

Programme of Works to Council Housing Stock
2017/18 Budget

£'000

Responsive Repairs

1	Responsive Repairs	2,200
2	Garage Repairs	50
3	Estate Maintenance	100
4	Temporary Accommodation	140
5	Voids (includes £400k Capital work)	1,325

Planned Programmes

6	Tenants Improvement Fund	100
7	Gas Servicing and domestic legionella checks	330
8	Essential Cyclical	270
9	Pensioner Decorations	130
10	Common Areas	160
11	Garages Planned Maintenance	60
12	Electrical Checks	110
13	External Repairs and Decorations	1180
14	Health and Safety Risk Assessments - Reducing risk following surveys	50

Major Capital Works

15	Special adaptations	390
16	Roofs/Structural Works	250
17	Rewiring	440
18	Smoke detector replacement	50
19	Windows and Doors	300
20	Central Heating and Boilers	1000
21	Fire Protection works	80
22	Insulation	80
23	Kitchens & Bathrooms	1800
24	Door Entry Systems	30
25	Communal Lighting	200
26	Asbestos / legionella	500
27	Decent Neighbourhoods Works	275
28	Hexham Road Flats	1,400
29	Coley water mains	600
30	Lifts	176
31	Storage heaters	360
32	Major Repairs	460
33	Communal Flooring	100
34	Feasibility	50

35	Contingencies	400
		<u>15146</u>

£15,146,000 WORKS TO COUNCIL STOCK 2016-2017

RESPONSIVE REPAIRS

1 Responsive Repairs £2,200,000

Benchmarking costs against other social providers (with similar size and type of stock) shows that repair costs have remained comparatively low, this can be attributed to an investment in planned and replacement programmes over many years. This aside however, there has been an increase in the number of jobs as well as in the cost of jobs across all trades. This year's budget is levelled to reflect annual spend, which is believed to have now peaked and will fall slightly in future years due to planned investment in the housing stock through cyclical maintenance and replacement of failing components.

Repairs are delivered predominantly by an in-house workforce, with some works (to allow for fluctuations in volumes) and specialist services delivered externally. Improvements to the service include:

- Continued standardisation of parts to reduce costs
- Improvements in IT/asset management systems - this has improved data and allows more in-depth repairs/cost analysis
- Control of high cost jobs and the development of new programmes of work to redirect investment to planned work
- Batched gutter cleaning works to reduce use of scaffolding cost
- Use of new types of scaffold system which are quicker and easier to use and more cost effective
- Additional and improved Health and Safety provision and monitoring, and training on legislation
- Improved specifications for work
- Improved customer feedback mechanisms
- Extended guarantees on boilers
- Increased budget on door replacements to reduce carpentry costs
- Continuing to deliver reactive repairs services to Wokingham Borough Council

2. Responsive Garage Repairs £50,000

This budget is for the provision of day-to-day repairs to the 1060 garages.

3. Estate Maintenance £100,000

A Tenant Services controlled budget to attend to day-to-day estate management issues and repair needs.

4 Temporary Accommodation £140,000

A budget used for the repair and maintenance of temporary accommodation properties. Last year budgets increased by £40,000 to anticipate bigger demand for repairs due to newly refurbished temporary accommodation coming back into use in recent years, increasing the number of properties available.

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5 Voids £1,325,000

Work is carried out at a change of tenancy so that homes can be re-let to new tenants in a safe state and to an approved standard. Funding remains steady and reflects the aim of keeping a good balance between expenditure, re-let times and re-let standards. This budget anticipates no change in specification.

PLANNED PROGRAMMES

6 Tenants Improvement Fund (Tenant's Choice) £100,000

This budget is used by tenants groups to provide local improvements to council estates. Previously this has been used to improve lighting, notice boards and mobility access, as well as to add security features, tarmac paths and improved signs. It has also been spent on drying and bin areas in the borough. This budget is marketed as "tenant choice" at the request of resident groups and managed by the Tenant Services team.

7. Gas Servicing £330,000

A landlord is legally required to make every reasonable effort to carry out gas checks every 12 months or at change of tenancy to all landlord owned gas appliances/ properties with gas meters. The number of gas services required each year will increase as more properties switch from electric to gas heating. Currently 4652 properties require services/ checks annually. There is 100% compliancy with the gas safety regulations and there have not been any overdue gas services in the last two years.

8. Essential Cyclical Inspections £270,000

This budget covers work in the following areas and has remained unchanged for five years:

- Basic lift maintenance and safety certification
- Warden call system maintenance
- Fire alarms, dry risers
- Fire extinguisher maintenance
- Checks and repairs to door entry systems
- Burglar alarms
- Communal lights maintenance
- Communal TV aerials maintenance
- CCTV

9. Pensioner Decorations £130,000

This is a three year cyclical programme with the stock divided into three geographical areas. This year's programme includes Church and Whitley, and areas of the PFI. Work is carried out by outside contractors and 259 addresses will be visited.

To be eligible, customers must be of pensionable age or receive a disability benefit and have no-one to carry out the work for them. The service is only provided where the condition of the existing decoration is poor.

Tenants receive a pre-work visit to:

- Ensure eligibility
- Discuss choices in colour and finishes

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10. Common Areas £160,000

A seven year cyclical programme is set, whilst maintaining additional budget for highly trafficked or vandalised areas in exceptional cases. This year looks at parts of Grove Road, 54, 56 Granville Road, Southcote Lane Wates flats, Windermere Road flats, The Dell and Virginia Way.

11. Planned Maintenance to Garages £60,000

Garage maintenance is done on a seven year cycle of planned maintenance. This budget is to keep garage sites in a lettable condition to maintain the revenue stream and the asset. Over the last decade investment in garages has much improved the appearance of estates and removed areas of neglect. Numbers of garages have fallen in recent years as sites are redeveloped or land is included in regeneration projects (such as at Dee Park). Last year planned maintenance was carried out to garages North of the Thames. This year Woodley, Hexham Road estate and Windermere Road will benefit.

12. Periodic Electrical Checks £110,000

An electrical check was, until two years ago, carried out every ten years or at a change of tenancy. Good practice has been reviewed at national level and now suggests checks should be made every 5 years. The electrical checks programme has been upgraded to move towards this and it is intended that the target of a 5 year programme will be met in two years' time. The data collected from the electrical checks is used to inform the rewiring programme and to upgrade and renew smoke detectors.

13. External Repairs and Decoration £1,180,000

Typically this includes a repair package, looking at the outside fabric of the homes and carrying out suitable improvements or repairs to:

- Roofs, down pipes and gutters and vent pipes
- Brickwork
- Windows and doors
- Porches, sheds
- Repairs to kitchens

An external painting programme follows the repair programme. Painting is subject to weather conditions and stops during the winter period.

Work is carried out on a rolling 7 year cycle, which this year is planned to cover Christchurch Gardens, Trinity Place, Isis Court, 125 Basingstoke Rd, Woodlands Court, Burford Court and Hexham Road estate (excluding the 4 storey blocks which are mid-way through a 5 year redevelopment programme).

14. Health and Safety Risk Assessment £50,000

This covers work requests following stock surveys that historically have been included as day to day repairs but are now separated out and separately managed. This is done to ensure work is completed (even when refused or access is difficult) and to ensure follow up visits can be made where necessary to support the customer and their needs or to monitor the home to ensure it is not damaged. Typically works include:

- Resolving major damp or monitoring it and offering advice
- Involving the Tenant Services Team where there are support needs
- Eliminating risk of fall from heights or stairs

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MAJOR / CAPITAL REPAIRS

15. Special Adaptations £390,000

The purpose of this budget is to provide adaptations to properties in order to improve living conditions for customers with disability or mobility needs. The majority of the budget is spent on adapting bathrooms. Out of a stock of 5484, 460 currently have adapted level access showers.

16. Roofs and Structural £250,000

This budget is for:

- Structural repairs and monitoring and tree control.
- £15,000 gully cleaning of accessible housing surface water gullies
- Roof replacements

Component lifetimes in the assessment of a decent home suggest that roof coverings should be considered old at 50 years of age for houses and bungalows and 30 years of age for flats. Reading has for many years had a 7 year cyclical planned programme repairing all roofs as part of the external repairs and decorations contracts and as a result of this strong maintenance programme the level of disrepair to roofs is low.

17. Rewires £440,000

Condition rather than age drives the rewiring budget. The need for full rewires has decreased and the focus has switched to upgrading systems. Rewires tend to be partial, focusing on circuit board replacement and socket upgrades. Selection for these upgrades is on the recommendation of the electric's team (following electrical checks) rather than from general building surveys.

Electric checks are done either as planned checks or checks at change of tenancy. As electrical checks are moving towards every 5 years rather than 10 years a rise in electrical works is anticipated for five years and only then a fall in the level of electrical repairs.

18. Smoke Detector replacement £50,000

Smoke detector replacement is generated from electrical checks, Decent Homes checks, Gas service checks and specific checks of electrically heated homes.

Replacement smoke alarms were fitted in over 1000 properties in 2016 and it is expected that a further 750 will be replaced in 2017.

19. Window and Doors Replacements £ 300,000

Half of all carpentry repair costs relate to doors. 2016 was the start of an extensive door replacement programme, looking at 100 doors in the first year and 520 in the following two years. Each door is individually surveyed. This should lead to a marked reduction in carpentry costs in day to day repairs. Windows are generally replaced on a thirty to forty year programme. Most were replaced from 1986 onwards, replacing comparatively few before 1991 but then the numbers increased. The replacements currently planned are generally to redress parts availability or isolated problems of condition. In 2017 new windows will be fitted to Field Road and Garnet Road flats

20. Boilers and Heating £1,000,000

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The high investment made in this area in past years has contributed to a considerable saving in annual repair costs resulting from:

- A fall in the number of gas engineers employed to carry out repairs and servicing
- Fuel efficiency of homes increasing
- Extended parts and labour guarantees of up to 10 years on new boilers.

The replacement of boilers is fixed on a 15-year plan and full systems every 30 to 40 years.

The budget initially focused on boilers but in the last four years the focus has generally been on replacing full systems. Since 2010 1526 boilers (out of 4341) have been replaced. In 2017, 290 boilers and heating systems will be upgraded and communal boilers will be replaced at Tyrell Court and Trinity Place sheltered housing.

21. Fire Protection Works £80,000

The focus on fire protection works is the start of a four year programme to upgrade fire alarm systems at a number of sheltered housing blocks. Systems are currently being replaced at Tyrell Court and Christchurch Court. In 2017 fire alarm systems will be replaced at Trinity Place and Padley Court.

22. Insulation / Energy £80,000

Loft and cavity insulation remain the most cost effective measures that can be applied to the housing stock to reduce carbon footprint and counter fuel poverty and associated health issues. There are 3000 lofts in the housing stock. 1700 lofts have been reinsulated in the last 7 years. With the exception of a few refusals all lofts have 100mm minimum of insulation, the 800 lofts with less than 250 mm of loft insulation will be targeted for an upgrade in the next three years. A separate budget outlines the commitment to investment in communal lighting and improving insulation to cross wall housing and flats. Heating systems have also benefitted from high investment levels. When benchmarked against 25 similar organisations Reading has the most energy efficient housing stock, which helps address fuel poverty in council homes.

23. Kitchens and Bathrooms £1,800,000

Kitchens and bathrooms will be replaced across all areas of the borough based strictly on the condition of existing facilities (and their age).

In the last 7 years half of all kitchens (2889) have been replaced and over a third of all bathrooms (1983). The business plan budgets for a replacement kitchen every 20 years and bathroom replacements every 30 years.

There are 1203 kitchens and 1114 bathrooms identified as due for replacement in the next 5 years and will require £1.8m investment annually for the next five years to address this.

Kitchen renewals involve adequate electrical sockets, storage and surfaces. New kitchens take account of the size and range of tenant's 'white goods' and aims to accommodate these (space permitting). The kitchen specification aims to offer a long design life to kitchens, for example, by using thicker kitchen carcasses, hinges that open doors 180 degrees and metal draw runners, whilst at the same time offering better tenant choice. All taps for kitchens and bathrooms are lever taps these permit easier use for arthritic tenants. The aim is to strike a responsible balance between modernisation and cost. Oak and white are new colour options added in recent months to the kitchen door options. Policy on standard bathrooms now offers shower facilities and an upgraded appearance of sanitary wares all of which show a commitment to modern standards in line with tenants' wishes, but will result in increased repair costs over the longer term.

24. Door Entry Systems £30,000

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This budget upgrades and replaces older door entry systems rather than fitting new systems. Addresses are not pre decided. The programme responds to systems that become inoperable and irreparable as the year progresses.

25. Communal Lighting £200,000

Investment in communal lighting results in substantial returns both in terms of the energy saved and in a reduction of the number of electrical repairs to failing lights and fittings.

In the last three years lighting has been replaced in most of our major blocks and sheltered blocks. Lights dim to a tenth of their energy output and only fully activate when they detect movement. They are fully guaranteed for 5 years and are LED low energy fittings.

In the coming year new lights will be fitted to Hadrian's Walk West, Sampage Road 4 storey blocks, Granville Road 8 storey blocks, Redland Road flats, Coley Place and Bamburgh Close (evens)

It is expected that the whole of the sum invested will be recovered within four years as a result of energy savings and reduced repair costs. 25% of all electrical repairs in 2010 related to communal lighting repairs. This figure fell to 9% last year but then began to rise slightly. (Accordingly conventional bulbs are being bulk changed to respond to this rise). A planned bulb change program was carried out in 2012 to all communal lights not in a replacement programme and the same is planned in early 2017.

26. Asbestos and Legionella £500,000

This year surveys and measures continue and the budget has reduced by £100K to reflect the fall in Legionella surveys and subsequent work that occurs every 5 years. The asbestos spend remains unchanged.

27. Decent Neighbourhood Funding £275,000

This budget is designed to make small improvements that improve the neighbourhood for tenants. The Strong investment choices follow from developing clearer plans for neighbourhood renewal and improvement. With this in mind, full surveys of all blocks and communal areas have been commissioned and a dedicated officer has the responsibility of checking the needs of safety requirements in communal space. Stock needs of drying areas and paths, lighting and landscape and boundaries are also considered. Within communal areas, entry doors, door closers, mat wells, stairs and balustrades, finishes, stores, security and refuse disposal are also looked at .

The Stock Survey team work closely with Tenant Services and Building Maintenance to develop a detailed improvement programme.

28. Hexham Road Estate Flats £1,400,000

This budget is for a flagship project over five years to greatly improve the four storey block properties at Hexham Road Estate. This affects 135 flats in total and each year work is carried out on a block of 27 flats.

Work is required to resolve fire stopping issues, cladding/structural faults, provide new windows, add new wall insulation and address concerns relating to asbestos and its removal. To complete the work, tenants are moved out on a temporary basis whilst curtain walls are taken down and rebuilt. Work has just completed at 2 to 54 Bamburgh Close and in 2017 Kielder Court (38 to 90 Hexham Rd) will be refurbished - leaving two of five blocks to be refurbished thereafter.

29. Coley Water Main £600,000

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The initial spend in year one of this programme to replace the water mains at Wensley Road high rise blocks is anticipated at circa £600,000. The work is being carried out to reduce leaks from the existing failing system and to achieve compliance with recent regulations. The programme will take 3 years and will cost circa £1.8 million in total.

30. Lifts £176,000

An extensive survey of lifts was undertaken 5 years ago to provide better long-term investment planning. Surveys continue to be undertaken and the provision of alternative lifts at Sheltered blocks has done much to improve the welfare needs of customers should an individual lift fail. In 2017 the focus will be on lifts at Burford Court and St Stevens Court and work will continue at Wierside Court (new second lift).

31. Storage Heaters £360,000

Fitting new heating systems to Granville Road 8 storey flats, replacing any older type storage heaters with gas central heating. The programme reaches its second year and new systems should allow better heating control, reduced condensation and lower running costs.

32. Major Repairs £460,000

Major repairs are batched together for increased efficiencies. Work includes a variety of projects such as replacing fencing, flooring, damp treatments etc.

33. Communal Flooring £100,000

£100,000 of the budget is earmarked to provide new flooring, replacing badly damaged flooring or concrete finished. This investment is a response to customer feedback from a tenant survey which highlighted the appearance of communal areas as an area of concern for customers.

34. Feasibility £50,000

To look at options for modifying, demolishing, change of use or development of stock, or to support bids for grants

35. Contingencies £400,000

A contingency in case of unforeseen events is set every year at £400,000.