

## Scrutiny Panel Service Review: Repairs Communications October 2024

### Why look at Repairs Communications?

Repairs are one of the most essential services Stonewater provides, as they have a direct impact on customer safety, satisfaction and overall wellbeing. Completing repairs promptly and effectively is important, but we also believe that clear and consistent communication throughout the process is crucial. As customers, we value being kept informed about the progress of our repairs from the moment the issue is raised to its resolution.

### What we focused on:

Recognising the importance of communication in the repairs journey, we chose to focus this review on one contractor in one area – Ian Williams (in the South East) – who has demonstrated strong performance in customer communication.

#### **To do our review we:**

- Looked at performance data which included Rant and Rave transactional surveys and Complaints
- Went through Customer Service Centre scripts with colleagues
- Researched best practice examples of repairs communications from other social housing providers
- Reviewed repairs information on Stonewater website including the repairs handbook
- Met with Ian Williams (South East) Contractors

We want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all the staff who assisted us in this review. Your help and dedication have been invaluable in shaping our recommendations.

## Our priority recommendations

We made 10 recommendations in total, and we're pleased to note that all the recommendations have been accepted by Stonewater and agreed with the Customer Experience Challenge and Assurance Panel (CXCAP).

Our priority recommendations are:

### **Recommendation 4**

Stonewater to explore options to ensure customers know who/when they should contact if they have a query or concern about their repair. This should make clear whether they should contact Stonewater or the contractor. We would also like Stonewater to explore a local point of contact for customers to speak to.

### **Recommendation 5**

Stonewater to work with contractors to ensure customers are sent prompt updates throughout their repairs journey, especially if follow on works are required, until the work is complete. This should include building clearer understanding of communication through the repairs customer journey, which we believe should be formalised and more consistent.

### **Recommendation 6**

Stonewater to investigate the most effective ways to provide customers with clear details about their repairs appointments when they report an issue, including who will contact them, time frame and information about what the appointment will entail and provide update on feasibility and timeline to the panel.

## What happens next?

Stonewater have already started progressing on our recommendations which includes investigating the most effective ways for scheme staff to have oversight of repairs.

We'll work closely with Stonewater to monitor the progress of all recommendations.

## How do Scrutiny Reviews work?

The Scrutiny Panel is made up of a maximum of 14 Stonewater customers who work alongside Stonewater colleagues to review and improve services.

A Scrutiny review takes an in-depth look at services and makes recommendations for changes or improvements based on the panel's investigations and findings.

You can find out more about the Scrutiny Panel on our webpage [www.stonewater.org/scrutiny](http://www.stonewater.org/scrutiny)