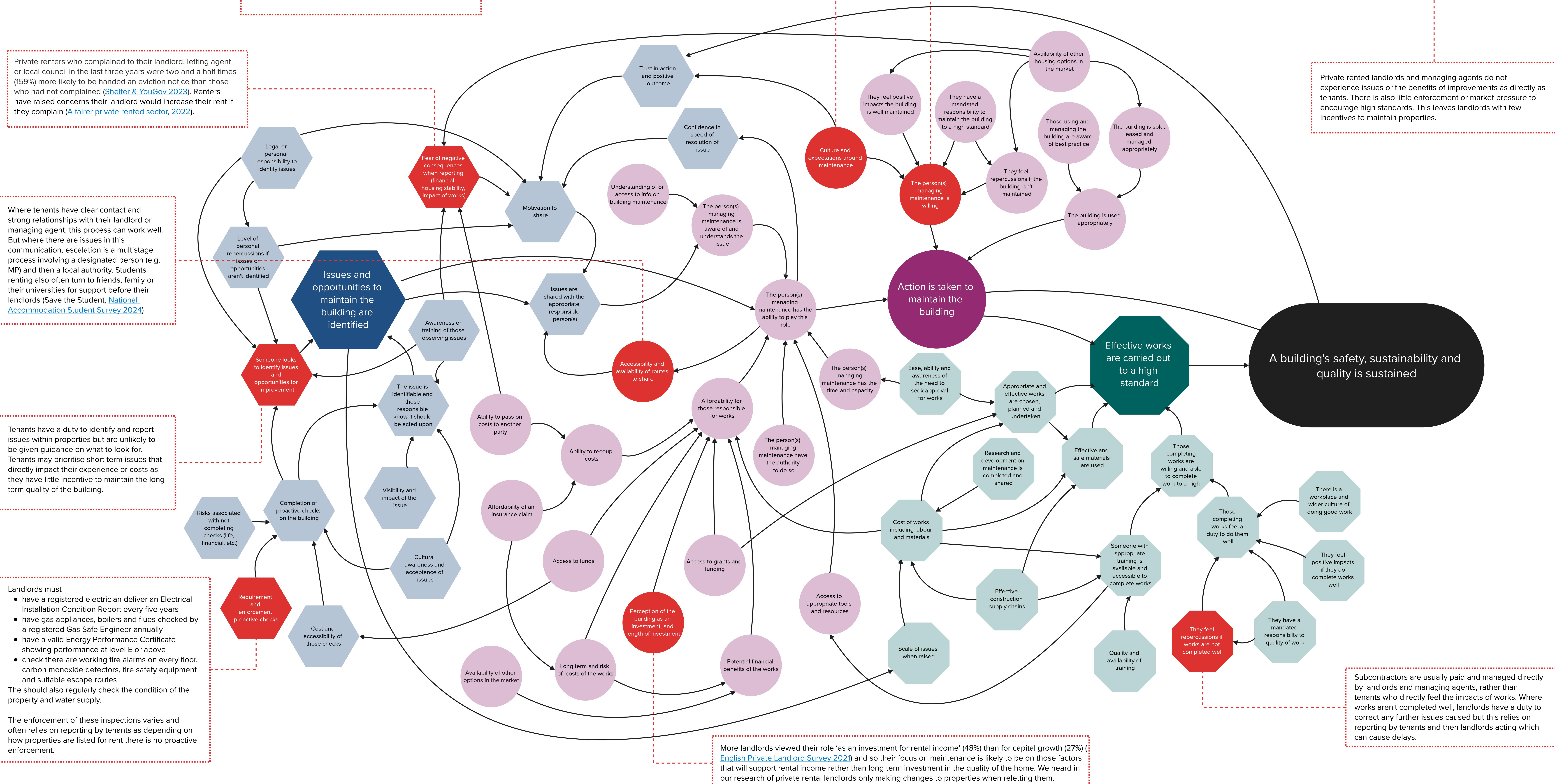
**Managing agent** (green hexagon) A company that may manage a property on behalf of a landlord, taking care of the day-to-day responsibilities including

**Works contractor** Hired to complete works on properties. Most commonly sole traders or small companies.

**Assessment contractor** Hired to carry out inspections of properties to standards. Has a legal duty to keep housing conditions in their area under review and identify any action needed.

**Local authority** (blue hexagon) Individuals with specific expertise and accreditation (electrical, gas, environmental). Factors related to taking management decisions where there are issues.

**Courts and Housing Ombudsman** (green hexagon) Issues and ombudsmen's factors related to the standards of service provided by landlords.



## Roles

## Tenant

Lives in the property feels most impact of quality in experience and cost of bills. Responsible for identifying issues, minor maintenance (as in their contract) or resolving issues caused by guests.

## Tenant Management Organisation

A tenant management organisation (TMO) is an organisation set up under the UK Government's Housing (Right to Manage) Regulations 1994, which allows social housing residents to take over responsibility for the running of their homes. TMOs can choose how much or how little responsibility they want to take over from the local authority and this may include maintenance.

## Registered Provider

Owns and rents the property. Responsible for its maintenance to the decent homes standard including energy performance and safety. Subject to Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, they may also operate under the Right to Repair Scheme.

## Temporary housing provider

Usually a private landlord, who owns and rents the property through the local authority as temporary housing. Responsible for its maintenance to a suitable level for habitation including energy performance and safety. Subject to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and Homes Act 2018.

## Management services

A company that may manage a property on behalf of a Registered Provider. Takes care of the day-to-day responsibilities including maintenance and management.

## Assessment contractor

Individuals with specific expertise and accreditation (electrical, gas, environmental). Hired to carry out inspections of properties.

## Works contractor

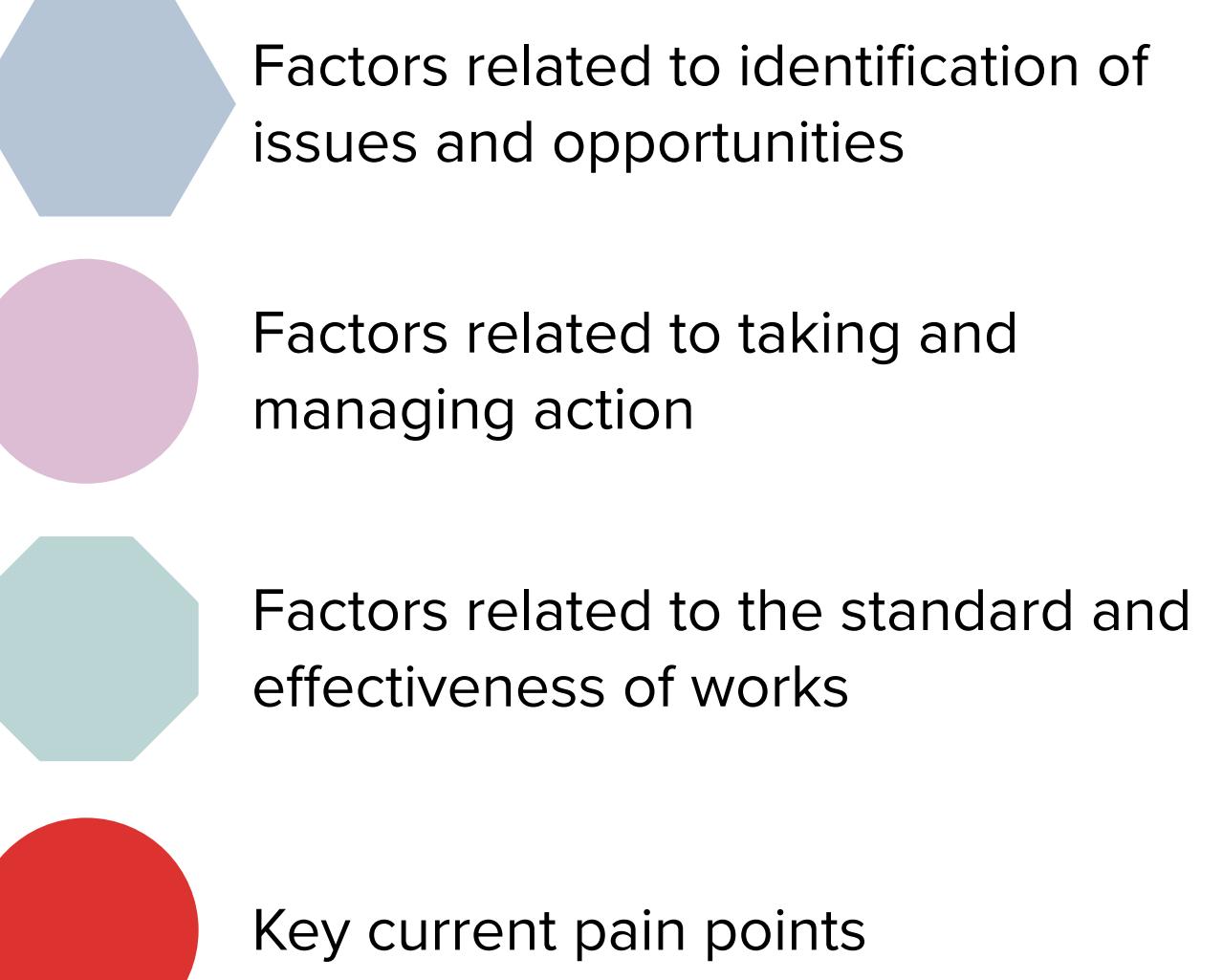
Hired to complete works on properties. Most commonly sole traders or small companies.

## Local authority

Own and run some social housing as a Registered Provider. Responsibility to ensure all buildings used for residential purposes meet housing safety standards. Local authorities have a legal duty to keep the housing conditions in their area under review and identify any action that may need to be taken.

## Social Housing Regulator

An arms length body of MHCLG which undertakes regulation and inspection of providers of social housing, may take action if these standards are breached and there is a significant risk to tenants or potential tenants.



Tenants are placed in temporary housing by local authorities when they have become homeless. This precarity, the stress of being in temporary accommodation and having little to no choice about where they live can mean some residents fear negative consequences if they complain or raise concerns within their housing.

In a [Households in Temporary Accommodation All-Party Parliamentary Group report \(2023\)](#), residents talked about not knowing what services they could access help from. This was particularly true of residents who had been placed out of area, away from their support networks. In temporary accommodation, a resident must communicate directly with the housing provider not the local authority who has placed them for repairs.

In the case of Grenfell, the relationship between the TMO and residents was difficult for many years. Residents felt the TMO was uncaring, a bully, belittling, marginalising them considered them a nuisance and failed to take their concerns and requests for repairs seriously.

We also heard particular issues in our research around the maintenance and organisation of funding for repairs in communal areas.

In [special reports by the Housing Ombudsman](#), maladministration of repairs is a consistent theme, with repairs not happening within acceptable timescales (with some residents waiting years for their repair to be completed) due to poor management from providers and their management services. Repair problems were often compounded by poor record keeping, which also impacted the handling of the resulting complaint.

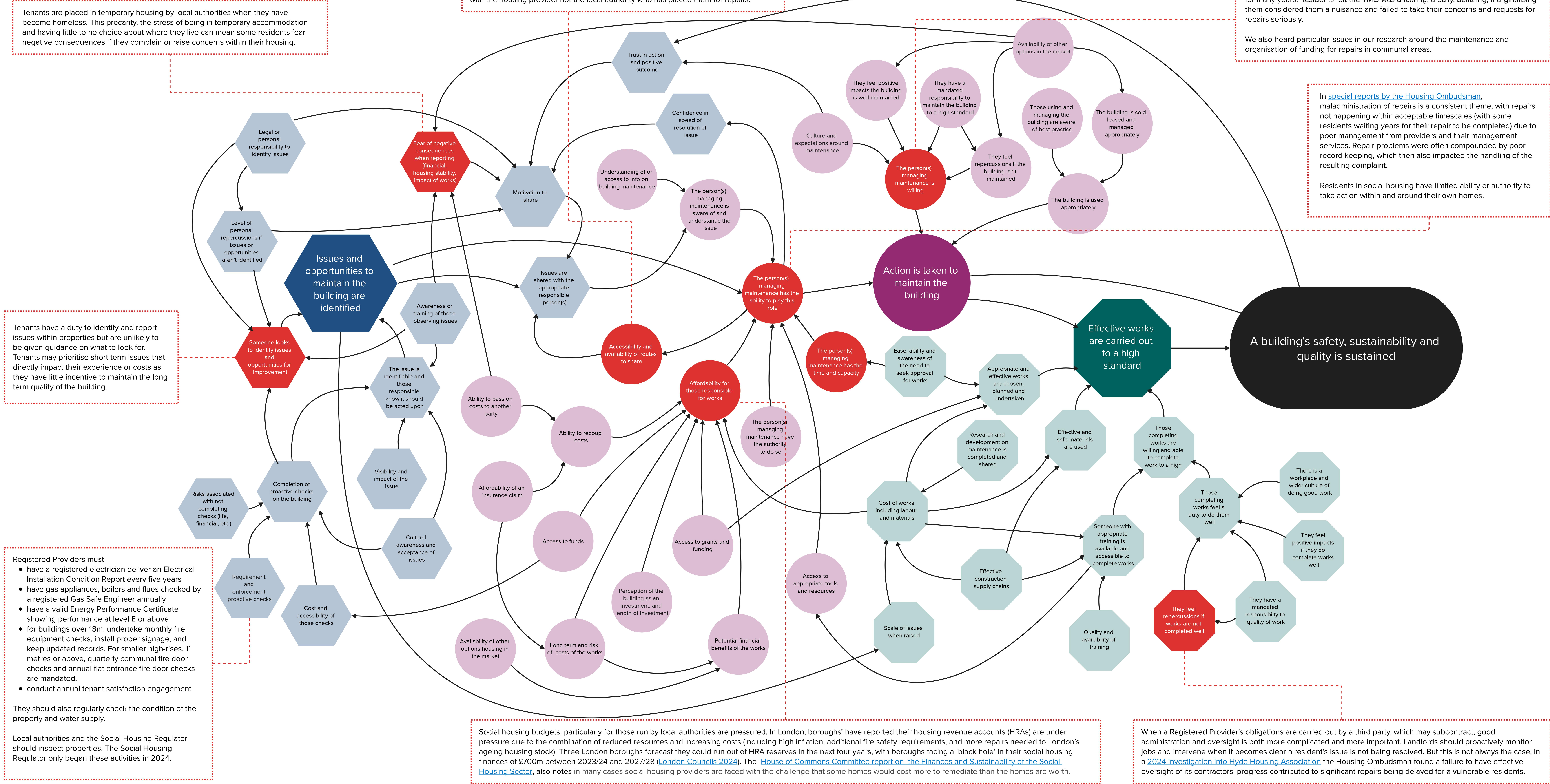
Residents in social housing have limited ability or authority to take action within and around their own homes.

Tenants have a duty to identify and report issues within properties but are unlikely to be given guidance on what to look for. Tenants may prioritise short term issues that directly impact their experience or costs as they have little incentive to maintain the long term quality of the building.

- have a registered electrician deliver an Electrical Installation Condition Report every five years
- have gas appliances, boilers and flues checked by a registered Gas Safe Engineer annually
- have a valid Energy Performance Certificate showing performance at level E or above
- for buildings over 18m, undertake monthly fire equipment checks, install proper signage, and keep updated records. For smaller high-rises, 11 metres or above, quarterly communal fire door checks and annual flat entrance fire door checks are mandated.
- conduct annual tenant satisfaction engagement

They should also regularly check the condition of the property and water supply.

Local authorities and the Social Housing Regulator should inspect properties. The Social Housing Regulator only began these activities in 2024.

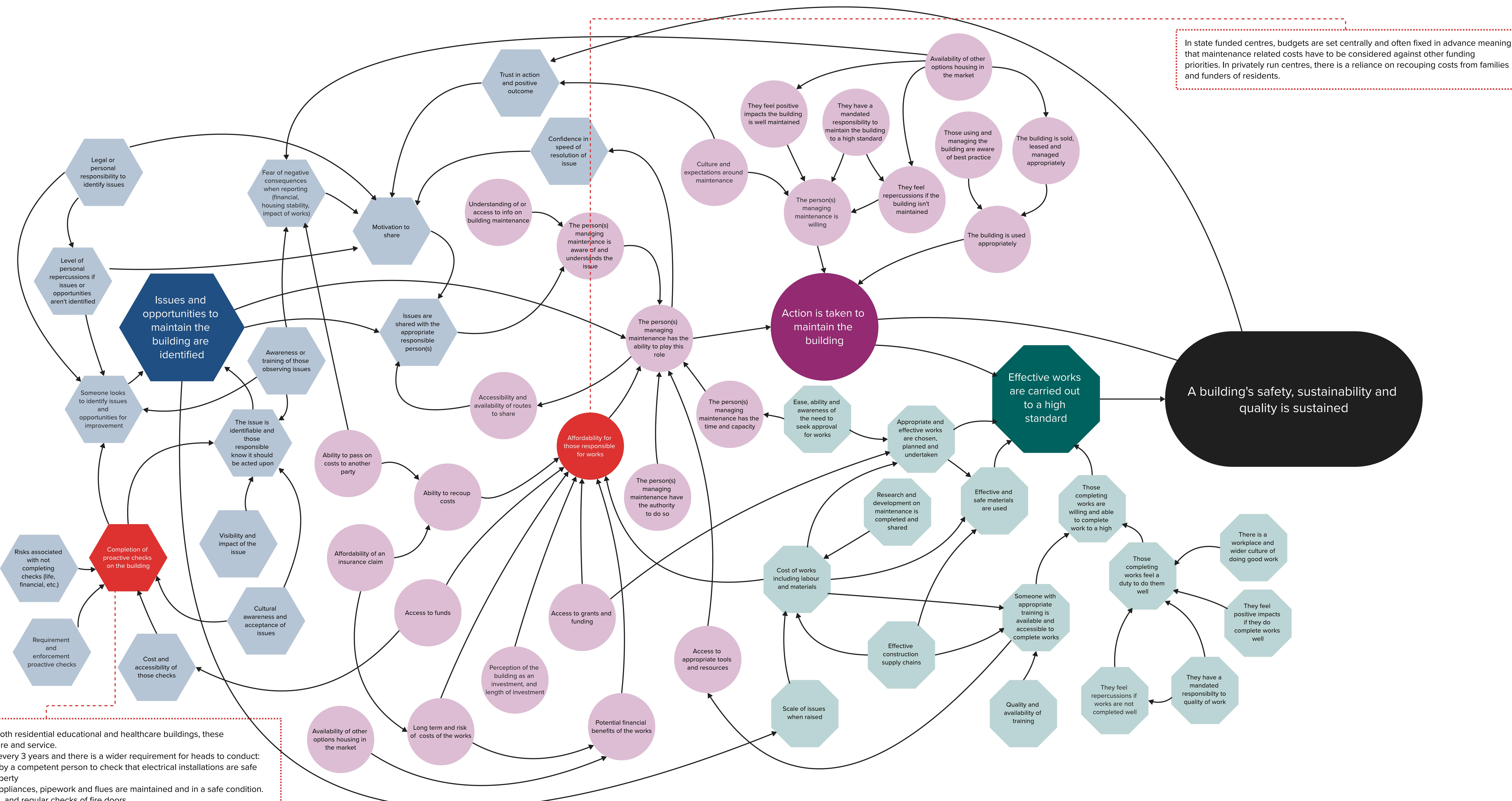


Social housing budgets, particularly for those run by local authorities are pressured. In London, boroughs' have reported their housing revenue accounts (HRAs) are under pressure due to the combination of reduced resources and increasing costs (including high inflation, additional fire safety requirements, and more repairs needed to London's ageing housing stock). Three London boroughs forecast they could run out of HRA reserves in the next four years, with boroughs facing a 'black hole' in their social housing finances of £700m between 2023/24 and 2027/28 ([London Councils 2024](#)). The [House of Commons Committee report on the Finances and Sustainability of the Social Housing Sector](#), also notes in many cases social housing providers are faced with the challenge that some homes would cost more to remediate than the homes are worth.

When a Registered Provider's obligations are carried out by a third party, which may subcontract, good administration and oversight is both more complicated and more important. Landlords should proactively monitor jobs and intervene when it becomes clear a resident's issue is not being resolved. But this is not always the case, in a [2024 investigation into Hyde Housing Association](#) the Housing Ombudsman found a failure to have effective oversight of its contractors' progress contributed to significant repairs being delayed for a vulnerable residents.

# Roles

Resident	Staff inc. maintenance	Managing organisation	Governors (education only)	Ofsted (education only)	DFE (education only)	Local authority	Works contractor	Health related to education of residents and opportunities
Lives in the property feels most impact of quality in experience and safety	Supports residents and runs the facility. Responsible for identifying and reporting issues, if in a maintenance role they may also be responsible for managing and resolving issues.	Operational responsibilities for buildings' quality and upkeep of the building and issues, if in a maintenance role they may also be responsible for managing and resolving issues.	In schools the overall responsibility for the quality and upkeep of the building and issues, if in a maintenance role they may also be responsible for managing and resolving issues.	Should ensure all buildings used for educational purposes meet housing safety standards. Has a legal duty to keep housing (independent schools) or manager (residential health facility).	Inspect schools and residential educational facilities using the school and college inspection framework (SCCIF).	Set standards for all schools and residential educational facilities and allocates funds to those which are run by the state, may manage in a management contract.	Hired to complete works. Must provide funding for maintenance through capital funds. Handles address and complaints.	Facilitates delivery of standard and effective works
<b>Resident families</b>	<b>Local government and social care</b>	<b>CQC (health only)</b>	<b>Assessment contractor</b>	<b>Local government and social care</b>	<b>Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP)</b>	<b>Local authority</b>	<b>Works contractor</b>	<b>Health related to education of residents and opportunities</b>
In privately funded facilities, residents' families or other funders pay fees which must cover the maintenance of the building.	Investigate individual complaints about adult social care in the England, including the buildings	Individuals with specific health and social care needs. An arms length body of DHSC and the independent regulator of health and social care in the England, including the buildings	Individuals with specific health and social care needs. An arms length body of DHSC and the independent regulator of health and social care in the England, including the buildings	Set standards and provide design patterns for current and future buildings	Keeps current complaints	Keeps current complaints	Keeps current complaints	Keeps current complaints
<b>Resident families</b>	<b>Local government and social care</b>	<b>CQC (health only)</b>	<b>Assessment contractor</b>	<b>Local government and social care</b>	<b>Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP)</b>	<b>Local authority</b>	<b>Works contractor</b>	<b>Health related to education of residents and opportunities</b>



There are some mandated regular checks on both residential educational and healthcare buildings, the requirements are part of wider standards for care and service.

In educational facilities, SCIFF checks happen every 3 years and there is a wider requirement for heads to conduct

- periodic inspections should be carried out by a competent person to check that electrical installations are safe

- periodic inspections should be carried out by a competent person to check that electrical installations are safe
  - periodic inspections for damage to the property
  - an annual gas safety check and ensuring appliances, pipework and flues are maintained and in a safe condition
  - an annual check of fire alarms and systems, and regular checks of fire doors

- an annual check of life alarms and systems, and regular checks of life doors

- Premises must be fit for purpose in line with statutory requirements and should take account of national best practice
  - There should be regular health and safety risk assessments of the premises
  - People's needs must be taken into account when premises are designed, built, maintained, renovated or adapted.

# Roles

**Owner** (Pink circle) - Lives in the property under a license rather than a tenancy agreement. Feels most impact of quality in experience and cost of bills. Responsible for identifying issues, minor maintenance (as in their contract) or resolving issues caused by guests.

**Property guardian** (Blue hexagon) - Owns what would be a vacant property, if not licensed to a property guardian.

**Managing agent** (Blue hexagon) - Hired to complete works on properties. Most commonly sole traders or small companies.

**Assessment contractor** (Blue hexagon) - Should ensure all buildings used for residential purposes meet housing safety standards. Has a legal duty to keep housing conditions in their area under review and identify any action needed.

**Works contractor** (Teal hexagon) - Hired to carry out inspections of properties and responsible for finding and managing guardians and the conditions of buildings.

**Local authority** (Blue hexagon) - Issues and opportunities

**Property guardian providers** (Teal hexagon) - Association (Pink circle) - Regulation (Teal circle)

