

HOMES & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

16 MARCH 2020

HOUSING SERVICE PERFORMANCE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report provides the Committee with an overview of the operational, customer service and compliance performance of the housing service at the end of January 2020.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 Following the transfer of the housing service back to the Council on 1 February 2020, the Committee now has the direct responsibility to ensure that homes and services are of a high standard and meet legal and regulatory requirements.

2.2 This report gives a summary of the performance of the housing service at the end of January 2020 – this is the point at which the service transferred from Newark & Sherwood Homes (NSH) to the Council.

2.3 This is the first opportunity for Members to consider performance as a service provider, rather than to assess the performance of its contractor, NSH. That said, results contained in this report relate to the performance of NSH.

2.4 Work is underway to review the information which is provided to Members to oversee Council performance, so the content of this report is likely to change over time. This version of the report provides Members with an opportunity to comment on the information required by the Committee to oversee the performance of housing services, its frequency and format.

3.0 Performance report

3.1 The report is split into three elements to help Members consider different aspects of housing service performance:

- Operational performance – this includes rent collection and how quickly homes are let
- Customer service performance – this includes feedback from surveys which gives an indication of tenant and other customer satisfaction
- Compliance performance – this covers landlord responsibilities for a range of building safety measures including fire protection, gas, asbestos, electrical and water. It also summarises details of the Council's housing stock.

3.2 The metrics included in the report (and supporting commentary) are drawn from those which were previously reported to the NSH Board and to the Committee, albeit presented in a more graphical form. The NSH Board most recently considered service performance at its meeting on 30 January (data was reported to 31 December 2019). The Committee last considered NSH's performance on 25 November (data was reported to 30 September 2019).

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report. This is because it is not currently possible to report the impact of housing services on different customer groups and by equality strands.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, it should contribute to Members' understanding of the way in which resources are allocated and whether key financial assumptions (such as for voids) are realistic.

6.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

6.1 The performance of the housing service contributes to the delivery of several of the objectives of the Community Plan 2019-23.

7.0 Comments of Director

7.1 This report provides the Committee with its first opportunity to consider the performance of the housing service since it was transferred back into the Council from NSH.

7.2 It's essential that the Committee receives high quality, timely information to enable it to oversee the Council's management of tenants' homes and services, so feedback is welcome around content and how it is presented.

7.3 In addition, feedback is also welcome on areas of service where the Committee would benefit from a more in depth briefing to enhance Members' understanding of the services being provided, legal and regulatory responsibilities.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee notes the performance of the housing service.

That Members feedback their observations about the content and presentation of performance information.

Reason for Recommendation(s)

This is the first opportunity for members of the Homes & Communities Committee to consider the performance of the housing management service following its transfer from NSH back into the Council on 1 February.

Background Papers

Operational performance

Customer service performance

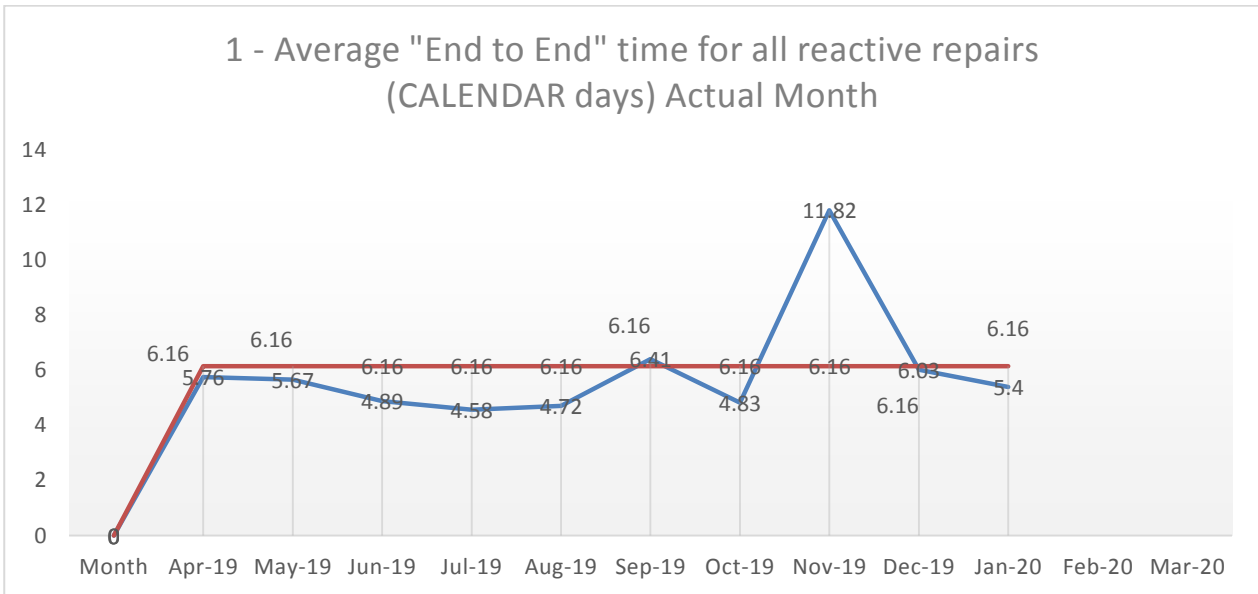
Compliance performance

For further information please contact Dave Newmarch on 07470423961, Steve Haywood on 07882 719655 or Julian Paine on 07968 421362

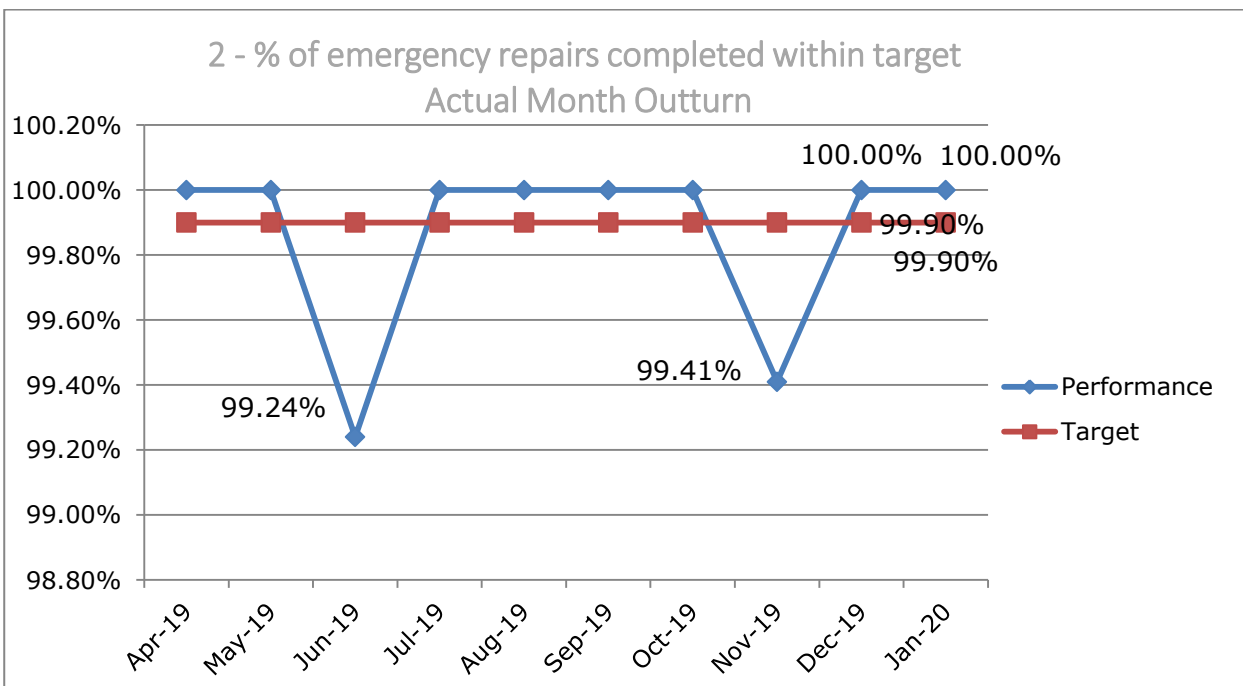
Julian Paine
Interim Director – Housing, Health & Wellbeing

Operational performance

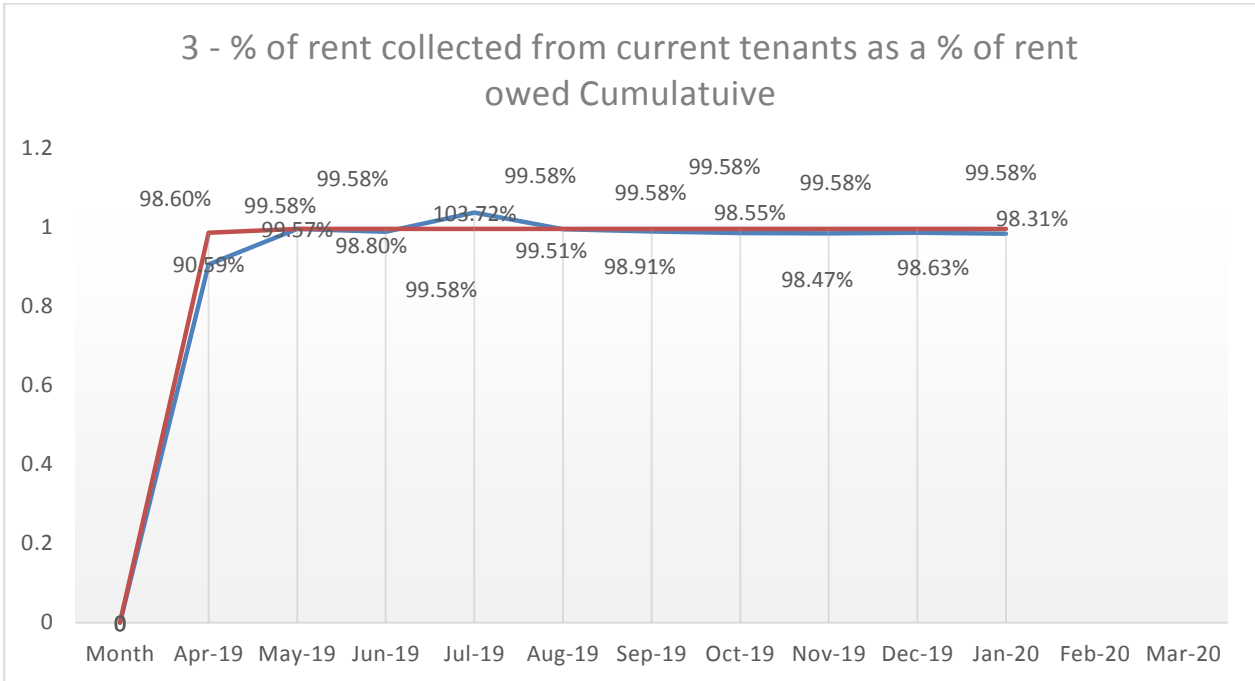
—●— Performance
 —■— Target



This target is at the forefront of tenants’ expectations and is a key driver of satisfaction levels. The rise in November can be attributed to shortage of resource within the repairs team and the start of the winter period. We have put measures in place to address this using contractors where necessary. We have also reviewed job allocation and van stocks to ensure short distances of travel and right first time repairs. This has resulted in a significant improvement in performance.

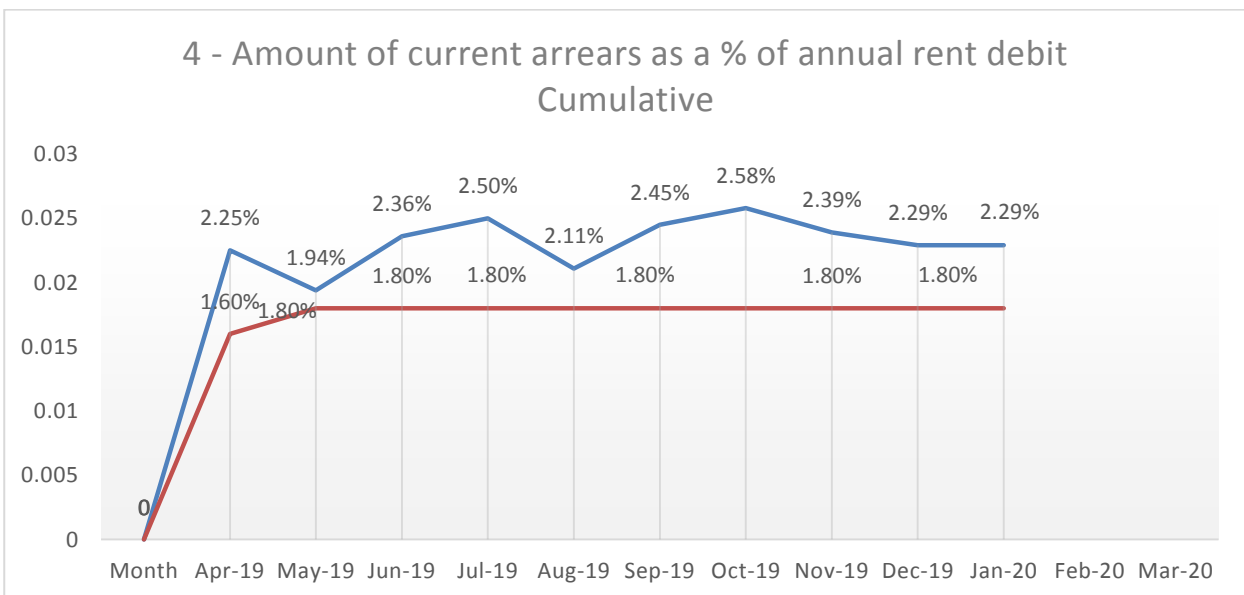


Emergency Repairs are those that will be completed within 24 hours. In January we completed 180 of these within target time.



The continued increase in tenants moving to Universal Credit (UC) continues to impact on rent collection rates. At the end of January 2020, 927 tenants were claiming UC compared to 537 at the end of March 2019. We currently have 176 Tenants on an Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA), where the Housing Element of the tenant's UC claim is paid direct to NDSC in order to sustain the tenancy.

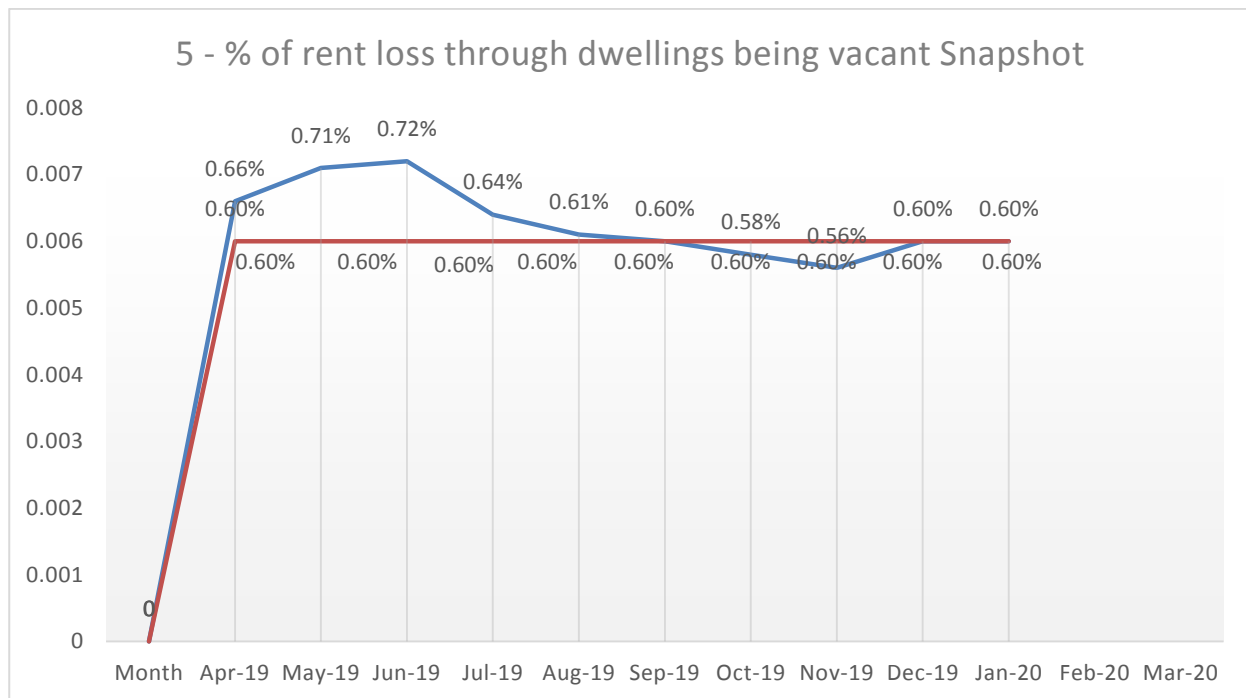
We continue to provide early intervention support to all new UC claimants in an attempt to minimise the impact of the transition to UC and respond quickly to failed payment arrangements. As the number of tenants moving to UC increases, this will continue to put pressure on collection rates.



The increasing Universal Credit (UC) caseload, combined with monthly payment in arrears feature of UC, is contributing to increasing arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit. Tenants claiming UC are carrying on average higher arrears balances on their account than HB tenants due to the impact of transitioning onto UC as well as the ongoing payment in arrears of

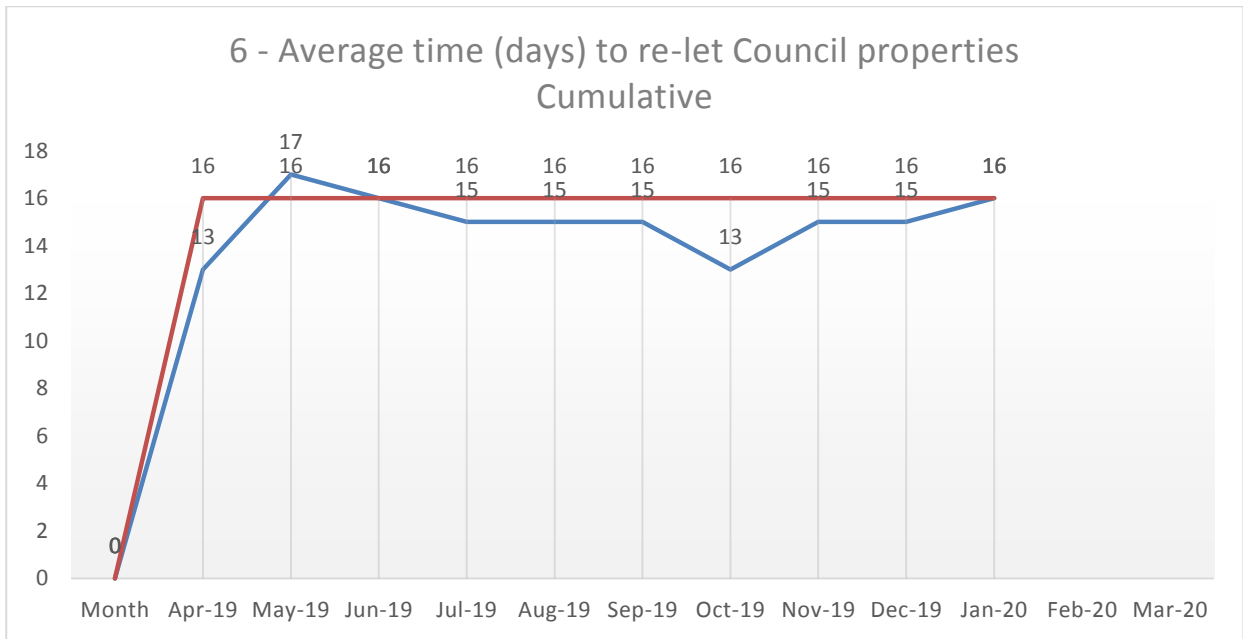
benefit. Tenants on HB continue to benefit from the weekly payment of benefit to their rent account which minimising arrears accruing.

Where tenants fall into arrears as they transition to UC, we will continue to work to stabilise their rent account and support tenants to make an arrangement to clear the arrears and gradually move into a credit on their account.



Rent loss through vacant dwellings presents a financial risk to the housing service through lost income, as well as reputational risk from residents seeing properties standing empty and applicants waiting for a home.

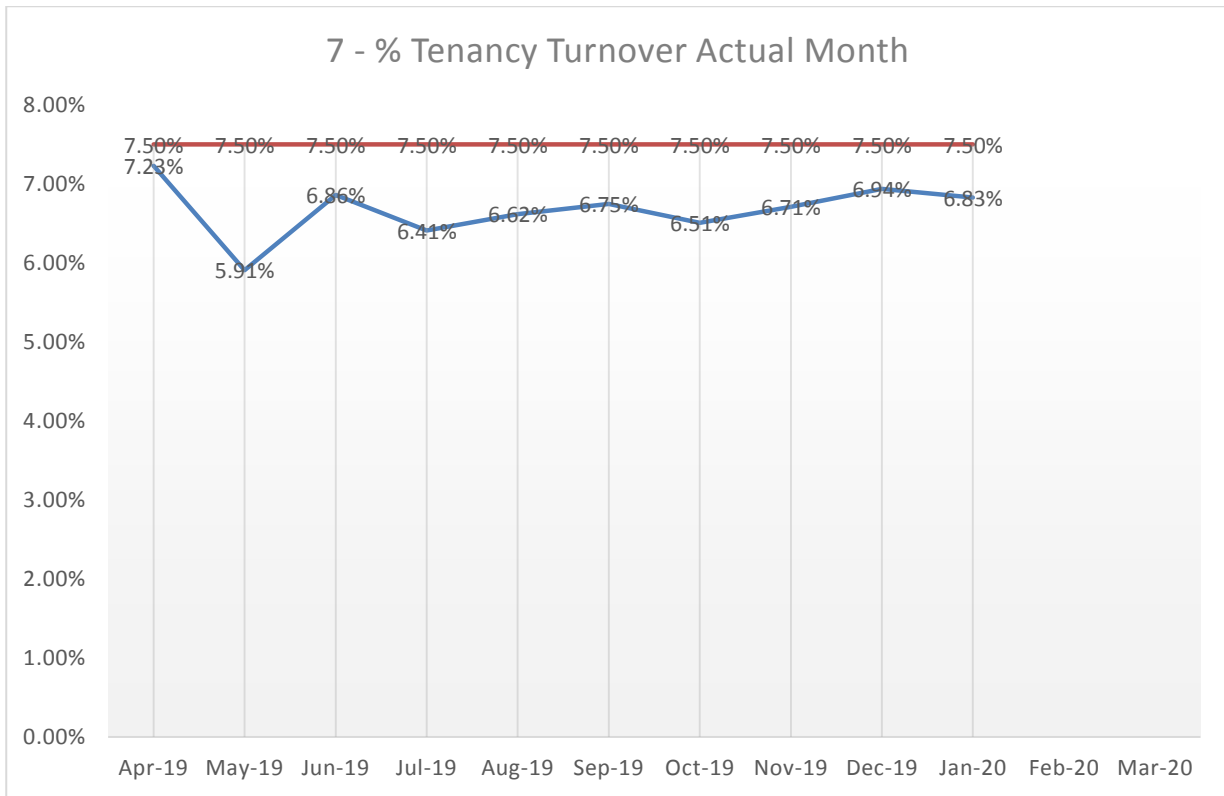
This has improved significantly throughout the year due to work completed to reduce re-let times and this indicator has remained on target since September 2019 as a result.



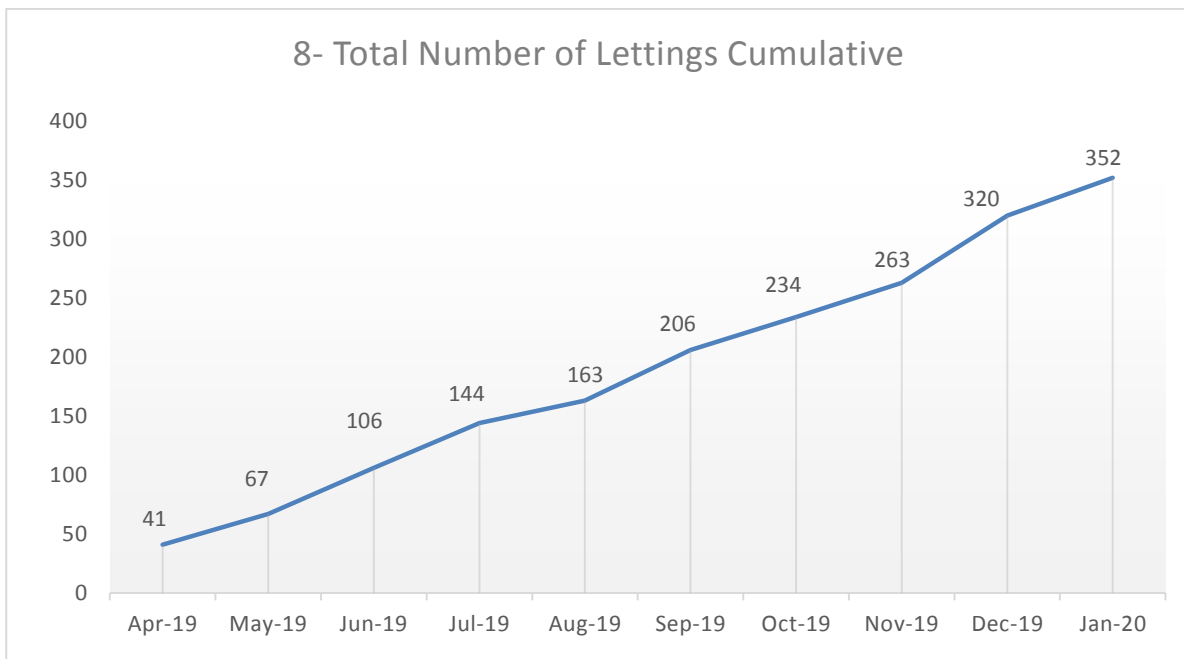
Average time to re-let properties is a direct reflection of the Council’s management of its void process. Empty properties present a financial risk to the housing service through lost income, as well as reputational risk from residents seeing properties standing empty and applicants waiting for a home.

The void process requires a multi team approach to maximise efficiencies. Over the past year the teams have worked hard to review their processes and improve communication to improve performance. This is evident from this indicator being on or below target for all but one month of this financial year.

Processes are embedded and staff work consistently to attain as quick a turnaround as possible with voids meeting the fit to let standard and being re-let.



Tenancy turnover has continued to be on target throughout the year. This can be attributed to pre-tenancy support and tenancy sustainment activity throughout the life of the tenancy.



This measure identifies how many properties are re-let throughout the year rather than a measure of performance in re-letting them. From this information we can see that the teams are re-letting on average 39 properties per month.

Customer services performance

Newark and Sherwood Homes commissioned Viewpoint (a social enterprise based in Sheffield) to collect feedback from customers over the telephone. Viewpoint are specialists in customer satisfaction surveys, especially within the housing sector, with long term relationships with local authorities, housing associations and construction businesses.

Viewpoint attempt to contact 500 tenants per month across a range of services, including: Responsive repairs, ASB, Complaints, Gas servicing, Adaptations, Customer Services, New tenants, Out of Hours repairs, they have a 60-65% completion rate, leading to approx. 300 survey completions each month.

Overall satisfaction in January 2020 was 91% based on 297 completed surveys. The overall outturn is also 91% for 2019/20.

Overall satisfaction performance remains consistently high in most areas. Those areas falling below 90% for January are highlighted in red in the table below; specifically ASB, CAS, Major Works and Repairs.

| Service | Number of completions | January % | YTD Outturn % |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Overall | 297 | 91 | 91 |
| Adapts (Major) | 3 | 100 | 99 |
| Adapts (Minor) | 3 | 100 | 98 |
| ASB | 3 | 67 | 79 |
| CAS | 43 | 88 | 87 |
| Complaints | 0 | N/A | 27 |
| Gas Servicing | 61 | 97 | 95 |
| Generic | 8 | 88 | 88 |
| Legionella | 21 | 100 | 96 |
| Lettings | 17 | 100 | 91 |
| Major works | 32 | 81 | 85 |
| Repairs | 105 | 89 | 92 |

The figures shown is for the levels of very satisfied or quite satisfied customers. This does not necessarily equate to the remaining percentage all being dissatisfied. Within the remaining amount are dissatisfied customers and those who have declared to be neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

The number of completions relates to surveys completed in the month. In many cases, the number of returns is very low (including overall) and cannot therefore be statistically relied upon to gauge the overall level of tenant satisfaction. However, the results do provide a useful indicator of customer feedback.

ASB- Out of three customers, two were satisfied and one was dissatisfied. Reasons for the dissatisfaction were that the issue is ongoing or a perception of not been dealt with.

CAS – Out of 43 customers, 38 were satisfied, three were dissatisfied and two were neither. Reasons for the dissatisfaction related to issues not being resolved or not being taken seriously.

Major Works - Out of 32 customers, 26 were satisfied, four were dissatisfied and two were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Reasons related to quality of work, mess left during and behind and length of time taken.

Repairs – Out of 105 customers, 94 were satisfied, four were dissatisfied and seven were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Reasons for the dissatisfaction related to operatives carrying out external repairs did not let the tenant know they had arrived before they started work or when they were leaving. Other issues were staff attitude, having to repeatedly chase up a repair and operatives attending a job without the correct materials.

Compliance performance

1) Asset Base

| | |
|--|------|
| Total no. of individual dwellings / properties being managed | 5542 |
| Total no. of “blocks” being managed Note: “Blocks” relates to multiple dwellings contained within one building i.e. flats, bedsits, maisonettes, apartments, HMO’s etc. | 332 |
| Total no. of non-residential units (i.e. commercial properties including offices, retail units, storage facilities etc.) | 3 |

2) Stock Type

| Residential | Number of Units |
|---|------------------------|
| Social & affordable housing | |
| General Needs (Social rented) | 2918 |
| Shared Ownership | 0 |
| Housing for older people | 2576 |
| Supported housing | 32 |
| NSH Owned | 25 |
| Affordable (non-social) housing | |
| Market Rented | 0 |
| Affordable Rented | 288 |
| Leasehold (Leaseholder owns 100% of equity) | 162 |
| Other | 0 |
| Non-Housing | |
| Offices and commercial premises | 3 |
| Garages & car parking spaces | 514 |
| Community centres | 33 |

3) Works Activity

| Fire | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Fire Risk Assessments | 128 | 128 | 128 | 0 | 100%* |

Comments:
 *The Type 1 fire risk assessments (FRA's) currently in place are a 5 year assessment and all are currently still valid and provide the necessary compliance.
 An annual review is also carried out to ensure no changes have been made to the property which would have an impact on fire safety. During the month of October, 2019 all FRA's were reviewed and found to be satisfactory for the remainder of the year. We will shortly begin a new programme of more stringent Type 3 FRA's which will take place throughout 2020. This type of FRA will potentially highlight additional areas of remedial work not routinely identified through the Type 1 FRA. Budgets have been increased to meet the increased cost of any additional work identified.

| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Fire Alarm Testing (including emergency lighting) | 636 | 530 | 530 | 106 | 100% |

Comments:
 53 checks have been completed during January across the district. The fire alarm testing is progressing as planned with all testing carried out to target.

| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Sprinkler Servicing | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100% |

Comments:
 This item relates to the sprinkler system at the extra care scheme, Gladstone House. Initial inspections have highlighted a problem with the pipework and water storage for the sprinkler system, that needs to be rectified before the servicing can take place.
 A contractor has been appointed and a site familiarisation meeting took place in January 2020, the remedial work to the water system and the subsequent servicing are scheduled to take place in February 2020.

| Asbestos | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Asbestos Surveys (Domestic) | 333 | 222 | 477 | 0 | 100% |

Comments:
 As required by the Asbestos Management Policy, asbestos surveys are planned to be carried out to at all domestic Council properties; this was commenced with a 20% survey in 2008. Subsequently we have targeted circa 333 surveys on domestic dwellings per annum, this is a fluid target as it is subject to removal costs where the material is identified and needs to be replaced. The target for the planned asbestos surveys has been achieved and the figures are supplemented by surveys completed on the capital works programme.

| Asbestos | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Asbestos Surveys (Communal) | 138 | 138 | 138 | 0 | 100% |

| | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <p>Comments: This is a statutory responsibility and the survey programme has now been completed. A programme of re-inspecting any asbestos found and not replaced will commence in 2020/21 as required by the Asbestos Management Regulations.</p> | | | | | |
| Heating Systems | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| Valid Gas Annual safety Inspection* | 5174 | 5174 | 5171 | 3 | 99.9% |
| <p>*Note: The Annual Gas safety inspection results in the issuing of a valid gas certificate.</p> <p>Comments: The gas servicing programme is now back on track and the 3 outstanding properties, at the end of January 2020, are progressing through the legal process to gain access. Since running the January report 1 of the properties has now had the service carried out. Properties are now also being brought forward for their annual service, to reduce the large spike in servicing arising from the completion of the 622 properties that went out of compliance during the summer of last year. This will have the effect of smoothing the programme for future years.</p> | | | | | |
| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| Solid Fuel | 32 | 32 | 27 | 5 | 84% |
| <p>Comments: Solid fuel properties are due servicing by the end of the year to ensure compliance, although this is not a statutory requirement at the moment. 27 properties have now been completed and the remaining 5 properties have had cold calling and appointments booked, the process will continue until the services are completed. At the time of writing this update the number outstanding has been reduced to just 1. The legal process for gaining access to these properties is currently being reviewed to mirror the process in place for gas 'no access' properties.</p> | | | | | |
| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| Oil Servicing | 210 | 210 | 209 | 1 | 99% |
| <p>Comments: All oil servicing is carried out within an 8-week period during Q3 of the financial year. All properties have a valid oil service certificate with the exception of one property which is currently void and will be tested when a new tenancy commences and they have received their first fuel delivery.</p> | | | | | |
| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| LPG Servicing | 3 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 100% |
| <p>Comments: All complete for the year 2019/2020</p> | | | | | |
| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |

| | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Commercial Systems | 3 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 100% |
| Comments: All complete for the year 2019/2020 | | | | | |
| Electrical | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| Domestic Testing | 1109 | 924 | 1132 | 0 | 100% |
| Comments: All properties have a valid domestic testing certificate dated within either 10 years or 5 years depending upon their place within the programme. We are also on target to progress to the 5-year testing certification programme for all properties, which is recognised as best, by the end of this financial year. | | | | | |
| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| Non-domestic Testing | 127 (159 -32 Community centres) | 127 | 123 | 4 | 97% |
| Comments: The community centres were previously tested on a 10-year cyclical programme. All 32 community centre sites are currently compliant within this, as the earliest is not due to be tested again until the end of Q4. The programme has, however, now started to progress towards a five-year testing programme and will also include the testing of all other communal areas of buildings, such as flat stairwells, etc. All 159 communal areas, including the community centres, are currently being tested to achieve the new 5-year testing cycle and 100% compliance with new target is expected by end March 2020. | | | | | |
| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| PAT Testing | 38 | 38 | 37 | 1 | 97% |
| Comments: PAT testing is ongoing it is expected to be completed by the end February 2020 | | | | | |
| Other Safety Works | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| Legionella | 10 | 10 | 10 | 0 | 100% |
| Comments: The programme is progressing on target and a Legionella Risk Assessment has been completed for each building where this is required. Additional work is now taking place to produce a 'written Scheme' for each building which describes the ongoing testing and cleansing that takes place to mitigate any safety issues highlighted within the risk assessment. | | | | | |
| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| General Block Inspections | 880 | 733 | 733 | 0 | 100% |
| Comments: Programme progressing on schedule | | | | | |

| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Play Park Inspections | 844 | 593 | 593 | 0 | 100% |
| Comments: Currently on target with no issues to report | | | | | |
| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| Tree Surveys | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| Comments: Tree surveys are undertaken every 5 years and were completed in March 2019 | | | | | |
| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| Passenger Lift Servicing | 8 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 100% |
| Comments: Programme progressing on schedule. Passenger lifts are serviced every 3 months the latest services were carried out in January 2020. | | | | | |
| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| Stair lift Servicing | 84 | 84 | 83 | 1 | 99% |
| Comments: One stair lift service is outstanding at the end of December 2019 due to tenant failing to provide access. Appointments are being arranged by the service contractor and the responsible surveyor is working with Tenancy and Estates team to gain access. | | | | | |
| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| Hoist Servicing | 36 | 36 | 36 | 0 | 100% |
| Comments: All hoists have received their annual inspection. | | | | | |
| | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| Commercial Ductwork Inspection | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| Comments: This relates to Gladstone House which is not due to be inspected until March 2020 | | | | | |
| Gladstone House | Annual Target | Target to Date | Total to Date | Outstanding | Compliance |
| Bacteria Testing Potable Water | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0% |
| Comments: | | | | | |

Service on the tank at Gladstone House was due in Q3 of the financial year. This has been delayed as it requires amendments to the water storage system which is due to take place in Q4. (See also the earlier comments relating to the sprinkler system at Gladstone House, to which this matter also relates.)