

Resident Questions for Housing Area Panel

Department	Housing
Date question raised	24-03-2022
Date of Area Panel	18-03-2022
Area in city	West
Star rating applied by residents	3
Deadline for officer response	22-04-2022, 12pm
Name of officer responding	Justine Harris, Head of Tenancy Services Grant Ritchie, Head of Repairs and
Department / team	Tenancy Services and Repairs and Maintenance

Title of question: Avoiding empty homes

Issue raised by residents:

West residents are acutely aware of the hardship caused by shortage of housing in the city. They want the quickest possible turn around when properties become vacant.

Background:

Individuals know of properties in their areas that have been empty for some months, which raises concerns about how effectively the Council is managing this.

Action requested by residents:

Request reports at the May Area Panel covering:

- a. The turn-around time for void properties city-wide
- b. The cost of refurbishment and the time required to bring void properties up to a lettable standard.
- c. Information on what action is being taken by the Council to ensure empty properties are quickly re-let.

Officer Response:

- a) During 2021/22, the average re-let time for council homes was 91 calendar days, excluding time spent in major works. We have seen a significant improvement in our lettings activity which is moving back toward pre-pandemic levels. In 2021/22 there were 443 re-lets of previously occupied homes, and 42 new property lets. This compares with 213 re-lets during 2020/21 and 445 re-lets during 2019/20. As of 31/03/22 there were 251 empty council homes, which at the time would have been empty for 168

calendar days. These figures are sourced from the housing management IT system and apply to general needs and seniors housing dwellings owned by the council.

- b) Currently we estimate the average cost of an empty home repair to be £3,500. This will increase to approximately £7,500 if the works include the installation of a new kitchen / bathroom and/or a re-wire. On average an empty home repair will take 14 days from start to finish, however, individual properties will vary greatly dependent on the scale of works required.
- c) Additional contractor resource has been applied to empty home repairs and we are anticipating a return to more normal work in progress levels by Autumn 2022.

Officer contact details:

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Specific Action:

Continue to track voids and report back to Area Panel.

Timeline:

Start date: *April 2022*

End date: *Ongoing*