

Report to Housing Lead Member Briefing

Repairs and Maintenance Service Performance Update Report 2025

Housing LMB: 11/08/2025

Housing Scrutiny Commission: 26/08/2025

HEN Board: 02/09/2025

Lead Member: Councillor Cutkelvin

Lead director: Chris Burgin

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Samuel Taylor and Nilkesh Patel, Head of Service
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- Report version number: - V1

1. Summary

This report is intended to provide an update on the current position of the Repairs and Maintenance Team and its performance throughout 2024-25, with projections for 2025-26. The report will detail the challenges faced, such as, changes in legislation, recruitment and increased demand. It will also outline improvement actions and projected timelines for reducing outstanding repairs.

This report does not detail health and safety compliance; this has been separated out and will be presented later in the year to cover all aspects: Asbestos, Electrical Safety, Fire Safety, Gas Safety, Lift Safety and Water Hygiene.

All data within this report, where not specified, is accurate as of 14/07/2025.

2. Recommended actions/decision

It is recommended that the report is noted.

3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

The report has been sent to the Heads of Service for Technical Services and Tenancy Management for comment.

The repairs performance is formally evaluated at the following forums:

Social Housing Regulator Board – Bi-monthly
Housing Senior Management Team Meetings – Quarterly
Housing Lead Member Briefing – Bi-annually
Housing, Economy and Neighbourhoods Board – Bi-annually

4. Background and options with supporting evidence

General

The Council has around 19,500 properties and 1,700 leaseholders across the city, the services provided are below (Leasehold properties may differ):

- Responsive repairs
- Emergency out of hours repairs
- Compliance works for Gas, Fire and Electrical
- Pre-planned maintenance
- Renovation of Void properties to prepare them for re-letting

The way in which repairs are reported can vary, but will generally be one of the following:

- Compliance works – driven by the Council as we have an obligation to complete.
- Responsive repairs – generally driven by the tenant due to something going wrong, usually reported via Housing Online, or Customer Services.
- Complaints/Enquiries – tenant driven by escalating through different routes, for example, complaints or via Councillors.
- Internally reported – where officers encounter repairs and pro-actively report them on behalf of the tenant.

Repairs will generally sit in three main categories:

- Priority 1 – these are emergency repairs, the Service Level Agreement (SLA) to respond is 24 hours.
- Priority 2 – these are routine repairs, the SLA to respond is 10 working days.
- Priority 3 – these are programmed repairs, the SLA to respond is between 8 to 52 weeks.

We also use additional categories, these are dictated by legislation or policies, for example, response times for damp and mould works are dictated by the damp and mould policy.

Challenges

Challenges facing the Repairs & Maintenance (R&M) service remain relatively consistent and difficult to overcome, the national skills shortage seen across all construction areas continues to inhibit businesses from employing competent and skilled operatives, something which also continues to impact our contractors.

The R&M service currently has 32 vacancies, despite recruiting 24 operatives in the last 12 months. The team continue to pursue all avenues to attract new staff and has recently completed a comprehensive workforce plan to help identify business critical posts and staff to enable early succession planning through our apprenticeship programme.

New legislation has increased workloads and broadened responsibilities of the R&M service, most prevalently these relate to the Regulator of Social Housing and the requirement to undertake Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICRs) and Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) surveys on a 5-yearly cyclical programme. Additionally, the introduction of Awaab's Law will further impact the R&M service over the coming years through the incremental introduction.

We continue to see challenges around jobs being cancelled and are working on a new dashboard to help better understand the exact reasons for this so we can look at options to reduce the impacts.

Repairs

Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicator	Actual (29/07/2025)	Previous Report
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Repairs Outstanding*	9,240 ↓	12,204
Repairs Out of Category*	4,206 ↓	5,431
Percentage of all repairs completed within category	80% ↑	75%
Percentage of emergency repairs completed within category	92% ↑	86%

*Excluding damp and mould

As can be seen from the data above, there has been significant improvements with reducing the backlog of repairs and performance related data. This is projected to continue and will help contribute towards achieving the projections.

The most notable decreases correlate to external works which since January 2025 has seen a decrease of 2,761 outstanding repairs and 1,111 outstanding repairs which are out of category. This represents a decrease of 40% and 42% respectively. We now continue to maintain this progress as well as focusing on other areas which are not progressing as positively.

Repairs Trends

Repairs Trends	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26*
Repairs Raised	123,672	122,111	126,406	126,786 —
Repairs Complete	102,704	101,604	103,647	113,232 ↑
Repairs Cancelled	18,253	20,090	20,819	19,050 ↓
Repairs cancelled as a %	15%	16%	16%	15% ↓

The table above shows good progress with the projections for repairs completed and a slight reduction in repairs cancelled, which will contribute towards reducing the overall repairs outstanding.

Repairs Profile for Priority 1,2 and 3 repairs

Repair Category	Number of jobs out of category	Average days job is out of category	Number of jobs over 12 months out of category	Number of jobs over 24 months out of category	% of repairs that have been visited
R1	0	0	0	0	100%
R2	2,453	82	0	0	73%
R3	1,753	215	331	0	58%

The table above shows work is still required to improve the overall position of the Repairs team; improvement actions are listed below in the report. However, positively, as the overall repairs position continues to improve, so will the other metrics, such as wait times and satisfaction with the service. This can already be seen when comparing the Tenant Satisfaction Measures from 2023-24 and 2024-25:

Measure	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 Target	What good looks like*
Repairs Service	61%	74% ↑	76%	78%
Time taken to complete repairs	61%	66% ↑	70%	74%
Homes are well maintained	52%	69% ↑	72%	75%
Homes are safe	57%	78% ↑	80%	80%

*Top quartile results from all local authorities in 2023-24

Despite the challenges, the feedback is showing that we are generally providing a good and improving service to our residents.

Repairs Improvements

Following on from our last report in April 2025, the Repairs team have continued to work through the improvements listed, as well as identifying further improvement opportunities. We are now working with a new selection of contractors to offset the vacancies being carried, this has proved to be one of the main catalysts for the improvements, however, their capacity is also stretched so we are looking to procure a specific repairs and maintenance contractor as part of a longer-term solution.

We have made a lot of minor changes within the team structures to better align resources and skills to meet the specific demands and to also better accommodate multi-discipline repairs at properties to provide a better customer experience.

There has been a strong focus on our works planning team to ensure maximum capacity and better communication when appointing repairs and improved customer service when updating residents on progress.

A new suite of dashboards is currently being created with a focus on ensuring the data provided allows us to make accurate and informed decisions on workforce planning, resource distribution, repairs trends, and any anticipated demand fluctuations.

The Housing apprenticeship programme has been increased from 30 to 60 over the last few years to bolster our workforce planning strategy. This year, we have 11 qualified tradespeople joining the service and have recruited a further 16 apprentices who are due to start imminently.

Repairs Projections

Contained within the last report was a table of projections which have been difficult to achieve for various reasons, listed below:

- Staffing levels remain lower than anticipated

- Contractor capacity has been stretched with other priorities, i.e. damp and mould, EICRs
- Contractor delays in achieving optimum performance due to setting up processes and undertaking surveys
- Continued issues with no-access

Below are the original projections with gas repairs incorporated compared to the actuals:

Key Performance Indicator	Projection by 31/03/2025	Projection by 30/04/2025	Projection by 31/05/2025	Projection by 30/06/2025	Projection by 31/07/2025	Projection by 31/08/2025
Repairs out of category	4,885	4,245	3,605	2,965	2,325	1,685
Actuals	5,002	4,733	4,631	4,303	4,206	TBC

Based on current performance levels, anticipated increases in resourcing levels and increased contractor capacity, we are projecting by the end of January 2026 the number of out of category repairs will be reduced by at least 50% to less than 2,000. At which point, we are confident we will be nearing completion of the procurement for a new large contractor to fully balance the service and re-establish a healthy level of outstanding repairs into the future.

Voids

Our Voids team have been on an improvement journey for the last 3 years, this has seen positive trends and we are now in a relatively stable position. As part of the improvements outlined around damp and mould within the report in April, we have now merged our damp and mould team within the voids team. The impact on Voids has been relatively minimal, whereas the improvements with damp and mould have been incredibly positive.

It is important to note that we often use the void stage to undertake our capital investment works, such as, kitchens, bathrooms, rewire and boilers. Also, where required, we remove asbestos containing materials while properties are empty as this is the safest time to remove it.

Voids Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicator	Year end 2021-22	Year end 2022-23	Year end 2023-24	Year end 2024-25	Projections 2025-26
Number of Voids (excluding projects, decants, RTL and supported living)	404	426	363	268	300
Number of Voids as a % of total housing stock	2.06%	2.17%	1.85%	1.36%	1.5%
New Void to Let Time (days)	169	195	188	147	150
Key Performance Indicator	89	87	63	54	40

The above illustrates the positive voids journey over the last few years, this helps towards reducing rent-loss, providing decent homes for those in need, particularly in relation to homelessness and those staying in temporary accommodation. The projection for 2025/26 is expected to see a slight increase with the number of voids outstanding as the team embarks on supporting with outstanding damp jobs and managing outstanding voids. The projections are based on having a stable resource position within the team which will be monitored by senior management to minimise any impacts resulting from the additional damp and mould works to ensure properties are still being prepared for letting at a reasonable pace.

The voids team will continue with the improvement actions, with one of the main priorities being the transition to mobile working in 2026-27 to align them with the rest of the workforce and allow better management of the end-to-end process.

Damp and Mould

Since the coroner's report confirming the tragic death of Awaab Ishak was due to living in a property with damp and mould, awareness has heightened and so have the reports coming through to the Council over the past few years. The Council has always promptly responded to and completed remediations relating to damp and mould in a timely manner, particularly where health concerns have been raised.

With the first phase of Awaab's law being introduced on 27th October 2025, the service is focusing on ensuring we meet the requirements, while we continue to reduce the current outstanding remedial repairs related to damp.

Below outlines the current performance up to July 2025 and projections into 2025/26.

Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicator	Target	Actual 2023/24	July 2025	Projections 2025/26*
Repairs outstanding	500	1,140	689	600
Repairs out of category	0	1,988	546	0

*Based on April to June 2025 and pending Awaab's law introduction/HHSRS surveys.

We currently have 18 inspections outstanding, of which 0 are out of category. These are carried out by our technical officers. It is worth noting there has been a drastic improvement over the past 12 months of completion of inspections in category down to active planning and implementing and reviewing working practises while utilising the dashboard to monitor outstanding requests/reports and taking the appropriate action at an early stage. The skills within the whole technical team have been broadened via internal training to develop their knowledge and this has supported in utilising resources to meet the expected Service Level Agreements (SLA). In 2024/25 we raised 1,396 inspections (In context this is approx. 7.1 % of our housing stock) following requests from tenants.

Whilst the current performance in regard to remedial repairs following a damp and mould report is not where we expect it to be, the improvements are clear to see with our outstanding and out of category repairs reducing.

Remedial works linked to damp reports are often treated as mini projects because the work required to be undertaken can be multi-faceted, requiring multiple visits, repairs and actions to complete the required response to clearing the damp and mould and addressing any root cause of the damp and mould. To add to this, damp and mould jobs are not completed until all segments of the multi-faceted approach are completed. Where we identify vulnerabilities which could be exacerbated by damp and mould, we carry out a multi-agency meeting with our technical, tenancy management and repairs colleagues to ascertain the best outcome for the tenant and escalate any remedial works. We also communicate with colleagues in ASC where required to ensure we have all relevant information to make informed decisions on additional support required for residents. An outcome could result in a decant for the tenant (and family) to ensure the works are carried out satisfactorily.

As at 14/07/2025, we have seen a welcomed improvement on our outstanding remedials which currently sit at 689, out of which 546 are out of category. The improvements previously reported, and outlined further below, have made a significant difference in the service being able to carry out the relevant works.

With the colder months approaching and the introduction of Awaab's law it is expected the numbers reported will continue to grow which will impact on jobs completed. The projection is by December 2025 we expect to clear all out of category remedial jobs relating to damp and mould; this is based on the provision of resources being stable, contractors delivering on expectations and access to properties is gained early to carry out relevant works. The impact will be monitored by senior management via our Regulator of Social Housing Board meetings chaired by the Strategic Director of Housing.

The focus has been to remove the immediate risks associated with any reports of mould. To achieve this, we are attempting to visit each property (if access is given by the tenant) by a specialist to assess the immediacy of any work required and mitigate the immediate health risk ensuring any mould clean is undertaken on the same day. The Council can confirm that 47% of live remedials arising from a damp inspection have had a visit in addition to the initial inspection. The visits will either be to survey for materials required, undertake mould cleaning and stain blocking, or to commence remedial repairs.

Whilst the improvements are welcomed, the team are faced with challenges such as:

- Jobs being cancelled. This is likely due to the damp remediation works generally taking longer to complete. The disruption when tenants do not accommodate the repair to go ahead can lead to extensive administrative delays in returning materials and re-booking appointments. Despite our planning team making improvements such as calling the tenant and agreeing a date, and undertaking a courtesy call the day before our attendance, the cancellations continue to cause disruptions. We have seen improvement on this within the last 6 months as our cleaners attending the emergency hazards allowing us to follow up on remedial work soon after.
- Continuous reports for external repairs (including working at heights). It is evident reports of external works have remained constant, and any leaks and/or cracks can result in increase of damp and mould reports across our stock. These outstanding repairs are slowly decreasing which is enabling the service to provide a quicker and lasting resolution.

Damp and Mould Improvements

As mentioned above, the council's, position around outstanding remedial works relating to damp and mould has significantly reduced. Since the last report we have introduced the below interventions to meet the milestones and eventually look to fully clear down the out of category damp and mould remedial works:

- Migration of resources to meet demand
- Use of contractors to undertake some of our larger jobs.
- Cleaning and applying a mould inhibiting solution to all damp and mould jobs where a priority 1 has been identified; this has removed the immediate risk to the residents. This has led to increased contact with tenants, where mould risk is categorised as P1, via phone, text and door knock. This is now business as usual to ensure our tenants are being contacted and updated on the remedial works. All necessary remediations are then treated as programmed works and provisions are in place to allow tenants to report any reoccurrence in the interim period where we will revisit where required.
- Repairs and Maintenance service are closely identifying properties where damp and mould exists and linked to external works to properties. This enables us to prioritise jobs and eradicate the growing risk of damp and mould.
- Increased performance expectations
- Availability of overtime for repairs staff which primarily focused on damp jobs for those skilled to undertake the works.
- Internal housekeeping to manage duplicate jobs raised.

Introduction of phase 1 of Awaab's law

Awaab's Law, officially part of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, mandates that social housing landlords investigate and repair hazards like damp and mould within specific timeframes.

The introduction of phase 1 of Awaab's law, from October 2025, will have a major impact on the service in regard to resources and operationally with the timescales being introduced to carry out remedial works.

From 27 October 2025, social landlords will be required to:

- Investigate all emergency hazards (including damp and mould) within 10 working days
- Provide a written summary of findings within three working days of concluding the investigation
- If a hazard presents a significant risk to health or safety, take appropriate action within five working days – including making the property safe (using temporary measures if needed) and beginning any required repair works within a reasonable time
- For emergency hazards, act as soon as reasonably practicable and within 24 hours
- Offer suitable alternative accommodation if the property cannot be made safe within the required timeframe.

In 2026 this will be extended wider to include the following hazards where they present a significant risk of harm:

- excess cold and excess heat
- falls associated with baths etc., on level surfaces, on stairs and between levels
- structural collapse, and explosions
- fire, and electrical hazards
- domestic and personal hygiene and food safety

In 2027, a further extension with regulations to include all remaining HHSRS hazards (apart from overcrowding) where they present a significant risk of harm.

The Council has been carrying out various workshops for the past few months with colleagues within Housing and wider services to ensure a collective approach is undertaken to meet the requirements. A detailed report on the council's response to Awaab's law will be presented in September 2025.

5. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

As an update report, there are no direct financial implications arising from its contents. Finance work closely to monitor the performance of the HRA and this is reported quarterly to OSC through the budget monitoring process. The challenges raised in this report, notably the work to reduce backlog repairs and respond promptly to cases of damp and mould, create budget pressures which will need to be managed by the HRA in-year and suitably reflected in future years' budgets.

Signed: Jade Draper (Principal Accountant)

Dated: 7 August 2025

5.2 Legal implications

Awaiting comments

Signed:

Dated:

5.3 Equalities implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 protects tenants from discrimination in housing, including in relation to repairs. This report provides an update on the current position of the Repairs and Maintenance Team and its performance throughout 2024-25, with projections for 2025-26.

There are no direct equality implications arising from the recommendations of this update report. Increased compliance should lead to the provision of better quality services to Council tenants through enhanced consumer standards, which will have a positive impact on all of the Council's tenants across all protected groups. Repair processes should be transparent, with clear communication and information provided to tenants about their rights and responsibilities.

Signed: Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148

Dated: 6 August 2025

5.4 Climate Emergency implications

In some instances, the timely completion of repairs and pre-planned maintenance may contribute to the continued energy efficiency of properties and resulting reduced carbon emissions. As Awaab's Law is phased in, there may be specific opportunities presented to improve energy efficiency in respect to remedial work that addresses excess cold and heat hazards.

Signed: Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer, Ext: 37 2246

Dated: 8 August 2025

5.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

6. Background information and other papers: N/A

7. Summary of appendices: N/A

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)? No

9. Is this a "key decision"? If so, why? No