

Resident Questions for Housing Area Panel

Department	Housing
Date question raised	28/06/2022
Date of Area Panel	17/08/2022
Area in city	North
Star rating applied by residents	2 star – local area issue
Deadline for officer response	25/07/2022
Name of officer responding	Grant Ritchie
Officer job title	Operations Manager, Property Maintenance Services
Title of Question:	Repairs
Issue:	Tenants are not receiving an adequate or responsive repairs service.
Background:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While emergency repairs to homes are happening, routine repairs are still taking a long time to get looked at and sorted out. • Tenants have to chase repairs repeatedly in order for repairs to be actioned. • Tenants are being sent from pillar to post to sort out a repair. • There are long call waiting times to get through to the Repairs service. • Tenants are unhappy that they have had an increase in rent, and paying for a sub-standard service. <p>Residents were previously informed that new members of staff would be employed to deal with the waiting time at the Repairs call centre but the issue of long waiting times to get through, and long waiting times for repairs to happen have not been resolved.</p> <p>Examples of repairs taking a long time, and repeated chasing, to get dealt with:</p> <p><i>At 8 Dunster Close, a leaking tap was reported on 28th April, and the repair has not yet been done. In the meantime, the resident's water bills have gone up due to the leak.</i></p> <p><i>At 7 Haig Avenue, kitchen cabinets needing repair were reported 7 times so far and nothing has happened.</i></p> <p>Tenants are being told by Repairs to contact traders, suppliers and contractors directly, rather than the repair being dealt with by the Council. Example:</p> <p><i>At Twyford Road, a boiler issue was report to Repairs. The resident was told by Repairs to contact the boiler contractors directly. The boiler contractors were contacted, and the resident was told that the repair needed to be dealt</i></p>

with via the Repairs service. When the resident called the Repairs service again, she was again told to contact the contractors.

Example of tenant waiting a long time for their call to get through to Repairs:
A tenant at Twyford Road reported having to wait for 40 minutes before getting through to the Repairs service.

Tenants are paying higher rents each year, but for no improvement in the service

Action requested by residents:

- 1) What are the Council doing to resolve the ongoing problems with the Repairs service?
- 2) If the Repairs service is not being adequately provided, why are the rents going up?

Officer Response: Grant Ritchie

Officer contact details:

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Response:

- 1) What are the Council doing to resolve the ongoing problems with the Repairs service?

The Repairs service is currently answering 7000-8000 phone calls and completing between 2000 and 3000 repairs per month. Our most recent survey of Tenants following a repair showed that 96% were satisfied with the work undertaken.

However, the Repairs Service is still dealing with c.9000 jobs which accumulated during successive lockdowns and because of depleted resource over this time, this means that we must prioritise works and less urgent repairs will take longer to complete. The repairs service has undertaken a large recruitment programme and is also currently mobilising 11 new specialist contractors across all workstreams, this will allow us to address the older jobs and bring us back to a position where repairs progress much more efficiently and in line with our targets.

The Repairs Helpdesk call centre has recently employed 4 new positions and these staff are being trained to deliver high quality, efficient customer service. Helpdesk colleagues based in the office to encourage collaborative and effective working practices and ensure that supervision is available to support the team and ensure correct advice is given.

The Helpdesk currently take on average 7000-8000 calls per month and their average call waiting time is 3 minutes. There may be some particularly busy periods where wait times are longer but overall, the performance of the team exceeds their KPIs.

- 2) If the Repairs service is not being provided, why are the rents going up?

Rents will be considered as part of our budget setting and proposals will be brought forward for consultation later in the year.

Specific Action:

Action:

NA	
Timeline:	
Start date:	NA
End date:	NA

