

Overview and Scrutiny



Housing Select Committee Agenda

Thursday, 9 March 2023

7.00 pm,

Civic Suite

Lewisham Town Hall

London SE6 4RU

For more information contact: Nidhi Patil (020 8314 7620)

This meeting is an open meeting and all items on the agenda may be audio recorded and/or filmed.

Part 1

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The public are welcome to attend committee meetings. However, occasionally, committees may have to consider some business in private. Copies of reports can be made available in additional formats on request..

Housing Select Committee Members

Members of the committee, listed below, are summoned to attend the meeting to be held on Thursday, 9 March 2023.

Jeremy Chambers, Monitoring Officer
Wednesday, 1 March 2023

<p>Members</p> <p>Councillor Stephen Penfold (Chair)</p> <p>Councillor Will Cooper (Vice-Chair)</p> <p>Councillor Natasha Burgess</p> <p>Councillor Suzannah Clarke</p> <p>Councillor Billy Harding</p> <p>Councillor Rosie Parry</p> <p>Councillor Sakina Sheikh</p> <p>Councillor Mark Ingleby (ex-Officio)</p> <p>Councillor Ese Erheriene (ex-Officio)</p>	
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Agenda Item 1 MINUTES OF THE HOUSING SELECT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 5 January 2023 at 7.00 pm

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Stephen Penfold (Chair), Will Cooper (Vice-Chair), Billy Harding and Rosie Parry

ALSO JOINING THE MEETING VIRTUALLY: Councillor Mark Ingleby (Chair of Overview & Scrutiny)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Sakina Sheikh, Natasha Burgess and Suzannah Clarke.

ALSO PRESENT: Fenella Beckman (Director of Housing Services), Tony Riordan (Principal Housing Accountant), Jennifer Daothong (Executive Director for Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm), Councillor Sophie Davis (Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Homelessness), Councillor Brenda Dacres (Cabinet Member for Housing Development & Planning), Councillor Louise Krupski (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate), John Pedretti (General Manager, Regenter B3), Lesley Johnson (Director of Property & New Business, Phoenix Housing), Adam Pope (Sustainability Manager, Phoenix Housing), Sean Longley (Licensing & Housing Enforcement manager), Mathew Browne (Licensing & Housing Enforcement manager), and Nidhi Patil (Scrutiny Manager),

ALSO PRESENT VIRTUALLY: Patrick Dubeck (Director of Inclusive Regeneration), Martin O'Brien (Climate Resilience Manager), Jon Kanareck (Lewisham Homes), Kenneth Gill (RB3), Mick Lear (Head of Revenues and Benefits), Iain McDiarmid (Assistant Director Integrated Commissioning), Emma Talbot (Director of Planning), Margaret Dodwell (Chief Executive, Lewisham Homes).

NB: Those Councillors listed as joining virtually were not in attendance for the purposes of the meeting being quorate, any decisions taken or to satisfy the requirements of s85 Local Government Act 1972

1 Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2022

1.1. RESOLVED: that the minutes of the last meeting be agreed as a true record.

2 Declarations of interest

- 2.1. Councillor Cooper declared an interest as a service manager for Community Advice Works- which provides advice and advocacy for people regarding housing matters in Lewisham.
- 2.2. Councillor Penfold declared an interest as an employee of the Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network- which provides advice to refugees and migrants in Lewisham.
- 2.3. Councillor Harding declared an interest as an employee of Centre Point- a youth homelessness charity- which manages property in Lewisham.

3 Responses from Mayor and Cabinet

3.1. There were none.

4 Rent and Service Charge increases 2023-24

Fenella Beckman (Director of Housing Services) introduced the report. The following key points were noted:

- 4.1. The rent and service charge increases were as follows: a 7% rent increase for both Regenter B3 and Lewisham Homes; a 7% increase in service, heating & hot water charges for Lewisham Homes and a 13.6% increase for Regenter B3; a 10% increase to garage rents. There were no proposals to vary the current levy for the Tenants' Fund contribution so those remained the same.
- 4.2. Engagement meeting with residents & leaseholders from Lewisham Homes and RB3 took place during December 2022. These meetings provided residents a chance to engage directly with the service managers to raise their concerns and give feedback on the services they receive.
- 4.3. Detailed feedback was received from residents at these engagement meetings. Response to their comments would be drafted by officers and sent to the residents, circulated to the members of this Committee as well as shared with the Mayor & Cabinet when they consider this report.

The Committee decided to ask questions to Lewisham Homes first, followed by Regenter B3. In their discussion with Lewisham Homes, the following key points were noted:

- 4.4. The proportion of tenants claiming housing benefits was around 53% but it was discussed that with Universal Credit being directly paid to residents, it was difficult to gauge the actual number of residents receiving full benefits.
- 4.5. There was an increase in rent arrears during Covid as there was a lack of legal action.
- 4.6. Since last April, the welfare benefit team at Lewisham Homes had helped over 1600 residents successfully claim £830,000 of additional Universal Credit and Housing Benefit.
- 4.7. Lewisham Homes did a lot of work with the Trussell Trust and provided around 20 residents with £49 vouchers. These were mostly people who had pre-paid meters as it was especially difficult to provide them with any other support around fuel prices.
- 4.8. Even though the percentage point increase in service charge for Lewisham Homes (7%) was lower than that of Regenter B3 (13.6%), in terms of actual price increase, Lewisham Homes costs were still higher. This was due to the fact that Regenter B3 followed a different service model- they employed people directly but did not have to pay similar on-costs as Lewisham Homes (for example, pension costs and pay award were significantly higher for Lewisham Homes). Lewisham Homes also ran a 7-day service which incurred a higher cost.
- 4.9. Lewisham Homes would have a discussion with Council officers about including the support offer for tenants and leaseholders on the back of the rent letters.

In the Committee's discussion with Regenter B3, the following key points were noted:

- 4.10. Regenter B3 (RB3) had an in-house welfare adviser to provide tenants with an intensive housing support and advice service. The in-house adviser was also conducting energy workshops to provide advice on energy bills, discounts and saving tips. They were also signposting residents to online resources such as StepChange, Debt advice, National Debtline and making sure that residents were aware of local schemes and initiatives. RB3 were also looking to commence monthly rent and welfare surgeries.
- 4.11. The Council's contract with RB3 was based on RPIX. The RPIX data was not released at the time that these service charge increases needed to be decided, therefore these rates needed to be estimated. These estimates were fairly accurate and had been the method of choice for deciding these increases over last

few years. The high estimates avoid massive changes to the bill when adjustments need to be made post-audit.

- 4.12. Tenants and leaseholders were never charged more than the actual cost of service provided. These service charges were reviewed annual by independent external auditors. If the actual costs for the service turned out to be lower than the estimates then the residents would see that come through as an adjustment to their account.
- 4.13. The contract with RB3 stated that they needed to maintain full-cost recovery. After that it was up to the Council whether they decided to accept the recommendations made by RB3. However, the Council had to consider the consequences of setting a lower rate as that would put the HRA in deficit and the Council was legally required to set a balanced budget.
- 4.14. According to legislation, residents have a right to be informed of any fundamental changes in housing management including increases in rent and other charges. The engagement sessions with tenants and leaseholders were called consultations but the Committee thought that it was misleading to call them consultations when residents had minimal or no power to influence the decisions.
- 4.15. A member of the public was invited to address the Committee who queried if any changes had been made to the rent & service charge increase proposals after resident engagement. They stated that tenants and leaseholders didn't understand the basis of the RPIX formula and why it was baked into the contract.
- 4.16. Officers confirmed that proposals weren't changed following engagement with residents since charging at a lower rate would put the HRA in deficit and the Council was legally required to set a balanced budget. They also added that in the future they would be asking RB3 to provide more information in the proposal reports about how the costs were broken down.
- 4.17. Regenter B3's annual report would also be added as a substantive item to the committee's work programme.

RESOLVED: that the Committee would refer its views to the Mayor & Cabinet as follows –

- The Committee believed that it was inequitable to charge one group of social tenants an increase below inflation (Lewisham Homes) and the other not (Regenter B3).
- The Committee recommends to Mayor & Cabinet that they look again at the proposal to pass on in full the service charge increase in line with RPIX + 1% for Regenter B3 tenants. This recommendation is made in the full knowledge that there are financial limitations and that the Council needs to ensure the HRA is not in deficit, but the Committee asks Mayor & Cabinet to look at this again and see if some dispensation can be made to assist RB3 tenants given the Cost-of-Living crisis.

5 Climate Emergency Action Plan update- Housing retrofit

Patrick Dubeck (Director of Inclusive Regeneration) and Martin O'Brien (Climate Resilience Manager) introduced the report. The following key points were noted:

- 5.1. Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan had 143 actions and 5 key themes. Sustainable housing was one of the 5 themes and had 43 actions assigned to it. 12 of these actions had already been completed, 29 were ongoing and work had not begun on 2 of the actions.

- 5.2. Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy had released data on the carbon emissions of local authorities in the UK. As of 2020, Lewisham had the 4th lowest carbon emissions in England.
- 5.3. 47% of Lewisham's carbon emissions were related to Housing.

Lesley Johnson (Director of Property & New Business) and Adam Pope (Sustainability Manager) from Phoenix Community Housing gave a presentation on their work on Homes Energy Improvement. In the discussion that followed, the following key points were noted:

- 5.4. Phoenix's approach to retrofitting was to first understand how their homes perform now. They would be taking a fabric first approach to get their homes to the energy performance certificate C. Phoenix had around 1500 homes that were below SAP Band C. Their roadmap to be net-zero carbon by 2050 included- fabric first energy efficiency measures to lower energy demand, moving to decarbonised fuel sources and microgeneration.
- 5.5. Phoenix had applied for SHDF funding (Social Housing Decarbonization Fund). Their SHDF bid focused on getting the funding to retrofit 160 homes at an estimated cost of £2.8 million. All of these homes were street properties.
- 5.6. Currently, Phoenix had to buy-in the contractors for any retrofitting work as the contractors needed to be trust-mark certified.
- 5.7. For this first phase of works, Phoenix had not taken void properties into account but agreed that it would be useful to look at them going forward.

Margaret Dodwell (Chief Executive, Lewisham Homes) gave a presentation on Lewisham Homes' retrofitting work. In the discussion that followed, the following key points were noted:

- 5.8. Lewisham Homes' Asset Management strategy, developed with the Council, was approved by Lewisham Homes Board in September 2021 along with their Sustainability strategy. These strategies would be shared with members of the Committee.
- 5.9. Lewisham Homes had around 3000 properties that were in EPC band D, E, F and G. Only 407 properties out of these were in the lower bands of E, F and G. Only 2 properties were in the lowest G band.
- 5.10. The bid for SHDF by Lewisham Homes focused on utilising the funding to focus on the properties in these lower EPC bands. The grant funding would be used to add insulation, improve ventilation, provide thermal comfort and to do fabric improvement work. The funding received from SHDF would need to be spent by 2025.
- 5.11. Lewisham Homes' application for SHDF was for £2.9 million. This funding would be used for carrying out improvement works on 159 properties. However, the total cost of the work would be £9 million so even after funding is secured, there would be a large gap in costs that would have to be bridged. The current plan was to meet this gap by programming the improvement work around other works planned for those buildings thereby making the most of planned activities.

John Pedretti (General Manager) gave a presentation on Regenter B3's home improvement works. The following key points were noted:

- 5.12. The Council entered into a 20-year PFI contract with Regenter B3 in 2007. Since 2007, RB3 had carried out a lot of refurbishment and maintenance work that had a positive impact on the carbon emissions of the properties such as- installing double glazed windows, boiler replacement and upgrading communal lighting to LED.

- 5.13. Regenter B3 had not applied for SHDF but even if they had applied and received the funding it wouldn't cover all the costs and there would still be a funding gap that couldn't be bridged.
- 5.14. Furthermore, in the case of Lewisham Homes, delivery of the work funded by SHDF would be through their major works contractor but using these contractors for delivering RB3's work would have given rise to a lot of legal and commercial complexities as they would be external contractors that were not managed by RB3.
- 5.15. Sustained and significant additional funding from government or elsewhere would be needed to achieve the Council's ambition to be net-zero carbon by 2030.

RESOLVED: That

- the Committee encouraged collaboration between the three main social housing providers in the borough namely Lewisham Homes, Phoenix Social Housing and Regenter B3 regarding working towards achieving the Council's aim to be carbon neutral by 2030;
- the Committee would refer its views to the Mayor & Cabinet as follows:
 - The Committee noted with concern that Regenter B3 are taking no steps to retrofit any of the housing stock they currently manage as it is not a part of their contract with Lewisham Council.
 - The Committee recommends that there are meetings between the relevant Cabinet lead, Lewisham Council officers and Regenter B3 as soon as possible to find ways of assisting Regenter B3 in commencing a retrofitting programme to include, if necessary, amending, varying or adding to the existing contract between Lewisham Council and Regenter B3.

The Committee voted to suspend standing orders.

6 Update on Supported Exempt Accommodation

Fenella Beckman (Director for Housing Services) introduced the report. In the discussion that followed, the following key points were noted:

- 6.1. There were 2,042 active claims for exempt accommodation last year out of which 525 related to placements in supported accommodation funded by the Council.
- 6.2. The Council submitted a bid for the £20 million Supported Housing Improvement Programme aimed at targeting local quality issues in Supported Exempt Accommodation in September 2022. However, Lewisham alongside the rest of London was not awarded the funding.
- 6.3. Officers were closely monitoring the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Bill 2022-23 which would require local authorities to develop a local strategy to combat unscrupulous providers and would provide the Secretary of State powers to require supported accommodation to be licensed.
- 6.4. To qualify for exempt status providers needed to show that they have a not-for-profit status. The process of accreditation also involved checking the credibility of the organisation and checking if they were suitably funded to provide this kind of accommodation.
- 6.5. When a provider was registered, the Council got a 100% rebate from Department of Work and Pensions for the housing benefit claim. But when it wasn't a registered provider, the Council only got a 60% rebate. This constituted an annual cost for the Council which was around £150,000 when last checked. However, officers have worked closely with big providers and got them to engage and partner with registered housing associations which made them exempt from that rent referral, so that the Council didn't have to pay a huge cost.

6.6. The Council had an appeals process in place for the providers but so far none of the cases had gone to the court. However, there was one case at a tribunal.

RESOLVED:

- That the report be noted.

7 **Select Committee work programme**

The Committee considered the work programme. The following was noted:

7.1. It was discussed that Optivo should also be invited to provide a repairs update in the next Committee meeting along with the other housing providers.

RESOLVED: That

- the following housing providers be invited for the Repairs update agenda item- L&Q, Clarion, Peabody, Hyde and Optivo (now known as Southern Housing);
- the agenda for the next meeting on the 9th of March 2023 be agreed after making the suggested changes.

The meeting ended at 10.10pm.

Chair:

Date:



Housing Select Committee

Declarations of Interest

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Chief Executive (Director of Law)

Outline and recommendations

Members are asked to declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda.

1. Summary

- 1.1. Members must declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda. There are three types of personal interest referred to in the Council's Member Code of Conduct:
 - (1) Disclosable pecuniary interests
 - (2) Other registerable interests
 - (3) Non-registerable interests.
- 1.2. Further information on these is provided in the body of this report.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Members are asked to declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda.

3. Disclosable pecuniary interests

3.1 These are defined by regulation as:

- (a) Employment, trade, profession or vocation of a relevant person* for profit or gain
- (b) Sponsorship –payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than by the Council) within the 12 months prior to giving notice for inclusion in the register in respect of expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member or towards your election expenses (including payment or financial benefit from a Trade Union).
- (c) Undischarged contracts between a relevant person* (or a firm in which they are a partner or a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest) and the Council for goods, services or works.
- (d) Beneficial interests in land in the borough.
- (e) Licence to occupy land in the borough for one month or more.
- (f) Corporate tenancies – any tenancy, where to the member’s knowledge, the Council is landlord and the tenant is a firm in which the relevant person* is a partner, a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest.
- (g) Beneficial interest in securities of a body where:
 - (a) that body to the member’s knowledge has a place of business or land in the borough; and
 - (b) either:
 - (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person* has a beneficial interest exceeds 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that class.

*A relevant person is the member, their spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom they live as spouse or civil partner.

4. Other registerable interests

4.1 The Lewisham Member Code of Conduct requires members also to register the following interests:

- (a) Membership or position of control or management in a body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Council
- (b) Any body exercising functions of a public nature or directed to charitable purposes, or whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy, including any political party
- (c) Any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25.

5. Non registerable interests

- 5.1. Occasions may arise when a matter under consideration would or would be likely to affect the wellbeing of a member, their family, friend or close associate more than it would affect the wellbeing of those in the local area generally, but which is not required to be registered in the Register of Members' Interests (for example a matter concerning the closure of a school at which a Member's child attends).

6. Declaration and impact of interest on members' participation

- 6.1. Where a member has any registerable interest in a matter and they are present at a meeting at which that matter is to be discussed, they must declare the nature of the interest at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered. The declaration will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If the matter is a disclosable pecuniary interest the member must take no part in consideration of the matter and withdraw from the room before it is considered. They must not seek improperly to influence the decision in any way. **Failure to declare such an interest which has not already been entered in the Register of Members' Interests, or participation where such an interest exists, is liable to prosecution and on conviction carries a fine of up to £5000**
- 6.2. Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest they must still declare the nature of the interest to the meeting at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered, but they may stay in the room, participate in consideration of the matter and vote on it unless paragraph 6.3 below applies.
- 6.3. Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest, the member must consider whether a reasonable member of the public in possession of the facts would think that their interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair the member's judgement of the public interest. If so, the member must withdraw and take no part in consideration of the matter nor seek to influence the outcome improperly.
- 6.4. If a non-registerable interest arises which affects the wellbeing of a member, their, family, friend or close associate more than it would affect those in the local area generally, then the provisions relating to the declarations of interest and withdrawal apply as if it were a registerable interest.
- 6.5. Decisions relating to declarations of interests are for the member's personal judgement, though in cases of doubt they may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

7. Sensitive information

- 7.1. There are special provisions relating to sensitive interests. These are interests the disclosure of which would be likely to expose the member to risk of violence or intimidation where the Monitoring Officer has agreed that such interest need not be registered. Members with such an interest are referred to the Code and advised to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance.

8. Exempt categories

- 8.1. There are exemptions to these provisions allowing members to participate in decisions notwithstanding interests that would otherwise prevent them doing so. These include:-
- (a) Housing – holding a tenancy or lease with the Council unless the matter relates to your particular tenancy or lease; (subject to arrears exception)
 - (b) School meals, school transport and travelling expenses; if you are a parent or

guardian of a child in full time education, or a school governor unless the matter relates particularly to the school your child attends or of which you are a governor

- (c) Statutory sick pay; if you are in receipt
- (d) Allowances, payment or indemnity for members
- (e) Ceremonial honours for members
- (f) Setting Council Tax or precept (subject to arrears exception).

9. Report author and contact

9.1. Jeremy Chambers, Director of Law and Governance, 0208 31 47648



Housing Select Committee

Draft Response to Housing Select Committee

Date: 9 March 2023

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Nidhi Patil (Scrutiny Manager)

Outline and recommendations

This report provides the draft response being considered at Mayor and Cabinet to the recommendations from the Housing Select Committee, arising from the committee's discussion on the retrofitting work done by the Social Housing Providers in Lewisham.

1. Summary

- 1.1. The attached draft response to the Housing Select Committee (HSC) is being considered by Mayor and Cabinet on 8th of March 2023 (prior to this committee meeting). The draft response is attached and an update will be provided at the meeting.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. The Committee is recommended to receive and note the Mayor & Cabinet response.

3. Response

- 3.1 The Mayor and Cabinet will be considering a response to the recommendations made by the Housing Select Committee arising from the committee's discussion on the retrofitting work done by the Social Housing Providers in Lewisham.
- 3.2 The Housing Select Committee had recommended to Mayor & Cabinet that there should be meetings between the relevant Cabinet lead, Lewisham Council officers and Regenter B3 as soon as possible to find ways of assisting Regenter B3 in commencing a retrofitting programme to include, if necessary, amending, varying or adding to the existing contract between Lewisham Council and Regenter B3.

- 3.3 The attached draft response outlines the response to these recommendations.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5. Legal implications

5.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6. Equalities implications

6.1. There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

7. Climate change and environmental implications

7.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from this report.

8. Crime and disorder implications

8.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

9. Health and wellbeing implications

9.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

10. Background Papers

Mayor & Cabinet considered this referral from the Housing Select Committee on the 11th of January 2023.

[Mayor & Cabinet Agenda Pack of 11 January 2023](#)

11. Appendix

11.1. Appendix A- HSC Referral Response to M&C

12. Report author and contact

12.1. If you have any questions about this report please contact the scrutiny manager:
Nidhi Patil, 020 8314 7620, Nidhi.Patil@lewisham.gov.uk



Mayor and Cabinet

Response to the comments of the Housing Select Committee on the Presentations by Social Housing Providers regarding their retrofitting work

Date: 8th March 2023

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Executive Director for Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm

Outline and recommendations

This report provides Mayor and Cabinet with a response to the comments of the Housing Select Committee which were presented in a referral report to the 11th January Mayor and Cabinet meeting. The referral was made following consideration of the presentations that the Housing Select Committee received from Social Housing Providers who attended its meeting on 5th January 2023, namely Lewisham Homes, Phoenix Community Housing and Regenter B3, to provide updates on their work on retrofitting.

The Mayor and Cabinet is recommended to note the officer response to the committee set out below and that the response will be provided to the Housing Select Committee.

1. Summary

- 1.1. On 5th January 2023, the Housing Select Committee received presentations from the Social Housing Providers who attended its meeting, namely Lewisham Homes, Phoenix Community Housing and Regenter B3. Officers from all three social housing organisations presented at the meeting. Following questions to officers, the Committee agreed to refer its views to Mayor and Cabinet. This report presents a response to the referral.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. The Mayor and Cabinet is recommended to note the officer response to the committee set out below and that the response will be provided to the Housing Select Committee.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1. The contents of this report are consistent with the Council's policy framework. It supports the achievements of the following corporate strategy objective:
 - 3.1.1. Tackling the housing crisis – Everyone has a decent home that is secure and affordable.

3.2. The contents of this report also support the objectives of the Housing Strategy 2020-26, as ensuring an appropriately funded HRA will work towards the delivery of the following objectives:

3.2.1. Delivering the homes that Lewisham needs;

3.2.2. Improving the quality, standard and safety of housing;

3.2.3. Supporting our residents to live safe, independent and active lives;

3.2.4. Strengthening communities and embracing diversity.

4. Housing Select Committee's views

4.1. At its meeting on the 5th of January 2023, the Committee received presentations from three Social Housing Providers: Lewisham Homes, Phoenix Community Housing and Regenter B3. These presentations provided the Committee with an update on the retrofitting work undertaken by these housing providers.

4.2. The Housing Select Committee made the following observations in their referral to Mayor and Cabinet:

4.2.1. The Committee noted that Lewisham Council declared a 'Climate Emergency' in 2019 and aims that Lewisham will be carbon neutral by 2030.

4.2.2. The Committee further noted with concern that Regenter B3 are taking no steps to retrofit any of the housing stock they currently manage as it is not a part of their contract with Lewisham Council.

4.2.3. The Committee recommended that there are meetings between the relevant Cabinet lead, Lewisham Council officers and Regenter B3 as soon as possible to find ways of assisting Regenter B3 in commencing a retrofitting programme to include, if necessary, amending, varying or adding to the existing contract between Lewisham Council and Regenter B3.

4.3. The Committee asked that a response to its referral is received from Mayor & Cabinet within the timeframe set out in the constitution.

5. Officer response to Housing Select Committee

5.1. The council entered into a 20 year PFI contract with Regenter B3 in 2007. There are 1,830 properties in the PFI area. Regenter B3 hold ultimate responsibility for delivering against the terms of the contract. In turn, Regenter B3 sub-contract to Pinnacle and Rydon. Pinnacle are responsible for delivering the housing management services, including all elements of tenancy management and resident engagement. Rydon are the repair and maintenance subcontractor who deliver the day-to-day repairs service, planned maintenance, lifecycle and other major works programmes. Higgins were the refurbishment contractor and carried out a programme of works to bring properties up to the Availability Standard between 2007 and 2010.

5.2. It is the responsibility of Regenter B3 to ensure their sub-contractors deliver the services they are responsible for in accordance with the terms of the PFI contract. In return, the council pay Regenter B3 a monthly Unitary Charge, which they distribute to Pinnacle and Rydon in accordance with the terms of their respective sub-contracts.

5.3. The contract comprises a series of documents, schedules and appendices. It fundamentally requires Regenter B3 to report performance against a range of key performance indicators and to ensure the properties are maintained at the Availability Standard. Regenter B3 report performance monthly and deductions can be taken from the Unitary Charge for performance below the standards expected in the contract.

5.4. The contract does not provide allowance for enhancements to property conditions to be provided, over and above the Availability Standard. There is therefore no mechanism with which the council can compel Regenter B3 to carry out specific retrofit works, without significant financial and legal implications to the existing contract.

- 5.5. Nevertheless, there are improvements to the properties taking place. The contract requires Regenter B3 to agree a Lifecycle Plan with the council each year. The Lifecycle Plan set out the works required to ensure the properties are properly maintained at the Availability Standard. For example, ongoing works to properties include installation of new roofs, windows and front doors. The Lifecycle Plan also includes a programme of boiler renewals each year and in 2022 a large programme of communal light renewals took place across the stock, replacing the old lights with new LED ones all of which will have beneficial impacts to the energy performance of the properties. The contract requires all properties to meet, on average, a SAP rating of 70, which corresponds with an EPC rating of C.
- 5.6. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is currently facing significant pressures and does not have spare capacity to meet the cost of any works which would be an additional cost to the council. Given the limited resources available it is essential that priority is given to properties that are in the greatest need of investment. The funding required to finance retrofitting works to the PFI properties would therefore have to be measured against the priority investment need of all HRA stock. There is available grant funding for retrofitting works, however this will require significant match funding to an extent which the HRA is currently not able to withstand.
- 5.7. In addition to funding the additional cost of retrofitting works outside of the existing contract, the additional cost of maintenance and repairs works for the improvements would also have to be met outside of the contract, representing a further cost, by way of an increase to the Unitary Charge.
- 5.8. Arrangements are being made to prepare for the expiry of the contract in four and half years' time. RegenterB3 and their repairs and maintenance sub-contractor have undertaken several stock condition surveys throughout the life of the contract. The works identified from these surveys are used to inform the annual lifecycle and future planned maintenance programmes to ensure condition standards are being maintained.
- 5.9. In preparation for contract expiry the council will commission its own surveys to confirm that the PFI properties will meet the required 'handback' standard. As part of the expiry process the Council will work closely with RegenterB3 to ensure that all relevant data pertaining to the condition, performance and where possible residual life of the assets is transferred to the Council. This data will enable the Council to forward plan in terms of future maintenance requirement for the PFI properties post expiry of the contract in June 2027.
- 5.10. Further, officers are investigating opportunities to realise improvements to properties without needing to match fund works. For example, discussions are currently ongoing with an organisation who can access grant funding to carry out non-intrusive surveys to properties and identify if any works would be beneficial. Officers will continue to work with Regenter B3 to identify opportunities to improve the stock where this does not require additional funding from the HRA including the Energy Company Obligation and other funding streams.
- 5.11. The Housing Retrofit task and finish group issued a recommendation for the development of a housing retrofit strategy for all tenures in the borough. The development of this strategy will include consideration of how best to work with and respond to the needs of the stock in Brockley.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1. Any requirements to incorporate additional works into the PFI contract would require renegotiation of contract terms which could involve significant financial implications to the existing contract.
- 6.2. Any retrofitting works outside of the existing contract would require extensive negotiation and liaison, which would include the specification, handover and additional cost of maintenance and repairs for the improvements undertaken and a likely impact on increases to the Unitary Charge.

6.3. Whilst there is no formal estimates for these works at present, it is likely to be a multi-million pound programme spanning a number of financial years. The HRA is currently facing significant pressures and has not currently allowed for these costs within existing or future budgets. Additional costs required to finance retrofitting works to the PFI properties would mean other works, currently scheduled into the Capital Programme are likely to be impacted significantly.

7. Legal implications

7.1. The Council has a PFI contract with Regenter B3 as set out in the report (“Project Agreement”). The Availability Standard under the Project Agreement does not include retrofit works therefore, should the Council wish to include retrofit works, the Project Agreement sets out the process the parties would need to follow to put the variation in place. This would include asking the contractor for an estimate of costs and adjusting the Unitary Charge accordingly.

8. Equalities implications

8.1. Residents of Lewisham’s housing stock represent a wide range of protected characteristics. There is a likelihood that residents may be in receipt of housing benefit or universal credit to support their ability to pay their rent and bills. High gas and electricity charges will have a significant impact on these households and therefore any improvements to improve the energy performance of homes will have a positive impact on these households, as well as the environment.

9. Climate change and environmental implications

- 9.1. There may be implications for climate change and the environment of not completing works to retrofit homes. Homes with lower EPC ratings will have a higher carbon footprint and will require more energy to heat.
- 9.2. The Brockley PFI contract is due to expire in June 2027. Any major works required to these properties to help the council meet its 2030 carbon neutral target will need to take place after this date.

10. Crime and disorder implications

10.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

11. Health and wellbeing implications

- 11.1. There may be implications for health and wellbeing of not completing works to retrofit homes. Any works to improve the energy performance of homes will have positive impacts for residents. For example, a good EPC rating can mean lower energy bills and a reduced home carbon footprint. It can make properties more affordable and comfortable, with particular benefits to those residents experiencing poor health, the elderly and those with disabilities.
- 11.2. Any works to homes resulting in lower energy bills will have positive impacts for residents, particularly those most affected by the cost of living crisis.

12. Background papers

12.1. [Housing Select Committee- Meeting Papers](#), 5th of January 2023

13. Glossary

13.1. Please see the below for details of terms used within this report:

Term	Definition
Availability Standard	Every Dwelling to be fit for human habitation, free from disrepair and structurally sound, wind and weather tight. Specifically every existing Dwelling in the PFI Area should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free from serious disrepair of a type which could be the subject of a Disrepair Action, • Structurally stable,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free from penetrating dampness prejudicial to the health of the occupants, • Have adequate provision for heating ventilation and lighting, • Have an adequate supply of wholesome water, • Have an effective system for the drainage of foul, waste and surface water, • Have a suitable located WC for the exclusive use of the occupants, • Have a bath OR shower AND wash hand basin with a satisfactory supply of hot and cold water, • Have satisfactory facilities for the preparation and cooking of food including a sink with a satisfactory supply of hot and cold water.
Capital Programme	A plan for improving properties through major works
Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)	An EPC is required whenever a building in the social or private rented sector is let to a new tenant. These show the energy efficiency of the property and the carbon dioxide emissions.
Lifecycle Plan	Annual review of the Cyclical Maintenance and Replacement Programme setting out works for the following five years to ensure it will meet the Contractor's obligations.
Retrofit	The process of making changes to existing buildings so that energy consumption and emissions are reduced. These changes should also provide the benefit of a more comfortable and healthier home with lower fuel bills.
Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP)	the methodology used by the government to assess and compare the energy and environmental performance of dwellings.
Unitary Charge	The fee paid to the Contractor for the services provided under the PFI contract

14. Report author and contact

- 14.1. Fenella Beckman, Director of Housing Services, London Borough of Lewisham
Fenella.beckman@lewisham.gov.uk
- 14.2. On behalf of Exec Director Finance: Tony Riordan, London Borough of Lewisham
Tony.Riordan@Lewisham.gov.uk
- 14.3. On behalf of the Director of Law, Governance &HR: Mia Agnew, London Borough of Lewisham
mia.agnew@lewisham.gov.uk

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Housing Select Committee

Report title: Repairs Update from Housing Providers

Date: 9 March 2023

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Nidhi Patil (Scrutiny Manager)

Outline and recommendations

This report will be followed by presentations from housing providers regarding their repairs service. The housing providers presenting today are:

1. Clarion Housing Group
2. Hyde Housing
3. L&Q
4. Peabody
5. Southern Housing Group

The Committee is asked to:

- note the updates provided by the housing providers and comment on the content of the updates.

1. Summary

- 1.1. The Housing Select Committee has invited five housing providers to update the Committee on their repairs service. These five housing providers are- Clarion Housing Group, Hyde Housing, L&Q, Peabody and Southern Housing Group. These updates will be delivered by means of PowerPoint presentations, following which members of the Committee will have an opportunity to ask questions.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to note the updates provided by the housing providers and comment on the content of the updates.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1. Receiving these repairs update from housing providers supports the aims and objectives of the Council's Corporate Strategy, namely:

- *Quality Housing* - to provide as many people as possible with safe, comfortable accommodation that they can be proud of and holding landlords to account.

4. Background

- 4.1. The Housing Select Committee's terms of reference state that the Committee has the responsibility to establish links with housing providers in the borough which are concerned with the provision of social housing. To meet this responsibility, the Committee needs to ensure that it engages with local registered social housing providers and scrutinise their activities and performance.
- 4.2. There are various social landlords in the borough and the Committee has invited five to its meeting on the 9th of March 2023 to provide an update on their repairs service.
- 4.3. The updates will cover several key issues such as- their repairs policy, details on the total number of tenants they have in Lewisham, information on the number of disrepair cases, their KPIs around providing efficient repair services, information on the complaints received by them regarding repairs and particular areas of concerns when it comes to repairs with a particular focus on 'Damp and Mould' cases.

5. Financial implications

- 5.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the content of this report.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from the content of this report.

7. Equalities implications

- 7.1. Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act included a new public sector equality duty, replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6 April 2011. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 7.2. The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 7.3. There are no direct equalities implications arising from the content of this report.

8. Climate change and environmental implications

- 8.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the content of this report. However, there are considerable benefits to both residents and the environment through homes which are properly insulated, efficiently heated and free from drafts and other issues. Housing providers' repairs services seek to improve the performance of properties through timely repairs and the correction of issues which hinder this.
- 8.2. In February 2019 Lewisham Council declared a Climate Emergency and proposed a target to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030. An action plan to achieve this target was subsequently agreed by Mayor and Cabinet (following pre-decision

scrutiny by the Sustainable Development Select Committee)¹. The plan incorporates all areas of the Council's work. The Committee should acknowledge and consider the climate change and environmental implications of any piece of work that it scrutinises, reviews or comments on.

9. Crime and disorder implications

- 9.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the content of this report.

10. Health and wellbeing implications

- 10.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from the content of this report. However, the condition of a person's home has a major impact on their physical and mental health and wellbeing. Ensuring residents can easily access the repairs service and that the homes are maintained in a good condition will have a positive impact on the residents' health and well-being. In particular, ensuring that housing providers deal with repairs relating to damp and mould effectively is an important part of securing better health outcomes for all residents living in social housing.

11. Appendices

- 11.1. Appendix A- Presentation from Clarion Housing Group
11.2. Appendix B- Presentation from Hyde Housing
11.3. Appendix C- Presentation from L&Q
11.4. Appendix D- Presentation from Peabody
11.5. Appendix E- Presentation from Southern Housing Group

12. Report author and contact

- 12.1. If you have any questions about this report please contact the scrutiny manager:
Nidhi Patil, 020 8314 7620, Nidhi.Patil@lewisham.gov.uk

¹ See <https://lewisham.gov.uk/TacklingTheClimateEmergency> for a summary of the Council's work in this area.

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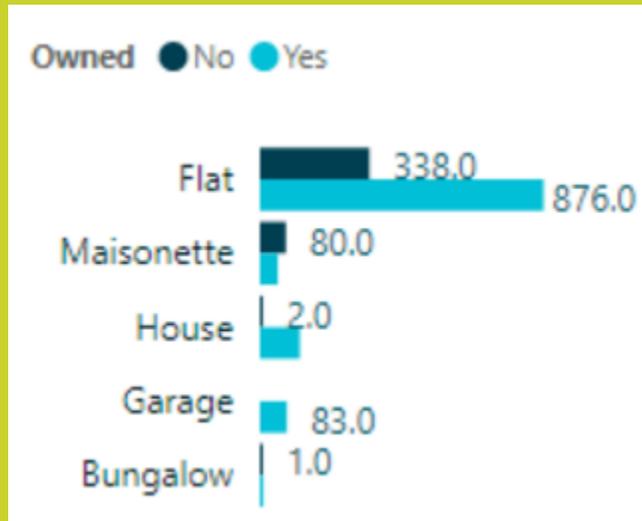


CLARION
HOUSING

Housing Select Committee, Lewisham Council -Repairs, Damp and Mould, and Building Safety

Ian Morrison
March 2023

Our Housing Stock In Lewisham



1384- Dwelling stock all tenure types



Locations



Tenanted stock



CLARION
HOUSING

Repairs

- Direct delivery
- Local apprenticeships
- Dedicated Operations Director
- M&E specialist supply chain
- Heating repairs externally delivered

Responsive Repairs

Repairs area	Target	Required	Completed	Lewisham %
Emergency Repair Unit	98.00%	45	43	95.56%
Emergency Repair Communal	98.00%	11	10	90.91%
Routine Repair Unit	95.00%	98	73	74.49%
Routine Repair Communal	95.00%	27	18	66.67%



Routine repairs KPI's affected by resourcing of Damp and Mould work

[Policy - Repairs and Maintenance Policy.pdf - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#)



CLARION
HOUSING

Safety and Assurance

Lewisham stock compliance report

End of January 2023

COMPLIANCE AREA	TARGET	%
Asbestos	95.00%	100.00%
Fixed Wiring: Communal	95.00%	100.00%
Fixed Wiring: Dwelling	95.00%	93.18%
Fire Risk Assessment	95.00%	100.00%
Gas: Communal	100.00%	100.00%
Gas: Domestic	100.00%	99.30%
Passenger Lifts: LOLER	95.00%	100.00%
Water Risk Assessment	95.00%	100.00%



CLARION
HOUSING

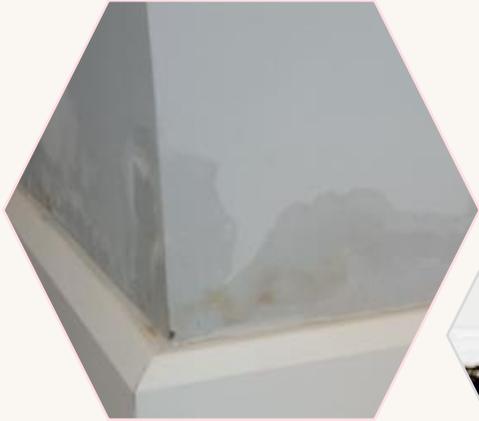
Complaints

- What do we do when things go wrong?
- The importance of learning from mistakes.



CLARION
HOUSING

Leaks, Condensation, Damp & Mould





CLARION
HOUSING

Overview

- We have been actively improving our approach to tackling leaks, condensation, damp and mould (LCDM) since the summer 2021.
- We've made a number of improvements including how we train our people, the equipment we provide them and the property interventions we make.
- We have invested more resource into managing LCDM.
- We have a new LCDM policy that is ready to publish.



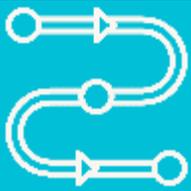
CLARION
HOUSING

Our five proactive areas of focus



Training and equipment

To have a fully equipped workforce, able to spot and direct property interventions



Process and consistency

To have an efficient organisational wide approach to managing LCDM.



Resident and stakeholder communications

To have a robust and supportive network of help aimed at giving all residents the advice they need to manage LCDM.



Data and technology

To use data insight to allow us to analyse, track and report on various LCDM and Disrepair reports.



Investment priorities

To have an investment programme that proactively reduces future LCDM cases.

Sample property interventions



Mould Eradication Kit we're piloting Mould Eradication Kits, to residents to help with early signs of LCDM in their home, alongside support from us

Support Packs We're looking at providing a range of helpful materials - which can sometimes be costly for people on low-incomes - for residents when they've just moved into their home or if required as part of a wider property intervention

MOT Pilot visiting homes with historic LCDM repairs.

Smart Tech We're investing in [Switchee](#) devices which we can install in our homes, these will help monitor the mould and condensation in the residents' property.

Industry response Alongside what we're already looking at, we know companies are actively trying to develop innovative solutions to this challenge. We'll partner with people with promising tools, test them and roll them out if they make a difference.

Sample customer interventions

Resident Focus Groups

We will be holding resident focus groups for residents that have recently been affected by CDM to understand their perception of the process and identify improvements

Resident Videos

We're creating two more resident videos, one with a deeper dive on how to potentially repair/report a CDM issue and the other to highlight from a residents' perspective on how serious this can get and what we can do to help. [V4_CDM_Clarion Housing.mp4 \(vimeo.com\)](#)

Resident letter

We have written to all our residents to make them aware of how during colder months there is a higher risk of LCDM. Along with this, we have provided a leaflet to let residents know what support there is available to them should they notice LCDM in their home, with some tips on how to minimise/prevent LCDM.

Building Safety





CLARION
HOUSING

High Risk Buildings (HRB's) in Lewisham

Site Address	Postcode	Building Safety Manager
1-44 Leybridge Court, Eltham Road	SE12 8TH	Mark Reed
45-88 Leybridge Court, Eltham Road	SE12 8TJ	Mark Reed
89-132 Leybridge Court, Eltham Road	SE12 8TQ	Mark Reed
Astral House, 335 - 337 Bromley Road	SE6 2RP	Mark Reed
Merridale, 127 Carston Close	SE12 8TG	Mark Reed
Orchard Court 35 Bell Green, Sydenham	SE26 4EJ	Alozie Ohuonu

Page 39



CLARION
HOUSING

Works in HRBs

Orchard Court – Installation of Sprinkler System. Works started Dec 2022. Estimated completion of works by Summer 2023.



CLARION
HOUSING

Fixing Cladding

St. Peters Gardens, Ladywell

Cladding due to be replaced by original developer, starting Apr 2023, expected completion Sep 2023.





CLARION
HOUSING

Fire Doors Checking

Since 23 January, 2023 we have in place:

- A fire door inspection programme for all buildings over 11m in height
- Established a programme of Annual inspection of all FEDs
- Quarterly inspection of all communal fire doors





CLARION
HOUSING

Fire Regulations

- All External Wall System information sent across to Fire Rescue service
- Floor Plans marked up and regular checks of essential fire safety equipment
- Established programme of installation of way finding signage
- Secure Information Boxes in all HRBs installed



CLARION
HOUSING

Resident Engagement in Building Safety

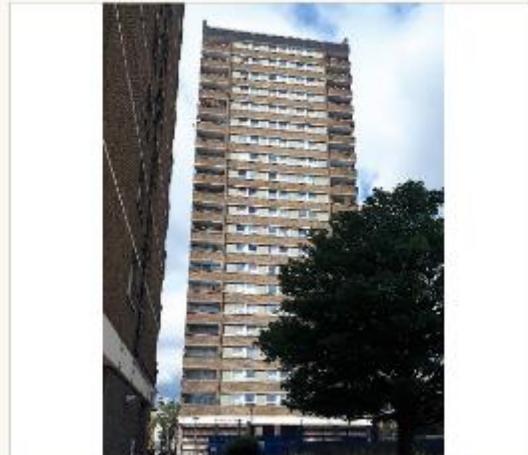
Fire door safety.



Building Safety
at Wilmer House



Your guide to help keep you safe



This booklet contains important
information, please keep it in a safe
place so you can refer to it in the future.



2023 programme

- 6 Cladding projects
- Information on fire doors updated on website since 23 January 2023.
- Fire door and safety instructions booklet delivered to over 60,000 households between January and October 2023
- Consult on and deliver resident engagement strategy to Higher Risk Blocks (above 18m)



Building Safety Programme

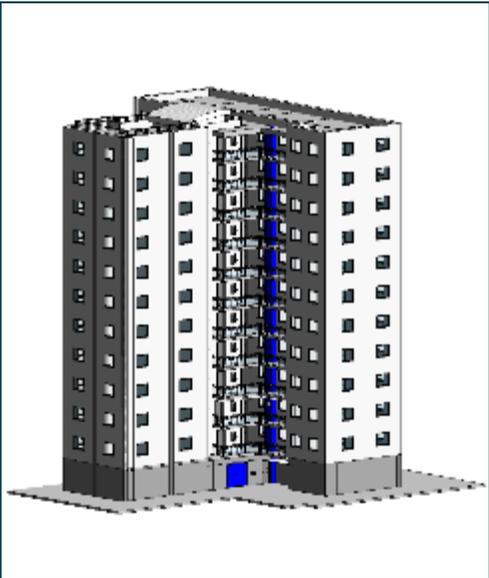
- Preparation of Safety Case files for all HRBs- Early Adopter for Building Safety Regulator
- Creation of the Golden Thread of information
- National programme of External Wall System investigation- 270 buildings undertaken
- Remediation of buildings by developers- 28 onsite, 70 completed
- 7 sites undertaken with Building Safety Fund- all completed
- Building Safety Managers in place across all HRBs

Golden Thread

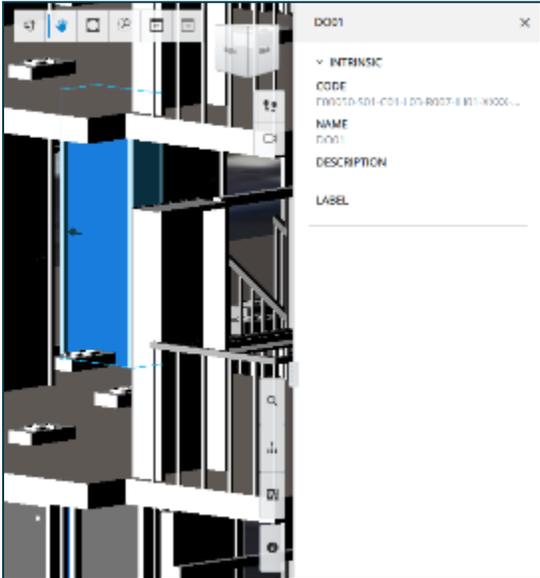


CLARION HOUSING

The information and steps to make a building safe



Name	Make	Availability	Type	Risk Level
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
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49				
50				





Hyde

Hyde repairs service
Lewisham Council

Resident Information

Tenant report for LBC Lewisham Report run date 23/02/2023
Residential & Occupied Properties only

All Hyde Properties	Count Main Tenants	Count Joint Tenants	Total Number of Tenants
Occupied	41374	9336	50710
Local Authority	Count Main Tenants	Count Joint Tenants	Total Number of Tenants
Lbc Lewisham	3348	509	3857

Lewisham Council – 2022/2023 – Repair KPIs

1004

emergency repairs

and

5853

routine repairs

have been completed



98%

of emergency repairs completed in target



76%

routine works orders completed in target



18

days – average completion time for routine work orders



99.2%

of appointments were attended on time



953

jobs are work in progress

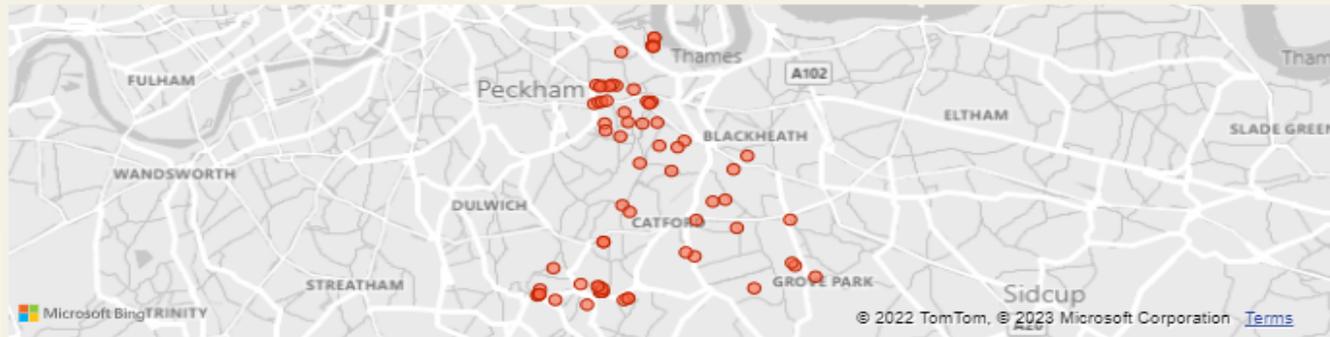


Disrepair - Tracker

71
Open Cases

181
Closed Claims

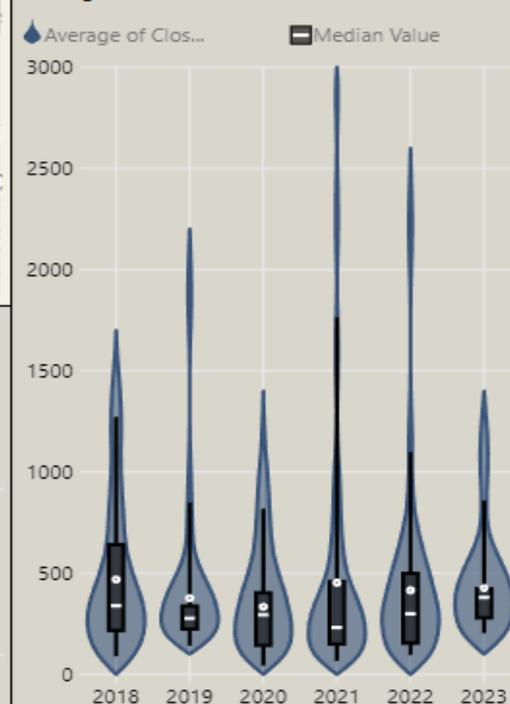
Disrepair Open Cases



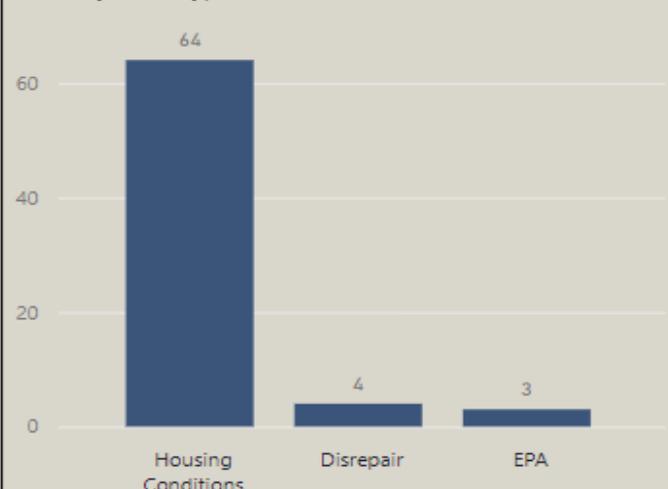
296
Ave Duration Open

397
Ave Closed Duration

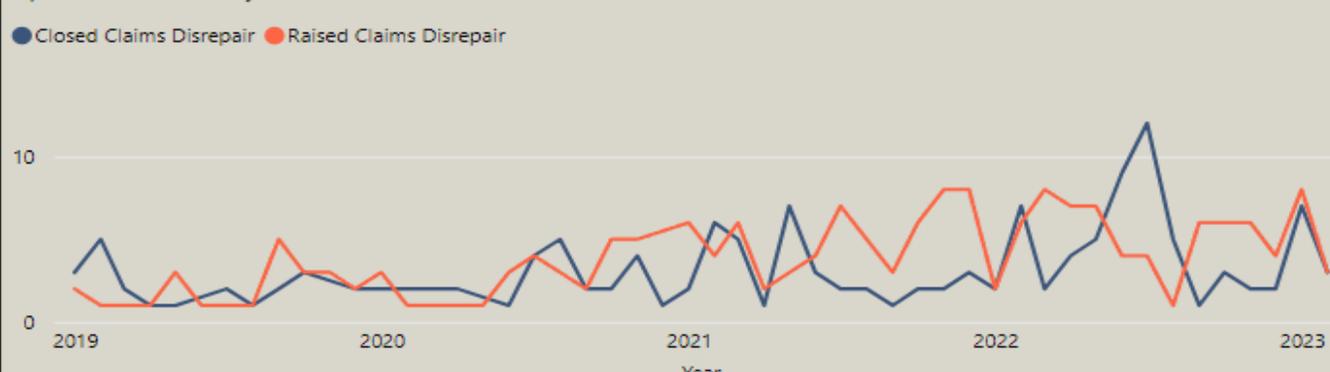
Average Closed Duration



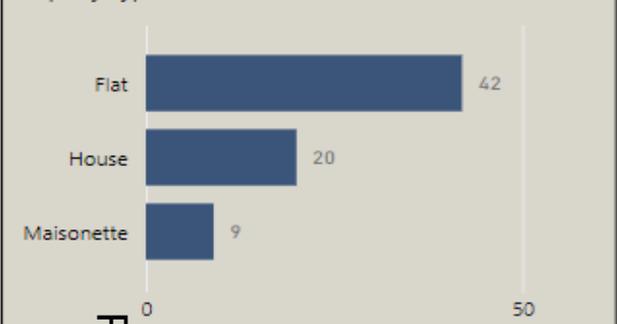
Status by Claim Type



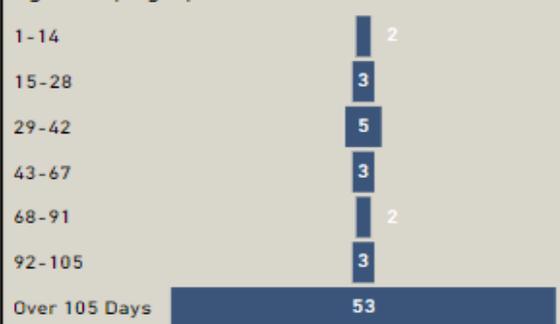
Open/Closed Claims by Year/Qtr/Month



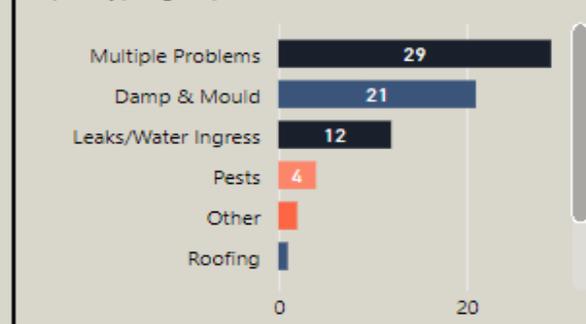
Property Type



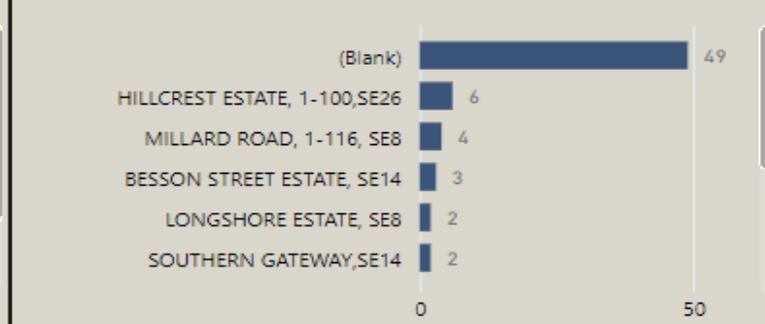
Age Grouping Open Claims



Repair Type (groups)

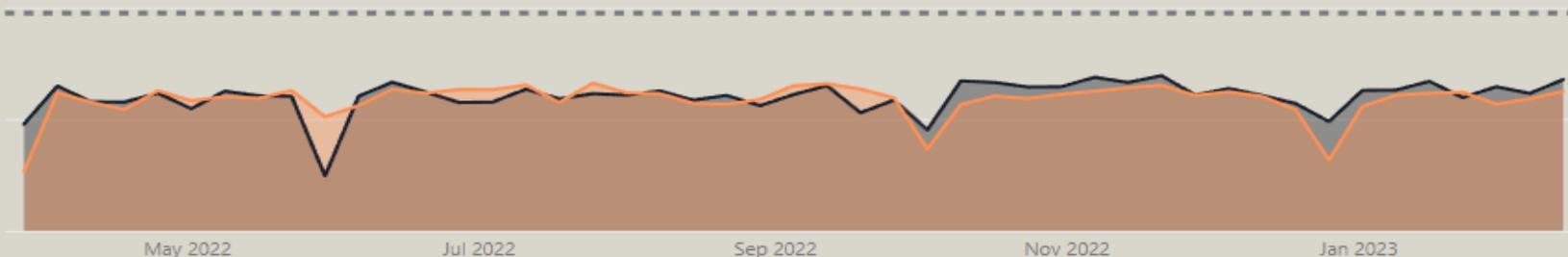


Estate



Raised WOs & Manual Completed by WOs by Week

● Raised WOs ● Closed WOs

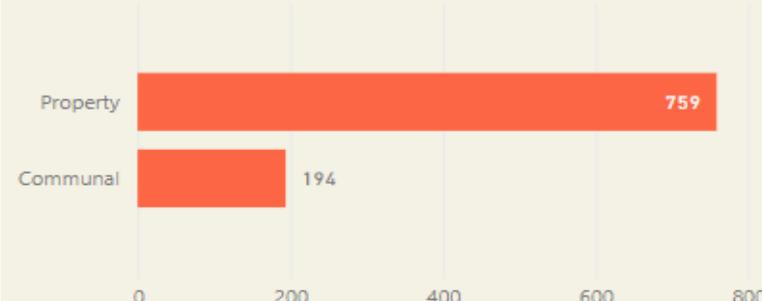


Grouping Age Days	In Date WIP	Overdue WIP	Total
1-7	39	1	40
8-14	136	2	138
15-21	68		88
22-42	174	78	252
43-67		138	138
68-91		113	113
92-105		47	47
Over 105 Days		137	137
Total	437	516	953

WO Number by Postcode District - Heat Map

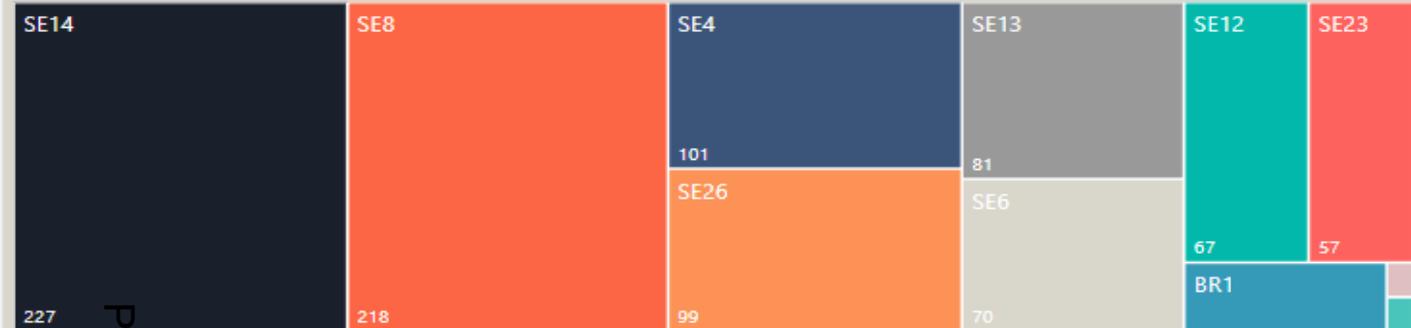


WO by Property & Communal

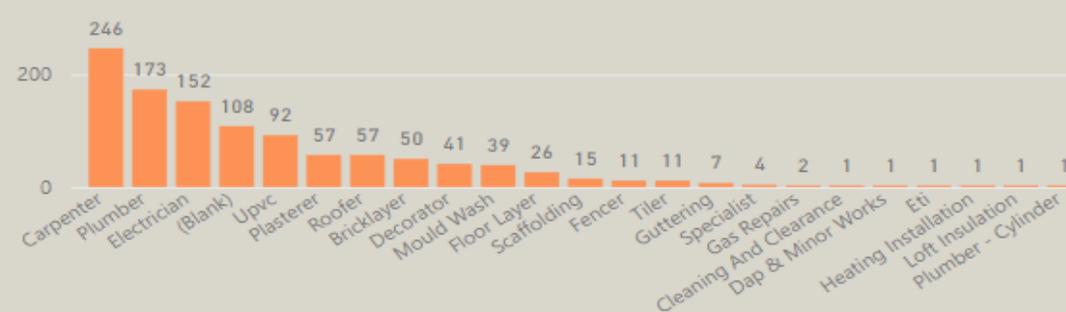


Trade	In Date WIP	Overdue WIP	Total
Carpenter	138	173	311
Plumber	117	118	235
Electrician	77	73	150
	35	66	101
Painter and Decorator	38	42	80
Roofer	12	49	61
Bricklayer	23	25	48
Floorlayer	8	17	25
Glazier	6	18	24
Iti skilled operative		12	12
Total	437	516	953

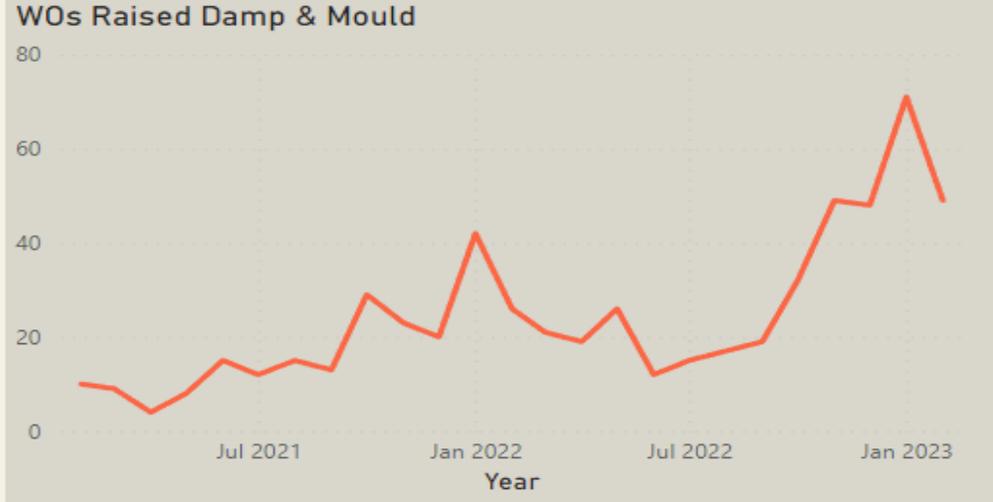
WOs Count by Zones



Trades per WO



DAMP & MOULD



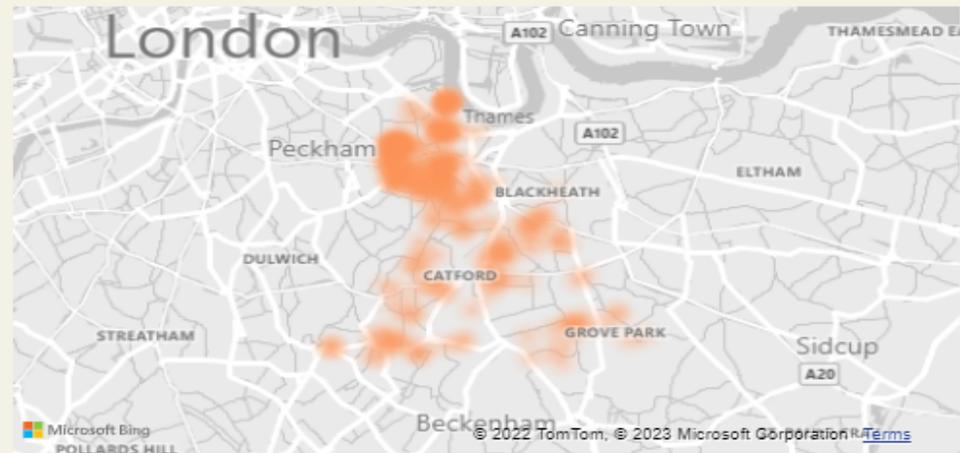
101
Open Work Orders

503
Closed Work Orders

Estate	Total
	70
LONGSHORE ESTATE, SE8	5
BESSON STREET ESTATE, SE14	3
HILLCREST ESTATE, 1-100,SE26	3
MILLARD ROAD, 1-116, SE8	3
PLASSY ROAD SE6	3
FORESHORE AND ALBERMALE HOUSE, SE8	2
NEW DEPTFORD GREEN, SE14	2
NIGHTINGALE GR 78-82 SE13	2
BARFLEUR LANE, 1-67, SE8	1
CORBETT COURT,SE26	1
DUNN COURT, 1-27, BR1	1
GROVE PARK ESTATE,SE12	1
GUNNELL CLOSE, HILLCREST,SE26	1
MERETON MANSIONS AND VANGUARD ROAD, SE8	1
ROWAN COURT, 1-19, SE26	1
SOUTHERN GATEWAY,SE14	1
Total	101

Year	Total
2021	158
2022	326
2023	120
January	71
February	49
Total	604

Damp & Mould Heatmap



January 2023 is the highest number of WOs raised for Damp & Mould since February 2021. This year we are seeing 2.4 WOs raised each day compared to 0.9 WOs in 2022. This equates to a 213% increase in damp & mould WOs being raised.

Housing Ombudsman Contact

First Contact

(this is where they request that we raise a complaint or respond to a customer complaint at either stage)

Total = 136

Request for Evidence

(this is where the customer is unhappy with our response and wants HOS to investigate)

Total = 5

Awaiting Determination

Total = 11 (Repair)

Determinations

Total received = 30 (April 2022 to March 2023) for repairs

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L&Q: Borough of Lewisham

9th March 2023

L&Q

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David Lewis

Executive Group Director of Property Services

L&Q

About L&Q

We house around 250,000 people in more than 105,000 homes primarily across the London and the South East.

Trafford Housing Trust in North West now part of L&Q

We believe that homes matter to everyone – our mission is to combine our social purpose and commercial drive to create homes and neighbourhoods everyone can be proud of.

As a regulated charitable housing association, we reinvest all the money we make into new and existing homes, creating successful communities and providing services for our residents.

In Lewisham we manage 9007 properties of all tenure types

L&Q Repairs Service

- We operate a reactive repair service covering all types of work
- Most repair requests relate to everyday repairs such as plumbing and electrical issues, these are managed by our internal Direct Maintenance team
- In Lewisham our Direct Maintenance team consists of 50 operatives, supported by a Maintenance Team Manager, Supervisors and back-office work planners and administrative staff
- Our internal team is supplemented by external contractors
- We have assigned gas heating contractors, lift engineers, door entry system contractors and other specialists
- We operate a specialist internal team managing damp and mould enquiries, working with a specialist contractor, Zap Carbon

Repairs Policy

L&Q's repair policy can be found here:

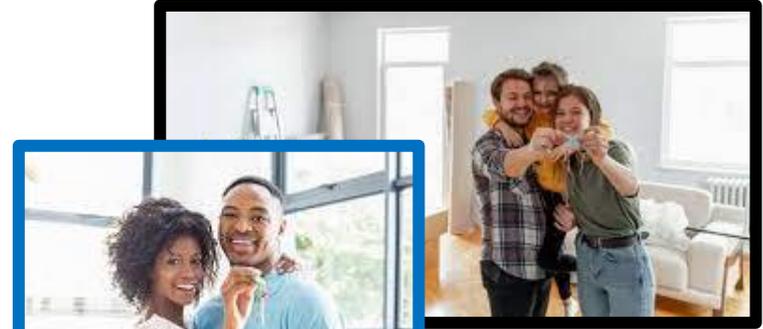


2022 – 2023

Repair Cases and Statistics

L&Q Repairs

- Between April 2022 – January 2023 in Lewisham 25,484 repairs were raised. From these, 3,878 repairs were outstanding at 8th February 2023
- Across L&Q 253,583 repair orders were raised (all repairs except void property refurbishment works). Overall, from these 44,754 repairs are outstanding at 8th February 2023
- The 2022 -2023 Maintenance Services Reactive Budget (excluding voids) is £64.2m and £100.6m, including voids work.



Repairs completion time

- Repairs classed as 'routine' are completed on average, within 16.36 days in Lewisham, the target is 20 days
- 'Emergency' repairs have a 24hr target for completion. In Lewisham this is 2.13 days
- 'Urgent' repairs have a five day target and in Lewisham these are completed at 2.75 days



Performance data: April 2022 – January 2023

Data in relation to priority targets is detailed below:

Month/Year	L&Q Emergency (within 24 hours)	Lewisham Emergency (within 24 hours)	L&Q Urgent (within 5 working days)	Lewisham Urgent (within 5 working days)	L&Q Routine (within 20 working days)	Lewisham Routine (within 20 working days)	L&Q Average working days to complete	Lewisham Average working days to complete
Apr-2022	1.43	1.61	3.63	4.22	2.82	2.80	2.35	2.57
May-2022	1.69	1.74	4.60	4.19	7.98	7.91	5.19	5.33
Jun-2022	1.94	2.56	5.07	5.74	11.68	11.11	7.50	7.72
Jul-2022	2.08	2.40	4.52	3.46	13.44	13.99	8.48	8.85
Aug-2022	2.12	2.45	4.14	2.90	15.99	17.70	9.93	10.98
Sep-2022	2.34	2.16	3.23	1.62	15.88	15.34	9.48	8.67
Oct-2022	2.61	2.15	4.26	1.95	22.63	22.29	13.99	13.38
Nov-2022	2.73	2.04	5.61	1.75	20.91	22.21	12.83	12.77
Dec-2022	2.37	1.92	4.32	1.79	20.43	18.09	10.14	8.52
Jan-2023	2.99	2.63	7.34	1.43	29.75	28.41	16.03	15.09
Average	2.22	2.13	4.53	2.75	16.47	16.36	9.73	9.47

Customer satisfaction survey results

April 2022 – January 2023

- This data is from a third party survey of residents who have had repairs completed
- 5,519 responses were received for L&Q
- 527 of these responses are from Lewisham residents

Satisfaction Question	All L&Q	Lewisham	Target (22-23)
Satisfaction with the repairs service on this occasion	73.4%	75.7%	75%
Satisfaction with quality of repair	75.7%	77.6%	90%
Ease of Dealing with L&Q	58.8%	64.5%	65%
Appointment Kept	83.6%	86.0%	93%

Disrepair cases

Statistics



For Lewisham
April 2022 – January 2023

- New cases – 86
- Closed cases – 226
- Current active cases – 153



L&Q Overall
April 2022 – January 2023

- New cases – 1,528
- Closed cases – 1,019
- Current active cases – 1,149

Repair Complaints

April 2022 – January 2023

Repairs and Maintenance

Year/Month	Number of complaints - Lewisham
Apr 2022	82
May 2022	106
Jun 2022	85
Jul 2022	85
Aug 2022	103
Sept 2022	84
Oct 2022	110
Nov 2022	134
Dec 2022	102
Jan 2023	127
Total	1018

Year/Month	Number of complaints – L&Q
Apr 2022	1105
May 2022	1071
Jun 2022	1016
Jul 2022	955
Aug 2022	1142
Sep 2022	1164
Oct 2022	1247
Nov 2022	1506
Dec 2022	1404
Jan 2023	1410
Total	13066

Areas of concern around repairs

Developments with repair demand



Booth Court – Thurston Point



Tuscany Court



Jude Court

Damp and Mould

In April 2020 L&Q introduced the **Healthy Homes** Programme to provide a comprehensive and proactive response to dealing with damp and mould.

- Through this programme a Healthy Homes Performance Certificate (HHPC) assessment is completed on properties visited
- Clean and Shielding takes place in nearly all properties visited
- Humidity Sensors are fitted unless refused. To date nearly 11,000 have been fitted
- These sensors remotely track internal and external temperatures, providing alerts when conditions could lead to mould growth
- From 1st April 2022 – 9th February 2023, **353** Damp and Mould cases were raised in Lewisham
- Of these **291** have been addressed and **28** are outstanding



Fire Safety

Above 18 metre blocks or seven storey

- 16 blocks in Lewisham will be registered by L&Q from April 2023 with the new Building Safety Regulator.
- We have no major concerns on such blocks but will carry out PAS 9980 assessments as part of their Building Safety cases.
- In addition to this, L&Q hold the following stock:
 - 1 Right To Manage block
 - 4 Privately Managed blocks
 - Above are being checked to establish if L&Q have any form or Additional or Contributory Building Safety Case reporting duties

Under 18 metre, six storey or less

- Of the 67 blocks L&Q have intrusively inspected to date:
 - 1 has had works identified, but not yet started
 - 5 have had fire safety works completed in the past 4 years
 - 27 will require a PAS 9980 assessment to establish any further works
 - 28 have been identified as not needing any fire safety remediation works
 - 6 are in the process of having reports reviewed and will fall into one of the above categories
- No blocks in the Under 18 metre category have waking watch or temporary alarms in place
- In addition to the above, 81 blocks have been desk-top assessed and identified as needing no further EWS inspections at this stage, but will continue on the FRA route only
- A further 30 blocks are being desk-top assessed further and will have an EWS inspection if determined to be necessary



Challenges

Challenges – reactive repairs and voids



Staff retention

- Staff retention has been challenging due to market competition and shortage of skilled labour.
- To mitigate this there are continued efforts to increase internal productivity through service improvement projects.



Sub-contractor capacity

- Externally for some trades, such as roofing, demands has exceeded supply of suitable contractors that will work to L&Q's health and safety standards. For significant damp proofing repairs there is also a limited amount of capacity available to L&Q.
- Procurement of additional roofing and other contractors is underway.



Quality Issues

- Using Plentific Contractor marketplace has proved useful for smaller repairs where demand has spiked. This is less effective for larger work due to quality issues.
- Procurement of additional roofing and other contractors is underway. New major works contracts in place from April 2023

Stakeholder Resolution Team

L&Q has recently restructured

- New team in place to respond to MP & Cllr enquires
- 10 working day response time
- Email: memberenquiries@lqgroup.org.uk

L&Q

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Peabody Update

Lewisham Housing Select Committee

Date: 09th February 2023
Presented by: Shane Sorour (Director of Repairs)
Wells Chomutare (Managing Director - South London)

0. Discussion Areas

1. Lewisham Overview
2. Customer Operations Overview
3. Property Services Overview
4. Repairs Performance
5. Questions

1. Peabody Overview

220,000 total Peabody customers
5,648 customers within Lewisham

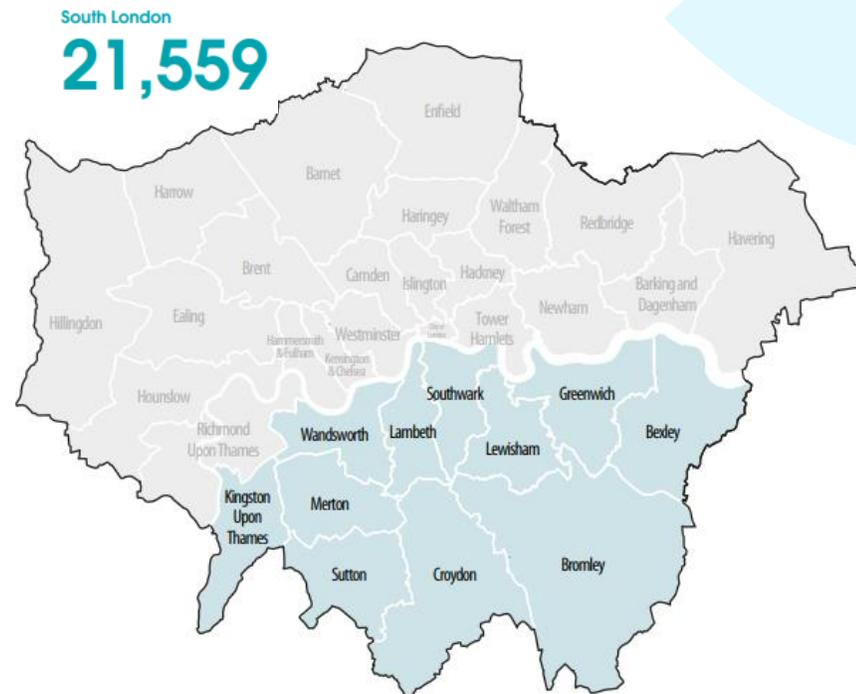
- 59% General Needs
- 4% Market Rent
- 3% Care & Supported Housing
- 31% Leaseholder / Freeholder / SO
- 3% Other

220,000 total Peabody customers
5,648 customers within Lewisham

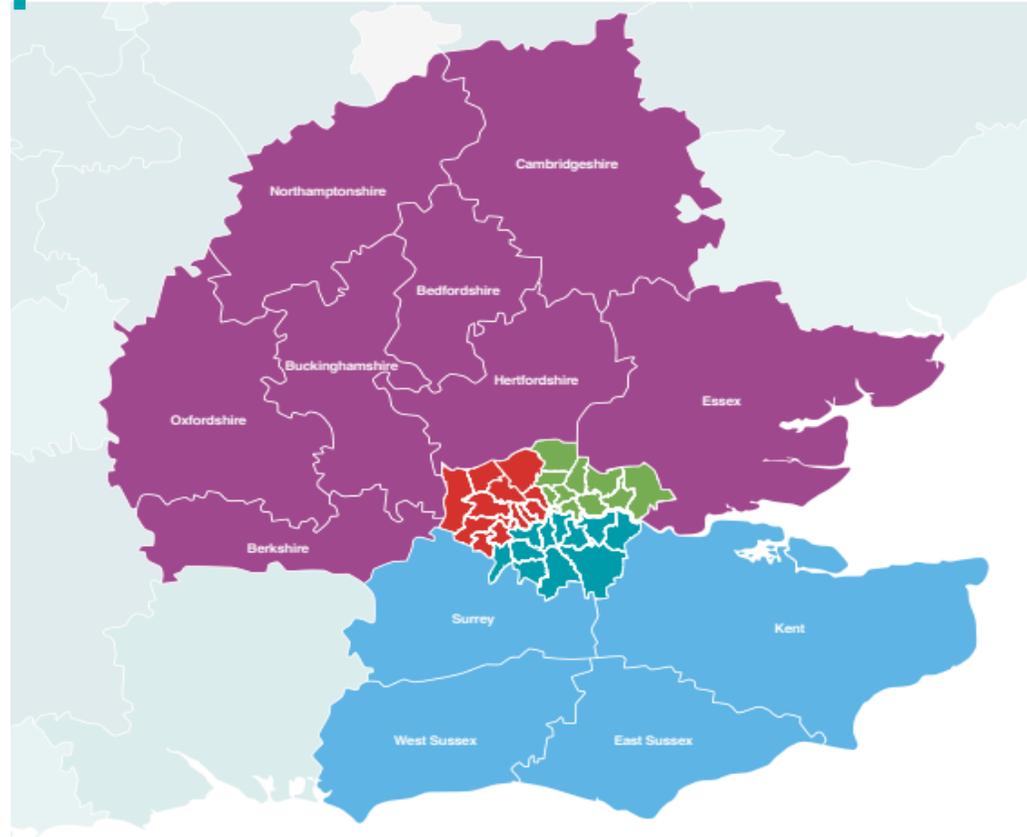
- 59% General Needs
- 4% Market Rent
- 3% Care & Supported Housing
- 31% Leaseholder / Freeholder / SO
- 3% Other

104,358 total Peabody homes
2,670 homes within Lewisham, across **406** blocks

- 82% flats
- 18% houses



2. Customer Operations Overview



North Counties

20,321

NE London

22,996

Total

104,358*

South Counties

12,871

NW London

26,571

South London

21,559

*Includes 40 properties that do not fit within operating region. Excludes Care and Support properties.

This version: 17 November 2022/Communications Team

3. Property Services Overview

- Delivery Model:
 - Regional Contractor - MPT for Lewisham
 - Dedicated Teams - Repairs, Surveying, M&E and Investment
- Challenges:
 - Demand - Unprecedented increase in demand
 - Complexity - Increase case complexity
 - Supply Chain Capacity - Operative and supply chain availability
 - Commercial Challenges - Inflation and increase market rates
 - Sector Scrutiny - Impact on resources managing queries and escalations
 - Recruitment & Retention - Challenges with both
- Repair Strategy & Integration:
 - Merger & Integration - Restructure underway to support regional model
 - New Repair Strategy - New repair strategy being implemented. Mixed economy model, increased investment and move to more proactive property management.

4. Repairs Performance (last 12 months)



4316
Repairs
(Total 12m)

278
Repairs
(Open)

13
Delivery Time
(Days)

Highest Trade
Plumbing (1415)
Carpentry (902)
Electrical (850)



441
DM&C
(Total 12m)

22
DM&C
(Open)

25
Delivery Time
(Days)



63
Voids
(Total 12m)

9
Voids
(Open)

75
Key-to-Key
(Days)

4. Repairs Performance (last 12 months)



137

Complaints
(Total 12m)

20

Stage 1
(Open)

1

Stage 2
(Open)

18

Ombudsman
(Total – South)



17

Disrepair
(Total 12m)

15

Disrepair
(Open)

235

Delivery Time
(Days)



80%

Satisfaction
(Overall)

85%

Satisfaction
(MPT)

5. Questions

Thank-You
Questions?



Lewisham Housing Select Committee

PRESENTATION FROM SOUTHERN HOUSING – THURSDAY 9
MARCH 2023

CREATING
COMMUNITIES
TOGETHER

Southern Housing Homes



We have 1479 homes in the borough

- 285 Home Ownership
- 1153 General Needs
- 41 Keyworker homes
- In addition we have 2 Independent Living Schemes providing 57 homes



Overview of Repair Service

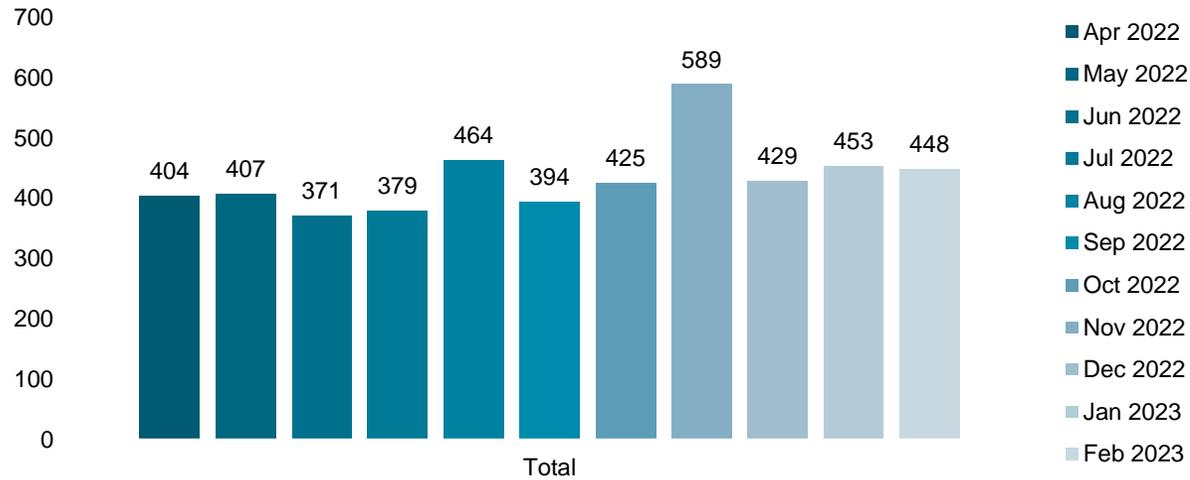
[Link to Southern Housing Repairs Policy - SH Responsive Repairs Policy.docx](#)

- Our aim is to provide a reliable repairs service that keeps residents safe, secure and warm in their homes
- Residents can access the service by phone, text, email, webchat, online account, letter or by direct contact with our operational teams
- The service is carried out by a combination of in-house and external partnered resources
- We aspire to attend and make safe all emergencies within six hours
- Our focus for non-emergencies is as quickly as possible and on a right first-time basis
- Quality assurance is maintained through a combination of home visits & telephone surveys

Repairs cases



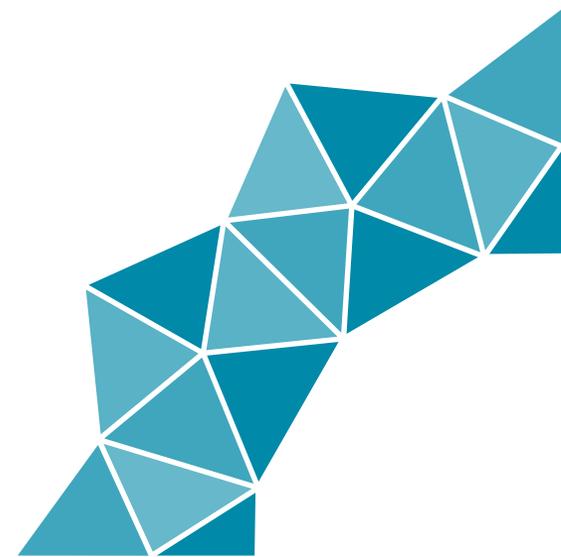
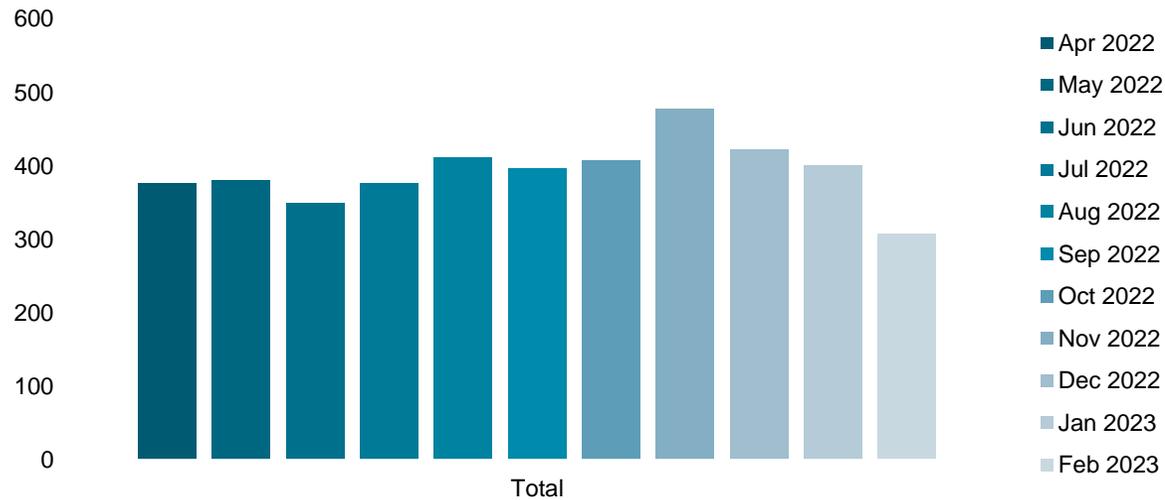
Volume of repairs raised



Total volume of reported repairs – 4763

Total volume of completed repairs - 4305

Volume of Repairs Completed



Challenges



Deslandes Please

- **This is a 33 mixed tenure scheme in Lewisham East.**
- **Queries about fire remediation works and future remedial works**
- **Lift breakdowns**
- **Overheating in the building**
- **Fly tipping**
- **Fire safety: Further cladding work likely but await PAS 9980 assessment.**
- **Action Plan**
- **To improve communication**
- **Arrange regular residents' meetings**

Norfolk House

- **This is a Shared Ownership block.**
- **We manage 58 homes.**
- **Leaks in the pipework due to corrosion. We're representing our leaseholders about this issue directly with Galliard – the developer. Some works done, but not yet complete**
- **Challenges about the costs of service charges**
- **Awaiting remedial works**
- **Fire safety cladding works needed. PAS 9980 assessment undertaken. In discussion with developer.**

There are 24 ongoing legal disrepair claims in the borough.

- **12 relate to damp and mould**

Complaints 2022/2023



- 101 Complaints
- 43 MP enquiries
- 3 Housing Ombudsman investigations

The themes vary but are predominantly around:

- Requesting a move/overcrowding
- Condition of home/repairs
- Anti Social Behaviour
- Stock investment

Support for our Residents



- **Specialist Financial Inclusion Team**
 - Supported Lewisham residents to increase their income by £120K last financial year
 - Approximately £60K this year
- **Support Grants and local initiatives available for residents**
- **Specialist Tenancy Sustainment Team**
- **Effective working with the Borough around ASB**

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Housing Select Committee

Report title: Lewisham Homes Repairs Service Update

Date: 09 March 2023

Key decision:

Class:

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors:

Fenella Beckman, Director of Housing Services – London Borough of Lewisham

Sarah Willcox-Jones, Director of Repairs – Lewisham Homes

Margaret Dodwell, Chief Executive Officer – Lewisham Homes

Outline and recommendations

The purpose of this report is to provide Housing Select Committee with an update to the performance and improvements ongoing within Lewisham Homes' Repairs Service

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

- Housing Select Committee 17 November 2022 – Lewisham Homes Repairs Service update

1. Summary

- 1.1. This paper gives an overview of Lewisham Homes' repairs service and an update on action being taken, since November 2022, to improve the service to residents.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Housing Select Committee are asked to note the contents of this report.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1. Lewisham Homes' repairs service is delivered in accordance with the Repairs Policy (October 2021), which supports the delivery of the Lewisham Homes Corporate Plan, 2019-2023, which was developed in collaboration with London Borough of Lewisham (LBL).
- 3.2. The Repairs Policy also supports the aims and objectives of LBL and aligns with key priorities in Lewisham's Corporate Strategy, notably on tackling the housing crisis and

providing quality homes.

4. Background

- 4.1. Representatives from Lewisham Homes attended Housing Select Committee in November 2022. At that meeting, the Committee noted the concerns they still had with repairs performance and requested a further report be presented to the March 2023 meeting.
- 4.2. Repairs and maintenance in the social housing sector continues to be a challenge. Staff shortages, surging costs and mounting repairs backlogs remain problematic, alongside ageing stock, fire safety priorities and stretched budgets.
- 4.3. Social housing remains in the media spotlight for both the quality of homes and the quality of services provided to residents. This theme will continue into 2023 and beyond, with the launch of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures and new Social Housing Regulation Bill will introduce measures to give tenants greater powers.
- 4.4. In November 2022, a coroner concluded that two-year-old Awaab Ishak died as a result of damp and mould in his home, which was managed by Rochdale Boroughwide Housing. In February 2023, the Housing Secretary committed to bringing in Awaab's Law as an amendment to the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill. The details are yet to be confirmed, however it calls for landlords to investigate damp and mould within 14 days and make repairs within seven days.
- 4.5. Responsive repairs go alongside the cyclical programme, largely focussed on compliance and a capital programme, to ensure homes are well maintained. The Council has c£325m over a five-year period and Lewisham Homes and Lewisham Council are working closely to determine an appropriate programme that can be delivered within this financial envelope.
- 4.6. This report sets out Lewisham Homes' current performance, the key elements of the improvement plan and expands on some of the key areas of focus. It is important to detail some of the challenges experienced since the previous report in November 2022. In December there was significant turnover in the management structure in repairs, 70% of the supervisory team departed and Lewisham Homes struggled to recruit two of the four operational manager roles and the Head of Service, who also left in November. December was therefore a particularly challenging period for the repairs service.
- 4.7. The loss of such a high number of staff within a short period put additional work on existing staff in the repairs service, who really stepped up. This shortfall coincided with the additional external requirements for detailed information required by the Regulator of Social Housing on damp and mould.
- 4.8. In January, Lewisham Homes launched a recruitment campaign for 41 new repairs staff, including 25 operative roles. 16 offers have been made and Lewisham Homes will be onboarding those staff throughout February and March. A further update on progress will be provided at the meeting.

5. Repairs Performance

- 5.1. In addition to the number of days to complete repairs, this report details three KPI areas:
 - 5.1.1. First Time Fix
 - 5.1.2. Appointments Made and Kept
 - 5.1.3. Satisfaction with the last repair
- 5.2.

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No	Indicator	Polarity	Nov	Dec	Jan
Repairs					
6	Tenant satisfaction with last repair	High is best	72%	69%	73%
7	Repair completed at first visit (First Time Fix)	High is best	82%	83%	87%
8	Appointments made and kept	High is best	93%	93%	93%
9	Average number of calendar days to complete responsive repairs	Low is best	27	23	26

Table 1 - Latest Performance Details

- 5.3. In November's report, Lewisham Homes highlighted the backlog in repairs. Work to eliminate the backlog has resulted in the timescales to complete repairs increasing to an average turnaround of 23 days in December and 26 days in January.
- 5.4. First time fix has increased by 1% since the previous report but is still below target, at 83% in September against a target of 90%.
- 5.5. Appointments made and kept has dipped just below target and was 93% in December and January against a target of 95%. The lack of internal resource meant any unplanned absence for operatives resulted in work had to be re-booked for a new date.
- 5.6. Satisfaction with the last repair has declined. This was anticipated due to the satisfaction surveys being carried out on previously outstanding jobs, so residents would have had a delay in getting their repairs completed. Satisfaction dropped to 69% in December and was 73% in January.
- 5.7. On 23 February Lewisham Homes launched the Localz App; which is being used to request satisfaction feedback and identify when work is not completed satisfactorily. This enables Lewisham Homes to work with individual operatives to improve their own performance to ensure that repairs meet the satisfaction of residents.
- 5.8. As well as an increase in operatives, United Living are being onboarded to assist in reducing the work in progress. This support will go-live in early April 2023 for approximately 10 weeks. It is hoped the lead time for repairs will be reduced during this time. As outstanding work in progress is completed, there may be a further decline in customer satisfaction (particularly around the time taken to complete a repair). However, this may be somewhat mitigated following an increased focus on customer service delivery through the introduction of the Localz software solution.
- 5.9. From April 2023 Lewisham Homes will be reporting on the following KPIs which align with the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures, for repairs this will focus on the following areas:
 - 5.9.1. Satisfaction with the repairs service
 - 5.9.2. Percentage of repairs completed on time
 - 5.9.3. Tenant satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair
 - 5.9.4. Tenant satisfaction with our actions to keep communal areas clean and maintained
 - 5.9.5. Tenant satisfaction that the home is well maintained
 - 5.9.6. Tenant satisfaction that the home is safe.

6. Repairs Improvement Plan

- 6.1. Lewisham Homes set out the objectives of the Repairs Improvement Plan in the

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November 2022 report.

6.2. The aims of the Repairs Improvement Plan are:

6.2.1. Improving the Customer Journey through:

- 6.2.1.1. Answering calls within target timescales.
- 6.2.1.2. Accurate diagnosis of a repair leading to an increased likelihood of first-time fix.
- 6.2.1.3. Offering residents an appointment at a time and date convenient to them and within target timescales.
- 6.2.1.4. Ensuring that residents always know what is happening next if operatives have been unable to complete the repair at the first visit.
- 6.2.1.5. Turning up when we say we are going to turn up.
- 6.2.1.6. Using the Localz satisfaction feedback to identify and work with operatives in improving their customer service skills and also celebrate success with those who are performing well.
- 6.2.1.7. Using the new Localz satisfaction feedback to inform corrective actions and continuous improvement.
- 6.2.1.8. Deliver exceptional standards of both customer service and workmanship through engendering a sense of contribution and pride.

6.2.2. Improving efficiency and effectiveness through:

- 6.2.2.1. Increased productivity.
- 6.2.2.2. Reduced sickness absence.
- 6.2.2.3. Improved retention of skills and experience.
- 6.2.2.4. Training and developing staff through individual development plans.
- 6.2.2.5. Ensuring consistent processes and approach across the teams.
- 6.2.2.6. Develop a team who celebrate success and are impatient with failure.
- 6.2.2.7. Developing and embedding a 'One-Team' culture where everybody understands their role and how it fits into the customer journey.
- 6.2.2.8. Increased self-delivery and reduced use of subcontractors.

6.3. Lewisham Homes have provided updates on the Plan to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness monthly. However, staff shortages in December 2022 and January 2023 meant the Repairs Improvement Plan was paused for two months. Any tasks that were in progress continued and there have been improvements in two key areas, operative productivity, and failure calls into the repairs service.

6.4. Prior to the launch of the Repairs Improvement Plan, operative productivity was 2.1 jobs completed on average per operative, per day. In January this was 4.5. This has been helped through better scheduling, improved management information and increased staff engagement.

6.5. Calls about an existing repair was at 50% of call volume prior to the Repairs Improvement Plan, and reduced to 35% in January. The implementation of Localz will help reduce this further, as residents can alert through the App if they would like to be re-contacted. This will create capacity in the contact centre enabling other calls to be answered more quickly

6.6. The majority of actions completed under the Plan relate to better management of staff through re-setting objectives and ease of access to management information. There are also actions around culture and engagement

6.7. The Localz App will enable satisfaction feedback to be used to identify and work with

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operatives to improve their customer service skills and celebrate success with those who are performing well.

- 6.8. Lewisham Homes have created new posts within the Repairs Team to increase management of staff and have more ownership in areas impacting residents, such as property condition and complaints. This will improve communication with residents and increase capacity to manage escalations when situations do not go as planned.
- 6.9. Lewisham Homes have employed a contact centre specialist as the Customer Experience Manager. The Manager oversees the running of the contract centre, review systems and processes and produce individual agent performance information, used to drive performance through staff. They have also re-designed the staff induction to be more detailed and robust. This has helped with engagement of new starters and improved staff retention. (See section 7 for a more detailed update on progress in this area.)
- 6.10. Lewisham Homes have also restructured the management of operatives by trade rather than location, to ensure better support and resource management. This again has improved productivity, but also operative engagement as they feel supported by technical staff from the same skillset as them.
- 6.11. Lewisham Homes have launched a staff engagement group of field-based operatives. This includes Union Representatives and is used to form new ways of working. This has improved communication and engagement. This group has worked on initiatives that have benefitted delivery such as the inclusion of additional hours at the end of the standard working day to pick up on emergency work. This has, for example, reduced work being passed to the Out of Hours Contractors.

7. Accessing the Repairs Service

- 7.1. Staff retention has improved in the contact centre. Since the last report, where staff turnover for 2022 was reported at 75%, Lewisham Homes have onboarded four new staff in the contact centre and have four new starters due to join in early March.
- 7.2. The new Customer Experience Manager has been working on improving areas of call handling and communication with the team, which alongside the reduction of failure calls will enable calls to be answered more quickly.
- 7.3. There have been significant improvements, starting in January, and continuing through February, with average wait times. At the end of January, the average call queue time was 33 minutes. As of 24 February, the average call queue time was 14 minutes, despite a higher volume of calls.
- 7.4. At Housing Select Committee in November, Lewisham Homes advised that IT issues were impacting the service to customers. This continues to be problematic, however, Lewisham Homes are taking a more proactive approach, ensuring they are logged and acted upon quickly. There have been several system outages or issues with internet access in Laurence House or the telephony system ceasing to work for hours on some days. Servers have now been upgraded, additional lines into the business freed up and the Wi-Fi tested. An issue with the usage of Wi-Fi bandwidth has been identified which has caused problems with telephony and is being investigated further. A verbal update will be provided on this in committee.

8. Delivering the Service

- 8.1. The recruitment campaign is now targeting local skilled labour who are currently self-employed, this is working well. Lewisham Homes and Lewisham Council have a generous pension scheme and annual leave entitlement. These elements have been a good selling factor to those who may have struggled through the pandemic once furlough was no longer available.
- 8.2. In January 2023 Lewisham Homes' Governance and People Committee agreed to

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increase the staffing structure for the repairs service. This enabled them to introduce increased management to support operatives, as well as some key customer facing roles. Lewisham Homes now have a Customer Experience Team Leader and Property Condition Manager. The Customer Experience Team Leader has been filled by an incumbent member of Lewisham Homes. The Property Condition Manager is currently out to recruitment, as are the increased management roles.

9. Damp, Mould and Condensation Management

- 9.1. Lewisham Homes introduced the dedicated Damp and Mould Team in May 2021 to help manage mould growth in residents' homes. This assists with the management of damp and mould cases, however, cannot eradicate the challenges faced given the major investment needed to properties. Damp and Disrepair Training remains mandatory for all new starters at Lewisham Homes.
- 9.2. Lewisham Homes have introduced several initiatives since separating out the management of damp, mould and leaks from the central repairs function. These were presented recently to residents of Deptford at a Property Condition session arranged by Vicky Foxcroft MP.
- 9.3. In December 2022, an ongoing damp and mould awareness marketing campaign was implemented through the resident newsletter and MOT awareness programme. This includes providing factsheets within resident welcome packs, as well as sharing links to a video advising on condensation management.
- 9.4. Piloted estate days will continue in 2023, allowing residents to drop in and discuss their property condition concerns and allowing for the immediate mobilisation of resource to remedy the issues or undertake a property MOT.
- 9.5. Historically Lewisham Homes have offered Hygrometers to residents upon request to allow for improved self-management and avoidance of damp and mould. Lewisham Homes will proactively be providing these to 5,000 households, which have been identified as having a higher risk and propensity for damp and mould growth. Lewisham Homes had planned to send these in January 2023, however there is a national shortage, and they currently only have 1,000 of the 5,000 ordered. Lewisham Homes will continue to use MediSpray, which stops mould spores from growing for up to five years.
- 9.6. In February 2023 the Director of Repairs and Chair of the Board attended a Round Table organised by Communities and Housing Investment Consortium (CHIC) to discuss damp and mould management. Lewisham Homes have embedded a significant number of initiatives that other providers are currently launching or designing, many struggling with resources and data management. This also provided the opportunity to look at new products on the market for data logging and property condition monitoring technology, outside of the Switchee devices we have previously procured, which allow data logging for some aspects such as heat and fan usage. This will be launched from April 2023.
- 9.7. Lewisham Homes are using the Major Works Contractors, United Living and Mulalley to re-visit all properties that have previously been treated for damp and mould and had their cases closed on the damp and mould register. The re-visit is to ensure the remedial works have had the desired effect. These inspections are being carried out from January to April 2023.
- 9.8. Discussions are ongoing regarding funding an ongoing programme of damp and mould inspections and works. The costs of this could be circa £1m annually from 2023/24.
- 9.9. Lewisham Homes will be commencing a 20% validation exercise on the information gained through the initial stock condition surveys in 2019 and 2020 and prioritising those properties where operatives were unable to gain access (30%). This will ensure that the Council retains an up-to-date view of the condition of homes and is

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something the RSH will expect to see.

10. Leaks

- 10.1. Properties continue to experience a high volume of inter-flat leaks. Lewisham Homes' leak resolution team have been recognised by residents as responding thoroughly and resolving issues promptly. This team addresses the symptoms and the underlying issues; however large-scale investment is needed in the fabric of the existing, mostly older, homes and this is under discussion.
- 10.2. Where issues are known, Lewisham Homes continue to use the leak resolution team proactively; this involves regular walkabouts on estates or in blocks such as Daubeney and Eddystone where leaks are a regular issue.

11. Complaints Management

- 11.1. 455 new formal complaints were received by Lewisham Homes in 2022 which equates to 0.7% of repairs completed. 393 complaints were upheld in full or in part, 62 were deemed to be dissatisfaction but not a service failure, so not upheld.
- 11.2. Lewisham Homes have now created a Customer Experience Team Leader role, to carry out further analysis and lessons learnt. The role will also be responsible for improving communication with residents throughout the complaints process. Localz will be used to enable issues to be addressed when they arise and hopefully avoid complaints. It will take time for residents to get used to using this tool.
- 11.3. One Repairs Supervisor will become wholly responsible for the delivery of works on complaint and complex repairs cases.

12. Legal Disrepair

- 12.1. Legal Disrepair continues to be a rising challenge in the housing sector since the introduction of the Fitness for Human Habitation Act 2019 and the move from previous PPI or Personal Injury claim solicitors into housing disrepair.
- 12.2. Lewisham Homes have now successfully recruited to the posts of Disrepair Supervisor, Paralegal and an additional surveyor. Lewisham Homes have also reshaped the Repairs Resident Liaison Officer role. The post holder manages the relationship with the resident through the disrepair claim and carries out early intervention visits on reports of damp and mould. Where a property is deemed to have hazardous mould on an early intervention visit, a cleaning team attends to clean the mould within five working days. The Resident Liaison Officer will also work with the Decant Manager if the property is not deemed to be habitable.
- 12.3. Early intervention visits help to manage the ongoing risk to residents. However, residents are sometimes advised by their solicitors to deny access, so this may not always be simple. An independent expert is appointed, at cost, to identify any disrepair and the required works. Lewisham Homes are currently working with solicitors, Clarke Willmott, to produce a letter to state that no access was given prior to the expert being appointed.
- 12.4. Lewisham Homes paid £199,750 in compensation to residents and £647,666 on legal fees from January to December 2022. There was a proposal in Government to implement fixed recoverable costs (FRC) for housing cases, however this was contested by several law associations and groups and will now be delayed for two years.
- 12.5. To reduce legal costs, Lewisham Homes have implemented the role of an in-house Paralegal. This role has proved to be successful. 25 legal cases are being self-managed, of these, seven cases have been closed with no action, due to the ability to challenge at pre-notification stage. Works are still being prioritised and carried out by the in-house operatives dedicated to disrepair cases, despite no legal action being

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taken.

13. Conclusion

- 13.1. Improvement is underway. Lewisham Homes continue to work towards implementing the Repairs Improvement Plan and have invested in project and operational teams. Time has been spent re-building the teams, structures and processes to enable the right people and the right culture to ensure improvements are made.
- 13.2. Improvements will be incremental, as there are few short-term fixes. As requested by the Cabinet Member for Housing Lewisham Homes will share the most recent progress graphs at the committee meeting.
- 13.3. Joint working between Lewisham Homes and Lewisham Council through clienting remains thorough and updates to Housing Select Committee Members around progress will continue, with a view to handing over a modern and high-quality repairs service on 1 October 2023.

14. Financial implications

- 14.1. Housing Select Committee are asked to note the contents of this update report, as such there are no direct financial implications.
- 14.2. Repairs to the Council's social housing stock is chargeable to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which provides annual resources to undertake both planned and responsive repairs. However, sustained increases in repair volumes and initiating new work streams like property MOTs may not be covered by the existing resources and may have financial implications for the Housing Revenue Account.
- 14.3. Once the results of the MOT's/surveys are known, repairs and follow-up actions will be taken to resolve issues identified. This may require the allocation of additional resources which are not currently forecast within the current HRA budget allocations. Discussions are on-going with Lewisham Homes on how to fund work.

15. Legal implications

- 15.1. The report sets out how Lewisham Homes is seeking to meet the statutory, regulatory and contractual repair requirements of a social landlord on behalf of the Council.
- 15.2. There are no direct legal implications beyond this.

16. Equalities implications

- 16.1. The repairs service is delivered in line with Lewisham Homes Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy.

17. Climate change and environmental implications

- 17.1. There are considerable benefits to both residents and the environment through homes which are properly insulated, efficiently heated and free from drafts and other issues. The repairs service seek to improve the performance of properties through timely repairs and correction of issues which hinder this. As noted in this report, the housing stock is mostly older, and thus less efficient, however, outside the scope of this report, measures are being taken to apply for funding to assist Lewisham Homes with making improvements to the stock.

18. Crime and disorder implications

- 18.1. During the year there has been an increase in reports of anti-social behaviour and abusive and aggressive behaviour to staff. Some of this undoubtedly arises out of frustrations over repairs. Improving the repairs service should have a positive impact.

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19. Health and wellbeing implications

- 19.1. The condition of a person's home has a major impact on their physical and mental health and wellbeing. Ensuring residents can easily access the repairs service and that the homes are maintained in a good condition will have a positive impact on the residents' health and well-being.

20. Glossary

- 20.1. The following terms are used in this report:

Term	Definition
Property MOT	A proactive pre-appointed check on the condition of a resident's home to proactively identify any repairs. The concept is based on repairs generally being completed at the time of the MOT.
KPI	'Key Performance Indicator.' A measurement taken of a specific element of business performance. A KPI usually has a target that performance can be tracked against.
Works in Progress	Jobs that have been raised and are yet to be practically completed.

Table 2 - Report Glossary

21. Report author and contact

- 21.1. Fenella Beckman, Director of Housing Services, Fenella.Beckman@lewisham.gov.uk
- 21.2. Comments for and on behalf of the Executive Director for Corporate Resources: Tony Riordan, Principal Accountant, Tony.Riordan@lewisham.gov.uk
- 21.3. Comments for and on behalf of the Director of Law, Governance & HR [Melanie Dawson, Principal Lawyer (Place), melanie.dawson@lewisham.gov.uk

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Housing Select Committee

Report title: Review of the councils Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

Date: 9th March 2023

Key decision: Yes.

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Director of Housing Services, Director of Law and Corporate Governance, Director of Finance, Director of Adults Integrated Commissioning, Director of Public Health, Director of Adult Social Care, Director of Children's Social Care

Outline and recommendations

Housing Select Committee are asked to review the report and the proposed strategy and to provide comments.

Housing Select Committee are asked to support the approval of this strategy by Mayor and Cabinet (once the Action Plan has been finalised).

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

11 November 2020	Housing Strategy and Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy Approved by Mayor & Cabinet
10 March 2022	Update to Housing Select Committee on progress of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-22 action plan
6 July 2022	Mayor and Cabinet approval of new Location Priority Policy
17 November 2022	Accommodation Procurement Strategy presented to Housing Select Committee
7 December 2022	Mayor & Cabinet Approval of Accommodation Procurement Strategy
August 22 – January 2023	Homelessness & Rough Sleeping strategy stakeholder and service user consultation
9 March 2022	Housing Select Committee review of Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-26

1 Summary

- 1.1. The current Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy was agreed in 2020 and expires this year. This strategy was proposed as a two-year document so that a new version

could be established after the longer-term implications of COVID-19 were fully understood.

- 1.2. This paper sets out a summary of the engagement process and proposed updated priorities within the strategy. It is accompanied by a statistical review of trends in homelessness approaches and underlying causes, activity in preventing and relieving homelessness, cohorts that may be more likely to become homeless or be threatened with homelessness and the profile of households experiencing homelessness. The strategy also provides an action plan for meeting the goals set out in the updated version of the strategy.
- 1.3. The proposed Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy is included as Appendix 1. The statistical review that informed the development of the strategy is included as Appendix 2. The Equalities Impact Assessment is included as Appendix 3.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Housing Select Committee are asked to review the report and the proposed strategy and to provide comments.
- 2.2. Housing Select Committee are asked to support the approval of this strategy by Mayor and Cabinet once the Action Plan has been finalised

3. Background

- 3.1. Under the Homelessness Act 2002, all housing authorities must have in place a homelessness strategy based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their district. Until 2020 we had incorporated our homelessness strategy within the wider housing strategy. Given the increase in homelessness and rough sleeping since the inception of the previous housing strategy, we moved forward with a dedicated homelessness and rough sleeping strategy in 2020.
- 3.2. The current Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy was agreed in 2020 and expires this year. This strategy was proposed as a two-year document so that a new version could be established after the longer-term implications of COVID-19 were fully understood.
- 3.3. An update on the Council's progress of the Homelessness Strategy 2020-22 action plan was provided to Housing Select Committee on the 10th of March 2022.
- 3.4. Since the last strategy was developed, there have been significant changes in the housing landscape, the cost of living and rising homelessness levels. Whilst many of the challenges the council currently faces are a continuation of existing issues, a review has been completed to determine whether the existing priorities are still fit for purpose or requires updating to reflect our latest needs.
- 3.5. Officers have worked with a wide range of stakeholders who are involved in or operate within the homelessness agenda in Lewisham, to seek their views on the priorities within the strategy. The intention was to work with existing services within the council and established forums of commissioned and community organisations addressing homelessness in the borough, as well as creating opportunities for service users to inform the development of the strategy.
- 3.6. This report outlines the outcome of the review/refresh of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-22 and the main themes emerging for the updated version.

4. Policy context

- 4.1. This report supports the aims and objectives the councils Corporate Strategy: Quality Housing - to provide as many people as possible with safe, comfortable accommodation that they can be proud of and happy living in and holding landlords to account.
- 4.2. This report supports the achievement of the following Housing Strategy 2020-26 objectives: Preventing Homelessness and meeting housing need

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- 4.3. This strategy sets the overall framework for the ambitions set out in Lewisham's Accommodation Procurement Strategy.
- 4.4. This strategy also complements the councils Location Priority Policy, which sets out how the council will prioritise the allocation of temporary and private rented sector accommodation that is available in different locations to our homeless households.
- 4.5. This strategy also complements the councils Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2021–2026.

5. Previous strategy - Homelessness & RS Strategy 2020-2022

- 5.1. Lewisham's Homelessness Strategy 2020-22 set out the borough's strategic priorities in five key objectives as follows:
 - Prevent homelessness at the earliest opportunity with the most appropriate level of support;
 - Support people to access a stable and secure home;
 - Support rough sleepers to enable access to services and sustainable accommodation;
 - Adapt and be agile in our service delivery to support residents impacted by COVID-19;
 - Strengthen partnership working.
- 5.2. An update on the councils progress of the Homelessness Strategy 2020-22 action plan, which has now lapsed, was provided to Housing Select Committee on the 10th March 2022. The progress against this action plan had been heavily impacted by the covid-19 pandemic, meaning that work priorities were changed due to newly emerging priorities and capacity challenges.
- 5.3. There were a total of 48 specific actions. For the majority of actions, the status is 'ongoing' as many of these actions form 'business as usual' service and do not have milestones / end points. These activities will continue alongside the delivery of the new strategy.

6. Engagement and Consultation - Reviewing the priorities

- 6.1. Since 2020, there have been more challenges in the delivery of homelessness services as a result of the onset of the pandemic and changes to the housing market / cost of living. Whilst many of the challenges we face are a continuation of existing issues, we wanted to review whether the existing priorities are still relevant and reflect our needs or requires updating to reflect our latest needs.
- 6.2. Between August 2022 and January 2023, we engaged with service users, council services and external organisations to find out their views on our homelessness & rough sleeping strategy. The engagement events focussed on exploring the existing themes within the strategy, our progress against these and other priorities they would like to be considered.
- 6.3. A number of engagement activities took place including formal face-to-face engagement events, discussions with internal partners, workshops with commissioned and non-commissioned providers and community organisations in Lewisham, followed up by an online survey for service users. These include:
 - Staff working in the housing needs service were invited to attend 4x workshops in August 2022 to contribute to the development of the homelessness strategy by discussing the current themes;
 - Wider council stakeholders were invited to attend a workshop in September 2022 to discuss the themes within the strategy and how these relate to other areas of work

- Feedback from over 50 service users / people with lived experience of homelessness through surveys, client committee meetings, one-to-one conversations and group discussions.
- The Lewisham Homelessness Forum including community homeless organisations, commissioned providers and third sector organisations were invited to take part in a focus group during a forum meeting;
- External commissioned providers from the Rough Sleeping Pathway, Mental Health Pathway, Young Persons Pathway and Single Vulnerable Adults Pathway were invited to attend workshops to discuss the themes within the strategy and how these relate to other areas of work;
 - St Mungos
 - Dinardos
 - Quo Vadis Trust
 - Thamesreach
 - Apax
 - Honour Lee
 - Bench
 - One Housing
 - Equinox
 - Change, Grow, Live
 - Ladywell Hospital
 - 999 Club

Summary of findings

6.4. The feedback we received suggested that existing overarching priorities continue to reflect the current needs in Lewisham. In terms of issues raised, a number of recurring themes were identified:

- The outcomes of the engagement highlighted that three themes that were mentioned the most by participants were: 'communication and information sharing', 'support' and 'supply of accommodation'.
- Improving communication regarding the housing support pathways, and other forms of support available was supported as this would enable households to understand the reality of the housing shortage and to be better informed to make their own decisions.
- The need for a continued focus on prevention was clear, by working closely with landlords, partners and other stakeholders to ensure that opportunities to maintain tenancies are maximised. In particular, this included eviction from family and friends, and feedback made clear the need to develop our mediation offer and enhance opportunities to resolve relationship breakdown.
- Equally, there is need to secure more private rented properties both to enable discharge of the homelessness duty, and to prevent homelessness occurring without households having to enter temporary accommodation.
- The engagement found that responding to Covid-19 was no longer viewed as a main priority as our service response has largely become business as usual. However, it was noted that the ability of the council to be agile in response to live issues should continue to feature in the strategy.
- Feedback also highlighted that the current rough sleeping pathways are successfully helping to divert people away from the streets and this needs to be sustained. However there remain concerns about a number of rough sleepers who are experiencing repeat incidences of rough sleeping as well as cases for those whose immigration status means they have No Recourse of Public Funds, restricting the services that would have kept them off the streets.

- Welfare reform and changes to the cost of living are continuing to impact residents, in particular those out of work and single people under the age of 35. Managing the impact will be necessary to prevent homelessness occurring. This includes a focus on supporting households by, for example, assistance with benefits, getting into employment or with their financial management skills to ensure rent arrears do not arise and homelessness is prevented.
- Reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation (TA) was a priority for many respondents. The rate of exit from TA is slowing as the number of available lets in the social housing and private rented sectors have diminished. The Council has recently agreed an Accommodation Procurement Strategy which sets out an action plan for ensuring a sufficient supply of accommodation for homeless households.
- Feedback also noted the need to ensure that the accommodation available supports a range of people including young people, those fleeing abuse and violence, vulnerable adults and people with accessibility needs.
- It was acknowledged that people facing homelessness require access to a range of support services, and developing the coordination of services, policies, and processes between partners would be beneficial.

7. The Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-26

- 7.1. Lewisham’s strategic vision will guide all our work with partners to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping. Over the next three years, the key priorities of the updated Homelessness and Rough Sleeping will seek to:
- Prevent homelessness by supporting more households to remain in their homes or helping them to find alternative accommodation;
 - Where homelessness does occur, ensure there is a supply of suitable accommodation for eligible households to move into;
 - Deliver an ongoing reduction in the number of people sleeping rough and ensure that where it does occur it is rare, brief and non-recurrent.
 - Improve pathways and partnerships internally and external with public authorities and other partner agencies to prevent and alleviate homelessness.
- 7.2. Under these four priorities, officers have developed a series of actions, initiatives and key performance indicators for each priority, setting out the activity that the council needs to undertake and how it will measure success against the goals set out in this strategy. Some actions reflect continued work streams that will include current council agreed targets, whilst in others, development of our current work, or a new initiative is required, together with support from partners.
- 7.3. Officers still need to develop and set specific and measurable targets against these actions which will be done alongside our wider annual service planning taking place in March-April. These will be monitored regularly throughout the life of the strategy and used to assess the impact of the Action Plan on improving our response to homelessness Lewisham. It is proposed that a note/report is circulated to Committee members updating on the targets being proposed for the Strategy’s Action Plan before the strategy is presented to Mayor and Cabinet for approval.

Summary of strategy priorities and changes

Priority	Update
Prevention	No change to priority , but we have reviewed the activities in the accompanying action plan to reflect feedback from consultation.

Accessing Accommodation	No change to priority , but we have reviewed the activities in the accompanying action plan to reflect feedback from consultation.
Rough Sleeping	No change to priority , but we have reviewed the activities in the accompanying action plan to reflect feedback from consultation..
Being agile in response to Covid	Remove priority – feedback from consultation indicated that the activities that were set have broadly become business as usual
Partnership Working	No change to priority , but we have reviewed the activities in the accompanying action plan to reflect feedback from consultation.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1. Housing Select Committee are asked to review this report and the proposed strategy, provide comments, and support the approval of this strategy by Mayor and Cabinet once finalised. As such, there are no direct financial implications.
- 8.2. There are significant costs associated with housing generally, including managing the allocations service, managing the supply and provision of council housing and providing services to those experiencing homelessness or the threat of homelessness and rough sleeping. All of these are affected over time by demand. Development of the Housing Strategy 2020-26 and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy 2023-26 helps to manage this demand with the resources allocated for that purpose.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 requires local housing authorities to take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness (when anyone is threatened with it within 56 days) and to “relieve” homelessness (through maintaining or securing accommodation) for eligible applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.
- 9.2. The Homelessness Act 2002 requires local housing authorities to review homelessness in their district and prepare and publish a homelessness strategy based on the review. The council is required to take its Homelessness Strategy into account in the exercise of its functions. A ‘homelessness strategy’ means a strategy formulated by a local housing authority for: (a) preventing homelessness in their district; (b) securing that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in their district who are or may become homeless; (c) securing the satisfactory provision of support for people in their district: (i) who are or may become homeless; or (ii) who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again. In formulating or modifying a homelessness strategy a local housing authority must have regard to: (a) its current allocation scheme under section 166A of the Housing Act 1996, (b) its current tenancy strategy under section 150 of the Localism Act 2011, and (c) in the case of a London borough council, the current London housing strategy.
- 9.3. The Council is required to consult such public or local authorities, voluntary organisations or other persons as they consider appropriate before formulating or modifying a homelessness strategy. The consultation that has taken place is set out at in this report.
- 9.4. The Council must keep its homelessness strategy under review. A copy of the Strategy must be available for inspection at the council’s principal office, or a copy provided to member of public if asked for, and the Council should publish the Strategy and review documents on the Council’s website.
- 9.5. The council is also under a general duty, pursuant to s11 Children Act 2004, to have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area. The duty under section 11 would suggest a strategy that seeks to prevent children from

becoming homeless which is one of the things the Homelessness Strategy seeks to achieve

10. Equalities implications

- 10.1. A draft Equalities Analysis Assessment has been completed and is included at Appendix 3.

11. Climate change and environmental implications

- 11.1. There are no anticipated climate change and environmental implications.

12. Crime and disorder implications

- 12.1. There are no anticipated crime and disorder implications.

13. Health and wellbeing implications

- 13.1. The Homeless and Rough Sleeping strategy has been developed in partnership with Public Health, NHS and community colleagues; therefore priorities under this strategy have evolved from a multi-disciplinary lens. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the fact that health is a vital consideration in this strategy, particularly our service provision for rough sleepers who have a variety of complex health needs.

14. Appendices

- 14.1. Appendix 1: Proposed Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-26
14.2. Appendix 2: Homelessness Statistical Review
14.3. Appendix 3: Equalities Analysis Assessment

15. Background papers

- 15.1. Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-22

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Lewisham's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-26

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Introduction

Our overarching vision is that is that everyone has a safe, secure and genuinely affordable home. For this to be a reality, we must work towards ensuring that no one stays homeless in Lewisham.

The Housing Strategy 2020–26 outlines five key priorities for Lewisham. One of these priorities is ‘preventing homelessness and meeting housing need’ which outlines our overarching strategic approach to preventing homelessness.

This homelessness and rough sleeping strategy underpins our Housing Strategy. It provides more detail on how we will prevent homelessness and rough sleeping. It outlines how we, with our partners, will work with and support those who are at risk of, or experiencing homelessness.

The updated strategy is a response to a period of unprecedented change. Since the publication of the last strategy, we have transformed how we deliver many of our services for homeless households and people sleeping rough in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Whilst we have recovered from many of the immediate challenges presented by Covid, we now face many new challenges. At the time of this strategy being launched, residents are finding it harder than ever to meet rising living costs, including higher rents, mortgage payments and cost of other living essentials. With much uncertainty still remaining around the longer-term impacts of the economic downturn, it is crucial that public services are prepared to support residents.

The review of our homelessness strategy set out to assess whether the existing priorities were still relevant or required updating to reflect our residents current needs. The strategy review has been based on evidence and data which highlighted the main causes of homelessness, as well as input from a wide range of our key stakeholders and partners who have a valued stake and interest in issues relating to homelessness in Lewisham. Overall, feedback strongly supported the existing priorities.

Lewisham’s Strategic Vision

Lewisham’s strategic vision will guide all our work with partners to prevent homelessness and meeting housing need. Over the next three years we will:

- Prevent homelessness by supporting more households to remain in their homes or helping them to find alternative accommodation
- Where homelessness does occur, ensure there is a supply of suitable accommodation for eligible households to move into
- Deliver an ongoing reduction in the number of people sleeping rough and ensure that where it does occur it is rare, brief and non-recurrent.
- Improve pathways and partnerships internally and external with public authorities and other partner agencies to prevent and alleviate homelessness.

The full detail on the actions and initiatives that will deliver this vision and its objectives are set out under each section.

Summary of homelessness in Lewisham

Homelessness has increased during the last ten years and remains high, the private rented sector (PRS) has become increasingly unaffordable and there are not enough social homes to meet the demand for them.

Whilst there have not been significant changes to the drivers of homelessness in Lewisham, the number of people seeking assistance from the council is increasing, with 3,723 households approaching the council for homelessness assistance in 2021/22. This is an increase of 31% since the publication of the current version of the strategy in 2020.

People approaching the Council for assistance due to exclusion from 'family and friends' continues to constitute the major cause of homelessness, rising from 32% of all acceptances in 2019/20 to 37% in 2021/22. There has also been a national increase in the number of domestic violence and harassment cases reported leading to significantly higher levels of those fleeing their homes.

We know that there is sometimes mistrust of housing services, and people can sometimes feel that they are not listened to or that the support provided does not always meet expectations. More needs to be done to explain the pathway of a homeless application, how decisions are made and the reality of housing available in Lewisham. We also need to ensure we are engaging with and building trust with people throughout their contact with the service.

Both the economic downturn in the last year and changing housing market are contributing factors. In 2012, the council started building its own council homes again for the first time in a generation and it continues to push forward with an ambitious programme to provide new homes for our residents. However, huge funding cuts and a lack of the right powers and resources have meant that the number of social homes available is far below the need. Given Lewisham's lack of availability of social and council housing, and record waiting lists for accommodation, by far one

of the key tools that enables us to prevent homelessness is by supporting people to remain in their private rented sector properties or supporting applicants to find alternative PRS accommodation. However, with a continued increase in private landlords choosing to increase their rent in line with market prices, or choosing to leave the market altogether, the council and London more widely are experiencing a recent sharp drop in the supply of affordable accommodation.

The growing housing affordability crisis comes at a time when the financial pressures on low-income households in Lewisham have never been greater. While rents continue to soar at record rates in the capital, ongoing welfare reform means that housing benefits remain frozen at the same level they were at in 2020.

These changes have significantly impacted on our services ability to prevent homelessness from the private rented sector, and to move households out of temporary accommodation. Despite the council increasing the rate of prevention compared to pre-covid levels, the number of people in temporary accommodation has continued to increase to 2,700 in January 2023. Without an increase in genuinely affordable and decent housing across the private rented and social housing sectors in Lewisham, the reliance on temporary accommodation will continue to rise to unsustainable levels.

Rough sleeping is increasing too. After year-on-year reductions, the current housing outlooks has highlighted an increase in the number of people on our streets in the last year. More widely, new figures show a steep rise in the number of people sleeping rough across London. Of concern is the number of people sleeping rough for the first time is increasing. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the Councils response to tackling rough sleeping, and we set up a new Rough Sleepers Pathway and partnerships as a result.

This strategy is supports the delivery of the Lewisham Housing Strategy 2020-26 and reflects the vision of the service that everyone has a safe, secure and genuinely affordable home where they can live an independent and prosperous life.

This strategy also supports the Council to achieve its objectives set out in the Accommodation Procurement Strategy 2022-25. The Procurement Strategy set out how the council will Increase the supply of high-quality private rented accommodation, maintain a sufficient supply of cost-effective temporary accommodation and reduce the overall number of households in temporary accommodation.

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Priority 1 - Prevention

Homelessness prevention means providing people with the ways and means to address their housing and other needs to avoid homelessness.

Homelessness prevention refers to all types of activity including but not limited to:

- Housing advice – aimed at helping households to gain access to, or to retain private or social rented tenancies.
- Private renting access schemes – to help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to access and sustain a tenancy in the private rented sector.
- Family mediation – help to reconcile relationship breakdown, often between parents and young people to prevent eviction from the parental home.
- Duty to refer - prison, hospital and other institution discharge arrangements to ensure people have a planned move into secure accommodation.

However, true prevention of homelessness is not simply a matter of managing to keep those at serious risk from losing their homes. The Homelessness Reduction Act defines someone at risk if their homelessness is likely to occur in the next 56 days, but we know we need to intervene even earlier to make sure our residents are getting help at the right time, and to prevent peoples housing issues arising in the first place. Timely access to advice, benefits, support to access employment and training, and strategies to deal with debt are all factors that can influence whether someone becomes homeless or not.

We will work with partners in adults and health, children and young people, the criminal justice system the voluntary sector and others to ensure that we are aware of cases in advance and able to secure support to avoid individuals becoming homeless.

What we have achieved so far:-

- Providing a face to face service in the community through various teams including the Rough Sleeping Team, Tenancy

Management & Resettlement Officers, Health & Housing Coordinator and Housing Enforcement & Intelligence team. We are also giving advice about housing through collation arrangements such as at the 999 Club.

- Encouraging partners to support us in preventing homelessness through raising awareness about the Duty to Refer, for which we have developed a specific online form where partners/ individuals can tell us about someone who could be homeless. We have received 648 referrals since 2019.
- Promote multi-agency working and discharge planning for patients leaving Lewisham Hospital with no accommodation, through the Health and Housing Coordinator.
- Continue to use our Rogue Landlord Team to intervene when tenants are threatened with unlawful or retaliatory eviction.
- Using data more effectively to spot groups at risk of homelessness, including fully embedding a new IT system to help improve our insight.
- Upskilling staff to support people at risk of homelessness to stay where they are, such as training officers to support residents to complete defence forms.
- Preventing homelessness from the private rented sector by providing financial support to people in rent arrears, working closely with the Council's Housing Benefit to access Discretionary Housing Payment and partnering with the Lewisham Credit Union to secure rent deposits/one off payments.
- Giving advice about housing through the newly created Housing Advice and Early Intervention Team, which supports residents to get timely information and advice before they become homeless.

Priority 1 – Prevention: Our goals

A high quality, efficient prevention service. We will achieve this by:

- Improving information on the Lewisham Council website on tenant rights and homelessness prevention support available in Lewisham
- Produce leaflets, videos and other information materials that can be used by partner organisations to inform residents who are at risk of homelessness of help and support available to prevent homelessness
- Increasing access to information and advice about homelessness prevention including more face to face contact with households at risk of homelessness
- Creating a home visiting function to work closely and support households at risk of eviction from family and friends

A higher proportion of homeless prevention outcomes. We will achieve this by:

- Promoting the work of the 'cost of living support hub' to manage the impacts of the cost of living crisis on homelessness in borough
- Continuing to use our powers to intervene when tenants are threatened with unlawful or retaliatory eviction
- Running awareness sessions about preventing homelessness in schools to educate young people about their housing options
- Exploring opportunities to co-locate with other services where housing advice can be provided at an earlier opportunity
- Ensuring assistance with accessing benefits, Discretionary Housing Payments, access to employment and skills training or financial management skills is available
- Continuing to ensure partner agencies meet their duty to refer under the Homelessness Reduction Act

Key measures of success:

- Increase in the rate of homelessness preventions
- Reduction in the number of people entering temporary accommodation
- Increase in referrals received under the Duty to Refer

Priority 2 – Accessing Accommodation

Homelessness in Lewisham is exacerbated by the lack of supply of suitable and affordable homes that our residents can access.

In 2012, the council started building its own council homes again for the first time in a generation and it continues to push forward with an ambitious programme to provide new homes for our residents. However, huge funding cuts and a lack of the right powers and resources have meant that the number of social homes available is far below the need.

We know that prolonged periods in temporary accommodation can have a detrimental effect on outcomes for families and children. Supporting people to move out of temporary accommodation requires a focus on increasing the supply of affordable accommodation. Lewisham has recently published an Accommodation Procurement Strategy which sets out how we will achieve this. We will ensure there is alignment between these two strategies to minimise the amount of time that households spend in temporary accommodation.

We must also ensure that the accommodation available supports a range of households. Those fleeing abuse and violence are at particular risk of homelessness. Our aim is that the service can recognise abuse in all its forms and know how to support victims. This should include a widespread awareness and understanding of coercive control and its impact on survivors and children. We must also review the needs of young people, vulnerable adults and people with accessibility needs to ensure suitable accommodation and support is available for different needs.

The council commissions a range of floating and accommodation-based support services to provide homes and support to young people, people with mental health problems, ex-offenders, women escaping domestic abuse, people sleeping rough and vulnerable adults. We will continue to work with our social care, health and commissioned partners to deliver this.

What we have achieved so far

- Established new and bespoke teams, including the Accommodation Assessment & Lettings Team who support people who are homeless to access suitable and affordable accommodation, and the Tenancy Management & Resettlement Team who supports people to sustain their temporary accommodation and move on into settled accommodation either in the private rented sector or into a social housing tenancy.
- Published a new Accommodation Procurement Strategy, setting out how we will ensure we have a sufficient supply of suitable, high quality temporary and private rented sector accommodation.
- Making the best use of capital funding to acquire new stock, or convert underutilised council-owned stock into temporary accommodation such as the acquisition of Sydney Arms.
- Utilise over 1,000 units of supported housing for vulnerable people including single adults, people with mental health needs, those sleeping rough and young people.
- Implementing the new Housing Allocations Policy which gives a higher priority for social housing to homeless households with additional needs.
- Supporting young people and care leavers to access accommodation, including developing a young person's joint working protocol, and supporting people leaving care to access social housing.
- Introducing new provision for people fleeing domestic abuse, including a new re-housing pathway developed for the local refuge.

Priority 2 – Accessing Accommodation: Our goals

Shorter stays in temporary accommodation. We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that the housing service remains in contact with households during their stay in temporary accommodation.
- Implementing the new Accommodation Procurement Strategy to increase supply
- Developing an Empty Homes Strategy to help bring empty properties back into use for homeless households
- Engaging with tenants under-occupying Council homes, to ensure that we are making the most effective use of our housing stock
- Reviewing the impacts of the new 'Band 2 - Homeless with additional need' priority in the Housing Allocations Scheme
- Implement the Local Lettings Plan to identify new developments in the borough

Homes meet the needs of a range of Lewisham residents. We will achieve this by:

- Adopting and implementing use of the daily vacancy list for refuges for victims of domestic abuse
- Deliver domestic abuse training to staff across the Housing Service
- Review our Young Persons Joint Working Protocol to ensure it meets the needs of young people fleeing violence
- Reviewing arrangements for people fleeing social housing due to domestic abuse
- Implement the Accommodation for Ex-Offenders programme to increase the number of ex-offenders accessing accommodation
- Review the councils action plan on supported exempt accommodation

Key measures of success:

- Increase in housing supply figures
- Social housing allocations under new Band 2 priority for homeless households with additional need
- Reduction in the number of households in temporary accommodation
- Reduction in the length of stay in temporary accommodation
- Reduction in temporary accommodation expenditure

Priority 3 – Rough Sleeping

One rough sleeper on the streets of Lewisham is one too many. Lewisham has seen a reduction in the number of people sleeping rough on a single night year-on-year since 2019. Despite the progress made in Lewisham recent years, new figures show an increasing trend in the number of people sleeping rough across the capital, including Lewisham. It is crucial that we do not become complacent, and instead build on recent success to develop sustainable pathways out of rough sleeping.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a massive impact on rough sleeping and accelerated the Council's response to tackling rough sleeping. Since then, we have established a Rough Sleeping Pathway and continue to commission a wide range of other accommodation and floating support services to reduce rough sleeping.

However, challenges remain. People sleeping rough often have worse physical and mental health than the general population, as well as worse access to health services. Through our Covid response we adopted a greater health centred approach to rough sleeping, however we know there is a smaller group of people sleeping rough with highly complex personal situations and support needs, such as substance misuse and mental or physical health needs. This can mean existing provision is not always suitable and cause them to stay on the streets for longer. People can also find themselves in this situation because their immigration status means they have No Recourse of Public Funds, restricting the services that would have kept many off the streets. We will work closely with our health partners to improve access to healthcare for people experiencing homelessness.

The government recently published its new Rough Sleeping Strategy, setting out for the first time a clear definition of what the government means by ending rough sleeping, which is that it is prevented wherever possible, and where it does occur it is rare, brief and non-recurrent. We will implement this definition in Lewisham.

What we have achieved so far

- Secured £2.4m Rough Sleeping Initiative Funding and £450,000 in Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Grant Funding to continue delivering a range of services which support people sleeping rough.
- Commission supported housing services offering 24 hour, medium and low support options which can be used to provide short – medium term accommodation options to alleviate rough sleeping
- Offer people sleeping rough a range of move-on options, including social housing, supported housing and accommodation in the Private Rented Sector. Last year, the Rough Sleeping Pathway achieved positive move-on outcomes for 68 people. We have also commissioned a floating support service for a capacity of 50 former rough sleepers, to help people sustain their tenancies.
- Secured £212,000 grant funding to provide access to private rented sector tenancies for ex-offenders who are, or are at risk of becoming, homeless
- Working with other local authorities to tackle rough sleeping, including a new sub-regional outreach service with Greenwich, Lewisham, Bexley and Bromley councils.
- Helped to regularise the immigration status of people sleeping rough where appropriate, such as helping obtain settled status. Of the 14 people with eligibility restrictions who were supported through Everyone-In, 6 have been supported into eligibility in the last year.
- Bring together a Rough Sleeping Strategic Group including partners from Community Services and Public Health, to oversee our rough sleeping work.
- Working with health partners to ensure that we continue to meet the varied needs of rough sleepers.

Priority 3 – Rough Sleeping: Our goals

Deliver an ongoing reduction in the number of people sleeping rough. We will achieve this by:

- Supporting Rough Sleepers with unclear immigration status to access available support and opportunities to find a sustainable route away from the street
- Establish reciprocal arrangements with other boroughs for female clients at risk
- Bid for funding opportunities to increase provision for repeat, long term rough sleepers
- Strengthen joint working with mental health services
- Review our female-specific provision for women sleeping rough with complex needs

Improve insights into why people sleep rough in Lewisham. We will achieve this by:

- Conducting a review into cases of new rough sleeping
- Conduct a review of flow between boroughs with neighbouring local authorities
- Contribute to Strategic Insights Tool for Rough Sleeping (SITRS) led by London Councils

Key measures of success:

- Reduction in the number of people sleeping rough
- Reduction in the incidents of repeat rough sleeping
- Reduction in the number of people living on the streets
- Increase access to support services

Priority 4 – Partnership working

Homelessness and rough sleeping is not simply a housing issue. Homelessness prevention needs to be a priority for all public services.

People facing homelessness experience a combination of problems and will require access to a range of support services. Recognising the different and often intersecting needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness must be acknowledged to ensure there is effective support.

The homelessness journey is full of transition points, from homelessness to being housed, from unemployment to employment, upon leaving hospital, care, prison or other provided accommodation. Planning for transitions and pathways between support services needs to be undertaken in partnership. This requires coordination of services, policies, and processes working together to find new approaches that maximise resources and provide the most effective support for people.

Our strategy will ensure we are engaged with partners who can contribute to supporting Lewisham residents threatened with or experiencing homelessness.

What we have achieved so far:

- Regularly meet with key partners such as the Registered Provider Partnership, the Rough Sleeping Strategic Group and the Homelessness Forum.
- Attend a range of key multi-agency groups such as the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference, Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements and Violence Against Women and Girls Board.
- Established co-located services with the 999 club to provide face to face housing support and advice.
- Working with Capital Letters to secure the right homes for households in need.

- Collaborating with other local authorities to guarantee the quality of homes that are procured, including adhering to the Inter-Borough Accommodation Agreement (IBAA) and 'Setting the Standard' scheme, ensuring an expected rate, quality and management of certain types of nightly paid and private rented sector accommodation.
- Established new ways of working with children's social care, including the implementation of a joint working protocol for young homeless people.
- Developing future funding bids and strategies in collaboration with council stakeholders, including the Rough Sleeping Initiative and Accommodation Procurement Strategy.
- Working with Asset Management and other partners to identify opportunities for existing council or community assets to be repurposed for homeless households.

Priority 4 – Partnership Working: Our goals

Establish new ways of working across partnerships to collectively reduce the risk of homelessness for families and individuals at risk. We will achieve this by:

- Co-Producing a protocol and pathway for vulnerable adults
- Ensure housing involvement and representation on strategic and operational joint working groups across the Council and with partner organisations
- Improve the availability of information on the range of services available in Lewisham
- Working with partners to develop joint bids for funding where relevant
- Delivering annual homelessness conferences to be attended by representatives of internal and external partners in the borough
- Attending the Homelessness forum to strengthen links between the housing needs service and partner organisations
- Working with partners across the council towards achieving the Domestic Abuse Housing Accreditation
- Work with partners to explore schemes that prevent someone affected by domestic violence from becoming homeless.

Key measures of success:

- Cross-sector buy-in to homelessness prevention
- Representation and attendance from a wide range of partners
- Agreed joint working protocols for vulnerable adults approved by partner organisations

1. Homelessness Statistical Review

- 1.1. Under the Homelessness Act 2002, all housing authorities must have in place a homelessness strategy based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their district.
- 1.2. The current Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy was agreed in 2020 and expires this year. This strategy was proposed as a two-year document so that a new version could be established after the longer term implications of COVID-19 were fully understood.
- 1.3. Since this strategy was developed, there have been significant changes in the housing landscape, the cost of living and rising homelessness levels. Whilst many of the challenges the council currently faces are a continuation of existing issues, a review has been completed to determine whether the existing priorities continue to reflect the needs of our clients or whether they require updating to reflect our latest needs.
- 1.4. This paper sets out our review of the current situation in Lewisham. It provides a statistical review of trends in homelessness approaches and underlying causes, activity in preventing and relieving homelessness, cohorts that may be more likely to become homeless or be threatened with homelessness and the profile of households experiencing homelessness. The analysis focusses on data collected between 2019/20 and 2022/23 which is intended to provide a summary of any changes or trends since the publication of the councils last 'Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-22'. This is intended to act as an evaluative tool to be used alongside the review of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy.

2. Summary

- Homeless approaches are increasing. Lewisham has seen a 31% increase in homeless approaches since the financial year of 2019/20.
- Single people continue to be the most represented in those applying as homeless (58% of all applications in 2021/22) followed by households with children (39% in 2021/22).
- People approaching the Council for assistance due to exclusion from 'family and friends' continues to be the major cause of homelessness, accounting for 28% of approaches in 2019/20 and rising to 32% of approaches in 2021/22.
- Domestic abuse homeless approaches are increasing locally and nationally. This accounted for 5% of all acceptances in 2019/20 which has increased to 7% in 2022/23 (year to date).
- When comparing current prevention rates to the pre-covid rate, successful preventions are 10% higher now than pre-covid.
- The rough sleeping count in November 2020 identified 12 people sleeping on the streets in Lewisham. This reduced to 7 in November 2021.
- Analysis of those applying as homeless since the publication of the last strategy shows greater proportions have a physical illness or disability, experience of domestic abuse, offending history and/or history of repeat homelessness. However, whilst statistically smaller a clear trend when reviewing change over time is the increase in the number of applicants for people with support needs related to young people and care leavers since 2020

3. Approaches

- 3.1. Homelessness has increased during the last ten years and remains high, with 3,723 households approaching the council for homelessness assistance in 2021/22. This is an increase of 31% since the publication of the current version of the strategy in 2020.
- 3.2. During the publication of the existing homelessness strategy the number of

homelessness acceptances had increased significantly. Since then, we have succeeded in preventing a higher rate of households from becoming homeless and as a result seen a considerable reduction in the number of main duty acceptances being made. It is likely that this is also partially the result the moratorium on evictions introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.3. The below table shows the total number of homelessness approaches acceptances made in the past 4 financial years.

Table 1 – Approaches to the service, and main duty acceptances by year

Year	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23 (YTD)
Approaches	2,973	2,833	3,120	3,723	2,412
Acceptances	888	729	550	326	569

3.4. Whilst there have not been significant changes to the most common reasons for homelessness, these causes of homelessness have become more prevalent. These are primarily:

- **Family / Friends Eviction** – People approaching the Council for assistance due to exclusion from ‘family and friends’ continues to constitute the major cause of homelessness, accounting for 28% of approaches in 2019/20 and rising to 32% of approaches in 2021/22. Generally, family exclusions occur when adult children remain in the family home and as a result the household becomes overcrowded.

- **Private sector evictions** – There continues to be an increasing percentage of private landlords choosing to increase their rent in line with market prices, or choosing to no longer rent out their properties resulting in them disposing of the properties altogether. In 2019/20, this accounted for 19% of all acceptances which has increased to 26% in 2022/23 (year to date).

- **Fleeing violence / harassment** – There has been a national increase in the number of domestic violence and harassment cases reported leading to significantly higher levels of those fleeing their homes and seeking alternative secure accommodation. This accounted for 5% of all acceptances in 2019/20 which has increased to 7% in 2022/23 (year to date).

Table 2 – Most common reasons for homelessness by year

Most common reasons for homelessness	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23 (YTD)
Family no longer willing or able to accommodate	645	699	1055	934	526
End of private rented tenancy – assured shorthold tenancy	681	463	315	555	466
Domestic abuse	118	154	229	291	218

4. Prevention & Relief

- 4.1. Since the publication of the last version of the strategy, 2,067 people have been prevented from becoming homeless in Lewisham. The number of people prevented from becoming homeless peaked at 680 during the publication of the current strategy in 2019/20 and has decreased since then. However, it should be noted that this is likely owing to the governments ban on evictions during the Covid-19 pandemic resulting in a higher number of successful preventions than usual. When comparing current prevention rates to the pre-covid rate, successful preventions are 10% higher now than pre-covid.

Table 3 – Number of households owed a prevention duty, and positive outcomes by year

Year	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
Prevention duty owed	1520	1482	1443	1311
Number of positive preventions	491	680	642	554

- 4.2. Since a return to 'business as usual' the success rate of prevention activity has decreased to from 51% in 2020/21 to a current prevention rate of 34%. Both the economic downturn in the last year and changing housing market are contributing factors. Given Lewisham's lack of availability of social and council housing, and record waiting lists for accommodation, by far one of the key tools that enables us to prevent homelessness is by supporting people to remain in their private rented sector properties, or supporting applicants to find alternative PRS accommodation.
- 4.3. As made clear in the councils new Accommodation Procurement Strategy, the council and London more widely are experiencing a recent sharp increase in rental prices and sharp decrease in the supply of private rented sector accommodation. The council's Accommodation Supply Team procured 95 PRS properties for move-on between April – September 2022, down from 182 over the same period in 2020 and 179 in 2021. Across London, the number of properties listed to rent in the first quarter of 2022 was 35% lower than the pre-COVID quarterly average.
- 4.4. This is significantly impacting on our services ability to achieve prevention outcomes through the private rented sector. Currently just 47% of applicants who are threatened with homeless due to eviction from a private rented sector property, are successfully prevented from becoming homeless (down from 58% in 2020/21). We have also observed a decrease in successful negotiation or mediation activity to prevent an eviction, which reduced from 120 in 2019/20 to 45 in 2020/21. This is linked to the fact that many landlords report that they intend to sell their properties due to reduced cash flow caused by higher interest rates. Additionally, many landlords took the opportunity of the strong sales market during 2021, supported by the Stamp Duty holidays, to sell their properties.
- 4.5. The continued increase in exclusion from 'family and friends' is another contributing factor to decreasing prevention rates. Of those prevented from becoming homeless, the most common reason for approaching the council for support was threat of eviction from family. Figures show that the positive prevention rate for this group reduced by 10% from 262 in 2020/21 to 171 in 2021/22. The Council's means to prevent this cause of homelessness are generally limited to an offer of private rented accommodation or rehousing through the Allocations scheme and this is likely a knock-on effect of low supply of PRS.
- 4.6. Other notable trends include the fluctuation in prevention outcomes for households

with children. The recent drop in positive prevention outcomes is mainly owing to a drop in prevention for the number of households with children. Whilst the number of positive preventions only dropped by 40 between 19/20 and 20/21, overall there was a net reduction of 136 positive preventions for households with children. However, it is likely that these figures are slightly skewed as there was a higher number of successful outcome for single people during this period due to the governments everyone-in initiative.

Table 4 - Reason for positive prevention outcome

Reason Prevention Duty ended	2019	2020	2021	2022
Secured alternative accommodation for 12 or more months	125	136	255	203
Secured alternative accommodation for 6 months	124	159	212	178
Secured existing accommodation for 12 or more months	89	101	31	48
Secured existing accommodation for 6 months	153	284	144	129
Total positive preventions	491	680	642	558

Table 5 – Most common activities taken to prevent homelessness

Positive Prevention Activity	No. positive preventions			
	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
Accommodation secured by local authority or organisation delivering housing options service	95	93	154	147
Helped to secure accommodation found by applicant, with financial payment	103	109	150	87
Supported housing provided	35	43	63	76
Helped to secure accommodation found by applicant, without financial payment	41	46	73	75
Negotiation/mediation/advocacy work to prevent eviction/repossession	78	120	45	51
Housing related support to sustain accommodation	15	24	24	45
Negotiation/mediation work to secure return to family or friend	4	17	41	33

4.7. The trend of outcomes for households owed a relief duty differs slightly from the trend seen in prevention activity. Since the publication of the last version of the strategy, 4,224 people have been relieved from homelessness in Lewisham. Whilst the number of positive relief outcomes decreased in 2021/22, the success rate of relief activity is higher as a proportion of those owed a relief duty. This success rate increased from 38% in 2020/21 to 45% in 2021/22.

Table 6 – Number of households owed a relief duty, and positive outcomes by year

Year	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
Relief duty owed	1,688	1,717	1,368	1,139
No. positive relief outcomes	411	506	582	451

4.8. The increase in positive relief outcomes in 20/21 is owing to a growth in the number of single people secured accommodation. One observable trend is an increase in the number of people being placed into supported housing. This had been enabled by the

governments ‘everyone-in’ initiative, the implementation of a new grant-funded rough sleeping pathway, and improved working relationships with the single vulnerable adult’s pathway. However, this trend has reversed more recently with the drop in positive relief outcomes in 21/22 largely owing to a drop in outcomes for single clients.

- 4.9. The recent drop in the number of successful relief outcomes follows a similar trend to prevention activity, for example including a drop in accommodation secured by the local authority and a drop in help to secure accommodation found by applicants. This is likely a knock-on effect of low supply of PRS described above.

Table 7 – Most common activities taken to end the relief duty by year

Relief activity	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
Supported housing provided	102	131	135	180
Accommodation secured by local authority or organisation delivering housing options service	164	176	264	149
Helped to secure accommodation found by applicant, with financial payment	33	91	99	54
Helped to secure accommodation found by applicant, without financial payment	16	22	25	24

5. Other areas of interest

- 5.1. Areas of change or significance since the publication of the last strategy are the change in the household composition and profile of support needs of those approaching Lewisham as homeless.

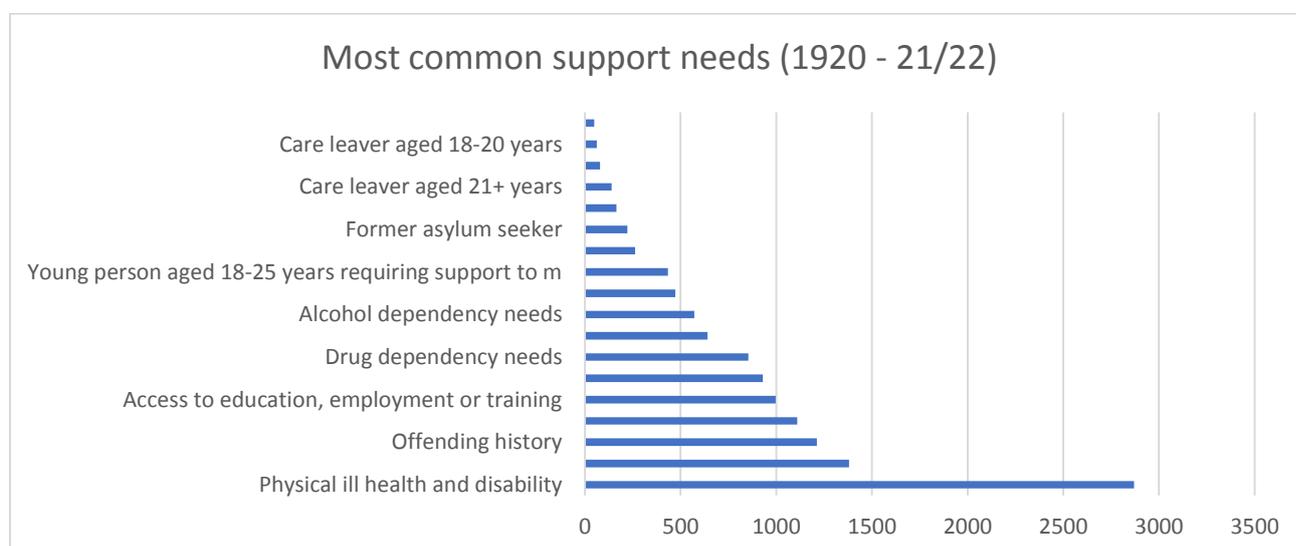
Support needs

- 5.2. The table below summarises the proportion of clients approaching the service who declared they had a support need during their application.

Table 8 – Number of applicants who declared a support needs by year

Year	19-20	20-21	21-22
Support Need Declared	1684	2005	2448
As proportion of all applications	59%	64%	65%

Most common support needs since last strategy



- 5.3. Analysis of those applying as homeless since the publication of the last strategy shows greater proportions have a physical illness or disability, experience of domestic abuse, offending history and/or history of repeat homelessness.
- 5.4. Whilst statistically smaller, a clear trend when reviewing change over time is the increase in the number of applicants for people with support needs related to young people and care leavers since 2020 (as shown in table X). This has prompted more partnership opportunities and new ways of working with children's social care, including the implementation of a joint working protocol for young homeless people and supporting people leaving care to access social housing. The council also commissions a The Young Persons Pathway, which is made up of 134 units, 58 of which are 24 hour support. This pathway includes an assessment centre for homeless 16 and 17 year old, and dedicated Care Leaver provision.

Table 9 - Largest increases in support needs by year

Support Need	19-20	20-21	21-22	% change
Young parent requiring support to manage independently	17	27	35	106%
At risk of/has experienced abuse (non-domestic)	151	213	277	83%
Young person aged 16-17 years	43	48	73	70%
Young person aged 18-25 years requiring support to manage independently	115	134	184	60%
Care leaver aged 21+ years	42	36	62	48%
At risk of/has experienced domestic abuse	395	470	515	30%

Profile of applicants

- 5.5. The table below shows approaches to the homelessness service by household composition per year.

Table 10 – Most common household types by year

Household Type	19-20	%	20-21	%	21-22	%
Single Person	1,453	51%	2,036	65%	2,175	58%
Household with children	1,261	45%	994	32%	1,463	39%
Adults with no children	67	2%	35	1%	83	2%
Unknown	52	2%	55	2%	2%	0%

- 5.6. There are no statistically significant changes in trends of household compositions applying for homelessness assistance. Whilst proportions vary year on year, single people continue to be the most represented in those applying as homeless (58% of all applications in 2021/22) followed by households with children (39% in 2021/22). When looking in more detail, the two most common type of applicants are single adult males and single female parents with dependent children. This ratio skews more heavily towards households with children when reviewing numbers in temporary accommodation, due to the priority need status give to households with dependent children.
- 5.7. A more detailed breakdown of the service-user profile for those applying for housing support and currently accommodated in temporary accommodation is available in the strategies accompanying 'Equalities Analysis Assessment' (Appendix 3).

6. Rough Sleeping

- 6.1. The number of people seen sleeping rough in Lewisham has fluctuated over the last year.
- 6.2. During the annual rough sleeping snapshot in 2021, Lewisham had the second lowest rough sleeping single-night snapshot figure in London.

Table 11 – number of people sleeping rough on a single night in autumn, by year

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
RS Snapshot	22	5	16	12	7	8

- 6.3. Concerningly, the total number of people rough sleeping across London is increasing compared to the same time last year, with 3,570 people sleeping rough from October – December 2022 - an increase of 21%.
- 6.4. A Rough Sleeping Taskforce was launched in response to Covid-19 when LBL, the NHS South East CCG and partners came together to provide an effective multi-agency response to the covid-19 pandemic. This work is now being taken forward through the work of the Rough Sleeping Strategic Group.
- 6.5. The causes of rough sleeping are complex and interconnected. Key trends and challenges in Lewisham currently include:
 - **Repeat rough sleeping:** Analysis of the number of accommodation placements for our most complex clients demonstrates long-term and re-occurring instances of rough sleeping. Of the 13 clients we currently support who meet this description, there are sustained instances of rough sleeping with 227 individual bedded down contacts. This is despite all client having been referred into existing provision, of which this group have had 87 separate supported housing or temporary accommodation placements.
 - **Gap in provision for complex needs clients:** Supported housing in Lewisham is structured into four separate pathways of funded and non-commissioned provision. Analysis of those engaging with supported housing pathways in Lewisham suggests a gap in support models for clients with the most complex needs. On average, 20% of referrals into existing pathway services result in a refusal by the service, reasons including support needs being too high for what is available. At the same time, of all moves within the pathway that were planned, 25% of these were moves into 24 hour support provision, suggesting a high level of need for intensive support in Lewisham.
 - **Restricted eligibility:** Some people have no recourse to public funds (NRPF), which prevents them accessing statutory support or welfare. Many non-UK rough sleepers also refuse offers of support away from the streets as they are sleeping rough in London temporarily while seeking (frequently informal) work. There are currently 35 NRPF clients supported by Lewisham Council to regularise their status.

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Equalities Analysis Assessment

Author	Jacob Foreman	Directorate	HRPR - Housing Services Division
Date	17/02/2023	Service	Housing Partnerships and Service Improvement

1. The project or decision that this assessment is being undertaken for:

The review of the councils Homelessness Strategy and adoption of a new three year Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

2. The protected characteristics or other equalities factors potentially impacted by this decision

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maternity and pregnancy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marriage and civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carer status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation		

The strategy being considered for adoption provides high-level directions to drive the council towards achieving its objectives. Whilst the strategy itself is high-level, it includes the adoption of a series of actions and activities that will be followed that may have an impact on any of the above protected characteristics. This assessment covers the broad approaches laid out in the strategy.

The strategy also explicitly references some priorities and deliverables that would be specifically targeted at groups with protected characteristics; these are aimed at ensuring we are offering appropriate and effective services for people with the noted characteristics. For the purposes of illustration, one strategic deliverable is to “Review our female-specific provision for women sleeping rough with complex needs” – this would specifically relate to the provision of homes and support for people with a specific gender and can therefore be considered a positive impact. Other related priorities and deliverables are explored below.

3. The evidence to support the analysis

The key data used for this assessment is the service-user profile – i.e. those applying for housing support and currently accommodated in temporary accommodation. Much of this information is provided as part of a housing application and has been sourced from the in-house system.

Applicants, however, are not required to enter data on protected characteristics in their service-user profile. Therefore the council has limited data on the protected characteristics of applicants, so we are unable to provide a detailed assessment of the impact, or forecast the impact with a significant degree of confidence.

- **The analysis**

Age

Homelessness applications Age Range	%
Less than 18	1%
18-25	23%
26-35	28%
36-40	12%
41-50	18%
51-60	12%
More than 60	5%
Total	100%

- The most represented age bracket in homelessness applications is 26-35.
- A clear trend when reviewing change over time is the increase in the number of applicants for people with support needs related to young people and care leavers.

Support Need	19-20	20-21	21-22	% change
Young parent requiring support to manage independently	17	27	35	+106%
At risk of/has experienced abuse (non-domestic)	151	213	277	+83%
Young person aged 16-17 years	43	48	73	+70%
Young person aged 18-25 years requiring support to manage independently	115	134	184	+60%
Care leaver aged 21+ years	42	36	62	+48%

Ethnicity

Homelessness applications ethnicity	%
Any other Asian background	2.60%
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	2.79%
Any other ethnic group	2.68%
Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background	1.64%
Any other White background	5.77%
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.32%
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	0.29%
Asian/Asian British: Indian	0.40%
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	0.40%
Black/ African/Caribbean/Black British: African	19.92%
Black/ African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	19.31%
Don't know / refused	6.25%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	0.32%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	1.69%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	4.77%
Other ethnic group: Arab	1.02%
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	18.56%
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.11%
White: Irish	0.48%
Blank	10.67%
Grand Total	100.00%

- We hold high quality data about the ethnicity of residents who make an application of homelessness, as this is collected by officers from the applicants.
- This shows that over half of homeless households have been from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic households.

Maternity

- **3.69%** of the lead tenants were known to be pregnant at the time of the most recent change in their application status.

Gender

Female	54.14%
Male	44.22%
Transgender	0.24%
Unknown	0.32%

(blank)	1.07%
Total	100%

- **54%** of applicants were female, **44%** male, and **0.2%** transgender.
- This ratio is much more even than that observed for temporary accommodation, which skews heavily female. This is most likely because there are more single women with dependent children owed a long term homelessness duty (as dependent children is indicative of a priority need).
- Female applicants have a different profile of reasons for application, in particular domestic abuse.

Gender identity

- There is no data available for gender identity within homeless applicants.

Disability

Primary Disability Declared in Homelessness Applicants	Count
Physical impairment or mobility issues	110
Mental Health Condition	93
Long standing illness or health problem	46
Blind or serious visual impairment	16
General Learning Disability	14
Deaf or serious hearing impairment	13
Specific Learning Disability	13

- This data field was highly incomplete for homelessness applications, so meaningful analysis is not possible.
- 7% of applicants on the housing register have declared a disability.
- As of November 2022, there were 77 households on the housing register who require a home that is wheelchair accessible and 186 households who require an adapted property to meet their needs. Due to the shortage of supply of such homes, the waiting times for these households are likely to be longer than average.

Religion

Religion	%
Christian	49.6%
No religion	32.4%
Muslim	13.6%
Other religion	2.3%
Hindu	1.5%
Buddhist	0.3%
Jewish	0.3%
Grand Total	100.00%

- This data field was highly incomplete for homelessness applications, so meaningful analysis is not possible.
- Of the 663 remaining individuals who have disclosed a religion, almost a half have identified as Christian. The next most prevalent declaration is 'no religion', followed by Muslim. This data field was highly incomplete for homelessness applications, so meaningful analysis is not possible.

Household type

- Single people continue to be the most represented in those applying as homeless (58% of all applications in 2021/22) followed by households with children (39% in 2021/22). When looking in more detail, the two most common type of applicants are single adult males and single female parents with dependent children. This ratio skews more heavily towards households with children when reviewing numbers in temporary accommodation, due to the priority need status give to households with dependent children.

Household Type	19-20	%	20-21	%	21-22	%
Single Person	1,453	51%	2,036	65%	2,175	58%
Household with children	1,261	45%	994	32%	1,463	39%
Adults with no children	67	2%	35	1%	83	2%
Unknown	52	2%	55	2%	2%	0%

Carer status

- There is no data for carers within the housing register or homelessness applications.

Sexual orientation

How would you define your sexual orientation?	Percentage
Heterosexual / Straight	95.3%
Gay / Lesbian	2.5%
Other sexual orientation	1.7%
Bisexual	0.5%

- Of those who have disclosed their sexual orientation, 95% have identified as straight / heterosexual.
- Less than 5% have identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or other.

Income

- Low-income households spend a larger proportion than average on energy and food, so are affected by price increases.
- The employment rate (78.2%) in Lewisham is comparable to the London average.
- Our average income is the 8th lowest out of 33 London boroughs, leaving many of our residents more vulnerable to changes in circumstance.
- Data shows a significant number of households in Lewisham are living in fuel poverty, particularly in Rushey Green, Hither Green, and Downham.

4. Impact summary

- Age
 - Ensuring that the needs of vulnerable children and young people are properly addressed within our service provision is in line with the corporate priority of “ensuring the most vulnerable children are protected from harm”. Actions deriving from this priority will have a positive impact on children and young people.
 - Increasing the availability of much-needed specialist accommodation will have a positive impact on older residents who are more likely to need such housing.
- Ethnicity
 - Data shows that Black ethnic groups are disproportionately represented in the homeless applicant extract. Additionally Black African groups are disproportionately represented in the cohort of overcrowded homes within our own stock.
 - Work needs to be done towards ensuring Housing policies and action plans drive positive changes in promoting equality and fighting injustice, and this is a priority of the Housing strategy.
 - Any strategic work under this priority will aim to have a positive impact on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups that currently experience disparity in outcomes.
- Maternity
 - Pregnancy is an indicator of priority housing need; therefore any strategic decisions relating to housing allocations may have an impact and should therefore be considered with this cohort in mind.
- Language spoken

- Users of Lewisham’s Housing Services come from diverse backgrounds and consideration must be given to language needs; i.e. use of translation services and ensuring relevant documents are written in plain English.
- Gender
 - Data suggests women are overrepresented in the homeless applicant cohort. Strategic action to effectively address homelessness will therefore have a positive impact on these applicants.
 - Ensuring appropriate solutions are available for people fleeing domestic abuse will have a positive impact on the women who make up the majority of this cohort.
 - Action to address rough sleeping will positively impact the men who make up the majority of this cohort.
- Gender identity
 - There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group.
- Disability
 - Increasing the availability of much-needed specialist accommodation will have a positive impact on people with disabilities would benefit from this type of home.
 - Reviewing and improving supported housing pathways will have a positive impact on the people with disabilities who are within these units.
 - Working to increase the take-up of Disabled Facilities Grants will help people with disabilities remain in their home, which is a positive impact.
- Household type
 - Delivering homes that address the needs of our residents, whether that be social, private or temporary accommodation, is a strategic priority. The prevalence of all household types need to be considered in the provision of homes – for example if the majority of homeless households need 3-bed houses, our focus should be on the delivery / procurement of such properties (this is an over-simplification but highlights the need to assess need in line with delivery).
- Religion
 - There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group. Delivery of specific priorities should take into account any cultural or religious sensitivities.
- Carer
 - The implications of any strategic deliveries on carers or those who are cared for must be considered. There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group, however the strategy alludes to monitoring the implementation of the new band 2 criteria for homeless households with additional needs. This includes those who are carers or cared for.
- Sexual orientation
 - There is no evidence to suggest any impact on this group.
- Income
 - The entire delivery of housing and homelessness strategies will have significant impact on those on low incomes. We know that incomes have not kept pace with house prices or rents, which is a key cause of the housing crisis.
 - One of the five priorities of the housing strategy is helping people to access accommodation. This includes delivering more social rented homes, increasing the supply of private rented homes available to low-income households and improving the standards of temporary accommodation. Any activity under these priorities should have a positive impact on low-income households.

5. Mitigation

This Equalities Analysis Assessment recognises that the implementation of the policy will have a greater impact on specific groups because they have a higher representation within the overall service user profile. However, as explained in section 1, the strategy being considered for adoption provides high-level directions to drive the service and the Council towards achieving its objectives. Specific procedural changes and / or reviews will come about as a result of the adoption of the strategy and the impact of these specific activities on groups with protected

characteristics will be mitigated by the individual assessment carried out in each case. This assessment is a high-level review of the possible effects of the strategic direction of Housing Services.

6. Service user journey that this decision or project impacts

If you think you may become homeless, you should contact the Council for advice at the earliest opportunity on our freephone number 0808 178 0939. The earlier you contact us the more chance we have of helping you to avoid becoming homeless.

If you want to join the housing register you can do this by referring to our information on the website www.lewisham.gov.uk

If you are vulnerable (for example you are elderly, have learning or other disability, or do not have the ability to read English or another language) we can assist you in accessing housing and bidding for properties. The **Lewisham Find Your Home Support Officer**, based in the Allocations and Lettings Service, assists applicants to engage with the choice based lettings system and can assist clients with bidding. Please contact the Allocations and Lettings Service for further information on 020 8314 7007 or LewishamFindYourHomeApplications@lewisham.gov.uk.

**Signature of
Head of Service**

Ellie Eghtedar

For further information please see the full [Corporate Equality Policy](#).



Housing Select Committee

Report title: Select Committee Work Programme Report

Date: 9 March 2023

Key decision: No.

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: Not applicable

Contributors: Nidhi Patil (Scrutiny Manager)

Outline and recommendations

To advise members of the completed work programme for 2022/23 and to propose draft priority themes for the committee's work programme for 2023/24.

The Committee is asked to:

- note the completed work programme attached at Appendix C.
- review the issues covered over the course of 2022/23.
- review the forward plan of key decisions at Appendix D.
- consider priority themes for the 2023/24 work programme.

Timeline of decision-making

Housing Select Committee Work Programme 2022/23 – draft agreed on 6 June 2022

Housing Select Committee Work Programme 2022/23 – agreed by Business Panel on 19 July 2022

Housing Select Committee Work Programme 2022/23 was reviewed at committee meetings on 12 October 2022; 17 November 2022; 5 January 2023 and 9 March 2023

1. Summary

- 1.1. Each Select Committee is required to agree a work programme for submission to the Business Panel at the beginning of the municipal year. As this is the last meeting of the Housing Select Committee in 2022/23, members are being asked to put forward suggestions for the 2023/24 work programme. Please note, however, that the 2023/24 work programme will not be formally agreed until the first meeting of 2023/24.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to:
- note the completed work programme attached at Appendix C.
 - review the issues covered over the course of 2022/23.
 - review the forward plan of key decisions at Appendix D.
 - consider priority themes for the 2023/24 work programme.

3. The Work Programme

Issues covered over the course of 2022/23

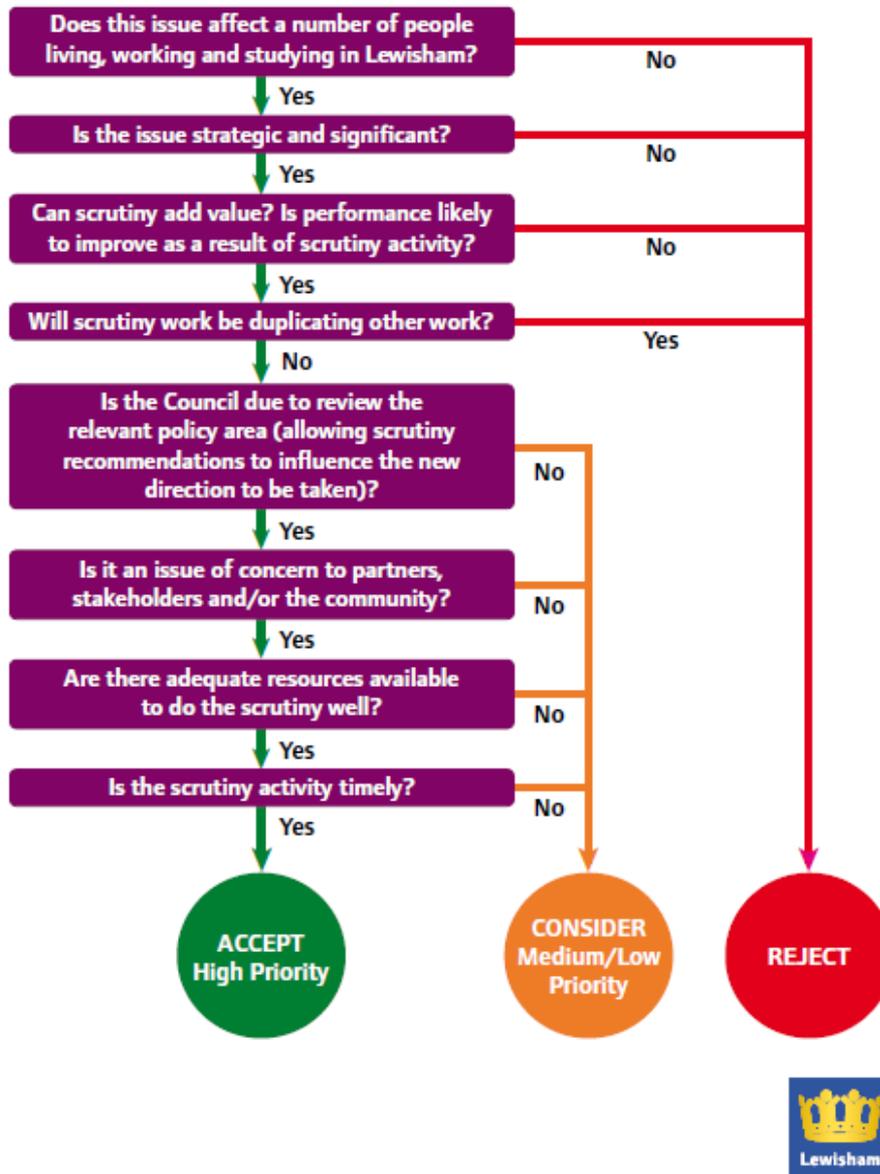
- 3.1. The Housing Select Committee met five times in the municipal year 2022/23. The completed work programme is attached at Appendix C.
- 3.2. Key issues covered by the Housing Select Committee this year have included: Article 4 direction for HMOs; Housing Revenue Account business plan; Future of Housing managed by Lewisham Homes; Service Charge policy; Selective Licensing; Temporary Accommodation Procurement strategy; Lewisham Homes repairs update; Rent & Service Charge increases for 2023-24; Repairs update from Housing Providers; Supported Exempt Accommodation; Climate Emergency Action Plan update focusing on Housing Retrofit and Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Timetable for setting the 2023/24 Work Programme

- 3.3. Five committee meetings will be scheduled for the 2023/24 municipal year. A draft work programme will be put forward at the first meeting of the municipal year, taking into account key local issues and the Committee's previous work.
- 3.4. At this meeting, Members are asked to review the Committee's work over 2022/23 and consider suggestions/priority themes for 2023/24. Forthcoming key decisions are set out in Appendix D.
- 3.5. Work programme suggestions should be considered against the Committee's terms of reference (see section 4 and Appendix A) and the prioritisation chart set out below, and be achievable in terms of the meeting time available.
- 3.6. The Committee should give consideration to issues of local importance and decisions due to be made by Mayor and Cabinet. Items within the work programme should be linked to the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy for 2022-2026:
- Cleaner and Greener
 - A Strong Local Economy
 - Quality Housing
 - Children and Young People
 - Safer Communities
 - Open Lewisham
 - Health and Wellbeing
- 3.7. The work of the Housing Select Committee will relate most closely to the 'Quality Housing' priority, which commits the Council to:
- delivering more social homes for Lewisham residents and providing them with safe & comfortable accommodation;
 - improving the conditions in the borough's housing stock by working with all housing providers to encourage retro-fitting as part of our drive to be carbon-neutral by 2030;

- developing a Lewisham Rent Repairs Charter that improves the quality and timeliness of repairs;
- providing more support to renters through further landlord licensing, holding landlords to account and giving a voice to renters across the borough;
- safeguarding our heritage by preserving and restoring our historic buildings and landmarks.

Scrutiny work programme – prioritisation process



4. Housing Select Committee- Terms of Reference

- 4.1. The Council's constitution sets out the Committee's powers as defined by the terms of reference (set out below). The Committee should familiarise itself with the terms of reference and consider its remit when selecting items for scrutiny.

Housing Select Committee terms of reference:

To fulfil all overview and scrutiny functions in relation to the discharge by the authority of its housing functions. This shall include the power to:

- a) review and scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken in connection with

the discharge of the Council of its housing function;

- b) make reports or recommendations to the authority and/or Mayor and Cabinet with respect to the discharge of these functions;
- c) make recommendations to the authority and/or Mayor and Cabinet proposals for housing policy;
- d) review initiatives put in place by the Council with a view to improving, increasing and enhancing housing in the borough, make recommendations and/or report thereon to the Council and/or Mayor and Cabinet;
- e) establish links with housing providers in the borough which are concerned with the provision of social housing.

5. Financial implications

- 5.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme will have financial implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, all scrutiny select committees must devise and submit a work programme to the Business Panel at the start of each municipal year.

7. Equalities implications

- 7.1. Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act included a new public sector equality duty, replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6 April 2011. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 7.2. The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 7.3. There may be equalities implications arising from items on the work programme and all activities undertaken by the Select Committee will need to give due consideration to this.

8. Climate change and environmental implications

- 8.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. However, in February 2019 Lewisham Council declared a Climate Emergency and proposed a target to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030. An action plan to achieve this target was subsequently agreed by Mayor and Cabinet (following pre-decision scrutiny by the Sustainable Development Select Committee)¹. The plan incorporates all areas of the Council's work. Items on the work programme may well have climate change and environmental

¹ See <https://lewisham.gov.uk/TacklingTheClimateEmergency> for a summary of the Council's work in this area.

implications and reports considered by the Committee should acknowledge this.

9. Crime and disorder implications

- 9.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme may have crime and disorder implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

10. Health and wellbeing implications

- 10.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme may have health and wellbeing implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

11. Report author and contact

If you have any questions about this report please contact the scrutiny manager:

Nidhi Patil, 020 8314 7620, Nidhi.Patil@lewisham.gov.uk

Appendix A – Housing Select Committee Terms of Reference

The following roles are common to all select committees:

(a) General functions

- To review and scrutinise decisions made, and actions taken in relation to executive and non-executive functions
- To make reports and recommendations to the Council or the executive, arising out of such review and scrutiny in relation to any executive or non-executive function
- To make reports or recommendations to the Council and/or Executive in relation to matters affecting the area or its residents
- The right to require the attendance of members and officers to answer questions includes a right to require a member to attend to answer questions on up-and-coming decisions

(b) Policy development

- To assist the executive in matters of policy development by in depth analysis of strategic policy issues facing the Council for report and/or recommendation to the Executive or Council or committee as appropriate
- To conduct research, community and/or other consultation in the analysis of policy options available to the Council
- To liaise with other public organisations operating in the borough – both national, regional and local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working in policy development wherever possible

(c) Scrutiny

- To scrutinise the decisions made by and the performance of the Executive and other committees and Council officers both in relation to individual decisions made and over time
- To scrutinise previous performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives/performance targets and/or particular service areas
- To question members of the Executive or appropriate committees and executive directors personally about decisions
- To question members of the Executive or appropriate committees and executive directors in relation to previous performance whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over time or in relation to particular initiatives which have been implemented
- To scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the borough and to invite them to make reports to and/or address the select committee/Business Panel and local people about their activities and performance
- To question and gather evidence from any person outside the Council (with their consent)
- To make recommendations to the Executive or appropriate committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process

(d) Community representation

- To promote and put into effect closer links between overview and scrutiny members and the local community
- To encourage and stimulate an enhanced community representative role for overview and scrutiny members including enhanced methods of consultation with local people
- To liaise with the Council's ward assemblies so that the local community might participate in the democratic process and where it considers it appropriate to seek the views of the ward assemblies on matters that affect or are likely to affect the local areas, including accepting items for the agenda of the appropriate select committee from ward assemblies.
- To keep the Council's local ward assemblies under review and to make recommendations to the Executive and/or Council as to how participation in the democratic process by local people can be enhanced
- To receive petitions, deputations and representations from local people and other stakeholders about areas of concern within their overview and scrutiny remit, to refer them

to the Executive, appropriate committee or officer for action, with a recommendation or report if the committee considers that necessary

- To consider any referral within their remit referred to it by a member under the Councillor Call for Action, and if they consider it appropriate to scrutinise decisions and/or actions taken in relation to that matter, and/or make recommendations/report to the Executive (for executive matters) or the Council (non-executive matters).

(e) Finance

- To exercise overall responsibility for finances made available to it for use in the performance of its overview and scrutiny function.

(f) Work programme

- As far as possible to draw up a draft annual work programme in each municipal year for consideration by the overview and scrutiny Business Panel. Once approved by the Business Panel, the relevant select committee will implement the programme during that municipal year. Nothing in this arrangement inhibits the right of every member of a select committee (or the Business Panel) to place an item on the agenda of that select committee (or Business Panel respectively) for discussion.
- The Council and the Executive will also be able to request that the overview and scrutiny select committee research and/or report on matters of concern and the select committee will consider whether the work can be carried out as requested. If it can be accommodated, the select committee will perform it. If the committee has reservations about performing the requested work, it will refer the matter to the Business Panel for decision.

The Housing Select Committee has specific responsibilities for the following:

- f) To fulfil all overview and scrutiny functions in relation to the discharge by the authority of its housing functions. This shall include the power to:
- g) review and scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken in connection with the discharge of the Council of its housing function
- h) make reports or recommendations to the authority and/or Mayor and Cabinet with respect to the discharge of these functions
- i) make recommendations to the authority and/or Mayor and Cabinet proposals for housing policy
- j) to review initiatives put in place by the Council with a view to improving, increasing and enhancing housing in the borough, making recommendations and/or report thereon to the Council and/or Mayor and Cabinet
- k) To establish links with housing providers in the borough which are concerned with the provision of social housing

Appendix B- Effective Scrutiny Guidelines

At Lewisham we:

1. Prioritise

It is more effective to look at a small number of key issues in an in-depth way, than skim the surface of everything falling within scrutiny's remit. We try to focus on issues of concern to the community and/or matters that are linked to our corporate priorities. We only add items to the work programme if we are certain our consideration of the matter will make a real and tangible difference.

2. Are independent

Scrutiny is led by Scrutiny Members. Scrutiny Members are in charge of the work programme, and, for every item, we specify what evidence we require and what information we would like to see in any officer reports that are prepared. We are not whipped by our political party or unduly influenced by the Cabinet or senior officers.

3. Work collectively

If we collectively agree in advance what we want to achieve in relation to each item under consideration, including what the key lines of enquiry should be, we can work as a team to question witnesses and ensure that all the required evidence is gathered. Scrutiny is impartial and the scrutiny process should be free from political point scoring and not used to further party-political objectives.

4. Engage

Involving residents helps scrutiny access a wider range of ideas and knowledge, listen to a broader range of voices and better understand the opinions of residents and service users. Engagement helps ensure that recommendations result in residents' wants and needs being more effectively met.

5. Make SMART evidence-based recommendations

We make recommendations that are based on solid, triangulated evidence – where a variety of sources of evidence point to a change in practice that will positively alter outcomes. We recognise that recommendations are more powerful if they are:

- Specific (simple, sensible, significant).
- Measurable (meaningful, motivating).
- Achievable (agreed, attainable).
- Relevant (reasonable, realistic and resourced, results-based).
- Time bound (time-based, time limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive).

Housing Select Committee work plan 2022-23

Item	Type	Priority	06-Jun-22	12-Oct-22	17-Nov-22	05-Jan-23	09-Mar-23
Article 4 direction for HMOs	Standard item	CP2					
Housing Revenue Account business plan	Standard item	CP2					
Future of housing managed by Lewisham Homes	Standard item	CP2					
Lewisham Homes business plan	Standard item	CP2					
Service charge policy	Standard item	CP2					
Lewisham Homes annual report	Standard item	CP2					
Selective licensing	Standard item	CP2					
Temporary accommodation procurement strategy	Standard item	CP2					
Budget cuts proposals	Standard item	CP2					
Lewisham Homes repairs update	Standard item	CP2					
Update on housing management consultation	Standard item	CP2					
Rent and service charge increases 2023-24	Performance monitoring	CP2					
Climate Emergency Action plan update- Housing retrofit (followed by presentations from Housing associations)	Standard item	CP2					
Update on Supported Exempt accommodation	Standard item	CP2					
Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy	Policy Development	CP2					
Repairs Update- Housing Providers	Performance monitoring	CP2					
Lewisham Homes Repairs update	Performance monitoring	CP2					

Information reports, briefings and visits	Type	Priority					
Building for Lewisham update	Information request	CP2	Received 08.07.22				
Regenter B3 annual report and business plan	Performance monitoring	CP2					
Visit to Sydney Arms rough sleeper accommodation	Visit	CP2		05.08.22			
Temporary accomodation briefing	Briefing	CP2			03.11.22		
Meeting with scrutiny councillors in other London Boroughs regarding their experience of housing management changes	Engagement session	CP2			04.11.22		
Universal credit and temporary accomodation update	Information request	CP2			Received 17.11.22		
Lewisham Homes' September performance pack	Information request	CP2			Received 17.11.22		
Exempt accommodation	Information request	CP2				Received 22.11.22	
Location Priority Policy	Information request	CP2				Received 01.12.22	
Visit to retrofit sites in Lambeth	Visit	CP2					06.03.23
Resident engagement in housing development (update)	Performance monitoring	CP2					02.03.23

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Corporate Priorities**Priority**

1	Open Lewisham	CP 1
2	Quality Housing	CP 2
3	Children and Young People	CP 3
4	A Strong Local Economy	CP 4
5	Health & Wellbeing	CP 5
6	Cleaner and greener	CP 6
7	Safer Communities	CP 7

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FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Forward Plan February 2023 - May 2023

This Forward Plan sets out the key decisions the Council expects to take during the next four months.

Anyone wishing to make representations on a decision should submit them in writing as soon as possible to the relevant contact officer (shown as number (7) in the key overleaf). Any representations made less than 3 days before the meeting should be sent to Emma Aye-Kumi, the Local Democracy Officer, at the Council Offices or emma.aye-kumi@lewisham.gov.uk. However the deadline will be 4pm on the working day prior to the meeting.

A "key decision"* means an executive decision which is likely to:

- (a) result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates;
- (b) be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards.

January 2022	Contract for Statutory Funeral Provision	28/06/22 Executive Director for Community Services	Corinne Moocarme, Joint Commissioning Lead, Community Support and Care, Community Services, LBL and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		
June 2022	Digital Infrastructure Fibre	28/06/22	and Councillor Amanda		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
	Wayleave	Executive Director for Corporate Services	De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
May 2022	Expert Assessors services for Concessionary Award Schemes	28/06/22 Executive Director for Corporate Services	and Councillor Chris Barnham, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and School Performance		
May 2022	Procurement of a replacement Housing Management System and implementation of a Customer Relationship Management System.	28/06/22 Executive Director for Corporate Services	and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
May 2022	Procurement of Learning and Development Services Provider	28/06/22 Executive Director for Corporate Services	and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
October 2022	Approval to procure for the provision of pre-paid card accounts	02/11/22 Executive Director for Corporate Services	Adeolu Solarin, MARAC Co-ordinator and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
June 2022	Permission to Tender Lawrence House Ground Floor Refurbishment Works	02/11/22 Executive Director for Housing, Regeneration & Environment	Gavin Plaskitt, Programme Manager and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
October 2022	Approval to procure for the provision of Fixed Asset Valuations	07/12/22 Executive Director for Corporate	Kathy Freeman, Executive Director for Corporate Resources and		

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		Services	Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
August 2022	Walsham - Budget Requirement	07/12/22 Mayor and Cabinet	James Ringwood, Housing Delivery Manager and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
October 2022	Award reports for Adult Weight Management Services: Universal offer; Targeted offer	11/01/23 Executive Director for Community Services	and		
August 2022	Award report for NHS Health Checks provision	01/02/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Iain McDiarmid, Assistant Director - Adult Integrated Commissioning and Councillor Juliet Campbell, Cabinet Member for Communities, Refugees and Wellbeing		
June 2022	BfL Appropriation for Planning purposes	01/02/23 Mayor and Cabinet	James Ringwood, Housing Delivery Manager and Councillor Sophie Davis, Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Homelessness		
December 2022	Contract for Microsoft Azure	01/02/23	Philippa Brewin and		

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	Agreement - delegate authority for award	Mayor and Cabinet	Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
October 2022	Determination of Lewisham's admission arrangements for the 2024/25 academic year	01/02/23 Mayor and Cabinet	and		
January 2022	Lewisham Autism Strategy	01/02/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Polly Pascoe, Integrated Commissioning Manager and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		
June 2022	Parts 1 & 2 - Recommendation regarding the delivery of Extra Care Services by Housing 21 at Cinnamon Court Deptford	01/02/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Beate Hellawell, Scrutiny Manager and Councillor Juliet Campbell, Cabinet Member for Communities, Refugees and Wellbeing		
December 2022	Permission to Extend the Humankind (Adult Substance Misuse Contract)	01/02/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Sarah Wainer, Director of System Transformation and		
December 2022	Right to buyback 1 extension	01/02/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Georgina Nunney, Principal Lawyer and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
December 2022	Statement of Community Involvement	01/02/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Michael Forrester, Major and Strategic Projects		

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			Manager and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
October 2022	2023-24 Budget Report	08/02/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Katharine Nidd, Head of Strategic Finance, Planning and Commercial and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
October 2022	Budget Report 2023/24	01/03/23 Council	Katharine Nidd, Head of Strategic Finance, Planning and Commercial, Kathy Freeman, Executive Director for Corporate Resources, David Austin, Director of Corporate Services and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
January 2023	Adventure Playgrounds: Procurement of Play Service and Site Maintenance and Development Service	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	and Councillor Chris Barnham, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and School Performance		
January 2023	Approval to Award report for Agency Managed Service Provider Procurement	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Courtney Richards and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS

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December 2022	Approval to Procure for the provision of Occupational Health Service and Employee Assistance Programme Provider. Approval for the subsequent award of contract.	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Megan Mellor, Community Coordinator and		
December 2022	Approval to transfer the procurement service (4C) for Housing Development from Lewisham Homes to LBLewisham	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Patrick Dubeck, Director of Inclusive Regeneration and Councillor Sophie Davis, Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Homelessness		
February 2022	BfL Programme - Approval to enter into contract	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	James Ringwood, Housing Delivery Manager and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		
December 2022	Corporate Software Solutions - Oracle Fusion/Evosys	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Sarah Lang, Development Officer and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
November 2022	Learning Disability Framework - Permission to approve the reprocurement of a Supported Living service and extension of contracts	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Tom Bird, Integrated Commissioning Manager and		
November 2022	Lewisham Climate Emergency Action Plan	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	and		

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January 2023	Lewisham Modern Slavery Statement 2023-24	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	James Lee, Director of Communities, Partnerships and Leisure and		
January 2023	Network Links (Circuits, broadband, PSTNs)	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	and		
December 2022	Network Links (circuits, broadband, PSTNs)	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Philippa Brewin and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
May 2022	On Street Advertising Contract Variation and Extension	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
January 2023	Permission to consult on the proposal to open a new SEN Provision at Launcelot Primary School	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Matthew Henaughan, Head of Business, Infrastructure, Compliance and Education and Councillor Chris Barnham, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and School Performance		
January 2023	Permission to extend Lewisham residents' access to Sexual Health London (SHL) for delivery of online sexual and reproductive health services (e-service)	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Iain McDiarmid, Assistant Director - Adult Integrated Commissioning and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		

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October 2022	Permission to extend the current lead home care provider contracts	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Tristan Brice, Associate Director, Community Support and Care and		
December 2022	Permission to procure Supported Housing for Care Leavers	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Jonathan Scarth and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		
December 2022	Permission to procure and extensions for Mental Health Supported Housing	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Jonathan Scarth and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		
June 2022	Reduction and Recycling Plan 2023-2025	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Wendy Nicholas, Strategic Waste and Environment Manager and Councillor Louise Krupski, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate		
October 2022	Selective licensing: Consultation response and proposals to introduce a new licensing scheme	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Rhona Brown, Head of Private Sector Licensing and Housing Improvement and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
November 2022	Temporary Accommodation Acquisition Procurement (Part	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Andrew Jacobs, Organisational Learning		

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	1 & 2)		and Talent Manager and		
June 2022	BfL Programme - Approval to enter into contract	04/23 Mayor and Cabinet	James Ringwood, Housing Delivery Manager and Councillor Sophie Davis, Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Homelessness		
December 2022	Mayfield - Budget Requirement	04/23 Mayor and Cabinet	James Ringwood, Housing Delivery Manager and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
June 2022	Approval to appoint operator for concessions contract at Beckenham Place Park Lake	05/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Vince Buchanan, Green Spaces Contracts Manager and Councillor Andre Bourne, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure (job share)		
November 2022	Approval to confirm an Article 4 Direction to withdraw permitted development rights for the change of use from dwelling house (Use class C3) to small HMO's (Use Class C4)	05/23 Mayor and Cabinet	David Syme, Head of Strategic Planning and		
November 2022	Approval to re-procure the Lewisham Learning Disability Framework Agreement	05/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Tom Bird, Integrated Commissioning Manager and		

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June 2022	Building for Lewisham Budget requirements Pt1 & Pt2	05/23 Mayor and Cabinet	James Ringwood, Housing Delivery Manager and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
November 2022	CIL Governance	05/23 Mayor and Cabinet	and		
June 2022	Housing Acquisition Programme	08/03/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Fenella Beckman, Director of Housing and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
December 2022	Ladywell - Budget requirement	07/23 Mayor and Cabinet	James Ringwood, Housing Delivery Manager and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
January 2023	Annual progress update on the Autism Strategy Action Plan	02/24 Mayor and Cabinet	and		

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