

To the Chairperson and Members
Of the Central Area Committee

14th September 2021

Housing Maintenance Report

Q1 What are the number of voids dealt with by Housing Maintenance and the number of voids given out to contractors?

Housing Maintenance (Direct Labour) deals with senior citizens' properties and bed sits (zero bed). Framework contractors refurbish houses and flats with one bed or more. The following figures show the who has refurbished what citywide and in the Central Area to date in 2021 and also what is currently being refurbished (figures valid to 13th August)

Refurbished in 2021:

Category	Central Area	Cabra	Rest of City	Total
Framework (Refurbished and Let)	36	32	258	326
Framework (Refurbished and available for letting)	55	2	73	130
Direct Labour (Refurbished and Let)	18	28	158	204
Direct Labour (Refurbished and available for letting)	4	4	18	26

Currently being Refurbished:

Category	Central Area	Cabra	Rest of City	Total
Framework	60	31	167	258
Direct Labour	30	15	104	149

Q2 How long does it take to complete the list of work to be done and then allocate to contractor?

A number of steps need to be completed before a list of works (Task Order) can be issued to a contractor. Once a tenant moves out keys and a Surrender of Tenancy need be given to Housing Maintenance. Housing Maintenance must also arrange for an Asbestos Survey for all properties built before 2000 (this applies to almost every property in the Central Area).

Housing Maintenance will often clear the property through Direct Labour before giving it to a contractor if there are lots of belongings left in the property. The reason for this is to control expenses but it does take longer to do this through Direct Labour than through

contractors. Where properties were cleared out by previous tenants in advance is no requirement for this stage but many properties come back in very poor condition with many belongings left in situ. The average timeframe from vacation of property to appointment of contractor citywide in 2020 was 6.7 weeks. This was 7.8 weeks in the Central Area. Note these figures relate to Framework performance only.

Q3 What is the average time between the unit becoming void to its re letting (not the time from contractor appointed to re letting)?

The average time is: (Based on 2020 full year data)

Stage	Average Time
Vacancy to Contractor Appointed	6.7 weeks
Refurbishment Works	11.3 week
Re-letting	5 weeks
Total	23 weeks

Note: re-letting times are based on tenant accepting property. This is an average time with variations between Areas and within Areas.

Q4 The report references difficulties in obtaining vacant possession? How many units are affected by this problem and what is the reason for this issue? In the case of disputed succession claims, how many/what proportion are upheld for claimant and how many/what proportion are eventually surrendered?

Housing Maintenance has a target of two weeks from vacancy to vacant possession (receipt of keys and surrender documents). In its ongoing efforts to achieve this Housing Maintenance will contact the relevant PEO as soon as a property is registered as vacant. However, there isn't a standard procedure in operation for tenants to return keys and many are afforded more time to move. Housing Maintenance receives keys within two weeks in fewer than 50% of cases. However, it does progress 100% of cases. A standard operating procedure would be beneficial in this regard.

Q5 Can good quality voids be let with the incoming tenant doing minor repairs rather than delaying the allocation pending on the contractors work?

As a landlord, Dublin City Council is obliged to have the property at the legal letting standard when the tenant enters a tenancy agreement. In addition, Framework rates are calculated on the proviso that contractors have vacant possession when carrying out works. Working in an occupied property is more expensive and issues such as child safety and extra Health and Safety requirements would come into play.

Q6 Can alterations made by the tenant (new doors/kitchens etc.) be left in situ for new tenant

All properties are assessed individually. Refurbishment works only bring the property up to legal letting standards. If a previous tenant put in a kitchen and bathroom and they can remain in situ with some minor repairs then that is the course of action we now take.



Q7. There appears to be a discrepancy in the figures from the Housing Maintenance Report and the Area Manager's report - can this be explained?

The Voids Manager gathers data from all sources – Areas, Rents, Depots, AMOs, Contractors, Allocations. This allows him to track the progress of all voids on a reliable basis. The data presented in July was up-to-date and accurate. It related to the Central Area and Cabra and may not have overlapped with the data presented by the Housing Manager.

Q8. Could we have monthly report on voids and vacancies on the Central Area Agenda with a progress report

The Central Area will arrange for the Voids Manager in Housing Maintenance to provide a monthly report.

Q9. I'm interested in the process of how Housing Maintenance deal with regular requests. Can you please detail this procedure? A significant number of requests appear to fall through the cracks and I'm wondering if improvements could be made to the system to ensure this doesn't continue to happen.

A Tenant can call Housing Maintenance Department by phone on 01-222 2222 or they can email maintenance@dublincity.ie

Every tenant has an account with the following details:

Name, Address, Contact number, previous address, length of time they are a Dublin City Council tenant.

All jobs are logged on a system called Anite which every depot has access to this. On receipt of jobs by the depot, they are allocated to the relevant personnel in each depot. Dublin City Council has 191 Flat complexes across the City, and 11,000 houses. We have 11 AMO's operating this service across the city.

We acknowledge the system has not operating as efficiently as we would like during the current pandemic, but we are currently working through all maintenance requests logged on our system.

It is important that maintenance requests are recorded on Anite by contacting Housing Maintenance, the Local Area Office or via a public representative. On occasion, in response to representations, we have found that maintenance requests have not been logged/recorded onto our Anite system and Housing Maintenance Section have no knowledge of works that may be required, therefore repairs can remain undone. Public representatives can email Housing Maintenance a list of maintenance issues for individual properties to be logged/record these onto your system and any follow up on the requests. We would require the tenants name, address, relevant details of the maintenance issue and their contact details in order for the depot to arrange an appointment with the tenant.

Q10. I understand a huge number of requests are made to Housing Maintenance on a monthly basis but I would be interested in what the department would consider a reasonable response time for a regular request.

As per the response time in our Tenant Handbook outlined below, we would consider a response time of 8 weeks a reasonable timeframe for a regular request.

- An Emergency - It will be followed up Immediately
- Urgent- up to 5 working days
- Routine – up to 8 weeks

Q11 Do we measure Housing Maintenance response times in comparison to timescales indicated in the DCC Tenants Handbook?

Yes we do measure response times to individual maintenance requests as per the response time in our DCC Tenant Handbook (outlined below). Although there are limitations to our current system, Anite, in measuring overall response time to requests.

- An Emergency – followed up immediately
- Urgent- up to 5 working days
- Routine – up to 8 weeks

Q12. Is there an option in the current system to inform a councillor when the repair work is complete?

Dublin City Council responds to all of its Councillors through email.

Q13. I would like the snag list issue report back that I asked about at the meeting. This is a serious concern and I was glad that the management agreed it was a good question when I raised it. He said he would look into it and report back.

The Voids Manager has put in place a better communication system with the Depots in relation to Voids. Depot AMOs used to be responsible for all Voids but the majority of Voids are now done by two specialist Voids AMOs. More information on the extent of works done on individual voids should be provided to the Depots. The Councillor has highlighted this need and steps are being taken to address it.

Q14. Maintenance issues and the length of time they take to be resolved.

- Emergency eg. No water/electricity/heating or if there is a roof leak, these maintenance issues would be taken care of immediately. If a planned programme of works is required such as replacing water pump the tenant is informed and these works are completed within 24/48 hours.
- Urgent- up to 5 working days: eg No Hot Water. While the tenant has running water in the home they may not have hot water, Dublin City Council would resolve this maintenance issue within 5 working days.
- Routine – up to 8 weeks eg Repairs to internal doors, replacing cistern are considered routine works and may take up to 8 weeks.



Q15. Maintenance issues not getting done tenants being told it may because they are in arrears on their account. I would like clarification on this.

If there is arrears on a tenants' account, they are legally entitled to water, heat & electricity.

Any other Maintenance works that fall into the routine category may have a longer lead in timeframe if there are arrears on the account. It is the responsibility of the tenant to liaise with the Rents Department and engage in a rental agreement, ensuring that payments are successfully paid, in full, on a weekly basis.

Q16. Names of the contractors we use and how many people they each have working for them. Like how many on each team of contractors.

The ten Framework Contractors are:

1. Owenbee
2. Westside
3. Richard Drumgoole
4. Ken Building
5. Academy
6. Raheen
7. Dudley Griffin
8. Weslin
9. Anzco
10. Des Adams

Details on staffing cannot be provided. However, this information must be provided by applicants when applying to get on the Framework and each contractor must pass suitability criteria before being admitted on the Framework.

Q17. What do the 10 contractors specialise in?

Before being admitted on the Framework, contractors must submit details of previous projects they worked on which are of a similar size, nature, scale and complexity to the work that is typically issued under the Framework. References are also provided for this work and applicants and scored against qualitative criteria. Applicants who achieve the minimum required score qualify for the Tender stage.

Award of future contracts from the Framework is dependent on a number of criteria including being able to consistently complete works to the satisfaction of the contracting authority (ie Dublin City Council)

Q18. The window and door replacement scheme what's the full situation on this. How many have we waiting on replacements and what funding is available?

We currently have 260 properties at different stages of manufacture in the workshop.

A further 91 properties have been assessed and measured. These are ready to be sent on to the shop floor for manufacture.

There are 749 properties that require assessment and awaiting assessment to see if joinery is required.

Q19. What maintenance jobs are not contracted out?

The majority of Maintenance Requests received by Housing Maintenance are not contracted out. A decision to contract out jobs is decided on a case by case basis, taking into account a number of factors, including available resources and the timeline for the job to be completed.

Q20. For housing adaptations for people with disabilities who are DCC tenants can I get a breakdown of staffing responsible for it and average wait times?

The Programme Manager is Paul Heffernan. The breakdown of staffing is as follows:

Programme Manager
Administration
Support Staff
Inspector
Clerk of Works

AVERAGE WAITING TIMES.

Substantial progress was made in reducing the waiting times for adaptations from 2018 to early 2020. However, the programme was disrupted significantly by the restrictions on construction activity that resulted from Covid 19.

However, emergency works still took place and the programme is fully operational again now. The backlog for stair lifts has been cleared and as these do not require surveying they can be sent for immediate medical assessment. There is no longer a backlog for ramps either and these now go for immediate survey once received and immediate medical assessment on completion of a survey.

Currently tenants wait approximately one year for surveying and medical assessment for showers and wet rooms with delivery of works normally taking a further 3 months. The average time for extensions takes approximately one year more. A programme is in place to work through the backlog. This will take time but is being dealt with.

The Voids Status report given in July is quite informative and comprehensive. I think it would be useful if we were to be given a summary of the basic information available on the system on a monthly basis. The status report section (2) would be useful

Q21. The number of contractors in the Framework is stated as 10. Are these all active/willing (given current demand) participants or basically just a list of "preferred" contractors.

All contractors are active and engaged. They are awarded jobs on the basis of KPIs built into the contract and on the basis of where they were ranked following the competitive tender process.



Q22. Is it feasible to put out a call to smaller contractors for inclusion on the list?

The Framework is well resourced and we are not struggling for contractors who are performing well. However, other contractors can only be engaged following a competitive public procurement process. The current Framework was established on 1st September 2020 and is valid for two years. The process of establishing the next one will commence in Q1 2022 and a notification will issue on eTenders.

Q23. How does a contractor get on the Framework list?

A tendering process was implemented for contractors to submit their proposals and certain criteria has to be met to be awarded a place on the framework list. The current framework runs for two years 2020-2022.

Q24. The average refurbishment time of 11 weeks (from 23) is, on the face of it, impressive but the "sting in the tail" is the statement that this is from the time the contractor sign off. What we need to know is how long does it, on average, take from TIME OF VACATING to time of re letting. Perhaps we could be given this information for 2020 and HY 2021 to get a better picture as we all have anecdotal evidence of flats taking over a year to retenant.

The average time is:

Stage	Average Time
Vacancy to Contractor Appointed	6.7 weeks
Refurbishment Works	11.3 week
Re-letting	5 weeks
Total	23 weeks

Note: re-letting times are based on tenant accepting property. This is an average time with variations between Areas and within Areas

Q25. The report presented to the CAC mentions "delays in getting vacant possession of properties in some parts of the city". Can we get further details on this? i.e. what parts of the city and what type of delays etc.

Housing Maintenance has a target of two weeks from vacancy to vacant possession (receipt of keys and surrender documents). In its ongoing efforts to achieve this Housing Maintenance will contact the relevant PEO as soon as a property is registered as vacant. However, there isn't a standard procedure in operation for tenants to return keys and many are afforded more time to move. Housing Maintenance receives keys within two weeks in fewer than 50% of cases. However, it does progress 100% of cases. A standard operating procedure would be beneficial in this regard.

The part of the city that it is most difficult to get vacant possession in is the NEIC. Contractors can also find it more difficult to work in this area because of issues such as difficulty finding parking, access to flat complexes can be more difficult as things such as fobs

and access codes change/go out of date, builders providers and suppliers are harder to access in the city centre.

Q26. Details of staffing levels in maintenance including skill/trades available.

Section	Title	No.
HSG MAINT ADMIN	Senior Executive Officer	1
	Administrative Officer	1
	Senior Staff Officer	1
	Staff Officer	1
	Clerical Officer	8
	Project Estate Officer	1
Voids Unit/Multi Unit Dev/ Adaption & Extensions		
	Administrative Officer	1
	Area Maintenance Officer	2
	Staff Officer	2
Multi Units Development		
	Senior Staff Officer	1
	Assistant Staff Officer	1
	Clerical Officer	1
Tenants Adaption & Extensions		
	Assistant Staff Officer	1
	Clerical Officer	1
Insurances & Claims	Senior Staff Officer	1
Hsg Maint – Technical		
	Senior Executive Engineer	1
	Executive Engineer	3
	Assistant Engineer	2
	Area Maintenance Officer	1
	Clerical Officer	1
Mechanical & Energy Efficiency		
	Senior Executive Engineer	1
	Executive Engineer	2
	Assistant Engineer	1
	Energy Liaison Officer	2
	Inspector	2
	Assistant Foreman/Foreman	2
	Clerical Officer	3
	Fitter	1
	Plumber	1
	Chargehand	2

There are a total of 465 staff in the 8 Depots and they are included by the following staff :

Area Maintenance Officers, General Operatives, Foreman, Plumbers, Plasterers, Brick Layers, Slaters, Charge hand, Drivers, Glaziers, Roofers, Time keepers.

Depot	Staff Number
Ballyfermot	23
Ballymun	21
Bannow Road	21
Cabra	28
Marks Lane	25
Portland Row	41
Sundrive	27
Newtown	22
Civic Maintenance	27
Steel Fab	21
Paint Squad	49
Workshop	18
Caretakers	142
Total Staff	465

Q27. Details of joinery section and cost benefit analysis vis a vis private contractors which, I understand, is in joinery section favour but would be good to use as an example of how in-house maintenance etc, can work better. (Please see attached report).

This is not available, however, the Audit Committee report gives a very good insight into the costings of the Joinery.

Q28. It would seem that the ongoing challenges referred to in the voids report are also applicable in maintenance performance. Can we get confirmation that this is the case?

Some of the challenges outlined in the voids report would be applicable to maintenance. The biggest challenge we have faced over the last 18 months is the impact on the current pandemic has had on our ability to provide a consistent service within the timelines specified in our tenant handbook.

The current pandemic has created many challenges in how we provide a service to our tenants. While continuing to provide a service, we have also to ensure that staff work safely during the current pandemic and perform their tasks in a healthy, safe and sound manner. We have had to put precautions and control measures in place, that are needed for staff to carry out their job correctly and safely. This has naturally this has had an impact on Housing Maintenance's ability to provide a service to our tenants over the last year.

Q29. A similar output/performance report would be useful if available

At present we don't have a similar report and there are issues with what data we have. But we are examining new systems that would make it more feasible to produce the required report.

Q30. Update on status and preparations for move to centralised depot would be good to get.

The existing Dublin City Council depot network consists of 37 depots spread across the city. The Council is planning to consolidate depot operations into two main depots – one serving the north city and one serving the south city. At present the North City Operations Depot (NCOD) is under construction with an expected completion date of late 2022 and it is likely to be operational in early 2023. This new central depot will consolidate 16 depots. When it is complete we propose develop the sites of nine existing depots that are located in residentially zoned areas. We are proposing to work in partnership with a number of Approved Housing Bodies for the development of these sites and expressions of interest are currently being sought.

Paul Heffernan
Administrative Officer
Housing Maintenance Section
Ph: 222 6024
paul.heffernan@dublincity.ie