

Camden Leaseholders' Forum Repairs Working Group

This is an interim report by the Repairs Working Group

1. About the Group

- 1.1. The members of the Repairs Working Group are Forum Representatives, leaseholders Laureline Champion, Joy Palmer and David Hart.
- 1.2. We saw our first task as getting to know and understand the repairs process, the roles and responsibilities and the upcoming changes. We are also gathering some issues/topics raised by CLF members or leaseholders via the website and are communicating them to the relevant stakeholders. This report highlights the progress we have made so far.

2. The Camden Repairs Team

- 2.1. Camden's Repairs team is responsible for repairs and some preventive maintenance. Planned maintenance is by another team (Major Works).
- 2.2. We have met with Danny Waite, Head of Repairs Operations on 23 August 2022. Danny joined Camden Council two years ago. Covid has delayed his implementation of improvements but a restructuring is just being completed.
- 2.3. As part of the restructuring, a Leak Detection team will in future treat all leaks as an urgent repair (currently, if the leak is containable the emergency level is downgraded).
- 2.4. To improve efficiency, there will also be a change in the management of the tradespeople who do the repairs, moving from a district-based to a trades-based management system.
- 2.5. The tradespeople carry an app which records their location and time spent. Repairs works are overseen by an Order Compliance Officer (OCO). For leasehold properties this is to be increased to 3 OCOs (currently 2). Completion of work is checked by an OCO who will also check the time spent before passing to Leaseholder Services for billing.
- 2.6. It is planned to grow the direct workforce, currently about 200, but recruiting skilled tradespeople has become much harder post-Covid and post-Brexit.
- 2.7. A new role of Neighbourhood Officer is to be created to interface with residents in each district, to provide feedback on work in progress.
- 2.8. Other targeted improvements include a better procurement process, better management of materials storage and better planning so that the correct tools and spares are carried in the van attending the repair.
- 2.9. The Repairs team looks to the Asset Management team for a decision on what needs to be repaired now against waiting for a full refurbishment. Sometimes, a temporary fix is sensible if it would be more time and cost efficient. We have yet to meet with the Asset Management team.
- 2.10. Danny Waite will be attending the CLF meeting on 22 November, to give more insights on the restructuring and work in progress within the teams. This will be an opportunity to raise any concerns, such as contractors failing to show up for appointments and having no liability to compensate the resident.

3. The Camden Property Services Team (Repairs Contact Centre)

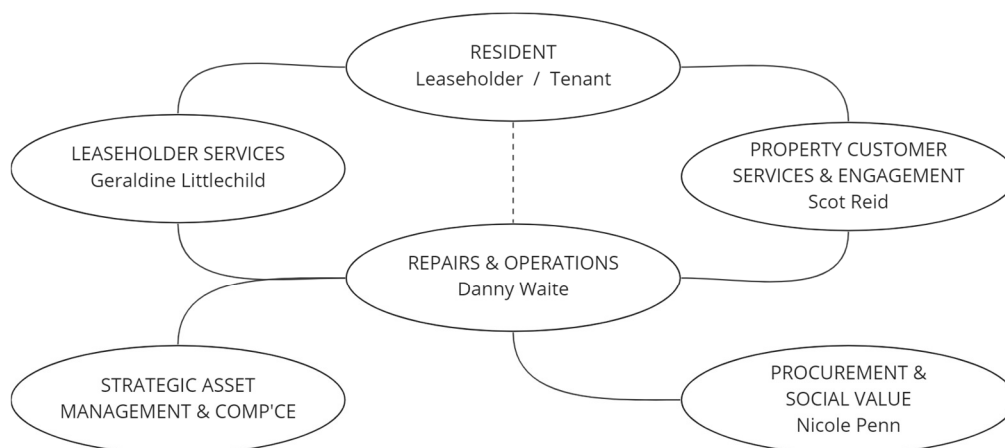
- 3.1. We have had an online meeting with Scot Reid and senior members of his team on 25 October 2022. Scot joined Camden Council three years ago as Head of Property Customer Services and Engagement. His team, which is responsible for the repairs Contact Centre, has also been restructured recently.
- 3.2. As a main point, the team has recognised the need to be able to track and communicate on the status of the repair (currently a struggle for officers and residents) and is working

towards introducing a tracking/workflow system. The anticipated planned date for its implementation is May 2023.

- 3.3. As of today, when a repair is reported, a Repairs Co-ordinator logs the details in the resource scheduling program and the case is allocated a work order reference, so that it may be planned and allocated, and its progress tracked.
- 3.4. The timescale for attending to a repair depends on the nature of the repair. The timescales are currently:
 - Emergency repairs: Within 24 Hours (serious issues are attended to without delay);
 - Essential repairs: Within 35 Days;
 - Non-essential repairs: Within 125 Days
- 3.5. The team has greatly improved the handling of cases in 2022 by introducing new ways of reporting, namely SMS (text messaging) and Webchat. Work is underway to add WhatsApp messaging. Telephone reporting is now only accepted for emergencies or for an enhanced resident (aged 65+ or with care).
- 3.6. The new methods enable residents to include videos and pictures with their report. These are an enormous help to the team’s understanding of the repair so that its resolution may be more effectively planned. They also make it easier to prioritise repairs – distinguishing an emergency from an inconvenience.
- 3.7. The team analyses performance in order to drive continual improvement. It now publishes its Contact Centre performance against its targets on the website in Open Data (www.camden.gov.uk/housing-repairs). There is also a useful link here to enable residents to track primitive details for a communal repair.
- 3.8. The team surveys residents when a repair is complete. We have yet to explore the high levels of satisfaction being reported. We feel that it is perhaps too early to be placing any reliance on the quoted percentages and we are not distracted by them.

4. Repairs Working Group Next Steps

- 4.1. We will be meeting with Danny Waite on a regular basis, to review progress and discuss issues raised by leaseholders.
- 4.2. We will be meeting again in November with Scot Reid and his team, to review casework management. We will also invite him to attend the next Forum meeting.
- 4.3. There are also several other teams involved in the repairs process and we shall be seeking meetings with these - the diagram below is our current understanding.



Camden teams involved with Repairs (as currently understood)

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