

Report to Housing Scrutiny Commission

Responsive Housing Repairs 2019/20 Year-End Performance Report & Update

Housing Scrutiny Commission: September 2020

Lead Member: Councillor Cutkelvin
Lead director: Chris Burgin

Useful information

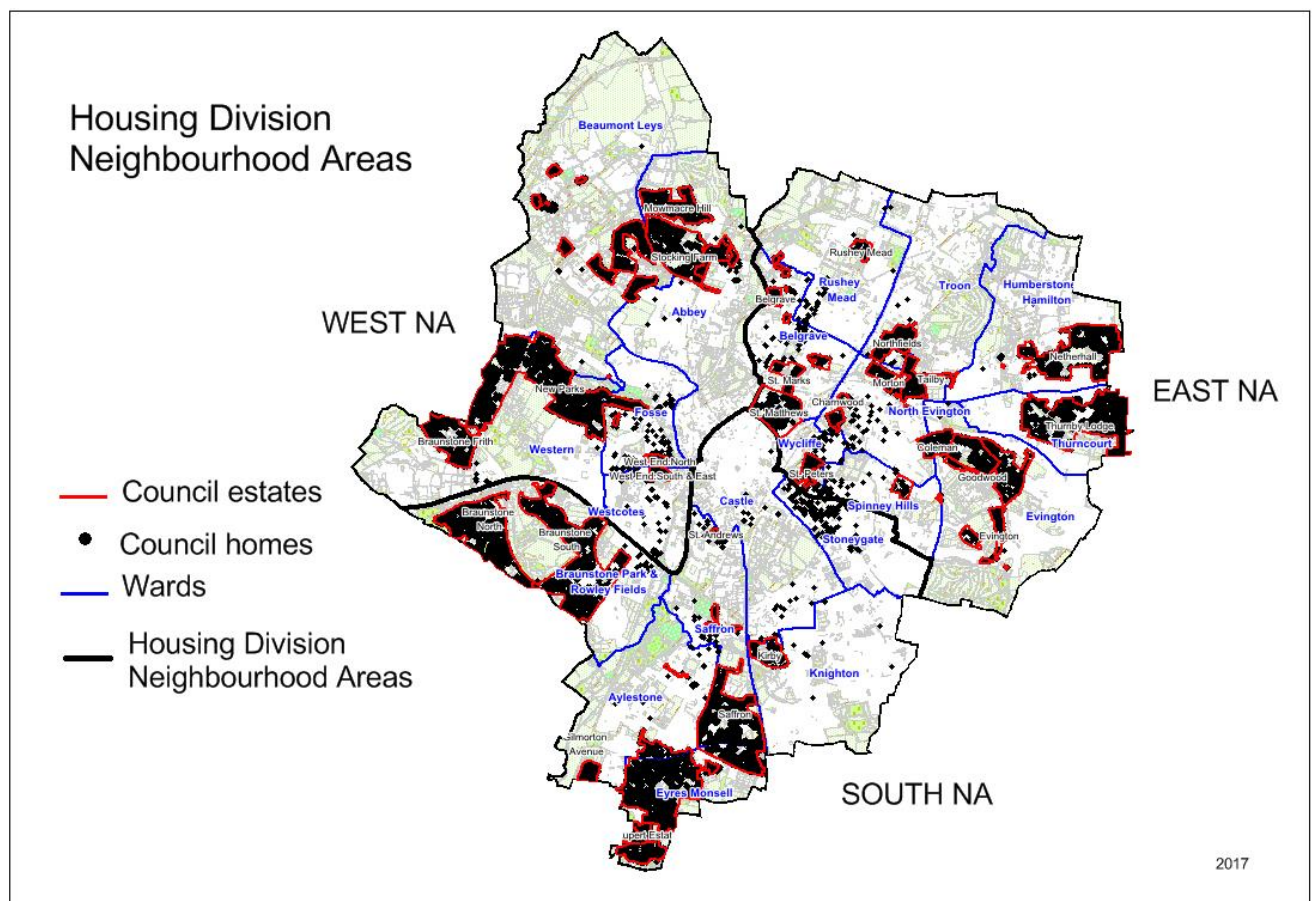
- Ward(s) affected: All
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- Report version number: v 2

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an end of year update on the performance of the Division's Repairs and Maintenance (R&M) service.
- 1.2 The report will also provide the Commission with an update about the implementation of future service changes aimed at improving performance.
- 1.3 This report will also provide a brief summary of the impact on the R&M service as a result of COVID-19 pandemic.

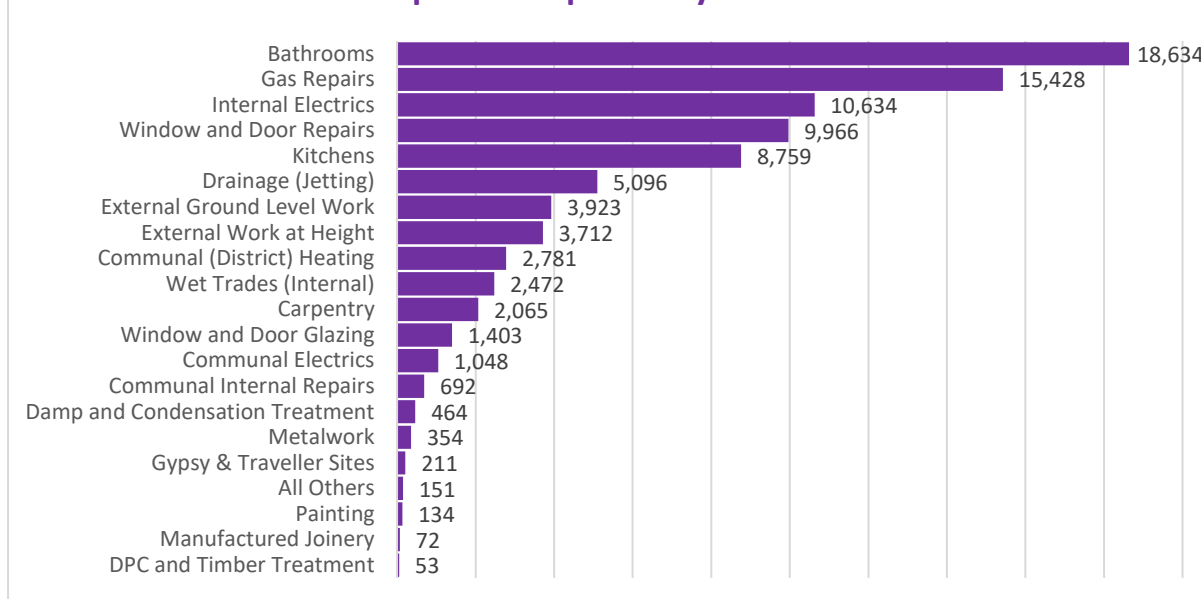
2. Background

- 2.1 The R&M service operates across the City, undertaking repairs and maintenance to 21,146 Leicester City Council owned homes.



- 2.2 During 2019-20, the R&M service completed 88,052 repairs. These figures exclude gas servicing jobs and repairs to Void properties. This represents a 2.2% reduction on the number of repairs completed last year. The table below provides a breakdown of all repairs completed by work area, including gas repairs.

Numbers of Repairs Completed by Work Area - 2019-20



- 2.3 During 2019-20 a total of 9,007 properties had 4 or more repairs during the year. This compares to 9,150 properties last year.
- 2.4 The average cost per repair in 2019-20 was £88.07. This is a slight increase on the figure in the previous year, which was £85.10.
- 2.5 The current primary channel of access to the R&M service is via the Tenants Advice and Repairs Line (TARS) 0116 4541007 (option 1), Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm. Outside of these hours' customers can call the Emergency Repairs Line 0116 2549439.
- 2.6 During 2019-20 the Call Centre received a total of 121,109 calls. This compares with 119,556 calls for the previous year. The Emergency Repairs Line received 14,532 calls during 2019-20, this compares to 15,474 for the previous year, representing a 6% reduction in total calls received.
- 2.7 During 2019-20, 99.9% of respondents to customer satisfaction surveys stated they were happy with their repair. (based on 37,299 responses during 2019-20)
- 2.8 The online service of 'My Account' is also available to report repairs online 24 hours a day.
- 2.9 Front line staff such as Housing officers are also able to take reports of repairs.
- 2.10 Appointments are offered between the following times:
- Morning appointments between 8am and midday
 - Afternoon appointments are between 12pm and 4pm.
- 2.11 There are 3 different categories of repairs.

Category	Description	Timescale
Priority 1	Emergency Work	to be completed within 24Hr
Priority 2	Routine Repairs	to be completed within 10 working days
Priority 3	Programmed Repairs	Surveyed within 10 working days and completed within 8 weeks to 12 months according to job

Examples of priority 1 repairs are:

- Total failure of electrical power and/or lights
- Serious water leak
- Total loss of heating

Examples of priority 2 repairs are:

- Minor repairs to windows or doors
- Repairs to kitchens
- Ceiling repairs

Examples of priority 3 repairs are:

- Repairs to paths
- Repairs to guttering
- Repairs to communal areas

2.12 Tenants can access the Repairs handbook online which gives them detailed information about their property, the council's responsibilities and their own responsibilities.

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/180950/repairs-handbook-2016.pdf>

3. Repairs and Maintenance Service - Key Performance Indicators for 2019-20

3.1 The following key performance indicators (KPI's) evaluate the success of the R&M service.

- Percentage of repairs completed on first visit
- Number of Repairs which are outstanding and out of category
- Percentage of Day to Day repairs carried out within target time
- Percentage of repairs which lead to a complaint

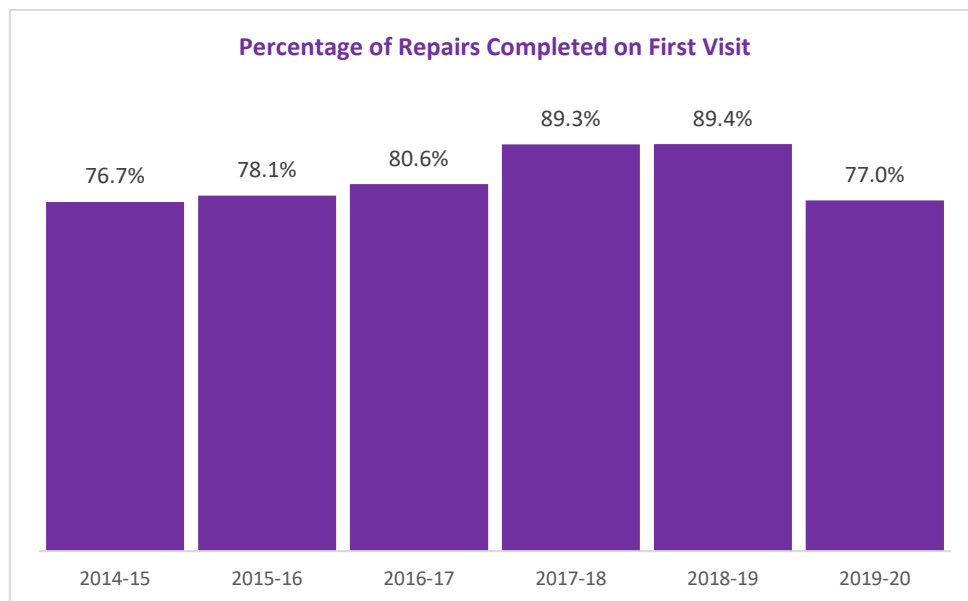
More detailed performance information against each is set out in 3.2 to 3.5 of this report.

Indicator	DoT	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Percentage of repairs completed at first visit – excluding external works	Higher is better	89.3%	87.6%	77.0%
Number of repairs which are out of category (excludes Gas and Voids)	Lower is better	813	636	721
Percentage of repairs completed within target time	Higher is better	85.7%	88.4%	86.8%
Percentage of repairs reported where a complaint has been received	Lower is better	0.33%	0.21%	0.1%

3.2 Percentage of repairs completed on first visit

The percentage of jobs completed on first visit during 2019-20 was calculated at 77%.

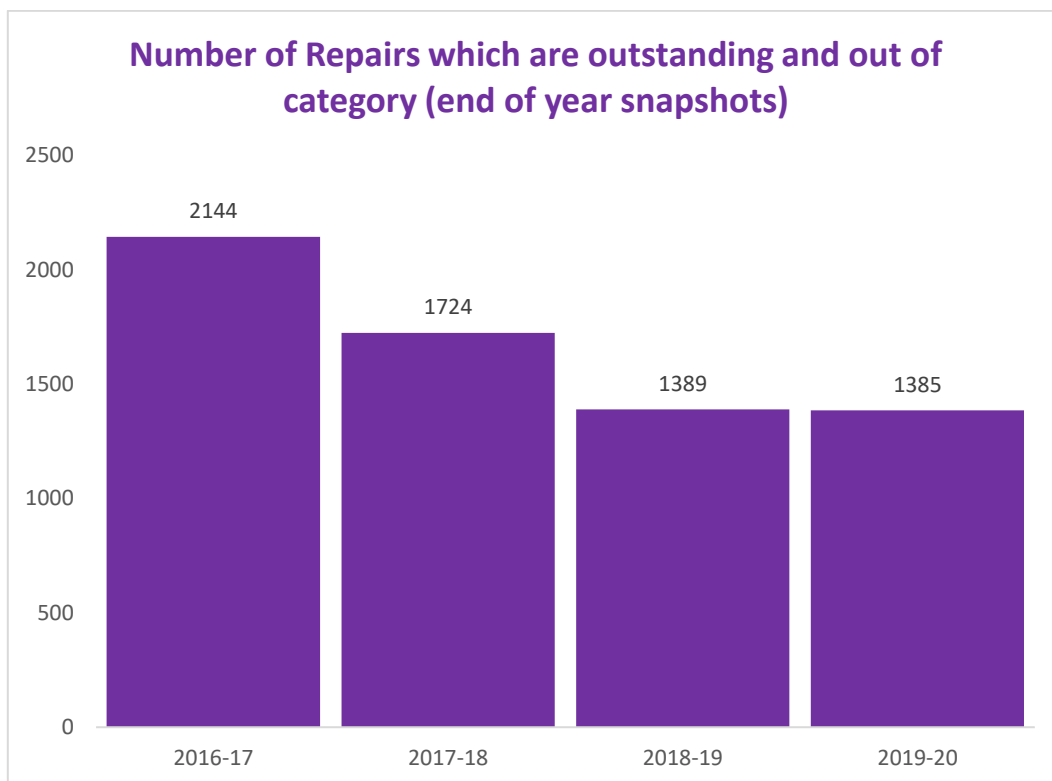
This measure disregards certain types of repair which we would not be expected to complete on the initial visit; in the case of a broken window, for example, we will need to measure the size of the window pane on our first visit and then return at a later date with the glass cut correctly to size. Performance in this indicator appears to have deteriorated over the past three years and further investigations are taking place to understand what is driving the overall drop in the numbers. Specific improvement areas have been highlighted in section 5 of this report to address under-performance in this area. Some factors, however, such as tenants not being at home when we arrive, are, to some extent, beyond council control.



3.3 Number of Repairs which are outstanding and out of category

At the end of 2019-20, there were 721 jobs (R&M function only) outstanding and out of category. This figure has changed little from a year earlier but shows a significant improvement on the numbers reported at the end of 2016-17 and 2017-18.

Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, we are unable to complete repairs within the target timescale. Issues such as materials availability, tenants availability, periods of excessively high workload demand caused by severe weather can all play a part.

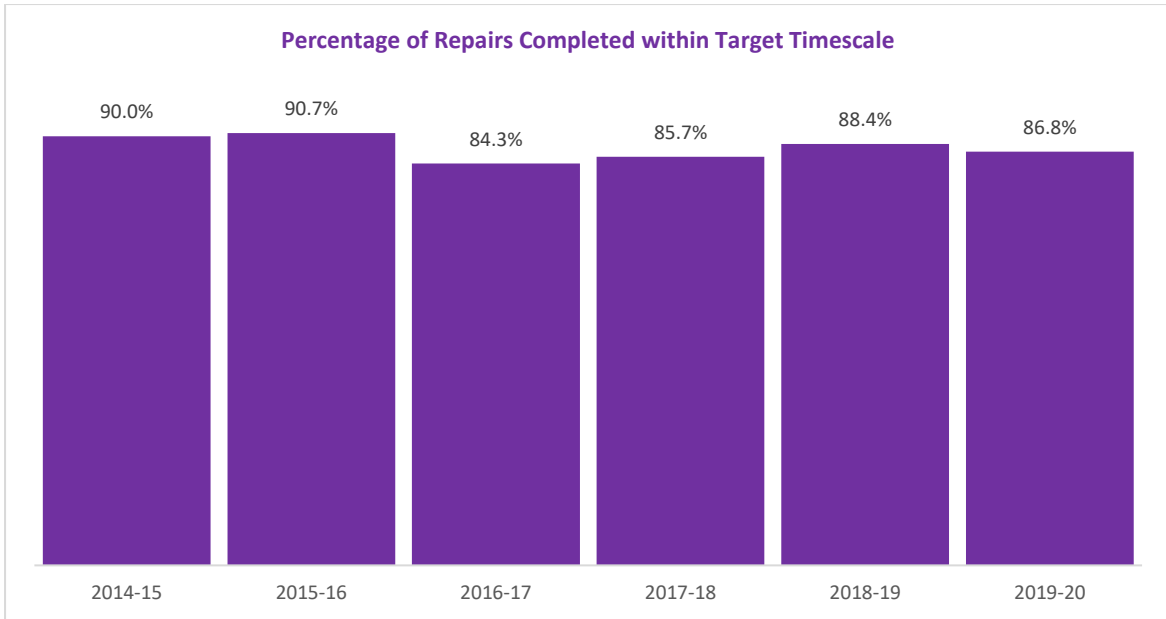


**2019-20 outstanding figure 1385 includes all repairs, including Gas and Voids, and not just the 721 R&M repairs quoted in section 3 of this report.*

3.4 Percentage of Day to Day repairs carried out within target time

In 2019-20 we completed 86.8% of repairs within the target timescale, and performance has been relatively stable across recent years.

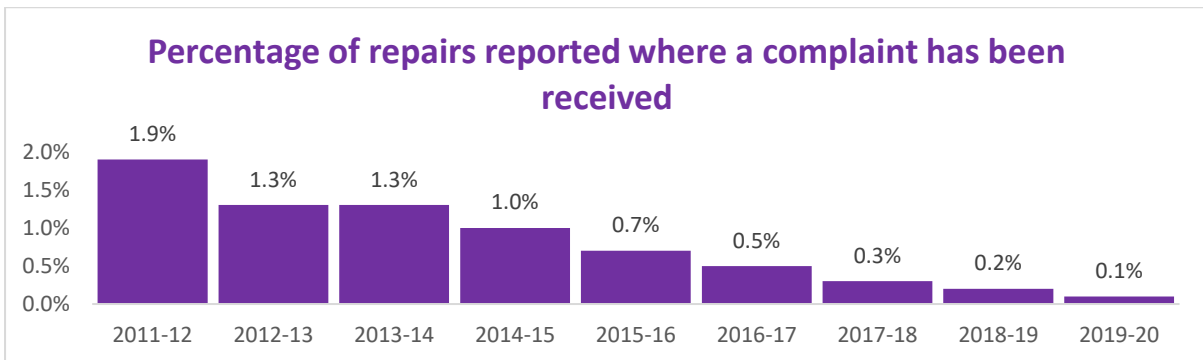
When tenants notify us of a repair needed at their properties, each repair is allocated a “priority” which determines how quickly we will look to respond to that repair. For emergency repairs we will look to respond within the first 24 hours of the repair being reported; for less critical repairs the timescale can be 10 working days or even 365 calendar days. Once a target date has been set, we then measure the proportion of repairs successfully completed within those time frames.



3.5 Percentage of repairs which lead to a complaint

Tenant's complaints about the R&M service have matched the significant reduction in historic outstanding jobs and these have remained consistently low in 2019-20.

The target for 2019-20 was to achieve a complaint % below 0.5%; this performance was exceeded in every single month during the year and the total number of complaints received was 92, which equated to 0.1% of total repairs.



4. 2020-21 first quarter performance

4.1 Due to the timing of this report, quarter 1 performance for 2020-21 KPI's are now available. It's important to note that performance during first quarter of 2020-21 has been impacted by our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in the R&M function reverting to an emergency repairs service only.

Indicator	DoT	2019-20	2020-21 Q1
Percentage of repairs completed at first visit – excluding external works	Higher is better	77.0%	87.25%
Number of repairs which are out of category (excludes Gas and Voids)	Lower is better	721	2381*
Percentage of repairs completed within target time	Higher is better	86.8%	97.4%
Percentage of repairs reported where a complaint has been received	Lower is better	0.1%	0.02%

*Source – Outstanding jobs report 12/08/2020.

- 4.2 The improved performance figures for three of the four KPI's needs to be taken in context as they only apply to the relatively small amount of emergency work we have been completing during the first quarter of the 2020-21.
- 4.3 The increase in the number of jobs outstanding and out of category when compared to 2019-20 is due to jobs being suspended during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic and whilst the R&M function provided an emergency service only.

5. R&M Improvement Action Plan for 2020-21

The performance of the R&M function, when measured against 3 of the 4 key performance indicators has declined over recent years, and in order to address this decline, a Repairs & Maintenance Improvement Action Plan is in place to target specific areas where performance needs to improve.

High priority areas, linked to the key performance indicators are listed below:

5.1 Channel Shift

- 5.1.1. The Northgate IT system has now been running since January 2016 the next stage for day to day repairs is to introduce channel shift to provide tenants the opportunity to make their own arrangements in appointing repair work at their property. This will improve services for tenants, specifically improving communication with tenants and flexibility around appointments.
- 5.1.2 We have begun implementing the online booking system which will enable tenants to book an appointment online directly and to choose a suitable appointment slot. An example of a Repairs Online appointment screen is shown below.

Report a Repair

[Back to Repairs Summary Page](#)

Successful

Works order 60401277/1 successfully created. Please make a note of this reference and quote it in any future correspondence.

Appointment Information

Please indicate when you require an appointment. Only one appointment may be selected.

Wednesday, August 05, 2020

12:00 to 15:59

Thursday, August 06, 2020

08:00 to 11:59

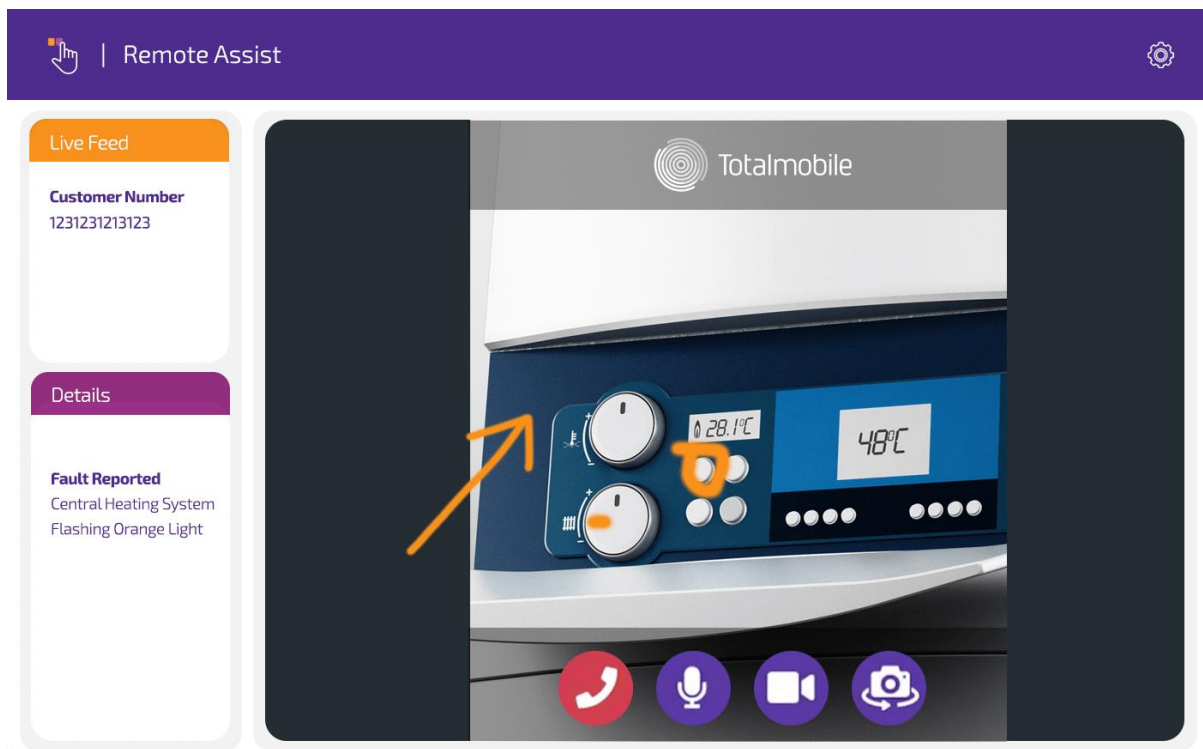
12:00 to 15:59

Friday, August 07, 2020

08:00 to 11:59

12:00 to 15:59

- 5.1.3 Further planned developments of this system will deliver improved updating and progress enquiry functionality for tenants wanting to find out more about the progress of their reported repairs.
- 5.1.4 An exciting new development we are already testing is a new system called **Remote Assist**, which will enable a real time video and audio link between the tenant in their home and one of our technical staff, to enable a remote 'survey', or even to complete a job without needing to visit their home.



This technology aims to improve performance in KPI 1 by increasing the number of jobs we complete on the first visit, following an initial remote assist survey.

5.2 New vehicle racking

5.2.1 We are aiming to install improved internal racking during 2020-21 to ensure that materials storage in vehicles is maximised and there is more effective van stock management and materials are available to complete as many repairs during the first visit.

This improvement action aims to improve performance in KPI 1 by increasing the number of jobs we complete on the first visit.

5.3 Communal Area Planned Maintenance

5.3.1 A programme of planned maintenance has now been introduced across the 1,035 internal communal areas. This will make the service more efficient and effective allowing early notification of works being carried out to tenants and reducing ad-hoc responsive repairs.

5.3.2 In addition an inner-city program of cutting back overgrown shrubbery and metal fence painting, including general repairs as commenced in the St Peters and St Matthews area involving several internal agencies, our own Neighbourhood Improvement team and Grounds Maintenance.

5.4 Area Planned de-scaling

5.4.1 A programme of planned de-scaling of soil pipes in tower blocks was due to be launched in March 2020, however, as a result of COVID-19 measures, there have been delays in the provision of specialist training for this new equipment and this has pushed back the planned start of the programme to November 2020. Once implemented, this programme will help prevent blockages and reduce significant damage and disruption to tenants' homes and should also help to reduce the total number of repairs reported during the year

These improvement actions aim to improve performance in KPI 2 and 3 by reducing the number of jobs outstanding and out of category and completing more jobs within target time.

5.5 Customer Satisfaction Monitoring

5.5.1 As part of the safety control measures put in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19, customer satisfaction surveys completed, in the customers home using the operative's mobile phone, was stopped. A more robust customer satisfaction monitoring system will be introduced in 2020 with the introduction of a 'free-post' paper-based customer satisfaction survey. This will be sent out to tenants after their repair has been completed and aims to improve response rates and enable the business to collect more meaningful data and respond quickly where there is dissatisfaction.

This improvement action aims to improve performance in KPI 4 by helping to reduce the number of complaints we receive in relation to the number of repairs we carry out.

5.6 Stores Managed Service

5.6.1 A managed stores service that provides materials for repair works is being procured during 2020 and is expected to be introduced in June 2021. In addition to the financial savings identified through more efficient stock management, the operational efficiencies delivered should contribute to improved performance across all 4 KPI's. Improved van stock management will help to improve first time job completion rates, and improved stock availability and faster ordering times for 'non-stock' items should contribute to more jobs being completed within target time, and less jobs outstanding. All the above improvements will also contribute to increased levels of customer satisfaction, leading to less complaints.

5.7 Performance Management 'Enabling our Best Work'

5.7.1 Whilst the improvement action plan aims to target improvements to specific operational areas, there is a significant piece of work required to embed a performance management ethos within the R&M service, based on the Corporate 'enabling our best work' performance management model. A significant piece of work is already underway to communicate and embed a performance culture with all staff within the R&M service, include the setting of

performance targets, providing leadership and performance management training to Managers and Team Leaders, and most importantly, ensuring regular Quality Conversations take place with all staff to discuss individual health, wellbeing and performance levels. This piece of work aims to ensure staff feel valued, that they understand the role they play in the overall success of the R&M service and enable them to contribute towards the overall improvement of the R&M service.

6.0 COVID-19 pandemic

6.1 In mid-March 2020, the UK Government announced a range of lockdown measures which have had a significant impact on the delivery and performance of the R&M service.

6.2 Our immediate response to the lockdown announcement was to implement our pre-prepared COVID-19 Business Continuity Plan (BCP), which came into effect w/c 23 March 2020. This included:

- Providing an emergency repairs service only.
- Managers, Team Leaders and Work Planners adopting remote working practices.
- Craft staff adopting remote working practices.
- Messaging placed on Tenants Advice and Repairs Line advising, ***'Emergency repairs service only, all previously appointed jobs suspended, no new appointments until situation improves'***.
- All jobs already in the system before this date were suspended.

6.3 From that point until 10TH August 2020, we operated an emergency service only and the number of non-urgent jobs outstanding has risen to 7,988 jobs as at 12/08/2020. Of these jobs however, the majority, 5607, remain within category.

6.3.1 If we compare the figures above with the first week in March 2020, before the COVID-19 lock down came into effect, there were a total of 6298 outstanding jobs, of which 723 jobs were out of category, leaving a similar number of jobs outstanding but within category of 5575 jobs.

6.3.2 These figures do not take into account the potential number of un-reported repairs during the period since COVID-19, and the potential impact this will have on the numbers of reported repairs over the next few months.

6.4 Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic had relatively little impact on the overall performance of the R&M service in 2019-20, it is expected to have a significant impact on the performance in 2020-21 across all the key performance indicators. The scale of that under-performance is uncertain, but significant factors will include the duration of Government restrictions, any potential second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the continued workload demands placed upon the service as we enter the traditionally busier winter period.

6.5 Reducing the current 'backlog' of outstanding work to pre-COVID-19 levels will be challenging. We are bringing in additional resources, both Agency and Contractor, and we are increasing the capacity of our own workforce using overtime and weekend working where possible. Our aim is to return to pre-

COVID-19 levels of outstanding work by the end of the 2020, but this is heavily dependent on building and maintaining sufficient resource capacity and avoiding severe winter conditions.

- 6.6 Our COVID-19 recovery plan has now been implemented and we will be reporting regularly on our performance.