

Report to: Housing Review Board



Date of Meeting 25th January 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Repairs and voids (empty dwellings) Performance

Report summary:

This report outlines our approach to improving performance across our repairs contracts and in the management of our empty homes. This is an update, following our last report at November's meeting.

The report outlines the progress we have made to date and the actions we are taking to further improve our performance.

The attached presentation outlines the performance in delivering our repairs service and in the management of empty properties. It also outlines the progress we have made to date and the actions we are taking to further improve our performance.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

The Housing Review Board receives the report and notes the actions

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure the Housing Review Board have assurances around the contract management of the repairs service and how we are managing our empty properties.

Officer: Yusef Masih – Compliance and Planned works service manager, Susie Williams – Responsive repairs and voids service manager

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning

- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

Report in full

1. Background

1.1 At the last Housing Review Board Meeting in November 2024 some concerns were raised about the performance of our two key contractors, Ian Williams and Liberty Gas.

1.2 We have spent the last few months working hard with our contractors to improve and we are seeing performance increase.

1.3 Outlined below is our current position and how we are moving forward to address the challenges of managing large contracts.

2. The Management of Empty Homes

2.1 The number of empty homes (voids) continues to reduce month on month, we are pleased to also report that void turnaround times are also decreasing. In December 2023 we recorded 127 empty homes, which is down from 168 in July 2023.

2.2 We are taking the following steps to ensure void performance:

- We are monitoring performance against a clear action plan with Ian Williams. Weekly progress meetings are in place.
- Joint specification and sign off visits with EDDC colleagues and Ian Williams are taking place which supports getting the delivery of the void right first time.
- Ongoing pre vacation visits completed by the Allocations team enable us to set expectations with the outgoing customer and identify areas of concern with the property well before the void date.
- A review of our Recharge Policy is due later this year which will reinforce our expectations of outgoing customers.

- A review of the key to key process (from when the outgoing customer leaves to the new customer moving in) is underway which will identify further efficiencies, decreasing void time and rent loss.

3. Repairs Completed within Target

3.1 Our target for all repairs across Ian Williams and Liberty Gas our two main contractors is 90%. While we acknowledge there is further work to be done, progress is being made with 83% of repairs being completed within time in December 2023, against 75% of repairs in July 2023.

3.2 Our target is for our contractors to complete 100% of emergency repairs within target. Again, while we acknowledge further work is necessary it is pleasing to see that we are on the right track. In December 2023 85% of emergency repairs were completed within target across our two contractors, against 65% in July 2023.

3.3 To improve performance across our repairs contracts we are taking the following actions:

- We continue to work in collaboration with our contractors and have implemented workstream specific meetings to address concerns and understand blockages in a timely manner (e.g. attendance at Toolbox Talks, Sub Contractor Meetings and weekly progress discussions)
- The recent appointment of a Data Analyst within the EDDC team enables us to reconcile our data, track and monitor repairs to ensure target dates are met and identify trends required in service improvement (e.g. trade specific challenges or geographical issues)
- By sharing data we are able to forecast where demand is likely to increase and work with our contractors to resource plan and grow their sub contractor networks (e.g. respond to the increase in demand from damp, mould and disrepair cases)
- The appointment of a Customer Liaison Officer into the Ian Williams team is providing invaluable to the contract delivery and resolution of complex issues. We continue to work with Ian Williams to shape the role and add value to all workstreams.
- We will undertake a review of customer feedback on our repairs contracts and use trend analysis from complaints to better understand areas for improvement.

4. Fit for the Future

4.1 To ensure we are in a position to meet upcoming challenges and invest wisely in our portfolio we are undertaking some additional actions to future proof our service.

4.2 We have undertaken a review of our services to ensure we have the right people in the right places. We will continue to review our resources in line with the demands on our service and support our contractors to do the same.

4.3 An upcoming skills review will inform a training plan for the teams to allow our colleagues to develop and be further equipped to manage the challenges of these large contracts.

4.4 Data from our stock condition survey will inform our Asset Management Strategy and our Investment Plan for the next five years which will improve the overall decency of our homes.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications identified in the report.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications.