

Finance and Resources Committee

10:00am, Thursday 23 May 2019

Edinburgh Shared Repairs Service Progress Report – Financial Year 2018/2019

Item number	7.16
Executive/routine	
Wards	
Council Commitments	

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That Committee:
 - 1.1.1 Notes the update on the progress of Edinburgh Shared Repairs Service (ESRS) in the financial year 2018/2019;
 - 1.1.2 Notes the performance summary Appendix 1; and
 - 1.1.3 Note the examples of Customer Feedback in Appendix 2;

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Executive Director of Resources

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Edinburgh Shared Repairs Service Progress Report – Financial Year 2018/2019

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides details on the operational progress of the Edinburgh Shared Repairs Service (ESRS) for the financial year 2018/19.

3. Background

- 3.1 The new ESRS became fully operational in 2017. The financial year 2018/19 was the first full year of operation and this report gives an overview of performance during that period.

4. Main report

Service Operation

- 4.1 The implementation of the new process for ESRS to share absent owners' details with the lead owner in tenements has been reviewed by the Information Governance Unit (IGU) and approved by the Head of Property and Facilities Management. IGU commended the robust nature of the proposed process, which is ground-breaking being the first for any Local Authority in Scotland. This has removed one of the obstacles many owners face when arranging common repairs. The process has been implemented, staff have been trained and the website information is live.

Communications

- 4.2 The Spring 2019 communications plan for the Service is currently underway. This plan included 100 lamp post wraps, leaflet drops to 16,000 tenement flats in hot spots of the city, social media posts on Facebook and Twitter, digital ads and radio advertising. There has been a significant increase in website downloads as a result.
- 4.3 The ESRS manager attended a further meeting of the Parliamentary working group on Maintenance of Tenement Scheme Property (WG) in March. This follows publication of the draft recommendations and a consultation period. The next step is

to formally submit the WGs' final recommendations to the Housing Minister for a debate in parliament later this year.

- 4.4 The ESRS Manager and the Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee also attended the Tenement Action Group meeting in March which feeds into the WG.
- 4.5 The ESRS manager has delivered presentations at the Chartered Institute of Housing Annual conference in Glasgow, the Scheme of Assistance forum of Scotland's Housing Network and a Home Energy Scotland Landlord event. In partnership with Under One Roof, ESRS officers had a stall and delivered a presentation to Landlords at an event in the Grassmarket. Several more events are scheduled throughout the coming year including an event for both tenement owners and Edinburgh school children at City Chambers on 13 and 14 May.

ESRS Workload Update

- 4.6 The total number of cases in ESRS has reached 196. Of the 196 cases, 44 are open and 152 have been closed, with successful intervention on 141 cases and 11 completed projects. Successful intervention represents 72% of the total number of cases. 26 have reached enforcement, representing 13% of all cases.

ESRS Panel Decisions

- 4.7 The Project Panel has taken a total of 53 decisions. A review of the reasons for enforcement action has shown that of the 26 cases, 20 are due to non-engagement between owners including the lack of a lead owner. In six cases, ESRS progressed the case due to Health & Safety concerns and/or previous hand over from the Emergency service.

4.8 ESRS Collaboration with Housing & Place Development

There continues to be ongoing consultation between ESRS and colleagues in Place Development in relation to the delivery of the Mixed Tenure Improvement Strategy. This follows approval of recommendations to the Housing & Economy Committee in January 2019. ESRS have currently agreed to provide the Case Officer support for one project. ESRS are developing a new process for payment of the Council's share of privately arranged common repairs into owners' maintenance accounts using the Missing Share process as a basis.

The Missing Share Scheme

- 4.9 The Missing Shares scheme continues to be popular and invaluable to owners when undertaking common repairs privately. There have been 21 missing share applications received by ESRS in 2018/2019. Tenement repairs in these cases have benefitted 207 owners in total. The value of work enabled privately through the scheme amounts to £711,900. In half of these cases the missing share owner has paid the monies due prior to the Council making the payment which is a positive outcome of the scheme.

Private work enabled by ESRS

- 4.10 The total value of works confirmed by owners as having been completed privately, or in progress, amounts to approximately £1.2m. This is in addition to the value of works for Missing Shares projects. The total value of works enabled by ESRS amounts to approximately £2.2m. The total financial commitment by the Council to date on these cases is approximately £56,800. This amount is recoverable.

The Enforcement Service

- 4.11 Of the total 26 projects enforced, 11 projects have been completed on site and billed out. 15 projects are progressing at different stages through enforcement. Refreshingly, given the inherited legacy issues, there has not been one recorded complaint on the new services' activity in this area.

The Emergency Service

- 4.12 The number of service requests (SR's) in 2018/2019 reached 1,163. The service attended to one incident where a pedestrian received a minor injury due to falling masonry.

ESRS Finance Update

- 4.13 Appendix 1 includes charts to demonstrate overall billing and debt outstanding. This shows that 95% of all invoices issued for all recoverable services have been paid, are in instalment plans or have registered inhibition orders. Of the paid enforcement works invoiced, 87% were paid within three months of billing the owners.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The Service will continue to evolve and processes and procedures are reviewed as business as usual through lessons learnt.
- 5.2 Consideration is being given to re-introduce a charge for the provision of outstanding debt information in relation to statutory notices, to solicitors and search companies during the conveyancing process.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The forecast budget for ESRS has been reduced to £0.77m for 2019/2020 as approved by the ESRS Board in December 2018, which has allowed ESRS to contribute to the wider budget saving proposals for 2019/20.
- 6.2 The bad debt provision for ESRS for 2018/19 will be re-assessed after the year end.
- 6.3 On 21 February 2019, the Council approved the revised fees and charges for ESRS, these are now implemented for works carried out after 1 April 2019.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 Customer feedback is an important tool for ESRS, it allows ESRS to reflect on process and procedure. ESRS has had positive feedback in 2018/19, appendix 2 includes examples of feedback received by the service.
- 7.2 The Scottish Government Consultation is now open for Short Term Lets, the consultation can be accessed by the link below:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/short-term-lets-consultation-regulatory-framework-scotland/>
- 7.3 A report to Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, on 14 May 2019, provides an update on the Councils position in relation to Short Term Lets. The report includes the enforcement action taken by the Council to date and measures being considered to introduce a licensing system and policy changes at a national level.
http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/60692/item_72_-_short_term_lets

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Report to City of Edinburgh Council, 12 February 2015, Shared Repairs Services -Development of a New Service.](#)
- 8.2 [Report to City of Edinburgh Council 11 December 2014, Shared Repairs Services -Development of a New Service -](#)
- 8.3 [Edinburgh Shared Repairs Service – Missing Share](#) – report to Finance and Resources Committee, 5 September 2017

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1: ESRS Annual Performance Slides
- 9.2 Appendix 2: Customer Feedback examples

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Edinburgh Shared Repairs Service

Edinburgh Shared Repairs Service Performance Update

2018/19 Performance Headlines

- First Local Authority to implement a process to share Absent owners details
- Only Local Authority to be on the Parliamentary Working Group for '*Tenement Maintenance*'
- Consultation with Housing on ESRS model
- No Customer complaints on any enforced project

Examples of Customer Feedback

- '*Great to have a supportive process from our Council.....*'
- '*I wanted to share the appreciation and to remind their members of the fabulous support you offer.....*'
- '*This Service really is so important.....*'
- '*Expectations exceeded and timescales eliminated. scored 5/5.....*'
- '*Your Service was First Class.....*'

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2018/19 Performance Headlines

Edinburgh Shared Repairs Service

Edinburgh Shared Repairs Service Performance Update

Customers	
Phone Calls	7,077
E-mails	3,924
Solicitor Enquiries	4,995
Total Contacts made	15,996

Website Views & Downloads	
Website Views	52,600
Tenement Toolkit	6,800
Missing Share	7,800

Emergencies Attended	
Masonry Falls	161
Dangerous Roofs	87
Drainage	903
Fire	5
Police	7
Number of Invoices raised	8,700

<u>Missing Shares</u> Applications in 18/19	Total Owners affected	Value of Works enabled by the Scheme	Total Missing Share Owners	Financial Commitment by CEC
21	207	£711,900	27	£32,316

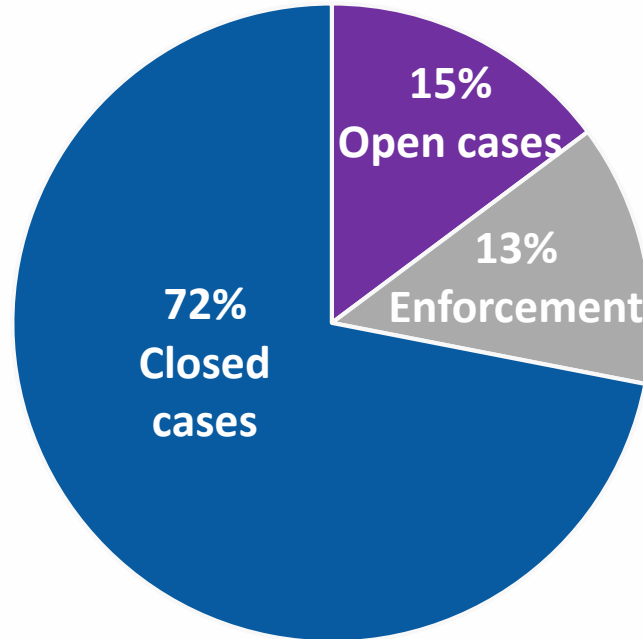
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Overall Performance Headlines

Edinburgh Shared Repairs Service

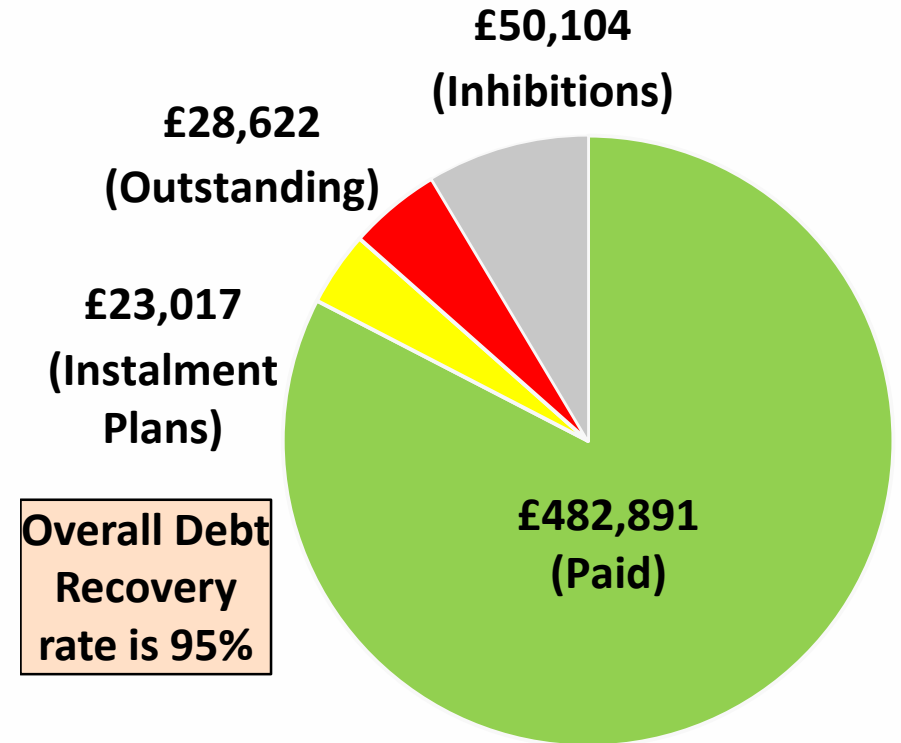
Edinburgh Shared Repairs Service Performance Update

- Open cases (29)
- Enforcement (26)
- Closed cases (141)



Total Case Workload (Sep 15 – Mar 19)

- Paid
- Instalment Plans
- Outstanding



All Projects Financial Review
Total Billed £584,634 (Sep 15 - Mar 19)



Appendix 2

Edinburgh Shared Repairs Service

Feedback from Customers 2018-2019



May 2018

Missing Share Scheme

'Now that you have got in touch, I would like to provide feedback for the process with helping us with the missing shares.

We have both been impressed by the process and support you have provided us with.

You have given us very clear information about a complex process (whilst it is now probably as simple as it can be) and been incredibly helpful in doing so.

*It is a really beneficial process for the City of Edinburgh, in that I know from experience, that many joint owners of tenements are happy to put the work into identifying contractors and managing the work themselves, but the fly in the ointment, which is often immovable, is getting the one or two errant non-payers to pay. So this Missing Shares process resolves this. **Great to have a supportive process from our council.'***

November 2018

Intervention Case

*'I wanted to thank you again for helping me to track down landlord details in order to organise a communal roof repair. I completely sympathise with you that under GDPR you are not able to give me landlord personal details, but by going direct to the landlord and speaking to them on my behalf is helping me collect missing payments. Thanks for the signposting to Under one Roof, Simple Procedures Court and the Registers of Scotland. You've made something that was feeling quite daunting, feel light again. Before our call today I was resigned to the fact that I'd have to pay for the missing contributions but now I'm feeling more confident that all money will be collected. I've copied in SAL as I wanted to **share the appreciation and to remind their members of the fabulous support you offer.'***



December 2018
Enforced Project



'We greatly appreciate the support, understanding and interaction of the shared repair team. The team there have done a great job.'

***This service really is so important.** There is a real need to expedite repairs to building in order to protect the building integrity as well as the assets of both the council and private owners.'*

January 2019
Emergency job (dangerous chimney)

*'Originally we discussed factoring roofing issues with the building surveyor engineer (great service on-site). Following on from this we dealt with your planning department who provided fantastic advice and forwarded me to Planning regarding conservation area concerns. All quickly, simply and logically resolved to everyone's satisfaction. **Expectations exceeded and timescale eliminated.**' Scores for all given = 5/5.*

February 2019
Emergency job (drainage)

*'Thank you for the great service you supplied when we had a blocked drain in the rear of our tenement. The Council inspector who came out very promptly was polite, friendly and very thorough, as was the contractor who came out later that evening. The Council gets a lot of negative stuff but **your service was first class**, so thanks again.'*