

**WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL - HOUSING AND REGENERATION
DEPARTMENT**

AREA HOUSING PANEL PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

OCTOBER 2021

Quarter 1: April – June 2021

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Key to Direction of Travel: Where a comparison with either the previous quarter or the equivalent quarter in the previous financial year is shown, an arrow indicates the direction of change between the previous quarter and the current quarter.

Introduction

Information on the quarterly performance of the housing management Area Teams and the contractors under their control is provided on the following pages of this document. This paper will be reported to each Area Housing Panel where the Area Housing Manager will briefly introduce the statistics at the meeting and will respond to any questions the residents' representatives may have.

The figures below relate to Council tenants and leaseholders who are required to pay rent and / or a service charge for the management services provided by the area teams as at 1st April 2021.

Residential properties managed by resident management organisations (RMOs)

	Tenanted	Leasehold	Total	Area Team
Ackroydon East TMO	130	144	274	Western
Allsaints Coop	23	26	49	Southern
Battersea Fields RMO	339	171	510	Central
Carey Gardens Coop	229	174	403	Eastern
Chatham Coop	2	15	17	Southern
Convent Coop	34	61	95	Central
Felsham Coop	46	42	88	Western
Goulden House Coop	41	228	269	Southern
Mccarthy Court RMO	38	40	78	Southern
Patmore Coop	576	278	854	Eastern
Totteridge Coop	104	34	138	Central
Wimbledon Coop	47	232	279	Western
RMOs Total	1,609	1,445	3,054	
Grand Total	16,962	15,672	32,634	
Percentage Breakdown:	52.0%	48.0%	100%	
Direction of travel:	↑	↓	↑	

Residential properties managed by area housing team:

	Tenanted	Leasehold	Total	Percentage of stock
Central	3,529	4,082	7,611	25.7%
Eastern	4,466	3,137	7,603	25.7%
Southern	3,269	3,846	7,115	24.1%
Western	4,089	3,162	7,251	24.5%
Total	15,353	14,227	29,580	100.0%
Direction of travel:	↑	↓	↑	

COVID-19: Impact on Housing Management

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has affected services across the Council including housing management. Although efforts have been made to limit disruption, with essential services continuing, restrictions were put in place to minimise the spread of the virus; these impacted which services were delivered and how, with most staff working from home.

In line with Government guidance, during the beginning of quarter 1 2021/22 the Department was carrying out a reduced number of non-urgent repairs as a result of the third national lockdown which began in January 2021. Non-urgent routine repairs were raised only where the resident and the contractor were in agreement and precautions including use of PPE were followed, as set out in Government guidance. If the resident was shielding, non-urgent routine repairs were not permitted. Annual gas servicing continued. Visits by officers were and remain avoided unless absolute necessary with repairs raised using information provided by telephone calls, emails and photos. Contractors attending to repairs are subject to their company's risk assessments which reflected Government guidance for operatives. With the further easing of lockdown restrictions, services and non-urgent repair orders are returning to normal levels, however, close monitoring is in place should Government guidance be refreshed which could further impact service delivery.

With a reduction in the Council services during 2020/21, the vacancy turnaround time was impacted during 2020/21, and this was due to a combination of supply shortages affecting necessary works to vacant properties, restrictions on viewings and house moves, and delays resulting from some applicants being unable to attend property viewings due to their legal requirement to self-isolate. The Department has responded well to the initial challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic, and the void turnaround figure has seen a significant improvement during Q1 2021/22.

The Coronavirus Act 2020 introduced measures to ensure no-one loses their home as a result of the pandemic by suspending all current eviction proceedings, though due to the fluctuation in coronavirus transmissions, legislation is continuously under review and updated. Between the 29th August 2020 to the 31st May 2021, only 6-month notices could be issued and evictions could only be carried out in the most serious of cases, such as for antisocial behaviour and tenants having 6 months' rent arrears. Since the 1st June 2021, notice periods have decreased to 4 months, and all evictions can now be enforced. The number of evictions to be initiated and carried out during 2021/22 is still expected to be low.

Due to the challenges the Council faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council was not rated against targets during 2020/21, though the Department will be rated against targets throughout 2021/22.

Stock condition and energy efficiency

Proportion and Number of Homes Non-Decent (not meeting the Decent Homes Standard)

Target for 2021/22: Maintain 100% compliance with the Decent Homes Standard

The Council met the Decent Homes Standard in 2007/08 and continues to ensure that properties do not become non-decent. Where tenants have refused to have central heating installed the installation takes place when the property becomes void. Where an individual tenant does not want work carried out on their home to bring it up to the Decent Homes Standard, then the home can remain below the standard until the property is vacated, at which point the necessary work can be undertaken. Whilst the home is occupied it is not counted as non-decent for reporting purposes (Housing, Communities and Local Government guidance). There are a few exceptions to this, e.g. where works are required to maintain the structural integrity of the dwelling or prevent other components within the dwelling from deteriorating. These dwellings are counted as non-decent.

The Decent Homes Standard has four criteria, which are:

1. It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing (i.e. the dwelling should be free of category 1 hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS))
2. It is in a reasonable* state of repair
3. It has reasonably modern* facilities and services
4. It provides a reasonable* degree of thermal comfort.

* As defined by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Guidance

How are we performing locally? Whilst efforts are made to encourage tenants to allow bathroom and kitchen upgrades or to allow central heating installation whilst in occupation, we sometimes have to agree to put work on hold until the property is vacated.

Number of properties where upgrade refused by tenant area team

	Central	Eastern	Southern	Western	Grand Total
No. of properties where tenants have refused works at 01/04/2021	14	10	35	10	69
Proportion of properties where tenants have refused works at 01/04/2021	0.40%	0.22%	1.07%	0.24%	0.45%

Completion of repairs within priority times allocated

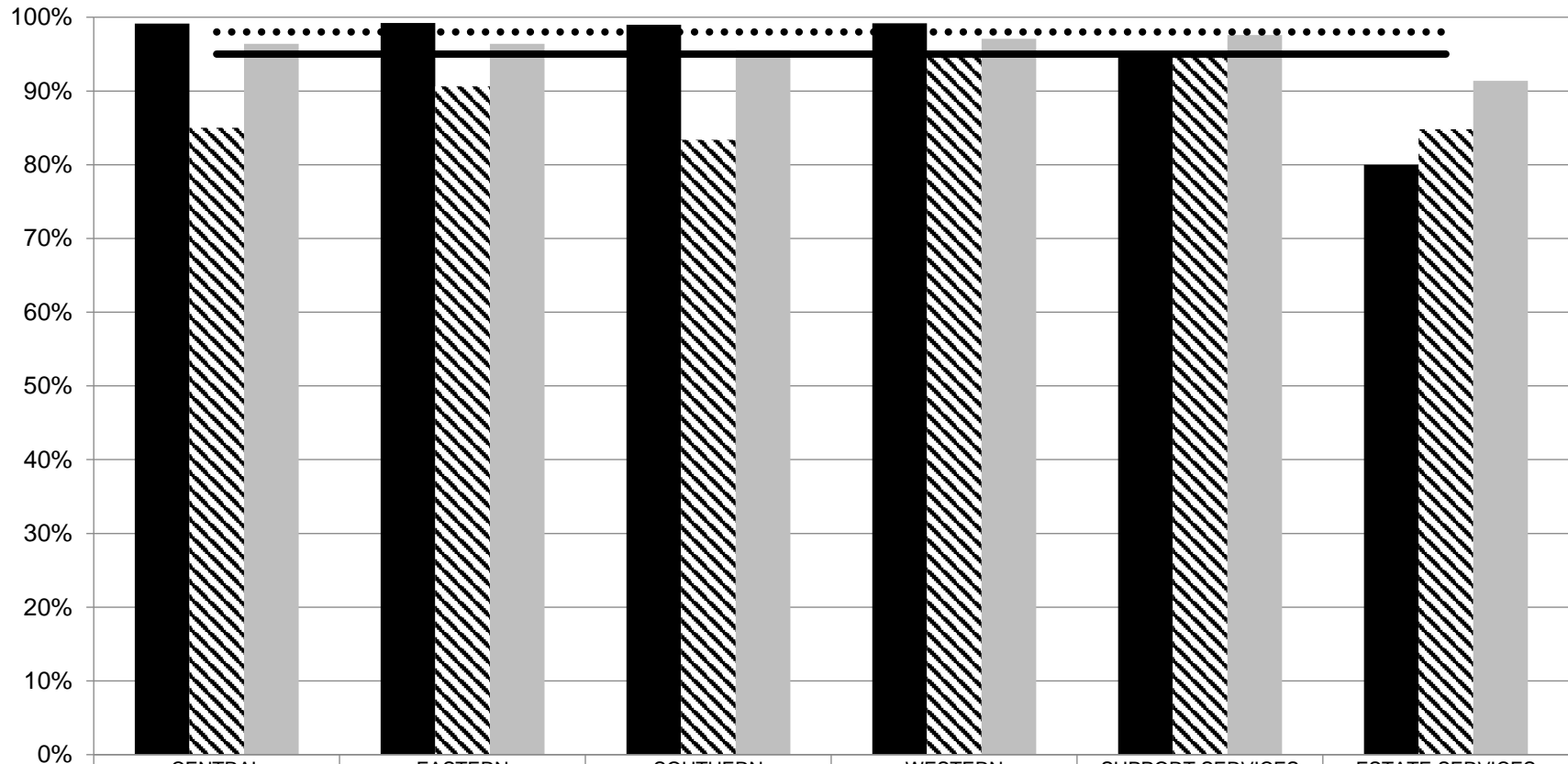
The Department is responsible for ensuring that repairs to tenanted properties are completed on time. When completing repairs each area team is instructed to use the broad guidelines which are shown below. This list is illustrative of the priority that has been awarded to a repair order and should not be considered as exhaustive. For emergency repairs the area team will first aim to make the repair safe within the time allocated, if more work is then needed a subsequent repair order will be raised.

Category	Response target	Type of repair
Emergency	Within 2 hours of notification	Major bursts etc where unable to isolate supply Danger to persons. Lifts in blocks of 10+ storeys and sheltered blocks
	Within 4 hours of notification	Other lifts Entry call door where system failed in lock mode
	Within 24 hours of notification	Heating & hot water Entry call door – other faults
	Within 1 working day	Emergencies Burst pipes Loss of power
Urgent	Within 3 working days	Total or partial loss of space heating or hot water or partial loss of water
	Within 7 working days	Repairs to water supply installations (enhanced priority for elderly and/or disabled residents)
Non-urgent	Within 10 working days	Work to vacant properties for re-letting
	Within 20 working days	Repairs to windows, doors and minor leaks
	Within 60 working days	Planned repairs – fencing, paving, and surface renewal etc.

Repairs performance is closely monitored by the Housing and Regeneration Department. **Graph 1** sets out the repairs performance of housing management area teams, the estate services section and the engineering services section. The graph shows the number of orders and percentage achievement for all priorities grouped into emergency (2-24 hours), urgent (3 to 7 days) and non-urgent (10+ days). The Department aims to complete **95%** of all repairs within the target times allocated, and **98%** of emergency repairs within the target times.

The Area Teams are responsible for the maintenance of tenanted properties and associated block repairs; the Engineering Services section maintains and repairs lifts, entry-call systems, heating, etc.; and the Estate Services section maintains the communal parts of all estates and non-residential properties.

Graph 1: Repairs completed within target



	CENTRAL	EASTERN	SOUTHERN	WESTERN	SUPPORT SERVICES	ESTATE SERVICES
Emergency	99.1%	99.2%	99.0%	99.2%	95.0%	80.0%
Non-urgent	85.0%	90.6%	83.4%	94.6%	95.2%	84.8%
Urgent	96.4%	96.4%	95.6%	97.1%	97.6%	91.4%
Emergency Repairs Target	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%
Overall Repairs Target	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%
Average - Q1 21/22	89.9%	93.3%	87.5%	95.6%	96.2%	86.1%
Average - Q1 20/21	94.3%	89.8%	92.3%	96.3%	86.1%	82.5%
No. of Jobs - Q1 21/22	1,568	1,652	1,316	1,607	2,245	1,781
No. of Jobs - Q1 20/21	1,189	1,129	1,003	954	1,715	1,155

Direction of travel	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑
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As can be seen the majority of teams are completing emergency and urgent repairs within target timescales. Increased contract monitoring arrangements, including monthly performance reporting and regular meetings, are in place to ensure contractors are completing jobs within target times.

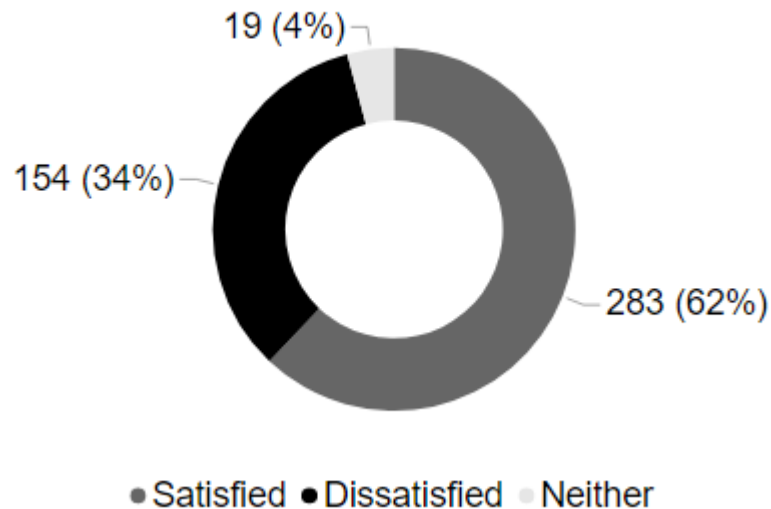
The number of repairs completed, and number of repairs completed on time across all priorities for each area team is as follows:

- **Central** completed 1,568 repairs in Q1, 1,409 of these were completed within target time.
- **Eastern** completed 1,652 repairs in Q1, 1,542 of these were completed within target time.
- **Southern** completed 1,316 repairs in Q1, 1,151 of these were completed within target time.
- **Western** completed 1,607 repairs in Q1, 1,537 of these were completed within target time.

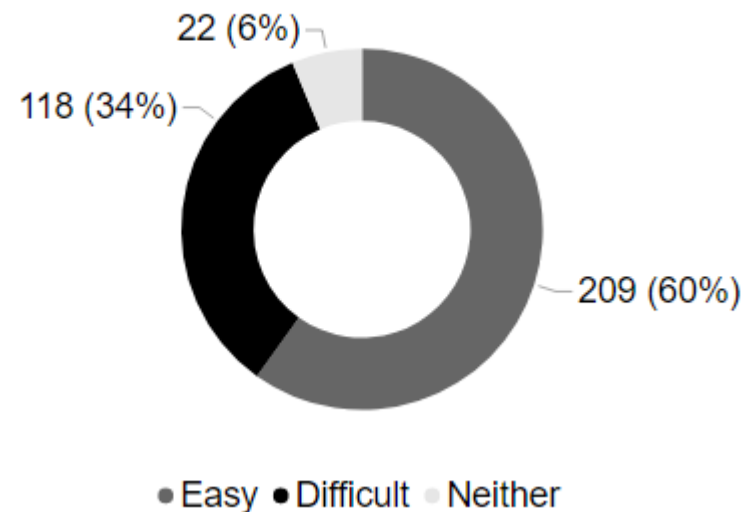
Tenant Repairs Satisfaction

A transactional survey measuring repairs satisfaction began in February 2021, where tenants who have a repair completed within their home are sent a text message to complete a short satisfaction survey. Satisfaction with all repairs for both tenants and leaseholders is also asked through the Housing Link surveys carried out annually. The following two graphs display tenant satisfaction on Council repair completions between April 2021 to June 2021:

Graph 2: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the repairs service you received on this occasion?



Graph 3: How easy or difficult was it to get your repair completed?



It has been identified that the pandemic has impacted the Department's services which is likely an influencer in the satisfaction scores, and it is evident that satisfaction within housing services corresponds with the speed at which the Department can respond to repair requests. The Department has had to apply caution in the speed in which repair orders are completed to reduce the risk of transmission of the coronavirus, so for this reason there have been fewer urgent and non-urgent repairs when compared to previous years, with some repairs given more time to complete. The number of repair orders are now increasing as lockdown measures are eased, and contractors will have better opportunity to complete repair orders at a faster rate. With the introduction of the transactional surveying, the Department is able to obtain a real time satisfaction level for the repairs service which will enable the Department to identify trends and any recurring issues to further improve tenant satisfaction.

Cleaning Monitoring: Inspections on residential blocks and estates

Target for 2021/22: 90% of Cleaning inspections on residential blocks and estates to receive a grade B or above

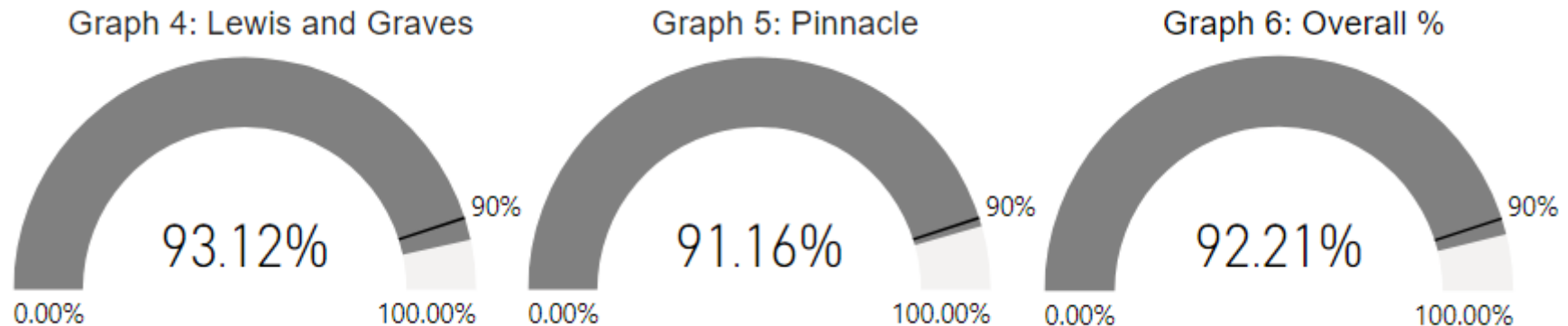
The Department has a dedicated estate services team that operates 24 hours a day, and two contractors (Lewis & Graves and Pinnacle) are hired to carry out cleaning and maintenance to the communal areas of the estate / block.

Regular cleaning inspections are carried out to monitor the performance of the two contractors to ensure they are meeting the agreed standards highlighted in the [HouseMark Caretaking and Cleaning Standards](#) document which provides indicative standards of cleanliness in photographic form for a range of elements (such as light fittings, handrails, floors, lobby areas, etc). There are four photos for each element, representing the following four standards and are graded from A-D as follows:

Grade	Description
A	Excellent
B	Good
C	Poor
D	Unacceptable

During the inspection, the Council shall award a grade to each of the fifteen elements in the block or estate item which have been inspected using the grading system above. All grades across the elements are then averaged, and the contractor is provided a final A to D grade.

Graph 4, 5 and 6 below displays the % of cleaning inspections during Q1 that received a grade B or above for both contractors:



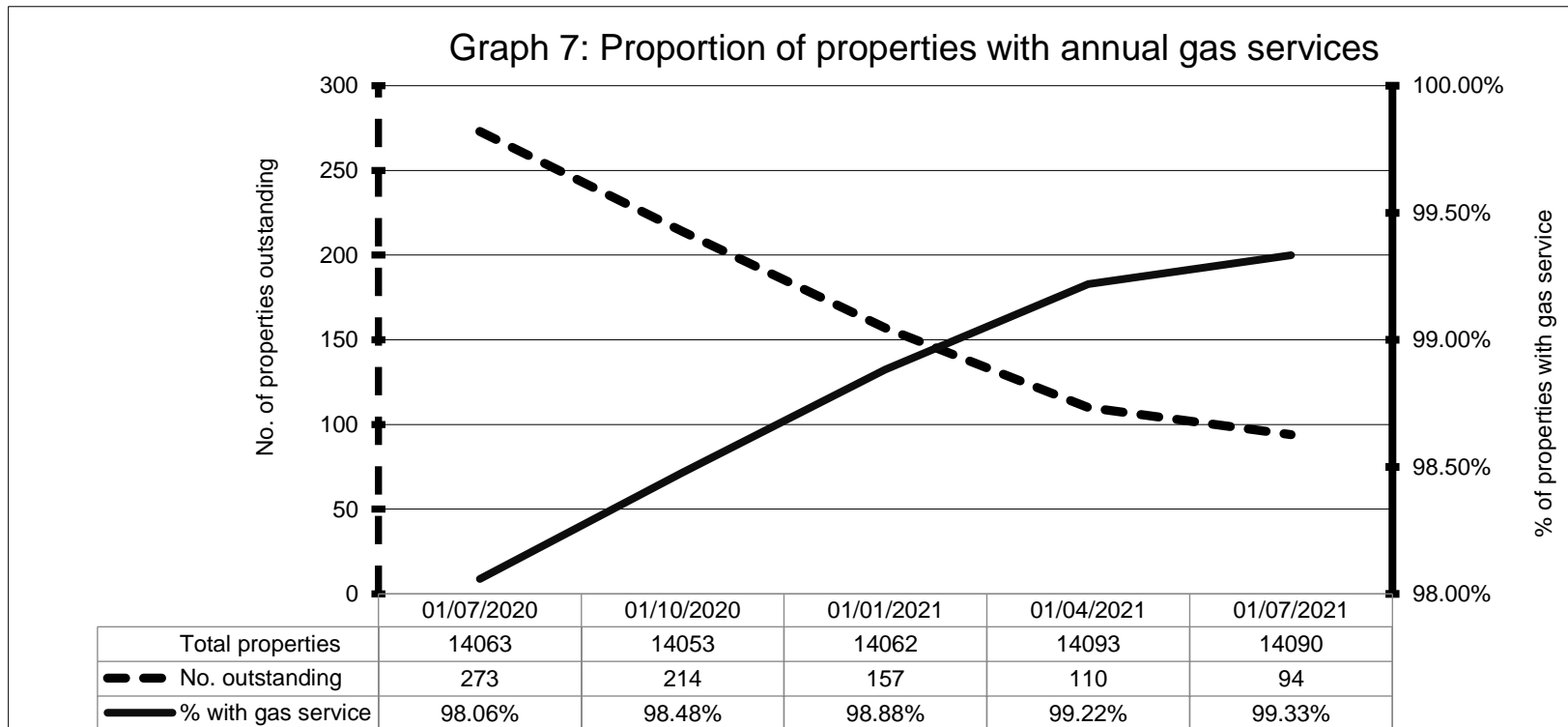
During quarter Q1 21/22, the Council had inspected 462 blocks and 62 estates, with 247 being cleaned by Lewis and Graves and 215 being cleaned by Pinnacle. Of these inspections, 93.12% were graded B+ (41.30% receiving a grade A) for Lewis and Graves, and 91.16% of inspections graded B+ (43.26% receiving a grade A) for Pinnacle, giving an overall average of 92.21% of all inspections receiving a grade B+, of which 42.21% were graded A. This is a positive start to the year with contractors meeting the agreed standards. The estate services team are working with the contractors and sending detailed feedback to further improve the contractors' performance.

Proportion of gas service certificates outstanding

Target for 2021/22: 100% of properties with a gas service in the last 12 months

A landlord safety certificate is the minimum required by the Gas Regulations. All homes with gas appliances should be checked annually by a HomeSafe registered engineer who will undertake repair work and issue a gas safety certificate. For owner occupiers it is good sense, for landlords it is a legal requirement. Landlords should ensure that their tenants get a copy of the gas safety certificate within 28 days of the gas check, or, if new tenants, when they move in.

The proportion of gas safety certificates outstanding (i.e. those that are older than 12 months) is expressed as a percentage of the total number of properties in the Housing Revenue Account that require a gas servicing certificate. **Graph 7** shows the percentage of inspections completed (as a solid line) in the current and previous quarters. The dotted line indicates the number of properties with gas safety certificates outstanding. One of the main reasons for failing to carry out a gas safety check is due to tenants failing to provide access to the gas maintenance contractor.



Average vacancy turnaround times

Void turnaround calculates the time taken from a property becoming vacant to it being re-let and a new tenant signing a tenancy agreement. This is a figure that is also provided to Central Government and they have a specific set of rules for how this figure is calculated. The council has a set target of 25 days (3.5 weeks) for the vacancy turnaround process, which is split between the following stages:

- The time taken for the Area Team or Co-op to make the property available for offer (e.g. carrying out repairs, lock changes, etc.). This period is known as the **Key Received (KREC) to Actual Completion Date (ACD) period** and has a target time of 13 days (excluding major works voids).
- The time taken by Lettings to re-let the property (from finding a suitable tenant to the new tenancy starting, including viewings). This period is known as the **Actual Completion Date (ACD) to Commencement of Tenancy (COT) period**.

In line with Government guidance major works voids are excluded from the KREC to ACD period and are instead counted only from the ACD to COT period.

Table 1 below displays the Quarter 1 average KREC to ACD turnaround time for each area team when major works voids are excluded from the calculation.

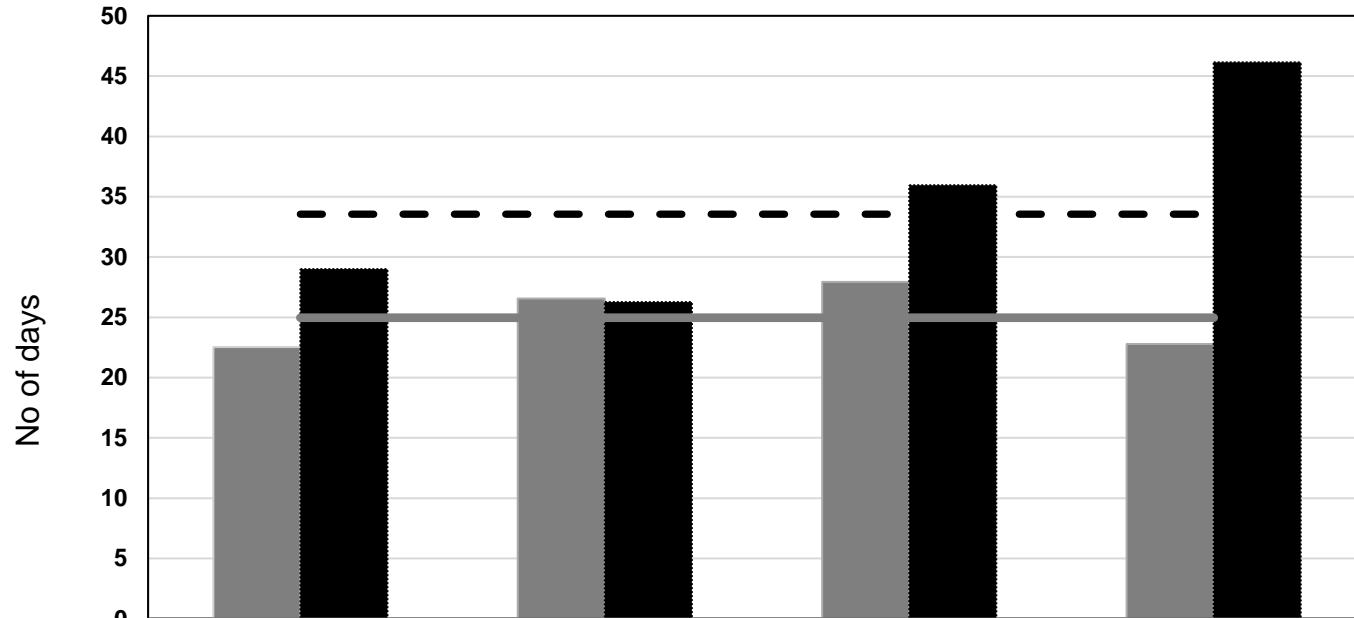
Table 2 below displays the Quarter 1 average ACD to COT turnaround time for all voids managed by the respective Area Teams.

Table 1	
Area Team	Average time taken between KREC and ACD (days)
Central	31.67
Eastern	31.14
Southern	18.60
Western	28.67

Table 2	
Area Team	Average time taken between ACD to COT (days)
Central	17.53
Eastern	16.64
Southern	24.94
Western	20.46

Graph 8 shows the performance for the previous two quarters broken down by the Area Teams. These figures show the total void period from vacation of a property to reletting including major works voids where only ACD to COT is used.

Graph 8: Void Turnaround by Area Team



Average no of days Q1 2021/22	22.53	26.55	27.94	22.78
Average no of days Q4 2020/21	29.00	26.26	35.96	46.14
Overall average Q1 2021/22	24.96	24.96	24.96	24.96
Overall average Q4 2020/21	33.55	33.55	33.55	33.55
Q1 2021/22 No of Properties	19	22	31	37
Q4 2020/21 No of Properties	17	34	25	21
Direction of travel	↑	↓	↑	↑

The overall void turnaround time (24.96 days) has improved significantly since the end of the previous quarter (33.55 days) and has seen the greatest improvement since Q4 16/17. During Q1 21/22, there was one 'harder to let' property which had 5 offers made before being accepted; without this property the turnaround time would improve to 23.57 days. Performance in the previous quarter had been largely impacted by significant delays in the lettings team in the allocation stage of the relet process, with the Western team particularly impacted by these delays. However, relet delays have reduced during Q1 21/22 leading to an overall improvement in the void turnaround time. The Council closely monitors the void turnaround time and further analysis into the void figures has highlighted long-term voids which are impacting average figures. Quarterly void meetings are in place to monitor performance and issues with harder to let properties.

Tenancy Enforcement

The Housing and Regeneration Department has a long-standing commitment to preventing and tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) to make estates and neighbourhoods safer. Our tenancy conditions provide a broad definition of ASB to reflect its wide-ranging nature. The tenancy conditions state that, *'we will take reasonable steps to investigate complaints and will take action where appropriate, we will also do all we can to help solve problems with neighbours and take firm action against neighbours who cause a nuisance'*.

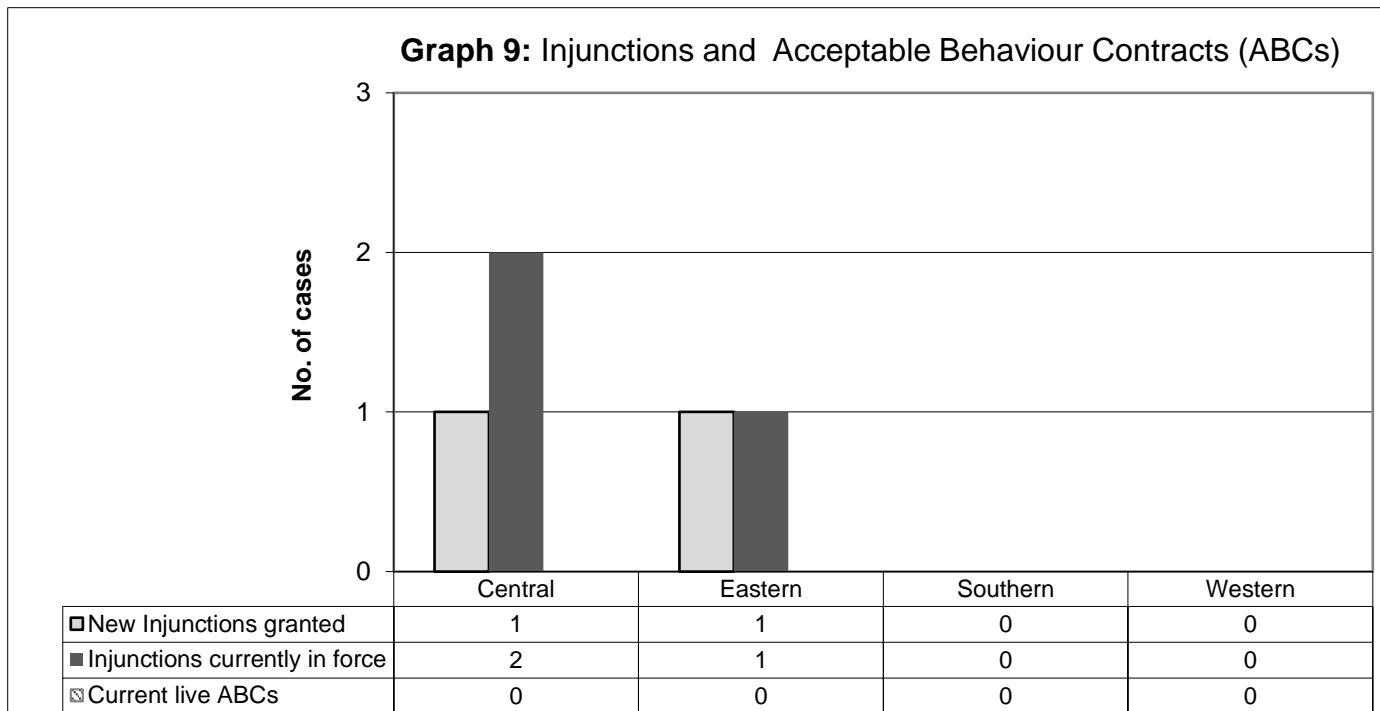
Examples of ASB which might cause the Council to take legal action against a resident include: using or threatening to use violence; hate crime or harassment due to race, religion, faith, disability, age, gender or sexual orientation; creating noise at a level that is intrusive or disturbing; drug dealing or alcohol/drug abuse. A full definition of ASB and the Department's approach can be found in our ASB policy statement which can be found on the Council's website - https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/media/5370/asb_housing_policy_statement.pdf. The following graphs show different kinds of enforcement action taken against residents for ASB. Data for all Area Teams is shown for comparison.

Injunctions and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs)

In cases where an individual continues to commit ASB the Council can apply to the County Court for an injunction; this aims to prevent them from committing further incidents of ASB. An injunction is normally granted for a specified period of time and can be granted against any person aged 10 and over. If an individual breaches the terms of the injunction this can be treated as 'contempt of court' for which the judge may impose a fine or prison sentence.

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) are used to prevent ASB and are generally voluntary agreements between a young person, their parents, the local authority, and the police. ABCs are used by the Council as a prevention tool to address problems of ASB before taking enforcement action. If an agreement is broken, then the relevant action will be taken which can include issuing an injunction or Notice of Seeking Possession.

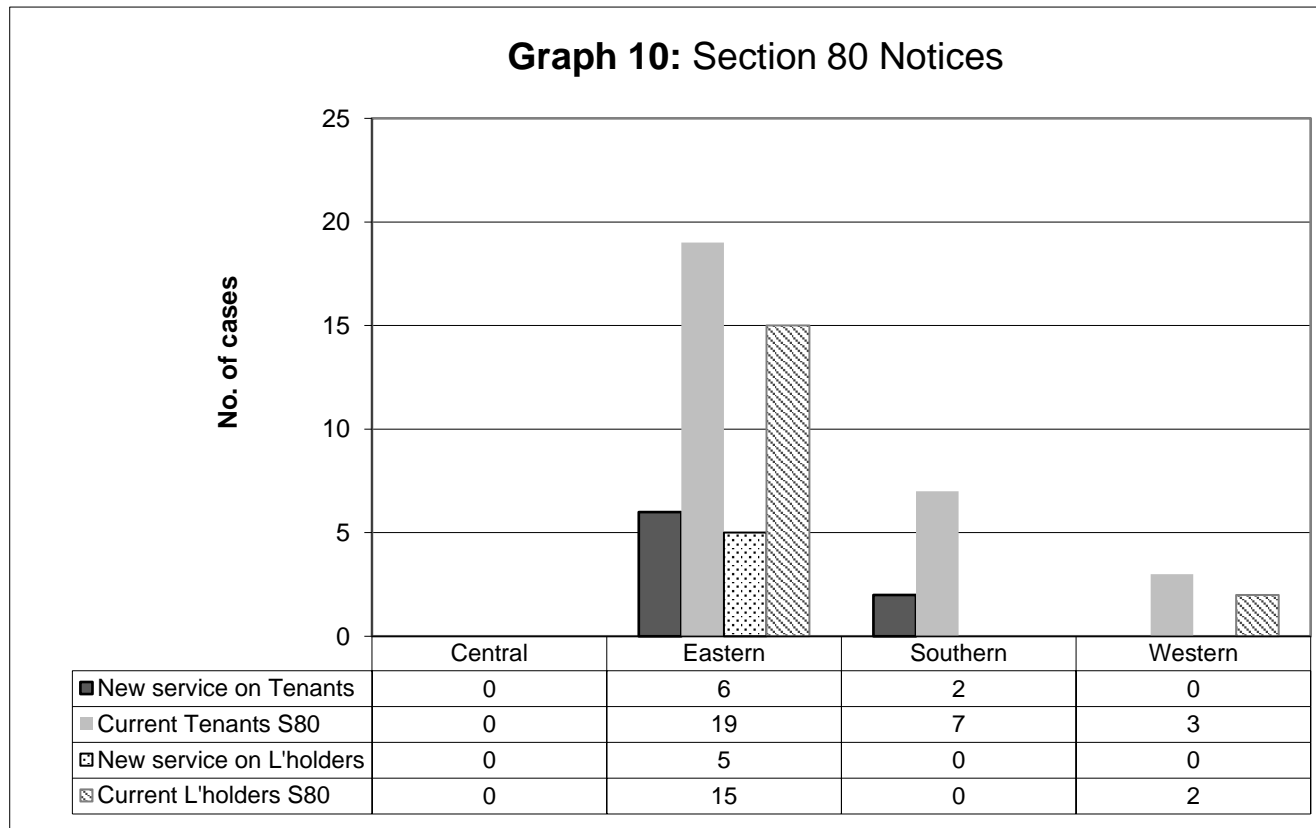
Graph 9 below shows the number of injunctions and ABCs issued for ASB across the Area Teams:



Section 80 Notices issued under the Environmental Protection Act 1990

Noise nuisance is one of the main types of ASB that is reported to the Council, and the Department aims to follow up 95% of noise complaints within 5 days. Where noise continues to be a problem an official warning will be served - this is called a Section 80 Abatement Notice. It can be served on any resident or person causing a statutory noise nuisance including tenants, leaseholders and their sub-tenants. If noise continues to be a problem and there is a further incident after a notice has been served court action can be taken, provided that sufficient evidence is available. If the perpetrator is then found guilty the court can impose a fine of up to £5,000 and/or authorise the seizure of equipment that caused the noise (e.g. speakers). This action alone does not result in eviction.

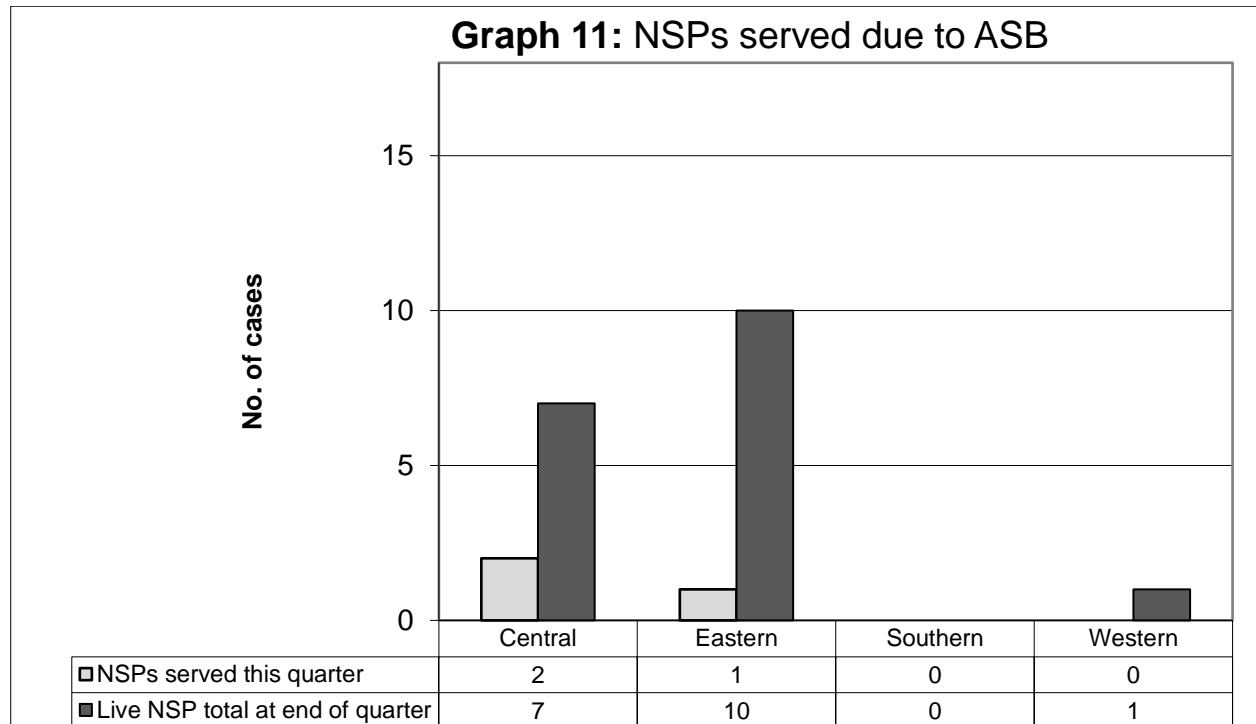
Graph 10 below shows the number of Section 80 Notices issued by Area Team for both tenants and leaseholders. The overall number of current Section 80 notices (46) has remained the same since quarter 4 2020/21.



Notice of seeking possession served on secure tenants - Housing Act 1985

The Council takes breaches of tenancy conditions seriously. If a Council tenant is found to have broken the terms of their tenancy a Notice of Seeking Possession (NSP) can be served on them where there is enough evidence to substantiate the facts of a breach. This is a formal warning from the Council that possession proceedings against the tenant will begin if there is any further breach within the following 12 months. If the tenancy breach is serious however court proceedings to gain possession of the property may begin straight away.

Graph 11 below shows the number of NSPs served during Q1, as well as a rolling total of live NSPs. The total number of live NSPs at the end of Q1 decreased from 24 in quarter 4 2020/21 to 18 in quarter 1 2021/22.



Possession Orders and Evictions

Where there has been a serious tenancy breach the Council can begin proceedings through the Courts to gain possession of a property, this can be for reasons of severe or continued ASB and/or high rent arrears. Often this is a last resort where intervention by the Council has failed to resolve an issue (e.g. NSP has been breached, continued noise after a S80 Notice, or failed intervention by the tenancy support service).

Due to the Coronavirus Act 2020, the issuing of possession orders and the enforcement of evictions were put on hold, and eviction proceedings were only initiated and enforced under the most serious of cases, such as antisocial behaviour and tenants having 6 month rent arrears. Since the 1st June 2021, notice periods, possession orders and the enforcement of evictions can be carried out for all eviction reasons. However, the number of possession orders issued, and evictions enforced is expected to be low throughout 2021/22, with no possession orders issued or evictions enforced during Q1 2021/22.

BUDGETARY PERFORMANCE

At the beginning of each financial year (April to March) housing management is allocated a number of budgets within which they are expected to repair and maintain the properties they manage. Housing management have a separate Engineering Services section to maintain and repair lifts, entry call systems, heating, etc, and an Estate Services section who maintain the communal parts of all estates and non-residential properties. The budget for the Area Teams is for the maintenance of tenanted properties and associated block repairs.

