

<b>Committee(s):</b> Housing Management and Almshouses Sub (Community and Children's Services) Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 15/11/2021
<b>Subject:</b> Repairs and Maintenance Service – Overview	<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>	N
<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> Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Mike Saunders, Head of Asset Management	

### Summary

The purpose of this report is to give Members an overview of the current repairs and maintenance service and the performance of the contractors delivering these services. The report covers the repairs and maintenance service to all the City of London Corporation's (the Corporation) Housing Revenue Account (HRA) estates including, the Almshouses and commercial properties.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to consider and note the report

### Main Report

#### Background

1. The HRA Repairs and Maintenance Service is varied and, is delivered by several contractors who specialise in particular areas of the service. These include (but not limited to) the following:

- Day-to-Day Response Repairs.
- Gas Servicing and Repairs.
- Lift Maintenance and Repairs.

- Active Fire Safety.

## Current Position

2. There are various active contracts in place to deliver the repairs and maintenance service across the HRA including:

Works contract	Contractor	Start date	Contract Period
Day-to-day Response Repairs	Wates Living Space	1 April 2019	3 + 2 years
Gas Servicing and Repairs	TSG Building Services PLC	1 October 2021	3 + 2 years
Lift Maintenance	Guideline Lift Services Limited	1 July 2019	3 + 2 years
Active Fire Safety	Amalgamated Limited	1 April 2020	2 + 2 years

3. The above four contracts contain the bulk of works included in the Responsive Repairs Service, in particular, the Day-to-Day Response Repairs contract. Other services which have a lesser element of responsive repairs include:

Works contract	Contractor	Start date	Contract Period
Asbestos Inspections and Remedial Works	Eton Environmental Limited	1 February 2021	3 + 2 years
Water Testing and Remedial Works	Guardian Water Treatment Limited	1 March 2019	3 years*

\*Currently in the process of being retendered, with a commencement date for the new Contract of 1 March 2022.

4. This report focuses on the Day-to-Day Response Repairs Contract, which comprises, by far, the highest number of response repairs and is carried out by Wates Living Space (Wates). On average every year, there are approximately 6,500 response repairs orders raised to Wates. These are across several different priority bands, depending on the type of work, the urgency and complexity. The table below details Wates' performance against the various priority bands for the latest quarter ending 30 September 2021.

Priority (completion)	Target (%)	On target (No.)	Out of Target (No.)	Not Comp (No.)	Total OOT (No.)	Total (No.)	Q2 Results
P0 (within 4 hours)	95%	103	4	1	5	108	95.37%
P1 (within 24 hours)	95%	158	5	2	7	165	95.76%
P2 (within 3 working days)	95%	307	26	13	39	346	88.73%
P3 (within 5 working days)	95%	534	26	17	43	577	92.55%
P4 (within 20 working days)	96%	278	11	24	35	313	88.82%
Emergency – Out of Hours	100%	72	0	0	0	0	100%

5. As can be seen from the table above, Priorities 2, 3 and 4 are below target (highlighted in yellow). Monthly contract meetings are held with Wates and,

discussions have taken place on Wates' failure to meet the P2, 3 and 4 targets for the last quarter. Wates has set out several factors that have affected performance including the availability of skilled resources (internal and external), material availability, access, complexity, and the performance of sub-contractors. Whilst we do have some sympathy with Wates predicament in the current climate, we do expect that performance will improve and, we continue to monitor the situation closely.

6. The types of repairs vary considerably across the contract and, whilst most are completed on-time and to a satisfactory standard, there are certain repairs that do cause difficulties and, historically, are not always completed on-time and to a satisfactory standard. These types include:

#### Leaks

7. Leaks are undoubtedly the type of repair that causes the most frustration with our residents and Members especially when they are not completed within the agreed timescale and standard. Typically, leaks across the Corporation's housing stock emanate from flat roofs, balconies, windows, burst pipework, sanitaryware and leaks from neighbouring properties
8. Whilst the cause of most leaks is usually easily identified and rectified, there is an increasing number that are identified but not fully rectified in the first instance. This is particularly the case for roof leaks. It is recognised that the roof coverings to many of the roofs to blocks of flats across the HRA require replacement and, as Members will be aware, this is being addressed as part of the current Housing Major Works Programme.
9. In addition to the poor condition of the roof coverings, there have been occasions where poor workmanship has resulted in leaks not being rectified. We do monitor problems with water ingress very closely and, when poor workmanship is identified, the repair is recalled and rectified at the contractor's cost. In the 12 months up to 30 September 2021, there were 130 repair orders raised to deal with leaks from roof areas.

#### Drainage

10. Like leaks, drainage problems can lead to property damage if not dealt with efficiently. Over the last two years, we have seen a significant increase in blocked drains and backsurgings. There are several factors contributing to this increase including changing weather conditions (we are experiencing many more increased and prolonged incidents of rain/storms than before). This has led to the main sewer infrastructure not being able to cope with the increased surface water causing backsurgings into properties.
11. The last 18 months has also seen a dramatic increase in the number of people working from home. This, along with lifestyle habits, has been the cause of many blockages. The third cause is the age and condition of the drainage pipework. It has been recognised that planned maintenance reduces the number of reactive repairs and in this case, blockages. We are currently undertaking a procurement

exercise for a planned pro-active drain cleaning and maintenance programme across the Golden Lane Estate and, it is intended that a similar programme across our other estates will follow. In the 12 months to 30 September 2021, there were 223 repair orders raised relating to blocked drainage

### Security

12. Security on our estates is very important. Not only does it make our residents feel safe, but a secure estate reduces the risk of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Security can take different forms, from secure doors to adequate lighting. During the pandemic, some of our estates were affected by increased vandalism and anti-social behaviour. An example of this was Avondale Square Estate where, almost nightly, there was anti-social behaviour. Youths were breaking into blocks causing damage and congregating on stairwells. A programme to replace the main entrance doors with high security, yet sympathetic, doors was put in place and the level of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage has dramatically dropped.

### General repairs and return visits

13. One of the other main areas of concern and complaint for our residents is the need for return visits shortly after a repair is carried out (which suggests that the repair was not completed properly in the first instance). For most repairs, we expect our contractor to affect a final repair at the first visit (eg. electric showers, replacement lamps, boiler repairs). In some cases, however, these repairs may fail within a short period of time due to the age and condition of the appliance or component. Where an item continues to fail, then, it is replaced. Whilst this may be frustrating for the resident, the HRA could not sustain the wholesale replacement of items, appliances/components at first failure.

## **Conclusions**

14. The repairs and maintenance service is varied and, performance is particularly subject to internal and external factors. This is evident currently from the national shortage of skilled labour and the availability of key materials. Whilst the service in general is good, it is recognised that the repairs that affect residents the most are those that require constant monitoring. Officers continue to work with contractors to ensure the correct level of suitable resources, both in-house and sub-contracted, are maintained to maintain improvements in the services provided.

## **Appendices**

None

### **Mike Saunders**

Head of Asset Management

T: 020 7332 3012

E: [mike.saunders@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:mike.saunders@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

