

**Tenant Scrutiny Panel**

**Report on: Repairs – Right First Time**

**September 2019**

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1. **Acknowledgements**

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP) gratefully acknowledges the support, guidance and assistance provided by members of the Housing Team, including Glyn Jones, Rob Bartholomew, Samantha Granger, Nicol Picksley and Amanda Harper. The panel would also like to thank The Resident Involvement Team – Justin O’Brien, Peter Warren and Cllr Roger Bayliss, portfolio holder for Housing for his ongoing encouragement, support, and guidance. Also many thanks to tpas for delivering the training on this topic.

1. **Executive Summary**

The TSP made the decision to inspect the Right First Time element of Repairs as a result of analysing performance data (as reported by NWLDC) and the STAR Survey both of which revealed that the level of customer satisfaction was lower than expected.

1. **Strengths:**
	* The TSP is a group of six volunteers who are tenants of NWLDC. Individually they have different skill sets and as part of their aims and objectives seek to improve their skills and value to the group and to NWLDC by identifying development needs and attending relevant training.
	* Each TSP member recognises the importance of adopting a flexible attitude and approach and each displays a high level of commitment to their voluntary involvement in working with NWLDC to improve Housing services to tenants and streamline processes.
	* The TSP mission is to be a “critical friend” to the Council, facilitating service improvements for Council tenants whilst improving tenants’ perception of their landlord.
	* The TSP uses differing methodologies to analyse data, collect evidence, report on outcomes and make recommendations to NWLDC to enable changes and improvements to be implemented.
2. **Vision and Strategy:**

The vision of the TSP is to increase its knowledge of NWLDC’s ways of working, and policies and procedures in order to be able to strengthen the group’s knowledge and improve its offer to tenants and NWLDC alike and to play a strategic part in the way services are delivered and improved in the future.

1. **Report**

The TSP has reported on its findings as factually as possible and without any bias. Our inspection has, on occasion, increased awareness of the complexity of the work done by NWLDC and other agencies

1. **Methodology**

The Group benefited from training, interviews and discussions with officers, shadowing of an operative and various other ways of investigating the topic, as follows:

* Tpas training on the topic of Right First Time.
* Reviewed NWLDC performance data for the previous three years on Right First Time.
* Examining definitions of this topic by researching other housing agencies.
* Posted on tpas and Housemark forums to identify what other housing providers’ definitions of Right first Time were.
* Reviewed Octavia Housing Association’s Scrutiny Panel report on ‘Understanding First Time Fix’.
* Consulted virtual panel of tenants who gave their views of what Right First Time means to them
* Set questions for various officer of the Asset Management team and recorded their responses.
* A member of TSP spent time with the AMSO team to understand their roles.
* TSP member shadowed an operative (Electrician) to understand how Right First Time was understood in that context
* Attended various working meetings to review data etc.
1. **Aim of the Exercise**

To investigate why customers were reporting low satisfaction levels in respect of the Right First Time (RFT) element of the Repairs service and suggest recommendations to improve how NWLDC could improve on this aspect of their repairs service to tenants.

1. **Findings**
2. Accompanied visit to do electrical check – mutual exchange final inspection visit took place at the same time as operative was carrying out full electrical test.
3. NWLDC currently uses Housemark definition of RFT – albeit informally.
4. There are some concerns regarding the robustness of Housemark reports due to lack of audit of data – so there is no true comparison (eg apples vs apples)
5. TSP became aware that post inspections are not carried out for all responsive work and indeed less than 5% of responsive work is post inspected
6. TSP are aware that different trades carry different van stocks to reflect the work of the user/operative. We also understand that these levels are reported as used to initiate re-ordering.
7. TSP are aware that the NWLDC uses one supplier (Travis Perkins) who may use different suppliers to obtain goods but all will be paid for through Travis Perkins.
8. All new AMSO’s receive a corporate induction with accompanying booklet but there is additional induction and training relevant to role. It is good to see a robust training programme is available for AMSO’s.
9. TSP are aware that there is a full and comprehensive review of Repairs Policy in the pipeline in early 2020.
10. The TSP are aware operatives are not currently empowered to change the jobs that have been allocated if there has been an error in reporting or a misdiagnosis of the job.
11. NWLDC employs electricians, carpenters, plumbers and roofers. Operatives are usually multi-skilled with the Council tending to use employed skilled operatives to provide training to colleagues to improve their skills. It is NWLDC’s preference to use multi skilled operatives in order to get optimum value from the team.

**9 Recommendations:**

1. The TSP recommend that the NWLDC formally adopt the Housemark definition of Right First Time as it stands.
2. The TSP recommends that when the current contract with Travis Perkins is reviewed NWLDC take all measures necessary to ensure that value for money is assured no matter where goods are obtained from by that supplier.
3. With regard to the planned comprehensive review of the Repairs Policy, the TSP would recommend that meaningful consultation with tenants is carried out – this to include the Tenant Scrutiny Panel.
4. The TSP is fully in favour of upskilling operatives using skilled operatives as trainers but would recommend that all informal training is recorded for each individual so that achievement of desired result can be monitored and reviewed with operatives.
5. The TSP recommend that for 10% of all responsive repairs jobs under the value of £200 there is a telephone call to check the quality of work and all repairs over £200 are visited for a quality check.
6. The TSP recommend that a performance target is set for RFT of 86% (To be reviewed annually) and this is reported in Intouch with other KPIs and shared with the Landlord Services Working Groups on a quarterly basis.
7. The TSP recommend that operatives should be empowered to carry out any job that has been misdiagnosed or misreported if it is within their capabilities and there is enough time allocated to the job.

Janet Higgins, Chair, On behalf of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel

NWLDC/TSP/2019 Right First Time Report