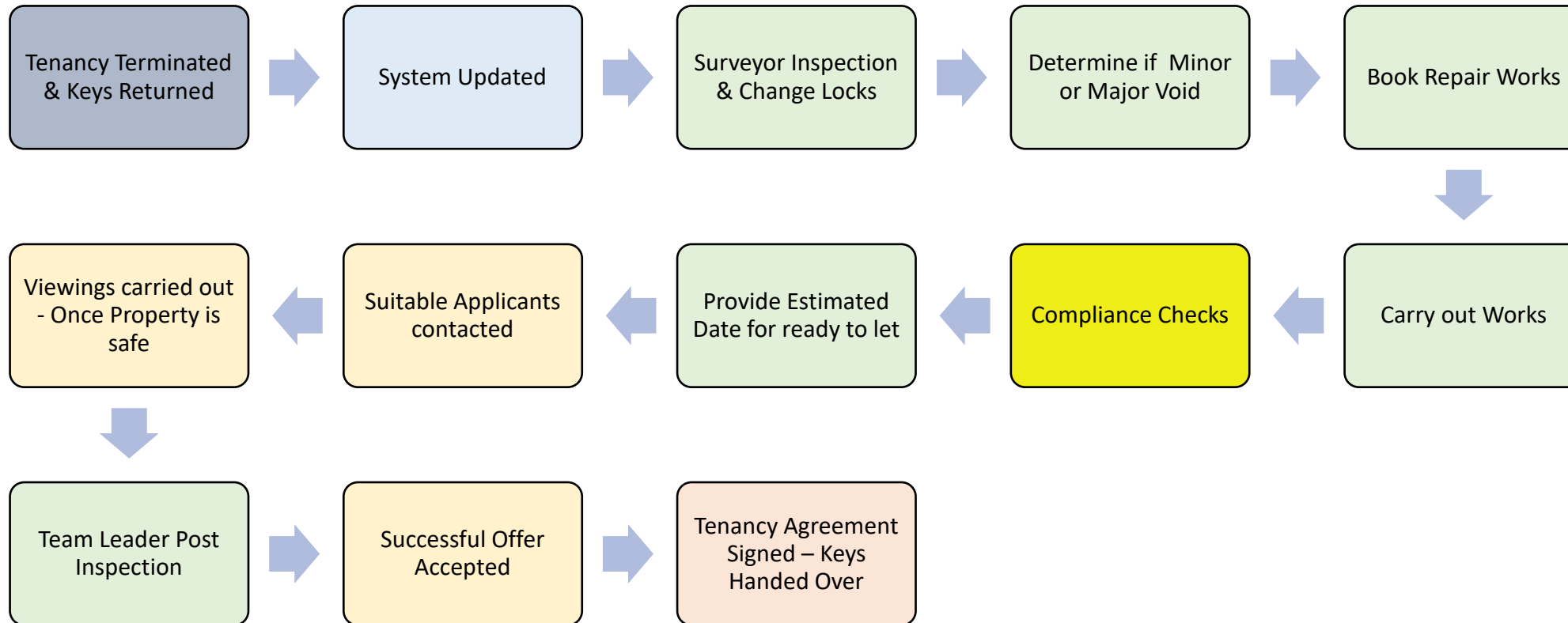


Improving Voids Performance -  
Presentation for Housing, Planning &  
Development Scrutiny Panel

*Jahedur Rahman, Operational Director,  
Housing Services & Building Safety*



# Background 1 - Summary of the Voids process



# Background 2 – Voids over the last 10 Years

Voids numbers over the last 10 years (snapshot as at 31 March each year)



## Voids numbers over the last 10 Years (2013-2023)

Excludes RTB, Disposals and TA Acquisitions

TENURE TYPE	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Hostel	22	16	7	8	1	7	8	46	67	57
General Needs	104	74	79	70	85	82	62	80	235	272
PSL	57	28	28	46	32	27	18	29	55	39
Sheltered Housing	5	8	18	17	13	25	14	28	49	74
Community Benefits Society	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	74	73
Travellers Site	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
<b>ALL VOIDS</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>515</b>

# Background 3- Current voids position

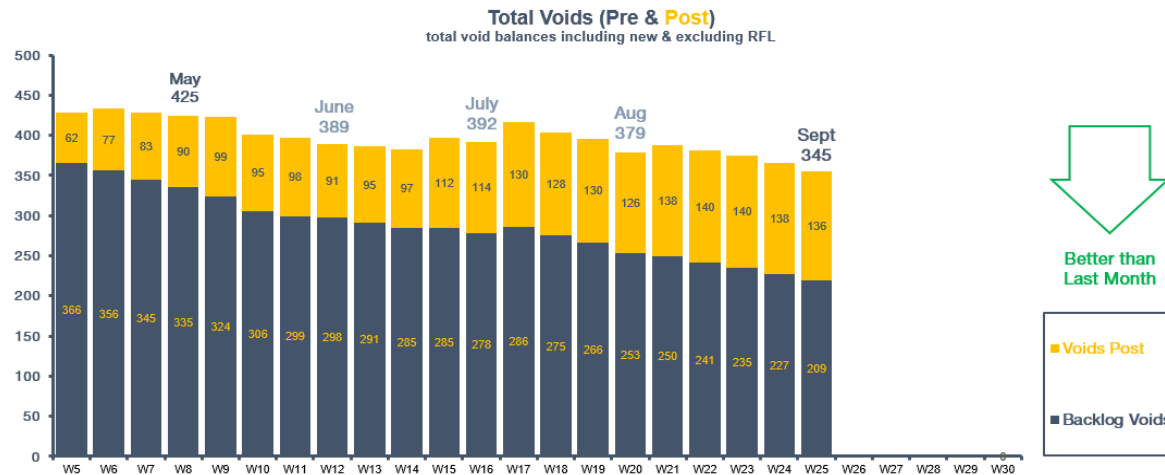
- Current voids graph – (345 at end of September 2023).

## Current Voids

Lower is Better Performance



Transformation & Improvement Team  
Culture, Strategy and Engagement



Better than Last Month

Target	Sept	YTD	2022/23
No Target	345	345	NEW

### Monthly Metrics:

Total No. Voids:	345
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# Context



## Properties:

The Council has 15k council homes

## Systems & processes

- Day to day voids repairs are managed through Total Mobile. The 'housing' element is through NEC/Northgate and there is an interface between the two systems
- Processes were last mapped in 2016. A new lettable standard has been launched and is being monitored
- Process maps - updates in progress to reflect changes in technology and team structures

## People

- 50% of voids operatives are aged 55 and over and approaching retirement
- Succession planning is being developed including attracting apprentices

## Voids backlog

This began to arise starting in 20/21 due to:

- The impacts of Covid, including staff shielding and difficulties around signing up new tenants
- Difficulties of obtaining building supplies during the pandemic

## HRA business plan

The voids loss adjustment figures as per the HRA business plan are:

- 23/24 – 3%
- 24/25 – 2%
- 25/26 – 1%

# Our voids improvement journey

- We are on an improving trajectory although we still have some way to go
- As at the end of 22/ 23 there were 515 void properties
- As at end of September 2023 there were 345 true voids that have been progressed by the Voids team:

Bed size	Total
Bedsit/Studio	6
1 Bed	150
2 Beds	103
3 Beds	77
4 Beds	8
5 Beds	1
Total Voids	345

- During the period April – September 2023 there were 135 new voids. During the same period 89 were made Ready for Let, of which 36 were in September alone

# Challenges

- **Systems** – these have required significant improvement. A new **performance dashboard** has been implemented to improve operative and team productivity; and data cleansing has been carried out to ensure accurate, up to date information
- **Policies and procedures** – policies, procedures and process maps were very out of date. Process maps have been updated, staff training updated, and a new **lettable standard** has been developed and launched with resident involvement, to provide a consistent standard
- **Improving the culture** – work is underway to address this with staff through improved performance management, team meetings, 1- 2-1s and performance appraisals
- **Supply chain** – this is limited. Procurement of new **dedicated voids contractors** is underway to provide back-up to support contractors for the DLO to tackle the voids backlog. The contracts will run for one year and will be divided into two geographical areas, East and West

# Housing Services Voids Improvement Plan

## Key actions

Recruit a team of 4 additional staff as a task and finish group to deal with historic voids – COMPLETE

- Develop voids performance dashboard – COMPLETE. Dashboards have been developed and are in use
- Procure additional supply chain to clear the backlog and help deal with peaks in demand - UNDERWAY. Tender evaluation for 2 x East & West contractors completed.
- Recruit two additional teams of operatives for six months to deal with backlog and peaks in demand – UNDERWAY, 7 posts filled & recruitment for 3 remaining posts underway
- Review lettable standard and introduce optional decorations package – COMPLETE
- Introduce satisfaction surveys measuring satisfaction with property – UNDERWAY – to be included as part of sign-up process
- In-house DLO performance and productivity to be managed and monitored more effectively – ON TARGET, training sessions with HR consultants planned
- Contractor penalties to be introduced for late return of void against target (equivalent to rental loss) to incentivise good performance and quick turnaround times – ON TARGET
- Use of Total Mobile voids management system to track voids to completion; efficiency of operatives to assess productivity and identify areas for improvement or training - ON TARGET, training with Total Mobile has taken place & discussions on next steps have taken place



# Questions