

H&F Repairs Improvement Plan

25 July 2023

How Things Stand

- **The Situation**
 - Underperforming Repairs Service and low resident satisfaction.
 - Backlog of repairs, complaints, and capacity issues.
- **Performance Data**
 - Main patch contractors struggling to meet contractually agreed targets.
 - New work is continuing to add additional strain on existing repair capacity.
- **Concerns**
 - Doubling of disrepair cases (London-wide problem).
 - High number of Ombudsman cases including maladministration.
- **Need for Improvements**
 - Structural, cultural, and process changes in the Housing Service.

Putting things right

To improve the repairs service we have focussed on 7 key areas:

1. Housing Repairs Service Improvement Plan
2. Increasing Contractor and Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) capacity
3. Review of Contact Centre
4. Improving complaints handling
5. Compensation Payments
6. Analysis of systems (e.g. AI)
7. Improving the culture and leadership of Housing

Our Repairs Service Improvement Plan



Our plan includes **six key interventions**, each underpinned by specific tasks, to make immediate and long-term improvements. These interventions focus on:

- 1. Policy and procedure review**, including resident safety
- 2. Staff capacity, support and performance** – includes formation of Housing Hub to ensure coordinated management of customer service and complaints
- 3. Tightly managed contractor performance** – enforcing improvement plans through regular data-driven meetings and reporting
- 4. Engaging with residents** – co-producing introduction of national tenant satisfaction measures
- 5. Social value** – supporting local businesses and ensuring social value better captured from larger firms
- 6. Working with others** – across the council and beyond, including on damp and mould.

Contractor and Direct Labour Organisation



Contractor capacity expansion: From April 23, we are increasing our contractor capacity, which will grow in terms of tradespeople across the summer:-

In place, from the plan, extra capacity for drainage and roofing, disrepair, and urgent and complex repairs, voids, and windows.

DLO's new responsibilities: The DLO has taken on repairs on leaks occurring from above and into the property, a key issue in the Borough. From August 23, the DLO will take the Sheltered Housing repairs from Morgan Sindall and Mears.

Focus on Winter: by end July, in addition to the plan, we will have 3 additional firms on mould and damp, disrepair, plumbing and drainage.

Improve Complaint Management



The Housing Hub: a single integrated complaints and disputes resolutions service with close links to repairs, a supportive touchpoint for our residents.

Resident-Centric Approach: We're focusing on recognising vulnerabilities, enhancing communication with residents, and upgrading record keeping, all corroborated by regular in-service audits for continuous improvement.

Replicable Strategy: applying a proactive approach uniformly across Stage 1 and 2 complaints to ensure consistency and efficiency. Process mapping now in place for Ombudsman complaints to be used for Stage 1 and 2 complaints.

Cultivating Proactive Culture: promoting a proactive complaint handling culture, bolstered by continuous training support to upskill the team.

Enhancing H&F Capacity and Quality



- **Staffing and Management**
 - New permanent Housing Director
 - New Assistant Director Repairs role, Head of Repairs role, operational managers and officers
 - Accountable officer for each repair case
- **Improving Resident Satisfaction and Communication**
 - General and specialist contractors aligned
 - Growing surveyor capacity for pre- and post-inspections
 - Courteous, compassionate and well-trained staff
- **Coordination and Monitoring**
 - New dedicated client contracting team
 - Stronger triaging of repairs cases
 - Strengthening interdepartmental and stakeholder coordination
 - Robust performance monitoring system.

Other Key Work Areas

- **Mechanical and Electrical (M&E)**
 - Strong track record in gas, M&E repairs, and lift operations.
- **Damp and Mould**
 - Cross-Council Damp and Mould Action Group has increased operational grip and resident focused approach.
 - 446 Home Visits conducted. Focus on Category 1 cases.
- **Complaints**
 - Addressing backlog and response effectiveness to ensure resident focused outcomes.
 - Clearer prioritisation and rectification with greater accountability.
 - Bespoke compensation approach.

Investing in our Stock

- **Current Stock**
 - H&F owns c.17,000 units; range of tenures and housing types
 - Majority of housing stock is over 50 years old; much requires substantial capital works.
- **Major Estate Investment Schemes**
 - 22 schemes approved for next 3 years
 - Informed by repairs data, asset management, stock condition survey.
 - Part of longer conveyor belt of interventions.
- **Planned Preventative Maintenance**
 - Drive down individual repair numbers
 - Focus on infrastructure: soil stacks, drainage, electrical wiring.
- **Long-term Asset Management Strategy**
 - Developed when the stock condition survey is advanced
 - Will support long-term investment planning in stock.