

Report to Housing Scrutiny Commission

Repairs and Maintenance Service (including Gas and Voids functions) 2022-2023 part-year performance update report

Housing Scrutiny Commission: February 2023

Lead Member: Councillor Cutkelvin

Lead director: Chris Burgin

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
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- Report version number: - V1 - Draft

1. Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the performance of the Division's Repairs and Maintenance service, which includes the Voids and Gas functions. Please note that this is an update report and not a full year report and all figures quoted are from 01/04/2022-31/01/2023 (Period 1 to Period 10). The full year report will be published later in 2023.

1.2 The report will also provide the Commission with an update on progress made following the last report in August 2022, as well plans about the implementation of service improvements that will drive improved performance into the future.

2. Recommended actions/decision

N/A

3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

N/A

4. Background and options with supporting evidence

4.1 The repairs and maintenance team is made up of the following: general repairs, gas and communal heating, voids, and stores. Each team plays a crucial role in ensuring that we can provide quality and cost-effective services to the 19,707 council properties and the 1,600 leaseholder properties.

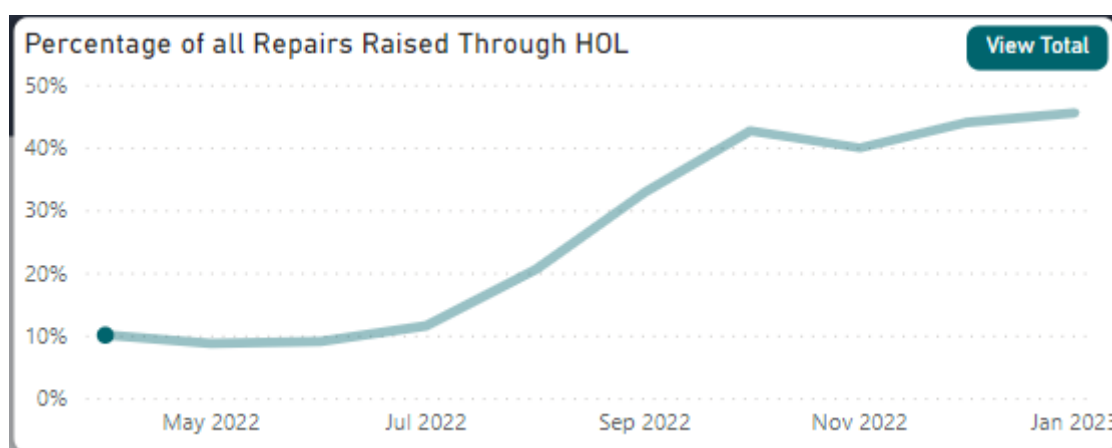
4.2 The primary channel of access to the repairs and maintenance team for non-essential repairs changed in 2022, with the move to Housing Online for most of our residents. Additional support has been provided for those who cannot access online services. For all essential repairs, the primary point of contact remains with the Customer Service Centre (CSC) via the Tenants Advice and Repairs Line on 0116 4541007 (Option one) between the hours of 08:00-16:00, Monday to Thursday and 08:00-15:30 Friday. We also provide an emergency repairs service (ERS) outside of normal working hours, from 16:00 Monday to Thursday, and 15:30 Friday, and all weekend, via the Emergency Repairs Line 0116 2549439.

4.3 The move to the Housing Online platform for tenants to report their non-essential repairs has resulted in a reduction in the calls received by the CSC, down from 88,431 calls in 2021-22 (P1 to P10) to 74,876 during the same period in 2022-23. However, it is worth noting that this change only came into effect in September 2022, so we are expecting a much bigger reduction in 2023-24.

4.4 Our outsourced Emergency Repairs call handling service received 13,010 calls via the Emergency Repairs Line during the period April 2022 to December 2022. Whilst this is an increase of 1,044 calls when compared to the same period in 2021-22, it should be noted that from October 2021, the ERS call handling service started taking calls from 4.00pm rather than 6.00pm each evening. Despite this, we continue to see a reduction in the total number of jobs completed on the ERS.

4.5 Since 1st April 2022 there has been 12,200 repairs in total reported through Housing Online from the 8,061 registered users. The total number of registered users has increased by almost 3,000 from April 2022. Leicester City Council staff have also responded to over 4,500 Housing Online enquiries, negating the need for residents to call through to the CSC.

4.6 Tenants who experience difficulties in using Housing Online are supported to ensure that they are still able to report their repairs. Those who are assessed to be digitally excluded, so unable to report their repair through Housing Online, are still able to report repairs in the usual way via the CSC.



4.7 There has been a total of 6,155 customer satisfaction surveys returned, of which 92% were satisfied with the service provided.

4.8 We are still continuing to see normality resume following the Covid-19 pandemic; however, we are projected to see a slight decrease in the number of jobs reported.

- 88,265 total repairs reported during 2021-2022, with 85,703 completed.
- 64,930 year to date reported repairs, with 63,097 completed.

4.9 Based on this we are projected to see 86,573 repairs reported and 84,129 completed.

4.10 As we continue to see the cost of materials and general running costs increase by up to 30%, we are seeing a direct correlation with the average cost of repairs, which has increased from £101.32 in 2021-2022 to £112.23 this year.

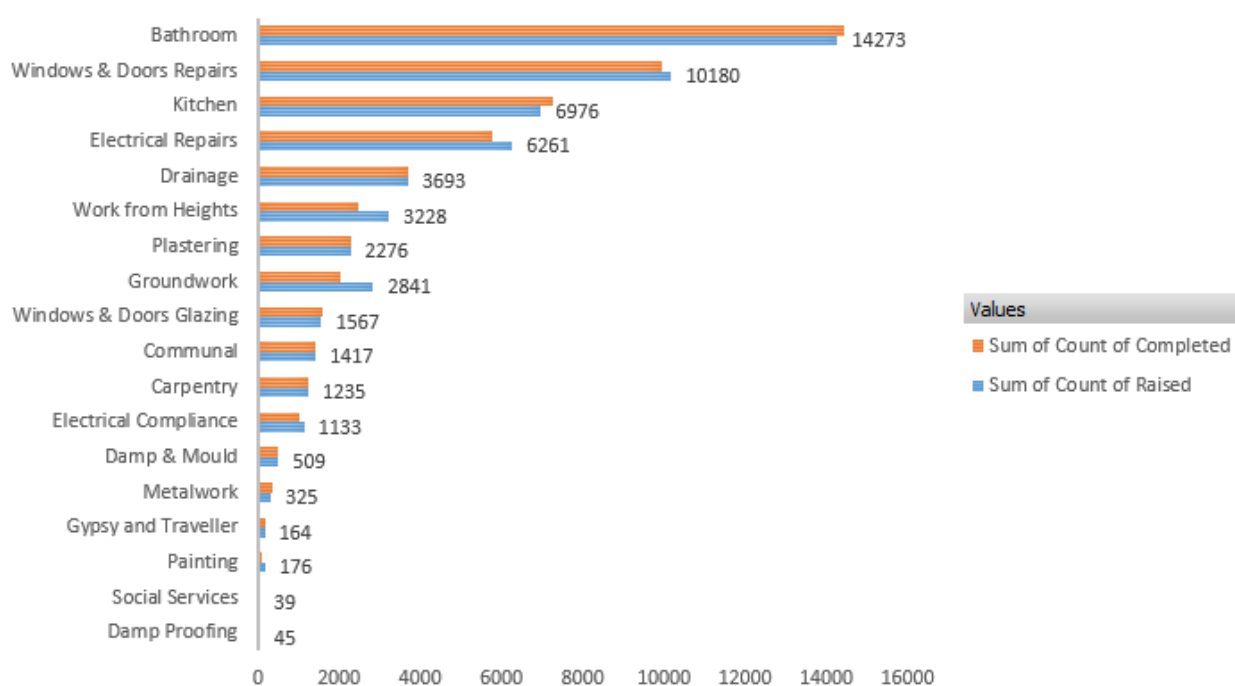
4.11 The backlog of outstanding day to day repair work, excluding gas repairs, currently sits at 8,657 jobs. This compares to 6,285 jobs that were outstanding in March 2020 (prior to the pandemic). The difference of 2,327 jobs represents just over 1.5 weeks of average repair demand, with an average of 1,400 new repairs being raised each week. The

number of outstanding jobs (excluding gas repairs) that are out of category has reduced from 1,965 at the end of 2021-22 to 1,555 currently.

4.12 We reported in August 2022 concerns around our resourcing levels and struggles to recruit; so, it is pleasing to share that we have really focused on our recruitment strategy, and we are making significant progress, particularly with our critical posts. We currently have 23 craft vacancies, a reduction from 39.2 and have more interviews arranged in the coming weeks.

5. General Repairs

5.1 So far this year we have completed 54,439 repairs (excluding gas and voids), again, this is projecting a decrease when compared to 2021-2022. The breakdown of repairs is as follows:



5.2 Our key performance indicators year to date:

Indicator	Direction of travel (DOT)	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Percentage of repairs completed at first visit (excludes external works)	Higher is better. Target is 90%.	77%	83%	78%	77%
Number of repairs which are out of category (excludes Gas and Voids)	Lower is better. Target is 300.	*721	*912	*2159	**1555

Percentage of repairs completed within target time	Higher is better. Target is 92%	83%	96.0%	87%	83%
Percentage of repairs reported where a complaint has been received	Lower is better. Target is <0.5%	0.1%	0.01%	0.10%	0.03%

*Snapshot at year end

**Snapshot 31/01/2023

6. Reports of Damp and Mould.

6.1 During the year, we have seen an increased awareness and concern from tenants relating to damp and mould issues within their property. Some of this heightened awareness has been driven by increased media coverage of cases in other parts of the country. This has resulted in a significant increase of around 70% in the number of reported repairs related to damp and mould over the last year.

6.2 In recognition of the dangers which come with damp and mould, the Housing Division is working closely with our Corporate colleagues to develop a strategy outlining how we can improve support for residents in council accommodation, as well as those in the private rented sector.

6.3 Purely from a Repairs and Maintenance perspective, we have moved additional resources to help undertake damp and mould repair work and we are also working closely with our colleagues in Technical Services to explore new materials and technologies to assist with prevention, detection, and eradication.

7. Rats Taskforce

7.1 Following a successful trial in the St Mathews area, further improvements have been made to the 'RATS taskforce', including closer collaboration with Neighbourhood and Environmental Services, to focus resources across the city to deal with the high numbers of infestations being reported in tenant's homes.

8. Gas and Heating Services

8.1 So far during 2022-23, there has been a total of 14,300 gas and communal heating repairs completed, this is on course to end the year with a similar total to 2021-22, which was 16,858. Meaning the previously declared 7.4% reduction (pre-covid) in the last report remains consistent.

8.2 Within this reporting period there have been a total of 15,300 Annual Gas Safety Visits completed.

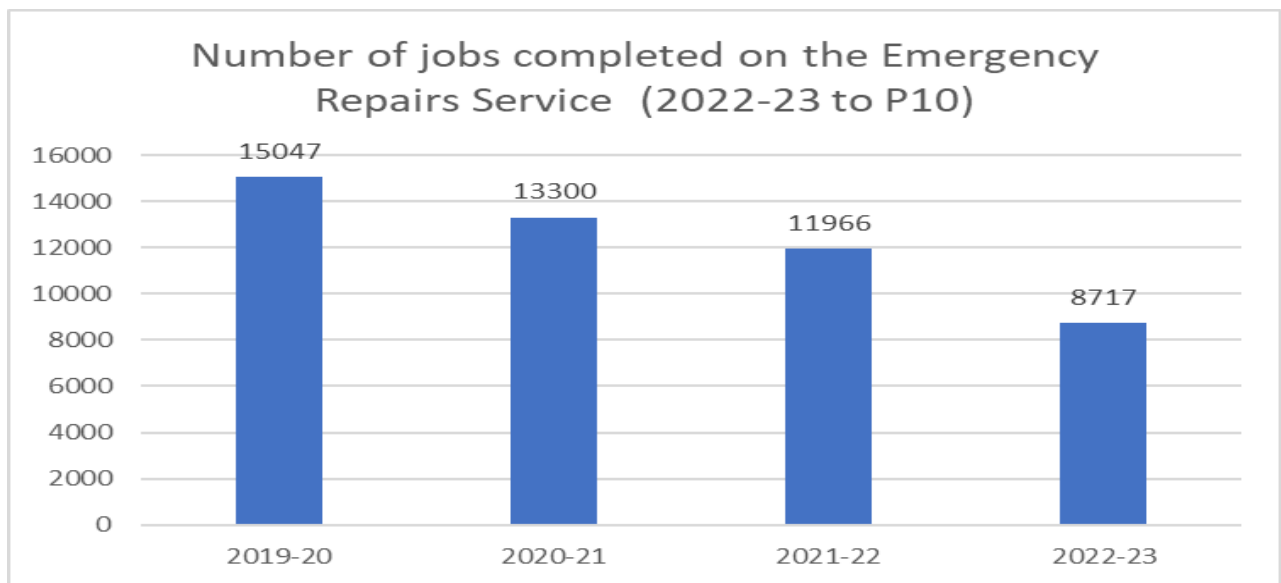
8.3 Below is a table outlining the main KPIs we use to measure the performance of the Gas and Heating Services team:

Indicator	DoT	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Annual Service Visit compliance percentage	Higher is better. Target is 100%	99.99%	99.17%	99.94%	99.26%
Percentage of gas repairs completed at first visit	Higher is better. Target is 90%.	74.8%	79.8%	70%	70%
Number of gas repairs which are out of category (snap	Lower is better. Target is 0.	*843	*0	*590	*616
Percentage of repairs completed within target time	Higher is better. Target is 92%	91.5%	98.6%	91%	84%

*Snapshot at 31/01/2023

9. Emergency Repairs Service

9.1 The number of emergency repairs we carry out continues to fall as we improve the efficiency of the service. This year to date we have completed 8,717 jobs, which is on target to show a further reduction by year-end on the previous year.



9.2 During this period, Pinnacle received 13,010 calls to report an emergency repair outside of normal working hours. However, not all of these calls met the emergency call-out criteria and were allocated an appointment during usual operating hours, this equated to around 42% of all calls received by Pinnacle.

9.3 During 2022, an audit of the ERS was carried out by the Internal Audit Service, and improvement actions were incorporated into an improvement plan to further improve the management and efficiency of the ERS.

10. Improvement actions underway in 2023 to drive improved performance

10.1. In August 2022, we updated the HSC on the improvement actions being implemented to drive improved performance within the service. This section provides an update on those improvement actions and new improvement actions identified as we deliver our services.

10.2 Housing online (HOL)

10.2.1 The team continue to focus on improving the tenant's experience when using Housing Online, including targets being set for responding to enquires made through Housing Online within 72 hours of receipt.

10.3 Schedule of Rates (SOR's)

10.3.1 During 2022 we started implementing the National Federation of Rates into our repairs system. These are more commonly referred to as a schedule of rates (SOR's), which are widely used by other local authorities and housing associations. These provide a standard measurement of labour time for various repair tasks undertaken. This will enable more effective planning of resources, leading to improved productivity.

10.3.2 The SOR's have now been input into the Housing system and we are carrying user testing before rolling out into the business. We aim to have this embedded into the business during 2023.

10.4 Voids Improvement Project

10.4.1 Following on from the Voids Service Analysis in 2022, a Voids Improvement Plan has now been developed and a dedicated Project Manager has been appointed. We are working on delivering the improvements identified within the first phase of the improvement project.

10.4.2 As part of the Voids Improvement Project and following a request at HSC in August 2022, we are currently undertaking a 'void work on occupation' trial, more locally known as 'tenant in void'. We will be providing a more detailed update within our year end performance report in August 2023.

10.5 Stores Managed Service Procurement

10.5.1 In the summer of 2022, the procurement exercise for the managed service stores provider was stalled due to the last remaining tenderer announcing their decision to withdraw from the procurement exercise. The current market volatility, availability of a suitable site, and inflationary pressures were the main the reasons given for their decision.

10.5.2 A new stores operating model has now been approved, which will retain the current 'in-house' solution, but with a number of improvements to make it more efficient. Those improvements include:

- The procurement of a new 'single-supplier' framework agreement to provide a 'one-stop-shop' for all our core materials requirements delivered more frequently into our Stores facility at 88 Leycroft Road.

- The investment in a new stores Inventory Management System (IMS) to better control the supply chain from ordering through to issue to our craft staff.

10.5.3 With these improvements in place, we aim to reduce the amount and value of stock held within our Stores at any one time, improve our buying power to secure the best possible prices from our chosen supplier, and deliver an improved quality service to the staff carrying out repairs in our tenants home.

10.6 Enhanced letting standard.

10.6.1 So far this year we have completed our new enhanced letting standard to 30 properties for tenants leaving care or homelessness. This has been extremely well received and helps our new tenants through their transitional period. The pictures below illustrate the enhanced letting standard.





10.7 Housing Digital Assistance Officers

10.7.1 During 2022, we successfully recruited into the 4 new posts of Housing Digital Assistance Officers, to embed new ways of working even further.

10.7.2 This new role will help us to deliver new services, such as our remote assistance offer, where we connect to the tenant's smart phone in real time to triage reported repairs and ensure they are properly prioritised. This video call may also provide an opportunity to provide guidance and support in resolving the reported repair at that time, and where this is

not possible, surveying the further work required and ordering materials without the need for a physical visit by one of our craft staff.

10.7.3 Both the remote assistance technology and the new posts provide the repairs service with further opportunities to bring more services 'online', including offering those services outside of the traditional hours of work, further improving the operational efficiency and quality of the service we offer to our tenants.

10.8 Drones

10.8.1 A project is currently being undertaken by our roofing team to ascertain the feasibility of utilising drone technology to enable inspections to our hard-to-reach structures across the city. This will provide tenants with a quicker service and reduce the amount of scaffold being used at any given time. The use of drones is also a much safer way for our teams to carry out surveys by reducing the amount of time that they are working from heights. A further update will be provided within our end of year report.

7. Background information and other papers: N/A

8. Summary of appendices: N/A

9. 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

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