

Report to Housing Scrutiny Commission

Responsive Housing Repairs 2020/21 Year-End Performance Report & Update

Housing Scrutiny Commission: April 2021

Lead Member: Councillor Cutkelvin

Lead director: Chris Burgin

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Kevin Doyle, Head of Service
- Author contact details: Ext 37 5415
- Report version number: V1 - Final

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 This report will start with a summary of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the performance of the R&M service during the year.
- 1.3 The report will also provide the Commission with a progress update on improvements being made to the service, aimed at improving the performance of the service.
- 1.4 Due to the timing of the report, most performance figures quoted are based on year to date figures at Q3 of 2020-21.

2. COVID-19 Pandemic

On the 23rd March 2020, the government announced the first national lockdown to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, and the R&M function responded to this by implementing its Business Continuity Plan (BCP), reducing its service offering to an emergency service only to our tenants.

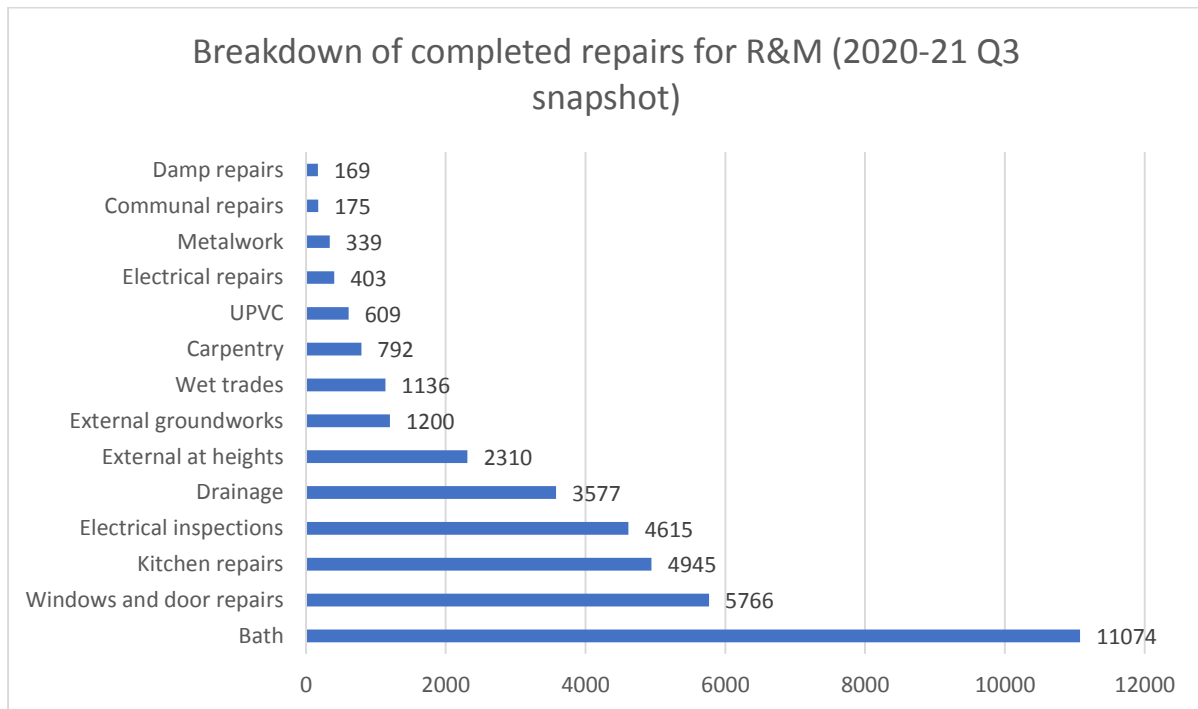
This situation continued until 10 August 2020, when restrictions had eased sufficiently for us to implement our R&M recovery plan. At the start of the recovery plan, there had been a build-up of non-urgent repairs, reported by our tenants, but not yet responded to. The figure at that time had reached 8364 outstanding jobs.

Phase 1 of the recovery plan saw a gradual opening of service to begin to tackle some of these outstanding repairs, specifically those involving our most vulnerable tenants. This phase of the recovery plan lasted 6 weeks.

Phase 2 of our recovery plan saw a further opening of services, allowing tenants to report new repairs in some job categories. During this period, the R&M function continued to make headway into the backlog of outstanding repairs and by the end of December 2020, the outstanding jobs figure had reduced to 5193, which was below the total number of outstanding jobs we had immediately prior to the first lockdown in March 2020. This target was highlighted to the Commission as part of the R&M Scrutiny Commission report for 2019-20 and represented a real achievement for the R&M function at the time.

Unfortunately, and despite all the good work that had been done up to the end of 2020, in January 2021, we saw the re-introduction of another full national

emergency repairs for large periods of the year. The table below provides a breakdown of all repairs completed by work area within the R&M function.



2.3 The average cost per repair in 2020-21 (Q3) was £87.69. This is a decrease on the figure for previous year, which was £94.78. Part of this reduction may be attributable to carrying out a greater number of emergency repairs, which tend to be less expensive in both labour time and materials used.

2.4 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.

2.5 Up to February of 2021 the Customer Service Centre (CSC) had received a total of 82,891 calls on this line. This compares with 113,181 calls for the same period last year, a reduction of 27%. During the pandemic, tenants were made aware via our Website and on the CSC messaging system of the periods when we were only providing an emergency repairs service and were being asked to call back when full services were resumed. This factor may have contributed to the reduction in calls received by the CSC. The Emergency Repairs Line, outside of normal working hours) received 9,962 calls up to Q3 of 2020-21. This compares to 11,528 for the same period in 2019-20, representing a 14% reduction in total calls received. Both measures suggest our tenants were following advice on only reporting essential repairs, and we may see a return to previous call volumes during 2021-22 as our services return to normal.

2.6 Up to Q3 of 2020-21, 89% of respondents to customer satisfaction surveys stated they were satisfied with their repair. (based on 1215 responses). The high levels of satisfaction and the numbers of responses received are particularly pleasing

given the limitations placed on our services during these times and the tendency for people to be more willing to report their dissatisfaction rather than their satisfaction.

3. Raising a repair

3.1 The online service of 'My Account' is also available to report repairs online 24 hours a day.

3.2 Front line staff such as Housing officers are also able to take reports of repairs.

3.3 Appointments are offered between the following times:

- Morning appointments between 8am and midday
- Afternoon appointments are between 12pm and 4pm.

3.4 There are 3 different categories of repairs.

Category	Description	Timescale
Priority 1	Emergency Work	to be completed within 24 hours
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

3.5 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>

4. Repairs and Maintenance Service - Key Performance Indicators for 2020-21

4.1 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

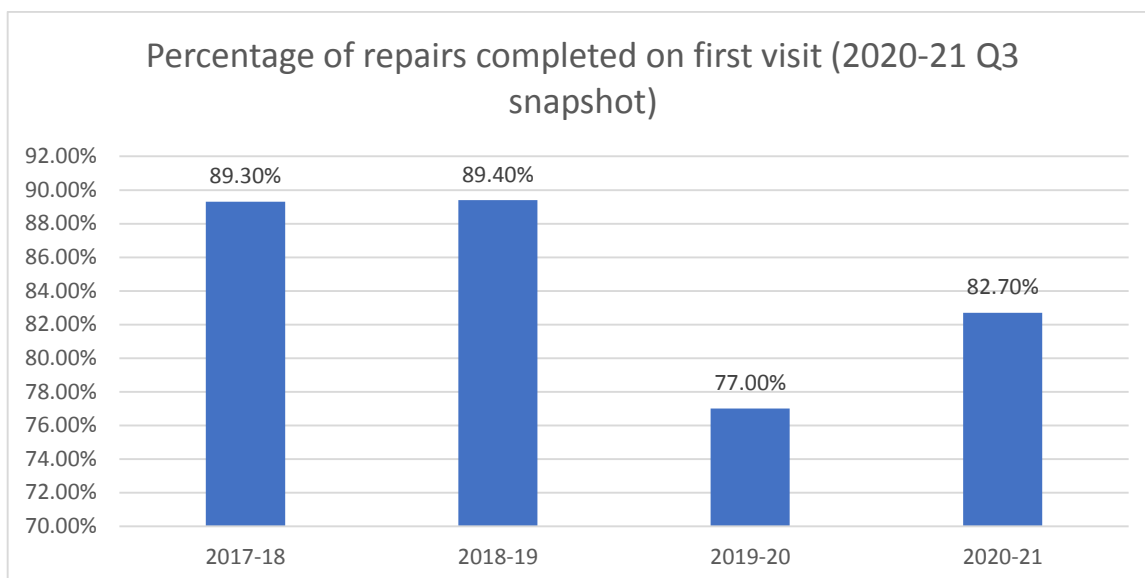
More detailed performance information against each is set out in 4.2 to 4.5 of this report.

Indicator	DoT	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21 (Q3)
Percentage of repairs completed at first visit – excluding external works	Higher is better	87.6%	77.0%	82.7%
Number of repairs which are out of category (excludes Gas and Voids)	Lower is better	636	721	168
Percentage of repairs completed within target time	Higher is better	88.4%	86.8%	96.5%
Percentage of repairs reported where a complaint has been received	Lower is better	0.21%	0.1%	0.03%

4.2 Percentage of repairs completed on first visit

The percentage of jobs completed on first visit during 2020-21 (Q3) was 82.7%. This is an improvement when compared to 2019-20, but should be taken in context with the pandemic, which saw a greater percentage of emergency work being completed during periods of the year when implementing our BCP.

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.

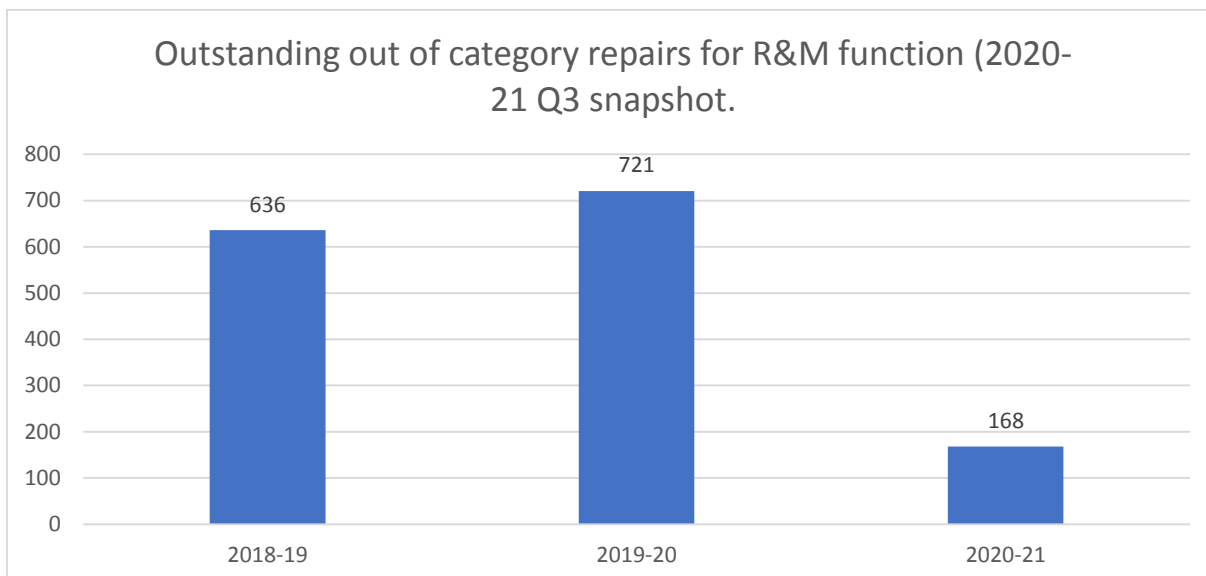


4.3 Number of Repairs which are outstanding and out of category

At the end of December 2020-21 (Q3), there were 168 jobs (R&M function only) outstanding and out of category. This figure is significantly down on previous years, and the primary reason is that during periods of this year, where we were only completing emergency repair work, non-urgent repairs were being reported but paced in temporary suspense status. These jobs now form part of the overall number of outstanding jobs, which currently stands at 6,810.

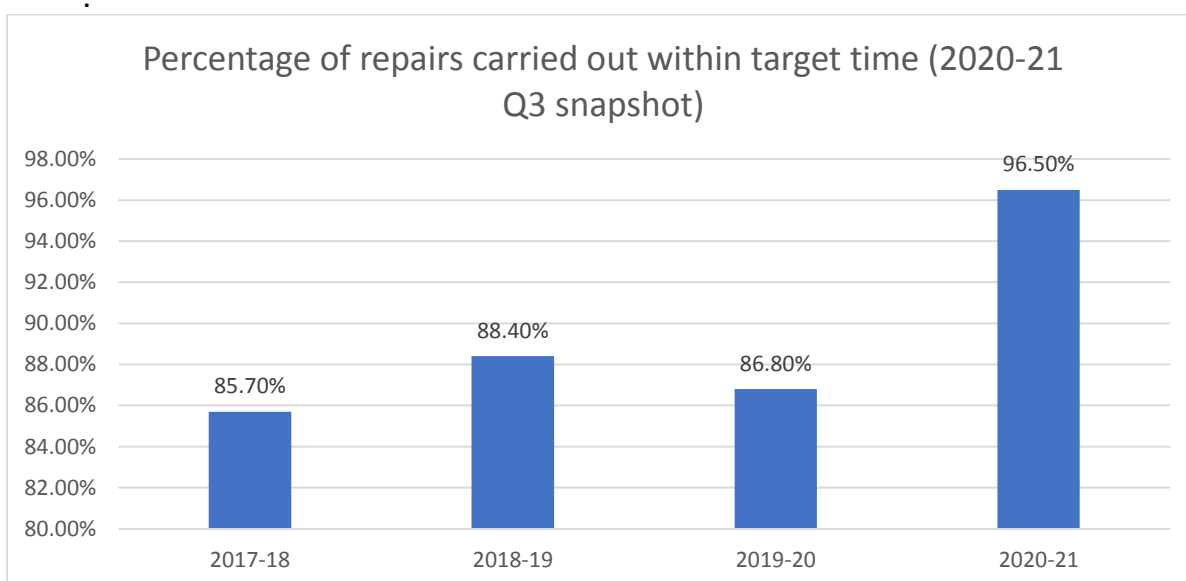
It's important to note, however, that under normal operating conditions, we would expect to see around 4,000 outstanding jobs at any one time, which represents around 3-weeks workload. This needs to be taken into consideration when looking at the total outstanding jobs figure.

Responding to the outstanding repairs is covered later in this report.



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

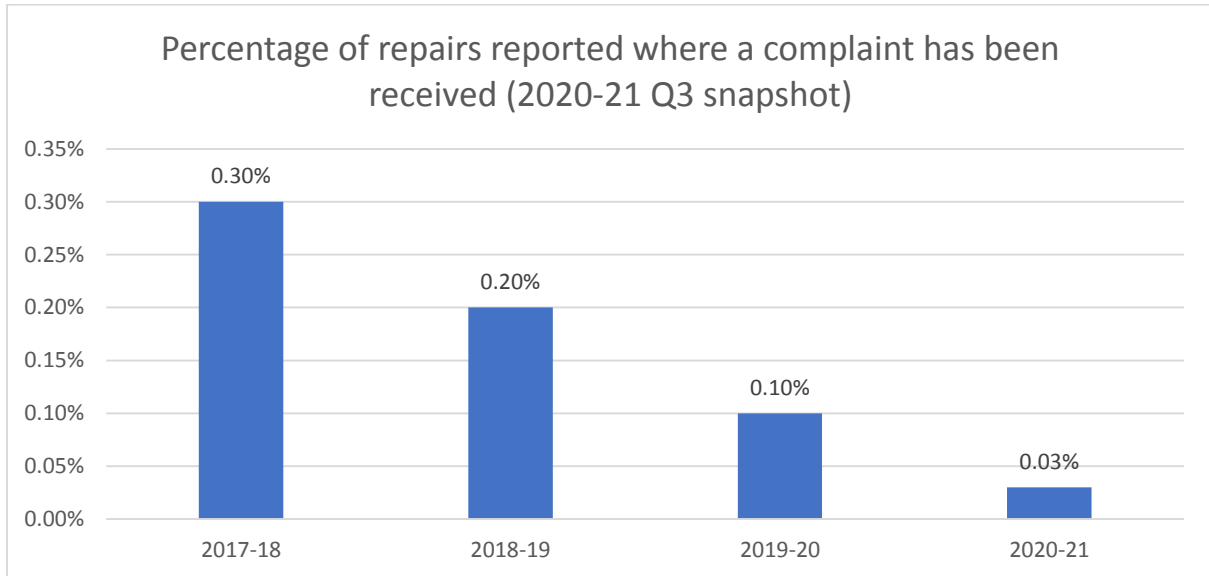
In 2020-21 (Q3 YTD) we completed 96.5% of repairs within the target time. Performance in this area has improved when compared to 2019-20 (86.8%), however, performance in this area has also been impacted by the pandemic, with the increased proportion of emergency repairs, which are more likely to be completed within their target time of 24 hours.



4.5 Percentage of repairs which lead to a complaint

Tenant's complaints about the R&M service have seen a year on year reduction and this trend continued during 2020-21 despite the difficulties experienced because of the pandemic and its impact on the service delivered to tenants.

2020-21 year to date performance at Q3 was 0.03% and at that time, we had received only 33 complaints for the year, compared to 68 for the same period in 2019-20.



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

Last years report identified several areas where service improvements had been implemented with the aim of improving performance against the key indicators.

5.1 Channel Shift - Housing On-Line (HOL)

In November 2020, improved functionality was introduced to HOL to enable appointments to be made and to provide on-line pictorial help to enable more accurate reporting of repairs by tenants. Since then, 570 repairs have been raised on-line. We currently have around 1,800 tenants registered to use the on-line service, and during 2021-22 we will see further developments of the system to enable our tenants to report missed appointments or to ask for an update on an outstanding repair.

Report a Repair

[Back to Repairs Summary](#)

Search fault keywords... 

Contents > Baths and Showers > Baths [Emergencies](#) [Extreme weather conditions](#) [Your responsibilities](#) [Gas safety checks](#) [Smell gas](#) [Making improvements to your home](#) [Damp and condensation](#) [Back](#)

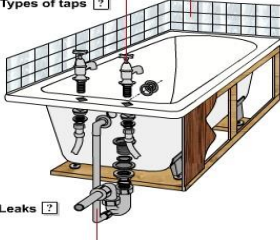
Please select the label that best describes the fault or damage:

Related Items:

[Basins](#) | [Drainage and gullies](#) | [Sinks](#) | [Toilets](#) | [Water supply and leaks](#)

- Bath tap is dripping or broken
- Damaged or loose tile

Types of taps 



Leaks 

- Bath waste is broken or leaking
- Bath waste is blocked

- Bath panel is loose or broken



- Water is seeping between bath and wall

- Bathroom rail is loose or damaged



- Bath plug and chain is broken or missing



During 2020-21 we started testing a new system called **Remote Assist**, which enables 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.

During 2021-22 we will develop the remote assist functionality further to embed it into our broader on-line service offer.

5.2 New vehicle racking

In January 2021 we started the installation programme of new vehicle racking.

Current vehicle racking:



New vehicle racking:



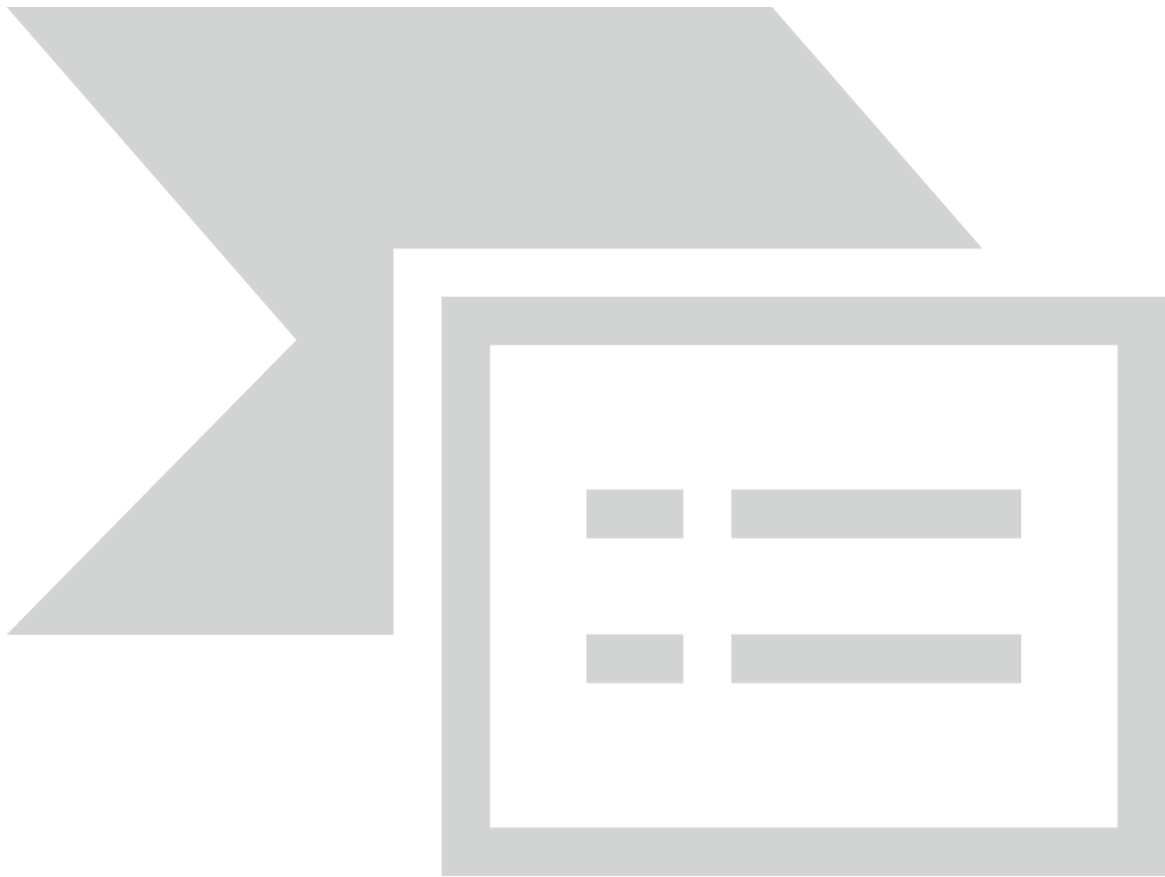
Improved vehicle racking will reduce stock damage, enable more effective van stock control, and reduce risks associated with manual handling injuries when removing materials and equipment from vehicles.

5.3 Communal Area Planned Maintenance

During 2020-21 we continued with our programme of planned maintenance across the 1,035 internal communal areas. This programme enables early notification of works being carried out to tenants and helps reduce ad-hoc responsive repairs.

During 2020-21 we worked closely with several internal agencies within the St Peters and St Matthews area to improve the condition of the estates.

Railings restored and re-panted in the St Mathews area below:

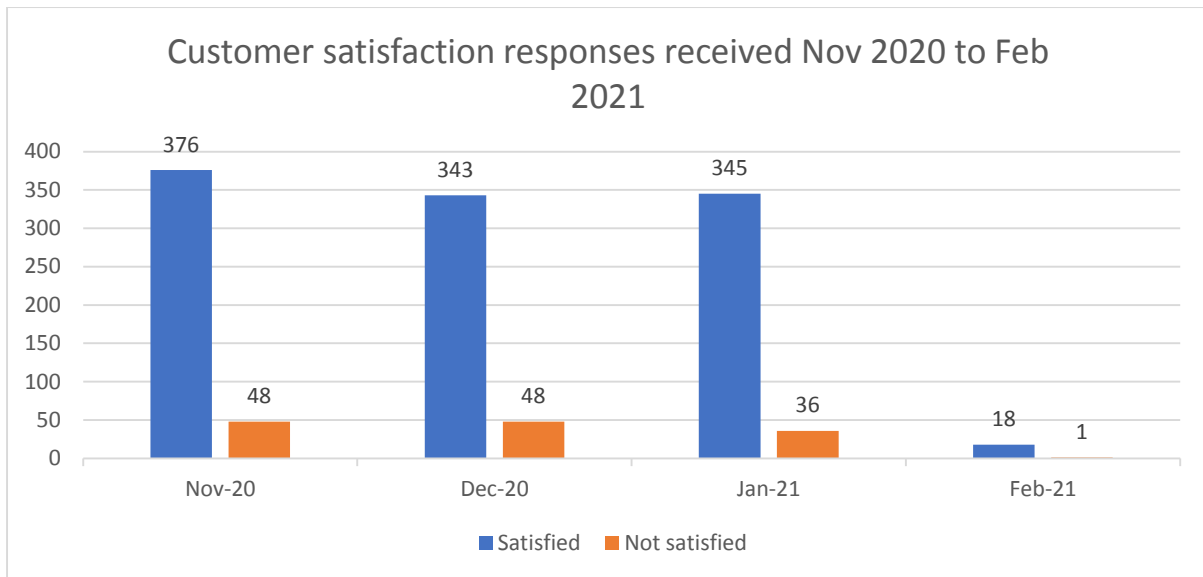


5.4 Area Planned de-scaling

A programme of planned de-scaling of soil pipes in tower blocks was due to be launched in March 2020, however, because of the pandemic, there have been delays in implementation. During 2021-22, priority will be given to the de-scaling programme for the 'Burns' flats, and consideration will be given to developing a wider capital programme to upgrade drainage in multi-occupancy buildings to deal with problems associated with poor drainage. 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.

5.5 Customer Satisfaction Monitoring

In November 2021 a new customer satisfaction monitoring process was introduced with all tenants receiving a customer satisfaction questionnaire automatically upon completion of their repair. Responses received to date indicate an average response rate of around 11.5%, with an overall satisfaction rate of 89%.



Where negative comments are received to specific questions, the responses are automatically redirected to the appropriate Team Leader to ensure dissatisfied tenants are swiftly contacted and their issue addressed as a matter of priority to avoid further escalation of the issue.

5.6 Stores Managed Service

A managed stores service that provides materials for repair works is being procured and is expected to be introduced by the end of 2021. In addition to the financial savings identified through more efficient stock management, the operational efficiencies delivered should contribute to improved performance across all key performance indicators.

To effectively manage the contract with the successful supplier, we are currently recruiting to the post of Stores Contract Manager and once in post, will lead on the mobilisation of the new contract, which we hope to award by May 2021.

5.7 Performance Management ‘Enabling our Best Work’

A significant piece of work has been undertaken during 2020-21 to embed a performance management culture within the R&M service, based on the Corporate ‘enabling our best work’ performance management model. Managers and Team Leaders within the R&M service have all been set clear performance targets and all staff have had regular quality conversations planned in with their managers throughout the year. Since September 2020 the R&M function has held 17 ‘enabling our best work’ team sessions, ensuring all staff are aware of 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 R&M Improvement Action Plan for 2021-22

During 2021-22, many of the improvements actions already identified on the R&M Improvement Action Plan will be developed further. In addition to those specific actions, the following actions will also be added.

6.1 Dealing with backlog of outstanding jobs caused by the pandemic

Previous focus on reducing the backlog of outstanding repairs demonstrated the ability to quickly reduce the number of outstanding jobs back to pre-pandemic levels. As restrictions are lifted, we will again prioritise our most vulnerable tenants and the oldest outstanding jobs to bring them down to business as usual levels.

To ensure sufficient resources are in place to achieve this, recruitment practices have been updated to enable more effective and speedy recruitment into vacant craft posts. Where appropriate, we will also utilise Contractors to assist in this task.

6.2 Embedding further a performance management culture (enabling our best work)

Following on from the staff workshops, feedback received will be analysed and improvement actions identified for inclusion in the overall R&M Improvement Action Plan for 2021-22.

6.3 Fencing replacement pilot

During 2021-22, we will be identifying a small number of properties to take part in a replacement fencing pilot, which if successful, will contribute to a wider business case for a larger capital fencing programme.