



## Housing Management and Almshouses Sub (Community and Children's Services) Committee

**Date:** THURSDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2024

**Time:** 2.00 pm

**Venue:** COMMITTEE ROOMS, 2ND FLOOR, WEST WING, GUILDHALL

**Members:**

Steve Goodman OBE (Chairman)	Deputy John Fletcher
Helen Fentimen OBE JP (Deputy Chairman)	Timothy James McNally
Joanna Tufuo Abeyie	Eamonn Mullally
Deputy Keith Bottomley	Henrika Priest
Mary Durcan	Deputy Ceri Wilkins

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**Ian Thomas CBE**  
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

# **AGENDA**

## **Part 1 - Public Reports**

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

3. **MINUTES**

To approve the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting on 9 October 2024.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 5 - 10)

4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services.

**For Information**  
(Pages 11 - 12)

5. **HOUSING MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME – PROGRESS REPORT**

Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.

**For Information**  
(Pages 13 - 28)

6. **HOUSING COMPLAINTS UPDATE**

Report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 29 - 116)

7. **HOUSING STRATEGY ONE YEAR ACTION PLAN – 2025-26**

Report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 117 - 148)

8. **DECANTS POLICY AND CRESCENT HOUSE LOCAL DECANTS POLICY**

Report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 149 - 170)

9. **FIRE SAFETY UPDATE – HRA PROPERTIES**

Report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services.

**For Information**  
(Pages 171 - 180)

10. **PETS POLICY CONSULTATION**

Report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 181 - 208)

11. **UPDATES FROM ALLOCATED MEMBERS AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

Allocated Members to be heard.

**For Information**

12. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

14. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION - That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

**Part 2 - Non-Public Reports**

15. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

To approve the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2024.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 209 - 210)

16. **OUTLINE COSTS FOR FUTURE INVESTMENT AND RESOURCING OF HOUSING  
MAJOR WORKS AND COMPLIANCE**

Report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services.

**For Information**  
(Pages 211 - 218)

17. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB  
COMMITTEE**

18. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND  
WHICH THE SUB COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE  
PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB (COMMUNITY AND  
CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, 9 October 2024**

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub  
(Community and Children's Services) Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd  
Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Wednesday, 9 October 2024 at 11.00 am

**Present**

**Members:**

Steve Goodman OBE (Chairman)  
Helen Fentimen OBE JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Deputy John Fletcher  
Timothy James McNally  
Eamonn Mullally

**In Attendance:**

Henrika Priest  
Ceri Wilkins

**Officers:**

David Blane	- Community & Children's Services
Peta Caine	- Assistant Director, Housing Management, Community & Children's Services
Liane Coopey	- Community & Children's Services
David Downing	- Community & Children's Services
Anna Donoghue	- Community & Children's Services
Judith Finlay	- Executive Director, Community & Children's Services
Liam Gillespie	- Community & Children's Services
Zoe Gayle	- Community & Children's Services
Michael Gwyther-Jones	- Community & Children's Services
Chris Keesing	- Chamberlain's Department
Marie Rene	- Community & Children's Services
Blair Stringman	- Town Clerk's Department

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mary Durcan.

**2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN  
RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

**3. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting  
held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024 be approved as a correct record.

## **MATTERS ARISING:**

- **Member Allocation for Boroughs:** Members discussed the allocation of Sub-Committee Members to different boroughs for Housing Management. Mary Durkin agreed to handle Islington, John Fletcher agreed to manage Tower Hamlets, and Tim volunteered for Southwark. The remaining boroughs will be allocated offline and brought forward for approval in the next Community and Children's Services Committee meeting.
- **Independent Members Recruitment:** The Sub-Committee discussed the recruitment of external Members for the Sub-Committee. Officers agreed to review the process for appointing external Members to the Sub-Committee and report back to the next meeting.

### **4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Town Clerk concerning outstanding actions.

### **5. HOUSING MATTERS**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning an update to Members of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee on some key issues currently being dealt with by the Social Housing Team.

The following points were noted:

- **Grenfell Inquiry Final Report:** The report outlined the changes made to date and mentioned the introduction of the Building Safety Act 2022, which brought in the building safety regulator. It was noted that further updates would be provided at the next committee meeting in November.
- **Risk Profile Update:** The risk profile update was included as Appendix 2. Questions were raised about the retrofitting of sprinkler systems at Avondale and Middlesex Street. Officers noted that the Avondale sprinklers are nearly complete, with one pending due to litigation. Members were informed that Middlesex Street residents were being consulted about the sprinklers.
- **Major Works Programme:** The major works programme included various projects, with a focus on ensuring value for money and minimising the financial impact on leaseholders. The need for accurate cost estimates and the involvement of quantity surveyors from the start of projects in future were emphasised.
- **Financial Support for Leaseholders:** Discussions included extending the discretionary loan scheme and maintaining the current position on voluntary charges on properties. The importance of clear communication with leaseholders about costs and support options was highlighted.

### **6. HOUSING MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME – PROGRESS REPORT**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director, Community & Children's Services providing an update to Members on the progress that has been made

with the Housing Major Works Programme and to advise Members on issues affecting progress on individual schemes.

The following points were noted:

- **Programme Overview:** It was noted that the current major works programme was valued at £110 million, covering works completed and those in progress. This did not include future works, which are estimated at £30 million.
- **Governance:** Members noted that there was a need for robust governance on major projects, similar to the approach used for the Middlesex Street project, to ensure effective management and communication.
- **Acceleration of Programme:** Discussions included the possibility of accelerating priority issues within the programme, considering financial support and capacity to move projects forward more quickly.
- **Net Zero Considerations:** Officers informed Members the programme included considerations for achieving net zero, with support from the City of London Corporation's Climate Action Strategy team.
- **Golden Lane Project:** Emphasis on the importance of governance for the Golden Lane project, with plans to implement a governance structure in November was expressed.

#### 7. **HOUSING COMPLAINTS UPDATE - QUARTER 1**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning an update to Members of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee on changes made in the Housing Complaints Team.

The following points were noted:

- **Resident Engagement:** It was noted that there had been significant progress in resident engagement and resolving individual complaints, with a strong partnership between members and housing colleagues.
- **Positive Feedback:** The efforts of the team were praised for their dedication and effectiveness in addressing complaints.

#### 8. **FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR LEASEHOLDERS**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning the implications of each of options for the Housing Revenue Account.

Members discussed extending the discretionary loan scheme, increasing the maximum loan amount from £72,500 to £100,000, and extending the loan term from 10 years to 15 years. There was a suggestion to consider extending the loan term to 25 years, as some leaseholders might face difficulties with the proposed terms. Members emphasised the need for a single document covering all loan options for greater clarity.

Members raised concerns about the adequacy of the £100,000 loan to cover major works projects and suggested having multiple options for different loan amounts and terms. The importance of involving leaseholders in discussions about their needs was highlighted. The Sub-Committee decided to take the questions about the loan amount and term extension to the Chamberlain's department for further consideration.

The Sub-Committee agreed to bring the matter back in November after further discussions with the Chamberlain. There was a consensus that the recommendations should be stretched to meet the estimated costs of the works and to consider extending the loan term beyond 15 years.

9. **FINANCIAL SUPPORT WITH MAJOR WORKS (LONG LEASEHOLDERS)**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning the current range of options for financial support for leaseholders in relation to major works costs; provide Members with information on options offered by other landlords; and inform discussion on possible variations or alternative offers.

It was noted to Members that item 9 was a background paper to item 8.

10. **FIRE SAFETY UPDATE - HRA PROPERTIES**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services providing Members of the Sub-Committee with information on how the City of London Corporation (the Corporation), through its Housing Team, is ensuring that its homes on its twelve social housing estates are managed in a way that residents are safe and we comply with current health and safety legislation, best practice, and regulatory standards relating to fire safety.

The following points were noted:

- **Fire Safety Measures:** Members noted the update included the implementation of various fire safety measures across the housing estates. This included the installation of fire doors, smoke alarms, and emergency lighting.
- **Compliance with Regulations:** Members were informed that the measures were in compliance with the latest fire safety regulations and standards.
- **Resident Engagement:** There has been ongoing engagement with residents to ensure they are aware of the new safety measures and how to use them effectively.
- **Future Plans:** Future plans include further enhancements to fire safety systems and regular reviews to ensure continued compliance and effectiveness.

11. **LEASEHOLD AND FREEHOLD REFORM ACT 2024**

The Sub-Committee received a report of Executive Director, Community & Children's Services concerning information on the Leasehold and Freehold

Reform Act 2024 was given Royal Assent in May 2024 and will introduce wide-ranging changes to current legislation on residential long leases.

The following points were noted:

- **Legislative Changes:** The Leasehold and Reform Act introduces significant changes to leasehold law, including the abolition of ground rents for new leases and the extension of lease terms.
- **Impact on Existing Leaseholders:** Existing leaseholders will benefit from the right to extend their leases by 990 years at zero ground rent.
- **Enfranchisement Costs:** The Act simplifies the process and reduces the costs associated with leasehold enfranchisement, making it easier for leaseholders to buy the freehold of their properties.
- **Commonhold:** The Act promotes the use of commonhold as an alternative to leasehold, providing greater control and ownership to property owners.
- **Implementation:** The changes will be implemented in phases, with further details and guidance to be provided by the government.

## 12. **SOCIAL HOUSING TENANCY FRAUD – 2023/24 ANNUAL REPORT**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Head of Audit concerning an update on our Social Housing Tenancy Fraud activity during the 2023/24 reporting year. It also provides Members with an update against our key anti-fraud initiatives in this area.

The following points were noted:

- **Fraud Detection:** The team has been actively working on detecting and addressing housing tenancy fraud. This includes identifying fraudulent activities and taking necessary actions to mitigate them.
- **Collaboration:** There has been significant collaboration with other departments and agencies to ensure a comprehensive approach to tackling tenancy fraud.
- **Outcomes:** The efforts have led to several successful interventions, resulting in the recovery of properties and prevention of further fraudulent activities.

## 13. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

The following points were noted:

- **Middlesex St :** It was noted that there is no maximum temperature set on the heating system, and some residents have been experiencing issues. The contractor will be asked to visit homes to address these problems.
- There was also a discussion about the heat metering system, which was not implemented as initially planned. Efforts are now being made to resolve this issue.
- **York Way:** The exposed wiring in the hallways was another topic of concern. Prices have been obtained for the necessary work, and procurement is in progress.
- Regarding the lifts, repairs are being carried out, and the issues have reduced.

- The temporary play area at York Way is operational and will remain so for the rest of the year.
- There was a mention of the replacement of main entrance doors, which would include entry controls but not automatic door devices.

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no other business.

**15. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** – That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

**16. WAIVER REPORT FOR CIVICA CX SYSTEMS SUPPORT WORK**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services.

**17. HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS PROCUREMENT STAGE 1 REPORT**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services.

**18. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

There were no non-public questions.

**19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was no other business.

**The meeting ended at 12.09 pm**

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Chairman

**Contact Officer: Blair Stringman**  
**Blair.Stringman@cityoflondon.gov.uk**

## Community & Children's Services

### Members Update

Date Added	Subject	Action Agreed	Responsible Officer	Target Meeting Date - HMASC	Update
22.02.2021	Vehicle charging points at Middlesex Street and Golden Lane.	Members noted that it would still be possible to apply for funding for the 2021/22 financial year, and Members will be updated once the initial report is received from the consultants.	Peta Caine	November 2025	Our consultant, WSP Points to be included as part of the developments at York Way and Sydenham Hill.  Programme to be included as part of the schedule of works required in the business plan / budget process for 25/26 and beyond.
08.07.2022	Automatic door devices.	Report to be provided with further detail on automatic door-opening devices at estates	Greg Wade	February 2025	Following meetings with the City's access advisor and other stakeholders, a specialist NRAC access/inclusive design consultant is still to be engaged on the Estate-Wide Accessibility Programme, competitive fee proposals have been received from 2 firms. Although previous audits were conducted in 2022, the plan is to review them to ensure compliance with current regulations before then moving into full design and specification. In respect of Petticoat Tower specifically, initial proposals have been

## Community & Children's Services

### Members Update

					received. The City's access advisor has reviewed and highlighted key areas where more information is required. Currently chasing revised proposals, in order to progress.
17.04.2023	New Repairs and Maintenance Contract to include consideration of compensation to be paid by contractor to residents for its failings.	Review the introduction of contractor compensation and incentivisation clauses in new R&M contract. Liaise with colleagues in legal and City Procurement.	Michael Gwyther-Jones	March 2024	Report on Agenda
17.04.2023	Housing Compensation Policy	Members to see the Housing Complaints Policy as part of a report into Housing Complaints generally.	Liam Gillespie	November 2024	Policy on Agenda

<b>Committee(s):</b> Housing Management and Almshouses Sub (Community and Children's Services) Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 28 November 2024
<b>Subject:</b> Housing Major Works Programme – Progress Report	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	1, 2, 12
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Greg Wade Head of Major Works Housing, DCCS Property Services	

## Summary

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress that has been made with development of the Housing Major Works Programme following September's HRA briefing session and to advise Members on issues affecting progress on individual schemes.

## Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the report.

## Main Report

### Background

1. The purpose of this report is to present progress and highlight slippage within the portfolio of projects which make up the Housing Major Works Programme to Members of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee.
2. The City of London Corporation (City Corporation) is committed to investing circa £110million on a Major Works Programme for the maintenance, refurbishment, and improvement of its social housing portfolio. The works, in the main comprise:

- Window repairs / replacements;
  - Re-roofing (including repair / replacement of rainwater goods);
  - Decent Homes (new kitchens and bathrooms);
  - Electrical rewiring and upgrades (communal landlord supply and domestic);
  - Heating replacements and upgrades (communal and domestic);
  - Concrete and external fabric repairs;
  - Fire safety improvement works (fire door replacement, compartmentation works, fire-stopping, fire alarm upgrades, sprinkler installation);
  - Energy efficiency works (co-funded through Climate Action Strategy funding);
  - Estate Improvement works (minor landscaping / security / fencing / waste storage / external drainage).
3. The funding for these extensive works, which is intended to bring all the City Corporation's social housing stock up to, and beyond, the Decent Homes Standard, comes from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), which is ring-fenced solely for housing. The HRA is made up of:
- Income from rents;
  - Income from service charges.
4. The Housing Major Works Programme was originally intended to be a 5-year programme. However, the size and complexity of certain high-profile projects (such as the Golden Lane Estate Windows programme), along with persistent staff resourcing issues and the addition of extensive unprogrammed works, has meant that it is now more likely to take a maximum of 10 years to complete.
5. The Housing Major Works Programme is monitored and managed at several levels both corporately and within the department. This includes:
- Gateway Process;
  - Community & Children's Services Committee (C&CS);
  - Projects and Procurement Sub Committee;
  - Housing Management & Almshouses Sub Committee;
  - Housing Programme Board.
6. The Housing Programme Board (HPB) is a cross-departmental group which meets every two months to oversee the Major Works Programme. It is chaired by the Director of Community & Children's Services and comprising senior officers from:
- Housing Management;
  - Housing Property Services;
  - City Surveyors;
  - Planning;
  - Finance;
  - Town Clerks;
  - City Procurement.

7. Attached at Appendix 1 to this report, for Members' consideration, are progress reports for the Housing Major Works Improvement Programme. The reporting has been redesigned following requests from Members at previous Committee meetings. Ongoing feedback on the revised format is very much welcome.
8. As detailed in previous reports, and as described at the Members briefing held 17 September 2024, there are circa £35 million of new projects that are currently '**unfunded**' and will form the basis of the next Major Works Programme. These projects comprise of works which were first identified in the Savills Stock Condition Survey (2018), in addition to projects that have since been highlighted from further surveys and testing works carried out as part of the current Major Works Programme. These 'unfunded' works have been provisionally programmed to commence in a phased approach from 2026/27, subject to sufficient capacity within the HRA/HRA borrowing or the identification of an alternative source of funding. A separate report will be presented to this Committee to update Members on progress in identifying future budget requirements.

### **Progress of note on key projects**

#### *Window Replacements and External Redecorations*

Works to Holloway Estate, Sydenham Hill Estate and Windsor House have all reached Practical Completion.

#### *Southwark Estate – Pakeman House, Stopher House & Sumner Buildings*

An Issues Report was submitted and approved by Community & Children's Services Committee in July 2024 to cover additional costs incurred by the need to renew planning permission, changes to ventilation to comply with changes in legislation and for inclusion of balcony doors at Sumner Buildings which had been omitted from the original scope of works. Window replacements at Sumner Buildings and Pakeman House are now all but complete with snagging ongoing and scaffold to be removed. Completion at Stopher House has been slightly delayed following the late delivery of units; this will be at the contractor's expense. Redecoration works will be finalised once scaffolds are removed. Expected date of practical completion is 12 December 2024.

#### *William Blake Estate*

The design team brief is now being finalised and the project team is in the process of engaging with the procurement team, to ensure that the project aligns with City's climate action and responsible procurement strategies. The tender for the services of the design team is expected to go live by late November 2024 and once the tender evaluations are complete, the Home Ownership Team will be undertaking the statutory post tender section 20 consultations with Leaseholders (in conjunction with the Major Works Team).

Once appointed, the design team will be working alongside the project team, seeking pre-planning advice ahead of submitting a new planning application. While the planning applications are underway, the design team will also be working alongside the project team, drawing up specifications for re-tender of the works, which will also

be subject to the statutory pre and post tender section 20 consultations with leaseholders. Subject to further committee approvals, successful statutory consultations, tenders and planning consents, the works are expected to start mid-2025.

#### Window Refurbishment, Roofing, Ventilation and Heating (Golden Lane Estate)

##### *Phase 1 - Crescent House*

A two-stage tender process was considered the most appropriate route to market for a project of this complexity and is currently underway. Stage 1 ended on 13 August and has been followed by a thoroughly in-depth evaluation process. The project team has proceeded with due care, given the importance of selecting the right profile of contractor. Of the 7 tenderers which expressed initial interest, 5 have been provisionally selected to proceed to the second stage. The form of proposed contract is currently under review by Legal, with the project team opting to revert to an industry standard form of contract rather than the Corporation's bespoke documentation, due to the complexity of the delivery programme. Legal opinion has also been sought in relation to recoverability of costs, with specific reference to large-scale decanting and the prospect of converting leasehold flats from gas to electric heating. This information is critical for the Stage 2 (Notice of Estimate) S20 consultation.

##### *Phase 2 – Wider Estate*

Design work and testing is continuing for the blocks of the Wider Estate; planning applications are expected to be submitted in January 2025. A consultation event for residents was held 3 October and was positively received. Window repair works (frames only) have been completed in three vacant flats (which served as temporary pilot properties) and these have now been returned to allocations. Exploratory work is continuing in one of the Bayer House maisonettes, which will be used as a two-bedroom temporary accommodation flat whilst the contract works are being undertaken in Crescent House.

#### Middlesex Street Estate Communal Heating

The ongoing programme of heating system replacements is still underway in Petticoat Square. As previously reported, there are five refusals in Petticoat Tower and the occupants of two flats in Petticoat Square are currently awaiting the outcome of the tribunal that is being dealt with by the City's legal department (the hearing is provisionally scheduled for December 2024). Furthermore, there are a number of persistent access issues, relating to various Petticoat Square properties, but the Major Works Team continues to work proactively with colleagues in the Estate Office to successfully resolve these matters.

Given the length of time it could take to fully resolve the ongoing legal issues, it is expected that the principal contractor will have vacated the site. Consequently, the additional costs of return visits to complete works to any outstanding properties and decommission the old/existing system will have to be taken into consideration, given that some form of limited site setup and welfare facilities will be required to support any further upgrade works.

A further Issues Report has been prepared and submitted, which will seek additional funding. This relates to the discovery of previously unidentified asbestos, which will need to be removed to complete the remaining installations. It is anticipated that a contract uplift of circa £250k will be requested.

### Fire Door Replacement Programme (Multiple Estates)

#### *Lot 2 (Avondale Square Estate)*

Works to the low-rise general needs' blocks are complete. Replacement of communal corridor doors within the Point Blocks remains on hold, pending resolution of an issue relating to the sprinkler installation. Replacements within Harman Close are also on hold, pending renewal of the fire alarm and warden call systems.

#### *Lot 3 (Sumner Buildings, William Blake, Dron House, Petticoat Tower communal doors)*

Works at Dron House and William Blake Estate are complete. One flat resident in Sumner Buildings continues to deny access; this is with City Solicitors to resolve. Works to the communal doors in Petticoat Tower can now be undertaken, following given that the sprinkler installation contractor has now vacated site and thereby can grant access.

#### *Lot 4 (Southwark Estate, Windsor House, Isleden House, Sydenham Hill, Spitalfields)*

Reform Architects have been appointed to lead the design work for Lot 4. There will be an initial focus on Sydenham Hill, due to the extra complications of the Listing and previous experience of lengthy timescales when dealing with Lewisham Planning Authority.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Housing Major Works Project Update Reports (November 2024)

### **Greg Wade**

Head of Major Works, Housing

T: 07598 064435

E: [gregory.wade@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:gregory.wade@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

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Project Summary

Project Name	Golden Lane Window Refurbishment Programme	Reporting Date & Number	05/11/2024 (2)	Project Number	29100102/73/74	PM	NICK CONDON
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Page 19

Key Milestones	Planned Start	Actual Start	Completion	Status
Court Approval			07/12/17	Complete
Gateway 4c			13/03/23	Complete
Planning Permission - Phase 1				Complete
Procurement - Phase 1		05/07/24		Ongoing
Gateway 5 - Phase 1	10/01/25			Pending
Building works - Phase 1	30/03/25			Pending
Planning Permission - Phase 2	21/01/25			Pending
Procurement - Phase 2				Pending
Gateway 5 - Phase 2				Pending
Building works - Phase 2				Pending

HEALTH & SAFETY
Accidents: 0
Near Misses: 0
Issues: 0

Change Request	Raised	Appr	Outstanding
	0	0	0
Cost ( £)	0	0	0

Status			
Budget	Programme	Risks	Quality
AMBER	RED	AMBER	GREEN

Summary
<p><b>Phase 1</b> - Proposed works to Grade II* Listed <b>Crescent House</b> include windows repairs and refurbishment; installation of new vacuum glazing; new roof covering and insulation; soffit insulation; mechanical ventilation system; some heating systems changed from gas to electric; tile repairs to columns. Planning permission obtained late 2023.</p> <p>A two-stage tender process was considered the most appropriate route to market for a project of this complexity and is currently underway. Stage 1 ended on 13 August and has been followed by a thoroughly in-depth evaluation process. The project team has proceeded with due care, given the importance of selecting the right profile of contractor. Of the 7 tenderers which expressed initial interest, 5 have been provisionally selected to proceed to the second stage. The form of proposed contract is currently under review by Legal, with the project team opting to revert to an industry standard form of contract rather than the Corporation's bespoke documentation, due to the complexity of the delivery programme.</p> <p>Estimated project cost is £13m: estimates will be refined once the commercial returns in Stage 2 of the procurement can be analysed.</p> <p>Legal advice on leaseholder recovery has been sought and remains pending. This information is critical for the Stage 2 S20 consultation.</p> <p><b>Phase 2</b> - Design work and testing is continuing for the blocks of the <b>Wider Estate</b>; planning applications are expected to be submitted in January 2025. Estimated cost of phase 2 is £17m</p> <p>A full update report will be presented to the next Community &amp; Children's Services Committee (Nov 24).</p>

Financial Summary	Approved Budget TD	Commitment	Spend TD	Projected Outturn Costs
Staff Costs	£194,371	£0	£143,142	TBC
Fees	£1,517,623	£244,040	£818,577	TBC
Works	£1,216,867	£101,186	£141,955	£30,000,000
SUB TOTAL	£2,734,490	£345,226	£960,531	£30,000,000
Risk Register	£0	£0	£0	£0
GRAND TOTAL	£2,734,490	£345,226	£960,531	£30,000,000

GW Prog Tracker	Date	Approved Budget	CRP
Gateway 4	13/03/23	£473,118	£0
Gateway 5			£0
Gateway 6			£0

Risks and Issues	
Section 20 Challenges.	Leaseholder(s) may challenge the S20 recovery on grounds of the works being improvements or due to disrepair. Advice from legal sought but overdue
Resourcing	A fully resourced Major works team needs to be in place to effectively manage the works.
Increase in pricing during works.	A clear contract and robust contract management will be carried out throughout the project to keep a focus on cost and delivery to budget.
Electrical Supply	The electrical supply into Crescent House may not have sufficient capacit for all flats to be converted to electric heating. Tests underway
Procurement failure	Unsuitable contractors tendering for project. Robust evaluaions procedures in place
Contractor Financial Viability.	Procurement colleagues undertake financial viability assessments as part of the tender process.
Works more extensive than planned for.	It's possible that the full extent of works may not become apparent until opening up works have been undertaken.
Residents refuse access.	Should residents refuse access to their homes in order to complete works, it would cause cost and time delays to the project.

Project Summary

Project Name	Holloway Estate Windows Replacement	Reporting Date & Number	05/11/2024 (2)	Project Number	29100103	PM	Rafael Cardenas
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Status			
Budget	Programme	Risks	Quality
GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN
Budget Update	EOT No2	N/A	Snagging

Summary
<p>This project addresses the need for the window replacements and redecoration at Holloway estate and Whitby Court, as well as provide a basis for establishing a platform for programming the future cyclical redecorations for the internal and external common parts across the Estate.</p> <p>The project suffered lengthy delays during it's early stages. The works were procured during the restrictions and lockdowns of the COVID-19 public health crisis which made it extremely challenging for prospective contractors to undertake the required site surveys. After every lockdown, officers needed to engage with the contractors to confirm their prices and review the tender documents amid constantly changing circumstances. The contractor Mulalley &amp; Co Ltd were appointed to complete the works in January 2023.</p> <p>Issues Reports were submitted and approved in November 2023 and April 2024. The original planning consent contained a condition explicitly ruling out the inclusion of trickle vents within the window frames. A change in the Approved Document F of the Building Regulations, after the design works were long completed, required the new windows to be fitted with trickle vents in order to avoid a lack of background ventilation that could lead to condensation and mould growth. The consent therefore required amendment to facilitate the installation of trickle vents. Additional funding was required to facilitate this and the extensions of time required to carry out the additional works.</p> <p>All works at Holloway Estate and Whitby Court are now complete with Practical Completion achieved on 24th January 2024.</p> <p>The health &amp; safety file and final accounts are being reviewed and a Gateway 6 report is being prepared.</p> <p>Next milestone to be achieved: Gateway 6.</p>

Financial Summary	Approved Budget TD	Commitment	Spend TD	EWN/ CRP	Projected Outturn Costs
Staff Costs	£87,095.00	£0.00	£69,438.25	£0.00	£69,438.25
Fees					
Design Team	£161,103.00	£3,681.00	£87,071.21	£0.00	£87,071.21
Legal Fees	£981.00		£981.00		£981.00
Works	£4,498,939.00	£0.00	£4,334,443.11	£0.00	£4,498,939.00
SUB TOTAL	£4,748,118.00	£3,681.00	£4,491,933.57	£0.00	£4,656,429.46
Risk Register				£0.00	
GRAND TOTAL	£4,748,118.00	£3,681.00	£4,491,933.57	£0.00	£4,656,429.46

GW Prog Tracker	Date	Approved Budget	CRP
Gateway 5	25/04/22	£3,559,919	N/A
Issue Report 1	26/05/22	£4,681,409	N/A
Issue Report 2	08/05/24	£4,835,281	N/A
Gateway 6			

Key Milestones	Planned Start	Actual Start	Completion	Status
Gateway 3/4			17/11/17	Complete
Court Approval			07/12/17	Complete
Planning Application (1)			28/02/20	Complete
Main Tender			01/11/21	Complete
Gateway 5			25/04/22	Complete
Planning Application (2)			06/07/23	Complete
Building Contract		04/01/23	24/01/24	Complete
Completion			24/01/24	Complete
HEALTH & SAFETY				
Accidents: 0	No accidents reported during the last month.			
Near Misses: 0				
Issues: 0				
Latest H&S Score:				
Site tidy and well laid out	No complaints reported during the last month.			
Hot Work Permits	N/A			
Change Request	Raised	Appr	Outstanding	
Time / Slippage:	1	1	0	
SoW:	16	16	0	
Cost ( £)	9	9	0	

Risks and Issues	
Section 20 Challenges.	Leaseholder(s) may challenge the S20 service charge recovery on grounds of the works being improvements or due to disrepair.
Weather delays.	The weather impact on this project would be high as the majority of works are taking place outdoors.
Increase in pricing during works.	A clear contract and robust contract management will be carried out
Challenge to tender awarding process.	A robust tendering process and cost evaluation has been undertaken.
Delay to works completion leads to project overrunning.	No actions can currently be taken, care has been taken assessing works contractors bids to ensure realistic timescales are set.
Contractor Financial Viability.	Procurement colleagues undertake financial viability assessments as part of the tender process.
Works more extensive than planned for.	It's possible that deterioration of the unmaintained assets may not become apparent until opening up works have been undertaken.
Residents refuse access.	Should residents refuse access to their homes in order to complete works, it would cause cost and time delays to the project.

Project Summary

Project Name	Sydenham Hill Windows Replacement	Reporting Date & Number	05/11/2024 (2)	Project Number	29100106	PM	Rafael Cardenas
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Page 2

Key Milestones	Planned Start	Actual Start	Completion	Status
Gateway 3/4			17/11/17	Complete
Court Approval			07/12/17	Complete
Planning Application			28/04/21	Complete
Main Tender			14/04/21	Complete
Gateway 5			17/02/22	Complete
Building Contract	05/09/22	05/09/22	29/03/23	Complete
Completion			14/03/24	Complete

HEALTH & SAFETY	
Accidents: 0	No accidents reported during the last month.
Near Misses: 0	
Issues: 0	
Latest H&S Score:	
Site tidy and well laid out	No complaints reported during the last month.
Hot Work Permits	N/A

Change Request	Raised	Appr	Outstanding
Time / Slippage:	2	2	0
SoW:	6	6	0
Cost ( £)	6	6	0

Status			
Budget	Programme	Risks	Quality
GREEN	AMBER	AMBER	GREEN
Budget Update	EOT No2	N/A	Snagging

Summary
<p>This project addresses the need for the window replacements and external redecoration at Lammass Green and Otto Close, as well as provide a basis for establishing a platform for programming the future cyclical redecorations for the internal and external common parts across the Estate.</p> <p>The project suffered lengthy delays during it's early stages. The works were procured during the restrictions and lockdowns of the COVID-19 public health crisis which made it extremely challenging for prospective contractors to undertake the required site surveys. After every lockdown, officers needed to engage with the contractors to confirm their prices and review the tender documents amid constantly changing circumstances. The contractor ETEC was finally appoined and works began onsite in September 2022.</p> <p>Issues Reports were submitted and approved (Nov 23 &amp; July 24) due to additional costs incurred following resident objections to the original location of the site compound in the green area, so, at the request of Members, it was relocated to the underground garages at Otto Close (which was planned to be demolished as part of the new Sydenham Hill development). The compound then had to be moved again to accommodate demolition and delivery of the development project sharing the same site. Further additional costs were incurred due to required changes to ventilation to comply with changes in legislaion that occurred after the orginal planning consent was obtained and cost inflation on materials whilst planning amendments were made.</p> <p>All works at Sydenham Hill are now complete with Practical Completion achieved on 14th March 2024.</p> <p>The health &amp; safety file and final accounts are being reviewed and a Gateway 6 report is being prepared.</p> <p>Next milestone to be achieved: Gateway 6.</p>

Financial Summary	Approved Budget TD	Commitment	Spend TD	EWN/ CRP	Projected Outturn Costs
Staff Costs	£61,580.00	£0.00	£61,557.54	£0.00	£61,557.54
Fees					
Design Team	£93,620.00	£0.00	£39,170.82	£0.00	£39,170.82
Legal Fees	£656.00	£0.00	£656.00	£0.00	£656.00
Works	£1,113,466.00	£0.00	£1,113,466.00	£0.00	£1,113,466.00
Issue Report 1	£310,033.00	£0.00	£310,033.00	£0.00	£310,033.00
Issue Report 2	£139,654.57	£0.00	£76,478.76	£0.00	£139,654.57
SUB TOTAL	£1,719,009.57	£0.00	£1,601,362.12	£0.00	£1,664,537.93
Risk Register				£0.00	
GRAND TOTAL	£1,719,009.57	£0.00	£1,601,362.12	£0.00	£1,664,537.93

GW Prog Tracker	Date	Approved Budget	CRP
Gateway 5	17/02/22	£1,217,610	N/A
Issue Report 1	01/11/23	£1,664,370	N/A
Issue Report 2	04/07/24	£1,719,010	N/A
Gateway 6			

Risks and Issues	
Section 20 Challenges.	Leaseholder(s) may challenge the S20 service charge recovery on grounds of the works being improvements or due to disrepair.
Weather delays.	The weather impact on this project would be high as the majority of works are taking place outdoors.
Increase in pricing during works.	A clear contract and robust contract management will be carried out
Challenge to tender awarding process.	A robust tendering process and cost evaluation has been undertaken.
Delay to works completion leads to project overrunning.	No actions can currently be taken, care has been taken assessing works contractors bids to ensure realistic timescales are set.
Contractor Financial Viability.	Procurement colleagues undertake financial viability assessments as part of the tender process.
Works more extensive than planned for.	It's possible that deterioration of the unmaintained assets may not become apparent until opening up works have been undertaken.
Residents refuse access.	Should residents refuse access to their homes in order to complete works, it would cause cost and time delays to the project.

Project Summary

Project Name	Windsor House Windows Replacement	Reporting Date & Number	05/11/2024 (2)	Project Number	29100108	PM	Rafael Cardenas
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Page 22

Key Milestones	Planned Start	Actual Start	Completion	Status
Gateway 3/4			17/11/17	Complete
Court Approval			07/12/17	Complete
Planning Application			06/12/19	Complete
Main Tender			01/06/22	Complete
Gateway 5			27/07/22	Complete
Building Contract	31/10/22	31/10/22	23/05/23	Complete
Completion			06/06/24	Complete

HEALTH & SAFETY	
Accidents: 0	No accidents reported during the last month.
Near Misses: 0	
Issues: 0	
Latest H&S Score:	
Site tidy and well laid out	No complaints reported during the last month.
Hot Work Permits	N/A

Change Request	Raised	Appr	Outstanding
Time / Slippage:	5	5	0
SoW:	15	15	0
Cost ( £)	2	2	0

Status			
Budget	Programme	Risks	Quality
GREEN	AMBER	AMBER	GREEN
Budget Update	EOT No5	N/A	Snagging

Summary
<p>This project addresses the need for the window replacements and external redecoration at Windsor House, as well as provide a basis for establishing a platform for programming the future cyclical redecorations for the internal and external common parts across the Estate.</p> <p>The project suffered lengthy delays during it's early stages. The works were procured during the restrictions and lockdowns of the COVID-19 public health crisis which made it extremely challenging for prospective contractors to undertake the required site surveys. After every lockdown, officers needed to engage with the contractors to confirm their prices and review the tender documents amid constantly changing circumstances. The contractor ETEC was finally appointed and works began onsite in November 2022.</p> <p>Issues Reports were submitted and approved (Nov 23 &amp; July 24) due to the discovery of lead paint, asbestos, the need for additional works to the dormer windows, and additional costs incurred due to required changes to ventilation to comply with changes in legislation that occurred after the original planning consent was obtained.</p> <p>All works at Windsor House are now complete with Practical Completion achieved on 6th June 2024.</p> <p>The health &amp; safety file and final accounts are being reviewed and a Gateway 6 report is being prepared.</p> <p>Next milestone to be achieved: Gateway 6.</p>

Financial Summary	Approved Budget TD	Commitment	Spend TD	EWN/ CRP	Projected Outturn Costs
Staff Costs	£43,437.00	£0.00	£43,410.00	£0.00	£43,410.00
Fees					
Design Team	£59,332.00	£0.00	£11,016.01	£0.00	£11,016.01
Legal Fees	£675.00	£0.00	£675.00	£0.00	£675.00
Works	£1,595,186.83	£0.00	£1,595,186.83	£0.00	£1,595,186.83
Issue Report 1	£562,307.97	£0.00	£308,262.82	£0.00	£562,307.97
Issue Report 2	£653,520.55	£0.00	£653,520.55	£0.00	£653,520.55
SUB TOTAL	£2,914,459.35	£0.00	£2,612,071.21	£0.00	£2,866,116.36
Risk Register				£0.00	
GRAND TOTAL	£2,914,459.35	£0.00	£2,612,071.21	£0.00	£2,866,116.36

GW Prog Tracker	Date	Approved Budget	CRP
Gateway 5	08/07/22	£1,670,431	N/A
Issue Report 1	01/11/23	£2,260,939	N/A
Issue Report 2	04/07//24	£2,914,459	N/A
Gateway 6			

Risks and Issues	
Section 20 Challenges.	Leaseholder(s) may challenge the S20 service charge recovery on grounds of the works being improvements or due to disrepair.
Weather delays.	The weather impact on this project would be high as the majority of works are taking place outdoors.
Increase in pricing during works.	A clear contract and robust contract management will be carried out throughout the project to keep a focus on cost and delivery to budget.
Challenge to tender awarding process.	A robust tendering process and cost evaluation has been undertaken.
Delay to works completion leads to project overrunning.	No actions can currently be taken, care has been taken assessing works contractors bids to ensure realistic timescales are set.
Contractor Financial Viability.	Procurement colleagues undertake financial viability assessments as part of the tender process.
Works more extensive than planned for.	It's possible that deterioration of the unmaintained assets may not become apparent until opening up works have been undertaken.
Residents refuse access.	Should residents refuse access to their homes in order to complete works, it would cause cost and time delays to the project.

Project Summary

Project Name	Southwark Estate Windows Replacement	Reporting Date & Number	05/11/2024 (2)	Project Number	29100104	PM	Rafael Cardenas
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Page 1

Key Milestones	Planned Start	Actual Start	Completion	Status
Gateway 3/4			17/11/17	Complete
Court Approval			07/12/17	Complete
Planning Application 1			29/11/19	Complete
Main Tender			10/05/22	Complete
Gateway 5			08/06/22	Complete
Building Contract	31/10/22	31/10/22		Ongoing
Planning Application 2			04/10/23	Complete
Completion	31/10/24			Ongoing

HEALTH & SAFETY	
Accidents: 0	No accidents reported during the last month.
Near Misses: 0	TBC
Issues: 0	TBC
Latest H&S Score:	TBC
Site tidy and well laid out	No complaints reported during the last month.
Hot Work Permits	N/A

Change Request	Raised	Appr	Outstanding
Time / Slippage:	3	2	1
SoW:	16	5	11
Cost ( £)	1	1	0

Status			
Budget	Programme	Risks	Quality
GREEN	AMBER	AMBER	GREEN
Budget Update	EOT No3	N/A	Snagging

Summary
<p>This project will address the need for the window replacements and external redecoration at Pakeman House, Stopher House and Sumner Buildings, as well as provide a basis for establishing a platform for programming the future cyclical redecorations for the internal and external common parts across the Estate.</p> <p>The project suffered lengthy delays during it's early stages. The works were procured during the restrictions and lockdowns of the COVID-19 public health crisis which made it extremely challenging for prospective contractors to undertake the required site surveys. After every lockdown, officers needed to engage with the contractors to confirm their prices and review the tender documents amid constantly changing circumstances. The contractor ETEC was finally appointed and works began onsite in November 2022. Consequently, the tender stage was delayed to the point that, on appointment of the successful contractor, there was little time (one week) to implement the previously obtained planning permission before that approval expired. Prior to commencing works the Contractor was required to carry out testing of existing paint to all previously painted surfaces to identify if lead content was present. The survey revealed that lead paint was prevalent in windows and across communal areas. Work necessarily could not commence and consequently planning permission expired. Renewed planning permission was obtained in October 2023. An Issues Report was submitted and approved in July 2024 to cover additional costs incurred by the new to renew planing permission, changes to ventilation to comply with changes in legislation and for inclusion of balcony doors at Sumner Buildings which had been omitted from the original scope of works.</p> <p><b>Programme Status:</b> Window replacements at Sumner Buildings and Pakeman House are now all but complete with snagging ongoing and scaffold to be removed. Completion at Stopher House has been slightly delayed following the late delivery of units; this will be at the contractor's expense. Redecoration works will be finalised once scaffolds are removed.</p> <p>Practical completion expected 12/12/2024</p>

Financial Summary	Approved Budget TD	Commitment	Spend TD	EWN/ CRP	Projected Outturn Costs
Staff Costs	£104,650.00	£0.00	£87,296.86	£0.00	£104,650.00
Fees					
Design Team	£61,288.00	£0.00	£40,318.82	£0.00	£61,288.00
Legal Fees	£896.00	£0.00	£896.00	£0.00	£896.00
Works	£6,164,816.00	£1,343,017.01	£4,821,797.84	£0.00	£6,164,816.00
SUB TOTAL	£6,331,650.00	£1,343,017.01	£4,950,309.52	£0.00	£6,331,650.00
Risk Register				£0.00	
GRAND TOTAL	£6,331,650.00	£1,343,017.01	£4,950,309.52	£0.00	£6,331,650.00

GW Prog Tracker	Date	Approved Budget	CRP
Gateway 5	08/06/22	£4,294,564	N/A
Issue Report	04/07/24	£6,331,649	N/A
Gateway 6			

Risks and Issues	
Section 20 Challenges.	Leaseholder(s) may challenge the S20 service charge recovery on grounds of the works being improvements or due to disrepair.
Weather delays.	The weather impact on this project would be high as the majority of works are taking place outdoors.
Increase in pricing during works.	A clear contract and robust contract management will be carried out
Challenge to tender awarding process.	A robust tendering process and cost evaluation has been undertaken.
Delay to works completion leads to project overrunning.	No actions can currently be taken, care has been taken assessing works contractors bids to ensure realistic timescales are set.
Contractor Financial Viability.	Procurement colleagues undertake financial viability assessments as part of the tender process.
Works more extensive than planned for.	It's possible that deterioration of the unmaintained assets may not become apparent until opening up works have been undertaken.
Residents refuse access.	Should residents refuse access to their homes in order to complete works, it would cause cost and time delays to the project.

Project Summary

Project Name	William Blake Windows & Redecorations	Reporting Date & Number	05/11/2024 (2)	Project Number	29100107	APM/PM	Jason Crawford / Rafael Cardenas
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Page 24

Key Milestones	Planned Start	Actual Start	Completion	Status
Gateway 3/4	18/09/2023	18/09/2023	18/09/2023	Complete
Planning Application				
Main Tender				
Gateway 5				
Building Contract				
Completion				

Change Request	Raised	Appr	Outstanding
	0	0	0
Cost (£)	£ -	£ -	£ -

HEALTH & SAFETY
Accidents: 0
Near Misses: 0
Issues: 0

Status			
Budget	Programme	Risks	Quality
Green	Green	Green	Green

Summary
<p>This project will address the need for the Window Replacements and external redecoration at William Blake Estate as well as a basis for establishing a platform for programming the future cyclical redecorations for the internal and external common parts across the Estate.</p> <p>This project has suffered significant delays during its development period, firstly as with the other HRA Window Replacement Projects through the enforced delays of the Covid-19 public health crisis, and then secondly, after completing procurment for the works, the City's Capital Programme Review. During this second enforced hiatus, both the tender returns submitted and the planning permission obtained expired. Approaches were made to the Local Planning Authority seeking an extension of time to allow us to undertake the tender pricing submissions again, but this was rejected. As such, we will have to undertake full planning approvals again and re-tender for the works. Due to changes in legislation the previously submitted designs will need to be respecified. Procurement for a new design team is expected to go live November 2024.</p>

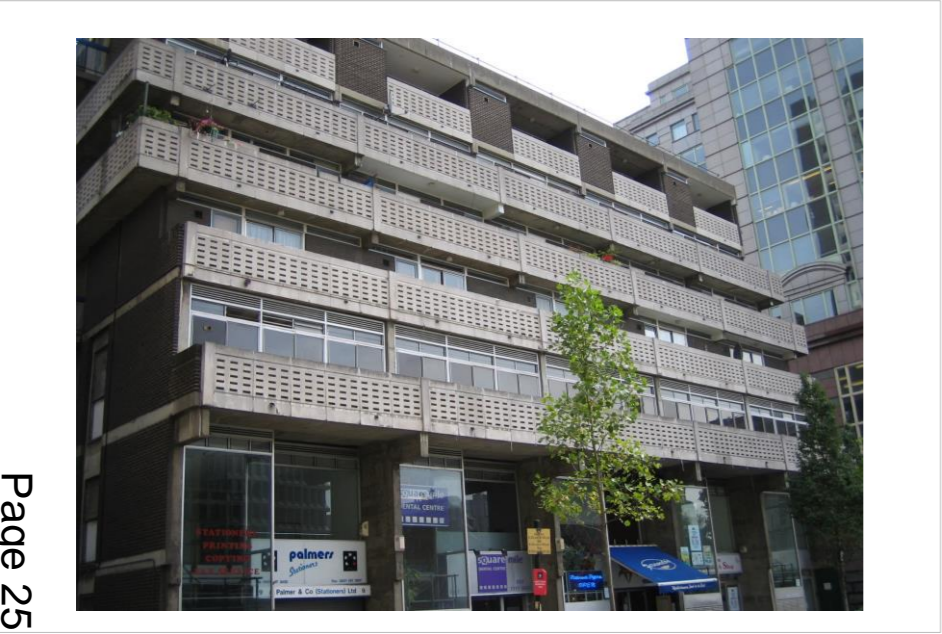
Financial Summary	Approved Budget TD	Commitment	Spend TD	EWN/ CRP	Projected Outturn Costs
Staff Costs	£ 48,324.00	£ -	£ 13,318.00	£ -	£ 70,000.00
Works	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Fees					
Comms Consultant	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Design Review Panel	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Multidis Design Team	£ 276,105.00	£ -	£ 43,823.00	£ -	£ 319,928.00
Planning Consultant	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Planning Fees	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Quantity Surveyor	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Other (please specify)	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Surveys					
Structural	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
M&E	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
SUB TOTAL	£ 324,429.00	£ -	£ 57,141.00	£ -	£ 389,928.00
Risk Register	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
GRAND TOTAL	£324,429.00	£ -	£57,141.00	£ -	£389,928.00
Actuals and Committed					

GW Prog Tracker	Date	Approved Budget	CRP
Gateway 3	15 January 2023	£ 276,105.00	£ -
Gateway 4 c			
Gateway 5			
Gateway 6			

Risks and Issues
<b>Risks</b>
1 Section 20 Challenges.
2 Weather delays.
3 Continued deterioration of windows
4 Delay to works completion leads to project overrunning
5 Significant Change in sustainability sector
6 Recommendations not approved
7 Increase in pricing during works
8 Challenge to tender awarding process.
9 Contractor Financial Viability
10 Works more extensive than planned for
11 Residents refuse access.
12 Fiire risk assessmsnets (FRA's)
13 Capital Programme Review
<b>Issues</b>
13 Last capital review caused delays which led to planning approvals expiring. Gateway 3/4 process began again. Project cost estimates increased £743,278 .

Project Summary

Project Name	Middlesex Street Estate Heating Replacement	Reporting Date & Number	05/11/24 (2)	Project Number	29100130	PM	Neil Clutterbuck
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Key Milestones	Planned Start	Actual Start	Completion	Status
Gateway 1&2			23/02/15	Complete
Gateway 3/4			19/07/18	Complete
Main Tender	01/08/18	01/12/18	31/05/19	Complete
Gateway 5	01/06/19	13/09/19	20/09/19	Complete
Building Contract		05/11/19		Ongoing

HEALTH & SAFETY
Accidents: 0
Near Misses: 0
Issues: 0

Change Request	Raised	Appr	Outstanding
	0	0	0
Cost ( £)	0	0	0

Status			
Budget	Programme	Risks	Quality
AMBER	RED	AMBER	GREEN

Summary
<p>The scope of this project is to replace the communal heating and hot water system, including boilers, distribution pipe work, heating controls and emitters with a more modern, efficient system. TSG were appointed to complete the works in Oct/Nov 2019.</p> <p>Progress with the contract was significantly delayed due to the Covid 19 public health crisis, and was subject to further length delays due to planning objections relating to the location and appearance of external pipework. An Issues Report was submitted and approved in November 2023 to cover additional costs following material and labour cost inflation and the extensive delays experienced during he pandemic.</p> <p>Installations of replacement heating systems remain ongoing across Petticoat Square. There are still five refusals in Petticoat Tower, and two in Petticoat Square now awaiting the outcome of the tribunal that is being dealt with by the City's legal department (to be heard December 2024). We are also having more standard access issues with some residents around Petticoat Square and are working with our colleagues in the estate office to try and overcome these.</p> <p>Once the legal issues have been resolved, if as seems likely, the contractor will have vacated the site then there will be additional costs for them to return to complete any properties outstanding and fully decomission the old system as their site setup and welfare facilities would need to be reestablished.</p> <p>A further Issues Report is in preparation to seek additional funding following the discovery of unanticipated asbestos which is required to be removed to complete the remaining installations. A contract uplift circa £245k is anticiapted to be requested.</p>

Financial Summary	Approved Budget TD	Commitment	Spend TD	EWN/ CRP	Projected Outturn Costs
Staff Costs	£325,564.00	0.00	198,732.86	£0.00	£325,564.00
Fees	£73,800.00	£5,500.00	£58,775.00	£0.00	£73,800.00
Works	£3,950,025.00	130,501.46	3,819,523.54	£0.00	£3,950,025.00
SUB TOTAL	£4,349,389.00	£136,001.46	£4,077,031.40	£0.00	£4,349,389.00
Risk Register	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
GRAND TOTAL	£4,349,389.00	£136,001.46	£4,077,031.40	£0.00	£4,349,389.00

GW Prog Tracker	Date	Approved Budget	CRP
Gateway 2	23/02/2015	£35,000	£0
Gateway 3/4	19/07/2018	£58,000	£0
Gateway 5	13/09/2019	£3,125,639	£0
Gateway 5 Issues	01/11/2023	£4,349,339	£0
Gateway 6			

Risks and Issues	
Section 20 Challenges.	Leaseholder(s) may challenge the S20 service charge recovery on grounds of the works being improvements or due to disrepair.
Increase in pricing during works.	A clear contract and robust contract management will be carried out throughout the project to keep a focus on cost and delivery to budget.
Delay to works completion leads to project overrunning.	No actions can currently be taken, care has been taken assessing works contractors bids to ensure realistic timescales are set.
Contractor Financial Viability.	Procurement colleagues undertake financial viability assessments as part of the tender process.
Works more extensive than planned for.	It's possible that deterioration of the unmaintained assets may not become apparent until opening up works have been undertaken.
Residents refuse access.	Should residents refuse access to their homes in order to complete works, it would cause cost and time delays to the project.

Project Summary

Project Name	Fire Door Replacement - Lot 2 Avondale	Reporting Date & Number	05/11/2024 (2)	Project Number	29100167	PM	NEIL CLUTTERBUCK
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Key Milestones	Planned Start	Actual Start	Completion	Status
Gateway 1-4			16/12/19	Complete
Main tender	23/09/22		23/02/23	Complete
Gateway 5	04/11/22		09/11/22	Complete
Building works	15/03/23			Ongoing

HEALTH & SAFETY
Accidents: 0
Near Misses: 0
Issues: 0
Site tidy and well laid out: No complaints reported

Change Request	Raised	Appr	Outstanding
	0	0	0
Cost ( £)	0	0	0

Status			
Budget	Programme	Risks	Quality
GREEN	AMBER	GREEN	GREEN

Summary
<p>This project forms part a programme of works to replace all identified fire doors (residential front doors, communal corridor doors and service cupboard doors), including any associated panel surrounds and fanlight windows, within City of London Housing managed residential blocks. At Gateway 4, approval was granted to proceed to procurement on an estate-by-estate basis (divided into Lots) with each procured contract to be authorised by a separate Gateway 5 report on the regular approval track. This report concerns Lot 2 of the programme encompassing Avondale Square Estate.</p> <p>Gerda were awarded this project through the Hyde Framework (Pretium). There was an initial delay to the project due to the COL budget reviews that were taking place at the time.</p> <p>All low level general needs blocks are now complete.</p> <p>The residential front doors in the three Point Blocks are currently being replaced but the communal doors are on hold until ingoing issues are resolved with the Sprinkler system project. Harman Close communal doors are also on hold as there are cables for the door entry system, the fire alarm system and the warden call lines that have been installed by penetrating through the existing doorsets, This prevents these doors from be removed for replacement until such essential services are renewed and relocated. A new project to do this is being developed.</p>

Financial Summary	Approved Budget TD	Commitment	Spend TD	Projected Outturn Costs
Staff Costs	£100,000	£0	£44,964	£60,000
Fees	£100,000	£5,600	£1,970	£20,000
Works	£2,843,751	£1,142,561	£1,701,190	£2,843,751
SUB TOTAL	£3,043,751	£1,148,161	£1,748,123	£2,923,751
Risk Register	£0	£0	£0	
GRAND TOTAL	£3,043,751	£1,148,161	£1,748,123	£2,923,751

GW Prog Tracker	Date	Approved Budget	CRP
Gateway 1-4	13/12/19	£150,000	£0
Gateway 5	04/11/22	£3,043,751	£0
Gateway 6			£0

Risks and Issues	
Increase in pricing during works.	A clear contract and robust contract management will be
Existing doorsets cannot be removed due to penetrations of essential services	Services to be renewed in forthcoming projects, fire door replacements reprogrammed to follow.
Delay to other works completion (Sprinkler install) leads to project overrunning.	No actions can currently be taken, care has been taken assessing works contractors bids to ensure realistic
Contractor Financial Viability.	Procurement colleagues undertake financial viability assessments as part of the tender process.
Works more extensive than planned for.	It's possible that deterioration of the unmaintained assets may not become apparent until opening up works have been
Residents refuse access.	Should residents refuse access to their homes in order to complete works, it would cause cost and time delays to the

Project Summary

Project Name	Fire Door Replacement - Lot 3 Various Estates	Reporting Date & Number	05/11/2024 (2)	Project Number	2910069/70/71/72	PM	NEIL CLUTTERBUCK
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Page 27

Key Milestones	Planned Start	Actual Start	Completion	Status
Gateway 1-4			16/12/19	Complete
Main Tender			01/02/23	Complete
Gateway 5			20/02/23	Complete
Building Works				Ongoing

HEALTH & SAFETY
Accidents: 0
Near Misses: 0
Issues: 0
Site tidy and well laid out: No complaints reported

Change Request	Raised	Appr	Outstanding
	0	0	0
Cost ( £)	0	0	0

Status			
Budget	Programme	Risks	Quality
GREEN	AMBER	GREEN	GREEN

Summary
<p>This project forms part a programme of works to replace all identified fire doors (residential front doors, communal corridor doors and service cupboard doors), including any associated panel surrounds and fanlight windows, within City of London Housing managed residential blocks. At Gateway 4, approval was granted to proceed to procurement on an estate-by-estate basis (divided into Lots) with each procured contract to be authorised by a separate Gateway 5 report on the regular approval track. This report concerns Lot 3 of the programme encompassing William Blake Estate, Sumner Buildings, Dron House &amp; Petticoat Tower.</p> <p>Gerda were awarded this project through the Hyde Framework.</p> <p>William Blake Estate - all works are complete.</p> <p>Sumner Buildings - there is one outstanding residential door to be replaced, but we are liaising with the legal department to obtain access.</p> <p>Dron House- all works are complete</p> <p>Petticoat Tower- we have been unable to replace the communal doors in Petticoat Tower to date due to the sprinkler system project and possible damage to the new doors, while work is ongoing. We are expecting the sprinkler contractor to vacate site shortly which will allow Gerda access to the communal areas. Although space to accomodate a further contractor on Middlesex Street Estate will be of a premium due to the Eastern Base police project, following a productive on-site meeting with Neilcott, the contractors undertaking these works, an amicable agreement has been made for the location of the site set-up required for the tower communal doors to take place.</p>

Financial Summary	Approved Budget TD	Commitment	Spend TD	Projected Outturn Costs
Staff Costs				
William Blake House	£7,500	£0	£7,173	£7,500
Sumner Buildings	£7,500	£0	£7,247	£7,500
Dron House	£7,500	£0	£6,179	£7,500
Petticoat Tower	£7,500	£0	£1,133	£7,500
Fees	£30,000	£3,257	£4,885	£10,000
Works				
William Blake House	£439,550	£95,138	£371,253	£439,550
Sumner Buildings	£356,467	£55,955	£301,296	£356,467
Dron House	£291,005	£63,435	£230,098	£291,005
Petticoat Tower	£224,724	£223,708	£1,016	£224,724
SUB TOTAL	£1,311,746	£438,236	£903,663	£1,311,746
Risk Register	£0	£0	£0	£0
GRAND TOTAL	£1,371,746	£441,493	£930,281	£1,351,746
Actuals and Committed				

GW Prog Tracker	Date	Approved Budget	CRP
Gateway 1 to 4	16/12/19	£150,000	£0
Gateway 5	44,977	£1,371,747	£0
Gateway 6			

Risks and Issues	
Increase in pricing during works.	A clear contract and robust contract management will be carried out
Delay to other works completion (Sprinkler install) leads to project overrunning.	No actions can currently be taken, care has been taken assessing works contractors bids to ensure realistic timescales are set.
Contractor Financial Viability.	Procurement colleagues undertake financial viability assessments as part of the tender process.
Works more extensive than planned for.	It's possible that deterioration of the unmaintained assets may not become apparent until opening up works have been undertaken.
Residents refuse access.	Should residents refuse access to their homes in order to complete works, it would cause cost and time delays to the project.

Project Summary

Project Name	George Elliston and Eric Wilkins Refurbishmment	Reporting Date & Number	05/11/2024 (2)	Project Number	29800156	PM	Lochlan MacDonald
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Page 28

Key Milestones	Planned Start	Actual Start	Completion	Status
Gateway 1 & 2			11/12/20	Complete
Appt Consultant	01/01/21	01/01/22	01/11/23	Complete
Options Appraisal	01/04/21	01/04/24	30/08/24	Complete
Gateway 3/4 Option Appraisal	01/04/21	01/01/25	31/01/25	Pending
Section 20 Pre tender		01/02/25	31/03/25	Pending
Main Tender	15/04/25		15/06/25	Pending
Planning Application				Pending
Section 20 Post Tender				Pending
Gateway 5				Pending
Building Contract				Pending
Completion				Pending

HEALTH & SAFETY
Accidents: 0
Near Misses: 0
Issues: 0

Change Request	Raised	Appr	Outstanding
	0	0	0
Cost ( £)	0	0	0

Status			
Budget	Programme	Risks	Quality
GREEN	RED	AMBER	GREEN

Summary
<p>This project follows on from the aborted scheme to carry out repairs at the same time as new flats were constructed on the roofs of George Elliston and Eric Wilkins Houses on the Avondale Square Estate. Since cancellation of the development scheme, progress with the refurbishment only project was delayed as part of the City's Capital Programme Review whereby this project was selected for short-term deferment until HRA budgets could accomodate. The appointment of a consultant was delayed whilst options for the brief were considered and possible funding avenues were considered outside of he HRA.</p> <p>The project scope covers: replace roof and windows, refurbish lift, brickwork repairs, communal redecoration, and drainage works as necessary.</p> <p>Studio Partington have been appointed to carry out a full condition survey, design work, options appraisal and to assist with the tender process and the project management. Survey and design work is ongoing.</p>

Financial Summary	Approved Budget TD	Commitment	Spend TD	EWN/ CRP	Projected Outturn Costs
Staff Costs	£50,000.00		£3,887.00	£0.00	£50,000.00
Fees	£150,000.00				
DesignArchitect	£110,000.00	£72,770.00	£20,100.00	£0.00	£92,870.00
Guardian Consultancy	£20,000.00		£17,130.00	£0.00	£17,130.00
Planning Consultant					
Planning Fees					
Quantity Surveyor					
Works	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£3,540,000.00
SUB TOTAL	£200,000.00	£0.00	£3,887.00	£0.00	£3,700,000.00
Risk Register	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	TBC
GRAND TOTAL	£200,000.00	£0.00	£3,887.00	£0.00	£3,700,000.00

GW Prog Tracker	Date	Approved Budget	CRP
Gateway 1 & 2	11/12/2020	£200,000	£0
Gateway 3 & 4			
Gateway 5			
Gateway 6			

Risks and Issues	
Section 20 Challenges.	Leaseholder(s) may challenge the S20 service charge recovery on grounds of the works being improvements or due to disrepair.
Insufficient funding capacity in HRA	Other funding streams being explored; works have already been subject to deferrment.
Works more extensive than planned for.	It's possible that deterioration of the unmaintained assets may not become apparent until opening up works have been undertaken.
Residents refuse access.	Should residents refuse access to their homes in order to complete works, it would cause cost and time delays to the project.

<b>Committee(s):</b> Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 28/11/2024
<b>Subject:</b> Housing Complaints Update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	3
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	No
<b>If so, how much?</b>	N/A
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	N/A
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	N/A
<b>Report of:</b> Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community & Children's Services	For Decision, Information and Comment
<b>Report author:</b> Peta Caine, Assistant Director – Housing	

## Summary

The purpose of this report is to update members of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee on some key issues currently being dealt with by the Social Housing Team. Namely:

### For Decision

- Approval of the following policies-  
Compensation Policy – Appendix 1  
Fire Safety Policy – Appendix 2  
Repairs and Maintenance Policy – Appendix 3  
Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy – Appendix 4  
The Empty Property (Voids) Policy – Appendix 5  
Observations Received – Appendix 6

### For Information and Discussion

- An update on our risk register – Appendix 7
- The Housing Damp and Mould Self-Assessment – Appendix 8

### For Information

- Staffing Update
- Grenfell Enquiry Phase 2 Report Toolkit

This report will outline the work being done by the team to keep abreast of these and other issues.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to approve the following policies attached at appendices 1-5:

Compensation Policy

Fire Safety Policy

Repairs and Maintenance Policy

Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy

Empty Properties (Voids) Policy

and note the observations included in appendix 6.

## **Main Report**

### **1. Policy Approval**

**Members are asked to:**

- **Approve the Compensation Policy for use by the Housing Division**

The Compensation policy establishes a fair, transparent, and standardised approach to compensating residents for disruption to or issues with our services. It supports the Complaints policy and aims to address situations where residents experience disruption or inconvenience due to repair delays, maintenance issues, or other service failures.

The policy provides a structured approach to enhancing accountability, recognising residents' rights and strengthening resident satisfaction. The guidelines help manage resident expectations, reducing potential disputes and promotes efficient handling of compensation claims. Approving this policy demonstrates our commitment to providing quality services and enhancing resident wellbeing, contributing to a more positive housing environment and ensuring compliance with regulatory standards.

- **Approve the Fire Safety Policy for use by the Housing Division**

The Fire Safety policy is crucial to ensure that our homes comply with safety standards and legislation, reducing risks for our residents. Poor fire safety can lead to devastating consequences, not only for residents but also for our reputation. Tragedies such as the Grenfell Tower fire have highlighted the importance of rigorous fire safety in social housing. Implementing this policy mitigates the risk of future incidents, protecting both residents and the City of London's reputation while preventing costly damages.

Implementing this policy demonstrates our commitment to proactive fire prevention, compliance with legal requirements and resident wellbeing.

- **Approve the Repairs & Maintenance Policy for use by the Housing Division**

The Repairs & Maintenance policy supports the responsive upkeep of our homes. Regular maintenance preserves the condition of our housing assets, prevents costly future repairs, and ensures that homes remain safe and comfortable for residents.

The responsive maintenance contract is currently being retendered; to ensure a smooth transition the policy outlines the Housing Division's expectations to maintain quality housing and a good service for residents and staff. The policy also aims to ensure compliance with legal standards and legislation, helping avoid legal disputes or enforcement action by regulatory bodies.

We continually aim to improve resident satisfaction. This policy addresses our approach to achieve an effective and efficient repairs service to promote a better

quality of life for residents, reduce complaints and contribute to a positive reputation for the Housing Division.

- **Approve the Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy for use by the Housing Division**

In recent years, there has been increased awareness and media attention to the harmful effects of damp and mould in social housing. High-profile cases and resident complaints have brought the issue to the forefront for all social housing providers.

The Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy demonstrates our commitment to proactive maintenance and resident care. The policy is essential to addressing health risks related to dampness, mould growth, and poor ventilation. It promotes a healthy living environment, enabling early detection and remediation to minimise health risks.

By adopting this policy, we will demonstrate our commitment to resident well-being, preventive maintenance and regulatory compliance, while also protecting the long-term value of our assets.

- **Approve the Empty Properties (Void) Policy for use by the Housing Division**

The Empty Properties Policy outlines our aims to reduce the time homes are left vacant, ensuring quick turnaround and occupancy. The policy highlights our commitment to help reduce lost rental income, meet housing demand, and provide quicker access to homes for people on the waiting lists. The policy outlines clear standards, roles and responsibilities to ensure that void properties are inspected, repaired, and re-let in a timely manner.

The implementation of the Empty Properties Policy reinforces our commitment to maximising housing availability, meeting community needs, and supporting financial stability through efficient void management.

## **2. Risk Profile Update**

### **Members are asked to review the risk register**

At Appendix 7 please find attached our latest risk register sorted by risk score and excluding completed actions. The register details the actions being taken to mitigate our risks. The Committee is asked to note the inclusion of the Statutory Compliance risk and the steps being taken and planned to mitigate this risk. Members are asked to review the report.

## **3. The Housing Damp and Mould Self-Assessment**

### **Members are asked to review the self-assessment**

At Appendix 8 please find attached a self-assessment led by the Head of Repairs and Maintenance against the Housing Ombudsman's Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould. Completion of a self-assessment is not a statutory requirement, but many landlords completed them to identify weaknesses in their approach to dealing with damp and mould and as good practice. The Housing Ombudsman's

Service asked us to submit our self-assessment following several complaints about damp and mould. The self-assessment was submitted earlier this month.

#### **4. Staffing Update**

##### **Members are asked to note the staff update**

- Greg Wade has joined us from Poplar HARCA as the new Head of Major Works. His key priorities will be delivering the major works programme efficiently whilst maximising resident engagement in the works being carried out to and in their homes.

#### **5. Grenfell Inquiry Phase 2 Report Toolkit**

##### **Members are asked to note the development of the Grenfell Inquiry Phase 2 Report Toolkit**

The toolkit developed with the London Councils is designed to highlight lessons from the Phase Two report and to help collaboratively drive change across housing services in London. There is a focus on listening to residents, keeping them safe and the responsibility that housing providers have for stewardship of assets on behalf of residents. The senior management team will review the toolkit and produce an action plan that we will share with Members at a future meeting.

#### **Key Data**

Key data contained in Appendices 1 - 8

#### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

Strategic implications – none

Financial implications – none

Resource implications – none

Legal implications - none

Risk implications – none

Equalities implications – none

Climate implications – none

Security implications – none

#### **Conclusion**

Members are asked to approve the policies presented in appendices 1-5, review the risk register and the damp and mould risk assessment.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Draft Compensation Policy

Appendix 2 – Draft Fire Safety Policy

Appendix 3 – Draft Repairs and Maintenance Policy

Appendix 4 – Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy

Appendix 5 – The Empty Property (Voids) Policy

Appendix 6 – Observations received on the policies

Appendix 7 – Risk Register Update

Appendix 8 – Housing Damp and Mould Self - Assessment

### **Peta Caine**

Assistant Director - Housing

E: [peta.caine@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:peta.caine@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

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**City of London Corporation**  
**Department of Community & Children's Services**  
**Housing Division**

**COMPENSATION POLICY**

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Approved by:	<i>Housing Management &amp; Almshouses Sub-Committee</i>
Original Approval Date:	<i>September 2016</i>
Review Date:	<i>April 2020</i>
Re-Approval Date	<i>30/09/2020 v2.</i>
Review Date:	<i>30/09/2023</i>
Re-Approval Date	<i>xx/xx/2024 (v.3 – this version)</i>
Next Review Date	

## **1. Purpose**

City of London's Housing Division is committed to providing an excellent service however we recognize that sometimes things may go wrong. This policy outlines our approach in which customers may be entitled to a goodwill gesture or financial compensation should the Housing Division (or a contractor acting on our behalf) fail to deliver a satisfactory service.

Any form of compensation is an exceptional course of action and will only be considered if other outcomes are not deemed appropriate. In most cases it is reasonable to resolve complaints by:

- Apologising for the failure
- Providing the service asked for
- Changing the service provision or procedures for future use where a complaint has highlighted that a change is required
- Reconsidering a decision which may have been unreasonable or unfair

In exceptional circumstances, where the situation cannot be rectified by apology or practical action, compensation may be appropriate. The types of service failures that may trigger compensation, whether caused by staff, or contractors or agents acting on our behalf, are as follows:

- Failing to deliver /provide a specified benefit, service or other entitlement
- Loss of amenities
- Loss of, or damage to, personal property
- Where a customer has incurred an expense as a result of our failure to provide a service

A table summarising how much we award as a payment of goodwill is set out at Appendix 1.

## **2. Aims of this Policy**

The aims of this policy are to:

- Make it clear the circumstances where compensation will be paid.
- Ensure fairness and consistency when calculating compensation.
- Provide guidance on how and when compensation can be claimed.

## **3. Scope**

The policy applies to residents living on City of London Housing Service estates which are managed as part of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), namely:

- tenants
- leaseholders
- freeholders
- residents of City of London and Gresham Almshouses properties

In exceptional circumstances, this policy may apply to non-residents, subject to the Assistant Directors of Housing and Property Services' discretion.

## 4. Policy Statement

### 4.1 Compensation as part of complaint resolution

Compensation may be considered at any stage in our complaints process. Our complaints policy encourages the quickest possible resolution of the issue. As part of our approach to resolving complaints, we may offer compensation if:

- After looking into the complaint, it's discovered that a service has consistently or seriously failed.
- A customer who has voiced a complaint about a service provided by the City of London's Housing Division and has not received adequate communication from a staff member, nor has the communication occurred in a timely manner.
- Damage to or loss of personal property has been caused by the City Corporation or its nominated contractors
- Other approaches to resolve the complaint, such as an apology and/or explanation are deemed insufficient, or our previous responses have been inadequate.
- We have taken an unreasonable amount of time to address the concerns raised.

Each case will be considered on its own merits. Such discretionary payments may be in conjunction with or separate to any other compensation payable for loss, however not for the same issue.

The event for the consideration of compensation should have occurred within the last twelve months. Compensation in respect of an event that happened more than twelve months previously will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. An exception may be made if there have been continuous delays in bringing the matter to a conclusion) by those working for the City.

We would require supporting information/evidence to consider each claim. For example, claims for damage to belongings would need to be supported with the appropriate receipts and pictures/documents evidencing the damage.

### 4.2 Circumstances in which compensation will be issued

There are three types of compensation payment that will be considered under this policy:

**Mandatory payments** – this applies to disturbance or loss of home, where payments will be made to compensate where you lose the right to rent/reside at your home, or to compensate you for reasonable expenses incurred in being re-housed, either on a temporary or permanent basis

**Quantifiable loss payments** – where you can demonstrate actual loss as a result of

our actions or omissions, or those of a third party working on our behalf

**Discretionary payments** – goodwill payments may be made when there has been a failure of service which has caused delay, distress or inconvenience.

### **Mandatory Payments**

These are made to compensate for any reasonable out of pocket expenses you incur where you have been asked to move out of your property through no fault of your own. These payments are variable.

The following expenses will generally be covered and where possible we will arrange and carry out works directly or through our approved contractors. If you wish to arrange your own works, we will only reimburse you for reasonable costs of works and on production of a works schedule, valid receipts and/or paid invoices.

Depending on the circumstances of your case, we may provide the following services;

- Assistance with removals - we may arrange removals for you and we may arrange a packing service, if this is required depending on the circumstances.
- Disconnection and reconnection of domestic appliances such as cooker, washing machine, telephone, broadband, television aerial/satellite dish.
- Redirection of post for up to 3 months
- Assist with the cost of altering existing or purchasing new carpets and curtains (and refitting of rails/blinds). We will not pay disturbance costs for carpets or curtains if they are in good condition or if the carpets and curtains in the old property can be adapted and fitted in the new property.
- Refitting security alarms or other security equipment.
- Repair adaptations in a property to a good standard.

### **Quantifiable Loss Payments**

If a complaint investigation finds that you have incurred costs as a direct result of our actions or omissions, then we will consider compensation to offset your reasonable costs. This may include (but is not limited to);

- Paying reasonable costs for increased heating costs as a result of repair works.
- Paying reasonable costs for alternative accommodation or takeaway food.
- Paying reasonable costs for cleaning.
- Paying reasonable costs for carrying out your own repairs where it is proven that we have failed to carry out our obligations.
- Paying reasonable costs for replacing lost or damaged possessions.

We will not cover costs if you have:

- not notified us of the issue.
- given us reasonable time to rectify the issue.
- refused us access to the property.
- refused our offer to rectify the issue.

## **Discretionary Compensation**

### Missed Appointments

If an employee, or a contractor working on our behalf, fails to attend a re-booked appointment unreasonably, a payment may be made depending on the circumstances. This cannot be claimed if you are given reasonable notice in advance that the appointment is cancelled.

To qualify for a missed appointment payment, you must have been available to allow access during the appointment time and have agreed the appointment in advance.

### Loss of heating and hot water

Between 31<sup>st</sup> October and 30<sup>th</sup> April (colder weather), if you have made a complaint and you continue to be without heating for a period of longer than 3 full days, we may provide compensation. This includes the cost of using any temporary heating that we provide.

Between 31<sup>st</sup> October and 30<sup>th</sup> April, if you have made a complaint and you continue to be without hot water for a period of longer than 5 full days, we may also provide compensation at a lower rate.

The provision of temporary heating will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will be influenced by the makeup of the household (for example, households with elderly, disabled, or children under the age of 12).

### Payment for Services

If we have failed to deliver a significant service paid for through fixed service charges, we will consider the charge for the service, the disruption caused and how long the service was unavailable. The charge may be adjusted the following year. In exceptional circumstances material errors in fixed charges may be addressed during the year.

For variable service charges, service failures will be credited and carried forward in the accounts or reimbursed to you after reconciliation of the accounts.

### The Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994

The Right to Repair Regulations cover specific repairs, known as 'Qualifying Repairs' which cost less than £250 and should be done within a set time limit for Secure Tenants. If these are not carried out within that time, and without justified reasons for its delay, you may be entitled to compensation.

### All other discretionary compensation payments

Each case will be considered for compensation on an individual basis and consider all

known circumstances and supporting evidence. We will work on evidence and facts and will not make any compensation awards based on the belief of what might have happened. All reports of loss or inconvenience will be investigated once evidence is provided. Factors that will be considered when the level of compensation is considered include:

- Whether you have contributed to the failure in service. This could be when there have been problems gaining access due to your availability, or delays in reporting the problem.
- The level of stress or distress caused as a result of action or inaction by the Housing Division or its contractors. This will include the severity of the distress, the length of time involved, and the number of people affected.
- The amount of inconvenience (time and trouble) you have experienced and how much effort was required by you to resolve the problem.

Compensation payments for delay and distress will be made based on the level of the Housing Division's responsibility for the loss or inconvenience and the impact on you. These payments may be in addition to another loss payment.

#### **4.3 Circumstances in which compensation will not be considered**

We will not consider a claim of compensation where:

- The loss or damage was caused by you, another household member or visitor to your property. This includes failure to report a repair promptly or to keep an appointment.
- The fault was unforeseeable and could not have been prevented by the Housing Division.
- The fault was caused by a third party and the Housing Division had not made the issue worse such as water leaking from a neighbouring property (unless we had already been alerted to this and had not resolved it promptly).
- Personal possessions are lost, stolen or damaged through no fault of the Housing Division or its contractors.
- Service failure or damage that is the result of extreme or unforeseen conditions, such as the weather
- Loss of supply of gas, electricity or water that is outside of the Housing Division's control, such as a failure by the utility provider.
- The loss or damage is covered under a policy of insurance (e.g. the City Corporation's building insurance, your contents or personal possessions insurance policy)
- Personal injury has occurred. You or the claimant should seek legal advice to ensure such claims are properly presented and we are required to refer them to the City Corporation's legal and insurance advisors.

- Legal proceedings have been issued. This is to avoid both parties prejudicing their legal rights and remedies

#### **4.4 Buildings and Contents Insurance**

The City Corporation is responsible for insuring the buildings and permanent fixtures and fittings in the residential estates. This insurance covers the cost of repair replacement or reinstatement of the building following an insured loss. All claims relating to damage to the building must be reported and considered by the City Corporation's insurers in the first instance, before we will consider a claim under this Compensation Policy.

Contents insurance covers the cost of replacing or repairing your own household possessions if they are damaged, destroyed or stolen. You should make sure you have sufficient home contents insurance to cover damage to your belongings.

Please see the Insurance Cover and Claims Policy for more information.

#### **4.5 Public Liability Insurance**

The City Corporation has public liability insurance that covers compensation payable to third parties for injury, loss or property damage arising out of the City Corporation's negligent acts or omissions.

Depending on the nature of the claim, the Housing Division may refer the matter claim to our insurers or legal advisors.

#### **4.6 Paying compensation**

Offers of compensation will be made in writing and expressed to be '*in full and final settlement*' of the matter.

Compensation will be applied to your account if you owe us rent, service charges, council tax or other debts. If your account is up to date, we will pay this directly to you. If we are reimbursing you for loss or damage to goods or other costs incurred unnecessarily by you, we will pay this directly to you regardless of whether your account is up to date. In order for these payments to be made, proof of purchase must be provided in the form of receipts or paid invoices.

Forms of compensation may include:

- Adjustment to your rent account, council tax account or service charges, if you're in arrears
- Flowers or gift cards
- Vouchers
- Monetary compensation in the form of direct bank transfer

All payments made are subject to our financial processes and approvals.

### **13. Policy Variations**

In exceptional circumstances, we may consider making a variation to this policy on discretion. Our reasoning can be provided to the affected parties on request.

### **14. Monitoring and Performance**

We will monitor our use of this policy and the way in which it is implemented, ensuring that any relevant information is reported at appropriate intervals.

### **15. Training**

We will provide all staff responsible for implementing this policy with comprehensive training as required.

### **16. Equality and Diversity**

This Policy has been subject to a full Equalities Analysis and will be implemented in accordance with our responsibilities and duties under relevant legislation, including the Equalities Act 2010.

### **17. Accessibility**

We will ensure that residents' needs are considered when implementing this Policy to ensure that they are treated fairly. We will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that customers with distinct communication needs are not unreasonably and disproportionately affected. This could involve providing communications in alternative languages or formats, or providing interpretation or transcription as appropriate.

### **18. Data Protection and Information Exchange**

We will comply with our obligations under relevant data protection legislation and regulations. We will process and store personal information securely. There are some circumstances in which we are required by law to disclose information given to us.

### **19. Policy Review**

We will review this policy at least every three years, or following relevant changes to legislation, regulation or policy.

## **20. Related documents**

- Complaints Policy
- Insurance Cover and Claims Policy
- Disposal of Personal Property Policy
- Tenants' Agreement and Handbook

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## 21. Document Management

Department of Community & Children's Services  Housing Service		 CITY OF LONDON
Policy Title: Compensation Policy		
Document Owner: Head of Housing Management		
Date Approved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>September 2016 (original)</li> <li>30/09/2020 (version 2)</li> <li></li> </ul>		
Version: 3	Last amendment: September 2020	
Effective date:	Next review date: 30/09/2023	
Changes in this version: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>		

## Appendix 1: Schedule of Compensation Amounts

All service failures and requests for compensation are different and will be considered on their own merits in accordance with our policies, including the Compensation Policy.

The information provided below is to help officers to assess how much compensation may be due in different types of circumstance, and to provide a benchmark to ensure compensation for similar types of service failure is considered fairly.

This list is not exclusive and there may be other factors we consider when making the decision.

The City is under no obligation to pay the compensation amounts outlined in this policy.

### ***Schedule of Compensation***

<b>Description</b>	<b>Compensation</b>
Two or more missed appointments (with no reasonable attempt to inform)	£25
Loss of Communal Heating (more than 72 hours) during colder weather	Relevant daily charge uplifted by 50%. (In colder months) offer electric fan heater and pay £10 per week.
Loss of Communal Hot Water (more than 72 hours)	Relevant daily charge uplifted by 50%
Loss of individual heating or hot water during colder weather	Offer of electric fan heater and payment £10 per week.
Loss of Living Space / Room	Offer of 20% of net daily rent per room.
Damage or loss of belongings caused by the Housing Division	Repair, replace or offer compensation for current value of item
Damage or loss of belongings caused by a contractor	Oversee process with contractor to repair, replace or offer compensation for current value of item as per the terms of the contract with City of

	London's Housing Division
Minor service failure	£50
General inconvenience, delays and distress	Case by case*

\*We will consider payments in the regions detailed below.

**Offers of £50 to £100** – Considered in instances of service failure resulting in some impact on you or members of your household. The impact may be of short duration and may not have significantly affected the overall outcome.

**Offers of £100 to £250** – Considered if we have found a considerable service failure, but there may be no permanent impact on you or members of your household.

**Offers of £250 and above** – Offers of this amount will be used in recognition when there has been a severe long-term impact on you or members of your household, this includes physical or emotional impacts, or both.

### Further Information

There are examples of case studies, the findings made by the Ombudsman and the levels of compensation paid on the Housing Ombudsman website:

<http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/useful-tools/case-studies>



**City of London Corporation  
Department of Community & Children's Services  
Housing Division**

## **FIRE SAFETY POLICY**

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This policy sets out the Housing Division's approach to fire safety to ensure that the service offered is compliant, efficient, responsive, and consistent service representing value for money.
- 1.2 The policy outlines our commitment to ensure the safety and well-being of all residents by setting clear standards for fire prevention, preparedness, and response.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1 The policy applies only to housing stock owned or managed by the City Corporation's Housing Service as part of the Housing Revenue Account. This includes the City of London's social housing estates and the City of London and Gresham Almshouses.
- 2.2 This policy does not apply to single access properties i.e. buildings or structures that have only one means of access or exit and do not require a fire risk assessment under the current legislation.

## **3. Aims and objectives**

- 3.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure that properties we manage meet the relevant fire legislation and that residents' homes are safe.
- 3.2 We will provide an efficient system of assessing risks and taking action to address any risks that are identified.
- 3.3 We will ensure that we meet our fire safety responsibilities for our residents and keep them informed of the fire protection measures in their buildings and our management actions relating to fire safety.
- 3.4 We will ensure that we meet our fire responsibilities for Leaseholders by keeping them informed of necessary communal fire safety management actions to their blocks.
- 3.5 We will ensure that there are effective systems in place to monitor and maintain fire safety management within our buildings.
- 3.6 We will have a process to identify our most vulnerable residents and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support on fire safety risks, and action in the event of an emergency.

## **4. Service standards**

- 4.1 We will update our current Fire Risk Assessments (FRA's) on a three-year basis or following major reconfiguration works or based upon an FRA assessors' risk assessment for all properties that share common areas.

4.2 We will undertake management inspections relating to fire and fire detection systems on a routine basis.

4.3 We will complete all fire actions that result from our routine visits within an agreed timescale based upon risk and will be contained in an action plan.

4.4 We will comply with our legal and regulatory obligations in respect of 'high risk' buildings, as defined by the Building Safety Regulator.

4.5 We will provide clear and accessible advice and information to residents on fire safety issues, including the proper use of communal areas.

## **5. Legislation and regulation**

5.1 This policy will help us to comply with the following legal requirements:

- Building Safety Act 2022
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Decent Homes Standard
- The Housing Act 2004
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act, 2002

## **6. Regulator for Social Housing – Regulatory Standards**

### **6.1 Safety and Quality Standard**

We will ensure that we meet all our regulatory responsibilities in respect of building safety and keeping residents informed about safety issues affecting them.

## **7. The policy approach**

### Our obligations

7.1 We will appoint competent Fire Risk Assessors to ensure we can deliver a programme of Fire Risk Assessments ("FRAs") for our property portfolio that contain common areas as described in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

7.2 When undertaking FRAs we will set target completion times for fire actions, based on the scale of the assessed risk. The actions will form part of a property action plan.

7.3 We will monitor and manage all responsive repairs relating to fire to ensure that the actions identified in the FRAs are completed in accordance with their urgency.

7.4 Documented management procedures will be developed to ensure a consistent application of fire safety standards across our housing stock and to support staff

in carrying out their duties. These will include areas such as fire risk assessment, fire inspection, management of communal areas, resident engagement, fire alarm testing and any other areas concerning fire safety.

7.5 We will provide information on the fire safety measures we have taken for the properties we manage and clearly set out our responsibilities and those of residents. We will include fire safety information in our communications with residents and on our website and ensure that we review the advice regularly.

7.6 We will undertake inspections of common areas to ensure the areas are free of obstructions and hazards, and items that may pose a fire risk.

7.7 We will resolve repair service failures as promptly as possible, keep residents informed of progress and where appropriate follow the Housing Division's complaints procedure.

7.8 We will publish our performance relating to fire safety on our website on an annual basis.

### Residents' obligations

7.9 We require all our residents (both tenants and leaseholders) to:

- look after their homes and maintain the fire integrity of the common areas by reporting any potential fire hazards.
- refrain from putting combustible items in common areas and on balconies.
- avoid using balconies and common areas for storage.
- keep all fire escape routes free from obstruction and not to interfere with any fire door or escape route.
- cooperate with us in meeting our fire safety obligations by following reasonable requests.

### Access

7.10 In accordance with the terms of their tenancies or leases, residents are obliged to allow access for essential FRA inspections.

7.11 We will be as flexible as we reasonably can be when it comes to setting appointments for access. We expect residents to cooperate with us and our contractors when they are seeking to arrange access and to take steps to rearrange appointments if they are not convenient.

### Vulnerable tenants

7.12 We recognise that some vulnerable residents may require extra support to comply with the terms of their tenancy or lease. We will provide appropriate support and adjustments, while balancing this with our obligation to maintain building safety.

### Reporting

7.13 We will collect performance and management data and provide internal reports for the purpose of managing our FRA and management action plans monthly. We will report progress to Committee on a regular basis and provide a fire action performance report to residents on an annual basis.

## **8. Responsibilities, Monitoring and Performance**

8.1 Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation rests with the Assistant Director of Housing and Property Services.

8.2 Fire safety forms part of our compliance reporting. Fire safety performance indicators will be reported regularly, together with any significant issues that arise.

8.3 We will monitor the implementation of this policy and performance via a program of assessments and inspections. This will provide data to reflect the effectiveness of this policy, and to identify opportunities to further improve in our management of fire risk.



## **9. Training**

9.1 The Housing Division will provide essential fire safety information (e.g. evacuation procedures and what to do if a fire alarm sounds) to all new staff on induction with refresher training being rolled out periodically.

9.2 Staff with fire safety responsibilities will be identified to receive additional training on the requirements of their role, with refresher training being completed every three years or sooner if required. This training would normally cover areas such as hazard identification, reporting procedures, operation/testing procedures of fire alarms, emergency lights and other fire equipment as appropriate to the individual staff members role.

## **10. Associated policies or strategies**

- Housing Strategy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Estate Management Policy
- Gas Safety Policy

## **11. Equalities**

11.1 This Policy has been subject to a full Equalities Analysis and will be implemented in accordance with our responsibilities and duties under relevant legislation, including the Equalities Act 2010.

## **12. Data Protection**


12.1 We will comply with our obligations under relevant data protection legislation and regulations. We will process and store personal information securely.

### **13. Exceptions**

13.1 We may make an exception to the approach outlined in this policy if the circumstances require it and it is reasonable to do so. Our reasoning can be provided to the affected parties on request.

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## 14. Document Management

<b>Department of Community &amp; Children's Services</b> <b>Housing Service</b>		 <b>CITY OF LONDON</b>
<b>Policy Title: Fire Safety Policy</b>		
<b>Document Owner: Head of Repairs and Maintenance, DCCS</b>		
<b>Date Approved:</b> •		
<b>Version: 1</b>	<b>Last amendment: N/A</b>	
<b>Effective date:</b>	<b>Next review date:</b>	
<b>Changes:</b> <b>N/A – new policy</b>		

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**City of London Corporation**  
**Department of Community & Children's Services**  
**Housing Division**

## **REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE POLICY**

## 1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1 This policy sets out the Housing Division's approach to property repairs to ensure that the service offered is an efficient, responsive and consistent service representing value for money.
- 1.2 The policy applies only to housing stock for which the Housing Service has repairing obligations as a landlord. It applies only to properties managed as part of the Housing Revenue Account, plus the City of London and Gresham Almshouses, which are managed by us on behalf of the respective trusts.

## 2. Aims and objectives

- 2.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure our estates and housing tenancies meet a compliant repair standard and that residents' homes are safe and well maintained.
- 2.2 We will provide an efficient and responsive repairs service for our residents that aims to ensure repairs are carried out reliably and to a professional standard.
- 2.3 We will ensure that we meet our responsibilities to leaseholders by keeping them informed of necessary works that require statutory consultation.
- 2.4 We will ensure that there are effective systems in place to monitor and maintain contractor performance and financial monitoring of the repairs service.

## 3. Service standards

- 3.1 We will provide a responsive repairs service according to the categories identified below:

Category P1 – within 24 Hours	Emergency
Category P2– within 3 working days	Urgent
Category P3 – within 7 working days	Non-urgent, could become dangerous if left
Category P4 – within 20 working days	Non-urgent, would not become dangerous if left

See Appendix 1 for additional details of repairs included in each category. You can also refer to our **Repairs & Maintenance Service Standard** on our website.

- 3.2 Outside normal office hours (8:00am to 5:00pm) we will provide an out of hours service so that residents can report emergency repairs.
- 3.3 Where there are Category P1, emergency repairs, that occur out of normal office hours, we will direct these calls to the appropriate repairs contractor who will attend to the repairs in the specified times. Non-emergency repairs will be processed during normal office hours.


## **4. Legislation and regulation**

4.1 This policy will help us to comply with the following legal and regulatory requirements:

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Decent Homes Standard
- All statutory regulation concerning Health and Safety and compliance including:
  - Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
  - Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
  - Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
  - Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020
  - Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act, 2002
- Regulator for Social Housing – Regulatory Standards - Safety and Quality Standard (Quality of Accommodation and Repairs and Maintenance)

4.2 Where repairs are required to support our compliance responsibilities such as gas servicing, managing asbestos and fire prevention, this policy will initially defer to the requirements of those policies in the first place. Where responsive repairs are not specifically impacted upon by the requirement of those policies then the responsive repair will be undertaken in line with this policy.

4.3 We will ensure that we meet all our legal responsibilities under the relevant health and safety and compliance legislation including, but not limited to, the following issues:

- 
- Control of Asbestos
  - Gas Safety
  - Legionella Safety
  - Electrical Safety
  - Fire Safety
  - Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER)

## **5. The policy approach**

### Our obligations

5.1 We will ensure that there are suitable arrangements in place to deliver an effective repairs service to meet our residents' needs and look after the long-term maintenance and improvement of our properties.

5.2 We will undertake all responsive repairs in order to meet our legal and statutory obligations to safeguard the health, safety and security of our residents, staff, other occupants and visitors and to safeguard the buildings and environment we own and manage. A list of repairs that we will undertake is in Appendix Two of this document.

- 5.3 We will provide information on the repairs for which we are responsible and those that our residents are responsible for in the standard Tenants' Agreement and Handbook and Leaseholders' Handbook and ensure that we review the advice to residents on a regular basis. Handbooks are provided to the incoming resident and copies can be provided upon request.
- 5.4 We will process responsive repairs accurately and promptly through all stages of the repair from the initial report through to delivery and completion by referring to the relevant procedure.
- 5.5 We will set target completion times for responsive repairs which will vary by urgency category.
- 5.6 We will offer appointments to residents reporting repairs under P2, P3 and P4 categories and provide them with a unique work order number, details of the repair and the next steps.
- 5.7 We will aim to resolve as many repairs in the first visit as possible.
- 5.8 We will operate a fair and consistent recharge process to cover any repairs that are the resident's responsibility. This is based on clauses in our tenancies and leases that permit such charges to be made in certain circumstances. Please refer to our Recharge Policy for further details.
- 5.9 We will resolve repair service failures as promptly as possible, keep residents informed of progress, and follow the Complaints Policy if the matter is escalated.

#### Tenants' obligations

5.10 We ask our tenants (and licensees) to take reasonable care of their homes and maintain the items for which they are responsible, as detailed in their tenancy or licence. Further information can be found in the Tenants' Handbook.

5.11 In summary, tenants are obliged to:

- Repair and maintain any fixings or alterations made by them.
- Keep the drains clear from any household waste.
- Report any repairs or damage promptly. Where the resident (or a household member or visitor) causes damage to any property for which we are responsible, we will recharge the cost of repairing the property back to the resident.
- Keep appointments for repairs and, where they cannot keep an appointment, to let us know in advance so the appointment can be rearranged. We may recharge the cost of missed appointments.
- Request permission before making any alterations and improvements in advance of undertaking them.

#### Leaseholders' obligations

5.12 The City Corporation's standard lease requires leaseholders to maintain their property in such a way as not to endanger or damage the structure of the building, or other residents, or alter or damage any landlords' fixtures or any part of the common areas.

5.13 In summary, leaseholders are obliged to:

- Be responsible for everything inside their home, including service pipes and stop cocks and cables that serve only their flat.
- Keep the interior in good decorative order and repair.
- Pay service charges on account based on our estimates to cover your proportion of the repairs and maintenance to the common areas and structure of the building.

5.14 Leaseholders **do not** pay for any work that is carried out to the inside of other flats, or to sheds or garages.

#### Alterations and Improvements

5.15 We will not repair or maintain any fitting or improvement residents have added or made to their home. The Housing Division will assess and intervene and make arrangement for repair works to be carried out if there is a Health and Safety risk. The cost to correct this will be recharged to the tenant or leaseholder.

#### Appointments

5.16 In order to deliver a high-quality repairs service, we offer an appointment system for tenants when reporting a repair.

	Morning	Afternoon
Responsive Repairs	8am – 1pm	1pm- 5pm
Reactive Gas Repairs	8am – 1pm	1pm- 5pm

#### Access

5.17 In accordance with the terms of their tenancy, tenants are obliged to allow access for repairs. This may include repairs to neighbouring property where access is only possible through a particular occupied property.

5.18 We will be as flexible as we reasonably can be when it comes to setting appointments for access. We expect residents to cooperate with us and our contractor(s) when they are seeking to arrange access and to take steps to rearrange appointments if they are not convenient.

5.19 Where access cannot be gained for a standard appointment, the repair will be rescheduled/cancelled.

Where the repair is an emergency or a health and safety matter then we will continue to make contact prior to the repair being cancelled. If the repair poses a serious safety risk for other residents or the building, we will take appropriate steps to gain access.

5.20 When not gaining access for a pre-agreed appointment the Housing Division experiences considerable cost and inconvenience, we reserve the right to recharge the resident for the cost of the failed visit.

#### Right to Repair

5.21 Section 96 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended) gives tenants the “Right to Repair”. Tenants have the right to have certain urgent minor repairs carried out where the repair may affect health, safety or security. If the Housing Division do not undertake the repair within the target time, nor complete the repair after a second

request, tenants may be entitled to compensation. It should be noted that the “Right to Repair” does not give tenants the right to carry out a repair and then seek compensation.

### Out of Hours Emergency Repairs

5.22 An out of hours emergency repairs service is provided outside of normal working hours. Where an emergency repair requires attendance, our contractor will attend your home as a matter of urgency in line with our published timescales.

5.23 The “Out of Hour Service” operates from:

- Monday to Friday - between 5.00PM and 8.00AM
- Weekends - between 5.00PM Friday and 8.00AM Monday
- The out of hours service will also operate on public holidays

### Vulnerable tenants

5.24 We recognise that some vulnerable residents may require extra support to comply with the terms of their tenancy. We will provide appropriate support and adjustments, while balancing this with our obligation to deliver the repairs service.

5.25 We will ensure that data relating to vulnerabilities is stored securely. We will record this information to help us prioritise responses to emergency or urgent repair requests.

## **6. Planned Maintenance**

6.1 The Planned Maintenance programme is administered separately from the responsive repair service. Planned works are designed to improve properties and bring them up to or above the Government’s “Decent Homes Standard”.

6.2 Planned maintenance programmes include items such as replacement bathrooms and kitchens. The Housing Division will ensure that tenants are consulted and kept informed when any planned works in their homes or neighbourhoods are scheduled to take place.

## **7. Quality Assurance**

7.1 Some jobs will require a pre-inspection before the repair appointment can be arranged. The pre-inspection will be used to establish the extent of the works. A pre-inspection will be carried out by a Property Services Officer or a nominated contractor representative. Following the visit to the property the tenant will be advised if a repair is required and the priority of the repair.

7.2 To monitor the quality of the repairs service we post inspect a proportion of completed works. Alongside this we contact some tenants by phone to gain feedback on the repairs service. This information is used to continually review and improve the repairs service.

## **8. Reporting**

8.1 We will collect performance and management data and provide internal reports for the purpose of managing our contracts on a monthly basis and provide a repairs and maintenance performance report to residents on an annual basis.

## **9. Responsibilities, Monitoring and Performance**

9.1 Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation rests with the Head of Repairs and Maintenance. The Head of Repairs and Maintenance will ensure that staff receive the appropriate training and support to achieve the aims of this policy. Where needed we may establish appropriate operational procedures.

9.2 Monitoring of the implementation of this policy and our performance in responsive repairs will be the responsibility of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee.

## **10. Responding to complaints and learning lessons**

10.1 Monitoring of the implementation of this policy and our performance in responsive repairs will be the responsibility of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee.

10.2 Residents may make a formal complaint about repairs matters at any stage, which will be resolved through our housing complaints procedure.

10.3 We aim to resolve complaints as quickly as possible without residents needing to resort to disrepair claims and legal action. Where legal action is taken, we will follow the Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Condition Claims, which aims to resolve claims at an early stage.

10.4 We will learn lessons from cases, update our technical approach and how we communicate with residents, in order to improve future responses.

## **11. Associated policies or strategies**


### **Strategies**

- Housing Strategy
- Asset Management Strategy

### **Policies**

- Complaints Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Gas Safety Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Lift Safety Policy
- Insurance Cover and Claims Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Recharge Policy

## 12. Document management

Department of Community & Children's Services		 CITY OF LONDON
Housing Service		
Policy Title: Repairs and Maintenance		
Document Owner: Head of Repairs and Maintenance		
Date Approved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li></li></ul>		
Version: 1	Last amendment: n/a	
Effective date: xx/xx/2024	Next review date: xx/xx/2027	
Changes: New Policy		

## 13. Appendix 1

<p><b>Priority One</b></p> <p><b>(Emergency - completed within 24 hours)</b></p>	<p>For some extreme situations requiring immediate action, we will aim to get to you within four hours.</p> <p>Immediate situations only include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A serious pipe leak causing severe damage</li> <li>• A blockage where raw sewage is overflowing into a home</li> <li>• Dangerous structures which could collapse</li> <li>• An uncontrolled water burst (if cutting off the supply does not control the leak)</li> <li>• A front door that needs to be made safe after a break-in</li> </ul> <p><b>For other emergency situations, we will aim to get to you within 24 hours:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electrical faults where there is a danger of fire or injury</li> <li>• Blocked toilet pans</li> <li>• No electricity supply</li> <li>• No mains water supply</li> <li>• A toilet which cannot be used (if there is only one toilet in the property)</li> <li>• No hot water</li> <li>• A heating system that has broken down in winter, or if there is a vulnerable person or baby in the house</li> <li>• A severe leak through the roof</li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority Two</b></p> <p><b>(Urgent - completed within three working days)</b></p>	<p>This is for urgent repairs that do not fall into priority one and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repairing a toilet that is not flushing (if there is only one toilet in the property)</li> <li>• Unblocking a kitchen sink, bath or hand basin</li> <li>• Repairing the overflow from the toilet cistern</li> <li>• Checking the electrics after a water leak</li> <li>• Repairing garage doors and locks</li> <li>• Repairing a faulty cooker panel, if cooking by electric</li> <li>• Repairing a heating system (outside winter months)</li> <li>• Repairing a faulty door entry system if it affects multiple homes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority Three</b></p> <p><b>(Completed within 7 working days)</b></p>	<p>This priority only includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replacing washers</li> <li>• Repairing electrical sockets in a hall or bedroom</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replacing glass in shared areas (if there is no immediate danger)</li> <li>• Replacing toilet seat (for elderly or disabled tenants)</li> <li>• Repairing banister rails (if there is no immediate danger)</li> <li>• Repairing a faulty door entry system or monitor</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Four</b>  <b>(Completed within 20 working days)</b>	<p>This is for non-urgent repairs that are not likely to become dangerous or cause serious damage.</p> <p>This priority only includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replacing baths, wash basin, kitchen sinks, toilet pans and cisterns</li> <li>• Plastering</li> <li>• Replacing wall and floor tiles (if there is no immediate danger)</li> <li>• Repairs to inside doors, locks and handles</li> <li>• Repairing fences and gates (if there is no immediate danger)</li> <li>• Repairing tiled surrounds on fireplaces</li> <li>• Preventing draughts around doors</li> <li>• Clearing blocked gutters</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2

We are responsible for carrying out certain repairs in your home and you are responsible for others.

### **Our responsibilities**

We have a legal responsibility to carry out certain repairs. We must keep the following in good condition:

- The structure and exterior of the building
- The services and equipment that supply water, electricity and gas
- Sewerage pipes, gutters and drains
- Communal areas including staircases, landings and footpaths
- Fire alarm systems, lighting and security equipment

Repairs we will carry out include:

#### ***The structure and outside of the building***

- the roof, foundations, outside walls and outside doors
- the drains, gutters and outside pipes
- windowsills, frames and glass
- fences, pathways, steps and other entrances to the building
- chimneys and chimney stacks
- playgrounds and play equipment

#### ***Inside your home (landlord's fixtures and fittings)***

These include:

- the plumbing system, including pipework, tanks, stopcocks, taps, baths, sinks, basins, cisterns and toilet fittings
- inside doors and their frames, skirting boards and kitchen cupboards
- heating and hot water systems including boilers, radiators, thermostats and controls
- electrical wiring, plug sockets, light fittings and switches, and door entry phones.

#### ***Shared parts of blocks of flats or houses***

These include:

- corridors, stairways and entrances
- shared facilities such as television aerials, entry phones, rubbish chutes, lifts and stairway lighting
- fire alarms, smoke detectors, fire doors and other fire and security equipment

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**City of London Corporation**  
**Department of Community & Children's Services**  
**Housing Division**

**DAMP, MOULD & CONDENSATION POLICY**

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Approved by:	<i>Housing Management &amp; Almshouses Sub-Committee</i>
Original Approval Date:	
Review Date:	
Re-Approval Date	-
Next Review Date	-

## **1. Purpose**

This policy outlines our approach to the management of damp, mould and condensation to ensure all our properties are well maintained, as well as free of damp and mould that could risk the health and safety of residents living in the homes we manage.

Due to the diversity, age and construction of our housing stock, some properties may need more regular maintenance than others, and varying levels of management for damp and mould conditions.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to:

- Properties owned or managed as part of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), including communal facilities such as car parks, commercial premises, and community rooms
- Properties managed on behalf of the City of London Almshouses Trust and the Gresham Almshouses Trust

## **3. Regulator for Social Housing – Regulatory Standards**

- Safety and Quality Standard

We will ensure that we meet all our responsibilities under the relevant legislation and regulatory requirements for the health and safety of residents in their homes.

## **4. Aims of this Policy**

Our objectives are to:

- Meet our landlord repairing responsibilities as detailed within our Tenancies, Leases and Repairs Policy
- Maintain our homes so that they meet the Decent Home Standard, providing dry, safe homes for our residents which are free from any hazards including those identified in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
- Comply with legislative, regulatory and contractual obligations.
- Treat residents reporting damp and mould with empathy and respect; we will not prejudge the cause of the damp.
- Conduct timely and thorough investigations and implement appropriate corrective repair measures and improvements in place to control condensation, mould, and damp.
- Support residents on resolving damp and mould where they result from the use of the home, and provide our residents with appropriate, clear, sensitive, practical and accessible advice and solutions.
- Provide residents with guidance and support, including information on how to prevent condensation, damp and mould

- Ensure staff are trained to enable them to spot potential causes of damp, mould and condensation so they can advise residents, diagnose problems and provide solutions.

We will ensure that:

- Residents who report damp and mould in their properties are treated with respect and empathy.
- Residents have access to and/or are provided with comprehensive advice, information, and guidance on managing and controlling mould, damp and condensation.
- The process of reporting an issue of damp and mould is straightforward and easily accessible for residents.
- We remain in regular and effective communication with a resident, following a report of damp and mould being made, providing progress updates from beginning to end especially on the occasion where an investigation into a case may be complex.
- In the situation of hoarding resulting in damp and mould, we will work with the resident and relevant partner agencies.
- At the time of a void (empty property) inspection, each room will be checked for damp, mould, and condensation. If identified, it will be managed and rectified as part of the void works.
- As part of a Mutual Exchange, a property inspection is completed at which time, each room will be checked for damp, mould, and condensation. If identified, it will be managed and rectified before the Mutual Exchange completes.

## 5. Definitions and Causes

The general term 'damp' covers four possible problems with very distinct causes.

**Penetrating Damp** - Water penetrating the exterior of the building causing damp, rot and damage to internal surfaces and structure. This appears because of a defect such as damaged brickwork, missing roof tiles, loose flashing or leaking rainwater goods. These defects allow water to pass from the outside to the floors, walls or ceilings. Penetrating damp is far more noticeable following a period of rainfall and will normally appear as a well-defined 'damp-patch' which looks and feels damp to the touch.

**Leaks** - Water leaks from defective supply and waste pipework (especially in bathrooms and kitchens) can affect both external and internal walls and ceilings. The affected area looks and feels damp to the touch and stays damp regardless of the prevailing weather conditions. It is the result of a problem or fault with the home, which requires repair.

**Rising Damp** – This is the movement of moisture from the ground rising through the damp course of the building through capillary action.

**Condensation** - Condensation occurs when humid air comes into contact with a cold surface, it then condenses producing water droplets. The conditions that may increase the risk of condensation are:

- Lack of adequate or improper use of ventilation
- Lack of adequate or improper use of heating
- Lack of adequate insulation.
- High humidity
- Overcrowding

**Mould** - This is a natural organic compound that develops in damp conditions and will only grow on damp surfaces. This is often noticeable and present in situations where condensation damp is present. There is strong research evidence to suggest that health conditions can be exacerbated by damp and mould in housing.

Any home can be affected by condensation because the climate in the UK fluctuates. Normal household activities also constantly release moisture into the air. Good practice in the home minimises and alleviates condensation, and in many cases will prevent it causing dampness and persistent mould. However, on occasion the root cause can be a problem that requires a repair or an improvement to the home. In others, a different solution may be needed (for example, in cases of severe overcrowding).

## **6. Policy Approach**

### **6.1 Property inspection**

We will undertake a property inspection when we receive a report of suspected damp, mould or condensation, within seven working days of the report.

At the property inspection we will investigate and diagnose the cause of the damp or mould and determine which solutions are appropriate.

When a property becomes vacant, and prior to re-letting, we will seek to identify and remedy any issues which may cause damp. This may include ensuring doors and windows are serviceable and can effectively ventilate the property, ensuring extractor fans are working well, as well as applying mould treatments where necessary.

### **6.2 Resolving Damp, Mould and Condensation**

Sometimes finding out the cause of damp and mould isn't always straightforward and could be due to a combination of factors. Any repairs that are required to be carried out will be dealt with in accordance with our Repairs Policy.

Where damp is because of condensation:

- we will work with the resident to take appropriate measures to prevent the damp and mould occurring.
- we may include advice about how to control moisture levels or increase ventilation or heating, so that damp levels are kept low.
- we may also offer improvements such as additional mechanical ventilation according to the situation.

Where we provide such advice, it is important that residents adhere to it and do not take actions that could accentuate any problems e.g. by turning off ventilation systems or sealing over air vents.

When there is a particularly severe or recurring damp or mould issue, a representative from our repairs team will undertake a comprehensive assessment which might result in a range of actions to support the resident depending on the circumstance of the issue the resident faces.

We will keep residents informed of any property inspections, diagnosis of issues and the programming of works, where these are required. Where work is not required, residents will be informed explaining the reason and the steps they should take.

### **6.3 Complex Cases**

For more complex cases, and especially where more intrusive building work is required and/or there is a serious health risk to the resident or a member of their household, we may require them to move out of their home. We will consider the individual circumstances of the resident. We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out at the property to ensure it is ready for the resident to return to.

### **6.4 Access**

Our tenancy and lease agreements require residents to allow us (including appointed contractors) access to their home to carry out works at the agreed appointment time. If we are unable to gain access and the integrity of the property, its fabric and/or the safety of the customer or those in the vicinity of the property is compromised, we will take appropriate action. For example, this may include, but is not limited to, obtaining an injunction for access.

### **6.5 Compensation**

In line with our Compensation Policy, we will pay compensation where there has been a service failure. Any claims for damages to belongings, or for personal injury, will be dealt with by our insurance department.

### **6.6 Resident advice on damp and mould**

We will also provide general advice and guidance on how to minimise damp and condensation, particularly when there are no apparent causes relating to design or construction of the property.

Advice provided will include directing residents to sources of information and support on energy savings, if they have difficulty in heating their home.

The advice will be available at all Estate Offices, at sign up of new tenancies, publicised on the website, within the damp and mould booklet and periodically in resident publications.

### **6.7 Resident support**

We will give residents advice on how to prevent damp and what they should do to remove mould. However, we recognise that not every resident will be able to resolve damp and mould themselves. We will provide appropriate support in such cases in relation to the specific circumstances and the individual customer's needs.

We know that some residents struggle to afford to heat their homes adequately so we will work with them to ensure they are guided to all the help and support available from various funding initiatives including those offered by City Advice.

Where internal conditions within a home, such as overcrowding and excessive hoarding of personal belongings, are contributing to the damp and mould conditions, affecting the health and wellbeing of the occupants or preventing inspections or repairs works being carried out, we will provide support and assistance to review the resident's options for resolving the problem

#### **6.8 Damp and Mould follow up**

We will follow up each completed damp and mould repair within six months of any damp and mould repair work being carried out, to assess if any work undertaken and/or advice provided, has been effective.

#### **6.9 Evaluation of Repairs & Maintenance Data**

We will record all instances of damp and mould and keep full records of action taken in response. The Head of Repairs and Maintenance will continue to have oversight of the process.

We will review performance measures and feedback from complaints to monitor that we are responding to damp and mould instances appropriately in accordance with the policy.

#### **6.10 Proactive Approach**

The Major Works Team will periodically evaluate repairs and stock data to identify property archetypes that are more prone to damp and mould, to work alongside the Asset Management Strategy. This proactive approach will either inform future planned programmes or identify properties to be targeted that require regular stock condition surveys.

Reviews of stock data will include properties that have a lower energy performance certificate (EPC) rating, blocks of flats where damp has been reported to multiple properties or where certain archetypes of properties are more prone to historical or repeated damp and mould issues.

We will also utilise all opportunities when inside tenants' homes to identify damp and mould issues, such as repairs and stock condition inspections, tenancy inspections and contractor visits, ensuring damp and mould issues are reported as appropriate and investigated.

We will plan to proactively inspect properties and engage with tenants where it has been identified that the properties are more prone to damp and mould issues.

As part of the asset management strategy, we will include developing planned programmes as appropriate that address any building construction causes of damp and mould.

#### **6.11 Resident Responsibilities**

Residents are encouraged to report any concerns about damp and mould to our Repairs service as soon as they arise. This includes reporting any evidence of rising or penetrating damp or faulty equipment that will affect the management of humidity and moisture in the home (faulty extract fan, unable to open windows, heating system failure etc.)

Tenants must allow access for inspections and for the carrying out all remedial works and servicing of appliances (gas boilers and ventilation systems).

Residents can help reduce the conditions that lead to condensation dampness by:

- Keeping the presence of moisture to a minimum e.g., covering pans when cooking, drying laundry outside (where possible), where it is safe to do so, keeping the kitchen or bathroom door closed when cooking or bathing.
- Adequately heating rooms (The World Health Organisation recommends 18°C and above)
- Keeping the house well-ventilated e.g., opening windows during cooking / bathing, turning on and ensuring that the extractor fan or ventilation system installed in their home is regularly cleaned and working, keeping trickle vents in windows open, and allowing air to circulate around furniture.

### **6.12 Leaseholder Responsibilities**

We will support leaseholders in addressing damp and mould by taking proactive and collaborative steps. We will conduct property inspections to ensure that the building's structural elements, such as roofs, external walls, and windows, are well-maintained to prevent water ingress. As we do with tenants, we will share information with leaseholders on the importance of ventilation and heating to reduce moisture buildup.

## **7. Quality Assurance and Performance Monitoring**

We will ensure that every case of damp, mould or condensation is managed appropriately, and practical advice, help and support is offered to each household in accordance with this policy.

The repairs contract operates within a performance management framework. The framework uses a series of measures and performance indicators to demonstrate service quality in terms of achieving 'purpose' and value for money.

We monitor our repairs performance monthly, and the figures are reviewed by senior management on a quarterly basis. They are also discussed with the contractors at their monthly performance review meetings.

## **8. Training**

The Housing Division will ensure that our Repairs team (internal and external) will have the required skills to diagnose and remedy damp and mould.

We will ensure the provision of training for all front-line and customer service staff on the identification, treatment and the prevention of damp, mould and condensation. The training will enable them to:

- Become familiar with and understand the correct response needed when a damp or mould issue is identified by them or reported to them, including what advice to give and when to raise remedial works.
- Identify the correct equipment required to assess damp in properties and find resolution to the problem if it is our responsibility.
- Develop their knowledge on our stock and the archetypes of properties that are likely to suffer from damp and mould.

## **9. Responding to complaints and learning lessons**

We aim to resolve complaints as quickly as possible without residents needing to resort to legal action. Where legal action is taken, we will follow the Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Condition Claims on the Housing Ombudsman's website so that we may resolve the dispute outside of court to help ensure issues are resolved quicker for customers.

We will learn lessons from damp and mould cases, update our technical approach and how we communicate with residents, in order to improve future responses.

## **10. Related documents**

- Housing Strategy
- Housing Asset Management Strategy
- Repairs & Maintenance Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Compensation Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Decant Policy
- Voids Policy
- Tenant and Leasehold Agreements
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Decent Home Standard
- Damp, Mould and Condensation Leaflet
- Housing Ombudsman Service Spotlight on: Damp and Mould

## **11. Regulation and Legislation**

- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11)
- Housing Act 2004
- Decent Homes Standard 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Home Standard, Regulator of Social Housing, 2015
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Conditions Claims (England), 2021
- Common hold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Building Regulations Act 1984

## **12. Equalities**

This Policy has been subject to an equalities impact assessment and will be implemented in accordance with our responsibilities and duties under relevant legislation, including the Equalities Act 2010.

We will ensure that tenants' needs are considered when implementing this Policy to ensure that they are treated fairly. We will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that customers with distinct communication needs are not unreasonably and disproportionately affected. This could involve providing communications in alternative languages or formats or providing interpretation or transcription as appropriate.

### **13. Data Protection**


We will comply with our obligations under relevant data protection legislation and regulations. We will process and store personal information securely.

There are some circumstances in which we are required by law to disclose information given to us.

### **14. Exceptions**

We may make an exception to the approach outlined in this policy if the circumstances require it and it is reasonable to do so. Our reasoning can be provided to the affected parties on request.

## 15. Document Management

<b>Department of Community &amp; Children's Services</b>  <b>Housing Service</b>		 <b>CITY OF LONDON</b>
<b>Policy Title: Damp, Mould and Condensation</b>		
<b>Document Owner: Head of Repairs and Maintenance</b>		
<b>Date Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>01/05/202 (original)</b></li> </ul>		
<b>Version: 1</b>	<b>Last amendment: n/a</b>	
<b>Effective date: 01/05/202</b>	<b>Next review date: 01/05/202</b>	
<b>Changes: New Policy</b>		



**City of London Corporation**  
**Department of Community & Children's Services**  
**Housing Division**

**EMPTY PROPERTIES (VOIDS) POLICY**

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Approved by:	<i>Housing Management &amp; Almshouses Sub-Committee</i>
Original Approval Date:	
Review Date:	
Re-Approval Date	-
Next Review Date	-

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines our approach to managing empty properties ('voids'), to minimise the length of time a property stays empty. This will consequently reduce the loss of rental income and maximise income for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), while ensuring that applicants in housing need are allocated a suitable property as soon as possible.

A property is defined 'void' when no tenancy exists following vacation by the previous occupant, and no rental income is being received. The 'void period' exists between a tenancy ending and a new tenancy beginning.

There are several reasons that lead to the initiation of the void process, which are outlined below:

- **Termination:** The tenant supplies formal written notice.
- **Death of tenant:** The tenant dies and there is no successor to the tenancy.
- **Transfer:** The tenant moves to another City Corporation owned property.
- **Abandonment:** The tenant has vacated the property without proper notice.
- **Eviction:** The City Corporation has completed court action and obtained authority to evict the tenant/s.
- **Decants:** Tenants being re-housed following plans to redevelop, dispose of or demolish housing stock.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Properties owned or managed as part of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
- Properties managed on behalf of the City of London Almshouses Trust and the Gresham Almshouses Trust

## 3. Duties of Landlords

### Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018

The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 rightly states that landlords have a duty of care when it comes to meeting their existing responsibilities relating to property standards and safety, and making sure their property is fit for human habitation at the beginning of the tenancy and throughout. Being mindful of all the rules and taking care of the property with inspections can save time and money later on.

### Regulator for Social Housing – Safety and Quality Standard

- **Stock quality** - Registered providers must have an accurate, up to date and evidenced understanding of the condition of their homes that reliably informs their provision of good quality, well maintained and safe homes for tenants.
- **Decency** - Registered providers must ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard unless exempted by the regulator.

- **Health and safety** - When acting as landlords, registered providers must take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas.
- **Repairs, maintenance and planned improvements** - Registered providers must provide an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which they are responsible.

During the void period we will ensure that we meet all our legal responsibilities under the relevant and current compliance legislation for the quality, health and safety of incoming occupants in their homes. These include:

- Gas, water and in-situ electrical installations, including all smoke and fire alarms, will be tested and certified to say that they are in good working order and comply to current legislation.
- Carbon monoxide and smoke alarms fitted where required.
- Fire doors and fire prevention mechanisms will be checked and if necessary, replaced to the current relevant legislative standard.

#### 4. Aims of this Policy

Our objectives are to:

- To minimise void rental loss, void periods and void repair costs through effective coordination of Housing Management and Repairs and Maintenance operations to re-let properties within agreed target times.
- Ensure that properties are managed efficiently throughout the void process by supplying transparency of tasks and responsibilities.
- Ensure that tenants are aware of their tenancy obligations in relation to ending the tenancy e.g. requirement to give 4 weeks' notice, to return all keys promptly and to fully clear the property and leave it in a clean condition.
- Minimise the rechargeable repairs costs through clear and effective communication with tenants.
- Ensure that repairs to properties are undertaken to enable the Housing Needs team to re-let to the lettings standard and that where appropriate "rechargeable" repair costs are met by the outgoing tenant or pursued post termination.
- Make effective use of void periods to carry out upgrades or major repairs as appropriate and to co-ordinate with the Major Works team with regard to decant requirements.
- Make effective use of the void period to consider possible works which would improve the energy efficiency and thermal comfort of the property, to help meet the City's net zero carbon targets.

- Prevent end of tenancy arrears wherever possible.
- Achieve high levels of tenant satisfaction with the condition of properties at the beginning of the tenancy.

## **5. Policy Approach**

### **5.1 Termination**

The Housing Division provides details of tenants' responsibilities regarding giving up their tenancy via the Tenancy Handbook and in the Tenancy Agreement itself.

A tenant must give four weeks' written notice of their intention to end their tenure with City of London via the service of a Notice to Quit (NTQ).

On receipt of the NTQ, we will send a NTQ letter to confirm the vacant possession date and remind them of their end of tenancy responsibilities, including:

- Confirming arrangements for a pre-void inspection of the property to be completed during the notice period.
- The property, including the garden (if any) is to be left in a clean, tidy condition, and clear of all tenant belongings and items.
- The removal of improvements, fittings and fixtures must result in the property being left safe and not detrimental to the condition of the property.
- Improvements installed without permission or repairs being carried out due to tenant neglect, will be subject to the recharge for repairs policy.
- Pay all rent owed up to the end of the tenancy.
- Return keys on or before the end of tenancy date.
- Provision of a forwarding address.

### **5.2 Pre-Void Inspections**

Carrying out a Pre-Void inspection is beneficial to minimise the void period of a property and to identify any problems that can be discussed with the tenant and resolved prior to the tenancy end date.

The Pre-Void inspection will include the tenant's home, and any sheds/garages licensed to the tenant. When the inspection is carried out, a checklist is completed and any rechargeable repairs and required clearance of possessions will be discussed with the tenant or their representative (should they be present). If the tenant is not present at the time of the inspection, we will write to the tenant setting out what rechargeable repairs were identified during the inspection.

The Housing Division has the discretion to decide whether to allow the tenant to rectify those repairs or, alternatively, to sign to confirm that they accept the

recharge to be levied against them. If the tenant indicates that they want to organise and carry out any rechargeable repair works within seven days of the inspection, the outgoing tenant will be given a target date by which time the tenant will be expected to complete the works.

Where possible, Property Services will check the works have been satisfactorily completed before the end of the tenancy.

If the tenant indicates that they do not wish to organise and carry out any rechargeable repair works and the Housing Division have obtained their signature to confirm that they accept to pay a recharge, Property Services will order the necessary void works (which shall include any rechargeable repairs), and a letter will be sent to the tenant confirming the amount to be charged and payment process and timescale.

If a tenant leaves either prior to an inspection, or after the inspection but prior to us writing to the tenant explaining the recharges, the rechargeable repairs will be ordered and a letter and invoice sent to the forwarding address advising that the repair work will be recharged and explaining how those charges will be recovered.

### **5.3 Return of keys**

Provision to collect the keys will be arranged with the tenant or the tenant's representative.

The keys should be returned by the tenant or the tenant's representative on or before the agreed vacant possession date.

The rent account for the outgoing tenant will be terminated on the date that the keys are returned. This ends the outgoing tenant's rent obligation and starts the void accrual period from the following day.

Should keys not be returned on, or before, the agreed termination date, rent will continue to be charged on the property until the keys are received.

### **5.4 Death of tenant**

When a tenant dies and there is no succession, it is compulsory that the tenancy is formally ended through a four-week notice being served on the next of kin or the Public Trustee once notified.

We will advise the deceased tenant's next of kin or Public Trustee of the process to formally end the tenancy, supplying the end of tenancy and vacant date.

Any remaining belongings will be managed according to our Disposal of Personal Property Policy.

Although we recognise that the loss of a family member or friend is a difficult and sensitive period, extra time to clear the property cannot normally be given past the expiry date of the notice. If there are extenuating circumstances, additional time may be given to clear the property (if approved by an Area Manager) however, the requestor would normally be liable to cover the rent for the agreed time.

The property must be left empty and in good condition. Any items remaining will be disposed of and the cost of this will be charged to the tenant's estate. The cost of replacement or repair to damaged and/or missing fixtures and fittings in the property will also be charged to the estate.

The estate of the deceased is responsible for settling any outstanding charges in respect of the property. The estate should also ensure that all supplies are turned off and the meters read as appropriate.

### **5.5 Abandonment**

Abandonment will be decided following an investigation when there has been evidence or information supplied that the registered tenant has left the property with no intention to return, and no termination of the tenancy has been received.

We will make reasonable enquiries to prove whether a property has been abandoned and record their findings. We will consider:

- If the property is secure.
- If possessions have been left in the property.
- Speaking to family and friends on contacts list.
- Information neighbours can provide.
- Unauthorised occupants.
- Liaising with colleagues in Tenancy Support.
- Information via Housing Benefits and Rents.
- Collaborating with the Fraud Investigation team.

Legal action should be taken to recover the property once adequate evidence has been gained to confirm the abandonment.

Images should be taken to also act as a record to any items left by the previous tenant and utilised as an inventory.

We will arrange removal of any items that are left to be placed in storage in line with the Disposal of Personal Property Policy.

### **5.6 Eviction**

The Housing Division will use legal action to evict tenants where there has been a breach of tenancy, and it is necessary to recover the property.

On receiving the property back via the Courts and execution of the warrant, pictures and/or videos should be taken to also act as a record to any items left by the previous tenant and utilised as an inventory.

We will arrange removal of any items that are left to be placed in storage in line with the Disposal of Personal Property Policy.

### **5.7 Organising repair works**

After the property has been vacated by the outgoing tenant, we will organise a property inspection. The inspection records the condition of the property, notes property characteristics and records any work to be completed before re-letting.

Information and costs about any recharges will be sent to the outgoing tenant by letter or email.

Property Services aim to complete all repair works before the property is re-let and within a clearly specified timescale. On some occasions and where there are outstanding repair works, we will discuss with the incoming tenant arranging for works to be completed after they have moved in. This will only be done if works are not urgent or disruptive.

During this period, an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) assessment and where required a landlord gas safety record (LGSR) will be completed.

If reasonable and practicable, energy efficiency works recommended within the EPC, will be considered by the City of London Corporation, in the context of any planned future works and existing financial circumstances.

If a property is assessed as requiring decoration, a decoration pack may be provided to the incoming tenant to assist with this work or decoration may be carried out by Property Services should the decorative condition of the property be likely to make it difficult to let.

#### **5.8 Planned Maintenance and Upgrades**

Properties scheduled for planned maintenance or upgrades are identified in the annual programme.

To keep disruption to existing tenants to a minimum, works will be carried out if a property becomes vacant wherever this is possible and practical within the agreed programme.

Where a property is used for decanting, or for a contractor's base during major works, the Head of Major Works will be responsible for ensuring that the decant period is minimised. The void will be calculated only for days where the property was available for let and the Major Works Team will be responsible for covering the rent during this period.

All upgrade works undertaken in the void period will be carried out in accordance with the Major Works Programme and Asset Management Strategy.

#### **5.9 Property Re-Lets**

In line with the Housing Division's Lettings and Transfers Policy and operation of the Home Connections choice based letting scheme, steps to identify prospective tenants should commence as soon as the void or prospective void is advised to Housing Management staff.

Whilst the Housing Division is mindful of minimising rent loss, there is an equal obligation to ensure that our housing is let to those most in need and as a result, all applicants (where possible) who are being considered for allocation will be required to confirm their circumstances which may include a visit at home by a member of the Allocations team to ensure that the circumstances which have led to their priority award are correct.

Staff will carry out accompanied viewings of re-lets unless there are specific unavoidable circumstances where this is not possible.

Before a viewing takes place, staff will ensure that all Health & Safety matters have been attended to and that the property is in a suitable condition to be viewed safely e.g. required repairs to flooring or electrical fittings completed.

#### **5.10 New Developments – First Lets**

Housing and Property Services staff will ensure effective liaison over the handover process for new properties with the aim of achieving occupancy as soon as practically possible.

#### **5.11 Void Processing – Information and Audit**

Processing of void properties involves a number of different staff. To ensure that all stages of the process are carried out efficiently this will be recorded within Civica Housing Management System. Information from the system can be used in collating monitoring reports and in assisting internal audit procedures.

Individual void phase targets will be monitored, reviewed and overseen by the Assistant Director of Housing and Property Services.

#### **5.12 Void Images**

On receipt of the keys from the outgoing tenant, pictures and/or videos are taken of the external and internal aspects of the void.

The pictures should be used to highlight any aspect of the property that requires specific attention, such as damage to the property or adaptations. The pictures should also capture the gas and electric meter readings.

#### **5.13 Health and safety**

All inspections and accompanied viewings conducted at void properties pre- and post-termination, will be carried out following good practice and health and safety guidelines.

#### **5.14 Recharge for repair**

When elements of a property have been considered to have been deliberately damaged by the tenant, or unauthorised alterations have been found, we will advise the outgoing tenant at the pre-void inspection.

If intentional damage or unauthorised improvements are not picked up at the pre-void inspection, but are found later, Property Services will order the works, and the outgoing tenant notified once complete.

If a tenant is known to have a disability or considered vulnerable, we will make an informed decision around whether to pursue recharges.

## **6. Performance Management**

Operation of the Voids Policy and its procedures and subsequent data will be recorded monthly and reported on a quarterly basis.

Details of procedures for gathering information and recording each stage of void processing and this information will be used to provide the following performance monitoring indicators:

- Average void time (routine voids) (days)
- Average void time (complex voids) (days)
- Average void turnaround time (contractor only) (days)
- Total voids (number)
- Voids pre-handover inspections completed (%)
- Voids meeting Letting Standard at handover
- Properties let after one offer (%) (YTD)
- Number of properties let (CBL)
- Number of properties let (management transfer/direct offer)
- Properties offered within 10 days of handover (%) (YTD)
- Properties refused due to quality or condition (number - YTD)

### **Key Targets**

The Housing Division recognises the importance of working to specific timescales in handling voids as part of performance monitoring and ongoing review of operations.

The targets are as follows:

- Routine Void: 10 working days
- Complex Void: 20 working days

It is important to note that the above targets are the maximum timeframe, staff should always be working towards minimising the number of void days.

## **7. Training**

The Housing Division will ensure that all staff involved in the void process will have the required skills, training and detailed understanding of this policy and related procedures.

## **8. Related documents**

- Lettings and Transfers Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Debt Recovery Policy
- Decants Policy
- Disposal of Personal Property Policy
- Recharge Policy
- Asset Management Strategy

- Health and Safety Policy
- Moving In Standard
- Climate Action Strategy
- Housing Energy Improvement Plan

## **9. Regulation and Legislation**

- The Housing Act 1985
- The Housing Act 1996
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (GSIUR) as amended 2018
- Code of Practice and guidance
- British Standard 7671 As Amended (Electrical Installations)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR
- Equalities Act 2010

## **10. Equalities**

This Policy has been subject to an equalities impact assessment and will be implemented in accordance with our responsibilities and duties under relevant legislation, including the Equalities Act 2010.

## **11. Data Protection**


We will comply with our obligations under relevant data protection legislation and regulations. We will process and store personal information securely.

There are some circumstances in which we are required by law to disclose information given to us.

## **12. Exceptions**

We may make an exception to the approach outlined in this policy if the circumstances require it and it is reasonable to do so. Our reasoning can be provided to the affected parties on request.

### 13. Document Management

Department of Community & Children's Services  Housing Service		
<b>Policy Title: Empty Properties (Void)</b>		
<b>Document Owner: Head of Repairs and Maintenance</b>		
<b>Date Approved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>xx/xx/202 (original)</li> </ul>		
<b>Version: 1</b>	<b>Last amendment: n/a</b>	
<b>Effective date: xx/xx/202</b>	<b>Next review date: xx/xx/202</b>	
<b>Changes: New Policy</b>		

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Appendix 6

Policy Name	Consultation	Feedback	Action
Compensation	Staff within the Housing Division (via group meeting & email)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Various discussions and feedback shared to make policy clear and relevant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amendedments made</li> </ul>
	Insurance Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wording changes</li> <li>added some caveats around claims for damage to personal property</li> <li>advice to refer to solicitors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amendedments made</li> <li>Referred to Legal team</li> </ul>
	Legal Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wording changes</li> <li>clarification of what we can legally offer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amendments made</li> </ul>
	Hub Consultation group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Policies are clear and understandable and seem to cover all areas as far as I can see and the suggested approach seems fair and reasonable.</li> </ul>	
Fire Safety	Staff within the Housing Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Various discussions and feedback shared to make policy clear and in line with current regulation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amendments made</li> </ul>
	Hub Consultation group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I think it would be helpful when introducing the purpose of the policy not to totally put the focus on meeting legal and regulatory requirements but to also indicate that CoL has the safety of residents at the forefront of its thoughts. Basically not only do we have to have fire safety measures in place but we want to have them too for the safety of the residents.</li> <li>I'm not sure if the fire safety one applies to me, as you state "only single access properties" are covered? That aside, the document is clear and concise.</li> <li>The Policies are clear and understandable and seem to cover all areas as far as I can see and the suggested approach seems fair and reasonable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under 'Purpose' heading included our commitment to achieving resident safety &amp; wellbeing.</li> <li>Clarification made under 'Scope' heading</li> </ul>

Repairs & Maintenance	Staff within the Housing Division (via group meeting & email)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Various discussions and feedback shared to make policy clear and relevant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amendments made</li> </ul>
	Hub Consultation group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>could there be a reference to where the tenant and leaseholder handbooks can be found (I couldn't find the LH handbook online).</li> <li>The repairs draft document covers everything, but it will only work if both Property Services and [REDACTED] are held to account if they fail to act! The repair time scales quoted need to be adhered to as well.</li> <li>The Policies are clear and understandable and seem to cover all areas as far as I can see and the suggested approach seems fair and reasonable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information inserted under 'Obligations' heading.</li> </ul>
Damp, Mould & Condensation	Staff within the Housing Division (via group meeting & email)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Various discussions and feedback shared to make policy clear and in line with current regulation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amendments made</li> </ul>
	Hub Consultation group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I think that while the policy concerns CoL's policy for it's tenancies, there could be a reference to making information available to leaseholders for their (and/or their tenants) benefit. That is not to diminish the leaseholder's responsibilities but to assist leaseholders in managing damp and mould in their properties</li> <li>The Policies are clear and understandable and seem to cover all areas as far as I can see and the suggested approach seems fair and reasonable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional informational added under 'Policy Approach' heading.</li> </ul>
Empty Properties (Void)	Staff within the Housing Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Various discussions and feedback shared to make policy clear and relevant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amendments made</li> </ul>
	Hub Consultation group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have read policy and confirm it is clear and easily understood.</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thank you for sending this draft document policy over. It covers everything applicable I feel. Well I left my property on [REDACTED], I never received a visit to ascertain if a charge back would apply before I left my property? This was only done after I had moved and the sum invoiced me was completely disproportionate (to simply disconnect and remove an electric cooker).</li></ul> <p>When I challenged the amount it was subsequently reduced. So a pre charge back visit is something that you need to ensure always happens. Also, perhaps you would be able to offer advice on removing large items of furniture to the resident? As I now believe Councils no longer do this for free?</p>	
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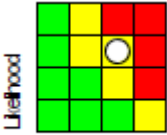
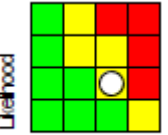

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DCCS – Housing Risks - detailed report EXCLUDING COMPLETED ACTIONS

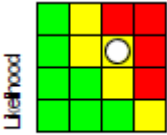
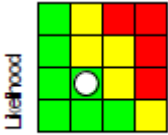

Report Author: Despo Evangelou  
Generated on: 13 November 2024



Rows are sorted by Risk Score

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>DCCS HS 003 Lone Working</b>  14-Jan-2016 Peta Caine	<b>Cause:</b> Not implementing appropriate risk assessment and lone working device to mitigate the risk, not providing training nor effective management supervision to support lone workers. <b>Event:</b> Fail to enforce corporate policy and guidance followed by legislation. Lone working staff not taking adequate control measures if an event was to occur. <b>Effect:</b> Physical or mental harmed to staff can result to investigation and legal action, damaging the reputation of the City of London.	 Likelihood Impact	<b>12</b>	Audit of users has been undertaken & front line teams have been supplied with new devices on request. Staff have also been given the opportunity to access the mobile app instead of the device. Monitoring is continuing on a monthly basis - reports are being sent to team managers to encourage them to take ownership of device usage.  <b>25 Oct 2024</b>	 Likelihood Impact	<b>8</b>	31-Dec-2025	 Constant
							Reduce	

Action no	Action description	Latest Note			Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
DCCS HS 003d	Monthly monitoring of Skyguard usage	Monitoring continues on a monthly basis with information reported to relevant Assistant Directors Lower risk lone workers (eg Project Managers) have been offered use of mobile app as an alternative to usage of the device (with line manager approval) Monthly reports of usage are sent to relevant ADs. Team managers are asked to have lone working as a set agenda items for team meetings (where appropriate)			Liane Coopey	25-Oct-2024	31-Dec-2024

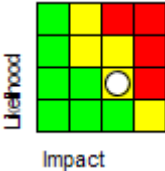


Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>DCCS HS 008</b> <b>Delivery of Repairs &amp; Maintenance services to City of London Housing residents</b>  20-Jun-2024 Beverley Andrews	<b>Cause:</b> Repairs & Maintenance of managed homes not being carried out effectively and in a timely manner <b>Event:</b> Failure to deliver a high quality Repairs & Maintenance service to City of London Housing Service tenants and leaseholders <b>Effect:</b> Poor quality homes for tenants and leaseholders can impact on health , safety and wellbeing. There also an impact on the property portfolio and the potential for reputational damage.	 Likelihood Impact	12	Delivery of R&M service to Housing tenants and leaseholders has declined due to aging housing stock, lack of planned maintenance and a challenging repairs and maintenance contract, leading to poor service delivery, A procurement process is being undertaken to secure a new contractor from April 2025  <b>25 Oct 2024</b>	 Likelihood Impact	4	31-Mar-2026	 Constant
							Reduce	

Page 95

Action no	Action description	Latest Note		Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
DCCS HS 008B	Improvement in delivery of service delivery under current R&M contract	Contract with Wates has been extended to March 2025. Service Improvement Plan in place with monthly contract monitoring meetings. New Head of Operations and Transformation has been recruited in August on a 6 month contract to support improvements		Peta Caine	27-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
DCCS HS 008C	Procurement of a new repairs and maintenance contract Contractor Selection - Failure to achieve the procurement timetable.	The re procurement of the repairs and maintenance contracts are on programme to execute new contracts by the end of the calendar year. The second stage tenders will be returned on 25th September.		Peta Caine	27-Sep-2024	26-Dec-2024
DCCS HS 008D	<b>Failure to obtain competitive tenders from credible R&amp;M contractors.</b>	Independent commercial advice has informed the approach to contract requirements and strategy for procurement. Programme has been developed with tolerance and agility to adapt to changing circumstances		Peta Caine	27-Sep-2024	27-Dec-2024

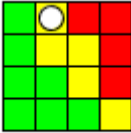
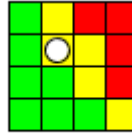

Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
DCCS HS 009 b	Identify resources required to maintain statutory compliance as business as usual.	Review of compliance structure.	Liane Coopey	12-Nov-2024	31-Jan-2025

DCCS HS 009c	Undertake compliance gap analysis to identify the current volume of buildings and equipment requiring statutory inspections, and current performance based on available data.	<p>A compliance matrix has been created to capture all essential information to deliver compliance and remedial programmes. The matrix is being populated using a range of data sources including NROSH returns, keystone, Civica, CBIS and data held in 3rd party systems, as well as physical validation of equipment wherever possible.</p> <p>Areas of non-compliance has been identified with both domestic and landlords periodic electrical testing and remedial works. An action plan is being developed across teams to remedy this.</p>	Liane Coopey	12-Nov-2024	31-Jan-2025
DCCS HS 009d	Confirm and document compliance processes and required metrics and identify gaps in process and resource	<p>The gas safety process is documented and there is a gas safety policy in place</p> <p>The process for lifting and fire equipment is currently being reviewed and documented.</p>	Liane Coopey	12-Nov-2024	31-Jan-2025
DCCS HS 009e	Create compliance 'dashboard' to provide single view of current compliance performance and to assist in managing compliance actions.	<p>Currently data is being sourced from a number of different third party systems and collated each month on a performance spreadsheet. This is a manual and time consuming process.</p> <p>We are exploring how compliance data can be transferred to and stored in Keystone in the short term and how that data could be presented in a usable dashboard to manage delivery and provide accurate reporting.</p>	Liane Coopey	12-Nov-2024	31-Jan-2025
DCCS HS 009f	Define user IT requirements for compliance delivery & determine Civica capability	<p>The Civica Asset Management module includes compliance management functionality. There is a demo of the new Civica AM module in November and its capability to deliver effective compliance management will be investigated.</p> <p>Once compliance processes have been confirmed, this will inform specific system requirements to support delivery.</p>	Liane Coopey	12-Nov-2024	30-Apr-2025
DCCS HS 009g	Identify compliance skills and knowledge gaps within the team and provide training	The property services officers are currently supporting the review and delivery of compliance remedial work. Compliance refresher training has recently been undertaken.	Liane Coopey	12-Nov-2024	31-Jan-2025
DCCS HS 009h	Reprocure or extend compliance contracts due for expiry in 2025, ensuring current and future delivery requirements are clearly specified	<p>Compliance service contracts for Fire equipment, Water safety, lifting equipment and Asbestos are scheduled for procurement prior to expiry and Daniel Castle is leading on this.</p> <p>The FRA contract is being extended with revisions to better suit Housing FRA requirements. The Gas servicing and gas repairs contract is being considered for extension next year</p> <p>A new contract for periodic electrical testing and remedial work is under urgent consideration</p>	Liane Coopey	12-Nov-2024	01-May-2025

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>DCCS HS 002</b> <b>Failure to carry out and review effective Fire Risk Assessments for more than 5000 units of residential accommodation and a number of commercial units</b> Jan-2016 Peta Caine	<b>Cause</b> Fire Risk Assessments for managed properties not carried out effectively <b>Event</b> Fires do occur from time to time. Effective Assessments reduce the risk and identify if any changes to procedures or maintenance regimes that need to be reviewed or introduced <b>Effect</b> Fires can lead to significant property damage and potential loss of life		8	A programme of Fire Risk Assessments has now been completed by Turner Townsend. All HRA and Barbican Estate inspections have been completed and reports received. Action plans have been completed with monthly monitoring meetings taking place and reported to the Housing Fire Task Group. Works have been identified and are being carried out over a period of 18 months to 2 years. These works include the retrofitting of sprinkler systems in 5 high rise blocks, works to improve compartmentalisation and the replacement of entrance doors to meet current fire safety standards  <b>25 Oct 2024</b>		4	31-Dec-2025	 Constant
							Reduce	

Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
DCCS HS 002c	Community and Children's Services Committee has approved the retrofitting of sprinklers in the 5 high rise tower blocks within the City's social housing portfolio.	<p>Avondale Point blocks: In flat installations complete. Previously anticipated date of completion was November 2023 but delay has been incurred to support in answering outstanding queries raised by Building Control linked to firestopping. Sign-off cannot be received until these points are confirmed. EOT dispute is ongoing with United Living. Contractor has now vacated site till further arrangement is made.</p> <p>Petticoat Tower: Works on site commenced 16th October 2023. Pipework across common parts is complete, reserve tank and central evacuation unit and alarm panel installed. 17 out of 88 flats complete system. Original date of project completion August 2024, EOT request has been submitted for additional 9 months with suspension of further works until progress is</p>	Peta Caine	25-Oct-2024	31-Dec-2024

		<p>made with resident bookings. Other major works programmes remain to be present across Middlesex Street estate, requiring regular monitoring by project officers and CDM principal.</p> <p>Great Arthur House programme suspended until further notice. Development of fire strategy document being explored to support ongoing proposals for compartmentation and sprinkler projects.</p> <p>Next report: GW5 Issues Report for Avondale and Petticoat Tower programmes due 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024 (CCS), 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024 (P&amp;P sub)</p> <p>Reporting as red for 24 months.</p>			
<p>DCCS HS 002d</p> <p>Page 99</p>	<p>Community and Children's Services Committee has approved a programme to replace all main entrance doors in the City's social housing blocks of flats. The new fire doors will provide a minimum of 30 minutes and up to 60 minutes of fire resistance.</p>	<p>Members approved the recommendation to direct award the further fire door lots via the Framework recommended by colleagues in procurement.</p> <p>LOT 1 is complete, LOT 2 is in delivery with works to the communal doors Point Blocks pending completion of the retrofit sprinkler project, and communal doors in Harman Close pending renewal of the warden call and fire alarm systems.</p> <p>Lot 3 is also in delivery. Our contractor Gerda have begun to mobilise in Petticoat Tower as the retrofit sprinkler contractor has now vacated site.</p> <p>LOT 4 is in the design phase with planning applications in preparation for the replacement of external opening fire doors.</p>	Peta Caine	25-Oct-2024	31-Dec-2026

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>DCCS HS 005 Major works programme</b>  <div>Page 100</div>  07-Jan-2020 Gregory Wade	<b>Cause:</b> Shortfall in funding/increase in costs of current major works programme <b>Event:</b> Inability of the City of London to fund current and planned major works improvements and fire safety works <b>Effect:</b> Detrimental to property conditions and living standards, reputational damage.	 Likelihood Impact	8	Completion of the current Major Works Programme has been delayed due to financial and external factors such as labour and material shortages and the complexity of the buildings. Due to increase in labour and material costs we are seeing the cost of many projects increase by more than 30%. The Capital Review has added a further six month delay to some projects. The resultant significant increase in capital funding from the HRA major repairs reserve for the effected projects will mean other planned projects may need to be delayed or stopped in order to compensate. A full review of existing and future projects will be undertaken when the 5 Year Plan is updated which will be informed by the forthcoming Asset Management Strategy.  <b>20 Aug 2024</b>	 Likelihood Impact	6	31-Dec-2025	 Constant
							Reduce	

Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
DCCS HS 005a	Review of major works programme alongside other works including fire safety improvements and planned maintenance	Future Major works programme delayed because there is currently no funding to match it. This will be reviewed once the HRA has had chance to recover in line with the outcomes of the new Investment Plan - due to be presented to HMASC in November 24. A £30 million funding gap has been identified. Work bridge gap has begun with the budget setting programme for 25-26	Peta Caine	25-Oct-2024	31-Dec-2024

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>DCCS HS 006</b> <b>Failure to deliver new homes programme</b>  <div>Page 101</div>	<b>Cause:</b> Funding and planning constraints, market volatility and development cost inflation <b>Event:</b> Failure on commitment to deliver 700 new homes by 2025 <b>Effect:</b> Delivery of a reduced number of new homes resulting in diminished HRA income and reputational damage		8	Priority is being given to progress the new developments for COLPAI, Sydenham Hill, and York Way Estate. These schemes will deliver 267 new homes for social rent by 2026. COLPAI project - ISG is now in Administration and consideration is being given to outstanding works and the provision of a building warranty. Earliest occupation is anticipated to be March 2025. and will provide 66 new social housing units and 3 commercial units. Sydenham Hill: This project will provide 110 new homes for social rent is now on site and will complete by February 2026. The York Way Development will deliver 91 new homes for social rent, new community centre, and a new housing estates office. The contract with Higgins Partnership at York Way will complete by February 2026.  <b>25 Oct 2024</b>		6	31-Mar-2025	
							Reduce	

Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
DCCS HS 006a	Review of remaining projects for new development programme to finalise costs and dates	A report will be submitted in January 2025 to formulate a policy on Joint Ventures and Development Agreements. This will also consider where there are opportunities for new developments on our estates	Peta Caine	25-Oct-2024	31-Dec-2024

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
DCCS HS 001 Health and Safety procedures  13-Nov-2014 Peta Caine	<b>Cause:</b> Failure to meet Health and Safety regulations and City of London procedures within the department and on the properties and estates managed by the Housing Division <b>Event:</b> Accident or fire in property or estates managed DCCS leading to harm / injury to staff member, resident or visitor <b>Effect:</b> Injury to person/s on property or estates managed by DCCS, possible adverse media coverage, external investigation into incident and potential claims for compensation.	 Likelihood Impact	6	A new DCCS H&S Business Plan is being co-ordinated for introduction across the department that will ensure a co-ordinated approach to H&S across all business areas. DLT have been consulted. Risk elements need to be updated to finalise the plan  <b>25 Oct 2024</b>	 Likelihood Impact	4	31-Dec-2024	 Constant
							Reduce	

Peta Caine

Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
DCCS HS 001h	Failure to recruit new health & safety advisor - either on a temporary or permanent basis.	Review of Housing H&S provision has been commissioned by Executive Director of DCCS. Outcome of review will influence recruitment and job evaluation. Head of Profession (Health & Safety) has asked that consideration is given to the recommendation of the Quadriga Audits on resourcing safety roles. Typically, safety manager roles at a level of competency mandated by IOSH will sit at the Grades E-G (job evaluation will dictate final outcome). With Job Evaluation now not being undertaken until October 24 due to Ambition 25, this will now be delayed	Peta Caine	25-Oct-2024	31-Dec-2024

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
DCCS HS 004 Housing Finance Changes	<b>Cause</b> Changes to housing financing <b>Event</b> Possible shortfall in Housing Revenue Account funding <b>Effect</b> – Inability to fund the estimated 30 year expenditure plans regarding the City of London’s Social	 Likelihood Impact	6	A further review and remodel the Housing Revenue Account 30 year Business Plan is being undertaken. This is a complex task looking at assets and finances across this period.	 Likelihood Impact	4	30-Jun-2025	

15-Aug-2016 Peta Caine	Housing			Significant pressures still remain in terms of escalating construction costs and uncertainty in the market. It is still intended that a further independent review of the HRA and the 30-year Business Plan is required to help manage this risk. The update of the HRA will be presented to members for discussion and debate at a meeting due to take place in September 24. It is planned to have an independent review carried out of the financial model and its assumptions in due course.  <b>29 Aug 2024</b>			Reduce	Constant
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Page 103

Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
2023 RCS HS 004d	A further review and remodelling of the 30 year Business Plan is to be undertaken.	A further review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Housing Major Works Programme has recently been undertaken by Chamberlains and shortly by Savilles. This is part of the Corporations' Capital Review 2022. This has resulted in a detailed report being submitted to the Resource & Allocations Sub-Committee at its meeting on 20th October 2022. The report was agreed, with the Resource & Allocations Sub-Committee and Chamberlain committing to the Major Works Programme., This will go part way to mitigating the potential risks to the HRA and allow some more critical projects to proceed, significant pressures still remain in terms of seriously escalating construction costs and uncertainty in the market. It is likely that a further reviews of the HRA and the 30-year Business Plan is required to help manage this risk.	Peta Caine	27-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025



## Spotlight on Damp and Mould: Self-Assessment (November 2024)

Housing Ombudsman Service Recommendations to Senior Managers:	Current Position:	Future Ambitions:
<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> Landlords should adopt a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould interventions. Landlords should review their current strategy and consider whether their approach will achieve this.</p>	<p>The City of London understands that it has a duty to investigate and manage damp &amp; mould issues that our residents may experience in their homes. However, we recognise that this is an area for continuous improvement.</p> <p>Currently all reports of damp and mould are assessed on an individual basis in terms of cause and appropriate resolution. Due to the diversity, age and construction of our housing stock, some properties may need more attention than others, regarding maintenance and varying levels of management for damp and mould conditions.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing our strategy and are developing a damp and mould action plan to ensure we continue to take a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould and that our service complies with current legislation and industry best practice.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> Landlords should consider whether they require an overall framework, or policy, to address damp and mould which would cover each area where the landlord may be required to act. This would include any proactive interventions, its approach to diagnosis, actions it considers appropriate in</p>	<p>We have created a draft damp and mould policy for submission to our committee for approval.</p> <p>The policy includes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach to diagnosis</li> <li>• Actions we will take in different circumstances including complex cases</li> </ul>	<p>The Damp and Mould policy will be subject to annual review.</p>

different circumstances, effective communication and aftercare.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resident communication, including support advice and aftercare</li> <li>• The effective use of data</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Quality assurance and performance monitoring</li> </ul> <p>The aims of the policy aims are to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet our landlord repairing responsibilities as detailed within our Tenancies, Leases and our Repairs Policy.</li> <li>• Maintain our homes so that they meet the Decent Home Standard and are free from any hazards including those identified in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).</li> <li>• Comply with legislative, regulatory and contractual obligations.</li> <li>• Treat residents reporting damp and mould with empathy and respect</li> <li>• Conduct timely and thorough investigations and implement appropriate corrective measures and improvements.</li> <li>• Support residents in resolving damp and mould and provide appropriate, clear, sensitive, practical and accessible advice.</li> <li>• Ensure staff are trained to spot potential causes of damp, mould and condensation so they can advise residents, diagnose problems and provide solutions.</li> </ul>	
<b>Recommendation 3:</b> Landlords should review the accessibility and use of their systems for	Residents are currently able to report repairs by phone, email or MS forms. We encourage residents to submit photos wherever possible to	Updated Housing Complaints leaflets have been produced and are being distributed in October 2024. A simplified version of the leaflet has been

reporting repairs and making complaints to ‘find their silence’.	<p>assist with initial diagnosis. We also display information and advice about repairs and damp and mould management on our website.</p> <p>We embrace a positive complaints culture in which residents are supported in and encouraged to make complaints if they experience dissatisfaction with the City of London’s service.</p>	<p>produced to enhance the accessibility of the service to a wider population.</p> <p>Resident online repairs reporting is to be implemented in future phases of our IT systems deployment and in conjunction with our new repairs &amp; maintenance contract. In addition to standard repairs, we will also explore the viability of residents reporting damp and mould issues online.</p>
<b>Recommendation 4:</b> Landlords should identify opportunities for extending the scope of their diagnosis within buildings, for example by examining neighbouring properties, to ensure the response early on is as effective as possible.	Our current approach diagnoses report of damp and mould issues on a case-by-case basis. Where solutions have been effective, these are also adopted in neighbouring properties.	We will develop a heat map of current and historic cases to inform likelihood of occurrence in neighbouring properties and to help inform where longer term investment is required.
<b>Recommendation 5:</b> Landlords should implement a data driven, risk-based approach with respect to damp and mould. This will reduce over reliance on residents to report issues, help landlords identify hidden issues and support landlords to anticipate and prioritise interventions before a complaint or disrepair claim is made.	<p>Reports of damp and mould and related data are currently recorded in our in-house repairs management system.</p> <p>Further refinements are in progress to improve specific categorisation of damp and mould cases and their severity, to aid risk management, monitoring and reporting of active cases.</p>	<p>The deployment of our new asset management module in 2025 will support the capture and use of specific damp and mould data to identify other properties that may be at risk.</p> <p>We are procuring a new stock condition survey for 2025, that will support the independent identification and risk assessment of damp and mould cases and enhance our existing data</p>
<b>Recommendation 6:</b> Where properties are identified for future disposal or are within an area marked for regeneration, landlords should proactively satisfy themselves that residents do not receive a poorer standard of service or lower living conditions, that steps are taken to avoid homes degrading to an unacceptable	All residents, along with frontline staff and contractors are encouraged to look out for and report damp and mould issues and we aim to respond to those issues within policy target timescales, irrespective of whether there is future major works or regeneration proposed.	Our updated stock condition survey will give greater visibility of the current condition of our stock, existing hazards and level of risk, highlighting where urgent intervention is required outside of any major works programmes.



<p>condition and that they regularly engage and communicate with these residents.</p>	<p>We appreciate that residents' homes with significant reoccurring issues, may require a longer-term action plan to provide resolution and this may include periodic inspections, mould treatments and planned investment work.</p> <p>Where significant repairs or future regeneration are essential to affect a long-term resolution, temporary or permanent alternative accommodation is considered.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 7:</b> Landlords should avoid taking actions that solely place the onus on the resident. They should evaluate what mitigations they can put in place to support residents in cases where structural interventions are not appropriate and satisfy themselves they are taking all reasonable steps.</p>	<p>We know there can be a range of factors that contribute to damp and mould issues in a home and that a holistic approach to diagnosis and remediation is important.</p> <p>Where issues relate to condensation and an imbalance between heating, ventilation and insulation, we will always consider the current effectiveness of building components alongside any practical measures that residents can take to help manage damp and mould.</p> <p>As part of our service, we typically undertake a mould wash of areas affected and appropriate follow up redecoration, checking the total air flow and upgrade of extractor fans in bathrooms and kitchens, as well as fixing any leaks and repairing defective heating, windows and doors that may contribute to heat loss.</p> <p>We also have tenancy support officers that assist residents across our estates. Support includes tenancy management and internal signposting to</p>	

	our City Advice page for help with issues such as fuel poverty, or signposting to external agencies.	
<b>Recommendation 8:</b> Together with residents, landlords should review the information, materials and support provided to residents to ensure that these strike the right tone and are effective in helping residents to avoid damp and mould in their properties.	FAQs, website information and guidance booklets have been reviewed internally to ensure the right tone and are in line with industry guidance.	We will consult with residents via our updated engagement strategy, to ensure our communications remain appropriate and helpful.
<b>Recommendation 9:</b> Landlords should be more transparent with residents involved in mutual exchanges and make the most of every opportunity to identify and address damp and mould, including visits and void periods.	<p>A mutual exchange inspection is conducted prior to any exchange taking place. The inspection records any identified issues with damp and mould and action to be taken, so this is fully visible to any incoming resident. If damp and mould issues are significant a mutual exchange may be delayed until appropriate remediation has taken place.</p> <p>We have recently updated our void lettable standard which includes ensuring that any damp and mould issues are properly diagnosed, and repairs actioned during the void period. We also check that extractor fans are operational and meet performance requirements and that heating systems are fully functional. We undertake a 'settling in' visit 6 weeks after occupation, which ensures any new repair and maintenance issues are addressed at an early stage.</p>	
<b>Recommendation 10:</b> Landlords should ensure their strategy for delivering net zero carbon homes considers and plans for how they can identify and respond to potential unintended consequences around damp and mould.	In line with the 'PAS 2035 Standard, all our projects and programmes to upgrade property energy performance include measures to improve ventilation, reducing the likelihood of unintended Damp, mould and condensation issues.	

	As some of our housing stock has listed building status, we employ a range of consultants who specialise in heritage buildings, to ensure that any design considers unintended consequences around damp and mould, whilst ensuring we comply with specific planning requirements.	
<b>Recommendation 11:</b> Landlords should review, alongside residents, their initial response to reports of damp and mould to ensure they avoid automatically apportioning blame or using language that leaves residents feeling blamed.	<p>We encourage and listen to resident feedback through a range of channels, which includes satisfaction surveys, complaints, focus groups and resident associations.</p> <p>Our published 'Service Standards - Involvement &amp; Communications' document explains how we will treat residents when they engage with us and how we will respond to feedback.</p> <p>We act upon feedback and capture lessons learned to help inform continuous improvement plans for the service. This extends to feedback about the content and tone of our communications</p>	Our updated resident engagement strategy will include consultation around our approach to damp and mould, including the content and tone of our communications, to ensure that our residents do not feel blamed.
<b>Recommendation 12:</b> Landlords should consider their current approach to record keeping and satisfy themselves it is sufficiently accurate and robust. We would encourage landlords to go further and consider whether their record keeping systems and processes support a risk-based approach to damp and mould.	<p>When a resident reports a repair, a record is created in our inhouse repairs system and is recorded as either a repair job or an inspection, depending on the details of the initial report.</p> <p>Water leaks resulting in dampness are initially directed to our contractor for assessment and urgent repair and our in-house property services officers always inspect reports of dampness where there is mould present.</p>	<p>Repairs diagnostic training for frontline non-technical teams in 24/25, to support with assessment and appropriate prioritisation of damp and mould issues at the first point of contact.</p> <p>Implementation of a bespoke damp and mould inspection template to ensure that essential information is captured consistently and is easily accessible.</p>

	<p>Where we identify an immediate risk to the resident, immediate action is taken which may include an emergency repair, mould treatment and inspection, or a move to temporary accommodation until appropriate action has been taken to reduce the risk.</p> <p>Job and inspection records are updated with information such as the outcome of the investigation, work completed, along with photographic evidence.</p>	<p>Assigning a severity rating after an initial report of damp and mould has been investigated, based on the extent and duration of exposure to damp and mould, along with resident vulnerability. This is expected to support a risk-based approach and help inform the next actions to be taken.</p> <p>As part of our new asset management system role out in 2025 we will explore how a damp and mould risk rating system could be applied to individual assets, to assist with proactive management and long-term investment planning.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 13:</b> Landlords should ensure that their responses to reports of damp and mould are timely and reflect the urgency of the issue.</p>	<p>All repair jobs and inspections are assigned a specific priority and target timescale based on the urgency of the issue and in accordance with our repairs policy. Performance against timescales is actively managed both internally and with our contractors.</p> <p>When reports of damp and mould are identified through the Housing Complaints Service, they are acknowledged within 5 working days and escalated to a manager for investigation.</p> <p>The Housing Complaints Team has a weekly meeting with the Property Services Team to discuss each complaint, flagging any specific concerns or high importance cases.</p>	<p>Our new repairs and maintenance contract commencing in April 2025 sets out a streamlined set of repair priorities and timescales. This should improve the accuracy of prioritisation at the first point of contact and delivery against target timescales.</p> <p>The Housing Complaints Team is in the process of improving measures for flagging certain complaints as high profile. Complaints are already flagged in the tracker, but more work is being done to ensure that investigation guidance templates clearly outline the severity of certain issues.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 14:</b> Landlords should review the number of missed appointments in relation to damp and mould cases and, depending on the outcome of any review, consider what steps may be required to reduce them.</p>	<p>We have a no access process in relation to repairs. We make 3 attempts at access before a job is closed and we request evidence of the access attempts made. No access information is recorded</p>	<p>As part of our new repairs and maintenance contract commencing April 2025, we will improve the visibility and reporting of missed appointments and investigate reasons for missed</p>

	in our repairs system, but it not currently scrutinised in any further detail.	appointments in relation to damp and mould cases, to reduce them.
<b>Recommendation 15:</b> Landlords should ensure that their staff, whether in-house or contractors, have the ability to identify and report early signs of damp and mould.	<p>Our contractors, housing and estate staff are our 'eyes and ears' and there is an existing process in place for them to report concerns about damp and mould.</p> <p>Most of our resident facing teams have received damp and mould awareness training in the last 12 months.</p>	
<b>Recommendation 16:</b> Landlords should take steps to identify and resolve any skills gaps they may have, ensuring their staff and contractors have appropriate expertise to properly diagnose and respond to reports of damp and mould.	<p>Individual training and qualifications are recorded in our people management system and our property services officers have extensive experience and training in damp and mould diagnosis.</p> <p>As part of continuous improvement and because of several staff and role changes, we are currently undertaking a competency review for current staff to identify any skills or knowledge gaps.</p>	<p>A departmental training matrix is being developed that will include role based mandatory damp &amp; mould awareness training for resident facing teams and enhanced training for our Property Services Team.</p> <p>Wherever possible, awareness training will be delivered jointly with our repairs and maintenance contractors.</p>
<b>Recommendation 17:</b> Landlords should ensure that they clearly and regularly communicate with their residents regarding actions taken or otherwise to resolve reports of damp and mould. Landlords should review and update any associated processes and policies accordingly.	<p>We have a damp and mould policy and documented damp and mould process, which includes communication with residents.</p> <p>Our Property Services Officers are responsible for specific geographical areas and are the designated point of contact for residents once a report of damp and mould is received.</p>	Implementation of a new CRM system in 2025 to improve case management, will enable better record keeping and provide greater visibility of customer communications regarding damp and mould, from the time of first contact until resolution.

<p><b>Recommendation 18:</b> Landlords must ensure there is effective internal communication between their teams and departments, and ensure that one individual or team has overall responsibility for ensuring complaints or reports are resolved, including follow up or aftercare.</p>	<p>Our teams are made aware of the correct reporting procedures for repairs and damp and mould issues and overall responsibility for resolution of reports or complaints resides with our Property Services Team.</p> <p>We currently aim to post inspect 10% of all repair orders via a system generated random sample. In January 2025 we intend to implement a 6 month follow up inspection after all damp and mould related jobs, to check whether actions taken have been successful or whether further actions are still required to resolve the issue.</p> <p>The Housing Complaints Team and Property Services Team have a weekly meeting to discuss any complaints and ongoing cases. There is an allocated staff member (Property Services Complaints Officer) responsible for tracking the progress of repairs following on from complaints. The teams have shared trackers.</p>	<p>Improvements are being made in terms of clarity around the responsibility for following up on certain complaints. The teams are now working to specifically agree individual ownership to maintain follow-up contact with the resident. This responsibility typically lies with either the Property Services Officer, or Property Services Complaints Officer, but occasionally the Housing Complaints Team will take primary responsibility for continued communications with the resident.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 19:</b> Landlords should ensure that their complaints policy is effective and in line with the Complaint Handling Code, with clear compensation and redress guidance. Remedies should be commensurate to the distress and inconvenience caused to the resident, whilst recognising that each case is individual and should be considered on its own merits.</p>	<p>The Housing Complaints Policy was updated in 2024 in line with the Complaints Handling Code. Please see Housing Complaints Policy:</p> <p> 2024 - housing-complaints-p</p> <p>Each case is considered on its own merit, and when compensation is offered, a discussion will be had between the complaint investigator, the Housing Complaints Manager and any other staff with knowledge on the specific case.</p>	<p>There is an existing compensation policy which is in the process of being reviewed to ensure that it is in line with the recommendations of the HOS. Please see draft document:</p> <p> compensation-policy.docx</p>

<p><b>Recommendation 20:</b> Landlords need to ensure they can identify complex cases at an early stage and have a strategy for keeping residents informed and effective resolution.</p>	<p>We acknowledge that where complex cases arise because further investigation and diagnosis is required or because resolution may involve major repairs or planned improvements, providing updates and maintaining regular communication with residents can be challenging.</p> <p>We currently utilise our property services officers as the main point of contact for residents where complex damp and mould issues exist, however this is supported by our housing and estates teams.</p>	<p>Implementation of a new CRM system in 2025 is expected to improve case management and customer communication, as well as providing greater visibility of damp and mould cases, especially those of a complex nature, requiring both short term and longer-term measures to resolve.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 21:</b> Landlords should identify where an independent, mutually agreed and suitably qualified surveyor should be used, share the outcomes of all surveys and inspections with residents to help them understand the findings and be clear on next steps. Landlords should then act on accepted survey recommendations in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Whilst most of our damp and mould investigations are undertaken by our inhouse property services team and specialist suppliers, we have access to external qualified surveyors through membership of frameworks.</p> <p>For disrepair cases, which sometimes include damp and mould issues, we always aim to mutually agree a joint expert wherever possible and will act upon their findings. Their reports are shared with residents for transparency.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 22:</b> Where extensive works may be required, landlords should consider the individual circumstances of the household, including any vulnerabilities, and whether or not it is appropriate to move resident(s) out of their home at an early stage.</p>	<p>Where extensive works are required, we consider vulnerabilities and whether it is appropriate to provide alternative accommodation as part of our works planning.</p> <p>Should a case reach the complaint stage, the Housing Complaints Team keep a log of any reasonable adjustments required for the Household. These factors are taken into</p>	

	consideration in discussions about extensive works or household moves.	
<b>Recommendation 23:</b> Landlords should promote the benefits of their complaints process and the Ombudsman to their residents as an appropriate and effective route to resolving disputes.	The Housing Complaints Team promotes a positive complaints culture and encourages residents to use the service. All communications with residents contain a direct link to the Housing Ombudsman Service, and all complaint response letters detail the availability of the service. Residents are informed that they can contact the Housing Complaints Service at any point during the complaints process.	<p>Updated leaflets to be published in October 2024 will contain a QR code directly linking residents to the Housing Complaints Service and the Housing Ombudsman Service for easy access.</p> <p>The Housing Complaints Team are planning a schedule to attend Housing Estate Drop Ins for increased visibility and promotion of the service.</p> <p>A complaints training day has been scheduled for a wider group of Housing Staff to develop a stronger understanding of the complaints service, and the importance of promoting a positive complaints culture.</p>
<b>Recommendation 24:</b> Landlords should continue to use the complaints procedure when the pre-action protocol has commenced and until legal proceedings have been issued to maximise the opportunities to resolve disputes outside of court. Landlords should ensure their approach is consistent with our jurisdiction guidance and their legal and complaint teams work together effectively where an issue is being pursued through the complaints process and protocol.	<p>The Housing Complaints Team are in regular communication with the City of London's legal team to ensure that there is no cross over between legal cases and active complaints. Residents are made aware of the exemptions in relation to legal action.</p> <p>Cases that have started with the Housing Complaints Team and moved on to legal proceedings are monitored in weekly Housing Complaints meetings with the Property Services Team, to ensure that works are continuing irrespective of whether the Housing Complaints Team have the authority to manage a complaint.</p>	
<b>Recommendation 25:</b> Landlords should consider how best to share learning from complaints and the positive impact of changes	A two-monthly Complaints Learning Panel has been established with members of Housing Management involved. In these meetings,	A power BI dashboard is in development to allow easy visualisations of trends and patterns in Housing Complaints.

made as a result within the organisation and externally. Systems should allow the landlord to analyse their complaints data effectively and identify themes, trends and learning opportunities.	Housing Complaints Statistics are reviewed in detail and any high-profile cases are flagged to senior management and discussed.	A bi-annual meeting will be implemented from January 2024 to delve deeper into complaints learning statistics, reviewing patterns and trends and implementing ambitions for change across the Housing Division.
<b>Recommendation 26:</b> Landlords should ensure they treat residents reporting damp and mould with respect and empathy. The distress and inconvenience experienced by residents in this area is some of the most profound we have seen, and this needs to be reflected in the tone and approach of the complaint handling.	<p>Last year, approximately 60 staff from the Housing team attended customer service training to support with this ambition.</p> <p>Our draft damp and mould policy and our existing service standards commit to treating residents with respect and empathy and we regularly review our performance against these standards.</p>	Further Housing Complaints Handling training has been scheduled, including specific training in communicating with residents with additional needs and neurodiversity.

## City of London Corporation Committee Report

<b>Committee(s):</b> Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee – For decision	<b>Dated:</b> 28/11/2024
<b>Subject:</b> Housing Strategy One Year Action Plan – 2025-26	<b>Public report:</b>  <b>For Decision</b>
<b>This proposal:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes</b></li> <li>• <b>provides statutory duties</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	No
<b>If so, how much?</b>	N/A
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	N/A
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	No
<b>Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director Community &amp; Children’s Services</b>	
<b>Report author: Scott Myers, Strategy &amp; Projects Officer</b>	

### Summary

This report presents the Housing Strategy 2025-29 one year action plan for 2025-26 for Member approval, following the strategy's approval by Members in June 2024.

The action plan establishes a baseline for initiating the delivery of the strategy's priorities. A subsequent, longer-term action plan will be developed next year to outline actions for the remainder of the strategy's duration.

### Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Approve the action plan for 2025-26

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The Housing Strategy 2025-29 was approved by the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee in June 2024. Since then, work has been taken to establish the first baseline actions that can be delivered by the Housing Service during the 2025-26 financial year.
2. These actions set out in this plan are high level and deliver on the priorities of the Housing Strategy. Actions noted include work to enhance customer service, invest in repairs and maintenance, improve resident services, ensure compliance with building safety regulations, improve health and safety and plans to increase the supply of affordable housing.
3. On completion of this action plan, a three-year action plan will be developed which will set out actions that require multiple years of implementation to complete.

### **Current Position**

4. This action plan was developed by evaluating the priorities of the strategy, focusing on what is achievable over a one-year period.
5. It provides the strategic direction for the Housing Management Team over the coming year to improve the services we deliver to residents, as well as help meet our statutory obligations.
6. Although the plan sets out some of the measures that will take place to achieve the overall action, much of the granular detail involved will be achieved through service level team plans across the Housing Service, which are guided by this plan.
7. The action plan provides information on the key outcomes achieved through the delivery of each action, as well as relevant Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on how we will measure success of actions where appropriate. It also provides an expected completion date by financial year quarters.
8. Progress in meeting the obligations of the action plan within Housing will be monitored by the Housing Management Team, and a report to Members on its progress will be provided on an annual basis.
9. The progress made in this action plan will also help shape the subsequent three-year action plan, which will guide longer term actions related to the strategies priorities, and will be published in 2025-26.

10. The action plan can be viewed in Appendix 1, as well as a copy of the approved strategy in Appendix 2.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

Strategic implications – The Housing Strategy one year action plan aligns with the priorities of the Corporate Plan 2024-29, such as ‘Diverse Engaged Communities’, ‘Providing Excellent Services’ and ‘Leading Sustainable Environment’. It also provides direction to the City of London Corporation's ambitions to improve housing services to its residents, as well as the delivery of new affordable homes. The action plan also aligns to and delivers aspirations set out in the Climate Action Strategy.

Financial implications – within existing budgets.

Resource implications – none identified.

Legal implications – none identified.

Risk implications – none identified

Equalities implications – The action plan and the Housing Strategy sets out our ambition to ensure that housing services are inclusive, fair and equitable, which includes ensuring that we support residents with vulnerabilities fairly.

Climate implications – The action plan sets out actions that help the City Corporation achieve Net Zero by 2027 and reduce carbon emissions, as set out in the Climate Action Strategy.

Security implications – None identified.

## **Conclusion**

11. This action plan sets out our ambitions for coming financial year within the housing service. It builds upon the current transformation programme and provides a clear focus and direction for the successful deliver of housing services in the City of London and on our estates in neighbouring London Boroughs.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Housing Strategy One Year Action Plan – 2025-26
- Appendix 2 – Housing Strategy 2025-29

## **Scott Myers**

Strategy & Projects Officer

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## Housing Strategy Action Plan – 2025-26

### 1. Improve quality of housing services

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
1.1 Undertake mock inspection and develop and implement improvement plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specification for inspection developed</li> </ul>	Q2 2025	Head of Housing Management	Clear independent assessment of our position in relation to inspection	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisation commissioned to undertake mock inspection</li> </ul>	Q2 2025	Head of Housing Management		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mock inspection takes place</li> </ul>	Q2 2025	Head of Housing Management	SMART improvement plan for delivery	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed report delivered</li> </ul>	Q2 2025	Head of Housing Management		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvement plan developed with SMART actions</li> </ul>	Q2 2025	Head of Housing Management		
1.2 Provide an effective, compliant and resident focused repairs and maintenance service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of the repairs and maintenance one year action plan</li> <li>Extend or plan the procurement of repairs, maintenance and compliance contracts due to expire in 2025.</li> <li>Establish robust contract management practice for the repairs service</li> </ul>	<p>Q1 2025 – new repairs contract.</p> <p>Ongoing improvements to the service.</p>	Head of Repairs & Maintenance	<p>Service improvement and therefore improved tenant satisfaction</p> <p>Provider held to account for performance</p> <p>Smooth transition</p>	<p>Improved resident satisfaction with repairs reported in TSM.</p> <p>Improved satisfaction of speed of latest repair report in TSM.</p>

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post mobilisation of new contract to ensure smoothness of transition.</li> <li>Awarding and signing of new repairs contract</li> <li>Transition between previous contractor and new contractor</li> <li>Mobilisation of a new repairs contract</li> </ul>			<p>between existing repairs &amp; maintenance contract and the new contract., with minimal disruption to service.</p> <p>Compliance with procurement regulations.</p> <p>Providing value for money to the HRA.</p>	
1.3 Delivery accurate reporting of statutory compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment of a compliance manager with further recruitment to be considered</li> </ul>	Q3 2024-25	Housing Business Support Manager	Quality and Safety with compliance	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a gap analysis and implement the findings</li> <li>Confirm document and processes for Big 6.</li> <li>Creation of a dashboard to display information</li> <li>Define system requirements for Civica compliance management system and implementation</li> </ul>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> January 2025</p> <p>30 April 2025</p>	Housing Business Support Manager	Quality and Safety with compliance	N/A

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
1.4 Complete the transformation of the complaints management process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate lessons learnt from the complaints process – Annual report from Complaints Panel.</li> <li>• Improve how we manage and report complaints. Including developing a complaints dashboard</li> <li>• Complaints reporting to DLT and HMSC on a 6-monthly basis.</li> <li>• Regular staff complaints training being held by Business Support.</li> </ul>	Ongoing continuous improvement	Housing Business Support Manager	<p>Improved accountability and transparency of complaints.</p> <p>Compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Code of Conduct.</p>	<p>100% of complaints acknowledged within 5 working days</p> <p>100% of complaints responded to within the required timescales, including committed extensions.</p> <p>Increased score in TSM measure - handling of complaints</p>
1.5 Delivery of accurate reporting of statutory compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment of a compliance manager with further recruitment to be considered</li> </ul>	Q3 24-25	Head of Repairs and Maintenance	Quality and Safety with compliance	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a gap analysis and implement findings</li> <li>• Confirm document for big 6 compliance areas</li> <li>• Creation of a compliance performance dashboard</li> <li>• Define system requirements for Civica compliance management system and implementation</li> </ul>	<p>31 January 2025</p> <p>30 April 2025</p>	Head of Repairs and Maintenance	Quality and Safety with compliance	N/A
1.6 Develop and deliver performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce regular housing performance reports and refine as required.</li> </ul>	Q4 2024-25	Housing Business	Strengthened performance management	Achievement of Housing KPIs

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
management framework			Support Manager	and monitoring which informs service development. management and accountability	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree performance management framework</li> </ul>	Q3 2024-25	AD - Housing		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure governance structure is robust.</li> </ul>	Q4 2024-25	AD - Housing		
1.7 Complete Phase 2 of Civica implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-ordinate the Implementation of the next 4 Civica modules - CRM, generic cases, forms, enhanced voids.</li> <li>Carry out any training for staff as required</li> </ul>	Q1 2025	Housing Business Support Manager	Full scope and benefit of system used and impacts on service delivery, tenant satisfaction and performance management	N/A
1.8 Complete Phase 3 of Civica Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-ordinate the migration from keystone to Civica Asset Management System.</li> <li>Testing of the system to ensure compatibility and effectiveness.</li> <li>Carry out any training for staff as required</li> </ul>	Q 3 2025	Housing Business Support Manager	Greater accessibility of asset management data and improved data management and monitoring on assets.	N/A
1.9 Conduct a review of our commercial portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce a report setting out the options for our commercial portfolio, the pros and cons of each</li> </ul>	Q2 2025	AD - Housing & City Surveyors	Opportunity for increased income generation for the HRA.	N/A

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
	option and the impact on the HRA. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a strategy for the operating model of the HRA's commercial portfolio.</li> </ul>			Assurance on the future direction of the HRA's commercial portfolio.	
1.10 Develop an effective training and development plan for housing staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop plan in response to key areas from staff survey</li> <li>Improve how we record training information across teams to improve consistency</li> <li>Develop an overall plan for training</li> <li>Role specific training introduced within Housing.</li> </ul>	Q1 2025	Housing Business Support Manager	Improved customer service  Increased staff morale and satisfaction	Increased score in staff survey (job satisfaction) Enhanced customer standard Improved training offer within Housing. 100% of staff up to date in mandatory training  Contribution to increase in overall TSM rating
1.11 Continuous improvement in customer service standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refresh and embed customer service training as set out in the Customer Service training plan.</li> <li>Refresh the Mary Gobar training for all staff.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Housing Business Support Manager	Improved customer service offer  Improved staff training	Increase in tenant satisfaction 70% TSM target – satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All relevant staff involved in a refresh of customer service training</li> <li>Mary Gobar customer training refresh</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Housing Business Support Manager	Improved customer service offer Improved staff training	Increase in tenant satisfaction 70% TSM target – satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
1.12 Refresh the HRA business plan and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with finance colleagues to review and stress test the HRA business plan.</li> </ul>	Q3 2024-25 – Q2 2025-26	AD - Housing	A business plan in place to support the work of the Housing Department.	Increased ownership of budget holders and tighter management of our finances.
1.13 Review, streamline and bring our data and data management into the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All relevant staff involved</li> <li>Recruitment a system support and implementation manager.</li> <li>Establish a business information and data integrity regime</li> </ul>	Q4 2024-25 to ongoing	Housing Business Support Manager	Improved data management  Increases staff efficiency  Improved customer service	N/A

## 2. Engage and listen to residents

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
2.1 Develop resident engagement and influencing framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop framework with residents</li> </ul>	Q4 2024-25	Head of Housing Management	Strengthened resident engagement and influence	70% TSM target – satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult on framework</li> </ul>	Q4 2024-25			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Framework agreed and introduced.</li> </ul>	Q1 2025			

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
				<p>Increase in number of active resident associations</p> <p>Increased resident involvement in service development</p>	
2.2 Strengthen information on resident profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specification for inspection developed</li> <li>Finalise audit form and the project plan</li> </ul>	Q4 2024 – Q1-2025	Head of Housing Management	Updated profile leads to improved service and policy process development	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit a project team to carry out data gathering exercise</li> </ul>	Q4 2024 – Q1 2025	Head of Housing Management	Robust data on each household.	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record data on Civica</li> </ul>	Q4 2025	Head of Housing Management		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the improved data on residents who live on our estates to inform improvements to resident communication and improve customer access to housing services.</li> </ul>	Q4 2025	Head of Housing Management		
2.3 Improve how we communicate with residents and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved staff satisfaction within housing</li> <li>Establish a team briefing regime</li> <li>Hold regular staff briefing sessions</li> </ul>	Q1 2025-ongoing	Housing Business Support Manager	Improved staff retention and satisfaction with job	75% TSM target – satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce of quarterly staff awards associated with the achievements of the TSMs.</li> <li>Development of Mail Chimp for residents in emergency situations (texting service)</li> </ul>				Improved staff engagement recorded in staff survey.

### 3. Increase the supply of housing

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
3.1 Deliver high quality affordable homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>270 new affordable homes over 2 years and development of local lettings plan for each scheme. These schemes are:</li> </ul>	Q4 2025-6	Head of New Developments and Special Projects	<p>Meeting housing need</p> <p>Reducing the housing waiting list.</p>	Net increase in available homes.

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Black raven Court (COLPAI) 66 new homes</li> <li>Sydenham Hill – 110 new homes</li> <li>York Way Development – 91 new homes</li> </ul>			<p>Increase in the quality of homes</p> <p>Reduction in carbon emissions.</p> <p>Increase in revenue for the Housing Revenue Account.</p> <p>Achieve resident satisfaction with new homes.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify opportunities for further delivery of affordable housing through partnership with GLA and other external providers</li> <li>Explore the options for estate regeneration amongst our housing portfolio.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Head of New Developments and Special Projects	<p>Meeting housing need</p> <p>Identifying areas for increased level of home delivery</p> <p>Explore potential for more grants and funding.</p>	Increase options of future housing delivery.

#### 4. Improve housing quality

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
4.1 Undertake Stock condition survey	• Specification for stock condition survey developed	Q4 2024	Head of Operations	Clear picture of stock condition	Approved and implemented
	• Organisation commissioned to stock condition survey	Q4 2024	Head of Operations	Better data about our stock condition	
	• Stock condition survey undertaken	Q1 2025	Head of Operations		
	• Detailed report delivered and findings recorded on Keystone	Q3 2025	Head of Operations		

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
4.2 Develop an Investment Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment Strategy drafted</li> <li>Comments provided on draft</li> <li>Governance process</li> <li>Implementation of strategy</li> </ul>	Q4 2025	AD - Housing	<p>Clear strategy to manage our assets</p> <p>Better data about our building assets</p>	Approved and implemented
4.3 Achieve Net Zero on our estates by 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look into renewable alternatives to gas boilers within homes where appropriate.</li> <li>Maximise the use of government grants and funding for carbon reduction schemes.</li> <li>Develop new policies and procedures on bank of Net Zero related changes, such as maintenance and installation of new equipment.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Head of Major Works and Head of Repairs and Maintenance	<p>Reduced carbon emissions on our estates.</p> <p>Reduced cost in use for residents</p> <p>Help achieve the 2027 target as set out in the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy.</p>	Energy Performance Certificates for homes minimum of a Band C.
4.4 Deliver successful Major Works on our estates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver Major Work Schemes across our estates for 2025-26</li> <li>Develop our Major Works plan for 2026-27 schemes of work.</li> </ul>	Q4 2025-26	Head of Major Works	<p>Clear and well managed programme which is efficient and tenant satisfaction increases</p> <p>Increased thermal efficiency of homes</p>	Projects completed on time and to budget

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
				<p>Reduced energy bills</p> <p>Higher levels of compliance as a statutory housing provider</p> <p>Resident input on design and implementation of major work programmes</p>	

#### 5. Improve building safety

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
5.1 Strengthen health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Health and Safety structure, identify new structure and responsibilities to remain statutorily compliant</li> </ul>	Q1 2025	AD - Housing	<p>Compliance with health and safety regulations</p> <p>Improved health and safety work practices on our estates and the expectations as set out in the Quadriga report.</p>	Achievement of relevant KPIs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-ordinate implementation from Safe365 review</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Housing Business Support Manager	Improved health and safety work practices on our estates	N/A

Action	Milestones	Timescales	Lead	Outcomes	KPIs
				Compliance with health and safety regulations	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roll out a Resident Engagement Strategy for building safety</li> </ul>	Ongoing	AD - Housing	Improved communication with residents	N/A
5.2 Deliver the fire safety works programme for 2025-26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rolling fire door replacement programme</li> </ul>	Q3 2025	Head of Major Works	Improved fire safety of our buildings	75% TSM target – satisfaction that the home is safe
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sprinkler replacement programme</li> </ul>	Q3 2025	Head of New Developments and Special Projects	Compliance with building regulations	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a fire safety works programme for 2026 onwards</li> </ul>	Q4 2025-26	Head of Major Works and Head of New Developments and Special Projects		
5.3 Compliance with Fire Risk Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliant fire risk assessments available for all our social housing blocks.</li> <li>Co-ordination and reporting of fire risk assessment actions.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Housing Business Support Manager	<p>Improved fire safety of our buildings</p> <p>Compliance with building regulations</p>	100% compliance TSM measure – proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out

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## **HOUSING STRATEGY 2024-2029**

### **Executive Summary**

The Housing Strategy 2024-2029 outlines the City of London Corporation's vision for the successful delivery of housing services to residents of social housing and future supply of new housing.

The strategy focuses on improving the quality of housing services, engaging, and listening to residents, improving building safety, and increasing the supply of housing.

The strategy aligns with national housing priorities and aims to address the challenges posed by the housing crisis, particularly in terms of affordability, quality, and safety.

Key priorities include improving customer service, investing in repairs and maintenance, engaging residents in decision-making, ensuring compliance with building safety regulations, and increasing the supply of affordable housing.

The strategy also emphasises the need for ongoing monitoring and governance to track progress and ensure accountability for the delivery of actions.

### **Vision**

Our vision is for every resident to have access to safe, affordable, and high-quality housing that enhances their well-being and provides stability for successful lives.

Through working together, openness and transparency, and continuous improvement, we aim to create thriving, inclusive, and sustainable neighbourhoods, where every resident feels valued, supported, and empowered to live their life well.

### **Purpose of the strategy**

The City of London Corporation is the landlord responsible for 1923 social rented properties and 936 leaseholder properties across London. Most residents within the Square Mile live on four estates at the Barbican, Golden Lane, Middlesex Street and Mansell Street. Three quarters of our social housing is situated outside the Square Mile on eleven estates that the Corporation manages in the six London boroughs of Southwark, Islington, Lewisham, Lambeth, Hackney, and Tower Hamlets.

The purpose of the housing strategy is to set out our vision for the successful delivery of housing services to residents of our social housing and future supply of new housing. In this document, we have outlined the priorities, ambition, and actions we consider necessary to address current housing needs and challenges and ensure that appropriate, affordable, and quality housing is available to meet the diverse needs of our existing and future residents.

The strategy aligns to national housing priorities and provides a roadmap for our areas of focus over the next five years.

Over the last year, we have reviewed how best to improve our services to residents and have reconfigured the housing service into two new departments, one for the Barbican residential estate, and one for social housing. Led by two new Assistant Directors, we have done this to ensure that there is a dedicated focus on services to leaseholders living in the Barbican residential estate, and to the remaining residents within the City of London itself and six other London boroughs.

We know that Housing is a fundamental issue for all residents. Everyone should have access to a decent, affordable home which is warm, dry, and safe. We know that poor housing, or poorly managed housing, has a negative impact on people's lives, so we are committed to getting the basics right in our housing management service to ensure a quality housing experience for all.

### **Five overarching priorities for the new housing strategy**

The draft priorities of the housing strategy were developed and strengthened via consultation, with residents, members, and staff through face-to-face focus groups, webinars, and an online questionnaire.

The sessions provided an opportunity to highlight key housing issues and to give views on the proposed priorities and actions with the final set of priorities agreed as below:

- Improve the quality of housing services.
- Improve housing quality.
- Engage and listen to residents.
- Improve building safety.
- Increase the supply of housing.

### **The wider strategic context for housing**

This is a critical period for the delivery of housing services. Nationally, Council landlords face a complex set of challenges which test our ability to enable all residents to have access to safe, affordable, and high-quality housing.

Today, there is a huge national shortage of affordable housing in the UK with demand for social housing exceeding available supply. This has resulted in long waiting lists for social housing and increased homelessness. The City of London is not immune from this crisis with 1056 applications currently on the housing register and a high incidence of rough sleeping, the vast majority of which are single homeless men.

Last year, 482 people were reported as sleeping rough in the City of London, and for this population, demand is particularly high for studio and one-bedroom sized accommodation. Amongst the City's rough sleepers, there were high incidences of poor mental health and drug and alcohol misuse. Those in need of long-term

accommodation come with a variety of vulnerabilities which require a supportive approach to housing management, working in partnership with social services and support agencies, which is not always easy when working across a range of different boroughs.

Following the tragic Grenfell Tower fire in 2017, which exposed a range of systemic failures in housing and fire safety regulations as well as issues related to social inequality and marginalisation, a strong focus on building safety, and particularly fire safety has issued in a new culture of regulation, particularly in relation to high rise blocks. We must ensure that our residential buildings are safe as they can be, not only because it is the right thing to do, but because of new legislation such as the Building Safety Act 2022.

This Act is intended to strengthen the regulatory system for building safety, with increased responsibilities of building developers, owners, and managers to ensure greater accountability for the design, construction, and occupation of high-risk buildings. We have taken our responsibilities seriously in this regard, not least through a widescale programme of fire sprinkler installation, but fire safety requires significant investment. The challenge is how we can ensure that we deliver much needed investment in the ongoing maintenance of our existing homes, as well as meet our statutory health and safety responsibilities.

Housing, and the quality of homes, particularly social rented homes has been in the national spotlight with successive investigations highlighting the perilous conditions that some residents have been living with for years, often without any redress. These recent high-profile cases have increased the scrutiny of housing conditions, exposing neglect, and ignoring factors that impact on the health and well-being of residents. How landlords tackle damp and mould alongside health and safety compliance of the 'big six' - fire, asbestos, gas, electrical, lifts and legionella is subject to public scrutiny and government intervention.

We are a proactive landlord, and in the last year, have commissioned two external reviews of our housing management practice to highlight where we can do more to improve the service to residents. The Altair review of the Barbican residential estate has resulted in a comprehensive action plan to improve the service to Barbican residents including a sharp focus on value for money of service charges, effective monitoring of contractor performance, and driving up the quality of customer service. Overseen by a Programme Board of residents, members and officers, the action plan arising from this review is already delivering improvements, with the Barbican team demonstrating greater responsiveness, more ownership and responsibility to resolve longstanding problems and better customer service.

The Barbican transformation programme has been driven by true partnership working with residents who have tirelessly supported the team to improve the quality of their service. It is a template that we wish to apply to all aspects of the housing service. Over the next 5 years, we want to encourage the same level of active engagement to drive up standards on those estates funded by the Housing Revenue Account.

The Pennington review of the housing management service for the social housing estates drew many of the same conclusions as that of the Altair review. Similarly, an action plan has been developed to improve the quality of the service overseen by the Housing Sub-Committee. Not only is it important to ensure that these actions are achieved internally, but there is an external driver too. In recent years, concerns about the treatment of social housing tenants have prompted the strengthening of the role of the Regulator of Social Housing with the introduction of a set of tenant satisfaction measures and consumer standards and a landlords' league table, to be published annually from April 2024.

This external scrutiny and new reporting regime are intended to strengthen the resident voice, increase transparency, and hold landlords to account. A zero-tolerance approach to poor housing service and consequences for inaction enables central government to intervene where residents are being failed.

We are pleased that currently 67% of our social rented tenants are satisfied with the service that we provide, up 10% from the year before, but we are certainly not complacent. We intend to build on this benchmark year on year, listening to what our residents have to say and working with them much more closely to make the improvements that they desire to their service. We will ensure that complaints are dealt with promptly and fairly, that the resident's voice is heard and that residents are treated with respect.

The Housing Ombudsman's service has also been bolstered to thoroughly scrutinise the service that is being provided to residents of social housing. They have produced a series of spotlight reports on the poor quality of complaint handling by local authorities and housing associations. There have been high profile deep dives into incidences of damp and mould, dealing with anti-social behaviour, attitudes towards tenants, respect, and tenant rights.

The naming and shaming of landlords who persistently let down their residents is something which we have thus far avoided, and we will continue to improve on our responsiveness to residents. However, we know that our residents are unhappy with the quality of the repairs and maintenance service and are uncertain about when they can expect investment in their homes. Getting the repairs service right and having a clear plan for housing investment, through our asset management strategy, will go a long way to reducing complaints and giving residents confidence for the future.

In 2019, central government declared a climate emergency, amending previous legislation to commit the UK to bringing down all greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. We have embraced this challenge with an aspiration to achieve net zero emissions by 2030 and have implemented measures to ensure that housing meets minimum quality, safety, and energy efficiency requirements. Where we can, we will ensure that energy efficiency is a top priority. We are committed to meeting net zero carbon in all our new-build housing, to meet government targets, and importantly reduce fuel poverty and increase comfort for new residents. We will explore fully how to achieve net zero in our existing homes through retrofitting.

Over the lifetime of this strategy, we will be informed by the accompanying asset management strategy about how we will replace gas boilers in our housing stock, with alternative energy efficient systems which are also economical to run. However, we know already that ground heat pumps are not a widescale solution for our social housing, and hydrogen boilers are costly to run. We will investigate all viable options for replacement and include a fully costed plan in our future housing investment programme.

In a period of financial turbulence and with the tail of the Covid pandemic legacy, we have witnessed a profound effect on housing, from supply chain issues which have impacted on the cost and timeliness of new development, the costs of procuring and delivering effective repairs and maintenance services, and shortage of resources, skills, and expertise. High inflation has had a severe impact on operating costs. The stark truth is whilst we aspire to do much more, we are operating within a much more constrained environment. Set alongside a cost-of-living crisis, the pandemic has also magnified existing issues such as social isolation, poverty, and scarcity of housing supply.

The rent cap worsens an already difficult financial position for the housing revenue account, with the annual 1% reduction policy in place from 2016 to 2020 leaving reserves severely depleted and demanding greater efficiency to achieve savings.

All these factors contribute to a challenging environment for housing management and a tough backdrop for the successful delivery of services to residents. Our ambition, despite these factors, is to deliver much more value to residents - value for money, community value, and strong values in our housing staff so that they are committed to creating great places for people to live.

### **Corporate Plan and the vision for housing**

Our corporate plan provides the context for a new housing strategy. People should receive good services, live in excellent quality housing, and live independent and healthy lives. Communities should be involved in decisions that affect them and the place where they live. Housing should be a positive aspect of everyday life, enhancing health and well-being and providing stability for successful lives.

Housing services should be high-quality, generating high levels of resident satisfaction. Homes should be safe and well-maintained with a strong emphasis on fire safety and building safety. There is an aspiration to develop more affordable housing for those in housing need.

There should be meaningful engagement with residents, so they can influence the quality of their housing services and raise the standards of their homes to enhance their well-being and life chances.

We deliver housing services via a local housing management model, with estate-based offices and a patch-based service which provides for residents where they live. By having housing management services delivered at a local level, our housing

teams should be better able to tailor their services to meet the specific needs of the community and provide a more personalised and responsive service.

As our housing is in different local authority areas, a local housing management service also enables better communication between residents and housing teams, with greater transparency and oversight, and dedicated points of contact for inquiries, feedback, and concerns.

Although the local housing management model has fallen out of favour with housing providers in recent years, increasingly with the challenges of the new housing regulatory regime and a demand from residents to improve the quality of housing service delivery, many housing providers are returning to patch-based housing management.

Because our housing stock is so widely dispersed, a locality-based model works for us and therefore it is not proposed that in the short to medium term this should change. However, when we spoke to residents, we heard from them a strong desire that the service should become more customer focussed. The challenge posed by residents was that our services were not focussed enough on them as recipients and that they wanted to see higher standards of customer service with a strong focus on outcomes not processes.

The benefit of a locally delivered service is that it should be easier to be more responsive to residents, however this was not the broad experience of residents who reported back to us via the Housing Strategy online questionnaire. Despite being based in the heart of estates, there was a disconnect between 'them and us,' and a feeling that housing teams were remote and disengaged.

This was also borne out by the lack of participation in the face-to-face consultation sessions, and the lack of attendance at estate drop-in sessions. This demonstrates that there is work to be done to improve the relationship between housing teams and the customers that they serve.

We need to provide more digitally accessible service routes in recognition of the fact that people are used to doing things for themselves and at a time that suits them, however we need to capitalise on our existing local presence and utilise it to its best effect. Increasingly too, we see many more vulnerabilities amongst residents who need that local, tailored support so we should not pursue modern options of service delivery without recognising that our resident base requires both; smarter ways to connect as well as one-on-one support.

### **Improve the quality of housing services**

We believe that it is paramount that we employ people with the right attitude to deliver housing services and that this is essential for building a successful customer focussed approach.

Our senior leaders will set the tone for the right attitude and behaviours to create a positive culture which puts residents at the heart of everything we do. Residents

want to be confident that when they contact us their enquiry will be dealt with promptly by someone who is knowledgeable, professional, and empowered to resolve their request, so we have invested in mandatory customer service training for all. We are recruiting new staff specifically for their customer service skills because we know that we can train them in housing management.

We will make it easy for residents to give feedback on our services and we will listen to what they have to say. Although nearly three quarters of our residents said that they were happy with the service that we provide in the most recent resident survey, that still leaves a significant swathe of dissatisfaction that we need to address through continuous improvement of service delivery.

Both residents and staff tell us that the main area for improvement is the quality of the repairs and maintenance service, and it is certainly the most frequent generator of complaints. New contracts are currently being procured, and their term will align with the housing strategy.

Residents have been fully involved in shaping the new contracts, which have prioritised the quality of the maintenance service as well as ongoing cost control and efficiency. The new contracts will require stronger collaboration between teams to avoid repairs being dropped and there will be better communication and sharing of information to frontline staff who are the main point of contact for residents.

We are committed to more much rigorous performance management of contractors to ensure that they are properly held to account, and the new contracts set stretching targets to ensure repairs are timely and completed right first time, and that there is less reliance on sub-contractors to reduce cost and improve efficiency.

There is a strong view that if the repairs service improves, residents will have an overall better perception of the housing service, and staff will be freed up to concentrate on other tasks rather than deal with repeated failure demand.

We also recognise that we need to be better equipped to deal with the increasing number of tenants with complex needs. Within the City of London, there is excellent joint working with corporate colleagues to get residents the help that they might need. However, this becomes less easy when dealing with the other boroughs in which our housing is located where those natural day to day relationships with colleagues are less familiar and embedded.

We will focus on establishing better networking and partnership working with outer borough social services and agencies to get vulnerable tenants the support that they need. We will also ensure that we are providing more support at the start of the tenancy for the most vulnerable residents to ensure that tenancies are sustained and that there is appropriate signposting to support services. We are keen to ensure that tenancy support becomes a core skill for frontline staff, alongside the existing specialist provision.

Knowing our customers is key to success in this area, and we have already increased the frequency of tenancy visits to ensure that we continue to build up a rounded picture of who is living in our housing, and what they might need from us as

their landlord. Improving the quality of core data will be a key area of focus to ensure that we have a continuously refreshed profile of our customers, and we can tailor our services based on this information.

Over the last year, we have invested in the installation of a new housing management system, Civica, which should enable a better base of core information to support the housing management service. The system implementation has not been without disruption, but we have invested to improve the reliability of the system and support staff through training so that they are using it to its maximum capacity. We will work with our teams and residents to ensure that data is constantly refreshed and updated at all points of contact.

Although we work across London, we have not always been as curious as we could be in exploring best practice and using it to improve our housing management service. The benefit of external review is that we have had our practice validated against an external evidence base which has provided lots of excellent case studies and examples of what works well. Building on this for the future, we know that we need to continue to actively seek out how things work elsewhere and actively benchmark with other organisations through informal peer review, Housemark, the sector-wide quality network, and London Councils' directors' groups.

In line with the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing, all staff providing housing services have received customer service training, and we will refresh this through an ongoing training plan. We will continue to invest in communication skills and conflict resolution to ensure that residents receive respectful, consistent, and responsive services.

Senior management staff will also receive accredited management training to equip them with the required managerial skills to ensure effective oversight of housing management services, and to meet the standards of the new monitoring regime by central government.

We recognise that over time, some frontline housing management roles may have been deskilled by an over-reliance on policies and procedures to the detriment of relationship building, problem solving and the ability to exercise sound judgement. We will create a culture in which everyone has a strong customer focus and performs to their best. Our teams are not large, and our structures are not complicated so we will focus on collaboration between teams, breaking down internal silos, and reducing handovers between teams to create a more seamless customer experience.

Whilst we are committed to a local housing management model, and services which are easily accessible to residents, we can do more to lever modern technology, including providing multiple channels for communication, and ordering online platforms for service requests. We will employ more sophisticated communication methods such as apps and customer portals to enable customers to do things for themselves where they are willing and able to do so, and generally embrace smarter ways of working.

We will collect data on service usage and resident satisfaction and use this data to actively inform decision-making, measure impact, identify any areas of non-compliance and make improvements to housing services. We will continually evaluate and monitor to assess effectiveness, identify areas for improvement and ensure that services are meeting the needs of residents.

### **Our ambition**

- We will meet the demands of the Regulator of Social Housing, increasing year on year performance against consumer standards and tenant satisfaction measures.
- We will increase the level of customer satisfaction through the effective management of services for tenants and leaseholders.
- We will build strong person-centred relationships with residents, enabling staff to take early, appropriate, and effective action with specialist interventions for those with complex needs.
- We will develop tenancy support to maintain tenancies and know our residents better by conducting annual visits to all tenants who live in Council housing.

### **Improve Housing quality**

Improving the quality of our existing housing is hugely important to residents. Throughout the consultation process, the quality of the current repairs and maintenance service and the lack of clear plans for housing investment were raised as major causes of concern, by residents and by colleagues working to deliver the housing service.

A lack of a clear plan for housing investment has caused dissatisfaction and increased the demand for the day-to-day repairs and maintenance service in the absence of a long-term plan for asset management.

Alongside this housing strategy, the asset management strategy is being developed, a 5-year plan which will provide a fully costed plan for major works to improve the fabric of our homes. The asset management strategy will include measures to enhance the safety, comfort, energy efficiency and overall liveability of homes. This will include investing in renovation and retrofitting projects to upgrade existing homes, improving building condition, and addressing maintenance issues as well as meeting central government targets for decent homes.

The asset management strategy will set out clear, timetabled plans to implement energy-efficient measures such as insulation, window upgrades, and roof renewal to reduce energy consumption, lower utility costs and improve sustainability.

For the Housing Strategy, we recognise that there is untapped potential to regenerate our existing stock, which could bring a range of benefits to communities and residents, primarily improved housing but also enhanced public spaces, economic opportunities, social cohesion, and environmental improvements.

The ambition for regeneration should be one rooted in the local community, for the benefit of existing residents as well as welcoming new ones, through the provision of more and better housing by refurbishing existing homes and building sustainable new homes. New housing should be also at the forefront of net zero carbon development, with sustainable design principles to deliver significant reductions in CO2 emissions and cheaper energy costs for residents.

We are keen to develop a coordinated and structured approach to estate regeneration. This will be rooted in a corporate understanding of how regeneration has the potential to realise real benefits for existing residents, through large scale refurbishment of estates and the delivery of new housing to meet local housing need.

We will also involve frontline staff and residents in the design of new housing so that it can be managed most effectively, and issues foreseen before they occur, futureproofing new homes especially when it comes to accessibility.

As part of the asset management strategy, appraisals will be undertaken across all estates, and recommendations around viability, enabling decisions around estate regeneration to have a robust evidence base.

Alongside our strategic ambitions, we recognise the need to improve operational management to keep homes well-maintained and in good condition. That sense of neighbourhood and home is enhanced by surroundings that are clean, tidy, and well-maintained, with inviting and functional spaces for residents to socialise, exercise and engage in community activities.

With a locally based workforce, we are well-placed to see neighbourhoods' quality first-hand as experienced by those who live there. Getting the basics right, through effective property management, regular maintenance and cleaning schedules and responsive repairs services will go a long way to keeping homes well-maintained and in good condition.

## **Our ambition**

- We will develop a new asset management strategy and plan, supported by survey information on our housing stock that is constantly updated.
- We will invest in our estates and homes to achieve ongoing decent homes standard compliance.
- We will provide a high quality, responsive repairs, and maintenance service.
- We will build new zero carbon housing, retrofit where it is cost-effective to do so in our existing housing, and explore off-setting carbon emissions.
- We will develop and implement a plan to replace gas heating systems and improve the energy efficiency of homes.
- We will publish a 5-year planned maintenance and cyclical decoration programme to provide residents with visibility of planned works.
- We will meet the requirements of the Homes Fitness for Human Habitation Act.

- We will develop a 5-year estate regeneration strategy, outlining a plan for revitalising and improving the City of London's housing estates, which drives the completion of existing schemes and identifies new opportunities to keep development on track through an effective programme management approach.

## **Engage and listen to residents**

Despite a housing management service which is rooted firmly within the local community, our relationship with residents needs strengthening. Engaging with residents to gather feedback, address concerns and involve them in decision-making processes related to the management and maintenance of their homes is essential for building trust and collaboration, however we know that this is an area which requires some improvement.

The Social Housing Regulation Act places a legal duty on social housing providers to ensure that tenants' voices are at the heart of their services. It expects landlords to tailor engagement so all tenants can engage through a wide range of methods. Effective resident engagement has many benefits, highlighting services that are valued by residents, identifying areas for improvement, improving communication, and building relationships with residents. If residents feel that they are valued and are being listened to, in turn they will feel happier about where they live and that their voice makes a difference.

For us, putting in place more meaningful and long-lasting resident engagement is more than just a tick in the legal tick-box. We want to do this well to build trust, enhance well-being and reduce complaints about the housing service.

Although we have many active established tenant associations and committees, there needs to be more effective liaison between residents and housing management teams. We have already recognised that this is an area of concern, and have been working with TPAS, the tenant engagement experts, to help us build model constitutions and better ways of working together.

Where it works well, we can see how joint working really drives service improvement and a greater sense of accountability. However, we do not have a strong sense of advocacy, or established forum, for residents to voice their opinions, share feedback and raise concerns about housing matters.

We are committed to improving resident forums so that these are stronger conduits for communication about the things that matter to residents. As well as door-to-door outreach and estate inspections to connect with residents, we will make more use of online platforms, social media, and digital communication to engage with residents, share information and facilitate feedback and dialogue.

Residents told us that we could improve the way in which we communicate with them, and how we provide feedback to those who do actively engage. At the heart of our organisational culture, must be a new approach to resident engagement and the opportunity for residents to influence decisions that impact them.

Giving residents the opportunity to opt in or out of the conversation is just as important as formal structures. We recognise that engagement needs to be tailored to residents' needs and the type of home that they live in, which is particularly pertinent to involving residents in discussion around fire safety for example.

### **Our Ambition**

- We will create a culture of co-production through the creation of a separate forum for social housing residents, reporting into Housing Sub-Committee, so that the tenant voice can be fully heard.
- We will develop more proactive and specific engagement with residents on matters of local concern using innovative and non-traditional methods.
- We will provide responsive services and effective customer care to all by identifying the needs of vulnerable households.
- We will proactively involve residents in monitoring the performance of services where they live.

### **Improve Building Safety**

We have been focussed on ensuring that the lessons from the Grenfell fire are learned and that action has been taken to ensure that every resident is safe in their home.

We have an effective fire safety regime and have recently completed the building safety cases required by law for all our high-rise blocks. We have commissioned an external check of our health and safety compliance monitoring regime to ensure that all our reporting is accurate and that there are no risks associated with our management of fire, asbestos, gas, electrical, lift and legionella safety.

Regular building inspections to identify and address maintenance issues, structural defects, and safety hazards, are conducted addressing any concerns related to damp, mould, and other health hazards.

The costs of building safety fall on our already overstretched housing revenue account and this work must be prioritised, and potentially redirected from planned maintenance or the development of new homes, however our sprinkler installation programme is well underway, and we have not faced the significant remediation costs that other landlords have had to bear.

We agree that the construction industry should be made to fix the fire safety defects built into blocks owned by councils and housing associations, and although this does not apply to any stock currently owned by the City of London Corporation, we will support residents who are facing these issues through our enforcement activities.

We will work closely with the police and the local community to address safety concerns and promote a safe living environment for residents.

Staying updated on changes to building regulations and safety guidelines is important to ensure that homes meet the latest standards, and we will actively engage with sector forums.

An important part of our resident engagement activity will be working with residents to raise awareness about building safety measures, emergency procedures and reporting mechanisms for safety concerns. We will continue to provide information and resources to help residents understand their rights and responsibilities related to building safety in their homes and continue to invest in training for staff and contractors on building safety practices, regulations, and emergency response protocols.

### **Our ambition**

- We will achieve full compliance with the regulatory framework for building safety.
- We will ensure effective fire safety management, maintaining up to date fire risk assessments, publishing documents and renewal dates.
- We will achieve full health and safety compliance on the 'big six' - fire, asbestos, gas, electrical, lifts and legionella.

### **Increase the supply of housing**

The average house price in the City of London in February 2024 was £809,000, more than double the national average (£298,000). The average monthly private rent for a two-bedroom property between October 2022 and September 2023 was £2,685 per month which is higher than the average rent in London (£1,860). For those in housing need, affordable housing is not within easy reach.

We have had a steady development programme in recent years, and projects are already underway at COLPAI (66 new homes), York Way Development (91 new homes), Sydenham Hill Development (110 new homes) and potential future developments at Sumner Building Estate and Avondale Square Estate. These schemes will increase the number of homes available for social rent, improve the existing housing stock and provide ongoing rental income for the Housing Revenue Account.

Our model for the supply of new affordable housing is supported by s106 contributions from developers (contributions towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure), delivering new office accommodation within the Square Mile. Historically, we have used these commuted sums to develop new social housing on our existing estates in the City and other London boroughs.

Social housing provides affordable and secure housing options for low-income households who may struggle to afford market-rated housing. Increasing the supply of affordable housing provides a stable base for family life and, where we can, we will strive to deliver more housing to provide long term security of tenure, address homelessness, and provide a safety net for those in unstable housing conditions. We also want to ensure that our housing is inclusive and supports accessibility for

people with additional needs, or who may need additional support, such as care leavers or people with specific vulnerabilities.

Although mixed tenure housing is in accordance with our Local Plan objectives, historically there has been a commitment that any new housing development should be social rented housing. However, the cost of construction and the availability of grant funding means that we may need to review what we build in the future, to futureproof the funding of council housing by building other forms of tenure as cross-subsidy. Moving away from this would require a policy refresh, and potentially new ways of working on housing delivery via a partnership with a developer contractor, housing association or other local authority under a development agreement, or joint venture.

Over the lifetime of this strategy, we will develop a clear plan for the future supply of new homes and will clearly define our definition of affordable housing, as we recognise that there is an increasing demand for all types of affordable housing including intermediate market rent, shared ownership, rent to buy and outright sale.

### **Our ambition**

- We will identify and secure an ongoing pipeline of funding streams, primarily s106 contributions, to support our development ambition.
- We will make housing development economically viable and better value for money.
- We will explore new development funding delivery models, including cross subsidy models.
- We will clearly define what we mean by affordable housing and who it is for
- We will set new achievable housing targets.
- We will prioritise new housing for local people through local letting policies.
- We will use our existing stock more efficiently by helping residents to downsize to more suitable properties.
- We will deliver an effective housing options and homelessness service, aimed at reducing the number of people at risk of homelessness and need for temporary accommodation.

### **Monitoring and Governance**

The strategy is designed to drive progress and deliver measurable outcomes for the quality of service provision, investment in our homes and new housing supply, underpinned by a delivery plan with clear actions against each of the priorities with timescales.

Oversight of performance against the ambition of the strategy will be via the Corporation's Community and Children's Services Grand committee with an annual report confirming the progress which has been made to ensure there is ongoing accountability for the delivery of actions.

## City of London Corporation Committee Report

<b>Committee:</b> Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 28/11/2024
<b>Subject:</b> Decants Policy and Crescent House Local Decants Policy	<b>Public report:</b> For Decision
<b>This proposal:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes</b></li> <li>• <b>provides statutory duties</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse Engaged Communities</li> <li>• Providing Excellent Services</li> </ul>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	No
<b>If so, how much?</b>	£
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	N/A
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	N/A
<b>Report of:</b> Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	
<b>Report author:</b> Liam Gillespie, Head of Housing Management, Department of Community and Children's Services (Housing Division)	

### Summary

A 'decant' takes place when a tenant is moved temporarily or permanently to an alternative property, to enable repair, redevelopment or renovation work to take place. This situation is covered by our Decants Policy, which was first approved by this Sub-Committee in April 2016 prior to the project to rehouse residents of Mais House in Sydenham Hill, which was later demolished.

The Decants Policy has been amended to cover different types of decant and to reflect key learning from the Housing Ombudsman, following their investigations into other landlords' handling of decant processes.

As part of the work to prepare for the project to refurbish and repair windows at the 145 homes in Crescent House on Golden Lane Estate, a local decants policy for that project has been drafted and is submitted for Member approval.

## **Recommendation**

Members are asked to:

- Approve the Decant Policy
- Approve the Crescent House Local Decant Policy

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The process by which residents are rehoused temporarily or permanently to enable repairs, major works or redevelopment, is often referred to as 'decanting'. Landlords have clear legal obligations in these situations, and the Housing Division's Decants Policy outlines our approach to ensuring that we meet these obligations. It also explains our commitment to providing the necessary support and advice to residents, to limit disruption and distress to residents as far as possible.
2. The Decants Policy was first approved in April 2016, as part of the project to redevelop the Mais House sheltered housing site at Sydenham Hill. As that project involved the permanent rehousing of residents, the policy concentrated on how the City Corporation would handle that kind of scenario.

### **Current Position**

3. The policy has now been reviewed under the three-yearly cycle, and in anticipation of the Crescent House windows project. It has been updated to cover three situations more clearly:
  - Emergency decants (for instance, to allow urgent repairs where the tenant cannot remain in occupation)
  - Planned temporary decants
  - Planned permanent decants
4. We are conscious that the process of moving home, whether temporarily or permanently, is potentially very disruptive to individual residents and can be distressing. The policy explains how we will communicate with and support residents during the process, to address their concerns and ensure that they are kept informed at each stage.
5. The Housing Ombudsman recently published a summary of key learning from complaints about how social landlords have handled decants, and those recommendations are reflected in the revised policy. They include:
  - Ensuring that residents have a named contact during the process and are regularly updated

- Making sure that the temporary accommodation is suitable at the outset, for both the resident's needs and the duration of the decant, and remains suitable depending on any changing circumstances
  - Landlords must communicate effectively with affected residents and provide information on key matters such as any financial allowances due
6. Our obligations differ in some respects between tenants and leaseholders (for example, in relation to emergency decants). The Decant Policy therefore applies to Secure tenants, however provision is made for project-specific local policies to be created, which can extend help and support to leaseholders and sub-tenants also as required.

### **Crescent House Windows Project**

7. The Crescent House windows project will involve 'planned temporary' decanting of households in phases, to enable works to be carried out to groups of properties systematically. Affected residents will return to their homes once work is complete, however some tenants with a current housing application may be assisted to find a suitable alternative home prior to the decanting process beginning.
8. The phased decanting of Crescent House is a complex matter and will require careful planning and management. It is appreciated that the process of moving into temporary accommodation is disruptive and potentially distressing for residents, and it is important that we listen and respond to their concerns about how the project will affect them individually.
9. The Crescent House project will require us to treat all tenures equally and provide the same offer to tenants, leaseholders and lawful sub-tenants. A Local Decant Policy has therefore been drafted to cover the Crescent House windows project, which Members are requested to approve.
10. The policy outlines the general approach to the Crescent House project. The detail on how the project will be delivered, including the support and assistance to be provided to residents, will be fully outlined in a decant scheme or plan. This will address the more specific logistical matters about how the process will be managed and will be developed with resident input, to ensure that their concerns and priorities are understood and addressed.

### **Recommendations**

11. Members are requested to approve both the main Decants Policy and the project-specific Crescent House Local Decants Policy.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

### **Strategic implications**

The Decants Policy will support consistent and legally compliant project delivery, and the Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcome of Delivering Excellent Services. Both the Decants Policy and Crescent House Local Decants Policy provide for planning and decision-making in conjunction with residents, and therefore support the outcome of Diverse, Engaged Communities.

### **Financial implications**

None.

### **Resource implications**

None.

### **Legal implications**

The Decants Policy sets out how we will meet our legal obligations, however there are no direct legal implications in the decisions Members are requested to make.

### **Risk implications**

None.

### **Equalities implications**

The policies provide for an assessment of residents' individual needs as part of any decanting activity, and this will support officers in fulfilling Equality Act 2010 duties.

### **Climate implications**

None.

### **Security implications**

None.

## **Conclusion**

12. The Decants Policy has been reviewed and amended to cover additional scenarios in why residents might be required to move home temporarily or permanently to facilitate repairs, major works or redevelopments affecting their homes.
13. The policy provides for the creation of scheme-specific policies to support specific projects. As part of the planning for the Crescent House windows project, which will require works to be completed while residents are temporarily housed elsewhere, a local decants policy has been drafted for Member approval.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Decants Policy
- Appendix 2 – Crescent House Local Decants Policy

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**Decants Policy  
(Temporary and Permanent Moves)**

**Department of Community and Children's Services**

**Housing Division**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy sets out our approach to managing the rehousing of residents (whether temporarily or permanently) when it is necessary to move them from their existing home to enable repairs, modernisation or redevelopment works.
- 1.2 As a landlord, the City Corporation is obliged to keep the structure and exterior of its residential properties, including communal areas, in good repair. The City Corporation also has repairing obligations to Secure tenants for the interiors of their homes.
- 1.3 Additionally, the City Corporation may elect to make improvements to the residential buildings it manages, or redevelop sites completely, to provide better quality homes for current and future residents.
- 1.4 Improvement works, including major repairs, will normally be carried out whilst the tenant remains in their home. There may be situations, such as those when the health and safety of the tenant would be at risk, or the works are extensive, when works cannot be carried out with the tenant at the property. Where this is the case, we will arrange to move the tenant and their household. This process is referred to as 'decanting', and this will be done on either a temporary or permanent basis, depending on the nature of the project.
- 1.5 The policy applies only to housing managed as part of the Housing Revenue Account.

## **2. Policy Purpose**

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the arrangements for the rehousing and financial compensation of residents to deliver either temporary or permanent vacant possession of affected properties, to allow for repair, modernisation or redevelopment works and ensure effective use of public funds.
- 2.2 The policy will help us to:
  - Ensure decants operate in a fair, equitable and reasonable manner
  - Provide tenants with a clear approach to temporary and permanent rehousing, to ensure their options are clearly explained and that they are aware of their rights and responsibilities
  - To enable decants to be carried out with the minimal disturbance to tenants.
  - To outline the support, both financial and practical, provided to tenants who are required to decant.
  - To minimise rent loss to the City Corporation and to ensure that the best use is made of our resources.
  - Ensure statutory compliance with relevant legislation, including the requirement for tenants to be compensated when home loss applies.

### **3. Service standards**

- 3.1 Consultation with affected residents will be carried out prior to the Committee's consideration of the works. Consultation will continue throughout the decant programme where appropriate on the detail of the modernisation or redevelopment programme.
- 3.2 Programmes will be managed by dedicated officers who will manage communication and consultation with residents and provide the first point of contact for advice and support for all households affected by the decanting programme.
- 3.3 A housing needs survey will be undertaken of all affected residents and households prior to agreeing any temporary move.
- 3.4 The policy aims to ensure no person will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of any protected characteristic (Equality Act, 2010).

### **4. Legislation and regulation**

- 4.1 This policy will help us to comply with the following regulatory requirements:

- Decent Homes Standard
- Safety and Quality Standard

- 4.2 The main legislation which is relevant to decanting is:

- Housing Act 1985

We have a legal obligation to consult with tenants when they are substantially affected by a proposal. Consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at an early stage, and we will consult with all affected persons.

- Land Compensation Act 1973

The Land Compensation Act 1973 provides for Home Loss Payments to be made to tenants for having to permanently move out of their home, subject to certain eligibility criteria. This mandatory payment is set by the Home Loss Payments (Prescribed Amounts) England Regulations.

The Land Compensation Act 1973 Act also sets out guidance relating to the payment of Disturbance Allowances aimed at compensating tenants for the actual cost of moving from their home.

### **5. Types of Decant**

- 5.1 Decants will generally fall into one of the following categories:

- Emergency (for example, to allow urgent repairs)
- Planned (Temporary)
- Planned (Permanent)

## **Emergency Decant**

5.2 An emergency decant is usually required when an unexpected event has caused the property to be uninhabitable and arrangements need to be made quickly to provide alternative accommodation. In these situations, we will assist the tenant in finding alternative accommodation. This may include but is not limited to:

- Encouraging them to stay with friends or family
- Sourcing bed and breakfast / hotel type accommodation
- Sourcing alternative City Corporation accommodation

5.3 In any emergency, the priority will be to secure alternative accommodation for the tenant affected. Once this has been resolved, a full assessment of the work required at the property and the future housing requirements of the tenant will be conducted.

5.4 We will ensure that the alternative accommodation is suitable for the tenant's needs and the duration of the decant. This will be reviewed if circumstances change (for instance, if a repair takes longer than originally estimated).

## **Planned (Temporary) Decant**

5.5 It may be necessary to move tenants temporarily whilst works are being carried out. An example of works include:

- Extensive works to multiple rooms
- Repairs or improvements meaning that the household is unable to live in the property safely whilst works are being carried out

5.6 Where planned repair or improvement work is required that cannot be carried out with the tenant in occupation, but does not require them to leave immediately, temporary alternative accommodation will be arranged prior to the work being undertaken. In determining the type of accommodation to be used, we will consider the likely time to complete the repair/works, the availability of suitable accommodation, the household's personal needs and the relative cost of each option.

5.7 Options that will be considered for temporary accommodation will include:

- Encouraging them to stay with friends or family
- Sourcing bed and breakfast / hotel accommodation
- Sourcing alternative City Corporation accommodation

5.8 The temporary move will only last as long as it takes to complete the repair or improvement works. If we arrange the accommodation, we will assist in respect of the relocation, including helping to move essential items and making minor adaptations to make the decant property suitable, such as installing grab rails or a temporary ramp.

## **Permanent Decant**

5.9 A permanent decant may be necessary where it is planned to dispose of, demolish, remodel, or redevelop the property. In these circumstances, we will carry out extensive consultation and work closely with affected households at all stages to support them through the process and help find suitable alternative accommodation.

5.10 For these decants, the following principles apply:

- Tenants will be given urgent priority through the lettings process.
- Existing tenants will normally be offered a new tenancy in accordance with our Housing Allocations Scheme
- If the decant is for the purpose of enabling new housing development on the site, we will discuss with the tenant the option of being rehoused in the new scheme if the planned accommodation is suitable for their needs.
- We will provide a package of support tailored to meet each households needs.

5.11 We will ensure that displaced residents are aware of their rights, including financial compensation and assistance with moving costs.

## **6. Accommodation Costs During Decants**

- 6.1 When a tenant is decanted as an emergency, or as a planned temporary measure, they remain liable for rent, service charges and other bills (including council tax and utilities) on their permanent home. Rent will not be due on the decant property whilst there is an intention for the tenant to return to their tenanted home.
- 6.2 We will cover the cost of utilities used by our contractors while repairs are completed.

## **7. The policy approach**

- 7.1 Decant programmes will be scheme specific. The approach to decanting will take into account scheme proposals, works requirements, residents' choices to be rehoused temporarily or permanently, and residents' rehousing needs and preferences.
- 7.2 Local Decants Policies may be implemented to address the requirements of specific projects. Any such policy will require Committee approval and will remain in force until the project is completed.
- 7.3 This policy applies to tenants and licensees of the City Corporation, however we may implement project-specific policies which extend assistance to leaseholders, sub-tenants and other classes of occupier depending on the nature of the project.
- 7.3 Whilst there is no legal requirement to allow residents to return to properties in a redeveloped site, the Corporation is committed to allowing residents who wish to return to be given priority to do so subject to availability of suitable properties which meet the identified needs and requirements of their household. Local lettings plans may be applied to the letting of new or redeveloped properties units to facilitate this.
- 7.4 Where residents are to move temporarily and return to their substantive home upon completion of works residents will:
- retain the tenancy of their existing substantive home
  - move temporarily with a licence to occupy their temporary decant property
  - pay the lower of the two property rents during the period of the works
  - have the right to return to their substantive home upon completion of the work.

## **8. Housing Needs Survey**

- 8.1 For planned decants, all residents will be offered a visit or interview to assess their individual households' rehousing needs, preferences and support requirements, and determine their eligibility for help with rehousing and financial compensation.
- 8.2 Household details will be updated periodically throughout the duration of the programme and further visits will be undertaken prior to rehousing to check requirements and enable claims for financial compensation.

## **9. Eligibility – Qualifications and Exclusions**

- 9.1 The following residents will be eligible for rehousing and assistance:
  - tenants living in affected property 12 months prior to the date of the Committee decision to proceed with the proposed scheme
  - family members including children living with the tenant at the property 12 months prior to the date of the Committee decision to proceed with the proposed scheme
  - partners and spouses living with the tenant 12 months prior to the date of the Committee decision to proceed with the proposed scheme

Proof that residents meet the eligibility criteria may be required. The City Corporation will not rehouse unauthorised occupants, sub-tenants, lodgers, licensees, children of the tenant whose main or principal home is elsewhere, or other non-secure occupants.

- 9.2 The Housing needs assessment and size of accommodation will be determined using the City Corporation's Allocations Scheme in the first instance.

Where necessary, estate-specific decant plans, or standalone policies, will allow flexibility and discretion to adapt requirements to the particular needs and circumstances of individual estates and works programmes.

## **10. Offers of accommodation**

- 10.1 For planned permanent decants, residents will be notified in writing of the size of property they are entitled to, their priority for rehousing, and their stated preferences for rehousing. They will also be notified of their right to return to their substantive property.
- 10.2 Tenants have the right to refuse offers of accommodation. However, after two reasonable offers of accommodation have been made, we will make a final offer of suitable accommodation.
- 10.3 Where a tenant refuses to move or has refused the offers of other suitable alternative accommodation and other options are not feasible, we reserve the right to seek possession of the property.

## **11. Practical Support for tenants**

11.1 Liaison with tenants affected will take place at the earliest opportunity to explain the process, including the support and options available. We will identify a dedicated officer who will be the tenant's key point of contact in relation to the decant and who will be responsible for making sure that the process runs as smoothly as possible.

11.2 The officer will discuss the level of practical support required and will agree an action plan to ensure all needs are met where reasonably possible. Support could relate to the following:

- General advice regarding our services, including housing allocations and benefit claims
- General advice and assistance on how to move home;
- Assistance to view the property offered to them;
- Assistance to move furniture and possessions
- Clearance of unwanted items;
- Additional support for vulnerable residents.

11.3 During the decant period the designated officer will keep in contact with the tenant, to advise them of progress with the work and confirm that there are no issues with their current home. How much can be planned and agreed in advance of a move will depend on whether it is an emergency or planned move.

## **12. Financial Support**

12.1 Statutory Home Loss Payment and Disturbance Payment are two separate payments with different entitlement criteria. Both relate to tenants who are required to move permanently out of their home, those who move on an emergency or temporary decant basis are not eligible.

12.2 A Home Loss Payment is a fixed sum paid in recognition of the personal upset and distress caused to the customer by permanent displacement. Home Loss payments are a legal requirement under the Land Compensation Act 1973 and the Planning & Compensation Act 1991, but only if a customer is required to move permanently from their home. To be eligible for this payment, the following must apply:

- the secure tenant has been living in the property for one year before they have to be permanently decanted
- the tenant has been living in the property as their main or only residence
- the tenant is being required to move as a consequence of improvement or redevelopment (repairs, even if major, do not justify payment)

12.3 The amount payable is governed by The Home Loss Payments (Prescribed Amounts) (England) Regulations. Any outstanding rent arrears or other debts owed to us will be deducted from the Home Loss Payment and credited to the customer's rent or sub account.

12.4 Payment for Disturbance Allowance is governed by the Land Compensation Act 1973. For joint tenancies, one Home Loss payment will be shared between both tenants. No other people resident in the home or required to move will receive one.

12.5 If a permanent decant is a voluntary decision because the tenant has a preference to move because of the repair work, the tenant will not be entitled to a Home Loss payment.

### 13. Responsibilities, Monitoring and Performance

13.1 Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation rests with the Head of Housing Management. The Head of Housing Management will ensure that staff receive the appropriate training and support to achieve the aims of this policy. Where needed we may establish appropriate operational procedures.

13.2 Monitoring of the implementation of this policy and our performance in temporarily decanting tenants will be the responsibility of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee.

### 14. Associated policies or strategies

- Lettings and Transfers Policy
- Housing Strategy
- City of London Corporation Housing Allocation Scheme

### 15. Document management

Policy title	Decant Policy
Date created	25 April 2016 (v.1) October 2020 (v.2) April 2024 (v.3)
Policy owner	Head of Housing Management
Authorised by	Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee
Date authorised	
Review period	3 years
Date of next review	

Document review history			
Version	Date amended	Date approved	Key changes
1.0	N/A	April 2016	Original document
2.0	October 2020	November 2020	Routine policy review.
3.0	April 2024		

## Appendix 1

Table 1  
Schedule of disturbance payments

1.	Removal costs	To include packing/unpacking for vulnerable/older tenants where approved
2.	Redirection of mail	For three months
3.	Disconnection and reconnection of domestic appliances	Cooker, dishwasher, washing machine. Must be undertaken by industry approved tradesperson
4.	Disconnection and reconnection of telephone line, broadband, satellite dishes, aerials	
5.	Carpets, floor covering	Uplift, alteration and refitting of existing or disposal and replacement to Corporation-approved standard
6.	Curtains, curtain tracks, blinds	Alteration and refitting of existing or replacement to Corporation-approved standard
7.	Redecoration	Allowance or redecoration to approved re-let standards where Corporation is the landlord. Allowance for non-Corporation properties subject to deduction of any landlord decoration allowance
8.	Security devices	Special or additional alarms, locks where fitted by tenant
9.	Aids and adaptations	To be refitted/re-provided where previously approved by the Corporation; allowance or reimbursement for same where provided by the tenant subject to proof or approval of costs
10.	Fitted furniture	Dismantling and refitting of wardrobes and kitchens where provided by tenant
11.	Other home improvements	Compensation and reimbursement as per existing policy
12.	Sheds, garden furniture	Dismantling and reassembly; reimbursement for loss or replacement
13.	Loss of earnings	For up to two eligible members of household. Written proof required
14.	School uniforms	Where change of school required
15.	Storage	For temporary decants only
16.	Other	Other exceptional or special costs may be considered and approved by the Corporation

Table 2

## Flat rate disturbance allowance – rates of payment

Flat rate disturbance payments are payable for items 1 to 6 as set out in Table 1 of this Appendix. Current rates are set out below. Rates will be subject to review.

<b>Size of Property</b>	<b>Flat rate allowance</b>
Studio	£1145
One bedroom	£1545
Two bedrooms	£1945
Three bedroom	£2345
Four bedroom	£2465

Table 3

## Decoration allowance – rates of payment

Where properties are undecorated tenants can claim an allowance at the following rates:

<b>Size of property</b>	<b>Decoration allowance</b>
One bedroom	£274
Two bedrooms	£355
Three bedroom	£517
Four bedroom	£598

## Shift allowance - rates of payment

The shift allowance (payable where tenants 'downsize' or give up a bedroom as they move) is payable as follows:

First bedroom released	£2000
Subsequent rooms	£1000

## **Local Decant Policy**

### **Crescent House Window Replacement Project**

#### **1. Basis for this Policy**

This policy applies to the Crescent House window repair and replacement project (“the Crescent House project”). The policy will remain in force for the duration of the project.

This policy is written in accordance with the provisions of the Decants Policy of the City Corporation’s Department of Community and Children’s Services (Housing Division). That parent policy provides (section 7) that local policies may be implemented to address the needs of specific projects.

#### **2. Policy Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Enable the successful delivery of the Crescent House project by providing a clear statement of our approach to decanting residents to allow the works to take place
- Provide a clear statement of our approach to inform residents of what to expect
- Set out our commitment to anticipating and meeting the needs of residents, to minimise disruption to them
- Make clear the support and help that residents can expect during the project in relation to decanting and temporary accommodation

#### **3. Policy Statement**

The Crescent House project will require residents to vacate their homes in phases, to allow extensive works to be completed to windows and other building components, which can only safely be carried out without residents being in occupation.

We aim to minimise disruption and inconvenience to affected residents by:

- Adhering to the provisions of our Decants Policy
- Providing affected residents with suitable alternative (temporary) accommodation while the work is being undertaken
- Assisting them with moving belongings which cannot remain in place, and storing these in an appropriate place
- Anticipating residents’ needs by carrying out assessments of their circumstances prior to the project starting
- Communicating clearly with residents at all stages of the project, so they know what is happening and how it will affect them

#### **4. Application of this Policy**

This policy applies to the following classes of occupier at Crescent House:

- Secure tenants

Date Approved:

Approved by:

Version: 1

- Leaseholders
- Sub-tenants of leaseholders, provided that they hold an Assured Shorthold Tenancy and this was registered with the City Corporation as required by the lease

The policy also applies to household members of the above classes of occupier, if they reside at Crescent House and meet the residence requirements set out in the Decants Policy.

## **5. Housing Needs Assessment**

We will carry out an assessment of the circumstances of each household currently resident in the building, in accordance with the Decants Policy.

This person-focused assessment will establish any support needs, requirements for alternative temporary accommodation, and details of household composition.

It will also be used as a means of communicating with affected residents about how the project will be managed, how they might be affected, and what we can do to help and support them.

## **6. Notification of Works**

Affected residents will be given reasonable written notice of works that require them to vacate their home. The notification will include:

- Projected start and finish dates
- Description of the works to be completed
- Details of suitable alternative temporary accommodation
- Information on how they will be supported, and their belongings safeguarded, during the works

A named contact will be provided to the resident, who will be able to answer any questions and provide appropriate advice.

We will ensure that any communication needs are taken into account, and will contact residents in a suitable alternative format, or in person, where required.

## **7. Alternative Temporary Accommodation**

We will provide temporary alternative accommodation for any eligible resident who requires it, for the duration of the works to their home. Residents will occupy this alternative accommodation under a Licence to Occupy, which is not a tenancy and does not have security of tenure. Security of tenure is maintained at all times on the decanted property.

Residents may make their own arrangements if they wish, however we are not able to cover costs of alternative accommodation without prior agreement.

We aim to provide suitable accommodation on Golden Lane Estate, however if this is not possible, we will discuss alternative options with the affected resident. Where we

cannot provide an alternative temporary home at Golden Lane Estate, we will aim to provide one within a reasonable distance of it.

Any alternative accommodation will take account of the needs of the resident and their household, and we will provide the same number of bedrooms as is currently occupied.

Where residents require adjustments due to disability or additional needs, we will accommodate reasonable adjustments (e.g. auxiliary aids or adaptations) and provide temporary accommodation which meets their needs.

The temporary accommodation will include white goods including laundry facilities. Essential furniture will be provided, which may vary according to household size and composition.

## **8. Payment of Rent and Other Charges**

Tenants remain liable to pay rent and service charges on their homes while they are away, plus any other liabilities such as Council Tax.

Leaseholders remain responsible for paying all charges and liabilities relating to their properties while they are in temporary accommodation.

No charge will be made for use of the temporary alternative accommodation.

## **9. Utility Bills**

Residents remain responsible for all utility bills in their home while they are away, however we will reimburse an appropriate amount to cover usage by our contractors while works take place in each property.

Where residents have a top-up meter, we will ensure that this is topped up for the duration of the work and handed back with at least the same credit remaining as when the resident temporarily moved out.

Residents will not be liable for utilities costs in their temporary accommodation.

## **10. Costs**

We aim to ensure that residents are not left out of pocket due to being temporarily accommodated elsewhere. We will cover the cost of:

- Removal of belongings, and returning them following completion of works
- Storage of any belongings removed for the duration of the works
- Cleaning the resident's home following completion of the works

## **11. Insurance**

We will always take reasonable care to avoid damage or loss to any property or personal belongings of residents. We will ensure that appropriate insurance is in place to cover liability arising from any aspect of the project, including the removal, storage and handling of personal belongings.

Date Approved:

Approved by:

Version: 1

## **12. Permanent Rehousing**

While it is anticipated that tenants will wish to return to their homes following completion of the works, we will explore the option of permanent rehousing for those tenants with a live housing application at the point the project commences. Any offer of permanent alternative accommodation will be made in accordance with our Allocations Scheme.

The properties on Golden Lane Estate which are to be used for temporary accommodation during the Crescent House Project are not available for permanent rehousing of decanted residents, as they are required for the duration of the project.

## **13. Support Services**

During the Crescent House project, we will ensure that affected residents will be provided with appropriate support and assistance. This includes:

- A named officer who will maintain contact with them during the decant process and respond to any queries
- Assistance with moving or storing belongings
- Transport to and from alternative accommodation, if necessary
- Access to advice and assistance from staff employed as part of the project to assist affected residents

Where any resident requires more in-depth help, for example from an agency such as Adult Social Care, we will make the appropriate referral with their consent and cooperate with that agency to ensure the resident is supported.

## **14. Communication**

Clear and regular communication will be maintained with residents in the planning stages and throughout the decant process. City Corporation staff will be available to address any concerns or questions residents may have, and regular updates will be provided regarding the progress of the work on their homes.

We will take account of communication needs and preferences, and these will be discussed as part of the needs assessments.

## **15. Decanting Plan**

A detailed decanting plan or scheme will be developed with resident input, to outline how the decanting process will be implemented. This plan will also contain detail on matters of importance to residents, including the provision of support and assistance throughout the process, handling and storage of belongings, and other matters.

## **16. Feedback and Complaints**

Residents will have the opportunity to provide feedback on their decant experience, including the accommodation provided and the overall process. This feedback will be used to continually improve our decant procedures in the future.

Residents who are dissatisfied with any aspect of the service they receive as part of the Crescent House project may contact us to complain. Complaints will be responded to under our Housing Complaints Procedure.

### **17. Review**

This policy will remain in effect for the duration of the project. It will be reviewed periodically or in response to emerging issues. Any material amendments must be authorised by the relevant Committee.

### **18. Data Protection and Confidentiality**

All personal data currently held on residents and their circumstances, or gathered from residents as part of pre-project assessments, will be stored and handled securely and in accordance with our data protection obligations and Corporate or Departmental policies.

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<b>Committee(s):</b> Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee – For Decision	<b>Dated:</b> 28 November 2024
<b>Subject:</b> Fire Safety Update – HRA Properties	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	1, 2, 4, 12
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of</b> Judith Finlay Executive Director of Community & Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> David Blane Health and Safety Advisor Department of Community & Children’s Services	

## Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Members of this Committee with information on how the City of London Corporation (the Corporation), through its Housing Team, is ensuring that its homes on its twelve social housing estates are managed in a way that to comply with current health and safety legislation, best practice, and regulatory standards relating to fire safety

## Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. Note, consider, and comment on the report.

## Main Report

### Background

1. In July 2017, an initial report was presented to the Community & Children’s Services Committee, the Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee and the Audit and Risk Management Committee updating Members on the Corporation’s approach to fire safety in its social housing homes. The report informed Members of the progress we had made with matters such as:

- fire risk assessments,

- communication with residents,
  - estate management,
  - fire safety maintenance and improvement work,
  - inspections by the London Fire Brigade (LFB),
  - potential future improvement works.
2. Further reports have been brought back to the Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee on several occasions to inform Members of the work that has been done to enhance the safety of the Corporation's social housing residents in the event of fire.
  3. This report is intended as a further update.

## **Considerations**

### **Automatic Water Fire Suppression Systems (Sprinklers)**

4. Members of the Community & Children's Services Committee have previously agreed a recommendation from its Director to retrofit automatic water suppression systems in each of its five social housing high-rise tower blocks below:
  - Great Arthur House, Golden Lane Estate.
  - Petticoat Tower, Middlesex Street Estate.
  - West Point, Avondale Square Estate.
  - Centre Point, Avondale Square Estate.
  - East Point, Avondale Square Estate.
5. Following completion of a compliant, competitive tendering exercise, United Living was appointed to carry out the installation of automatic water suppression systems in each of the Corporation's five social housing high-rise tower blocks. However, due to escalating costs and potential time delays, Great Arthur House and Petticoat Tower were subsequently removed from the contract with United Living.
6. Although the retrofitting of sprinklers is a complex and challenging project, we are making good progress with the works as set out below.

### **West Point, Centre Point and East Point – Avondale Square Estate**

United Living have installed a system within the majority of 222 properties across the three Avondale Square Point Blocks and coverage is now live awaiting commissioning alongside Building Control sign-off.

Unfortunately, one tenanted property across this estate has required intervention and legal proceedings have been issued to obtain access. The first available trial date is April 2025.

Despite the intrusive nature of the works, resident satisfaction, gauged from ours and the contractor's in-house surveys has been largely positive, with no "very dissatisfied" scores for any aspects of the work and, only a few "fairly dissatisfied."

The issues that caused residents to be 'fairly dissatisfied' were identified and promptly addressed.

### **Petticoat Tower – Middlesex Street Estate**

The successful contractor, Harmony Fire, commenced on site in mid-October 2023, beginning with pre-condition surveys, site setup, and booking installation appointments with residents. So far 18 out of the 88 flats have permitted access.

Residents' main objections are the disruption to their home and perceived 'ugly' aesthetics of the works. In the circumstances the current contract has been suspended to the new year whilst work is done with residents to address their concerns.

To date, communal areas have mechanical rises and controls have been 23 installed on all floors. Textured coating materials that may contain asbestos are being identified and remediated. The main water storage tank for the sprinkler system has been installed.

### **Great Arthur House – Golden Lane Estate**

Members will be aware from previous reports that the sprinkler installation at Great Arthur House is to be incorporated into a wider compartmentation and fire safety works project. The project team are looking to commission a Fire Strategy for the building before an application for resident engagement and Listed Building Consent can proceed.

### **Fire Doors**

7. As Members will be aware, the Corporation has committed to replacing all front entrance doors in its residential blocks of flats with fire doors that give up to 60 minutes fire resistance (30 minutes as an absolute minimum). The Fire Door Replacement Programme also provides for the installation/upgrade of fire stopping/compartmentation solutions to, for example, penetrations above and through the communal doors and frames (service pipes, service cables etc).
8. GERDA, our specialist appointed contractor, continues to make good progress with the fire door installation programme as set out below.

### **Lot 1 – York Way and Holloway Estates**

The work in Lot 1, to install new upgraded replacement fire doors (front entrances and communal doors) on the York Way and Holloway Estates is now complete. Customer satisfaction with this project, as gauged from our Customer Satisfaction Surveys, was very high (around 96% satisfied or very satisfied).

### **Lot 2 – Avondale Square Estate**

All low-level general needs blocks are complete and have been very well received by residents (as evidenced by the Customer Satisfaction Surveys).

The residential front doors in the three Point Blocks are currently being replaced but the communal doors are on hold until ongoing issues are resolved with the Sprinkler system project.

Harman Close communal doors are also on hold as there are cables for door entry system, fire alarm system and warden call lines that have been installed by penetrating the existing doors, which would not allow the existing doors to be removed for replacement. The cabling is scheduled for removal in conjunction with renewal of the warden call and alarm systems.

### **Lot 3 – Sumner Buildings, William Blake Estate, Dron House, Petticoat Tower (communal doors)**

Work to Lot 3 is now well underway.

William Blake Estate - all residential doors are complete. There were some communal doors in Blake House that required special testing, this is now complete, and the doors are in fabrication with the subsequent install to take place in due course.

Sumner Buildings - there is one outstanding residential door to be replaced, but we are liaising with the legal department to obtain access.

Dron House – All the doors here have now been fitted.

Petticoat Tower- we have been unable to replace the communal doors in Petticoat Tower to date. An HRB/BRS application must be made before we are able to commence with the installation of the communal doors.

## **Lot 4 – Southwark Estate, Windsor House, Isleden House, Sydenham Hill Estate, Spitalfields**

Reform Architects have been appointed to lead the design work for Lot 4. The planning applications are ongoing. Sydenham Hill and Isleden House have been approved, and we are contacting residents to make appointments for their individual/bespoke surveys in preparation for the costing to be offered by Gerda.

### **Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs)**

9. As Members will be aware from the report prepared for its meeting on 2 June 2023, following a corporate procurement exercise, Turner & Townsend (T&T) was appointed to undertake the next round of FRAs for the Corporation's social housing estates.
10. Residential blocks and, where appropriate, associated community centres, have FRA reports, in which observations on key areas found on the day of the assessment were recorded. Areas identified in each of the FRAs are broadly categorised into the following:
  - issues that require immediate remedial action and could be resolved immediately by teams on site.
  - matters requiring contractor intervention.
  - matters that are/will be subject to or incorporated into major works projects.
11. The latest FRAs also refer to positive practices/innovation, acknowledging that some of the Corporation's fire safety and major works improvements projects go beyond the current minimum statutory requirements including, the new fire doors and installation of sprinklers. The FRAs also refer to future considerations and impacts of the introduction of new legislation, regulations, best practice etc.
12. The main themes identified by the latest FRAs undertaken by T&T include:

#### **Fire doors/fire stopping/compartmentation.**

The areas highlighted under this category form part of the Corporation's Housing Major Works Programme. The Corporation's Fire Door Replacement Programme incorporates front entrance doors to all flats (including, associated door frames and surrounds), communal fire doors and riser/service cupboard doors (part of the fire stopping and compartmentation work). Work to replace fire doors and improve compartmentation has already been completed on a number of estates and work continues as part of the major works programme, as mentioned above in this report.

#### **Fire alarms**

Any problems identified with existing fire alarms on the day that the FRA survey was carried out, were addressed, and remedied immediately by the on-site estate teams.

The FRAs have identified potential improvements (not statutory) in some of our homes and, in some cases, these may be incorporated into future major works projects. One example of this, is the City of London's Almshouses, where it is proposed to carry out a significant upgrade to the existing fire alarm installation, to incorporate both carbon monoxide and environmental monitoring. The enhanced system will also allow for live remote monitoring of alarm activation and faults.

A full pilot system has been installed in one flat. A full scope of the enhanced fire alarm is being undertaken by our contractors, incorporating electrical installation condition reports, to provide full surveying and costs of this project.

### **Emergency lighting**

Where the FRAs highlighted that whenever emergency lighting systems are to be upgraded/replaced, due consideration must be given to the presence of 'borrowed' external lighting, which may no longer be relied upon to provide sufficient additional lighting to meet the new requirements.

### **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS)/Premises Information Box (PIB)**

Although the introduction of PEEPS did not make it into recently introduced legislation as expected, this topic continues to be discussed within several forums at national level.

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Building Safety and Homelessness made a statement on 2 September 2024 to Parliament bringing forward proposals in the Autumn to improve the fire safety and evacuation of disabled/vulnerable residents in high-rise and higher-risk residential buildings in England in response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's Phase 1 recommendations that relate to Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans, or PEEPs. These proposals will be called 'Residential PEEPs.' Progress of this introduction will continue to be monitored, and updates provided to this Committee.

As part of its work to ensure a high standard of fire safety in the homes it manages, the Corporation has introduced a new procedure for assessing vulnerable residents, who may need help evacuating in an emergency or, who may benefit from further help and advice on fire safety issues in their homes. Having previously carried out over 220 evacuation assessments of vulnerable residents; relevant information has been included in the Premises Information Boxes (PIB) installed across our estates.

These lists are refreshed every six months or, when new person specific information becomes known. No personal details are included within the list, only their location within the residential block.

### **Testing/records**

As stated previously, in the case of emergency lighting, a key part of the FRA process is demonstrating that systems and equipment in our blocks of flats are tested as per

the required regulatory frequency. In addition to the testing, records are kept demonstrating effective management of both active and passive fire protection.

13. Carrying out FRAs under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO), is a vital and legally required part of the CoLC's fire safety strategy for its residential portfolio. The RRO does not however, specify how often FRAs should be carried out or reviewed. Officers have been working closely with colleagues in the Corporate Fire Safety team to ensure that FRAs on our housing estates are not only carried out in line with the provisions of the RRO but also, are carried out in accordance with the Corporation's own guidance and best practice.

To provide the Committee with improved oversight of the number of actions produced following FRAs and when actions are completed, data has been captured below in the following tables and graphs. This new data format will develop moving forward as new FRAs are undertaken, and actions undertaken with completion dates. Some actions may have been completed but we are working retrospectively to capture completion dates to add to 2024 data.

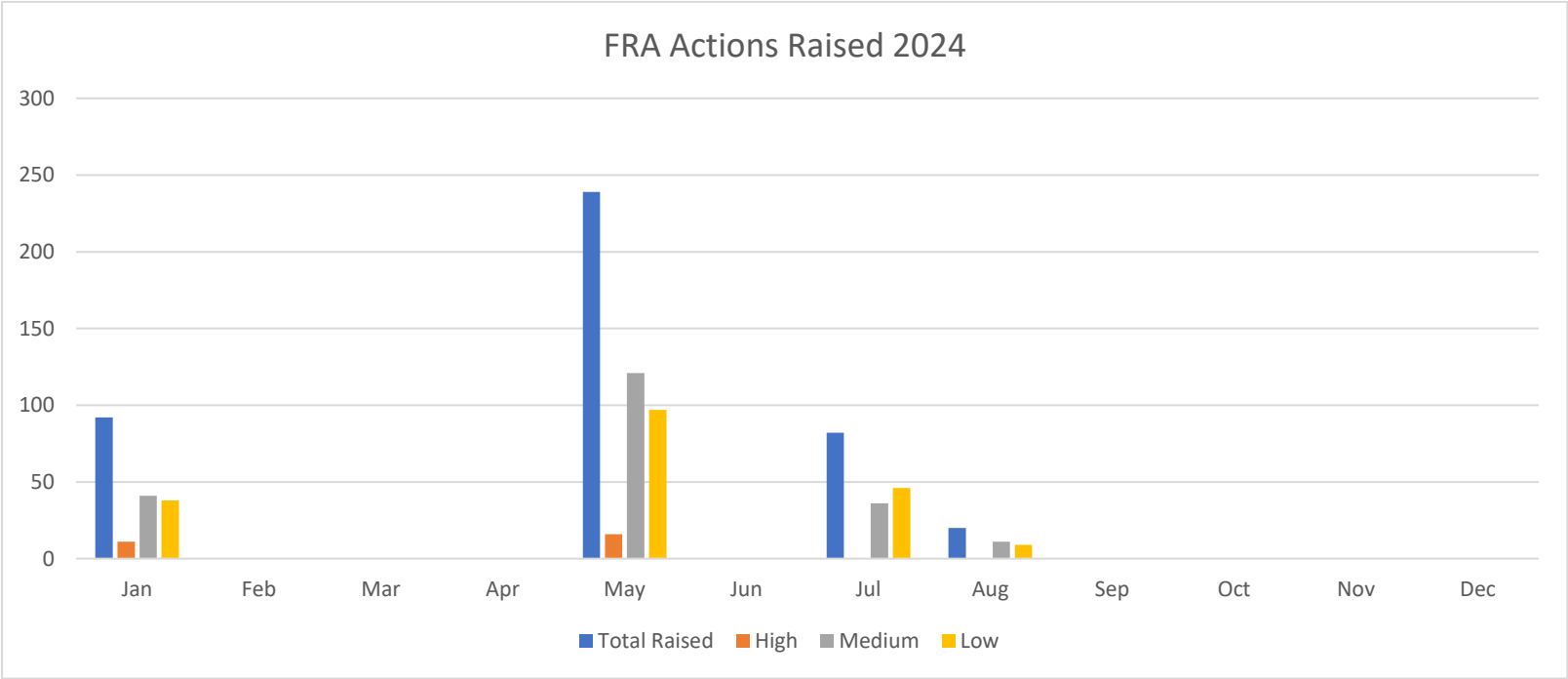
The data below indicates a large number of actions raised in May 2024. This is due to the largest housing estate being assessed, Avondale Square Estate.

David Blane – Health and Safety Advisor, Housing  
E: David.blane@[cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:David.blane@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

Table 1

The below outlines the number of actions raised (monthly) when fire risk assessments are undertaken

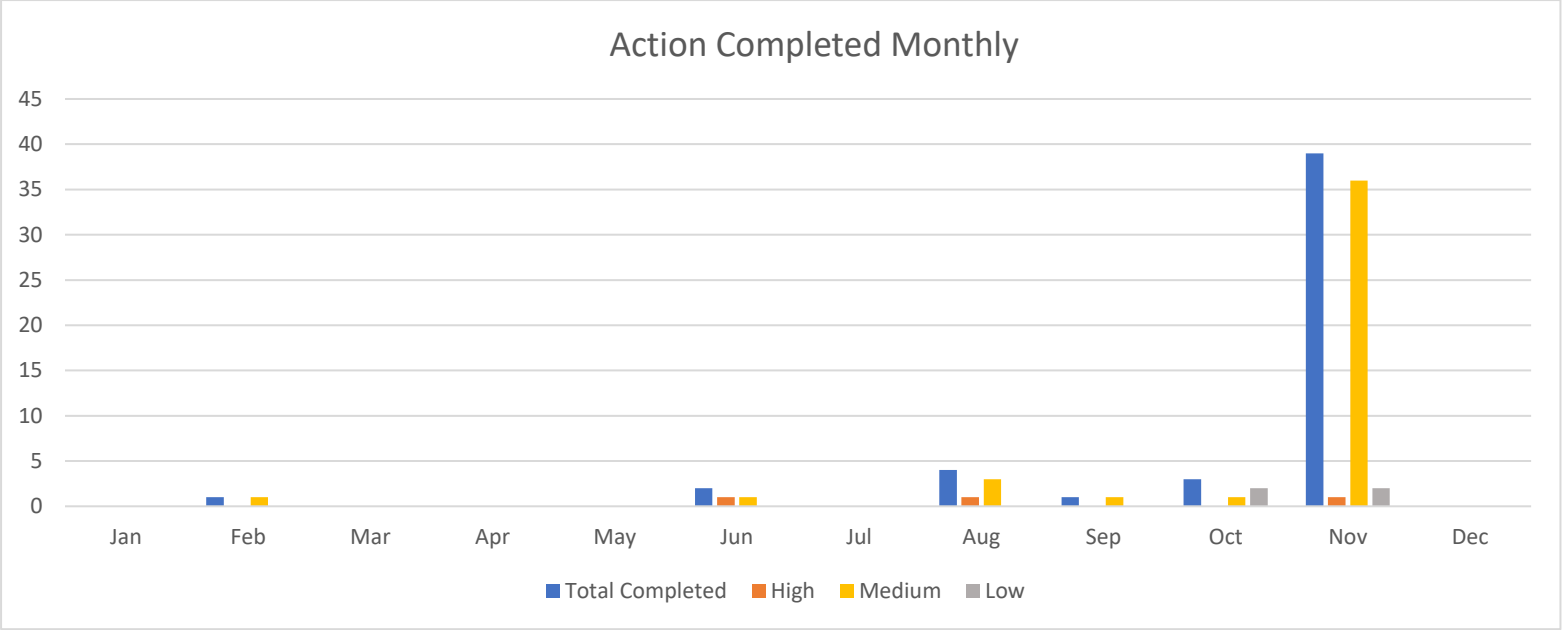
2024	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total Raised	92	0	0	0	239	0	82	20	0	0	0	0
High	11	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medium	41	0	0	0	121	0	36	11	0	0	0	0
Low	38	0	0	0	97	0	46	9	0	0	0	0



Page 179

Page 179

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## City of London Corporation Committee Report

<b>Committee:</b> Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 28/11/2024
<b>Subject:</b> Pets Policy Consultation	<b>Public report:</b> For Decision
<b>This proposal:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides statutory duties</li> <li>• delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse Engaged Communities</li> <li>• Providing Excellent Services</li> </ul>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	No
<b>If so, how much?</b>	£
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	N/A
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	N/A
<b>Report of:</b> Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	
<b>Report authors:</b> Liam Gillespie, Head of Housing Management, Department of Community & Children's Services (Housing Division)  Sam Bedford, Resident Involvement Manager, Department of Community and Children's Services (Housing Division)	

### Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the outcome of the recent resident consultation on the Housing Division's Pets Policy, which focused on the question of dog ownership.

Several workshops were held for residents to discuss the policy and express their views on how the resident survey should be conducted. The survey, which was carried out by an independent organisation, received an excellent response with over 1,200 returns. The result was that 58% of respondents were against allowing dog ownership, with 40.5% in favour. This report provides further details of the results of the survey.

Given the strong sentiment expressed by a clear majority of residents, it is proposed that the current policy is maintained, and Members are asked to re-approve the Pets Policy for use by the Housing Division.

## **Recommendations**

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.
- Approve the attached Pets Policy, which maintains the current position in relation to dog ownership, in line with the majority resident view following consultation

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The Housing Division's Pets Policy was last approved in January 2021. At that time, it was agreed that the Housing Division would carry out a more detailed consultation on dog ownership in 2024. This report explains the steps taken as part of the consultation workshops, and the result of the subsequent survey of residents on the issue of dog ownership.
2. While the whole policy was up for discussion, the most contentious issue is dog ownership. This part of the policy tends to be the most discussed and gives rise to the strongest views from residents. It is perhaps unsurprising that this question became the focus of the consultation following discussions held at the various resident workshops.

### **Resident Consultation**

3. An initial consultation plan was devised that included multiple workshops both online and in person, to understand residents' ideas and priorities about both the way in which the consultation and survey took place, and any thoughts on what a potential future Pets Policy might look like.
4. Calm Mediation was engaged to facilitate the consultation workshops, as an independent organisation, allowing residents to feel comfortable sharing their views and opinions.
5. Alongside facilitating a discussion on how, and by what method, the consultation should take place, and what residents felt would be fair, the Housing Division requested that the following two questions were put to the attendees of the consultation sessions to generate discussion:

- i. *How do you think that dog ownership could be managed if it were to be allowed?*
- ii. *What sort of issues do you think might arise and how could these be dealt with?*

6. Calm Mediation held ten in-person workshops and two online sessions, with some sessions held solely for sheltered housing residents. A total of 82 residents attended one of our general needs consultation workshops, which were scheduled for evening slots between 5:30 – 7:00pm.

27 February	Online via Microsoft Teams
4 March	Middlesex Street Estate, Artizan Street Library
5 March	Golden Lane Estate, Sir Ralph Perring Centre
6 March	Dron House Community Hall
7 March	Online via Microsoft Teams
11 March	York Way & Holloway Estates, Holloway Estate Community Centre
12 March	Southwark Estate Office
13 March	Avondale Square Estate Community Centre
14 March	Windsor House Community Hall

7. Additionally, specific workshops were held at our sheltered housing schemes as follows:

18 March	Isleden House
19 March	Harman Close
22 March	Almshouses

## Outcome of Consultation Workshops

8. Two key recommendations that came out of the consultation workshops were that we use a fair and independent ballot process to ensure as high a turnout as possible and deliver a fair and transparent result from the survey. Residents also asked that we provide as much information as possible to enable people to make an informed decision.
9. The common themes on which residents wanted further information included the Housing Division's management of a policy if dogs were to be permitted, what the potential impact on service charges might be, plus information on how the survey would operate.
10. In response to residents requesting an independent survey, we partnered with Acuity, an organisation with over 25 years' experience in conducting fair and resident-focused surveys, to help us draft and run the survey process. Colleagues from Housing Management, Estate Services, Home Ownership and the Comptroller & City Solicitors' Department helped draft the Information Booklet, which included responses to several issues raised by residents during the consultation. This was shared with residents alongside the survey. This booklet is attached as **Appendix One**.

## Survey Methodology

11. Acuity advised on the methodology for the survey and how to achieve a statistically certain result. The aim was to generate at least 500 responses, on a 'one vote per household' basis. A paper survey was sent to 2,745 households, with a return envelope included, which is attached at **Appendix Two**.
12. Each survey had a unique reference number, which enabled Acuity to ensure that only one response was received per household, and to monitor responses by estate.
13. Acuity advised not to include a 'don't know' option on the question of dog ownership, as this could muddy the results from which Members would have to make a yes or no decision anyway, so it was made clear this would not help us get to a statistically certain result.

## Results

14. In answer to the question on dog ownership, the results were:

***Do you think the City of London Housing Service's Pets Policy should be updated to allow residents to have one dog (with prior permission)?***

Response	Respondents	Percentage
No	721	58%
Yes	496	40.5%
No Response	18	1.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,235</b>	<b>100%</b>

15. We received 1,235 responses from 2,745 delivered, which is a turnout of 45%. For this number of responses, the margin of error is +/- 3.0%, which means a difference of more than 6% is needed for it to be statistically significant. The difference between Yes and No responses is 18%, which is 3 times the required difference. The result is therefore reliable and statistically significant.
16. A full breakdown of the results by estate is shown at Appendix Three. Members will note that, although the results on some estates were close, only one estate had a majority in favour of allowing dog ownership (Windsor House), though this was only by a handful of votes.
17. There was a noticeable difference in sentiment between tenants and leaseholders; 73% of leaseholder respondents responded 'no' to dog ownership, while among tenants the figure was 52%.

## **Renters' Rights Bill**

18. Members may be aware of proposals to give private tenants in England and Wales strengthened rights regarding keeping pets in rented accommodation, as part of a wider suite of reforms contained in the Renters' Rights Bill, which is currently at the Committee stage in the House of Commons. The Bill will make amendments to the Housing Act 1988 in respect of private sector rental agreements, which are usually Assured Shorthold tenancies. These will be abolished, and private tenancies will take effect as Assured Tenancies with no fixed term and enhanced security of tenure.
19. The Bill will insert section 16A into the Housing Act 1988 and imply a term into all Assured tenancies, giving private tenants the right to request to keep a pet, which landlords must not unreasonably refuse. The Bill does not propose giving a blanket right to tenants to have a pet without seeking permission.
20. The proposals apply only to the private rented sector and do not affect social housing, which is expressly excluded in the Bill. Assured tenancies provided by housing associations, and Secure tenancies of the kind provided by local authority landlords, will remain unchanged.
21. Leasehold properties within the City Corporation's housing stock, if sub-let, are technically part of the private rented sector. However, the Renters' Rights Bill includes a provision (clause 10) that the private landlord (i.e. the leaseholder) may reasonably refuse permission for their sub-tenant to keep a pet if giving consent would put the landlord in breach of a superior agreement (in this case, their lease). As the City Corporation's leases contain strict terms on pet ownership, these would take priority. A situation where private renters within our stock enjoy rights that our own tenants do not have will therefore be avoided.
22. While the Renters' Rights Bill does not directly affect the City Corporation's management of its housing stock, and the proposed Pets Policy, further consideration will need to be given to our approach in future, as there may be equalities implications in maintaining a more restrictive position on pet ownership for social housing tenancies compared to the private rented sector. It is proposed that the City Corporation's policy is reviewed again once the Renters' Rights Bill is finally passed, and the full legal and equalities implications become clear. This is unlikely to happen before mid-2025, and given the scale of some of the reforms, some parts of the Act may not commence immediately following Royal Assent.

## **Recommendation**

23. It is recommended that the attached Pets Policy (**Appendix Four**) is approved, with the current position on dog ownership remaining unchanged following the clear result of the resident consultation.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

**Strategic implications** – The Pets Policy forms part of a suite of policies designed to promote clarity and consistency in the management of the City Corporation’s housing estates, and therefore supports the aim of Delivering Excellent Services.

**Financial implications** – none.

**Resource implications** – none.

**Legal implications** – none.

**Risk implications** – none.

**Equalities implications** – The Pets Policy seeks to balance the need to manage our housing estates effectively with relevant equalities considerations. The Policy enables exceptions to be made to the stated policy approach in line with the Equality Act 2010, for instance in relation to dog ownership. Officers will have due regard to equalities duties when making decisions in accordance with the Pets Policy.

**Climate implications** – none.

**Security implications** – none.

## **Conclusion**

24. The Housing Division’s Pets Policy has been reviewed and a substantial resident consultation exercise undertaken as part of this process. This involved holding resident workshops across City Corporation housing estates, to seek residents’ views on the current policy, particularly on the issue of dog ownership, which tends to dominate discussion on the policy.
25. As a result of the workshops, a survey was issued to every household, along with an information booklet summarising the outcomes of the resident consultations. The survey was conducted by an independent organisation, Acuity Research and Practice, and 1,235 responses were received (45% of households on City Corporation estates).
26. In answer to the question on dog ownership, 58% of households responded to the effect that the current prohibition on dogs should be maintained (with some exceptions); 40.5% were in favour of allowing dogs.
27. It is therefore recommended that the Pets Policy is approved with no changes. This will be reviewed again in 2027, or sooner if there is a need to do so.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Pets Policy Information Booklet
- Appendix 2 - Copy of survey sent to all households
- Appendix 3 – Full results breakdown
- Appendix 4 – Pets Policy (version

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Department of Community and  
Children's Services - Housing Division

# PETS POLICY CONSULTATION: Information Booklet



Visit the webpage for  
information on the consultation:  
[bit.ly/pets-policy](https://bit.ly/pets-policy)

Page 189



This booklet explains the proposed changes to the Pets Policy and how to participate in the survey.

### **What's happening?**

- We're asking you about allowing dogs on your estates.
- We held workshops to hear your thoughts.
- The survey will determine the final recommendation to Committee, for a decision to be made.

### **How will the survey work?**

- You'll receive a survey pack with this booklet.
- Vote by mail and return it in the pre-paid envelope.
- We aim for at least 500 responses.

### **Why can't we have different policies per estate?**

- It would be unfair to residents based on location.
- It would make it difficult to manage.
- The survey result and final decision will apply to all estates equally.

### **What would a new Pets Policy look like?**

- Residents would need approval to own a dog.
- Specific rules would apply, like lead requirements and waste disposal.
- At this stage, we do not anticipate an increase in service charges for managing dogs.

### **What about existing pet restrictions in leases?**

- We're seeking to update leases for all residents.
- This removes the current pet ban and allows the new policy if approved", suggest "would mirror the pets policy.

#### **Take action!**

- Review this booklet and the survey questions.
- Vote by returning your survey.





## Introduction

The City of London's Housing Division is currently consulting on our Pets Policy, as we have done every three years. We have held a number of workshops across our estates and online, working with CALM Mediation (an independent mediation service) to ensure that this consultation is done in a way that makes residents feel comfortable and involved.

Two key recommendations that came out of the consultation workshops were that we use a fair and independent ballot process that ensures as high a turnout as possible and delivers a fair result from a fair survey. The second recommendation was that we provide as much information as possible for residents to read before they take part in the survey.

We've partnered with Acuity, an organisation with over 25 years of experience in conducting fair and resident-focused surveys, to help us draft and run this survey process. This booklet provides as much information as possible on the topics raised during the consultation process to ensure you have a complete picture before completing the survey.



# Summary of resident feedback

Calm Mediation held 10 in person workshops and 2 online.

## Online:

- Thursday 7 March
- Tuesday 27 February

## In person:

- Monday 4 March - Middlesex Street Estate
- Tuesday 5 March - Golden Lane Estate
- Wednesday 6 March - Dron House
- Monday 11 March - Holloway & York Way Estates
- Tuesday 12 March - Southwark Estate
- Wednesday 13 March - Avondale Square Estate
- Thursday 14 March - Windsor House

## Specific workshops were held on the sheltered housing estates:

- Monday 18 March – Isleden House
- Tuesday 19 March – Harman Close
- Friday 22 March – City of London Almshouses

# How will this survey work?

We are sending a survey pack to all residents by mail. This pack will include:

- This information booklet
- A cover letter from the City of London and Acuity
- A one-page questionnaire (A4 or A5) for you to vote on
- A pre-paid envelope for easy return

We're aiming for at least 500 responses based on the expertise of Acuity. This will ensure statistically significant results that accurately reflect the views of our residents.

During the consultation sessions, some residents suggested having separate surveys and potentially different pet policies for each estate. We appreciate the suggestion, but here's why a single survey with one policy for all estates makes the most sense:

- **Fairness:** Having different policies based on location could discriminate against residents. Someone living on one estate wouldn't be allowed a dog, while someone else living nearby could, simply because of their address.
- **Mobility:** Residents often move between estates, sometimes due to emergencies. Different policies could create issues in these situations.
- **Consistency:** A single policy ensures all residents have the same expectations and responsibilities regarding pets.

Therefore, we'll be conducting a single survey across all estates, with one vote per household. The final policy will apply equally to all City of London housing estates.

# Potential future Pets Policy

It's important to understand that any new pet policy, including one allowing dogs, will be subject to ongoing review. However, reversing a decision to allow dogs would be a complex process. Therefore, the future focus of policy reviews will primarily be on managing the policy effectively.

In the next section, we'll outline what a potential future pet policy, allowing dogs, might look like based on resident feedback from the consultation sessions.

## How would we manage dogs on your estate?

If the survey results allow dogs, here's how we propose managing them on your estates:

- **Resident Application & Approval:** Residents will need to apply for permission to own a dog, which will require City of London (CoL) approval.
- **Dog Register:** CoL will maintain a register of residents with dogs, including photos.
- **Ownership Agreement:** Residents must sign an agreement outlining pet ownership rules.
- **Dog Size & Breed:** The dog's size should be appropriate for the property, and dangerous or banned breeds will not be allowed.
- **Pet Requirements:** Proof will be required for microchipping, vaccinations and vet registration.
- **Home Visits:** CoL reserves the right to conduct home inspections as needed.
- **One Dog Limit:** Residents will only be allowed one dog per household.

# Responsible dog ownership

If dogs were permitted, here's how we propose managing them on your estates:

- **Nuisance Behaviour:** Owners are responsible for their dogs' behaviour. This includes preventing them from disturbing neighbours or fouling in communal areas. Failure to comply could result in warnings, legal action, or even mandatory rehoming of the dog.
  - **Warning System:**
    - **1st Breach:** Verbal Warning
    - **2nd Breach:** Written Warning
    - **3rd Breach:** Legal Action
- **Dog Registration:** All dogs must be registered. Failure to register will impact your tenancy.
- **Leaving Dogs Unattended:** Residents must sign a document confirming their dog won't be left alone for extended periods due to work, education, etc.
- **Reporting Policy Breaches:** Residents can anonymously report breaches of the policy to the estate office.
- **Leash Requirement:** Dogs must be kept on a leash at all times within the estate grounds.
- **Restricted Areas:** Dogs are not allowed in children's play areas.
- **Exercise:** Dogs must be taken off the estate for exercise.

## Impact on service charges

A common question at the consultation sessions was how service charges might be affected by policy change. Here's what we know:

- **Dog Waste Bins:** We anticipate a small increase in service charges to cover the cost of providing and emptying special dog waste bins across the estates if these are implemented. Plans to implement and the exact amount is still under review.
- **Policy Management:** Managing any changes to the Pets Policy itself is not expected to impact service charges. This will be handled within existing staffing structures.

# Impact on Leaseholders

A key question that came out of the consultation with residents was how would this impact leaseholders who have a clause prohibiting pets in their lease? As a result, we have taken legal advice on the potential options going forward.

It has been advised that regardless of outcome of the survey, the City of London should look to update leases so that the clause is adjusted to one that means leaseholders will benefit from the City of London's Pets Policy, rather than a specific pets prohibition in their individual lease. This needs to be done as the leases do not reflect the current Pets Policy anyway, and the prohibition of all pets is unfair on leaseholders and their families. Consequently, regardless of any changes that may happen to the policy, updating the leases would be the best course of action.

Therefore, there is an additional question on the survey for leaseholders, which asks: *"Would you agree to the City of London updating your lease so that your property will benefit from the City of London Housing Services Pets Policy, instead of being bound by the current lease provisions?"*. If there are enough positive answers and we decide to update the leases, we will send further communications in due course about the process and actions to be taken to make this change.



## Pets Policy Survey

### Your chance to have your say!

Your views are important to **City of London's Housing Division** and your vote will help them determine the final recommendation to Committee, for a decision to be made regarding the future Pets Policy that will apply to all City of London Housing estates.

#### Tenancy Type

**1** Are you a City of London tenant, leaseholder or private sub-tenant?

- ☐ Tenant
- ☐ Leaseholder
- ☐ Private Sub-Tenant

#### Your vote

**2** Do you think the City of London Housing Service's Pets Policy should be updated to allow residents to have one dog (with prior permission)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

#### Leaseholders only

**3** Would you agree to the City of London updating your lease so that your property will benefit from the City of London Housing Service's Pets Policy, instead of being bound by the current lease provisions? (*This will only go ahead if it can be applied to all leases*)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

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## Pets Policy Survey Results

Response	Count	Percentage
No	721	58%
Yes	496	40.5%
no response given	18	1.5%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1235</b>	<b>100%</b>

Estate	No	Yes	no response given	Grand Total
Dron House	16	8		24
Avondale Square Estate	150	105	4	259
Southbank Estates	101	82	2	185
Horace Jones House	16	12		28
Golden Lane Estate	151	102	4	257
William Blake	23	22	1	55
Holloway Estate	43	23	1	67
Middlesex Street Estate	61	57	2	120
Isleden House	23	15		38
Sydenham Hill	46	9	2	57
Windsor House	21	24	2	47
York Way Estate	70	37		107
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1235</b>

Tenure Type	No	Yes	no response given	Grand Total
Leaseholder	265	90	8	363
Private Sub-Tenant	2	4		6
Tenant	453	400	10	863
No response given	1	2		3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1235</b>

**Turnout 45%**

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**City of London Corporation**  
**Department of Community & Children's Services**  
**Housing Division**

## **Pets Policy**

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<b>Approved by:</b>	<b><i>Housing Management &amp; Almshouses Sub-Committee</i></b>
<b>Original Approval Dates:</b>	<b><i>May 2017 (v.1); January 2021 (v.2)</i></b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	
<b>Re-Approval Date</b>	<b><i>November 2024 (v.3)</i></b>
<b>Next Review Date</b>	<b><i>November 2027</i></b>

## **1. Purpose and scope**

- 1.1 We have this policy because we want residents to know our approach when they wish to keep pets in their home. This policy reinforces the provisions in our tenancy and lease agreements relating to pets.
- 1.2 This policy applies to residents of all tenures living on estates managed by the Housing Division, including Secure tenants, leaseholders and sub-tenants of leaseholders. Some differences apply to sheltered housing and these are explained in the policy.
- 1.3 This policy applies to the almshouses administered by City Corporation in its capacity as trustee of the relevant charities (the City of London Almshouses and Gresham Almshouses).

## **2. Policy aims and objectives**

- 2.1 Our aim is to encourage responsible pet ownership and to prevent residents from allowing their pets to cause a nuisance and annoyance to others. We will achieve this aim by:
  - Limiting pet ownership according to the type property occupied
  - Having a clear and simple process for residents to make a request to keep a pet
  - Communicating information on responsible pet ownership
  - Taking action when residents do not comply with their tenancy or lease conditions

## **3. Service standards**

- 3.1 When we deal with residents' requests to keep pets (if permission is needed) we will:

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to requests within 10 working days</li> <li>• Where we grant permission, explain the pet owner's responsibilities</li> <li>• If we refuse permission, we will explain the reasons</li> <li>• Take prompt action if a resident allows their pet to cause a nuisance or annoyance.</li> </ul> |
|--|

## **4. Legal and regulatory obligations**

- 4.1 This policy will help us to comply with the following regulatory requirements:

- Tenancy standard – we must have clear and accessible policies which outline our approach to the management of tenancies
- Neighbourhood and community standards – we must keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with our homes clean and safe.

4.2 There are no direct legal obligations arising from this policy. However, this policy will ensure that we act when residents do not comply with their legal obligations as a pet owner.

## **5.0 Our approach**

We want all tenants to enjoy living in their homes and we recognise the benefits that responsible pet ownership can bring. However, we must ensure that controls are in place to prevent irresponsible pet ownership which can cause suffering to animals and a nuisance or annoyance to others. Residents who wish to keep a pet must ask our permission first, providing details of the pets that they wish to keep.

In exceptional circumstances, we may consider variations to this policy. Any variation will depend upon an individual's circumstances. Our decision and reasons for the decision will be provided in writing to the relevant parties.

### **5.1 Permitted pets**

#### ***Permission***

Residents do not need to seek prior permission for any pet that is allowed within the policy below.

If a resident wants to ask for us to make an exception to the policy in their case, they must apply in writing via their Estate Office, explaining why an exception should apply in their case. They may be asked to provide appropriate evidence to support their application.

#### ***General needs rented and leasehold properties***

In line with our tenancy and lease conditions, we will only allow residents to keep pets that we regard as suitable, and in such numbers that we consider reasonable.

**Cats** – Up to two indoor cats or 'house cats' are permitted per property. Cats must not be allowed to roam in any indoor or outdoor communal areas, or to cause a nuisance.

**Dogs** – Registered guide dogs, hearing dogs and other assistance dogs will be permitted in any property. They must be registered with an accredited organisation.

- Residents who live in a flat or a maisonette are not allowed to keep a dog other than a registered guide, hearing or assistance dog as above.
- Residents living in a house with a private enclosed garden are permitted to keep one dog of their choice provided that the breed, size and temperament of the dog is suitable.

**Other animals** - Small domestic pets such as hamsters, caged birds and fish are permitted to be kept. Exotic or wild animals are not permitted to be kept.

### ***Sheltered Housing and Almshouses***

Cats and dogs are not permitted in our sheltered housing, which includes the City of London Almshouses and Gresham Almshouses for the purposes of this policy. This does not include guide dogs or assistance dogs, which are permitted, though residents must inform us if they plan to obtain one.

## **5.2 Residents responsibilities**

Any permission to keep a pet is subject to the following conditions and responsibilities:

- Residents must ensure the health and welfare of their pets at all times
- Residents must comply with all legal obligations relating to the ownership and control of their pets and not keep any breed banned by law
- Residents are also responsible for the behaviour and control of any animal they own or those owned by visitors to their home. They must not allow their pets to cause a nuisance or annoyance to others or cause damage to property
- All dogs, including registered assistance dogs, must not be exercised on City of London estates and communal areas, and must not be allowed to cause a nuisance to others.
- All dogs, including registered assistance dogs, must be kept on a lead at all times when being taken through a City of London estate and must not be tethered to any land owned by us
- Residents must not keep any pets on balconies or communal walkways

Residents must not undertake the following activities from their home:

- Breeding of animals.
- Sale of animals.
- Hoarding of animals – this involves keeping an excessive number of animals as pets without having the ability to properly house or care for them

### **5.3 Dealing with nuisance from pets**

We will take appropriate action where residents do not comply with these conditions or their obligations and responsibilities as a pet owner.

Pet nuisance includes but is not limited to the following: allowing pets to roam unattended; fouling; noise; smells; damage caused by animals; injuries caused by animal; aggressive animals.

We aim to resolve problems informally and by agreement. However, where the problem is serious or persistent, we may take legal action to enforce our tenancy or lease conditions and remove the pet or animal from the property.

## **6. Responsibilities, monitoring and performance**

- 6.1 Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation rests with the Head of Housing Management. The Head of Housing Management will ensure that staff receive the appropriate training and support to achieve the aims of this policy. Where needed we may establish appropriate operational procedures.
- 6.2 Monitoring of the implementation of this policy and our performance in dealing with issues relating to pet ownership will be the responsibility of senior management within the Housing Division.
- 6.3 The City Corporation in its capacity as trustee of the City of London Almshouses Trust has oversight of the application of the policy to Charity, through the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee.

## **7. Associated policies**

- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Tenancy Management Policy

## 8. Document Management

Policy title	Pets Policy
Date created	May 2017 (v.1) January 2021 (v.2) November 2024 (v.3 – this version)
Policy owner	Head of Housing Management
Authorised by	Housing Management and Almhouses Sub-Committee
Date authorised	
Review period	3 years
Date of next review	November 2027

Consultation and assessment	
Customer consultation	Residents have been consulted on this policy. Any substantive changes to this policy will result in further consultation.
Equality Impact Assessment	This Policy has been subject to a full Equalities Analysis. We permit assistance dogs in line with disability requirements. The policy allows for the needs of individual residents to be considered.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required. Minimal risk of data breaches. Use of personal data covered by our privacy statement.

Document review history			
Version	Date reviewed	Date approved	Key changes
1.0	N/A	February 2017	Original document
2.0	November 2020	January 2021	Routine policy review. Document format amended and updated but policy approach unchanged.

3.0	July 2024		Routine policy review. Resident consultation completed. No material amendments.
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