

Title: Consolidated Housing Services Report

Discussion Report

Report summary: At this DMC round, members have asked that the report includes performance information to understand and seek to improve contractor performance and address tenants and residents’ concerns. Areas for focus are rent arrears, repairs, major works and fire safety, CCTV upgrades, caretaking, grounds maintenance and complaints.

Recommendation: DMCs are asked to comment on the reports, and highlight any area for further discussion.

Discussion report	Officer Contributing
HRA budget monitoring update	Michael Webb
Performance update reports for information	Officer Contributing
Repairs	Gavin Haynes
Capital works and fire safety	Susanne Afra
CCTV & Responsive Security Patrol	Graeme Dyson
Income management	Jo Adams
Neighbourhoods	Maria Jacobs and
Caretaking	Michael Wood
Estate parking	Michael Wood
Grounds maintenance	Andrew Hinchley
Complaints	Jim Read and Scot Reid

HRA Budget Monitoring Update

1. Introduction

- 1.1 HRA expenditure in 2022/23 was £12.054m above what had been forecast during the budget setting process. The additional expenditure related to:
- £6.9m on heating and electricity costs
 - £5.6m on repairs, of which £3.2m related to the work on damp and mould
- 1.2 The additional expenditure was funded by a call on reserves.
- 1.3 Our current forecast for 2023/24 is that expenditure will be £6.879m above budget. The main drivers for this being:
- Approx. £3.5m to address remaining damp and mould casework
 - £2m of pressure related to building works following disrepair cases
 - £1.1m of pressure from the fees charged by solicitors in relation to disrepair and the compensation payable to residents
 - £0.6m expenditure on communal repairs which has been carried forward from 2022/23
- 1.4 Interest payable is also forecast to be £2.6m over budget due to rising interest rates. Much of the HRA's borrowing is from the Council's General Fund at a floating rate (so called internal borrowing). The HRA's current rate of internal borrowing is now 4.65% compared with 1.13% at this point last year.
- 1.5 The forecast overspend on expenditure in 2023/24 is partially offset by income being £4.2m above the forecast that was set, particularly in relation to leaseholder service charges. This reflecting increased actual costs, particularly for energy.
- 1.6 The table overleaf shows the budget headings, budget actuals for 2022/23 and forecast expenditure for 2023/24.
- 1.7 Detailed work is being carried out across services to determine how the additional forecast in expenditure can be managed and any potential impact on HRA reserves mitigated. We will report back on this work at future DMCs.

Expenditure:	Current Year					
	22/23 Actuals £'000	Approved Budget £'000	Present Budget £'000	2023/24 Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Forecast vs Last Year Outturn
Repairs and Fire Safety	68,832	63,381	63,381	71,219	7,837	2,387
Housing Management Services	25,988	26,147	26,481	27,231	751	1,244
Commercial Properties	1,358	1,778	1,778	1,778	-	420
Housing Needs	1,236	1,321	1,321	1,321	-	86
Supported Accommodation	1,765	2,941	2,850	2,439	(411)	674
Estate Management	18,247	18,939	18,802	18,703	(99)	456
Power	21,986	38,593	38,593	38,602	9	16,617
Rent and Rates	5,054	5,141	5,141	5,042	(99)	(12)
Tenant Mgmt Organisations	2,447	2,570	2,465	2,418	(47)	(29)
Debt/Capital Outlay/Contingency	57,654	68,830	68,830	72,478	3,648	21,121
Bad Debts Provision	4,496	2,694	2,694	2,694	-	(1,802)
Corporate & Democratic Core	801	4,470	4,470	4,470	-	3,669
Total Expenditure	209,862	236,806	236,806	248,396	11,590	44,830
Income:						
Government PFI Grant	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dwelling Rents	(139,310)	(149,091)	(149,091)	(149,668)	(577)	(10,358)
Shops, Garages, Sheds and Parking	(12,898)	(13,945)	(13,945)	(14,187)	(242)	(1,289)
Charges for Services	(44,007)	(72,770)	(72,770)	(76,662)	(3,892)	(32,655)
HRA Investment Income	(1,593)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	-	593
Total Income	(197,807)	(236,806)	(236,806)	(241,516)	(4,711)	(43,709)
Actual/forecast funding from reserve	(12,054)	-	-	(6,879)	(6,879)	5,175
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table: 2022/23 outturn and 2023/24 forecast (as at 30 June)

2. Rent arrears

- 2.1 Rent collection reduced from 97.4% as at Q4 2022/23 to 94.7% at Q1 2023/24. The arrears increased from £14.9m to £16.6m during that quarter. This period also saw an increase of 377 tenants claiming Universal Credit, taking the total to 6,257 households.
- 2.2 The cost-of-living crisis continues to significantly impact lower income households who make up a significant proportion of council tenants. Also, while Housing Benefit and Universal Credit levels increased to cover the 7% annual

rent increase in April for those on benefits, the benefit increases do not cover the heating charge increase that residents experienced as a result of needing to pass on some of the fuel cost increase.

- 2.3 The rental income team pilot was launched in September 2022 for a more focused approach to rent income recovery. The new team quickly developed ways of working to better support tenants through close working with Welfare Rights, Contact Camden, Housing Benefit and other colleagues; making better use of data; and through enhanced training and development.
- 2.4 Some of the team's successes include increasing the proportion of Universal Credit claimants in arrears and on direct payments to the council from 71% when the team formed to 83% as at Q1; contacting all non-payers who had not been spoken to or supported regarding their arrears; having residents respond positively to the team's contact and being pleased to be making arrangements to manage their debt; and networking with and learning from other social housing landlords.
- 2.5 Approximately £1.1m of debt contained within two specific groups. There are just over 260 homes where the tenant has passed away or is not in occupation of their home but have someone else in residence. These unauthorised occupation cases carry around £840k debt, and urgent work is taking place along with tenancy teams and Legal colleagues to resolve these tenancy matters. Future mitigation work includes further training on, and monitoring of, our end of tenancy processes. The second group relates to debt of approximately £270k among 17 tenancies awaiting eviction. There have been significant delays with London bailiffs, and the advice is that this will continue until October 2023 when the current backlog will be worked through. In mitigation, the team is looking into using high court processes to resolve pending eviction cases rather than the county court bailiffs.
- 2.6 Other work that the team is focussing on to mitigate against more severe increases in rent arrears includes piloting using data analytics to focus attention on arrears prevention through early contact, resolving cases where there are static debts, and embarking on a project with other teams to support those tenants who are in rent arrears and are under-occupying homes to downsize. In these cases, the tenants' incentive payment will be used to offset arrears, and the council will benefit from a larger home for overcrowded households.

3. Heating Pool outturn 2022/23

Expenditure	2022/23 Budget	2022/23 Actuals	Variance
Electricity Costs	3,738,000	5,251,676	1,513,676
Gas Costs	6,772,000	15,716,143	8,944,143
Increase in Bad Debt Provision	387,600	518,082	130,482
Total Expenditure	10,897,600	21,485,901	10,588,301

Income	2022/23 Budget	2022/23 Actuals	Variance
Heating - Meter + Scales + Compensation	(7,679,090)	(7,761,733)	(82,643)
Leaseholders	(3,317,570)	(3,388,026)	(70,456)
Total income	(10,996,660)	(11,149,760)	(153,100)

Surplus/Deficit	(99,060)	10,336,141	10,435,201
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Heating Pool surplus drawn down from reserve	(3,418,257)
Overspend	6,917,884

A verbal update on the heating pool will be provided at the DMC meetings.

Report ends

UPDATE REPORTS

Repairs

Reporting officers: **Darren Smith, Head of Repairs & Operations and Scot Reid, Head of Property Customer Services & Engagement**

1. Lift Repairs

- 1.1 Camden has 554 lifts around the Borough which are serviced and maintained regularly by specialist lift contractors, to ensure that breakdowns are kept to a minimum. We understand the inconvenience caused to residents by lift breakdowns so Camden and Apex, our lift contractor, have been working together to improve the service, including trialling a remote lift monitoring service that can alert us to potential issues, and help us to resolve them as quickly as possible.
- 1.2 12 months ago we were in a very different position, with a number of lifts switched off and awaiting parts. With the improvements we've made since then, we were able to reach a key milestone on 25 July this year, when only one lift had been reported to us as out of service, out of the 554 lifts we maintain.
- 1.3 Even with regular checks and maintenance, we can't avoid breakdowns completely, as lifts consist of many moving parts which can fail at any time. We are however, actively looking to make further improvements to the service by launching a critical spares store at Holmes Road Depot. The store will hold any part we have identified, meaning a lift can be repaired the same day.

2. Plans to Replace Old Heating Systems

- 2.1 We currently have live heating projects at the St Silas Estate and the Weedington Estate each with an investment of approx. £7 million.
- 2.2 We also have boiler house/plant room upgrade projects which will provide our residents with a more reliable and energy efficient heating system. These are currently in progress at five sites with a total value of approx. £1.2 million: Tonbridge House; 22-38 Southampton Road; Great Ormond Street; 217-255 Camden and New Harmood.
- 2.3 In the next 12-24 months we are finalising and mobilising a number of other heating projects with an approx. total value of £19 million, these including Holly Lodge; Rowley Way; Dunboyne Road Estate; Spedan Close; Brookes Court; Clyde Court; Dudley Court; Chester Court and 13-29 Belmont

3. Royal Free Hospital and District Heating System

- 3.1 In response to concerns raised by DMC reps we offered to meet TRA reps on 11 August 2023 and are happy to follow up any further queries. In brief, the heating connection worked well between 2014 and the Summer of 2020, providing up to 50% of the heat required across a number of estates in Gospel Oak. Unfortunately, a fault developed

which could not be resolved without major adaptations to the system and shutting down the heat turbine for the hospital. This complex work is being designed and procured in dialogue with the hospital and the contractor Mitie who manage the system. The work will be undertaken later this year and should complete by February / March 2024. We will also be looking back over the leaseholder heating charges between 2020/21 and 2023/24 for the estates connected to the system. We will make sure that the leaseholder charges are adjusted to take account of the waste heat not being captured and the difference in costs are reimbursed.

4. Heat Metering Programmes Link to Helping People Suffering Fuel Poverty

- 4.1 Camden has been carrying out a heat metering programme for a number of years – some meters are fitted as standalone retrofits in residents' homes, some as part of regeneration new build developments, and some as part of large heating upgrades at estates. Currently, homes and blocks at approximately 40 estates are metered for heating, hot water, or gas.
- 4.2 The Heat Network (Metering and Billing) Regulations 2014 (amended in 2020) require us to meter homes where technically and financially viable. We have assessed the remaining homes on our heat network against the cost effectiveness tool published by the government in Nov 2020, with the result that 157 homes still needed to be metered. The rest of the homes on our heat network were either exempt from metering under the Regulations, or deemed not cost effective through the tool.
- 4.3 These 157 homes are going to be prioritised under the next phase of our heat metering programme (Phase 4) as they are the ones we are legally required to meter. These are certain homes at Sanderson Close; Cressfield and Woodyard Estate; Lymington Road Estate; Netherwood Estate and Bacton Estate.
- 4.4 This part of the programme is in the procurement phase, and we intend to do the meter installs later this year.
- 4.5 We still have plans to meter as many other homes on our heat network as possible, including those we are not legally required to meter. However, the speed of the rest of the programme will depend on budget, resource, supplier constraints and resident access issues. We may also decide to change our retrofit approach and install meters as part of bigger heating upgrades at estates, rather than as standalone work.

5. Damp and Mould Programme

- 5.1 Our Damp & Mould Team are continuing to work hard to visit, inspect, and resolve all the reports we are continuing to receive. Reports about the home of an at-risk resident (eg due to age or respiratory problems) are prioritised and inspected within 24h, while other reports are currently responded to and inspected within 7 to 10 working days.
- 5.2 In January this year, we made outbound calls to residents that had previously been identified as vulnerable, or at-risk. For those residents that confirmed damp and mould was present, we arranged for a member of the team to visit the property and resolve any issues. We are now planning to reconnect with those residents during August/September to check their homes are still free from damp and mould.

5.3 Since December last year we have actioned and closed 2464 inspections. In July we received 155 new mould reports; and carried out 512 mould inspections and 556 mould washes.

6. Missed Appointments

6.1 We recognise that any missed appointment is frustrating and inconvenient for our residents.

6.2 Last-minute sickness can often result in having to cancel or rearrange appointments. This is a last resort approach as we always seek alternatives, and our policy is to always try to call the resident, followed by a text message advising of the revised appointment date.

6.3 Where there is a report of no access to a property, the Operative calls the planning team to ask them to contact the resident by telephone including any alternative contact numbers. If this is unsuccessful, the operative leaves a calling card and takes a photograph on their phone of the entrance to the property. The image is sent to the Planner and retained to evidence the attempted visit.

6.4 In Q1 23/24, we recorded **90 missed appointments logged by Agents or through complaints**. This number has fallen from 104 in the same period the previous year.

Report ends

Capital works and fire safety

Reporting officer: Susanne Afra, Head of Capital Works

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is currently carrying out its latest stock condition survey. This will conclude in the Autumn, and we will then look at the investment required, what needs to be prioritised and the resources available. At the time of the last survey which concluded in 2018/19, it was noted that there was a gap of c. £180m between the investment required and the resources available. This means that we have had to prioritise schemes that we bring forward; also that we have to focus on the main building elements such as roofs and windows, in addition to infrastructure such as heating, communal electrics and lifts. We have also had to divert resources to fire safety works with c. £50m set aside for investment in this area over this financial year and next.

2 Better Homes

- 2.1 Previous DMC reports have provided detailed information regarding the Better Homes projects that are included in the programme by DMC area. Please refer to previous reports for the detail. Residents living at these sites will be contacted in advance of the works taking place.

3 Sheltered and Temporary Housing Schemes

- 3.1 There are a number of sheltered and temporary housing schemes that are currently being progressed by the team.

Block Address	District	Ward	Status
61 Kingsgate	Hampstead	Kilburn	Procurement
Holmes road Hostel	Kentish Town	Kentish Town South	In progress
Levine and Abbotts	Hampstead	South Hampstead	Procurement
Argenta House	Gospel Oak	Gospel Oak	Procurement
Henderson court	Hampstead	Hampstead Town	Procurement
10 Bramshurst	Hampstead	Kilburn	Procurement
154 Broadhurst Gardens	Hampstead	South Hampstead	Procurement
180 Haverstock Hill	Gospel Oak	Gospel Oak	Procurement
Dartmouth Park Avenue	Kentish Town	Highgate	Procurement

4 Retrofitting housing stock and delivering against the aims of the Camden Climate Action Plan

4.1 We are working up the programme and delivery options while learning how other local authorities have delivered similar projects. Demonstrator projects and pilot work consists of the following:

- Full deep retrofit of 10 street properties, tenders from London Housing Consortium Framework have been returned and currently being reviewed.
- Deep retrofit of 5-7 Belsize Grove, which comprises 58 homes – these works are progressing
- Energy efficiency works at Brookes Court, which comprises 32 homes – these works are progressing
- Internal wall insulation to 50 homes with solid walls included as part of the Somers Town Future Neighbourhoods project are progressing.
- Discussions with “Energiesprong” (meaning “Energy Leap”) on a demonstrator project to carry out deep retrofit of a small block as a prototype project using their technology and repayment model (comfort charge). The GLA have allocated ‘United Living’ as the principal contractor via their RE:NEW framework. The GLA together with LBC are finalising contracts
- Successfully secured £3.6m of central government grant funding to retrofit 283 homes in 23/24 & 24/25, Baily Garner have been instructed to commence surveys.

Note: Deep retrofitting is a process where you look at a property’s overall energy efficiency and use a combination of measures to improve it. The aim is to ensure the property is operating in the most efficient way possible, using the least amount of energy.

5 Mechanical and Electrical Programme

5.1 **Lifts** - the Council monitors its lifts remotely and has a robust servicing regime in place through its term contractor Apex. As part of its capital programme, the Council has replaced 383 of its 554 lifts since 2010, addressing the oldest and hardest to maintain lifts first. The current capital programme has 71 lifts scheduled for installation, these lifts are prioritised through analysing repairs data and advice from engineers. The data on repairs is included below in the M&E repairs summary.

5.2 **Communal heating** - a number of large schemes and communal heating plant upgrades are in progress borough wide. Large heating replacement schemes are complex and require extensive works both in the communal areas and within properties. Once complete however they provide well insulated heating distribution networks and heating that can be fully controlled within dwellings. Over time we will also explore how we de-carbonise the communal heating network as technology develops.

6 Fire Safety Works

6.1 This section of the report note provides the background to the Council's current position and the Notice issued by the Regulator of Social Housing on 21 July 2023.

Background

6.2 The Chalcots evacuation and the fatal fire at Daleham Gardens in 2017 brought into sharp relief the need for the Council to change its approach to fire and building safety, both in terms of how it commissioned and published Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) but also its governance and the resources needed to deliver the works identified.

6.3 Many of the changes made were reported to Cabinet in July 2021 and this also saw the introduction of the Council's fire and building safety charter. Key points to highlight are:

- The appointment of a Director of Resident Safety who reviewed our FRA cycle and methodology. This led to a new FRA survey form, a change control process for immediate high-risk issues and a strict three-year programme for FRAs to be completed
- The introduction of a new fire safety panel, co-chaired by the Cabinet Member and a resident representative. This has met quarterly since early 2018 and is held in public with the LFB, residents, elected members and senior officers as panel members
- The expansion of our fire safety advisory team in 2018, and further changes in 2020 which established:
 - A new building and resident safety team
 - A dedicated fire safety capital works team
 - Additional dedicated resources in the repairs team
 - A new property data and systems team to track all compliance data
- A commitment to install hard-wired smoke detection in all tenanted homes
- A thorough internal audit carried out in 2019 to determine what additional improvements were needed to governance, systems and performance.

Key outcomes from this work include:

- Every block that needs one has a valid FRA, with assessments consistently delivered through a dedicated supplier
- Strong governance with fortnightly meetings across relevant teams (repairs, landlord services, capital works, estate services) to track progress, risks and monitor performance on the delivery of fire safety actions
- A referral route for emergency issues identified by FRA assessors and 15 occasions when our risk change control process has been used to deal with immediate risks
- A new fire safety policy and a new communal area policy which balances how residents use their home with the need to remove combustible items

- Additional resources and new ways of working assigned to clearing combustible items
- Quarterly checks of communal areas and testing of alarms in all street properties
- Excluding the Chalcots, we have spent over £66m on fire safety works since 2017 and our future capital works budgets now total £68m. Once the Chalcots is included, the Council has allocated £208m to the delivery of fire safety works.
- The Council has set aside £4.5m each year to fund its work to deliver the requirements of the Fire Safety Act 2021 and the Building Safety Act 2022, to help deliver these legislative requirements we have appointed 10 new Building Safety Managers

How we have been communicating this work

- 6.4 We report changes in our policy and approach to the resident-led Fire Safety and Compliance Advisory Panel which meets on a quarterly basis.
- 6.5 We signed off our Fire and Building Residents Safety Charter in July 2021 and we published our first annual report to all residents in October 2022. The corresponding report the October 2022 Panel meeting highlighted the volume of fire safety works we were delivering and the need to make additional progress.
- 6.6 Aside from the above we have had regular articles in our Housing News publication, a survey of residents on their perceptions of safety in their home and regular reports to the Housing Scrutiny Committee.

Why the Regulator issued a Notice

- 6.7 The Regulator engaged the Council following the Daleham Gardens sentencing hearing which concerned the tragic death in the fire that took place in 2017. It recognised the substantial work done by the Council and the programmes it has in place.
- 6.8 It noted that although the Council had delivered 40,000 actions since 2020, it had 9,000 overdue actions that remained and that 400 of these were high risk. The Regulator also stated that the Council should have made better progress in installing hard-wired smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors, as it has 9,000 hard-wired smoke detectors and 4,000 Carbon Monoxide detectors still to install.

Why were there 400 overdue high-risk actions

- 6.9 At the time of our engagement with the Regulator we had 400 high-risk actions overdue and of these one-third had a timescale of 10 days to resolve. The number of overdue actions has been reducing as we focus on the oldest and highest risk actions first and as at 21 July 2023, the number of overdue high risk actions had fallen to 231.

The majority of the overdue high-risk actions related to:

- Metal security grilles placed on front entrance doors by residents. These accounted for 89 of the “10 day” actions – we have been reviewing our advice to residents regarding these and have recently sent a further letter advising these should be removed. We will then work with residents to remove gates and determine any concerns we need to address in doing so.
- Repairs to front entrance doors – for example checking the fire rating of glazed panels or reinstating a door closer – these are all assigned to our repairs service
- 30 related to combustible items – we have a new process and dedicated resources in place to clear these more quickly
- 4 related to alarm queries
- 5 related to mobility scooter storage and 10 related to compartmentation checks
- The remainder related to miscellaneous actions such as trip hazards

When will the 9,000 actions be addressed

6.10 Our current FRA cycle has generated over 50,000 actions in total and we’ve closed 40,000 since 2020 as below, with between 10,000 and 15,000 actions closed each calendar year:

	2020	2021	2022	2023 (as at 31 July)	Total
Actions closed	10,231	15,531	10,923	6,018	41,261

Of the remaining actions:

- 4,700 are being delivered by the Capital Works team – we do this when we have similar works across a wide range of homes and it helps us to get value and put in place resources like Resident Liaison Officers. We have just awarded five large geographical packages covering items such as door replacements, this work covers over 9,000 homes and will take place this year and next. Capital works take time to arrange as we sense check all actions and make sure we are being consistent within a block, we then package and tender the works.
- 2,945 are with the Repairs service and are scheduled to be completed by Autumn 2023, these typically relate to standalone repairs to doors and simple elements such as signage. We have had to repackage our repair works following non-delivery by a contractor and have gone directly to specialist suppliers in most cases
- 879 actions are being delivered by our Landlord Services team, with approximately 400 of these requiring the removal of security grilles over front doors (89 of which were classed high risk as above). The remaining actions are general housekeeping actions for items in communal areas to be either removed or alternative storage found, clearances are projected to be completed this Summer with support from the repairs service.
- 327 are actions related to our Estate Services with 47 relate to the relocating of bin stores and the remainder the removal of items in communal areas, dedicated resources are in place to address the remaining actions, these will be closed this year
- 391 are actions that are being reviewed by the building safety team or fire safety advisors which generally require commissioning of further investigative surveys to provide further assurance, these will be closed this year

Why are internal hard-wired alarms not installed in all tenanted homes

- 6.11 The Council's Cabinet agreed in July 2021 to install hard-wired detection in all tenanted homes and this was signed off as part of the investment programme. At this stage it was not a regulatory requirement.
- 6.12 Our first alarm packages reached site in August 2022, we would have started sooner but our first contractor would not deliver against the prices it had submitted. To speed things up we also asked our individual heating contractor to install Carbon Monoxide alarms as part of the annual servicing programme.
- 6.13 In October 2022 the Government passed a regulation to make hard-wire smoke detection and Carbon Monoxide detection in tenanted homes mandatory. The regulation stated that the detection, or a programme to install detection had to be in place.
- 6.14 The Council is compliant with the regulation, however the Regulator of Social Housing has stated that it would expect better progress to have been made at this point.
- 6.15 The Council's programme will see smoke detection installed in all tenanted homes by March 2024 – subject to getting access – and Carbon Monoxide detection in all homes that need them installed by December 2023.

When will all fire safety actions be completed?

- 6.16 New actions arise all the time, for example if combustible items are found or equipment needs to be replaced. However, most of the 9,000 actions will be delivered this calendar year with the Capital Works packages continuing into 2024.

What will we do next?

- 6.17 We have many measures already in place such as our resident-led Panel, programmes of work and internal governance, it's now stepping up again to drive performance further and provide more detailed reporting to all stakeholders. To achieve this we will:
- Agree an action plan with the Regulator – this will set out how the Council will tackle the issues in the Notice and will be submitted to Cabinet for approval
 - Report publicly on progress to the Fire Safety and Compliance Advisory Panel and the Housing Scrutiny Committee
 - Make sure the action plan is correctly resourced and we have robust arrangements to maintain the pace of delivery.

Report ends

CCTV

Reporting officer: **Graeme Dyson, Head of Security**

1. CCTV

- 1.1 Work has continued on the planning and design stages of the new housing CCTV installation project over the last three months.
 - 53 estates identified as a priority for upgrade
 - 38 estates visited to date and full assessments completed
 - 11 more estates booked in for August
 - Leaving just 4 estates to complete site visits on

- 1.2 Camera installations are continuing:
 - 8 estates are now fully upgraded and operational – about 30% of the estates
 - 7 estates are being worked on – 13%
 - 3 estates are waiting for work to start shortly – 6%
 - 205 new cameras now working in the CCTV Control Room
 - 25 more cameras being finalised and due to come online over the next few weeks.

- 1.3 A document with more details about the upgrade (subject to change due to operational and technical reasons) has been published on the Council's website. It will be updated monthly and can be accessed here - [CCTV and Responsive Security Patrol \(RSP\) - Camden Council](#)

- 1.4 There has been some good, pro-active work from CCTV operators again over the last three months, proactive work continues in recording mobile phone snatches in the south of the borough. On two separate occasions proactive work by CCTV operators has resulted in people being detained in public armed with machetes. We are currently doing a deep dive into processes in the control room to free up operators' time to do less admin and be more proactive and learn the best practice ways of being proactive.

- 1.5 Please remember visits have started to the new CCTV control room and a number of you have visited already, we are booking in as many interested people as possible so spaces are limited. Each DMC and TRA can send 2 people along at the moment. If you are interested in visiting, then please email the Control Room Operations Manager direct at tawanda.majasi@camden.gov.uk and he will make the arrangements.

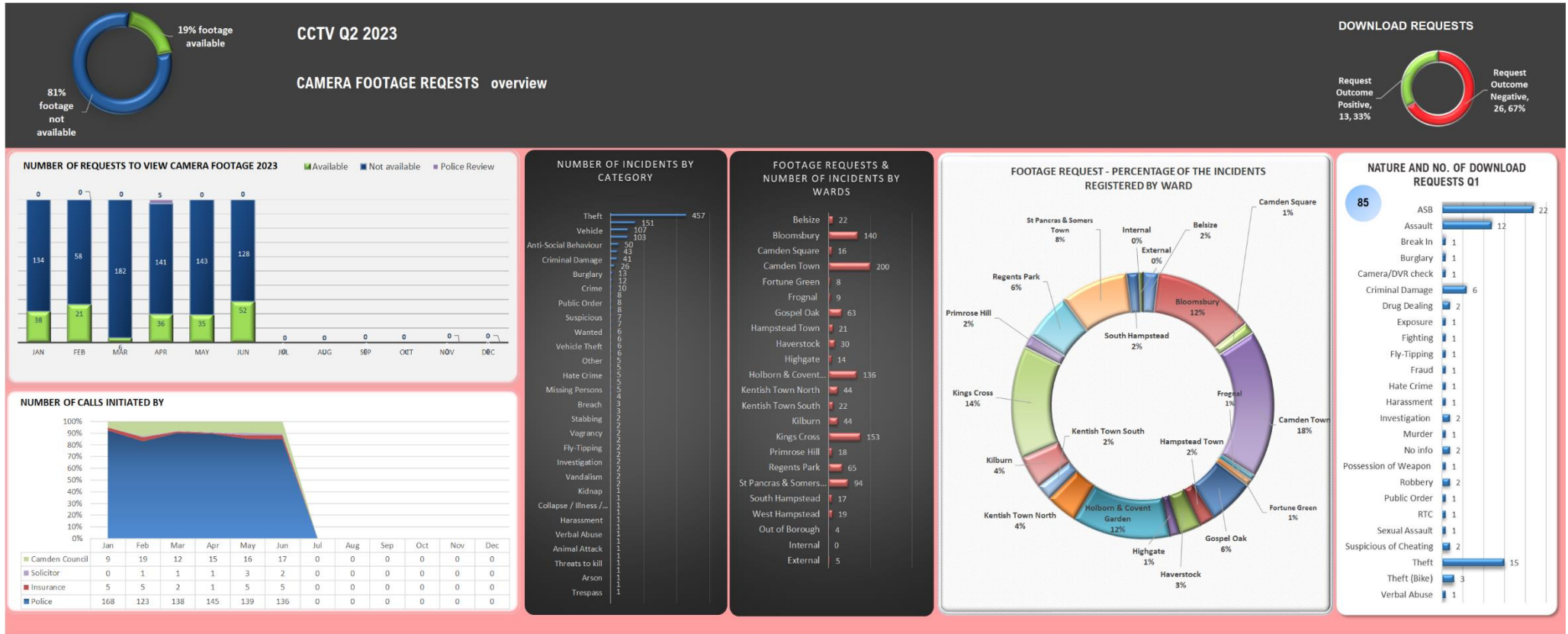
- 1.6 Just to remind everyone, residents will only be charged a higher rate of CCTV service charges from the next April after their estate is upgraded to the new CCTV system. The majority of residents will not see an increase above inflation

in 2023 and the increased service charge will be applied in April 2024. You will be notified in advance but the majority if not all estates should be upgraded by this time.

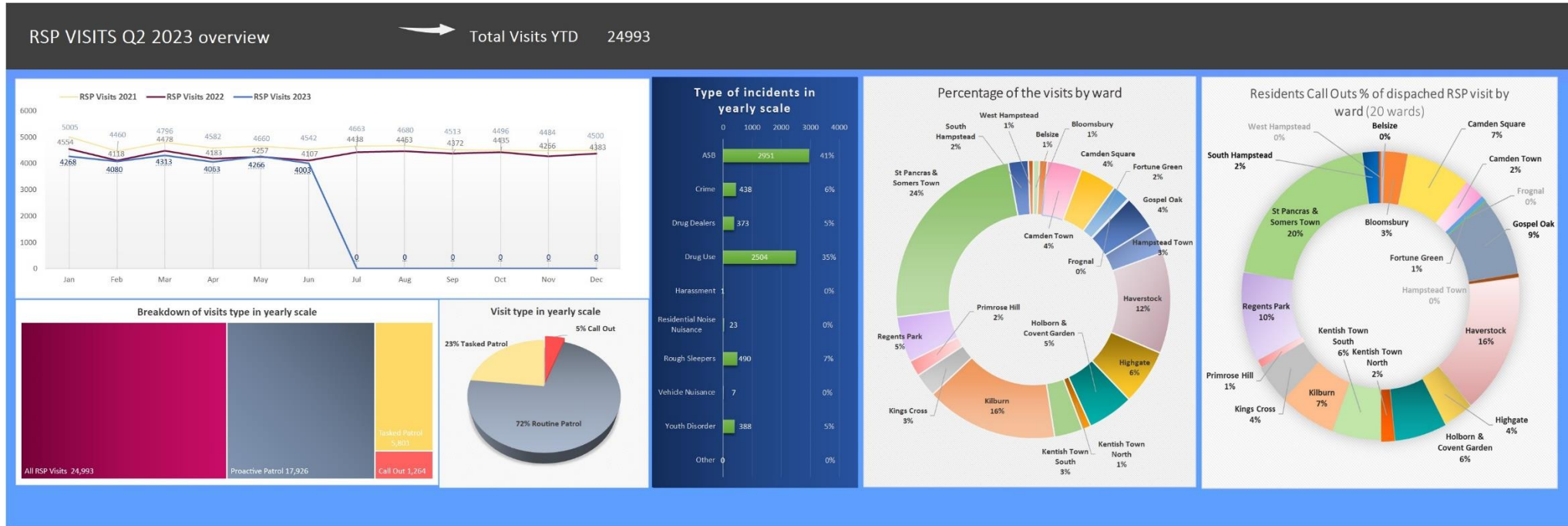
2. Responsive Security Patrol

- 2.1 The Council's five-vehicle Responsive Security Patrol (RSP) is available for residents to call out 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, from 4pm to 4am. The main purpose is to act as a deterrent and to detect and disrupt ASB on Housing land. The RSP can be called out for any type of ASB and residents can call them out without sharing their personal details. In the first half of this year they have carried out over 25,000 patrols. About 25% of these are targeted patrols to proactively disrupt ASB and the RSP dealt with more than 1,265 residents call outs in 6 months.
- 2.2 The two most common causes of incidents are ASB (2,951 incidents to date) and drug use (2,504 incidents). St Pancras and Somers Town was the busiest ward for residents calls and patrols to date, with Haverstock and Kilburn following on behind.
- 2.3 As well as responding to residents' call outs, the RSP carry out targeted vehicle and foot patrols at the request of Community Safety, Housing Managers and the Police. They may also carry out welfare or tenancy checks and form part of the Council's emergency response. They can be contacted on 020 7974 4444 asking for the Responsive Security Patrol or at RSP@camden.gov.uk
- 2.4 All RSP cars are fitted with GPS trackers that show in real-time where the vehicles are and keep a record of all the car's movements. The cars have in car CCTV fitted that records automatically and the RSP officers are equipped with body worn CCTV cameras that captures both audio and video. If there is a complaint about a patrol then all of this data is downloaded and compared to the patrol logs they submit. Management also carry out a "dip sampling" process where they select patrols at random and check all of this for accuracy.

3. CCTV dashboard – call types, locations, footage requests - April to June 2023



RSP dashboard April – June 2023



Report ends

Income management

Reporting officer: Jo Adams, Senior Neighbourhood Manager (service development & partnerships)

1. Rent collection

- 1.1 Supporting people to make their rent payments and to maximise their incomes remains a high priority Housing.
- 1.2 The increase in arrears is in part a reflection of people struggling with the cost-of living crisis and the fuel cost increases - £16.9m as at end of June 2023.
- 1.3 Work is continuing to increase the number of Universal Credit claimants whose rent is paid direct to the Council by the Department for Work & Pensions.
- 1.4 Making personal contact and ensuring that tenants know where to get help when they need it will remain a priority for our service.
- 1.5 New Head of Leaseholder Services and Housing Income has been appointed and will prioritise collection of arrears.

Rent collection data

	4 Apr 2021	4 Apr 2022	2 Oct 2022	2 April 2023
Rent arrears	£10,387,511	£12,346,862	£14,253,940	£14,895,163
% collection rate	98.10	97.92	96.92	97.37
Owe 7 weeks+	2,677	3,010	3,303	3,337
Tenants on UC	4,412	5,164	5,680	6,076
Arrears owed by tenants on UC and % of total arrears	£4,099,443 39%	£6,515,001 53%	£7,264,844 51%	£7,410,272 50%

Report ends

Neighbourhoods

Reporting officer: Maria Jacobs, Head of Neighbourhoods

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The chairs of the respective DMCs (District Management Committees) had given feedback from their members regarding problems in contacting their Neighbourhood Housing Officer.
- 1.2 This report sets out the changes we have undergone in recent months along with some challenges for our service.
- 1.3 We have 66 NHOs managing around 22,000 tenancies. Currently there are six vacancies and five posts where staff are on long-term absence. This represents a 17% reduction in the workforce at a time of increasing pressures impacting housing services generally, as outlined below.
- 1.4 Where vacant patches or long-term sick these are covered by existing Neighbourhood Housing Officers. A full list of current Neighbourhood Housing Officers can be found on our website.
- 1.5 External factors have impacted on the Neighbourhood Housing Officers in recent months including cost of living crisis, damp and mould, and management actions arising out of our fire risk assessments.

2. National trends

- 2.1 There has been a significant increase in voluntary resignation across the sector with a recent survey of local authorities showing that turnover for customer facing roles had doubled from 4.5% in 2017 to over 9.8% in 2022¹.
- 2.2 The Better Social Housing Review, created by the National Housing Federation and the Chartered Institute of Housing and published in January, acknowledged that “exceptional pressures and demands” on frontline staff working directly with tenants “are contributing to very high turnover rates... and making it harder for many tenants to communicate with their landlord.”
- 2.3 The employment sector remains buoyant and highly competitive with London being a particular pressure point. House mark² predict that London landlords will need to replace 1 in 5 housing officers this year if the current trend continues.

¹ Inside Housing 28 July 2023 cites 67 Local Authorities responded

² Housemark is a leading data insight company for the social housing sector (www.housemark.co.uk)

3. Looking forward

- 3.1 The housing service is on a journey of transformation that will include our people and how we deliver our services. This is against a backdrop of legislation, new regulation, and constraints on our budgets.
- 3.2 We have undertaken a recruitment drive to appoint fixed term Neighbourhood Housing Officers for any vacant roles along with agreeing temporary appointments for any areas where the officer is (or is likely to be) on long-term sickness absence.
- 3.3 As part of our transformation we will be exploring how we deliver our services and looking at ways in which we can increase the ease and range of options for our residents to connect with us.
- 3.4 We will also be reviewing and redefining the role of our housing officers so that they have a clear purpose along with the right tools to enable them to deliver a first-class service in line with our vision that we deliver an exemplary housing and repairs service that is proactive, responsive, relational, and empathetic.

End of report

Caretaking

Reporting officer: Michael Wood, Project Manager - Estate Services

1. Performance

1.1 Our caretaking service is responsible for the upkeep and safety of our communal areas on our estates. We assess our communal areas against a quality control framework with A being the highest. The performance for the last quarter is as follows:

Q1 (Apr-Jun 2023/24) Borough	A	B	C	D
Camden Town	4.9%	90.9%	4.1%	0.1%
Gospel Oak	4.0%	95.6%	0.4%	0.0%
Hampstead	27.2%	72.4%	0.4%	0.0%
Holborn	9.0%	89.5%	1.5%	0.0%
Kentish Town	0.3%	97.0%	2.8%	0.0%

1.2 Our estates are independently audited by Keep Britain Tidy, the table below demonstrates how we compare against the borough-wide audit:

Survey period	Litter	Detritus	Flyposting	Graffiti	Fly Tipping
2022-23 T3 Social housing only	5.56%	3.33%	0%	3.33%	6.67%
2022-23 T3 Without social housing	10.32%	7.7%	9.21%	15.08%	2.06%

1.3 In addition to our day-to-day services, we also have a caretaking response team who undertake small projects to enhance the quality of our estates.

District	Projects completed
Camden Town	12
Gospel Oak	23
Hampstead	2
Holborn	25

Kentish Town	5
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- 1.4 The window cleaning team carried out 162 communal window cleans across the five district areas.
- 1.5. Our meter reading team has seen an increase in demand for meter readings. Along with providing access, the team also checks for hazards in these secure and infrequently used locations.

Type of request	No
Access for electrical work	6
Meter reading	217
Smart meter installation	23
Top-up a pre-payment meter	1

Report ends

Estate Parking

Reporting officer: Michael Wood, Project Manager - Estate Services

1. Background

- 1.1. This report continues from the update provided to DMCs in March 2023 and outlines progress so far.
- 1.2. In March 2023, Cabinet formally agreed the matter of implementing a traffic management order (TMO) on estate land, and confirmed the sites selected for group 1. You can view the full report here:
<https://democracy.camden.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=3952>
- 1.3. This area is highly regulated, and each group will consist of two consultations (a design consultation and a statutory consultation) before physical changes and new enforcements can take place. The roll out of parking schemes will be carried out in groups of 10 sites and will be programmed alongside any other improvements as detailed below.

2. Progress

- 2.1. At the time of writing this report, the group 1 design consultation is still live. However, early results suggest that around 10% of group 1 households have responded to the survey at <https://www.estateparkingcamden.co.uk/>, with around half of the estates supportive of the proposed design changes.
- 2.2. We will now closely examine the results of the design consultation to make improvements to proposals in line with resident feedback.
- 2.3. The timetable below takes us through to the implementation of the first group of locations :

2023-24 Q1	Estate consultations on proposed Group 1 designs [in progress]
2023-24 Q2	Review designs based on resident feedback; Undertake statutory consultation
2023-24 Q3 - Q4	Make any physical changes to estates and begin parking enforcement

3. Monitoring and Feedback

- 3.1. We will continue to monitor the projects in terms of impact on surrounding areas and any lessons learnt. This will be used to inform future projects where parking is identified as an issue.

Report ends

Grounds maintenance and tree management contractor performance

Reporting officer: Andrew Hinchley, Interim Head of Green Space

Summary: The role the Green Spaces service undertakes across housing estates was set out in the March 2021 report. The below sets out an update to that report and provides service performance information. It also responds to a number of enquiries raised by DMCs in advance of this meeting, regarding alternative contracting and DMC funded projects.

Grounds Maintenance

- 1.7 Grounds Maintenance Monitoring Officers undertake a range of monitoring including complaint led and programmed inspections, across housing green spaces. If a task has not been completed a rectification (financial and contract penalty) can be raised against the task to ensure that it is completed in a specific time. Data for the number of rectifications issued is as follows:

	Non Rectifiable Default	Stage 2 Rectification
2021/22	36	197
2022/23	37	127
2023/24 – (April – July)	2	129

Delivering safe and accessible playgrounds across housing

- 1.8 96% (182 separate play/sports areas) of play areas managed by Camden Green Space Operations on housing estates are currently open for use. 7 play areas/MUGAs are currently closed.
- 1.9 The resurfacing works at St Silas Lenham play area have been completed. New roundabouts and safety surfaces have been installed at New Calthorpe Estate and St Silas Shipton

Grounds Maintenance Service Recommissioning

- 1.10 The Council's Green Space service contract with idverde ends in March 2025. As part of the early stages of this process, an online consultation for residents and other stakeholders was undertaken throughout spring 2023. The online consultation receiving 188 responses.
- 1.11 Responses have been collated and we are currently in the process of summarising themes, which will be shared with stakeholders in due course. We will be completing further stakeholder engagement regarding playground maintenance through the coming months.

- 1.12 The current recommissioning process provides Camden with the opportunity to explore what future service delivery will look like; which includes considering a number of different delivery models such as fully outsourced, fully in-house or a number of different mixed service delivery models. We are currently exploring these potential models and the internal and external feedback received will inform this process.
- 1.13 We plan to provide a more detailed update to DMCs in the December meetings.

Question response: Opting out of the contract

- 1.14 A question has been raised about whether TRAs could opt out of the contract to source an alternative provider if they went through the proper channels, and what these channels would be.
- 1.15 The existing grounds maintenance contract enables site, or part of sites, to be removed from contract relatively easily, so cessation of the existing grounds maintenance arrangements can be arranged. This facility is intended for use where community members or residents wish to take on gardening tasks or establish growing areas. We facilitate community management of planting beds through the contract at present, with many successful examples.
- 1.16 If TRAs wished to manage their own grounds maintenance services, a Local Management Agreement (LMA) can be considered. Under these agreements TRA's can do the work themselves, employ somebody or appoint a contractor. The group would need to be registered as a Tenant and Resident Association, have a bank account and require training on health and safety and finance. Further information on setting up an LMA can be requested from the Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement team.
- 1.17 Larger tasks, such as grass maintenance or playground management can require specialist equipment or skills, and require legislative, health and safety and landlord obligations to be met. The existing contract ensures these are met. Any alternative providers would have to demonstrate how they meet these requirements to ensure sites are managed safely.
- 1.18 The council is currently exploring alternative approaches to the management of budgets at Hillgrove Estate within the participatory budgeting trial. This is at early stages and we are not yet in a position to roll out similar approaches elsewhere until this trial has been undertaken and evaluated.

Question response: DMC project costs

- 1.19 A question has been raised about whether TRAs can offset grounds maintenance costs where a DMC-funded project is commissioned.
- 1.20 The DMC funds are usually used to deliver one-off capital works. These are works that are outside the scope of the core grounds maintenance contract and which involve a change to a site (rather than maintenance of the existing assets). As such, they are in addition to the routine grounds maintenance tasks, rather than instead of them – and therefore cannot be offset.

- 1.21 Any variations in the maintenance costs resulting from capital works delivered through a DMC-funded project (which can arise from changes in the measurements for different assets, or introduction of new features) will be reflected in future contract payments, once the change details are communicated and applied to the green space asset register. This could be an increase or decrease depending on the changes made.

Tree Management

Housing Tree enquiries

- 2.1. We are experiencing a very high number of enquiries at present and are seeing some longer than normal response times. The tree section has been struggling to recruit to a full complement of staff due to a shortage of suitably qualified people in the sector. We hope to have a full team in place by September 2023. Our term contractor is experiencing the same staffing problems which is causing a delay in some works being completed.
- 2.2. Following the complete year of reporting, it is now possible to provide performance information compared to the same period last year:

Enquiries Received	Apr -June 2022	Apr – June 2023
Housing Communal	140	99
Street Property	52	46
Total	192	145

Enquiries closed	Apr – June 2022	Apr – June 2023
Housing Communal	84	67
Street Property	48	48
Total	132	115

Work completed	Apr – June 2022	Apr – June 2023
Housing Communal	31	221
Street Property	25	7
Total	56	228

- 2.3. As can be seen from the tables above the number of enquiries received has reduced by 47 and enquiries closed by 17 compared to the same period last year.. However, the amount of work completed has increased by 172 jobs compared to last year. We will continue to prioritise works based on risk to maximise capacity.

Report ends

Complaints

Reporting officers: Jim Read, Service Manager – Information Governance and Scot Reid, Head of Property Customer Services & Engagement

1. Housing Complaints Quarter 1 2023/2024

Division	Housing Management Qtr 1 23/24	Qtr 4 22/23	Property Management Qtr 1 23/24	Qtr 4 22/23
Number stage 1 complaints in Qtr	59	91	293	379
Cases responded to within time (10 wkg days)	25%	30%	50%	50%
Cases responded to late	34%	39%	37%	43%
Open cases currently overdue	39%	31%	13%	7%
Number of "not a complaint" cases & not included in above figures	39	51	155	194
Number stage 2 complaints in Qtr	20	25	75	82
Number of upheld stage 2 complaints	4	4	66	40
Number Housing Ombudsman decisions in Qtr	2	2	3	3

Housing Management (by main service areas)	Landlord Services Qtr 1 23/24	Qtr 4 22/23	Estate Management Qtr 1 23/24	Qtr 4 22/23
Number stage 1 complaints in Qtr	34	46	18	28
Cases responded to within time (10 wkg days)	18%	15%	6%	11%
Cases responded to late	47%	50%	28%	50%
Open cases currently overdue	34%	35%	67%	39%
Number of "not a complaint" cases & not included in above figures	26	34	14	11
Number stage 2 complaints in Qtr	16	8	1	2
Number of upheld stage 2 complaints	4	2	0	2
Number Housing Ombudsman decisions in Qtr	2	2	1	0

Property Management	Repairs & Operations Qtr 1 23/24	Qtr 4 22/23
Number stage 1 complaints in Qtr	284	372
Cases responded to within time (10 wkg days)	51%	50%
Cases responded to late	37%	44%
Open cases currently overdue	12%	6%
Number of "not a complaint" cases & not included in above figures	147	183
Number stage 2 complaints in Qtr	75	79
Number of upheld stage 2 complaints	66	39
Number Housing Ombudsman decisions in Qtr	3	3

Stage 1 Complaints

- 2.1 The data shows a significant decrease in Stage 1 complaints compared to the previous quarter with Housing Management services seeing a 35% drop and Repairs a 23% drop. However, the number remains high and consequently the number of complaints responded to on time remains low due to pressures on resources.
- 2.2 Please note, the above complaints performance is calculated as per the complaints policy and procedure. The 10 working days are counted from the date the Council receives the complaint.
- 2.3 Housing Repairs prepare their own specific performance data to measure the performance of the actual service rather than the Council as a whole where the 10 working days is counted from the date Housing Repairs case management team receive the complaint. These figures are reported separately by Housing Repairs as part of their regular performance data.

Stage 2 Reviews

- 3.1 Over the last year there has been a significant increase in the number of Stage 2 complaints where complainants remain dissatisfied with the outcome of a Stage 1. This has created delays in responding to Stage 2 reviews within the required timescales. In order to address this, the complaints team has reviewed the Stage 2 handling process to make it more efficient and have increased resources to manage the increased workloads (see section 4 below).
- 3.2 Stage 2 reviews are carried out by complaints officers in the Central Complaints Team who carry out an investigation independent to the service area involved.
- 3.3 A higher proportion of Stage 2s relating to Repairs have been upheld this quarter whereas in Housing Management a relatively low proportion are upheld.

- 3.4 The main reasons for being upheld are continued delays in carrying out repairs and delays in handling the complaint.
- 3.5 The Repairs service is working with the Central Complaints team to look at themes and lessons learnt from reviews to ensure complaints are resolved at the earliest stage as possible.

The Central Complaints Team

- 4.1 The complaints team has increased staff resources with two additional complaints officers, plus a third complaints officer starting in Autumn 2023 to manage the increase in Stage 2 reviews. They are currently recruiting an additional case co-ordinator to provide advice and support to residents at the initial stages of the process. The complaints team remains on track to reduce delays by August 2023.

The Complaints Policy and Procedure and Compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code

- 5.1 The Council's Complaints Policy and Procedure has been reviewed and updated. This has been done in collaboration with the Housing Ombudsman's Compliance Team. It now provides more information on reasonable adjustments and changes the stage 2 timescales to 20 working days making it fully compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.
- 5.2 The revised policy and procedure took effect from 1st July 2023 and is available on the Council's website - [Complaints - Camden Council](#)

6. Housing and Property Services - A new approach to improving the customer service we provide to our residents.

- 6.1 Across Housing and Property Services, customer satisfaction should be front and centre in delivering our work. Yet, in part, our customer feedback and complaint numbers can often tell a different story. Our customers tell us that communication is a high concern for them. Not being ignored and being kept up to date with an enquiry is their number one concern, but often this is what lets us down. We are proactively collecting customer satisfaction feedback, and this should be a driver for change. With this in mind, we are launching some new concepts to help improve overall customer satisfaction.
- 6.2 Working with colleagues in central complaints and our outbound call provider KWEST, we will introduce a new way of measuring customer satisfaction in handling stage one complaints. We want to understand from our customers whether the process was handled correctly. From when a formal complaint was logged, how the service handled the case, whether the customer believed it was responded to promptly and meaningfully, and whether it showed understanding

and empathy. The aim is to have a relational telephone conversation where the feedback can help drive performance and customer satisfaction. We plan to launch this in the Autumn.

- 6.3 A new resident complaints oversight panel concept will be introduced. Fully supported by the wider Property Customer Services and Engagement team, this panel of up to five members will meet at least bi-monthly to review the current level of stage one, stage two, and ombudsman cases and review the trends that have been identified. The panel will carry out a lessons-learned approach and will meet with Senior Managers to report on improvements to avoid repeated issues. The panel recruitment will commence in the Autumn, with a plan to have this group in place for January 2024.
- 6.4 The work of the complaints oversight panel will be fully tracked and shared with the Director of Housing, the Director of Property Services and across the organisation, including the DMCs. The panel will produce regular lessons learned reports, and where possible, the output of this work will be made available on our website. This new concept aligns with the Ombudsman's recommendations, where we include residents in the areas that directly affect them and continue along our agreed path of being more open and honest about the decisions we make and how it helps improve overall customer satisfaction.
- 6.5 Due to the nature of the work involved, following a robust recruitment process, remuneration will be paid to the five-panel members. In line with the current London Living Wage, currently set at £11.95. A payment of £40, including travel costs for the 3-hour session, will be made.
- 6.6 Further updates will be provided to the DMC as we progress through the panel recruitment.

Report ends