

Leicester
City Council

MEETING OF THE HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION

DATE: MONDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 2020
TIME: 4:00 pm
PLACE: Teams Virtual Meeting

Members of the Scrutiny Commission

Councillor Westley (Chair)
Councillor Nangreave (Vice Chair)

Councillors Aqbany, Gee, O'Donnell, Pickering and Willmott

Members of the Scrutiny Commission are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed overleaf.

For Monitoring Officer

Officer contacts:

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Further information

If you have any queries about any of the above or the business to be discussed, please contact Angie Smith, Democratic Support on **(0116) 454 3833** or email edmund.brown@leicester.gov.uk.

For Press Enquiries - please phone the **Communications Unit on 0116 454 4151**

PUBLIC SESSION

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed.

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Appendix A

The minutes of the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Commission held on 7 July 2020 have been circulated, and Members are asked to confirm them as a

correct record.

4. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer to report on the receipt of any petitions received in accordance with Council procedures.

5. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS OR STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer to report on the receipt of any questions, representations or statements of case received in accordance with Council procedures.

6. ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF NEW BUILD HOUSING [Appendix B](#)

The Director of Housing submits a report to update Members of the Housing Scrutiny Commission on the climate credentials of the new build council houses proposed at Saffron Velodrome and Lanesborough Road.

7. OVERCROWDING REDUCTION STRATEGY [Appendix C](#)

The Director of Housing submits a report to inform Members of the Housing Scrutiny Commission of a new initiative to develop and implement an Overcrowding Reduction Strategy.

8. VOID PERFORMANCE REPORT: JANUARY 2020 - MARCH 2020 - YEAR END [Appendix D](#)

The Director of Housing submits a report to update Members of the Housing Scrutiny Commission on Void performance for the final quarter and year end 2019/20.

9. RESPONSIVE HOUSING REPAIRS - 2019/20 YEAR-END PERFORMANCE REPORT AND UPDATE [Appendix E](#)

The Director of Housing submits a report to update Members of the Housing Scrutiny Commission on the performance of the Division's Repairs and Maintenance (R&M) service and the implementation of future service changes aimed at improving performance. It will also provide a brief summary of the impact on the R&M service as a result of COVID-19 pandemic.

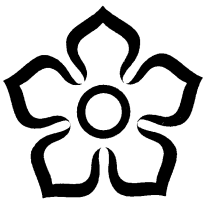
10. DISABLED ADAPTATIONS, HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT AND DISABLED FACILITY GRANTS [Appendix F](#)

The Director of Housing submits a presentation for noting to the Commission which provides an update on the Disabled Adaptations, Housing Revenue Account and Disabled Facilities Grants.

**11. TENANTS' AND LEASEHOLDERS' FORUM ACTION
AND DECISION LOG**

The Scrutiny Policy Officer submits for noting the Tenants' and Leaseholders'
Forum Action Log

12. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: TUESDAY, 7 JULY 2020 at 4:00 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Westley (Chair)
Councillor Nangreave (Vice Chair)

Councillor Gee
Councillor O'Donnell

Councillor Pickering
Councillor Willmott

In attendance:

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Cutkelvin

In attendance for item 7:

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke
Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clair
Councillor Govind
Councillor Solanki

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65. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Aqbany.

66. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

67. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED:

that the minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 25 February 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

68. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received.

69. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS OR STATEMENTS OF CASE

Kim Burley Jones was present in the virtual meeting and asked a number of questions to the Housing Scrutiny Commission on behalf of Climate Action Leicester and Leicestershire Action Group:

Question 1:

Since in order to both reduce greenhouse emissions, and to ensure the housing continues to be fit to live in as climate change takes hold you – and every other council - needs to deep-retrofit all the council housing stock, please would you tell us what you are doing as a council to find funding to deep-retrofit and/or externally insulate all your council housing in the next 5 years?

Response to question 1, provided by Director of Housing:

“As a division we have been carrying out energy efficiency improvements to our stock as part of the annual capital programme for some time now, fitting energy efficient boilers, low energy LED lighting, insulating lofts, upgrading the insulation when we renew external cladding etc. and specify energy efficiency measures into our specifications for all of our work areas if we can.

In the past we have successfully secured match funding and part funded several large retro fit schemes of external wall insulation and solar PV across the city as part of previous CESP and ECO schemes and these have proved hugely successful. Unfortunately match funded opportunities are no longer available but we are always on the lookout for schemes that would help us do more.

However, in light of the council declaring a climate emergency we are now looking more closely at what we do and how we can move more quickly to a zero-carbon strategy. We have recently set up a working group to specifically look at our existing stock and what retro fit might look like, and we are looking to extend this to include external organisation and experts.”

Question 2:

Would Leicester City Council consider using Section 106 to raise funds from housing developers as Milton Keynes does with a charge for each tonne of carbon emissions in new building first year of life to fund energy efficiency?

Response to Question 2, provided by Director of Planning, Development and Transportation:

“The City Council is committed to develop ambitious and innovative new policy in respect of energy efficiency in the new Local Plan. To inform this, officers in the Planning Department have already reviewed exemplar policies of innovative sustainable design and construction and low-zero carbon technology policies in other local plans, not just at Milton Keynes, but also other authorities including Reading, Brighton and Hove, Bristol, and Greater Manchester. This review has informed the commissioning of a comprehensive consultant study to advise on the optimal local plan policy choices available to the city. This study will include the potential for offsetting approaches and potential candidates for

sustainable infrastructure or mitigation investment including energy efficiency.

However, all policies seeking to require s106 funding will however need to pass a 'whole plan' as well as a 'site by site' viability assessment. Current assessment shows limited viability levels in the city (especially on brownfield land sites) so there will need to be a substantive prioritisation exercise between various policy objectives over the relatively limited amount of s106 funding income projected (balancing such requirements as affordable housing, education, transport, biodiversity, sports/open space and climate investment aspirations). In addition, any proposed policy need to also pass the test of being related to the generating development under the definition of the Community Infrastructure Regulations."

Supplementary question, asked at the Housing Scrutiny meeting:

You mentioned the commissioning of a consultancy, is this leading to a report and does it have a deadline or target date for findings?

Response to supplementary question, provided by *Director of Planning, Development and Transportation (following the meeting):*

The consultants will provide a report, and this will include recommendations for policies in the new local plan. A final report is expected to be published by June 2021.

Question 3:

Have you considered using municipal or social impact bonds such as the Brummie Bond in Birmingham?

Response to Question 3, provided by Director of Finance:

"The Brummie Bond was raised from institutional investors in 2017. Birmingham obtained £45m at a rate of 2.36%, 0.4% below the PWLB rate at that time. We would have no need to borrow in this manner, because we can use our investment balances in lieu of borrowing (a significant part of these balances have been set aside by law to repay borrowing, but we can use them in this way because repaying debt is prohibitively expensive). We would only lose around 0.5% in interest but would still need to repay the "debt." The real issue is the need for a business case that would enable us to build at no revenue cost to ourselves. In the case of council housing, because rents are below market levels, we can only afford to build if 50% of the cost is met from other sources."

Question 4:

Would you consider working with the Leicestershire County Council Pension Fund (which includes Leicester Pensions) to get them to invest a small proportion – maybe 3 to 5% of the fund – in deep retrofitting locally (at the same time as getting them to divest the £200million they have currently invested in fossil fuel companies), as with the Greater Manchester Pension fund?

Response to Question 4, provided by Director of Finance:

“We would be pleased to put a formal request to them from the scrutiny committee. Members of the Pension Committee have a fiduciary duty to safeguard, above all else, the financial interests of the Fund’s beneficiaries, though its Investment Strategy also explicitly states that responsible investment can enhance long term investment performance and investment managers will only be appointed if they integrate responsible investment into their decision-making processes. Note that the fund doesn’t directly hold £200m in fossil fuel companies, though it does have passive funds which will include them.”

Question 5:

Are you using, or do you have plans to use money from the Public Works Loan Board for climate activities?

Response to Question 5, provided by Director of Finance:

“This would not be necessary for the reasons given at question 3 above. If projects that pay for themselves can be developed, we can use our investment balances instead of borrowing.”

Question 6:

Would you consider raising council tax on higher band properties to raise money for a climate action fund as Warwick District council is considering?

Response to Question 6, provided by Director of Finance:

“Warwick District Council voted to increase council tax by 34% in 2020/21, in order to raise money to combat climate change. It was not targeted at higher tax bands – this is not legally possible, although conceivably an authority could use some of the extra income to bolster their council tax support scheme. A tax increase at this level requires a referendum to endorse it, and in the event Warwick could not hold one due to coronavirus. The tax increase was consequently withdrawn. In Officers view, a referendum would stand little chance of success. Since the Government required referendums to approve “excessive” tax rises in 2012, only one has been held. Central Bedfordshire Police’s referendum in 2015 to pay for more police was defeated by a vote of 2:1. If my memory is correct, they thought they would win based on earlier opinion polling. Referendums are costly (Warwick’s was reported to cost £300,000), and new bills have to be sent if the public votes for a lower increase.”

Question 7:

Finally, if you are seeking funding for external insulation and/or deep retrofit, please would you tell us from where and in what timescale?

Response to Question 7, provided by Director of Housing:

“We are always looking for match funding opportunities, in the past these have come from the energy companies as a way of them being able to meet their own carbon reduction targets. Unfortunately, these haven’t been available to us

recently but we continue to monitor the situation. In the absence of any available funding any external wall insulation scheme and retro fit would have to be funded by the HRA, I can assure you that energy efficiency will continue to feature heavily in the HRA capital programme now and into the future.”

70. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair introduced all Members, Officers and Members of the Executive present and requested anyone else present that would be participating in the meeting to kindly introduce themselves.

The Chair advised the Committee that the meeting was a virtual meeting as permitted by section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and outlined the procedures for the meeting.

71. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB) SERVICE PROPOSAL

The Director of Housing submitted a report to seek feedback from the Housing Scrutiny Commission and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Members on the transfer of the ASB function from the Housing Division to the CrASBU Team.

The following points were made;

- Currently ASB services were delivered by two areas from within the Council, the Tenancy Management Service within the Housing Division and the Crime and ASB (CrASBU) Team based in the Neighbourhood and Environmental Division.
- The proposed transfer would lead to one central team within the Council having responsibility for dealing with all ASB cases across the City from the first report to conclusion regardless of tenure.
- It was noted that Neighbourhood Housing Officers spent 20% of their time working directly on ASB cases.
- If the function was to transfer to CRASBU, funding from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) would need to be transferred too. Officers drew Members attention to 8.1 of the report, which set out the financial implications.
- The change would be delivered by using vacant Neighbourhood Officer posts.
- Enough staffing resource within the housing division would be retained to provide initial advice and signposting.
- The change would enable Housing Officers to focus on delivering their primary roles.
- Tenants & residents would need to be consulted on the proposal, in addition to all staff who would be affected.
- Officers further detailed the benefits of the future working model and expressed the aim of providing an improved service.

In response to Members queries:

- Housing Officers would remain the 'go to' person and would pass on essential knowledge and intelligence to CRASBU, maintain close links

and also ensure that cases had been followed up and followed through.

- A Member of the Commission requested that the continuity of Housing Officers knowledge which exists in housing stock should be maintained and protected. The presenting officer agreed to include and formalise this within the proposal and further expressed the importance of the Housing Officer facilitating the support that tenants needed in order for the service to support and sustain tenancies.
- Members attention was directed to 6.3.4 of the report which set out the proposed new structure. This included the creation of specialist posts within the team reflecting the level of complex cases and also the creation of ASB investigators.
- With the Directors' consent, following the establishment of the new service model, the proposed new structure would be reviewed this time next year to ensure it was fit for purpose.
- It was noted that at least 75% of complex cases involved mental health issues, as a result the mental health aspect would be bought into the service model.
- In relation to low-level ASB issues, the service would encourage 'self-help' in the first instance whereby people would be encouraged to try and resolve certain issues amongst themselves, signposting and leaflets would also be available to support this. CrASBU contact would be the latter option for low-level ASB issues.
- The service was looking at developing job descriptions, comments/ feedback taken from this meeting would be merged into the new job roles.
- In relation to the point of contact, Officers explained the system which they had including a daily checked CrASBU inbox, a shared 'SENTINEL' system with the Police and all cases were reviewed efficiently.
- Officers noted some Members' concerns that there would not be a designated telephone contact number for the service and only one single point of contact, especially for those people who had internet difficulties and language barriers.

Although some Members welcomed aspects of the proposal, there were also some of the following further concerns;

- It was felt that there was not a clear breakdown as to what ASB Housing Officers were spending 20% of their working time on.
- Concerns regarding the financial implications of the budget cut and the requests to ensure that the tenants had been consulted on the transfer of HRA funds. Officers responded that the needs and requirements from a finance perspective would be reviewed each year and an equitable process ensured.
- It would be important to have someone/ people from a Mental Health Team/ specialist.
- The Officer responded that the complexity of the current model was felt to be very confusing and inefficient at times. This new proposal would aim to offer an improved service and it was in no way financially driven.
- It was noted that the Officers would be looking into how the new arrangements could be measured in terms of performance indicators.

- A special Tenants and Leaseholders forum meeting was anticipated to be set up in August in order to carry out the consultation and a report/ feedback brought back to the next commission meeting.

AGREED; (all for the next meeting due to be held in September)

1. A report would be brought back to the Committee with the results following the Tenants and Leaseholders consultation.
2. To circulate the job descriptions to Members.
3. To bring a further report.

Councillors Govind and Solanki were present from the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission in the participation of deliberation of this item.

72. HOUSING DIVISION COVID RESPONSE AND UPDATE MEMBERS BRIEFING

The Director of Housing submitted a report to update Members of the Housing Scrutiny Commission on the Housing Division's Covid-19 response.

During presentation of the report, the following was noted;

- All staff were thanked for the hard work, dedication and commitment for the services that were continually provided during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The report set out the challenges and key issues faced since the pandemic started some of which included;

- Rent arrears increased to £2.1m, an increase of £600k. A response to this challenge was set out in 4.1 to 4.1.7 of the report.
- The primary aim was to continue to work for those that required help, support those to maximize benefit entitlements and make arrangements for the payment of any arrears, agreeing affordable amounts where necessary. Officers detailed internal and external support services which were available.
- Only in a small number of cases would legal action be proceeded to, those who had refused to co-operate after several attempts at communication.
- In terms of the challenge of assisting those people to not live on the streets and now looking into housing solutions, to achieve the most positive solution work was taking place with colleagues in the homelessness sector. A draft rough sleepers Next Steps strategy had been developed in resolving this issue and involved bringing online 170 additional units of accommodation to meet the needs.
- The 3rd challenge was the amount of non-priority repairs built up during lockdown, and potentially more repairs which were unreported during lockdown.
- The fourth challenge was the delivery of existing capital budgets and programme works, which meant it could be likely that all the work in housing stock previously anticipated may not be fulfilled this year.

The Director of Housing responded to the points made by Members:

- A more detailed report was being brought to the Housing Scrutiny Commission this evening to provide an update on Rent Arrears.
- In order to clear the routine repairs, the service's staff would be used for potential overtime and discussions were taking place with local contractors.
- Phase 1 of the new house build was anticipated to be completed in Autumn 2020.
- All responses in government funding had been in conjunction with the general fund. Reportedly, some discussions were taking place between the Director of Finance and government ministers regarding the potential funding of the HRA but no confirmation currently.
- The Home Choice Service became live last week for existing applicants to make any necessary amendments to applications with anticipations for new applicants to have access this week and the full choice-based lettings system due to go live on 27 July 2020.
- Regarding the allocation of housing stock to homeless people, 170 units had been identified; it was intended that 60 units would come from existing void stock and to achieve the other 110 units it was intended that they would be facilitated through private arrangements.
- It was noted that a next steps strategy was being developed in draft, this would be taken to the executive team and a formal process would take place and then shared publicly.

AGREED:

1. That the Commission thank all the staff for their work and continued service provided.

73. MANIFESTO DELIVERY - HOUSING

The Director of Housing submitted a report to provide a progress update to the Housing Scrutiny Commission setting out progress on delivery of the Labour manifesto commitments made in 2019, and was an update on progress since November 2019 when the last update was provided on the matter to the Housing Scrutiny Commission.

All to note;

- A summary of the report was provided.
- Members attention was drawn to table Appendix 1 which set out each individual manifesto detailing the key actions required, delivery timeframe, key metrics and a progress update.
- Good progress continued to be made by Housing towards the commitments.
- In order to enhance and deliver the commitment to maintain the adaptations service for all home owners and Council tenants which would include disability access work, the City Mayor and Council had agreed to increase the budget for that work to £4.3m across the General Fund and Housing Revenue Budget.
- The delivery of new social and affordable housing was explained.
- Some Members hoped that one day only social housing would be built,

and that Housing Association's would eventually come under the Local Authority.

AGREED:

1. That the report be noted.

74. RENT ARREARS PROGRESS REPORT APRIL 2019 TO MARCH 2020

The Director of Housing submitted a report to inform Members of the Housing Scrutiny Commission of progress in the above area of work over the full financial year, from April 2019 to March 2020.

- The current status of rent arrears and the various factors which contributed to the increase in rent arrears and the impact of Universal Credit was explained.
- It was noted that Leicester City Council was in a good position compared to other similar Local Authorities.
- £389,327 was paid by Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's for all qualifying Council tenants).
- The Housing online services were available and would be expanding to allow tenants to log new repairs and make housing related enquiries.
- Evictions were at a low level compared to earlier years and were only pursued as an ultimate last resort.
- As a result of the pandemic the Lord Chancellor had suspended courts on possession proceedings. Notices of seeking possession had also now been modified and were now 3 months instead of 1 month.
- Face to face contact to discuss rent arrears was currently suspended, however alternative options of communication were being considered.

Following questions and comments from the Committee, the following points were made:

- In terms of work and support, the service was ensuring that resources were fairly distributed across the whole City. Certain areas/ wards were noted to be more high risk in terms of Covid-19 cases, however due to lockdown restrictions, it had been difficult to physically go out and reach tenants. The service covered various areas and if one area required more support then more staff were generally deployed there. The team welcomed any ideas on how tenants could be reached out to in this time.
- A Member of the Commission had concerns that there was actually no evidence that the arrears were due to Covid-19, as stated in the report. The Director of Housing clarified that there had been consistent payments and performance at 99% rent collected for years previously and only in this Covid-19 period there were increased cases of the arrears.

AGREED:

1. That the content of the report be noted.

75. WHO GETS SOCIAL HOUSING?

The Director of Housing submitted a report for information to the Housing Scrutiny Commission in regard to the Housing register, band proportions, lettings and tenant overcrowding and under-occupation.

All to note;

- 6486 applicants on the housing register as at 1st April 2020.
- Largest demand was still for 2-bedroom accommodation (a third of all applications).
- There were 1271 lets in the last 12 months. This was a 2% increase on last year. 98% of lets were to applicants in Bands 1 and 2.
- Demand still significantly outstripped supply.
- There was a disparity across wards in terms of the number of applications received from constituents, with the highest being Evington and the lowest been Knighton.
- The most common reason for joining the housing register remains overcrowding. However there were multiple overcrowding priorities dependant on the level of need. The service was working on a local overcrowding reduction strategy to bring a range of solutions. A report on this would be brought back to the committee. This report would also show a range of initiatives which were being looked into.
- Key information regarding each of the three Bands were detailed.
- There were some issues of displacement due to people living together however no issues had been identified of households having issues due to Covid-19 and overcrowding.

AGREED:

1. That the report be noted and further reports discussed be provided at the next meeting.

76. TENANTS' AND LEASEHOLDERS' FORUM ACTION AND DECISION LOG

AGREED:

1. That the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum Action and Decision Log be noted.

77. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair noted that a housing working party would be set up and requested that Members volunteer to support this. The Scrutiny Policy Officer would circulate any information relating to this and further discussions would take place at the next meeting.

78. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.15pm.

Housing Scrutiny Commission

Energy Efficiency of New Build Housing
Assistant Mayor for Housing: Cllr Elly Cutkelvin
Date: 7th. September 2020
Lead director: Chris Burgin



City Mayor

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: Potentially all
- Report author: Simon Nicholls
- Author contact details: simon.nicholls@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: V.1

1. Summary

The Council has embarked on a programme of building new council homes to help meet the identified need for the city. Since we started this process the City has declared a 'climate emergency' and the energy efficiency and climate credentials of our new homes has come under scrutiny.

The primary reason for the new build programme was to increase the supply of much needed 2-bedroom and wheelchair accessible homes in the city; the first phases are being built to established building control standards, with the enhancement of solar PV panels.

The specification for future phases has been increased to exceed building control standards and this report details the standards we are delivering at Saffron Velodrome, Phase 2, of the new council house building programme.

2. Recommendations

To update members of the Housing Scrutiny Commission on the climate credentials of the new build council houses proposed at Saffron Velodrome and Lanesborough Road.

3. Supporting information including options considered:

Phase 1.

The first phase of the new build council house programme consists of six small sites located on established council housing estates, sites range from just 2 dwellings up to 12, a total of 29 units.

The overriding reason for the building of these homes was to try and address the chronic shortage of 2 bedroomed and wheelchair accessible accommodation available to rent for social housing tenants.

In 2019 the city council declared a 'Climate Emergency' and rightly since then there has been a greater emphasis on ensuring that all capital schemes meet the council's aspirations and targets.

Phase 1 were designed and are being built to current building control standards, however we have since increased the specification to include solar PV panels and triple glazing. The contractors are on site now and the first of these new homes will be

ready for occupation in October 2020.

Next steps:

There has been a lot in the construction media about ambitious plans to deliver zero carbon homes by housing providers and homes to Passive House standards and there are some schemes that have gained national recognition for this. one in particular is the Goldsmith Street scheme in Norwich.

https://amp.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2019/oct/08/stirling-prize-architecture-goldsmith-street-norwich-council-houses?_twitter_impression=true

Whilst we want to be proactive in delivering low carbon homes and homes that are fit for a fossil fuel-free future the original aim of the programme hasn't gone away and we need to find cost effective and sustainable ways of delivering new homes that people can enjoy living in.

The building regulations are also being revised and we have reviewed our specification, based on our expectation of the new regulations and our desire to exceed them.

We are proposing not to follow others or commit to delivering all new build council houses to 'Passive House' standards, but concentrate on a 'Leicester Standard' that is clear, based on fabric first principles uses standard building materials and methods and be simple and inexpensive to run for the occupier. We hope this approach will deliver homes that are up to 70% better than current Building Control requirements and will have a carbon saving of 65 tonnes per year.

Subsequent phases will follow this approach; however, we will review this on a phase by phase basis and review and amend as necessary to ensure that we are constantly improving.

The next two phases are Saffron Velodrome and Lanesborough Road, where we have adopted the following approach to sustainability and energy efficiency. The examples given all relate to the Saffron Velodrome site.

General Measures:

Layout and Orientation:

The layout of the scheme has been designed to ensure that as many plots as possible have a south east or south west orientation to maximise solar PV generation. However it has not been possible to do this on all plots. Main living rooms have also been designed to have a dual aspect to maximise the potential for solar gain and cross flow ventilation to limit any overheating.

Energy Efficiency and Carbon reduction measures:

The new houses will be constructed under current Part L of the Building regulations,

below is the proposed specification for the new houses, the following is based on the 38 homes at Saffron Velodrome; we are still finalising the Lanesborough Road site, however it will follow the same principles:

Item	Standard	Specification
Walls - Brick	0.16 W/m ² .K	Masonry cavity wall with partial fill or full fill insulation.
Party wall	0.00 W/m ² .K	Fully filled party wall
Roof (ceiling)	0.09 W/m ² .K	Tradition trussed roof with 500mm mineral wool insulation
Ground Floor	0.12 W/m ² .K	Suspended floor with either insulated blocks or insulation on beam and block floor
Windows & Glazed doors	0.80 W/m ² .K	Triple glazed 'g' value = 0.57
Front door	1.00 W/m ² .K	
Air test	3 m ³ /hr/m ²	
Accredited Details	Accredited and Concrete Block Association	Separate lintels

The 'U' value is a measure of how efficient a material is as an insulator; the lower the number the better the materials insulating qualities.

These homes will have increased thermal efficiencies compared to that is required under the current building regulations; below is a comparison table that shows the improvement as a percentage:

Item	Standard	Building Regs	Improvement
Walls Cavity	0.16 W/m ² .K	0.30 W/m ² .K	47%
Roof (Ceiling)	0.09 W/m ² .K	0.20 W/m ² .K	55%
Ground Floor	0.12 W/m ² .K	0.25 W/m ² .K	52%
Windows	0.80 W/m ² .K	2.00 W/m ² .K	60%
Front Door	1.00 W/m ² .K	2.00 W/m ² .K	50%
Air Permeability	3 m ³ /hr/m ²	10 m ³ /hr/m ²	70%

The proposed building fabric improvements show an up to 70% improvement based on current building control standards.

Building Services, heating and hot water:

Item	Standard	Specification
Heating and ventilation	Air to Air Heat Pump	Nilan Compact P**
Heating Controls	Programmer and room thermostat	
Heating Features	Via air (Nilan Compact)	
Hot Water	Via the Nilan Compact	180 litre storage tank, 0.84 kWh/day losses
Ventilation	Via the Nilan unit	
Lighting	100% low energy lighting	

Air to Air Heat pump:

An air source heat pump takes heat from the air and boost it to a higher temperature, the pump needs electricity to run but should use less electricity than the heat that it generates.

The proposed Nilan Compact P is a multi-function air to air heat pump that provides highly efficient space heating, hot water and integrated heat recovery ventilation.



Solar PV panels:

PV panels convert solar radiation into direct current electricity. They are a very good source of renewable energy as they convert the most abundant source of energy on the earth, the sun, into the most useful source of energy, electricity.

PV panels are silent in operation, they have no moving parts, have low levels of maintenance and a long-life expectancy. They are connected into the grid via an inverter and more recently battery technology has improved so the electricity can now

be stored.

Solar PV is more efficient in lower temperatures; they should be located to avoid over shading and preferable face due south at an angle of 35 degrees. The output of PV panels is measured in KWP, kilowatts peak. The average cost of an installation will be between £2k - £3k.

We are proposing installing 6 x 250-watt panels to each of the roofs, with the exception of two plots that will need 8 panels to achieve the required EPC 'A' rating, see below:

	Plots	Panels per roof	Total PV panels	kWp PV	Energy kWh/yr
South Roofs	5	6	30	7.50	6,475
SW Roofs	29	6	174	43.50	35,815
West Roofs	2	6	12	3.00	2,435
West Roofs	2	8	16	4.00	3,247
TOTAL	38		152	58.00	47,972

Based on the above 47,972kWh/year on site renewable energy will be generated.

Carbon emission summary,

House Type	No.	Floor area	TER	DER	Baseline	Actual	Saving	Saving
		m2	kgCO2/m2/yr	kgCO2/m2/yr	kgCO2/yr	kgCO2/yr	kgCO2/yr	%
Type A1	4	64.4	28.25	5.35	7,277	1,378	5,899	81.06%
Type A2	2	64.4	25.34	6.58	3,264	848	2,416	74.03%
Type B	2	70.84	31.45	6.69	4,456	948	3,508	78.73%
Type C1	4	81.84	25.95	6.05	8,495	1,981	6,514	76.69%
Type C2	6	81.84	25.75	5.95	12,644	2,922	9,723	76.89%
Type D	2	98.76	28.44	8.7	5,617	1,718	3,899	69.41%
Type E	10	92.88	24.95	6.56	23,174	6,093	17,081	73.71%
Type F	3	117.06	27.27	8.62	9,577	3,027	6,550	68.39%
Type G1	2	146.58	21.09	7.97	6,183	2,336	3,846	62.21%
Type G2	2	146.58	21.96	8.47	6,438	2,483	3,955	61.43%
Type H	1	103.33	28.18	9.72	2,912	1,004	1,907	65.51%
	38				90,036	24,738	65,298	72.52%

All dwellings will have an EPC rating of A and the predicted annual electricity bill of £440 per year, or £36 per month, which compares well to £443 per year for a similar sized Passive House.

This is compared to the average dual fuel energy bill in the UK of £1,138 per year or £93.83 a month. (Ofgem 2020)

Sustainability
Electricity usage

These houses will be carbon free because they will be solely powered by electricity. The council's energy supplier, Robin Hood Energy supplies only electricity from renewable sources.

Water usage:

The water usage per person per day has been calculated at 110 litres, set against a current average consumption of 142 litres per person per day.

It has been calculated as per the table below:

Installation Type	Unit of Measure	Capacity/Flow Rate	Use Factor	Fixed Use (Litres/person/day)	Litres/person/day
WC (Single Flush)	Flush Volume (litres)		4.42	0	0.00
WC (Dual Flush)	Full Flush Volume (litres)	4	1.46	0	5.84
	Part Flush Volume (litres)	2.6	2.96	0	7.70
Taps (excluding kitchen utility)	Flow rate (litres/min)	6	1.58	1.58	11.06
Bath (where shower present)	Capacity to overflow (litres)	180	0.11	0	19.80
Shower (where bath present)	Flow rate (litres/min)	8	4.37	0	34.96
Bath only	Capacity to overflow (litres)		0.5	0	0.00
Shower only	Flow rate (litres/min)		5.6	0	0.00
Kitchen/Utility taps	Flow rate (litres/min)	6	0.44	10.36	13.00
Washing Machine	Litres/kg dry load	8.17	2.1	0	17.16
Dishwasher	Litres/Place Setting	1.25	3.6	0	4.50
Waster Disposal	Litres/use (1 = present, 0 - absent)	0	3.08	0	0.00
Water Softener	Litres/person/day	0	1	0	0.00
	5	Total Calculated			114.01
	6	Contribution Greywater			0.00
	7	Contribution Rainwater			0.00
	8	Normalisation factor			0.91
	9	Total water consumption			103.75
	10	External water use			5.00
	11	Total Water Consumption			108.75

Sustainable materials used in construction.

Where possible green guide A rated material will be used, the only exception being the load bearing partition walls.

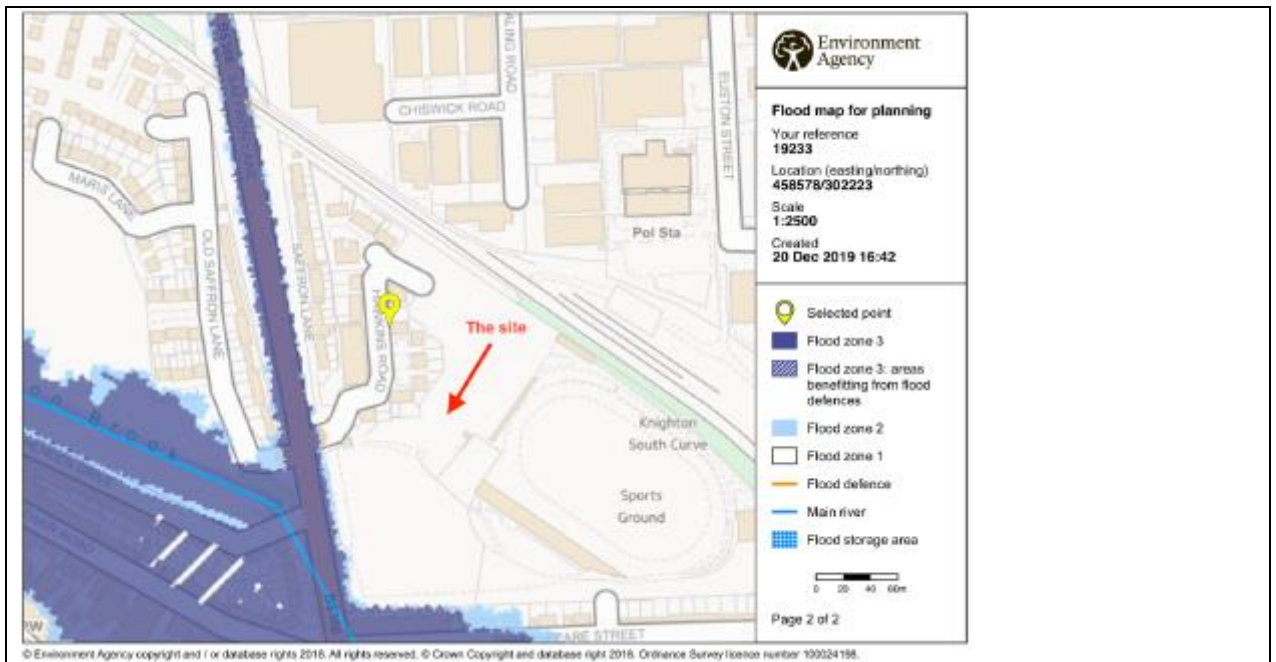
See table below

Element	Green Guide Ref	Rating	Description
External brick cavity wall	806170047	A+	Brickwork outer leaf, insulation, medium dense solid blockwork inner leaf, cement mortar, plasterboard on battens, paint
External rendered block cavity wall	806180042	A+	Cement rendered medium dense solid blockwork cavity wall, insulation, cement mortar, plasterboard on battens, paint
Roof	812410007	A+	Timber trussed rafters and joists with insulation, roofing underlay, counterbattens, battens and concrete interlocking tiles or clay tiles
Intermediate Floors (Houses)	807280026	A+	T&G floorboards on timber 'I' joists
Non-loadbearing internal walls	809760002	A	Galvanised steel stud, plasterboard, paint
Loadbearing walls	809180008	B	Medium dense blockwork, plasterboard, paint
Windows	813100009	A	PVC-U window with steel reinforcement, double glazed
Carpet – Floor Finish	821570080	A	Carpet - polypropylene cut, 1000 g/m ² , textile backing. Felt Underlay 1400 g/m ² . FCSS 21, 22/23.
Vinyl – Floor finish	821570015	A	Homogeneous and heterogeneous profiled surfaced rubber floor coverings (EN 12199). FCSS 23/32.

Flood risk and surface water run off:

The proposed scheme will use rainwater recycling and if ground conditions permit we will use soakaways to limit surface water run and existing storm water drains.

The site is not in a flood plain, it is low risk, flood zone 1 but borders a flood zone 3



What next:

We are continuing to look at the specification and review the materials that we use to build our new homes with the aim of reducing the running cost further and using materials from sustainable/local sources.

We are also looking at the way we build our homes to try and see if we can make them more sustainable by considering off site construction and or modular construction. We are currently working through these ideas on a number of smaller sites and will bring a further report to the Executive once we are further ahead in the process.

Housing Scrutiny Commission Report

Overcrowding Reduction Strategy (LCC Stock)

Lead Member Briefing: 29th June 2020

Housing Scrutiny Commission: 7th September 2020

Assistant Mayor for Housing: Cllr Elly Cutkelvin

Lead Director: Chris Burgin

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report authors: Justin Haywood, Service Manager – Housing Solutions & Partnerships, Caroline Carpendale, Head of Service - Homelessness, Prevention & Support.
- Author's contact details: justin.haywood@leicester.gov.uk
caroline.carpendale@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: 1.0

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Housing Scrutiny Commission of a new initiative to develop and implement an Overcrowding Reduction Strategy. The strategy aims to take a multi-pronged approach to reduce and ease overcrowding in the city, focussing on those in most need. Although it is unrealistic to aim to eradicate overcrowding, the programme will set ambitious goals to make a significant and ongoing difference through a large programme of projects over time.
- 1.2 The strategy will focus initially on reducing overcrowding within Council stock, but it is intended to later roll out any successful elements to other housing sectors within the City, where they can be practically applied – i.e. Housing Associations, Private Rented Sector.
- 1.3 As such the longer-term vision is to create an Overcrowding Reduction Strategy covering all tenure types within Leicester City. There are risks associated with attempting this approach from the start, so a phased approach will be taken, starting with LCC Tenants, and lessons learned will help to form the wider strategy. Furthermore, social housing has higher levels of overcrowding than the private rented sector.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council continues to face challenges in meeting the huge demand for affordable housing and attempting to reduce the overcrowding that many of our Tenants experience.
- 2.2 Overcrowding remains the single biggest reason why households apply to the Housing Register. This is followed closely by homelessness, of which a proportion of family exclusions are at least partially as a result of overcrowding. As such, we know it to be a significant issue in the City.

Overcrowding Standard, Bedroom Standard and Leicester's Housing Allocations Policy

- 2.3 Overcrowding has been a cause for concern since the public health and social reforms of the 19th century.

- 2.4 Although the intention of the legislators in 1935 was that the standards should be regularly updated, they were in practice carried over unchanged into the 1985 Act. They are as a result now well out of line with contemporary expectations. For example, a couple with a boy aged 15 years and a girl aged 13 years in a one-bedroom flat would not be statutorily overcrowded because the father and son could share one room and the mother and daughter the sitting room (or even the kitchen).
- 2.5 Although this remains the standard for assessing Statutory Overcrowding, a more modern definition of overcrowding is used in the Survey of English Housing, known as the Bedroom Standard. This is based on the ages and composition of the family. A notional number of bedrooms are allocated to each household in accordance with pairings by age, sex and relationships of family members. A separate bedroom is allocated to each pairing, and one to any family member left over. This standard is then compared with the number of bedrooms available for the sole use of the household.
- 2.6 Under this standard the family described above would be entitled to three bedrooms rather than one.
- 2.7 The Housing Act 1996 and 2004 respectively have given further scope for identification and direction of how to decide whom is overcrowded.
- 2.8 Leicester City Council's Allocations Policy uses this Bedroom Standard and the most recent guidance to identify bedroom need when awarding priority banding to households applying for re-housing.
- 2.9 Tenants with a bedroom deficit will be awarded Band Priority 1, 2 or 3 - dependent on severity.

Band 1 – Statutory/Critical Overcrowding

Where a household's size exceeds the maximum occupancy level of the property, either by assessment of Statutory Overcrowding, or stock intelligence.

Band 2 – Severe Overcrowding or families in 1-bed accommodation

Where a household does not meet Band 1 need, but their current home is 2 or more bedrooms smaller than ideal, or where a family is residing in a 1-bed flat.

Band 3 - Overcrowding

Where a household does not meet Band 1 or 2 need, but their current home is 1 bedroom smaller than ideal. Most commonly seen with families in 2-beds who need a 3-bed due to growth of the family.

- 2.10 Tenants with a bedroom excess will be awarded Band 1 or 2 depending on level of under-occupation.

Housing Register Data – Overcrowding (focussing on LCC Tenants):

- 2.11 Based on a recent¹ report a total of 605 LCC tenants are currently on the Housing Register wanting to move to a larger property. Of these;

¹ May 2020

- 352 families require one extra bedroom. i.e. living in a 2-bedroom property requiring a 3 bedroom, or in a 3-bed requiring a 4-bed.
- 90 families are currently living in 1-bedroom flats, wanting to move to a 2-bedroom property.
- 163 (27%) are severely/critically/statutorily overcrowded, (requiring two or more extra bedrooms).

Census data – Overcrowding (all tenure types):

- 2.12 The 2001 Census found that 10.6% of Leicester’s households were overcrowded compared with 7.1 % nationally.
- 2.13 Ten years later the 2011 Census found that overcrowding in Leicester had reduced and 9.8% of Leicester’s households were experiencing overcrowding. However, compared to 4.6% nationally, the reduction in Leicester was slower than average. Overcrowding in Derby and Nottingham was 5% and 6% respectively.
- 2.14 The ward with the highest level of overcrowding was Wycliffe, with around a third of households living in overcrowded accommodation.
- 2.15 North Evington, Westcotes, Stoneygate, Belgrave, and some areas of Beaumont Leys wards also recorded high levels of overcrowding with around a fifth of their households living in overcrowded accommodation.
- 2.16 If we cross compare this with data referenced in 2.11, we see correlation for Wycliffe, Evington, and concentrated areas of Beaumont Leys, but contradiction with regard to Stoneygate, and Belgrave (See Appendix 1 and 2 for further information). Further research into this; and potential correlations with ethnicity, housing types / tenure / ownership within Wards, and other relevant factors; will be done as part of the early stages of the Strategy (see 3.2).
- 2.17 This research may provide valuable information about the need for targeted community approaches, or different forms of communication, which will inform strategy objectives and development of solutions.

Housing Register Data – Under-occupation (focussing on LCC and RP Tenants):

- 2.18 **Note on this section:** *It is important to include RP (Housing Association Registered Provider) Tenants as they are awarded priority for a downsize move to release more social housing for overcrowded households. They can mutually exchange with Council Tenants and are therefore relevant.*
- 2.19 By contrast we have a total of 165 LCC and RP tenants who are currently on the Housing Register wanting to move to a smaller property. Around 80% want to move from family accommodation into 1 bed accommodation.
- 2.20 Generally, only 5% of lettings are to cases who are under-occupied. Whilst the exact reasons are not known, it is likely that this is largely down to the low bidding activity by the cohort, due to lack of urgency and the ability to wait for an ideal, rather than just suitable, solution.

Census data - Under-occupation (all tenure types):

2.21 The 2011 Census found that Leicester has relatively low levels of under occupation (55.4%) compared to England as a whole (68.7%)

3. Overcrowding Reduction Strategy

3.1 The aim of the strategy will be to develop a multi-faceted and corporate approach (led by the Housing Division) to tackling overcrowding, comprised of the following five broad priorities:

3.2 a) Further develop a detailed profile of overcrowding and under-occupation within LCC stock

3.2.1 Build on the pilot that was undertaken to address known gaps in intelligence regarding overcrowding and under-occupation to include the barriers preventing tenants from downsizing, including identification of any equality issues.

3.2.2 Research can be undertaken in the following forms;

- Via welfare visits / housing options planning visits.
- Via Survey / mandatory annual online data collection exercise of tenants requiring completion of their current circumstances, composition/occupants, income information etc.
- Via further analysis of the Housing Register, and data obtained through information sharing agreements with other areas of the Council e.g. the Revenues and Benefits Service.
- Involving other partners such as Public Health, especially with renewed focus on the city following developments with the COVID-19 pandemic

3.3 b) Provide a range of enhanced housing options to overcrowded and under-occupied households. This includes use of Planning to promote and deliver an increased and targeted Housing offer.

3.3.1 Making use of the information gained in (a), the main objectives of this priority are to; 1) create increased mobilisation within the stock and 2) create more opportunities for overcrowded and under-occupying households to move out of LCC stock to release Social Housing stock for those most in need. For example:

- Convene a Programme Board to holistically review the City's position, and creatively explore new and existing opportunities to resolve overcrowding and under occupation. Examples include:
 - Prioritising the most severely overcrowded households for a case-managed approach. Identified households will have an individualised housing plan

created to look collaboratively at all of the options available to them. This will enable their housing needs to be assessed beyond current application processes, and managed in agreement with the tenant, to fully maximise the range of housing options available to them. This approach will therefore be similar to that taken for applicants who apply to the service with a threat of homelessness.

- Review the recent changes to the Allocation Policy that re-prioritised overcrowding across all 3 bands of the Housing Register to reflect different severity and to ensure a high priority for the most overcrowded. Look to propose further changes to try to ensure that a proportion of available properties are ring-fenced to LCC tenants experiencing high need.
- We will work to create and promote alternatives to the Right to Buy to assist people into home ownership whilst reducing the number of stock-properties lost. Examples include:
 - Working in partnership with EMH Housing to promote Shared Ownership as an alternative housing option for those unable to access the housing ladder but able to afford a supported shared ownership scheme.
 - Exploring Property Purchase Grant Schemes such as the one currently active in the London Borough of Southwark.

3.4 c) Ensure that we are making best use of current LCC housing stock

3.4.1 The Programme Board and Project Team will also work to review and evaluate the current position, and ensure our stock is being effectively use to prioritise households most in need, and to ensure that under-occupation is reduced so homes can be fully utilised in terms of size. Examples of items on the agenda include:

- Review and evaluation of the current process for promoting mutual exchanges to achieve a higher number of home swaps between under occupied and overcrowded households.
- Re-introduction of the Easy Move Scheme which offers support and financial incentives to tenants who want to downsize, who are under-occupying family homes. This will remove barriers and increase the number of exchanges.
 - The scheme will support tenants through the whole moving process until they have been successfully rehoused. It is recognised that some tenants will require more support than others.
 - The scheme will offer a cash incentive for tenants under occupying to move. Along with this incentive payment there will be the offer of the removals and disconnection and reconnection of appliances.
- Making existing accommodation more suitable to reduce the need for moves, and improve the profile of stock. For example, looking at the feasibility of extending

homes that are overcrowded as an alternative resolution. This would enable families to remain in their neighbourhood and maintain existing support networks.

3.5 d) Maximise opportunities to develop new social housing to meet the needs of overcrowded and under-occupying households, for example

3.5.1 We know that a great portion of those under-occupying LCC homes are elderly Tenants. We intend to use collection methods in Priority (a) to gather evidence on how best to develop stock to attract older aged Tenants to give up family homes. Specific consideration should be had with regard to;

- development of an attractive Sheltered Housing offer
- a focus within the building programme to develop bungalows / age designated new-build flats
- building larger family homes – a closer examination of accommodation in the city, and buying larger homes ‘off the peg’ as part of the acquisition programme.
- A focus to develop or acquire housing in areas of the city favoured by those ethnic groups for whom statistics show are more affected by overcrowding.

3.6 e) Ensure that solutions, whether through the Housing Register or other options, have longevity and sustainability at the core

To ensure that solutions and new initiatives can be further developed and regularly reviewed to confirm that we continue to have a range of options available to manage under-occupation and reduce overcrowding to mitigate the need to introduce flexible tenancies.

4. Next Steps

4.1 A Programme Board will be set up to take the aims and objective of the strategy forward and it is intended to provide regular updates to HSC as the strategy develops. This will include a series of more defined aims and targets as each individual project within the strategy is started, so progress and results can be monitored and evaluated.

The Programme Board will consist of Project / Workstream Leads within Housing, and will also seek to include regular representatives from;

- Children’s Services – to take into account the impact on children and families
- Adult Social Care – to take into account the impact on vulnerable adults

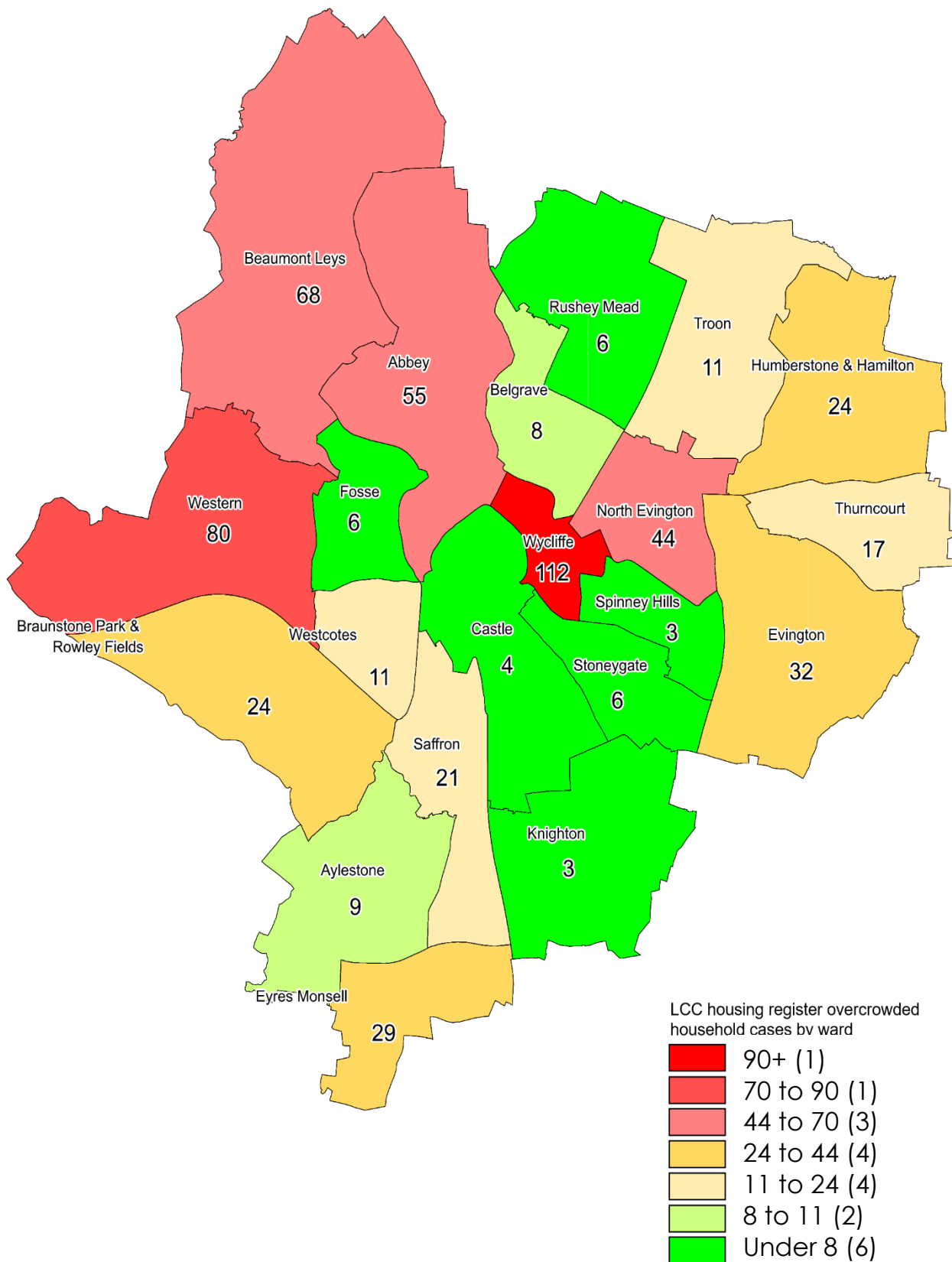
Irregular/ad-hoc representation may then also be sought from other areas such as IT Equalities, Planning, Public Health, as needed to complete objectives. As mentioned previously, the intention is to expand this strategy to beyond LCC tenants if successful, at which point we would seek representation from Regulatory Services to ensure that statutory responsibilities relating to overcrowding are appropriately cited within the Private Rented Sector.

To enable the Board and Housing Scrutiny Commission to monitor progress, a small number of Programme KPIs will be set up, and a larger number of PIs will also be set up relevant to particular workstreams. With regard to the broader Programme KPIs we intend to set up monitoring for:

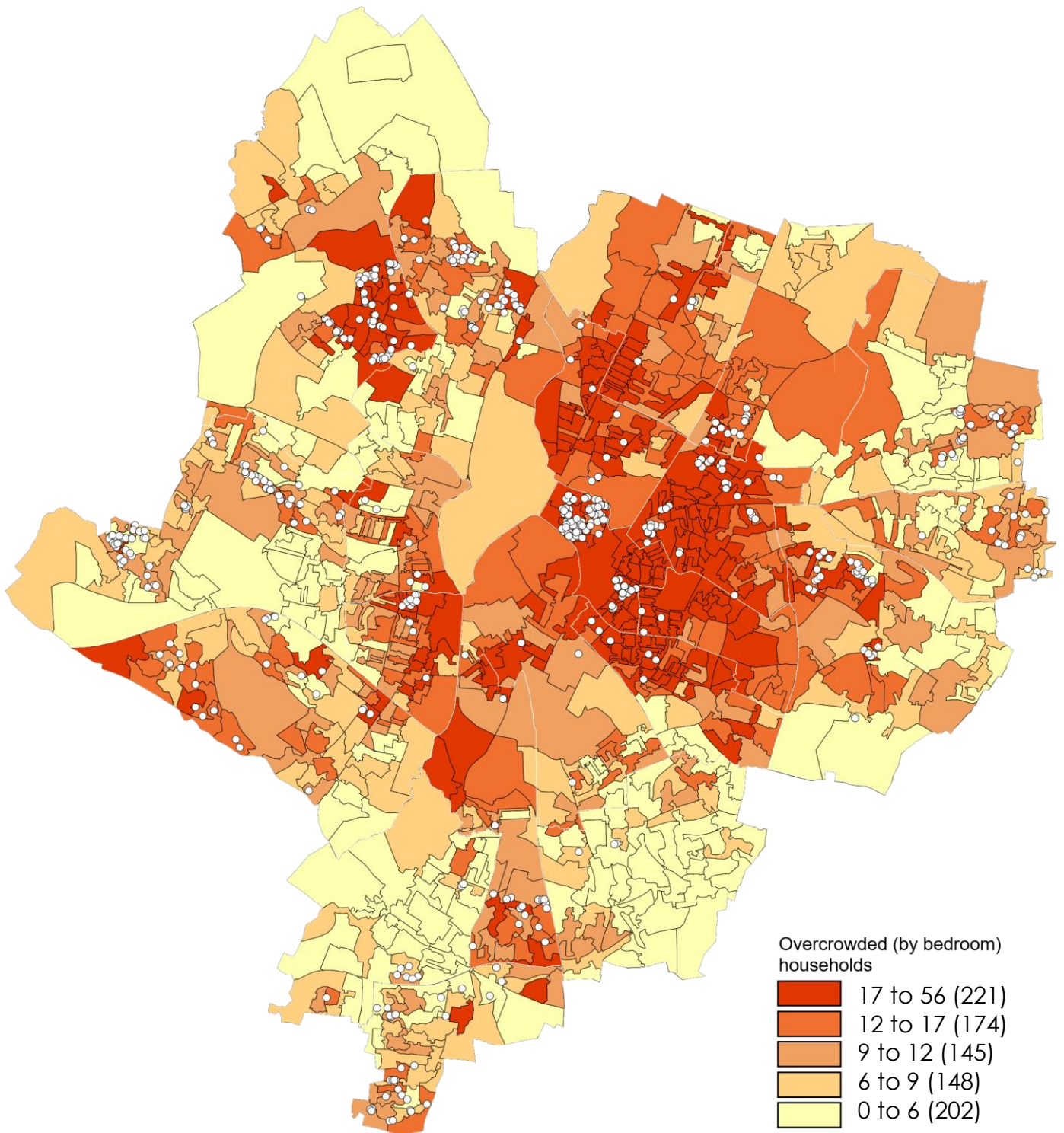
- To reduce:
 - Overall LCC Overcrowding Quotient – a figure based on a weighted formula, using Housing Register data.
 - Number of households on the Housing Register lacking 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5+ bedrooms.
- To increase:
 - Number of overcrowded households rehoused...
 - ...through the Housing Register
 - ...through Mutual Exchange
 - ...through other solutions (e.g. shared ownership, private rented sector)

4.2 A key aim will be to have a full communication plan for tenants and stakeholders with a commitment to publish an overcrowding reduction strategy that is reviewed at regular intervals and adapted to meet any emerging and changing needs in the city.

Appendix 1 – Housing Applications from LCC Tenants where Overcrowding is the main reason for applying, distributed across Wards



Appendix 2 – Housing Applications from LCC Tenants where Overcrowding is the main reason for applying (white dots), overlaid onto 2011 Census Overcrowding data for all Tenure Types (colour shading)



Source: 2011 census

Overcrowding Reduction Strategy (LCC Stock)

Assistant Mayor for Housing: Cllr Elly Cutkelvin

Lead Director: Chris Burgin

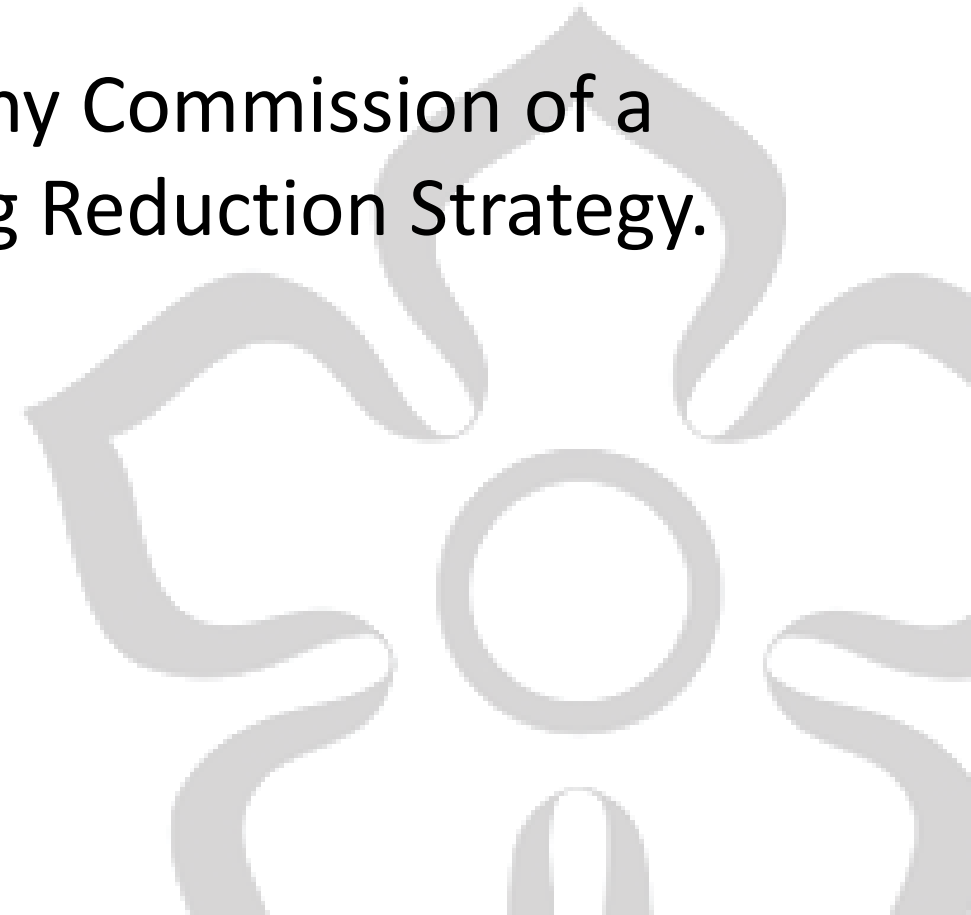
Lead Head of Service: Caroline Carpendale

Presented by: Justin Haywood (Service Manager – Housing Solutions)

Overcrowding Reduction Strategy

Purpose of presentation:

To inform Members of the Housing Scrutiny Commission of a
new initiative to develop an Overcrowding Reduction Strategy.



Why is this needed?

- Council continues to face challenges in meeting the huge demand for affordable housing
- Overcrowding remains the single biggest reason why households apply to the Housing Register.
- Overcrowding is a known driver of homelessness via family exclusions.



Background - Overcrowding

- Approx. 600 LCC tenants are currently on the Housing Register wanting to move to a larger property. Of these;
 - Approx. 350 are in family accomm but require one extra bedroom.
 - Approx. 90 are currently living in 1-bedroom flats, wanting to move to a 2-bedroom property.
 - Approx. 160 (around a quarter) are severely/critically (including statutorily) overcrowded, (requiring two or more extra bedrooms).

Background - Overcrowding

- 2001 Census - 10.6% of Leicester's households were overcrowded compared with 7.1% nationally.
- 2011 Census – 9.8% of Leicester's households were overcrowded compared with 4.6% nationally.
- Wards with the highest level of overcrowding were Castle and Wycliffe. North Evington, Westcotes, Stoneygate and Belgrave wards also recorded high levels of overcrowding.

Background – Under-occupation

- By contrast we have a total of Approx. 210 LCC and RP tenants who are currently on the Housing Register wanting to move to a smaller property.
- Approx. 170 of those ($\approx 80\%$) want to move from family accommodation into 1 bed accommodation.
- 2011 Census found that Leicester has relatively low levels of under occupation (55%) compared to England as a whole (69%).

Strategy Priorities

a) Further develop a detailed profile of overcrowding and under-occupation within LCC stock



Strategy Priorities

b) Provide a range of enhanced housing options to overcrowded and under-occupied households. This includes use of Planning to promote and deliver an increased and targeted Housing offer.



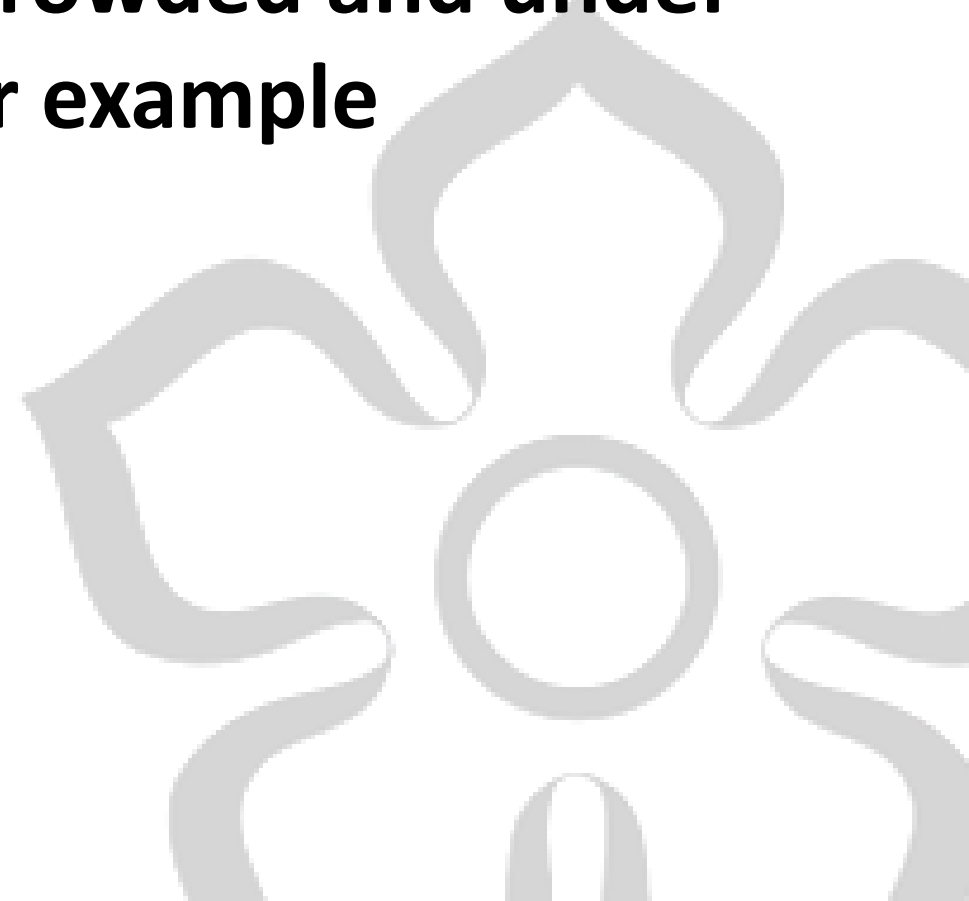
Strategy Priorities

c) Ensure that we are making best use of current LCC housing stock



Strategy Priorities

d) Maximise opportunities to develop new social housing to meet the needs of overcrowded and under-occupying households, for example



Strategy Priorities

e) Ensure that solutions, whether through the Housing Register or other options, have longevity and sustainability at the core



Next Steps

- Programme Board - to take the aims and objective of the strategy forward with identified project managers.
- Provide regular updates to HSC as the strategy develops. This will include a series of more defined aims and targets as each individual project within the strategy is started.
- Full communication plan for tenants and stakeholders - commitment to publish an overcrowding reduction strategy document.

Housing Scrutiny Commission

Void Performance report: January 2020 – March 2020
Year End

Assistant Mayor for Housing: Cllr Elly Cutkelvin

Lead director: Chris Burgin

Date: 7th September 2020



Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: all
- Report author: Suzanne Collins / Jo-Anne Hollings
- Author contact details: Ext 37 5189 / 37 5346
- Report version number: v.2

1. Summary

Void performance in the final quarter of 2019/20 has remained consistent, with the 'All Void' average remaining under the 90-day target.

Positively overall, Void rental loss has reduced in 19/20 to £911,060 from £985,903 in 18/19 and this has remained consistent as a percentage of rent roll.

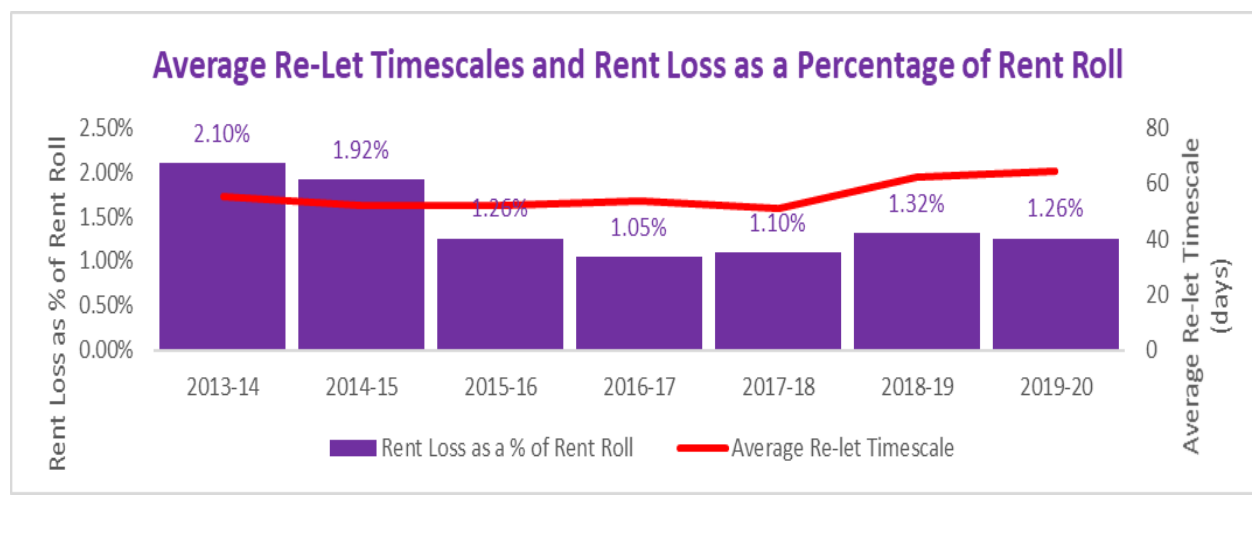
There have been various challenges throughout the year with workloads, contractor capacity, changes in regulations and with the added issues and impacts of COVID 19 to deal with from the middle of March, including the suspension of Leicester HomeChoice. We anticipate that performance in the next quarter will reflect the impacts of COVID 19 in more detail.

2. Purpose of report

To update members of the Housing Scrutiny Commission on Void performance for the final quarter and year end 2019/20.

3. Supporting information including options considered:

Void rental loss has remained low as a percentage of the rent roll. The table below shows performance over the last 7 years. With performance remaining good and consistent over the last 5 years.



Comparator data shows that Leicester sit in the middle of other comparator authorities.

Authority	Rent loss on void dwellings (h11a)	Total value of rent roll (including rent rebates) (h9a)	%	Average Re-let Timescale (days) (g1a)
	2018-19	2018-19	2018-19	2018-19
Oldham	206,873	8,393,063	2.46%	10.00
Newcastle	2,606,334	110,719,828	2.35%	64.91
Kingston upon Hull	1,825,748	94,051,446	1.94%	33.35
Sheffield	2,562,975	148,529,077	1.73%	72.00
Slough	558,675	32,638,600	1.71%	98.16
Bristol	1,771,505	112,118,124	1.58%	41.00
Birmingham	3,719,215	271,007,964	1.40%	37.42
Leicester	985,903	74,718,215	1.32%	62.13
Stoke-on-Trent	715,298	65,251,180	1.10%	28.00
Nottingham	956,433	104,401,199	0.92%	33.56
Salford	51,931	5,792,657	0.90%	2.20
Wolverhampton	757,290	89,597,265	0.85%	19.00
Derby	430,220	56,093,717	0.77%	23.72
Leeds	1,496,856	208,753,765	0.72%	34.43
Milton Keynes	344,792	52,848,734	0.65%	33.00
Manchester	382,355	60,590,377	0.63%	32.89
Sandwell	639,972	118,621,982	0.54%	22.76
Luton	129,440	32,974,856	0.39%	21.29

Source: Local Area Housing Statistics (LAHS). Updated annually.

The table below shows quarters 1,2 3 and 4 of 19/20 performance with 18/19 as a comparison.

Measure / Target	Quarter 1 19/20	Quarter 2 19/20	Quarter 3 19/20	Quarter 4 19/20	Year end 19/20	Year end 18/19
Routine Voids* (days) 45-day avg. target	59.6	64.9	74	58.6	64.1	62.1
All voids (days) Max 90day avg. target	90.9	195.1	100.4	77.1	123.3	85.8
No. Voids Held (Less than 2% (421))	248	218	239	270	(avg 239)	(avg 309)
Total annual rent loss No greater than £800K	£265,127	£226,407	£175,874	243,652	£911,060	£985,903
Ready to let to Occupation** (days) 10-day target	5.7	5.3	5.2	5.9	5.5	5.9

*This figure is the number of days void from the end of one tenancy to the start of the next including weekends.

**This figure is the number of working days between when the property is ready to when the new tenancy starts.

Void turnaround times have not been as good as we had aspired to this year, there have been some good improvement for routine voids but on average the year-end figures are disappointing. Our aspiration is to continually improve the letting standard whilst attempting to reduce void times overall.

Definitions

Routine voids

Are those properties that require a comparatively lower level of work prior to being re let.

Long term voids

Are those properties which require a higher level of repair before it can be re let, the reasons maybe:

- *Damp proof work, wood worm treatment.*
- *Asbestos removal (licenced)*
- *Structural repairs*
- *Major adaptations*
- *Fire damaged properties*
- *The property is being used as an office, by a resident's group or the police*
- *Projects (such as the tower blocks)*
- *New meters and supplies.*
- *Pest control.*
- *Rewires, new capital kitchens and bathrooms*

All voids

This is the term used when talking and reporting on all voids regardless of if they are routine or long term.

Number of voids held

This is a snapshot of the number of vacant properties we hold at any one time; this should be less than 2% of the total stock and excludes decants

Total annual rent loss

This is the amount of rental income we have lost as a result of a property being empty and is based on a daily rate, the longer the property is empty the greater the amount.

There are two weeks over the Christmas period that are defined as rent free, this means that December is traditionally a low month for void income loss. The average weekly rental figure is: £69.97 (range £53.64 - £116.48)

Total annual council tax loss

We become liable for paying council tax on void properties at a daily rate as soon as the property has been empty for 1 calendar month. There are exceptions to this but in the majority of cases this will apply. We work closely with Council Tax to ensure this information is correct and it is audited quarterly.

Current issues affecting void times:

COVID 19

From when lockdown was announced in late March 2020 this had an immediate impact with regards to resources and operational processes and the majority of these impacts will show in the next quarters report. From an applicant point of view, Leicester HomeChoice was suspended, and moves were also placed on hold towards the end of March due to lockdown issues such as applicants and family members with symptoms, not able to book removals etc. A recovery plan is in place.

Condition properties returned in

As has been reported before we continue to see an increase in the number of properties returned back to us in a poor condition both internally and externally which has an impact on the time it takes for the property to be brought back into use. This is not an issue we can control but one we can influence and have planned in discussions with Housing Management to look at potential ways/initiatives that could be applied to influence an improvement on the returned condition. We are currently also looking into a property condition grading system which will be included in future reports to HSC.

Completing capital works

We often take the opportunity to complete of capital works in void properties to avoid disruption to tenants. We carry out a lot of electrical rewire and kitchen refurbishments, this could be because we made the decision to defer the refurbishment to the void period to lessen the impact on the current tenant or the current tenants declined to have the work carried out at the time. When a property is void it is a good time to do these types of works as they can be very disruptive, but it does add to the time the property is empty. Our own craft staff do carry out some of these works but rewire and some kitchen refurbishments are issued out to contractors. Where using contractors we adhere to procurement rules and enable and encourage local contractors where able.

We are also experiencing contractor delays due to the volume of work we are issuing.

Kitchen Pilot

A number of Void properties have new kitchens fitted. Kitchens on average take 10 working days to complete. We have been running a pilot project to see if we can reduce the number of days a kitchen takes to fit. The results of the pilot will be reported in the next quarterly report.

Increased workload

The Voids and property Lettings Team are dealing with additional properties aside from normal voids, these are acquisitions or 'buy back' as they used to be called. In Q4 of 2019/20 we received keys for 44 acquisition properties. Unfortunately, 90% of acquisitions need rewire, 25% need new boilers and a third need new kitchens. Additional resources to support the acquisition process have been secured for next quarter.

Recent changes to the electrical requirements through the 18th Edition have seen regulations strengthened to enhance health and safety. For example, the frequency of replacing consumer units has increased significantly because of the requirement for the RCD protection to all fixed luminaries. This occurs mostly where we fit new kitchens and can take half a day. We also now have to fit fire clips to wiring systems such as PVC trunking in all locations, not just over escape routes. This occurs mostly in flats and can take half a day.

Additionally, changes to the Fire Regs BS5839-6:2019 have increased the amount of smoke alarms that require to be fitted to voids. This occurs in 75% of voids and can take up a full day's work.

These changes are a time/labour consideration. A void can therefore have an extra 2 days' work added due to the above. Over the course of 12 months this equates to 990 extra days which is equivalent to 16 x 60-day additional voids.

Key management:

This has always been an issue & challenge that the team continue to try to improve. Since the closure of many local offices tenants now hand deliver their keys to certain locations across the city and they have to be collected which sometimes causes delays. We have now improved this system by sending tenants pre-paid envelopes with which to send their keys back to us. We also have the void snapshot, this is a report that tells us how many terminations are due the following week so we can monitor which keys have/have not been returned so Housing Management can then chase and action accordingly.

Keys are moved in order for almost all of the functions that need to happen within the void, some functions happen concurrently, like the actual inspection and the Energy Performance Certificate, but most others are carried out by different specialist teams. To try to overcome delays we do split keys where we are able but with certain works such as asbestos this is not possible due to health and safety considerations. At the point of lockdown many keys were delivered to closed libraries, housing offices and customer service centres resulting in a number of properties where we needed to gain entry and carry out a lock change in order to minimise delays

We have also tried to make the process of capital works better by looking at the challenges of contractor capacity and contract type which can have a negative impact. As advised above we have secured an additional admin resource for the next quarter which will assist with acquisitions and the monitoring and chasing contractor works. We are also currently looking into the feasibility of a specific Voids Contract

Recruitment:

There are always vacancies in the Void Team due to the number of people employed within the service area and the numbers of applications that are successful in the recruitment process. For example, the last recruitment exercise looked to recruit 5 posts and we successfully recruited 3. The turnover, time taken and the difficulty we have recruiting appropriately trained staff impacts on available resources. We are in the process of a further round of recruitment. The situation is constantly changing with an ageing workforce so we are also looking to improve workforce planning to meet

future needs. To bridge the gap, we do employ agency workers when needed and we also issue void repairs to contractors when we hit capacity. The craft apprenticeship programme is also key to vacancy management within the Voids team and we ensure that our requirements are fed into the Divisional plan for future recruitment. We are also involved in the skills development of the individuals as part of their apprenticeship programme.

Immediate Priorities

To continue to work closely in partnership with Housing Options to facilitate the provision of accommodation for homeless cases, especially the COVID 19 move on cases.

To continue to work with applicants to facilitate moves, and those that were previously on hold due to COVID measures.

To investigate the potential to enhance the Void standard specification utilising the Community Support grant to decorate and carpet a property for identified vulnerable groups and will report back to a future meeting.

To investigate further putting a specific Void Contract in place

To continue to work to improve operational arrangements identified in this report including key management arrangements and the condition of returned properties.

To improve workforce planning arrangements and bring forward recruitment and to also consider an extended apprenticeship craft offer to meet needs in the future.

4. Details of Scrutiny

Report for HSC

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

None sought – for information only

5.2 Legal implications

None sought – for information only

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

None sought – for information only

5.4 Equalities Implications

None sought – for information

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

Report to Housing Scrutiny Commission

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

Housing Scrutiny Commission: September 2020

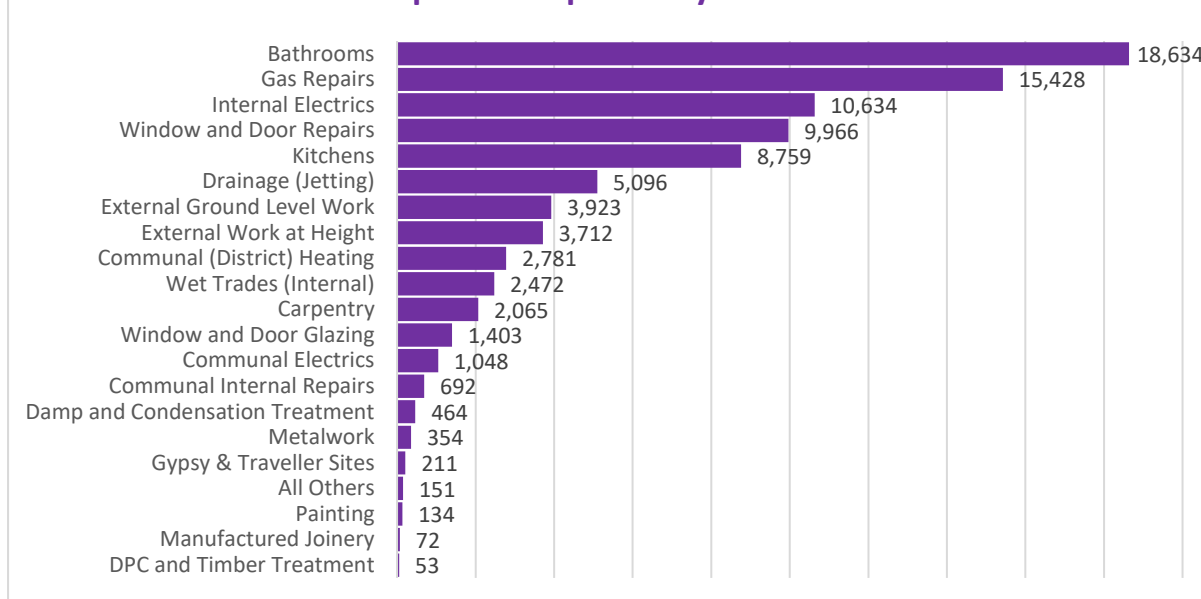
Lead Member: Councillor Cutkelvin

Lead director: Chris Burgin

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Kevin Doyle, Head of Service
- Author contact details: Ext 37 5415
- Report version number: v 2

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

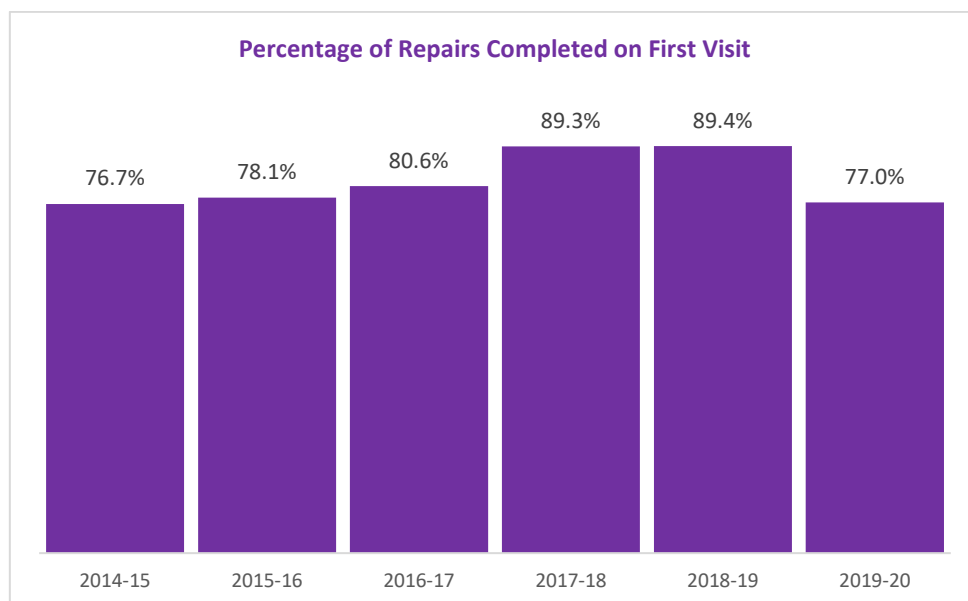
More detailed performance information against each is set out in 3.2 to 3.5 of this report.

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%.

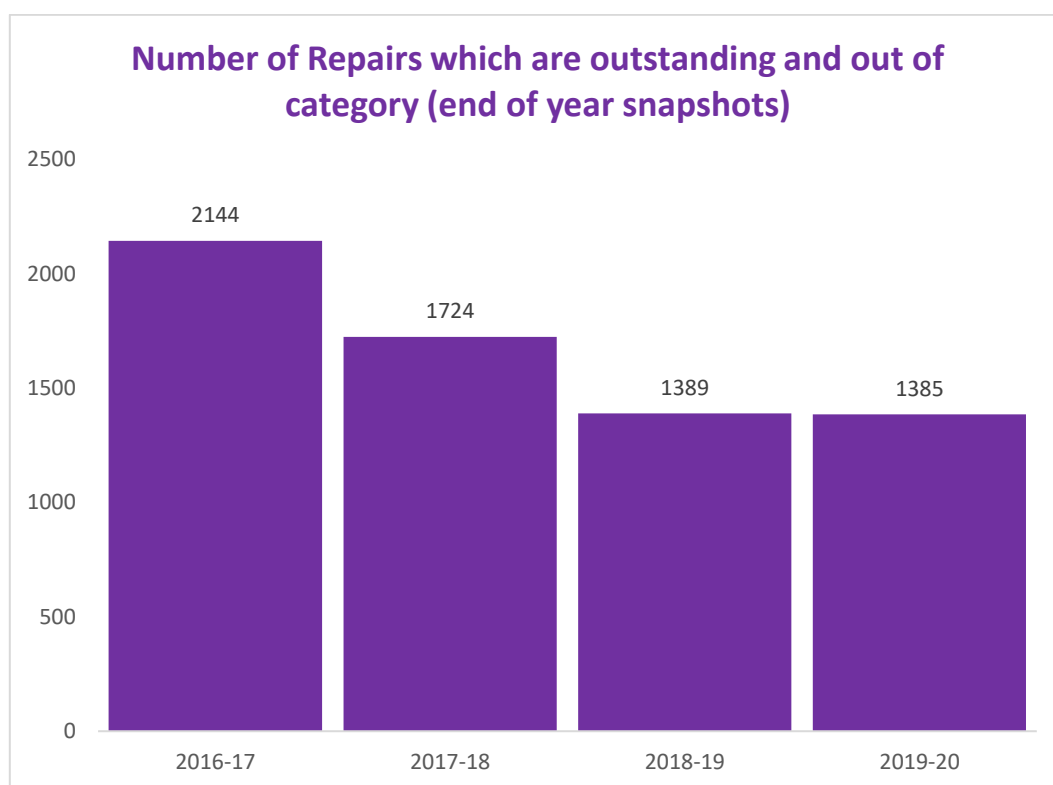
This measure disregards certain types of repair which we would not be expected to complete on the initial visit; in the case of a broken window, for example, we will need to measure the size of the window pane on our first visit and then return at a later date with the glass cut correctly to size. Performance 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.

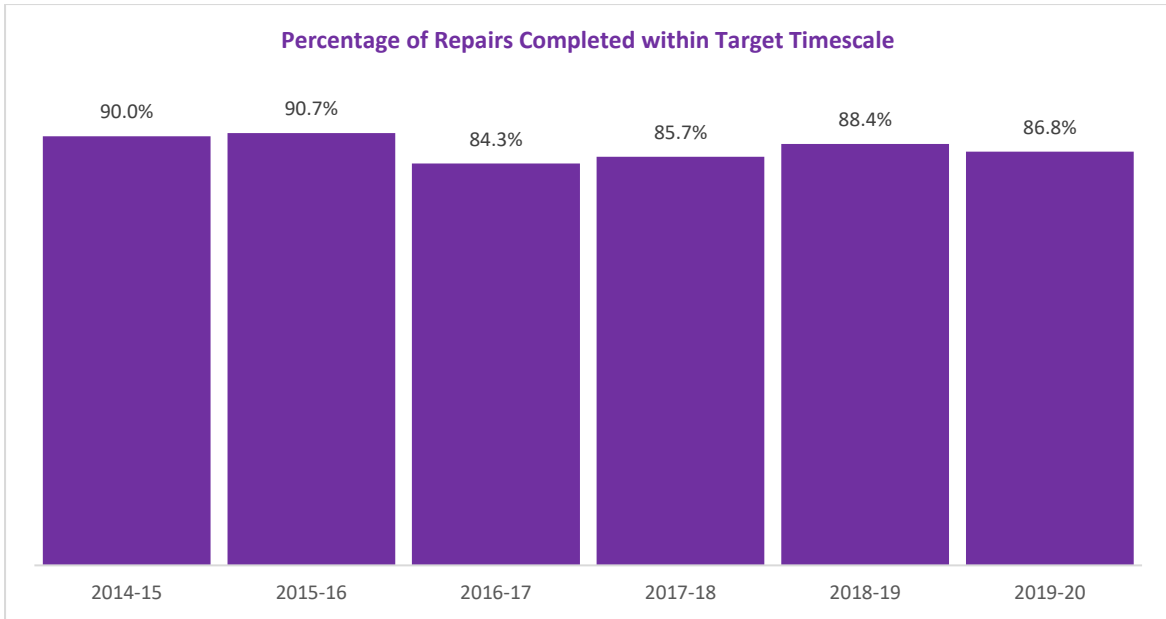


**2019-20 outstanding figure 1385 includes all repairs, including Gas and Voids, and not just the 721 R&M repairs quoted in section 3 of this report.*

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.

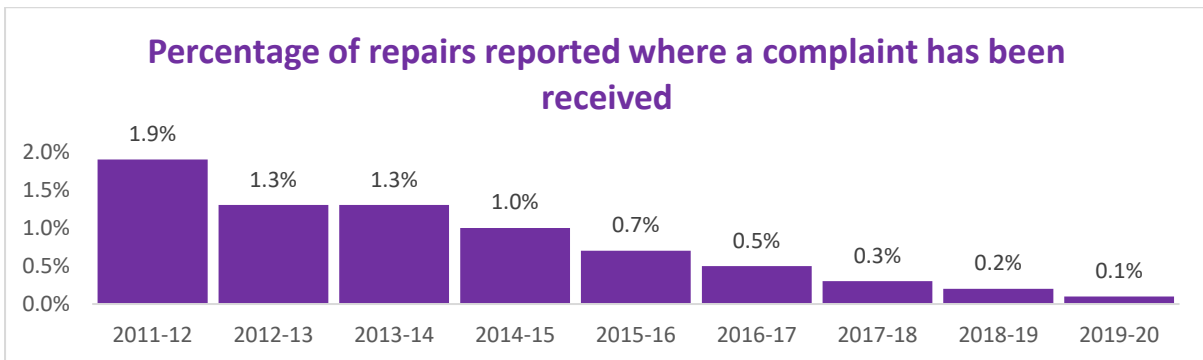
When tenants notify us of a repair needed at their properties, each repair is allocated a “priority” which determines how quickly we will look to respond to that repair. For emergency repairs we will look to respond within the first 24 hours of the repair being reported; for less critical repairs the 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

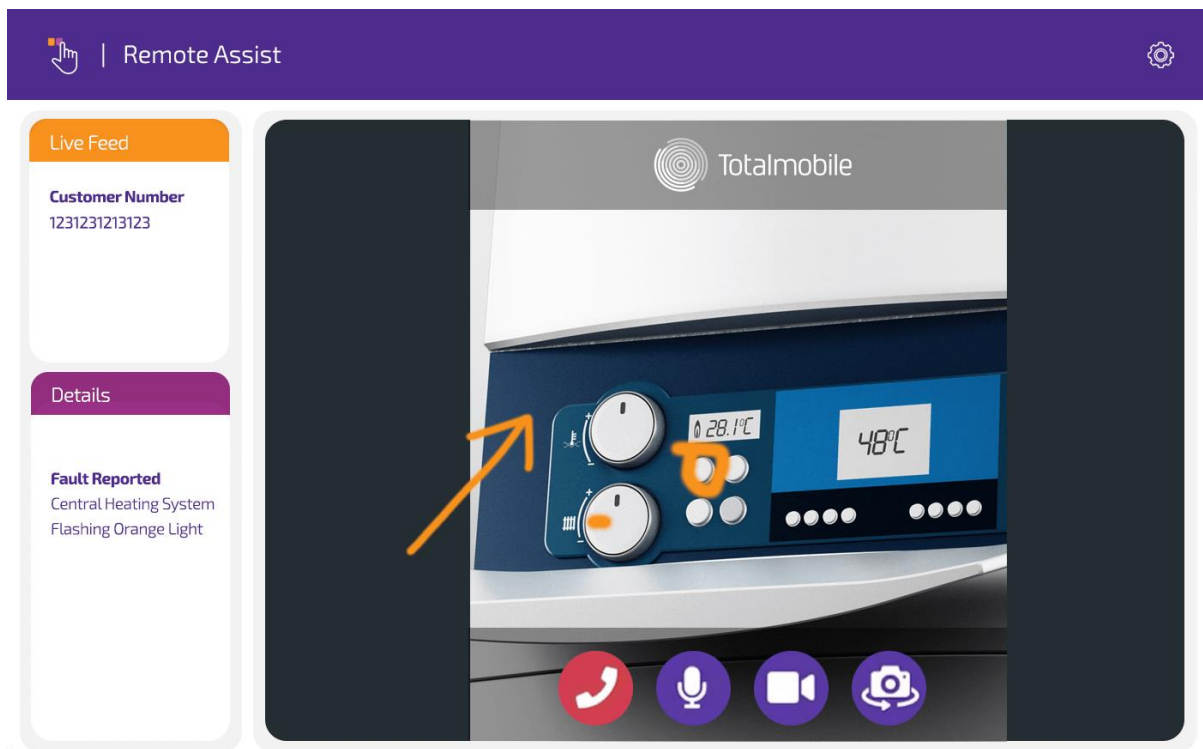
12:00 to 15:59

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.

Disabled Adaptations, HRA & Disabled Facility Grants. Housing Scrutiny Commission September 2020



HRA Disabled Adaptations – council tenants

All adaptations are recommended by Adult Social Care.

All adaptations up to £1,000 in value are classed as minors and completed straight away.

⌘ Major adaptations follow the agreed joint working protocol with ASC and are allocated priority points and completed in order of need, however these are currently actioned as the recommendation is received, we have no waiting list

All are directly funded and are not means tested.



How many do we do per year ?

Type of adaptation	18/19	19/20
Grab rails/handrails	437	358
Ramps	42	24
General layout alterations	0	7
Level access showers	43	74
Wash/dry toilets	7	7
Stairlifts	39	38
Step lifts	0	7
Through floor lifts	15	16
Extensions	1	4
Totals	584	535

67

What do we spend each year

	17/18	18/19	19/20
Budget	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m
Actual spend	£1.04m	£982k	£901k

89



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What is causing the reduction in spend

- Reducing stock
- Positive impact from previous capital expenditure, eg. 'Bathrooms for life'
- Development of wheelchair accessible homes
- The way assessments are carried out.



Disabled Facility Grants (DFG's)

- The process is similar to that followed as HRA adaptations, but the applicants are homeowners or private tenants.
- Minor adaptations are carried out straight away
- Major adaptations follow the same joint working protocol, actioned in order of need, however there are some differences due to the addition of the means test.



WHY DO WE HAVE TO DO IT?

- A Disability Facilities Grant (DFG) is a mandatory requirement (*which is 30 years old this year*), and forms part of the better care fund, this is a pooled fund which includes housing services and health and social care.
- 71 • The DFG grant is administered by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- The DFG grant is means tested, the means test identifies if the service user has to pay a contribution towards the adaptation if they are not on passported benefits i.e. Council tax support/ reduction

WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO ?

- Provide access to the front and rear of homes by providing:
 - Ramps front and rear
 - step lifts front and rear
 - Access to rear gardens
- Carry out adaptations to provide access into and around a service users home which meets their assessed needs by providing:
 - Level access showers
 - Stair lifts
 - Through floor lifts
 - Door widening

72

The last 4 years of funding

Year	Government Grant (£k)	Council Contribution (£k)	Total Budget (£k)
2017/18	1,388*	612	2,000
2018/19	1,633*	367	2,000
2019/20	1,539	461	2,000
2020/21	1,538	1,461	3,000

*including Top up grant received late in year

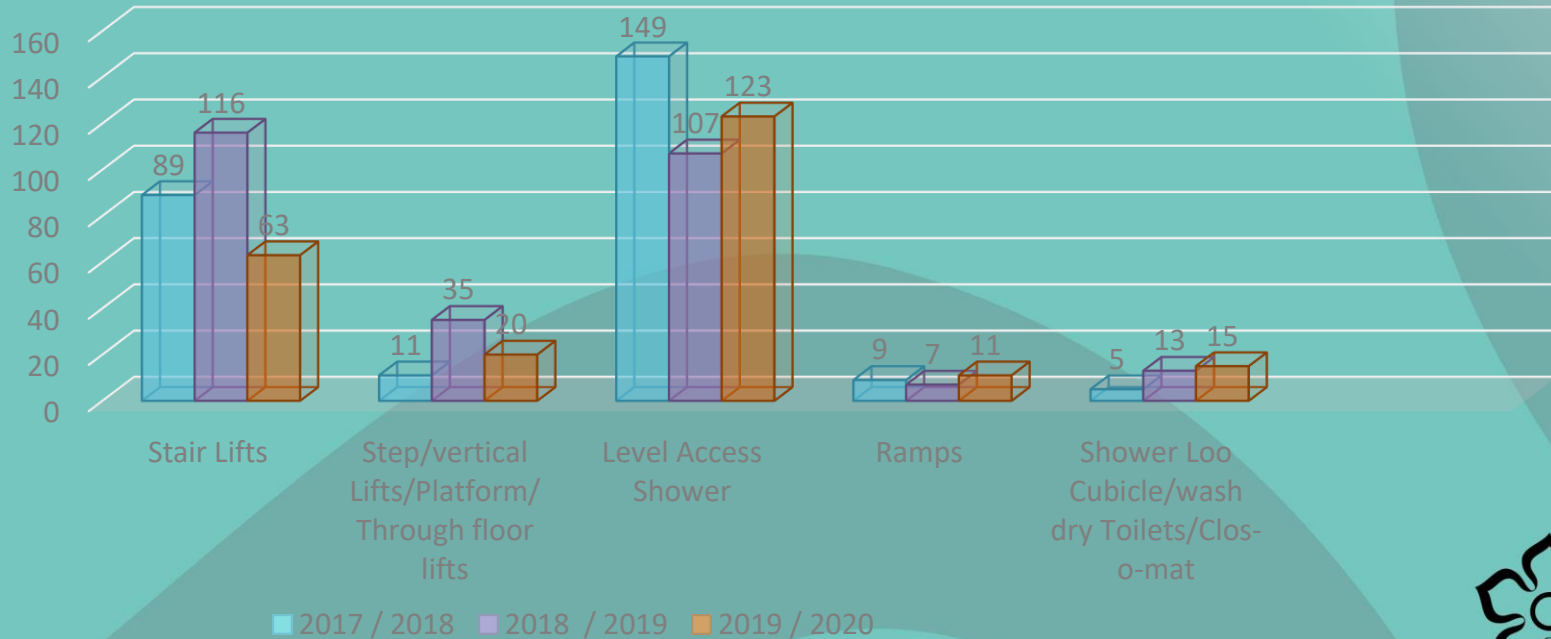
DFG Housing Performance

DFG	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Applications	432	430	532
Approved	229	247	248
Completed	214	220	190
Average cost	£7640	£9686	£11,321
Overall Spend	1.635m	2.131m	2.151m
Waiting list	176	117	63

74

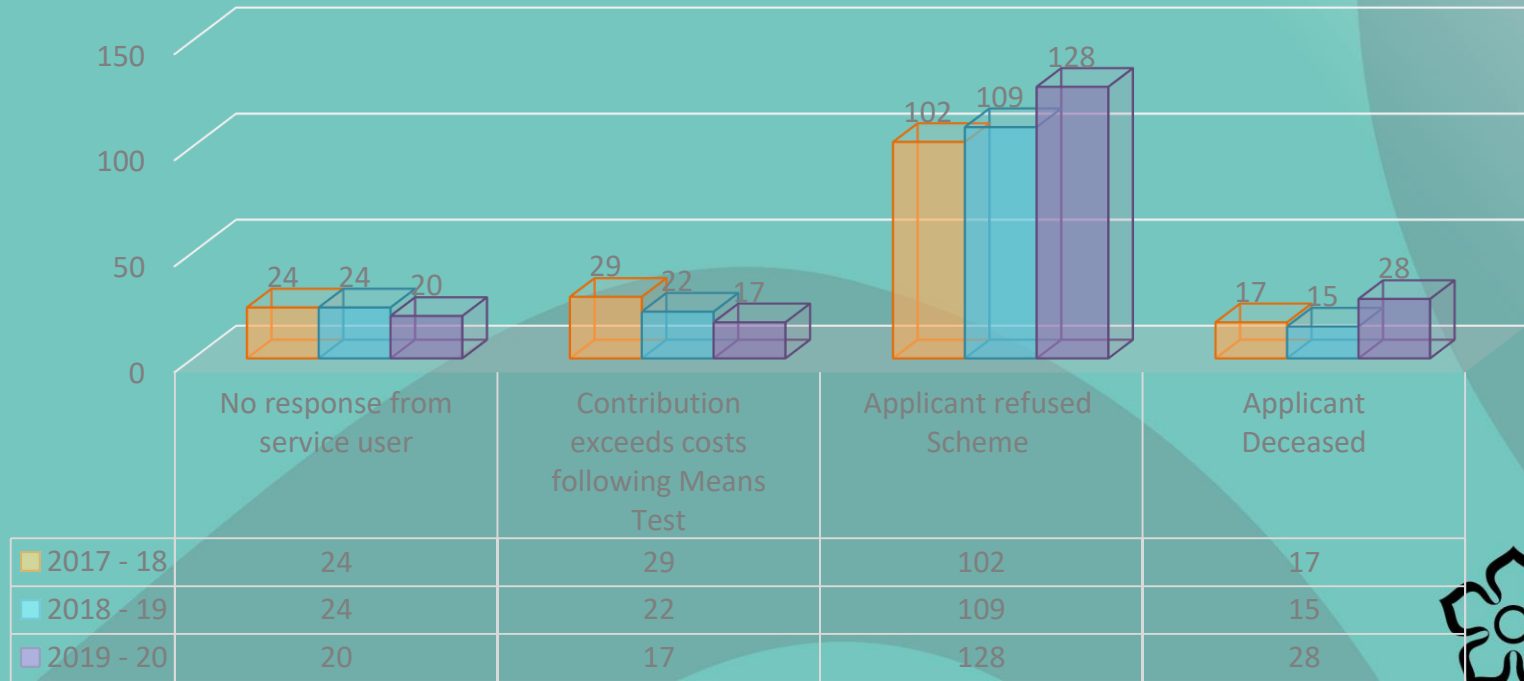
DFG Housing - Types of Adaptations (Approved works) 2017/2018 & 2018/2019 & 2019/2020

75



Cancellation categories for DFG's

76



Impact of a Disabled Adaptation– Case Studies

- **Case Example 1 – DFG**

- *Property type presented significant issues with proposed scheme of concrete ramp*
- *Following consultation with the family it was agreed to install a step lift to meet the needs of the service user*
- *The step lift increases grant costs by 4 times over the original scheme cost, however the solution taken produced a better outcome in a shorter time.*

- **Case Example 2 – HRA**

- **Existing ground floor facilities did not meet the service users needs and property needed to be extended**
- **Due to the extent of the works the tenants and disabled child could not live there during the works – this would mean the child would be separated from his parents for 4 months**
- **The house opposite became vacant, so we extended that to meet the child's needs and rehoused them, preventing them from being separated and the cost of residential care.**



Waiting List Management – during and post Covid-19

What we have done and are doing Now (deemed as critical):

- End of Life` (EOL) Cases
- Children Cases
- Equipment only Cases (Lifts etc. to access services)
- External works – Ramps
- Progressing cases which require extensions up to planning stage so that they are ready to be issued on further easements of restrictions of Covid-19

78



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Continued....

Going forward:

- Continue with the above including non-critical equipment installations
- Carry out a case by case review monthly
- Extend the Grant time period for `work in progress` (WIP) cases (currently suspended following the initial lockdown) from 12 months to 18 months
- Temporary change the Grant time period from 12 months to 18 months for all new cases to provide flexibility in service delivery for any future spikes in Covid-19 in accordance with (Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 Section 37 sub section 1 & 2)



A joint approach to Adaptations

- A single point for lift breakdowns and installations – all tenures
- A single point for lift invoices and payment processing – all tenures
- A standard specification for all adaptations & all tenures
- Co location with O/T's makes faster response to issues.
- Opportunities for streamlining process.