

Philip Slawther,
Principal Scrutiny
Officer,
philip.slawther2@haringey.gov.uk

020 8489 2957

philip.slawther2@haringey.gov.uk

03 March 2026

To: All Members of the Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel

Dear Member,

Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel - Monday, 9th March, 2026

I attach a copy of the following reports for the above-mentioned meeting which were not available at the time of collation of the agenda:

7. KPI UPDATE (PAGES 1 - 4)

Additional slides

8. MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF COUNCIL HOUSING ESTATES (PAGES 5 - 16)

Report

9. LEGAL DISREPAIR (PAGES 17 - 26)

Report

10. NEIGHBOURHOOD MOVES SCHEME (PAGES 27 - 28)

Appendix

Yours sincerely,
Philip Slawther

This page is intentionally left blank

Additional Figures as requested by the Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel, covering Voids and Damp and Mould

March 2026

Summary of void properties

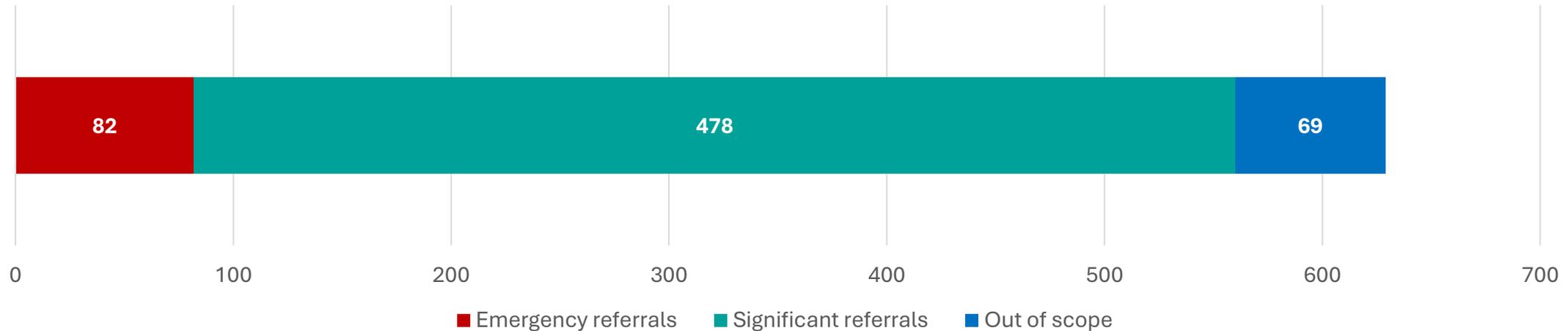
The below table sets out a snapshot of voids properties as of the end of December 2025:

Tenure Type	Total voids
General Needs/Sheltered	500
HfH PSLs	20
HCBS	95
Temp (Hostel)	16
TOTAL	631

- Various vacant properties excluded from the above figures are noted below:
 - Approximately 50 additional PSLs (changes being made to NEC voids report so these are included for future reporting).
 - 224 New Build (13 voids, 211 provisional voids)
 - 88 Right-to-Buy
 - 1 TA Acquisition
 - 7 Temporary Decants
- The monthly General Needs and Sheltered figure calculated and reported by the voids operational group also excludes approximately 150 to 170 additional exceptions: regen voids, asset management voids, squatted properties, and those referred to tenancy management.
- Voids are managed across different teams in different directorates, subject to their tenure, including teams in Housing Services and Capital Projects / Housing Delivery.
- The level of voids will also vary in line with initiatives across the Council, such as progress with our acquisitions programme.

Damp and Mould update (February 2026)

- As of 17th February 2026, there is a total of 886 damp and mould cases open on the case management system.
- 629 of these were referrals since Awaab’s Law launched on 27th October 2025. These 629 cases are made up of:



- As Awaab’s Law came into force in October the full required range of management information indicators is currently being captured, with new KPIs and associated targets due to be established for reporting in 2026/27.

Damp and Mould update (February 2026)

The following possible indicative KPIs show current performance:

Category / stage	Completed in Target
Emergency Referrals	
Emergency treatments	63%
Surveyor visits	80%
Further works	100%
Significant Referrals	
Surveyor visits	80%
Made safe	86%
Further works	97%

Report Title: Management and Maintenance of Council Housing Estates

Report for: Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel

Item number: 8

Title: Management and Maintenance of Council Housing Estates

Report authorised by: Rachel Sharpe, Director of Housing Services

Lead Officer: Neehara Wijeyesekera, Assistant Director for Housing Management

Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** For information.

1. Recommendations

1.1. That the report be noted.

2. Describe the issue under consideration.

2.1 This report sets out the overarching picture of how our housing estates are managed and maintained across Housing Services. This will provide the Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel with an overview of the service offer, what teams are responsible for, and how this links to larger programmes of work.

3. Background

3.1 Our estates are managed by a variety of service areas all with their own responsibilities however these teams work together to ensure neighbourhoods are safe, well maintained and responsive to residents' needs. Through coordinated estate inspections and regular cross service communication, we aim to deliver a consistent and high quality standard of estate management. This collaborative approach allows us to identify issues early, resolve problems efficiently and improve the overall living environment for our residents.

Estate Management

3.2 On a local level within Housing Management, there are a variety of officers that have regular interactions with our communities and will have a responsibility in how low-level improvements, repairs, and other improvements may be identified. For Estates & Neighbourhoods who provide the day-to-day estate management, this includes the below roles and responsibilities:

Job Role	Responsibilities
Estate Services Operatives	Carry out cleaning and caretaking duties to a weekly schedule. Identify and report communal repairs.
Concierge Services	Provide onsite reception service with guidance and information to residents (specific estates only), reporting communal issues/service failures to service providers. Liaise with council services on behalf of residents.
Neighbourhood Improvement Officers (NIOs)	Annual Estate inspections, monitoring of services to communal areas of estates, liaise with service providers including arranging and hosting 'frontline' meetings where required. Identify minor estate improvement work, (inc. bin store improvements), project manage improvement work through to completion.
Estate Safety Team	Dealing with fire safety issues as identified on Fire Risk Assessments, enforce Housings Clear Communal Areas Policy & TORT notices.
Safer Estates	Direct management of Housing CCTV, project management of all new installations and contract management. Identify report/log instances of crime & ASB to the relevant service providers/partner agencies. Liaise with relevant services/external agencies on safety issues on estates including but not limited to leading on safety initiatives.
Neighbourhood Manager	Oversight of all communal services on estates in a geographical area including but not limited to Cleaning & Caretaking, Concierge Services, Waste Management, Grounds Maintenance, Estate Roads/Footpaths & Lighting, Estate Parking, & Estate Improvements. Direct line management of Estate Services Team Leaders, Concierge Managers, Neighbourhood Improvement Officers

- 3.3 To help provide guidance and clarity on how the Estates & Neighbourhoods Service manage the common areas of our Council Housing, the refreshed Clear Communal Areas Policy was approved by Cabinet signing in January 2026. The aim of the policy is to support the effective management of the communal areas of our council housing for the safety of tenants, leaseholders and other users of our premises.

Estate Inspection Process

- 3.4 The Estate Inspection process has three purposes and is carried out the Neighbourhood Improvement Officers (NIOs), which define their terms of reference:
- Quality review of the services on estates: This includes estate cleaning, refuse collection, communal repairs, grounds maintenance, highways, and street lighting.
 - Review of estate issues: This includes issues such as anti-social behaviour on estates e.g. dumping, dogs, gangs, and the review will also

pick up enforcement issues e.g. satellite dishes, grilles, unauthorised alterations, encroachment on land and signage.

- Review of estate improvements: The NIO will identify improvements that may be required to the communal areas of the estate and include these in the current or future tears of the estate improvement programme.

3.5 Estate inspections are completed on an annual basis, unless an inspection is triggered by consistently low quality services or issues that have not been resolved by the NIO or other estates services staff. Estate invitations to the inspection are sent out at least two weeks in advance to all residents and ward members and residents who are unable to attend can use an online feedback form or return an estate inspection card (prepaid) to advise of any issues or ideas in respect of their estate.

3.6 There are ratings given for each estate inspection which are either excellent, pass, or fail, and this has to be agreed with the residents who have attended. However, an overall grade is not assigned due to the fact that one inspection can cover multiple estates, although each category has its own grade.

3.7 Any actions identified from the estate inspections are noted on a report which are progressed through to a conclusion by the appropriate officers or contractors. Updates on these actions should be sent to residents who attended the inspection, involved residents, any local resident association and ward members, however in reality this is not always possible to achieve due to the capacity of officers. Improvements that will help to address this are outlined in section 5.2 of this report.

3.8 Whilst these are the formal annual estate inspections, our estates are regularly monitored by the Estate Services team leaders, who complete their own formal assessment on a monthly basis and address any issues as required.

Neighbourhood Improvements

- 3.9 Minor estate improvement work is primarily identified via three main ways:
- Resident feedback, such as through estate inspections and Resident Association Meetings
 - Learning from complaints
 - Officer observations

3.10 An annual budget of £750k is allocated for 2025/26 as follows:

Improvement	Budget	Type
Ad hoc	£60,000	Various improvements inc security improvements
Secure Cycle Parking	£50,000	New
CCTV	£150,000	New and upgrades
ESO work lodges	£20,000	
Estate Lighting	£100,000	New and upgrades

Highways/pavements	£150,000	Resurfacing works, new pathway constructions
Bin Stores	£100,000	New and upgrades
Signage	£20,000	
Community Centres	£50,000	

- 3.11 When an improvement is identified and funding is secured, the NIO will write to all affected residents to outline the proposed works and invite their feedback. Any objections received will be reviewed and responded to before a final letter is issued, confirming the anticipated start date, the appointed contractor, and the associated costs.
- 3.12 In the financial year 2024/25 we delivered 112 minor improvements and for the current financial year, we anticipate delivering 76 minor improvements. Improvements for the year 2024/25 included items such as:
- Installation of security gates
 - Seating for supported housing
 - Installing recycled picnic benches
 - Deep cleans of communal areas
 - Installation of hard standings and edging
 - Resurfacing bin areas and installation of new bin areas
 - Lighting improvements
 - Installation of cycle storage
- 3.13 Estate Surgeries arranged by the Community & Resident Engagement service provide residents with regular face-to-face opportunities to raise housing issues in an informal setting, with locations rotated across the borough to maximise accessibility. These surgeries are attended by a variety of staff representatives, including but not limited to repairs, tenancy services, anti-social behaviour, and neighbourhood improvement. Targeted drop-ins are also held for specific communities, such as Somali and Kurdish residents, with translation arranged where possible. From all of these events, issues are raised and recorded for follow-up where this feedback has informed repairs priorities, estate improvements, and service responses that may not have been identified through other reporting channels.
- 3.14 Our Safer Estates team work collaboratively across Community Safety, Concierge, Tenancy Services and partner agencies such as the Police to identify crime and ASB across our estates while introducing and/or improving Housing CCTV network. They work closely with the NIOs in identifying potential physical security improvements to enhance the security of our estates that can be achieved within the available budget. This can include reviewing Environmental Visual Audits carried out by the Police to deploying Rapid Deployment Cameras to flytipping hotspots. Where relevant, the Estates & Neighbourhoods team will work with Asset Management for larger initiatives that require capital funding outside of the allocated Neighbourhood Improvement Budget.

Service Level Agreements

- 3.15 Service Level Agreements (SLAs) are in place against the following service areas that are contract managed by Estates & Neighbourhoods:

Element	Service Area (supplier)	Cost
Grounds Maintenance	Haringey Parks Services	c. £2m annually
Pest Control	Haringey Pest Control	c. £400k annually
Highways & Lighting	Haringey Highways	c. £500k annually
Waste Management	Haringey Waste Management (contracted out to Veolia)	c. £4.2m annually

- 3.16 Performance indicators are monitored on a monthly basis as set out in the individual SLAs and are reviewed as set out by the agreed terms.
- 3.17 For major and recurring services, such as Waste and Grounds Management, monthly liaison meetings are conducted to review strategic priorities and overall service performance. Additionally, an operational meeting is held each month with Frontline Team Leaders to address and resolve local issues promptly and effectively while promoting collaborative working across teams.

Repairs and Maintenance

- 3.18 When communal repairs are identified by our frontline officers, these are reported through the Love Clean Streets app. The app enables officers to upload GPS tagged locations, photographs, and written descriptions, which significantly reduces the need for back office staff to seek further clarification on the issues being reported. We raise on average 1,000 communal repairs a year.
- 3.19 Our Mechanical and Electrical repairs team manage a variety of contracts, working with other teams to ensure issues are resolved through a partnership approach where required. This includes work streams such as door entry systems, lifts, powered gates, and internal CCTV. For 2024/25 there were 2,243 repairs to door entry and internal CCTV systems and 622 repairs to lifts, showing the volume of works required.
- 3.20 For the management of these contracts, we have an overall capital budget split into the varying areas to make sure we maintain our stock a good stand and making sure that we adhere to any legislation changes and future technology.
- 3.21 At a more senior level, the Head of Estates & Neighbourhoods works closely with the Head of Repairs and is a core member of the Repairs Board, which ensures the clear links between day-to-day housing operations and customer experience. By connecting this frontline intelligence with strategic planning, this has helped the Board prioritise effectively and drive a more coordinated approach to improving communal spaces and neighbourhoods and ultimately better outcomes for residents.

- 3.22 An example of this is the new process for reporting emergency repairs, which was borne out of discussions at Repairs Board and monthly meetings. Officers highlighted a gap in the Love Clean Streets app's ability to facilitate emergency repair reporting. To address this, we have established an 'Emergency Communal Repair' communication channel between Estates & Neighbourhoods and Repairs. This enables emergency issues to be quickly identified, reported, triaged, and attended to typically within 24 hours or sooner.

Building Safety

- 3.23 The Building Safety Act 2022 establishes a stringent regulatory regime for "Higher-Risk Buildings" (HRBs) in England, defined as at least 18 metres tall or 7+ storeys with 2+ residential units. There are currently 52 HRBs spread across the borough that the Council are responsible for, where every HRB now has a designated Building Safety Manager (BSM). At present there are 4 BSMs and 1 Senior BSM delivering this service.
- 3.24 The BSMs work collaboratively with teams across the Council to support in the delivery of services to our HRBs as well as delivering the regulatory responsibility. The key activities delivered by the team for our HRBs include monthly building safety block inspections, updating bespoke noticeboards, regular engagement with the Resident Voice Board to deliver the HRB Resident Engagement Strategies, and to monitor and manage hazards in the block to ensure safety.
- 3.25 This means that for our HRBs, there is another layer of oversight that links into the work of other teams such as Asset Management, Repairs, and Estates & Neighbourhoods to ensure that work is identified, hazards are monitored and managed, and that wider improvement work is coordinated effectively as to not put residents at risk.

Asset Management Work Programmes

- 3.26 The Housing Asset Management Team delivers investment in the council's housing stock through the planned major works programmes. This involves the renewal of internal and external building components as well as improvements to blocks, communal areas and estates.
- 3.27 The Housing Asset Management Strategy 2023-2028, which was approved by Cabinet in December 2023, sets out how we will invest in our housing and estates and how this investment will be prioritised to ensure we comply with our statutory and regulatory obligations and requirements and keep our residents safe and warm.
- 3.28 Our investment programme has been developed in line with these priorities and with our commitment to the Regulator of Social Housing to achieve 100% decency in our homes by 2028. Therefore, the key drivers for inclusion within the programme between now and the end of 2028 are works that will bring homes up to the decent homes standard as well as ensuring essential building safety works are undertaken, particularly in our high-rise buildings.

- 3.29 As part of our planning approach where possible we will take a holistic approach to stock investment and this means that we will deliver communal and estate works, including external and communal decorations, as part of the scope of works alongside decent homes and building safety work.
- 3.30 The Asset Management Team also devolve part of our annual capital budget to the Estates and Neighbourhoods team (£1.05m in 2025/26) which is used for improvements to CCTV, highways, lighting, signage, cycle parking, bin stores and other ad hoc capital works on estates.
- 3.31 New initiatives which require capital funding from the Asset Management budget (and potentially delivery assistance from the team) are discussed at Capital Board. For example, recently assistance with delivering Environmental Improvements to improve neighbourhood safety and reduce crime and ASB based on the Clear Hold Build initiative was requested.

Resident Impact

- 3.32 Engaging with residents is a core part of how the Council manages, maintains and invests in its housing estates. Alongside formal estate inspections and performance monitoring, a range of engagement and scrutiny mechanisms are used to ensure that services remain responsive, transparent and accountable to residents.
- 3.33 The Resident Advisory Panel (RAP) forms part of our Resident Engagement structure, who select service areas and complete a comprehensive review which is summarised by a series of recommendations. Following the RAP's scrutiny of Estate Services, the RAP and Housing Services jointly agreed 19 improvement actions. Eleven have been completed and evidenced with RAP, with the remainder scheduled for closure by summer 2026.
- 3.34 To embed continuous scrutiny, RAP receives six-monthly progress updates on each recommendation and conducts a 12-month verification process, including spot checks on selected estates to confirm delivery, providing ongoing independent resident oversight alongside internal monitoring.
- 3.35 The RAP also completed a Repairs review in June 2025, which included communal repairs. This review comprised of desktop reviews, shadowing staff, resident and staff workshops, tenant surveys carried out by the RAP, and a journey mapping workshop jointly between residents and staff. This review concluded 20 recommendations which included improving the process for communal repair tracking and sign-off by Estate Services. Similarly to the Estate Service RAP review, progress will be monitored to ensure completion.
- 3.36 In addition to RAP scrutiny, several resident Task and Finish Groups are supporting the co-design of key service improvements. These include a Grounds Maintenance Group reviewing resident experience of greenspace services, a group co-designing consultation on the Estate Parking Management Scheme as it transitions from contractor enforcement to Traffic Management

Orders, and a Concierge Service Transformation Group shaping future service models.

- 3.37 In essence, from Estate Surgeries to formal feedback, these mechanisms complement formal inspections, performance reporting and internal processes, ensuring resident insight informs both day-to-day management and longer-term investment across housing estates.

4. Performance Monitoring

- 4.1. We have a variety of ways in which performance is monitored. We have our formal Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which in addition to covering areas such as Decent Homes and Repairs there is a KPI for the percentage of estate gradings being 'Excellent' or 'Pass'. Our KPIs are shared with the Resident Voice Board for discussion and scrutiny in addition to the Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel and our internal Housing Improvement Board which is chaired by the Chief Executive, the Cabinet Member for Housing & Planning, and cross-party members.
- 4.2. As outlined in section 3.17 there are monthly liaison meetings for our SLAs to review service performance and address any issues in delivery.
- 4.3. There are also regulatory requirements that also set out what services and outcomes we should be providing as a social landlord. The Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 that was introduced allows the Regulator of Social Housing to take action against social landlords before people are at risk and holds landlords to account with regular inspections. The regulator's proactive role is supported by new consumer standards and regular inspections regime, of which there are four key areas:
- Safety and Quality
 - Tenancy
 - Neighbourhood and Community
 - Transparency, Influence and Accountability
- 4.4. Within these standards, there are required outcomes. Some of these are cross-cutting and apply to all of Housing Services, but there are some that can be directly attributed to the work on our Estates and communal areas. Such as, we must work co-operatively with tenants, other landlords and relevant organisations to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of shared spaces.
- 4.5. As part of the increased regulation, there is now a statutory requirement to collect tenant satisfaction data. The Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) collect a variety of data, some of which is performance related and some are perceptive from Tenant Perception Surveys. These are submitted to the Regulator of Social Housing and are published on our website. Those relevant to the management of Estates are:
- Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained.

- Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods.

5. Challenges and Improvements

- 5.1. As referenced in this paper, we want to ensure that our homes meet the Decent Homes Standard and our planned investment is specifically tailored to achieve this in line with the delivery of the Asset Management Strategy by 2028. This is carefully balanced within our financial priorities and our capacity to deliver; although it is increasingly challenging to meet all of the improvements residents would want to see on their estates as it is subject to the amount of funding that can be made available outside of the set devolved budget.
- 5.2. As part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing service delivery for residents and strengthening visibility across our estates, we will be transferring responsibility for estate inspections from the NIOs to our Housing Officers within Tenancy Services. This change would increase the number of officers undertaking inspections, allowing more frequent inspections and opportunities to engage with our residents and improved communication with ward members. This is in addition to providing a more independent assessment of the condition of our estates and improving capacity to follow up on actions identified during these visits.
- 5.3. We will be continuing to work with the various groups of residents involved in task and finish groups relevant to the Estates & Neighbourhoods service:
- 5.3.1. **Concierge Service Transformation Group**
Our Concierge service has operated in its current form since it was first introduced in the late 1990s. We are undertaking a comprehensive improvement programme, supported by a dedicated Task and Finish group made up of residents, to ensure that any changes reflect the needs and expectations of those who use the service. The objective is to modernise the service and tailor its delivery to the specific requirements of each individual block that benefits from concierge support.
- 5.3.2. **Grounds Maintenance**
The Grounds Maintenance Group are reviewing the resident experience of greenspace services. We are currently in the process of reviewing the Ground Maintenance SLA in order to understand the service that residents expect and the Group are a key part of setting the requirements of what service can be delivered in future.
- 5.3.3. **Estate Parking**
This group are co-designing consultation materials and processes on the Estate Parking Management Scheme which is borough wide on estates that currently have parking enforcement as it transitions from contractor enforcement to Traffic Management Orders.

- 5.4. Key projects are being managed as immediate priorities through the above Task & Finish Groups, with the intention of translating their learning and momentum into a permanent Continuous Improvement Group (CIG) within the Customer Engagement Framework, mirroring other CIGs across Housing Services in order to provide ongoing resident oversight and assurance of estate services delivery.
- 5.5. We will be continuing to embed the recommendations as suggested by the Resident Advisory Panel following their detailed reviews. There is however further work to do with our residents on increasing the level of information that they can access on a regular basis. For example, making performance specifically on communal repairs regularly available to our engagement frameworks and transactional repairs satisfaction being gathered for both internal repairs and communal repairs. These are areas we are working to improve, in partnership with our Resident Voice Board, RAP, and our CIGs across various services.
- 5.6. Building on from the performance information we already publish on the website, we are working with Housemark to integrate the software used for Estate Inspections (Housemark's Photobook) with our housing management system (NEC) allowing us to publish the full inspection reports in the future and provide even more information to residents. This in turn will open up additional digital initiatives that could be explored to further enhance the accessibility and efficiency of the service.
- 5.7. Our borough is diverse, with distinct neighbourhoods and communities that experience our services in different ways. Being genuinely resident led allows us to recognise these differences and respond with solutions that are, transparent and designed around local priorities. It also helps us to build trust which is vital as we continue improving the quality, safety, and sustainability of our homes and public spaces.
- 5.8. By strengthening collaboration between Estates & Neighbourhood Services, Repairs, Building Safety, Asset Management and other core teams, we can create a more consistent and accountable service offer across Haringey. This joined up way of working ensures that issues raised by residents are acted on quickly, systemic challenges are addressed collectively, and our workforce feels empowered to deliver high quality services.

6. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

Not required.

7. Procurement

Not required.

8. Head of Legal & Governance

Not required.

9. Equality

The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

8. Use of Appendices - none

9. Background papers - none

This page is intentionally left blank

Report Title: An update on Legal Disrepair

Report for: Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel

Item number: 9

Title: An update on Legal Disrepair

Report authorised by: Rachel Sharpe, Interim Director of Housing Services

Lead Officer(s): Richard Purvis, Senior Disrepair Manager
Scott Kay, Assistant Director for Repairs and Compliance

Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** For information.

1. Recommendations

That the report be noted.

2. Describe the issue under consideration.

- 2.1 This report sets out the current status of legal disrepair claims and the work being undertaken to meet the strategic objective of reducing open case levels to a business-as-usual scenario.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Disrepair Team is responsible for responding to legal claims made against the Council in relation to housing conditions and repairs. Therefore, in essence, valid claims arise from failures to maintain the housing stock adequately due to challenges related to asset investment and the repairs service.
- 3.2 The costs associated with claims are high, mainly due to the legal costs which are applicable to successful claims. Therefore, whilst it is essential to have a properly functioning Disrepair operation to ensure claims are dealt with when received, cost prevention measures are required upstream of the legal process to limit and mitigate the Council's exposure.
- 3.3 Significant progress has been made in the Disrepair operation itself, which is the primary focus of this report. However, it is important to understand how the root causes of Disrepair exist in the asset management and repairs functions and consider how, as an organisation, we can undertake a more holistic approach to drive further improvements.

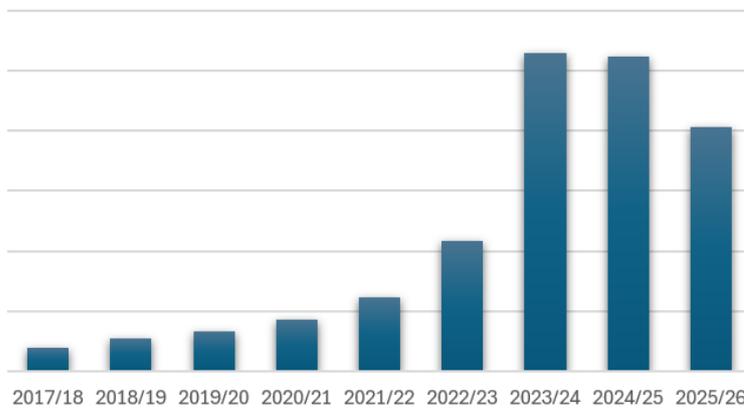
- 3.4 During 2022/23, the Council made the assessment that case levels had been increasing substantially over previous financial years and represented a significant financial risk.
- 3.5 The decision was made to engage external solicitors to assist with the volume of case levels being dealt with by the In-House Legal Department.
- 3.6 Case levels continued to increase due to the extent and complexities of the works associated with the claims and the timescales and resources required, resulting in delays in completions. The delays were also exacerbated by a lack of experience across delivery teams, in dealing and complying with the strict legal protocols involved.
- 3.7 The above delays and increased case load led to increases in associated costs for each case, and in a build-up of future costs associated with legal fees and compensation directly linked to timescales. These would crystallise in future years, causing excess expenditure during this period.
- 3.8 During 2023/24, a decision was made to implement a variety of measures to resolve the issues including new, experienced management and claims management, surveying, and administration posts in a dedicated Disrepair Team. A procurement exercise to mobilise a suitable supply chain to cope with existing and future demand and an evaluation of policy and procedures was undertaken, to ensure improvements were made.
- 3.9 In November 2023 the new management arrangements commenced, and an assessment of the operational status led to immediate changes to improve the tracking and management of case progress and assess priorities and risk, which had an immediate stabilising effect on the service and increased confidence.
- 3.10 In December 2023, the internal Housing Improvement Board were presented with the current volumes of caseload and cost, where the proposed changes that would help support the resolution of the disrepair backlog and future caseload were outlined. This included a new operational model and case management system that was supported by the Board.
- 3.11 Arrangements were put in place to significantly increase works output in the latter stages of 2023/24, which resulted in an improvement of case closure performance. This in turn slowed and later arrested the 8+ year trend of open case level increase between 2017 and 2023/24.
- 3.12 The following Legislation covers disrepair cases:
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
 - Occupiers Liability Act 1957
 - Defective Premises Act 1972
 - Occupiers Liability Act 1984
 - Environmental Protection Act 1990
 - Housing Act 2004

- Equality Act 2010
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025

4. Summary of Outcomes

4.1 The new approach resulted in a cessation of increasing open case levels and achieved a small reduction in the volume of open cases during 2024/25. Consistent net reduction trends solidified during 2025/26, reaching 815 open cases in January 2026 which is a reduction from the June 2024 peak of 30% (1,137).

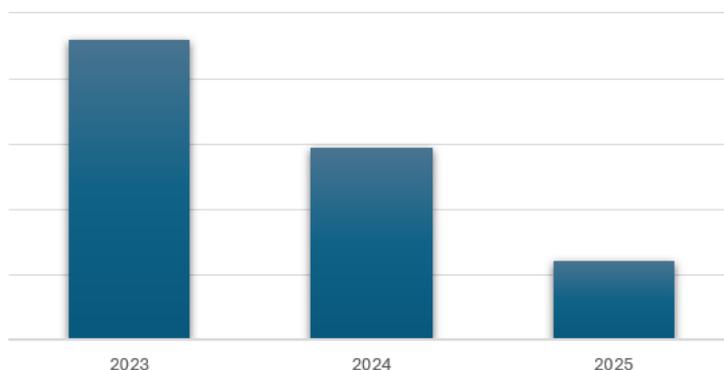
Open case Level at Financial Year End



4.2 During the 2024/25 period we also increased the capacity of the In-House Legal Team, utilising operational practices brought in by the new management team. This enabled departments to work collaboratively to implement a new operating protocol where new cases were assigned internally in addition to insourcing cases back from our external providers, reducing the need and cost of external solicitors.

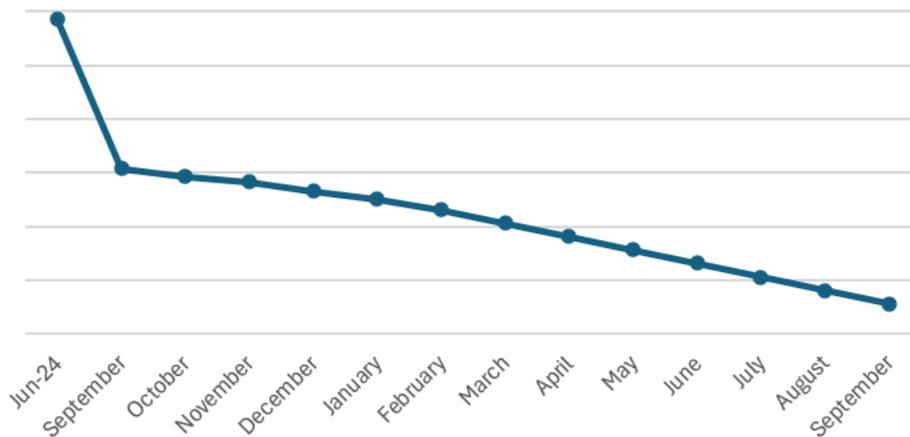
4.3 Throughout 24/25, use of external solicitors was decreased further as more cases were closed, with the assignment of new cases and reassignment of previously outsourced cases to the In-House Legal Team. This further reduced expenditure on the external legal representation by 74% from the peak in 2023/24, since the initiation of the new approach.

External Solicitors - Disbursements



- 4.4 A procurement exercise to appoint 4 new contractors at the end of quarter 3 of 24/25 increased works completion rates, compared to the previous delivery volumes through the two original contractors.
- 4.5 In Q4 of 2024/25, a further procedural upgrade was implemented, which would allow the Disrepair Team to handle Pre-Action Disrepair claims directly, without the involvement of external solicitors or the In-House Legal Team. This achieves a further cost saving measure as the salary model is a cheaper alternative than a legal services billing model. As the vast majority of cases are Pre-Action claims, there is a significant ongoing benefit as we are paying less for the same function. In addition, this also reserves the capacity of the In-House Legal Team for litigated and criminal procedural cases.
- 4.6 In summary these measures achieved two of the most important objectives which were to significantly increase works output, and more effectively manage legal claims, meaning open case levels have reduced by 30% from the peak demand in June 2024, where cases totalled at 1,137. We estimate that we will start the 2026/27 financial year with approximately 740 cases, which would mean 30% fewer cases than this year. We believe the maximum extent of potential case reduction from the original peak demand will be around 50%-60% and expect to achieve this goal during the next financial year, based on current levels of demand, delivery and funding.

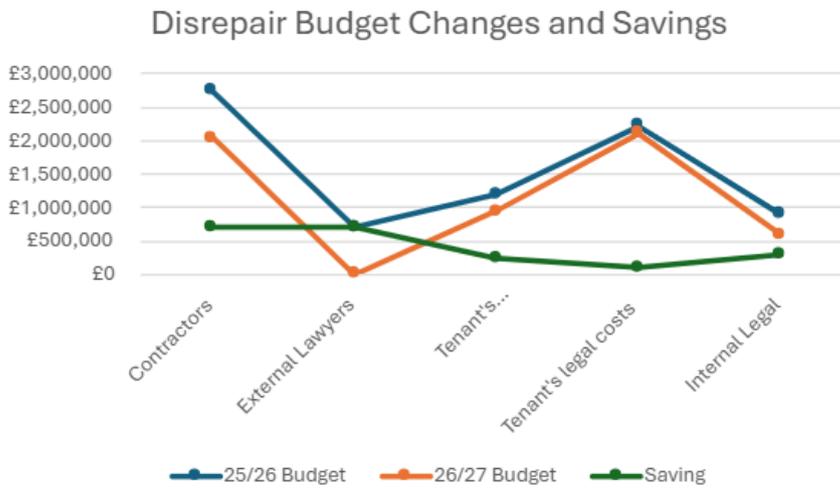
Open Case Level Trajectory



- 4.7 We assume, based on the data, that disrepair claims will continue to be received at a similar rate unless or until the government reforms the sector, specifically reducing incentives for volume-based litigation firms. There are current proposals to introduce fixed costs for disrepair claims, however they have been delayed from implementation several times. This is despite an explicit statement by the current Government that it would meaningfully intervene.
- 4.8 Achieving this realistic, business as usual scenario in terms of open case levels, in conjunction with effectively dealing with and closing claims when they

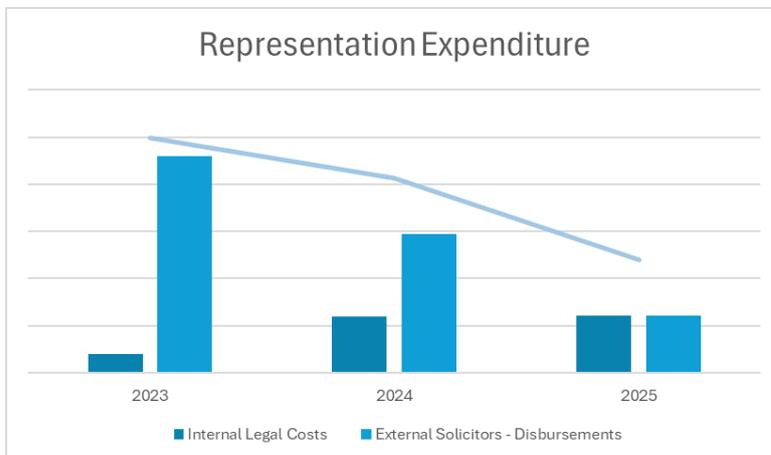
are received, are the means by which financial pressures associated with Disrepair will be eased.

4.9 Disrepair needs to deliver a saving of £2m for the 2026/27 budget, which is being delivered by reducing the additional funding received over the last two years, reducing from £6m in addition to the baseline to £4m. This will be achieved by cutting revenue expenditure for contractors by £700k which is supported by this year's expenditure, taking capital income into account, and the lower open case levels. The external lawyers' fees will be reduced to £0 and tenants' legal costs will be reduced by £109,578 against what was budgeted for this year. This is set out in the below graph:

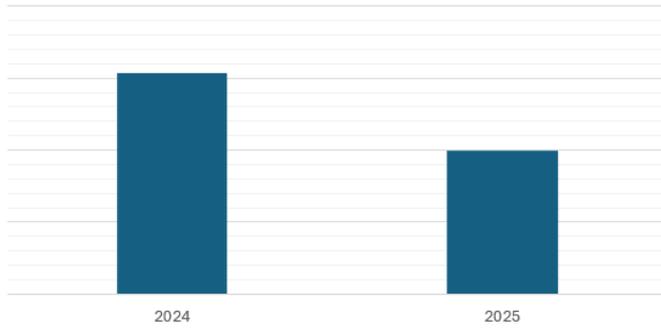


4.10 Whilst we anticipate the improvements to have a longer-term positive impact on associated cost to the Council, there will be a lag in reduction of expenditure due to the mechanics of expenditure in this area.

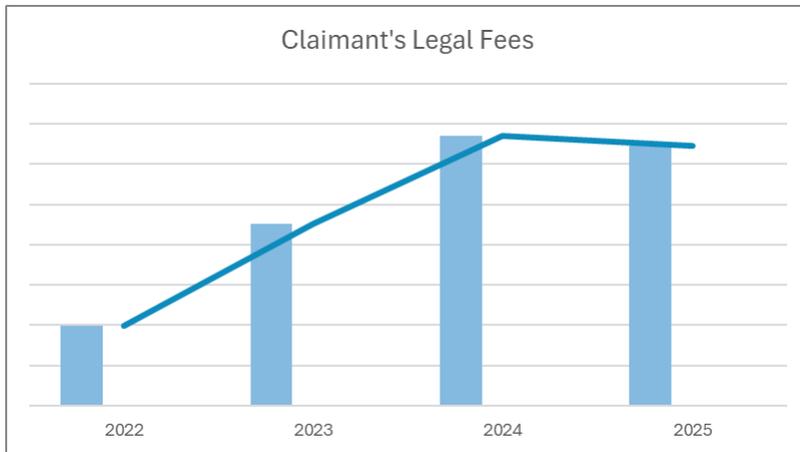
4.11 However, we have already achieved significant savings in two of the four most important areas, which are the costs of our own legal representation, which is down by 52% and compensation down by 35% from their respective peaks in 2024/25.



Compensation Expenditure

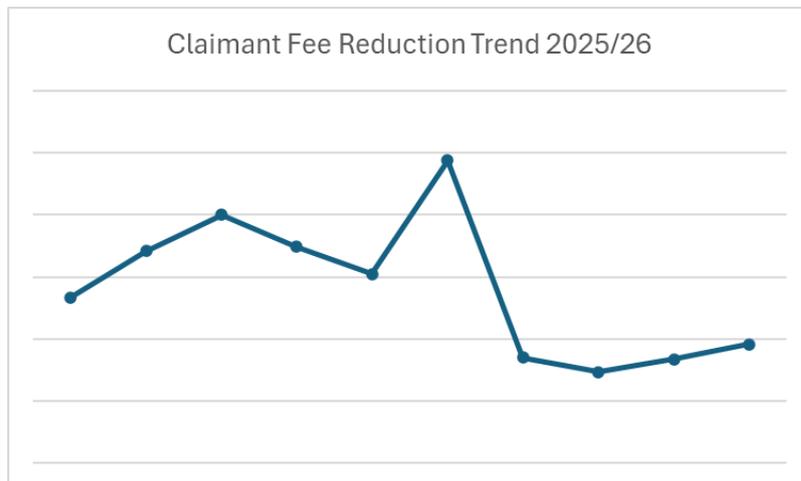


4.12 Challenges remain around external legal costs, which are the legal costs payable to the claimant’s solicitors. This has reduced by 4% from the peak in 2024/25, however this reduction comes after an increase of 49% in 2024, preceded by an increase of 127% in 2023. This should be interpreted as a stabilisation of costs, leading to a future reduction.



4.13 The volume of historic cases and increases in cases due to current incentives for legal firms has been the key driver of costs over the last 2 years, as built-up unrealised liabilities going back several years were crystallised and discharged. As case levels reduce, this expenditure will reduce, however it should be noted that these costs could remain to be substantial in the medium term, with a best-case scenario of around 40% reduction from peak spending in 2024/25.

4.14 The positive message surrounding this issue is that we have begun to see a significant reduction in these costs over the last consecutive 4 reporting periods, equating to an average reduction exceeding 30%, which are the lowest since Q1 of 2023/24. This has followed the operational result of having absorbed the pressure of a substantial number of historic claims and reduced breach and litigation costs through improvements in our operational performance. Should the trend remain on course, we anticipate further but moderate reductions in external legal costs over the next 12 months.



- 4.15 Although repair costs have increased significantly over the last 3 years, this is a positive reflection of increased works completion rates. Prior deficiencies in this area were a direct cause of increased case levels and expenditure between 2017 and 2024. This has directly supported increased case closures and reduced legal costs and open case levels. Furthermore, an increase in works output has resulted in a significantly higher level of legal compliance with Court Orders and settlement agreements, which again reduces claimants' legal fees.
- 4.16 This also means that significantly more money is being invested into the housing stock which would otherwise have been paid out in legal costs and compensation across future years. Accordingly, this increase is deemed as necessary expenditure to comply with the law and represents a substantial financial efficiency and increased value for money.
- 4.17 There is also an important element of capital expenditure, which has increased spending through this budget. This has highlighted the challenges of resolving disrepair claims in an environment where the defects affecting our properties often require complex works, involving substantial refurbishment and upgrades to effectively resolve. The requirement for reactive, fast paced and comprehensive refurbishment works will remain a factor for the Disrepair Team in the short to medium term, but the ability to deliver these works at scale in the context of disrepair claims has been an operational strength and a key development. It is anticipated that the forthcoming major works programme and associated investment in the housing stock in line with the Asset Management Strategy will reduce the number of disrepair claims over the longer term, although we are not at this point able to quantify the potential beneficial impact at this time.
- 4.18 The Disrepair Team has recently undergone an external audit, of which the draft report indicates an adequate level of assurance regarding our approach to managing disrepair cases. The draft report identified zero high priority recommendations, with only 2 medium priority recommendations and 2 low priority recommendations, all of which have since been completed. This demonstrates that there are no immediate concerns of note to report.

- 4.19 The report also contains 4 advisory measures, 3 of which were already part of existing future improvement plans for implementation. The auditors agreed following discussions during the audit field work that these plans should be formalised in the audit report as advisory recommendations.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The main medium priority recommendation from the audit is to consider the implementation of a case management system. Significant progress had already been made on this in 2024/25, having concluded the initial design phase. We are working with the Digital service to establish a firm delivery project plan and completion timescales.
- 5.2 In December 2025, Cabinet approved a new procurement exercise to solidify the existing works practices by implementing new, longer-term contracts for repairs delivery in connection with disrepair claims. The resulting contract awards will improve long term management, delivery timescales by increasing the financial envelope of our contracts, as opposed to relying on shorter term, smaller value arrangements. This exercise is expected to conclude in Q1 of 2026/27.
- 5.3 Projections for reduced costs and increased completions outlined above rely on sustained levels of investment in major works, responsive repairs and case work repairs, as well as support to maintain the funding of the Disrepair team and supply chain, and to implement the digital case management system. Removal or reductions in any of these critical factors at this time could reverse the current positive trends in reducing case load and costs.

6. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

Not required.

7. Procurement

Not required.

8. Head of Legal & Governance

Not required.

9. Equality

The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

10. Use of Appendices - none

11. Background papers - none

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 1 - Allocations Policy Consultation Questions on the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme (NMS)

The entire list of Cabinet Approved questions relevant to the NMS as part of the Allocations Policy consultation are set out below:

1. Should the Council continue with the NMS, options include:
 - a) Keeping the NMS in its current form (that is, no change) (recommendation)
 - b) Suspend the NMS for 2 years.
 - c) End the NMS for future schemes.

2. If the NMS continues, should the scheme be amended to:
 - a) Give higher priority for under-occupying tenants living in the borough with priority for those living near the scheme (recommended).
 - b) Give higher priority for under-occupying tenants but only if they live close to the scheme (that is, no change).

3. If the NMS continues, should the scheme be amended to:
 - a) Include nearby Housing Association tenants with the same priority as Council tenants (recommendation).
 - b) Include nearby Housing Association tenants but only after nearby Council tenants.
 - c) Not include Housing Association tenants (that is, no change)

4. If the NMS continues, should the scheme be amended to:
 - a) Only offer homes to existing tenants who are under-occupying or over-crowded in their current home or who have a medical or other housing need to move (recommendation).
 - b) Offer homes to all nearby tenants even they are moving to a same size property and have no medical need to move (that is, no change).

5. If the NMS continues, should the scheme be amended to:
 - a) Not allowing tenants to move a second time through the NMS.
 - b) Not allowing tenants to move a second time through the NMS unless there has been 5 years since they moved (recommendation).
 - c) Allowing tenants to move through NMS a second time (that is, no change)

6. If the NMS continues, should the scheme be amended to clearly state that:
 - a) Only offer homes suitable for the tenant and their children who are either 18 years old or younger and living with them at the time of application.
 - b) Only offer homes suitable for the tenant (and partner) and their children who are either 18 years old or younger, or any other adults who have lived with them for at least 1 year (recommendation).
 - c) Make offers suitable to the current household (that is, no change)

7. If the NMS continues, should the scheme be amended to:
 - a) Only offer homes where there are 25 or more new rented homes.
 - b) Only offer homes where there are 10 or more new rented homes (recommendation).
 - c) Only offer homes where there are 4 or more new rented homes (that is, no change)

8. If the NMS continues, should the qualifying area be amended to:
 - a) existing tenants within 250 metres of the new homes (recommendation)
 - b) existing tenants within 250 metres of the new homes or on the same estate.
 - c) existing tenants within 250 metres of the new homes or on the same estate, or on another estate within 250 metres (that is, no change)

9. If the NMS continues, should the qualifying area be amended to:
 - a) The distance from the scheme should be increased to 300 metres for schemes over 50 new homes
 - b) The distance from the scheme should be increased to 350 metres for schemes over 100 new homes.
 - c) The distance should remain at 250 metres regardless of how many homes are being built (that is no change, recommended)

Any changes are made to the qualifying area will not apply to new homes on the Broadwater Farm estate.