

The logo for the Northern Housing Festival is a large, stylized sunburst or fan shape composed of many thin, parallel lines radiating from a central point. The lines are colored in shades of yellow and gold, creating a gradient effect. The text 'NORTHERN HOUSING FESTIVAL' is overlaid on the top-left portion of this graphic.

NORTHERN HOUSING FESTIVAL



The Debate: How to Talk About Homes

Chloe Fletcher

Head of policy and external affairs
Chartered Institute of Housing

Natalie Tate

Strategic communications manager
Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Resources to help you frame your stories about homes

The toolkit

- [How to talk about homes](#)

Further practical guides

- [Talking about homes, homelessness and poverty](#)
- [How to grow support for building social homes](#)
- [How to talk about private renting](#)
- [Building consensus for building new homes](#) - presentation was based on this
- [How to talk about supported housing](#)
- [Framing stories from lived experience](#)
- [Top tips for effective explanation](#)

Use our QR code to find out more, sign up for information and events, and connect with Natalie Tate on LinkedIn.



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NORTHERN HOUSING FESTIVAL



The Debate: How to Create a Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Housing Response

Kelly Henderson

Founder and managing director
Addressing Domestic Abuse

Deborah Alderson

Co-managing director
Addressing Domestic Abuse CIC

Northern Housing Festival March 2026: Domestic Abuse Perpetrators



Dr Kelly Henderson & Deborah Alderson
Co-Managing Directors

Addressing Domestic Abuse (CIC)

Prevent harm
Reduce re-offending
Keep victims safe

Who we are...



Dr Kelly Henderson
Co-Managing Director



Founder of Addressing Domestic Abuse with extensive housing sector experience with a Masters in Housing Policy and PhD from Durham University in housing role in a co-ordinated community response to Domestic Abuse. Also a Non-Executive Director at Believe housing.



Deborah Alderson
Co-Managing Director

Former Executive Policing leader and Assistant Chief Constable at Northumbria Police, Head of Safeguarding and Criminal Justice and Designated Lead for Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements with a Post Graduate Certificate in Education and CMI Level 7 in Strategic Management and Leadership.

Professor Gavin Oxburgh PhD
Non-Executive Director



Gavin is a Professor of Police Science, a Registered Forensic Psychologist & Chartered Psychologist & Scientist. He served for over two decades in the Royal Air Force Police specialising in child protection, sexual offences and domestic abuse. His doctoral research focussed on sexual and violent offenders.

Session Outline



Today, we will discuss:

- ✓ The importance and impact of addressing domestic abuse
- ✓ Perpetrator behaviour: presentation to professionals
- ✓ National responses to perpetrator management: MATAC, Clare's Law, DVPN/Os, DAPOs, DA GPS proximity system
- ✓ Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Intervention Programmes
- ✓ The Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- ✓ Housing policy and practice considerations

Self Care



- Domestic abuse training can trigger strong emotions and personal memories, especially for those new to trauma-related content
- Proactive self-care helps prevent burnout and compassion fatigue, fostering a sustainable, supportive work environment
- Recognise personal triggers and use grounding techniques like deep breathing and mindfulness to stay composed
- Engage with supervision, peer support, or therapy to process emotions and gain perspective
- Rest and Recovery - maintain good sleep, nutrition, physical activity, and leisure to build resilience and overall health

What is Domestic Abuse?

England and Wales

Domestic Abuse Act (2021)



Abusive behaviour between people aged 16+ who are personally connected (partners, ex-partners and family members), abusive behaviour includes:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse (explicitly defined)
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Can be a single incident or a pattern of behaviour

Children are legally recognised as victims in their own right if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse



Key Takeaways

- A criminal conviction is not required for housing action
- Domestic abuse includes non-physical, non-criminalised behaviour
- Children in the household always increase risk
- Housing providers can often be the first or only safe disclosure point



Extent of Domestic Abuse

Figures from Office for National Statistics (2025, England and Wales) show:

Adult Prevalence

! 1 in 5 adults will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime:

 1 in 4 women  1 in 6-7 men

! There were 108 domestic homicides across the UK in year ending March 2024

 83 women  25 men

Child Prevalence

! 1 in 5 children experience domestic abuse whilst a child*

! 105k children live in homes with a high risk of domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Homicide Project 2023/2024

ADDRESSING
DOMESTIC
ABUSE

262 deaths related to domestic abuse in this period in England and Wales:



80 intimate partners



39 adult family member



98 suspected suicides



11 children



23 unexpected deaths

Background to Project

This project is a collaboration between the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), the Home Office, and the College of Policing (CoP)

The aims are to learn from these deaths to improve safeguards for future victims and hold perpetrators accountable

Addressing the Cause: Perpetrators



“There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they’re falling in”

*Desmond Tutu,
Archbishop and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate*



How a Perpetrator Might Present



- It is important to recognise risk and manipulation
- Do not stereotype or pathologise

Pathologise:

- Saying someone is “mentally unstable” instead of recognising they are reacting to trauma or stress
- Treating anger, fear, or distress as a diagnosis rather than a response to circumstances
- Describing controlling behaviour as “they can’t help it, they’re damaged” rather than recognising choice and power



How a Perpetrator Might Present

- Plausible and composed - calm, articulate, reasonable
- Engaged and proactive - knows policies well, follows process
- Sympathetic or wronged - presents themselves as the victim, 'unreasonable partner', false allegations
- Respectful to authority - polite, flattering to professionals

Common Narratives

Mutualising the abuse
'we were both as bad as
each other'

Minimisation 'it was just
shouting, it was
exaggerated'

Blame shifting 's/he's
unstable, s/he has mental
health issues'

Parental concern - using
children to maintain
control or contact

Coercive Control and Housing



Even without visible aggression, coercive control may be evident through:

- Insistence on being present at all appointments
- Speaking on behalf of a partner
- Monitoring housing communications
- Using housing status, arrears, or homelessness risk as leverage
- Threats framed as consequences:
 - “If I’m evicted, it’ll be his/her fault”
 - “He/she’ll be making us all homeless”

Practice Implications for Housing Professionals



Effective responses include:

- Separate engagement with partners wherever possible
- Show curiosity: focus on patterns and don't make assumptions
- Consistent boundaries and policy-based decision-making
- Multi-agency information-sharing (MATAC, MARAC, police, probation where relevant)
- Victim-centred risk assessment, even if the perpetrator appears low-risk - a calm perpetrator does not mean safety

A perpetrator may present as reasonable, cooperative, and convincing - while using housing systems as another arena of control: recognising this helps housing professionals avoid collusion, protect victims, and maintain safe, defensible practice.

Post-separation Abuse



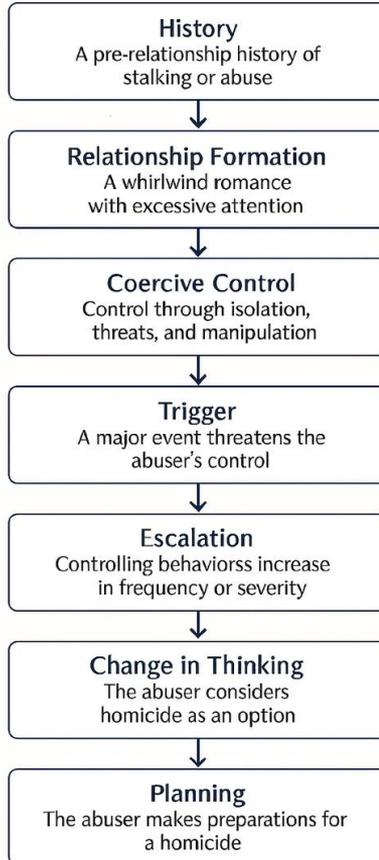
- Any controlling or coercive behaviour that occurs **after** a relationship has ended, is commonly referred to as **post-separation abuse**.
- Research shows the focus of the abuser intensifies in efforts to regain control
 - They may turn up at work or place of education to ‘make a scene’ to scare victims into complying with their demands
 - They may threaten suicide or use children as weapons against the victim
- This is often the most dangerous time for a victim and when most domestic homicides or DA related suicides occur

Eight Stage Homicide Timeline - Professor Jane Monckton Smith



- Developed from hundreds of cases of intimate partner homicides
- UK femicide census data (598 women killed by male partners 2009-2015)
- mapped commonality in all cases leading to development of the eight stage homicide timeline
- This timeline is now widely used in risk assessments, policing, and domestic abuse strategies because it shifts focus from isolated violent incidents to patterns of behaviour and motivation
- Intervention is possible at every stage, which is why understanding these steps is crucial for prevention.

Professor Jane Monckton Smith's 8 Stage Homicide Timeline



Final Stage - Homicide

The perpetrator kills the victim, sometimes harming others (children and family members) in the process

More info:
Eight stage homicide timeline,
Professor Jane Monckton-Smith



National Responses to Perpetrator Management

MATAC - Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination

- Northumbria Police and OPCC Home Office Innovation Funding
- Programme Director for Domestic Abuse Innovation Projects 2014 - 2020; *Domestic Abuse: A Whole System Approach*
- Designed and Implemented MATAC for Domestic Abuse Perpetrators, commencing 2014
- MATAC process was shared across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland
- Not mandatory, but highlighted as good practice by HMICFRS and the College of Policing
- Government commitment made to further strengthen and reinforce MATAC within the December 2025 Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy for England and Wales

MATAC principles



- Identify and target perpetrators that cause the most harm to gain maximum impact
- Police led multi-agency cohort of partners, including housing
- Data algorithm (RFGV - recency, frequency, gravity and number of victims) used to identify priority perpetrators, alongside multi-agency referral process
- Managed through structured 4 weekly meetings
- Toolkit of interventions and tactics including education, prevention, disruption and enforcement
- Linked to MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference), MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) and other multi-agency processes through MATAC coordinators
- £15.66 Social Return on Investment (SROI) per £1 invested and 65-72% reduction in re-offending

DA GPS Proximity System Pilot

Process

- Tag applied to perpetrator and victim given 'telephone' type device
- Proximity set on case-by-case basis
- If proximity breached, alert sent to monitoring agency
- Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) determines responses to breaches – if at risk, immediate policing response

Proposals for a UK wide pilot to use for:

- Police bail
- Court bail
- Conditions of orders, and
- Prison release conditions

Benefits

- Prevention and deterrence - perpetrators understand breaches will be detected
- Early intervention - alerts give victims and police critical minutes to act
- Autonomy and wellbeing - survivors remain protected wherever they go
- Evidence-led prosecutions - GPS logs means victim evidence not required
- Cost-effectiveness: GPS monitoring is five to six times cheaper than imprisonment (National Audit Office, 2019)



Spain's COMETA Programme: A Proven Model



The gold standard

Spain's COMETA system is considered the global model for GPS-enabled DA monitoring, introduced in 2009 and operating nationwide.

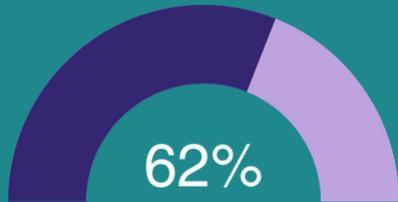
Key achievements

COMETA has achieved remarkable results, including zero femicides, high offender compliance, and improved victim reassurance.

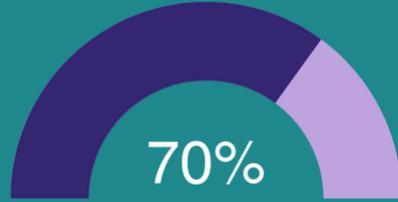
Rapid response

Police intervene within 5-7 minutes of a breach, prioritising victim safety.

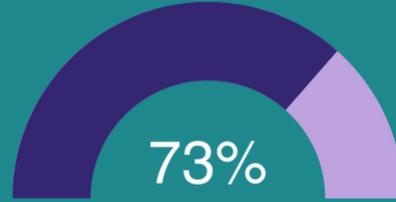
Lessons from Other Jurisdictions



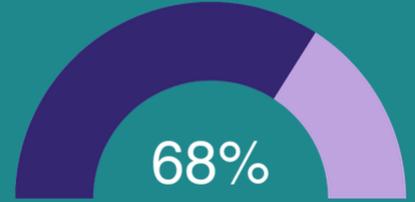
France



Switzerland



USA



Australia

Percentage reduction in protective order violations

Our Call to Action



Addressing Domestic Abuse CIC and Resolute Womens Services have sought UK government consideration of:

Action 1



Support

Ministerial and policy support for designated pilot sites

Action 2



Funding

Funding to develop and test a modern DA Proximity System aligned to UK frameworks

Action 3



Inclusion

Inclusion of DAPS in national DA strategy documents

Action 4



Engagement

Cross-departmental engagement to support DAPS* deployment and victim protection

*Domestic Abuse Proximity System

Clare's Law

Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS)



Clare's Law - Background



- Named after Clare Wood, murdered in 2009 by her ex who had a history of violence against women which Clare was unaware of
- Allows disclosure of history of violence or abusive behaviour to a current or ex partner
- Right to Ask
Anyone (including housing staff) can request
- Right to Know
Police can pro-actively disclose if they believe someone is at risk
- Early intervention can prevent harm and save lives

Clare's Law - Process



- Police forces aim to complete their checks and make a disclosure decision within 28 days of receiving a Right to Ask request

During the assessment window, police will:

- Meet with the applicant to verify identity and understand concerns if needed
- Conduct background checks on the person of concern
- Consult partner agencies if needed
- Decide whether disclosure is necessary, lawful, and proportionate
- Share information with the person at risk (not necessarily the applicant)

Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Orders

DVPNs and DVPOs



Current legislation: Domestic Violence Protection Notice (DVPN) and Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO)

DVPN

- Issued by police immediately following a domestic abuse incident
- Prohibits contact from perpetrator including exclusion from property
- Lasts 48 hours and does not need victim consent

DVPO

- Court issued order following DVPN, application by police, lasts up to 28 days
- Gives victim space and time to consider options and access support

Housing Impact

- Breach of an order is a criminal offence and carries a power of arrest
- Coordinate with police and support agencies to ensure safety

DAPNs and DAPOs



Pilot ongoing for Domestic Abuse Protection Notice (DAPN) and Domestic Abuse Protection Order (DAPO) - will replace DVPN/DVPO

- Current pilot areas Greater Manchester, North Wales, Cleveland and parts of London - should move to full roll out and replacement of DVPN/O before end 2026
- Application can be by victims, police, local authorities and other third parties with court permission - including housing professionals
- No set timeframes for order, determined by court based on risk and necessity
- Can include positive requirements e.g. attend behaviour change programme, electronic tagging
- Breach is a criminal offence with a power of arrest

Other Protective Orders



Non-Molestation Orders
(NMOs) – civil order;
prohibit abuse, contact,
harassment

Restraining Orders
imposed on conviction or
acquittal

Occupation Orders
civil order; regulates who
lives in the home

Key Takeaways



- Protective orders exist everywhere, but the landscape is complex - you are not meant to be an expert; understand when to seek advice
- Know when to signpost clients for advocacy and support
- Check and understand what orders are in place for tenants and what powers come with them so you can help to safeguard
- Protective orders are legally complex, jurisdiction-specific tools that housing providers must understand and respond to as part of their core safeguarding and risk-management duties
- Protective orders should remove perpetrators from housing, not survivors - unless the survivor wants to move



Summary so far...

You should:

- Understand how perpetrators can present to housing professionals
- Know how to recognise risk and manipulation; don't stereotype or pathologise
- Understand the importance of the role of housing in the MATAC process
- Understand Clare's Law and how and when to make a Right to Ask application
- Know the importance of joined up communication across partner agencies
- Understand the range of protective order available and the importance of staff knowledge and awareness of what is in place for tenants
- Consider how information and intelligence re orders are shared and how breaches should be reported



The Neighbourhood and Community Standard

Regulator of Social Housing



- ▶ In England the Social Housing Regulation Act (2023) came into force July 2023
- ▶ The Neighbourhood and Community Consumer Standard now includes domestic abuse from **April 2024**. What does this mean around our response to the cause of the issue?

The Neighbourhood & Community Standard



In terms of domestic abuse:

Required outcome

- Registered providers must work co-operatively with other agencies tackling domestic abuse and enable tenants to access appropriate support and advice.

Specific Expectations

- SE1 Registered providers must have a policy for how they respond to cases of domestic abuse.
- SE2 Registered providers must co-operate with appropriate local authority departments to support the local authority in meeting its duty to develop a strategy and commission services for victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation.

Housing Policy and Practice Considerations

Considerations



- Re-housing perpetrator as opposed to the victim survivor.
- Positive engagement with the perpetrator from Housing as part of a coordinated community response (BIG).
- Positive requirements to attend a perpetrator programme.
- Ground 14A of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1988 & 1996 - *London and Quadrant Housing Association v S (re victim not attending court)*.
Recognition of the Domestic Abuse definition as in DA Act 2021.

Restart Programme



Restart is an earlier intervention and accommodation pilot for those who are at **risk of perpetrating** or where there is domestic abuse within families who are in contact with **children's social care**.

The intervention is designed to **fully assess risk** and **potential for abuse** alongside offering support and tools for use in the longer term.

The Restart approach removes perpetrators from the home, provides (in the main) **four (to eight) weeks of supportive temporary accommodation in a hotel**, with a view to supporting perpetrators into **accessing rehousing via local authority homeless teams** in the pilot boroughs.

Case Study and Discussion



Thank You For Your Time

We are happy to answer any questions



Visit Our Website

www.addressingdomesticabuse.com



Scan for Kelly's Details



Scan for Debs' Details



Prevent harm
Reduce re-offending
Keep victims safe

The logo for Northern Housing Festival features the text 'NORTHERN HOUSING FESTIVAL' in a bold, sans-serif font. 'NORTHERN' and 'FESTIVAL' are in yellow, while 'HOUSING' is in white. The letter 'O' in 'HOUSING' is replaced by a white house icon. The text is set against a dark purple circular background with a pattern of radiating yellow lines of varying lengths, creating a sunburst effect.

NORTHERN HOUSING FESTIVAL



The strategy lab: Nailing a right-first-time repairs service with the Housing Ombudsman Service

Mark Lawrence

Communications manager
Housing Ombudsman Service

Sam Barker

Relationship manager
Aico

Ian Hancock

Executive director of property
Cobalt Housing



Nailing a Right-First-Time Repairs Service with The Housing Ombudsman Service

Sam Barker



Nailing a First-Time Repairs Service



Sam Barker – Relationship Manager

Repair services across the housing sector are under pressure. My perspective today is how quality products and smart technology can help reduce reactive repairs and allow housing providers to focus more on proactive support for residents.

Quality, technology and prevention in housing maintenance

Rising Demand on Repairs Teams

- Increasing repair requests
- Repeat visits for the same issues
- Pressure on frontline teams
- Higher expectations from residents

Reactive repairs limit time for proactive work

A decorative graphic element in the bottom right corner of the slide, consisting of a diagonal bar that is red on top and grey on the bottom.

What “Right First Time” Should Mean - Beyond Fixing Problems Quickly

Right First Time requires:

- Accurate diagnosis
- Reliable products
- Correct installation
- Long-term performance

Reliability starts with what we install

A decorative graphic element in the bottom right corner of the slide, consisting of a thick red diagonal bar that transitions into a grey diagonal bar.

The Role of Technology: From Reactive to Predictive Homes

Smart technologies can support housing providers through:

- Connected safety systems
- Remote monitoring
- Real-time alerts
- Data-driven maintenance

Technology helps identify issues before they become repairs.

A decorative graphic element in the bottom right corner of the slide, consisting of a diagonal bar that transitions from red on the left to grey on the right.

Understanding the Conditions Inside Homes

Using data to support better decisions.

Environmental data can help housing providers understand:

- Temperature patterns within homes
- Humidity levels and condensation risk
- Indoor air quality indicators
- Ventilation performance

Potential value:

- Earlier awareness of conditions linked to damp and mould
 - Evidence to support targeted property interventions
 - Better understanding of how homes are performing in practice
- 
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The Opportunity: Prevention and Planning

Designing homes that need fewer repairs.

Housing providers can reduce repairs by:

- Investing in reliable systems
- Using smart monitoring technology
- Upgrading homes during voids
- Targeting homes using asset data

Prevention frees frontline teams to focus on residents.

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aico®



Improving our Repairs

Ian Hancock

Executive Director of Property

18 March 2026

Cobalt Housing

- Cobalt Housing is a community-based housing association
- Formed in 2003 following stock transfer
- Manage around 6,000 homes in North Liverpool
- Expanding into new neighbourhoods

Our Purpose

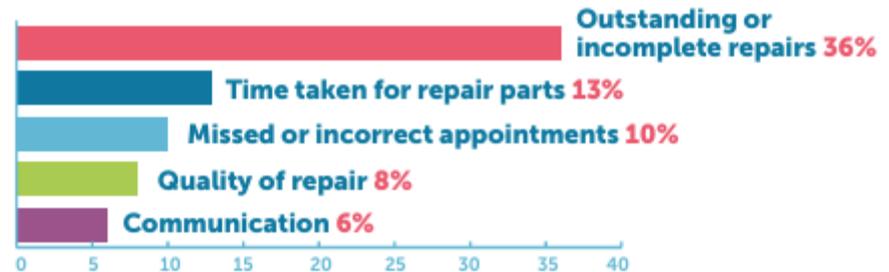
We will provide quality homes and services and maximise the positive impact of our investment for the communities we serve.



Performance and Customer Service

- Declining repairs service
- High call numbers into contact centre
- High numbers of complaints
- Low customer satisfaction rates
- Low morale
- High numbers of repairs, HHSRS and disrepair
- Damp and mould
- Challenges with digital systems

The top five reasons for complaints were:



Immediate Priorities



Listen to customers, colleagues and contractors:

- Answer the phone
- Make an appointment
- Turn up



Improvement plan



Increase colleague and contractor resources



Small in-house team - what can they offer?



Customer and Board options for the future operating model

Repairs Options

Board approval to develop an inhouse service:

- Exit the existing contract
- Develop inhouse service to:
 - Improve customer outcomes
 - Improve value for money
 - Social Value outcomes
- New Repairs Standard
- Task and Finish Group – customers and colleagues



Improving our Repairs Project

- Co-locate repairs and contact centre teams
- Procure local contractors, then transfer colleagues to Cobalt
- Upscale investment programmes
- New damp and mould, HHSRS and disrepair team
- New digital systems
- New depot and office
- Rebrand in-house team
- Review Repairs Standard
- Customer and colleague communication plan
- New management team and operating model
- Involving customers

Customer Voice

Developing customer insight:

- Various customer network events
- Outbound calls
- Big Listen
- Complaints Clinics
- Transactional customer surveys
- Scheme meetings
- Customer workshops



Repairs Standard

Worked with customers to develop a new repairs standard and define expectations:

- New repair categories and targets
- Surveyor appointments and timescales
- Appointments offered for trade and surveyor visits
- Process for follow on repairs
- Code of conduct for trades and contractors
- Commitment to review in 12 months

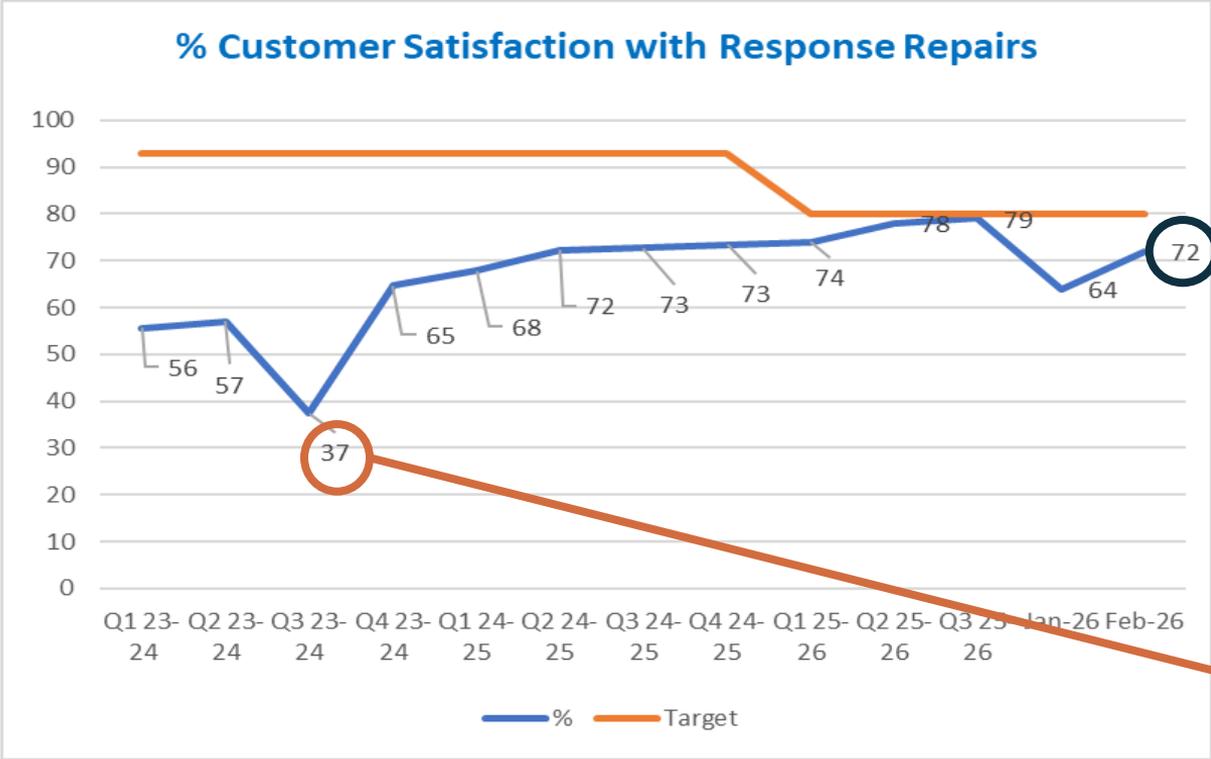


Repairs Standard - 12 month customer review

- School run appointment slots
- Written visit summaries from surveyors
- Evening and Saturday morning appointments
- Specific appointment slots for specific customer needs
- Text functionality



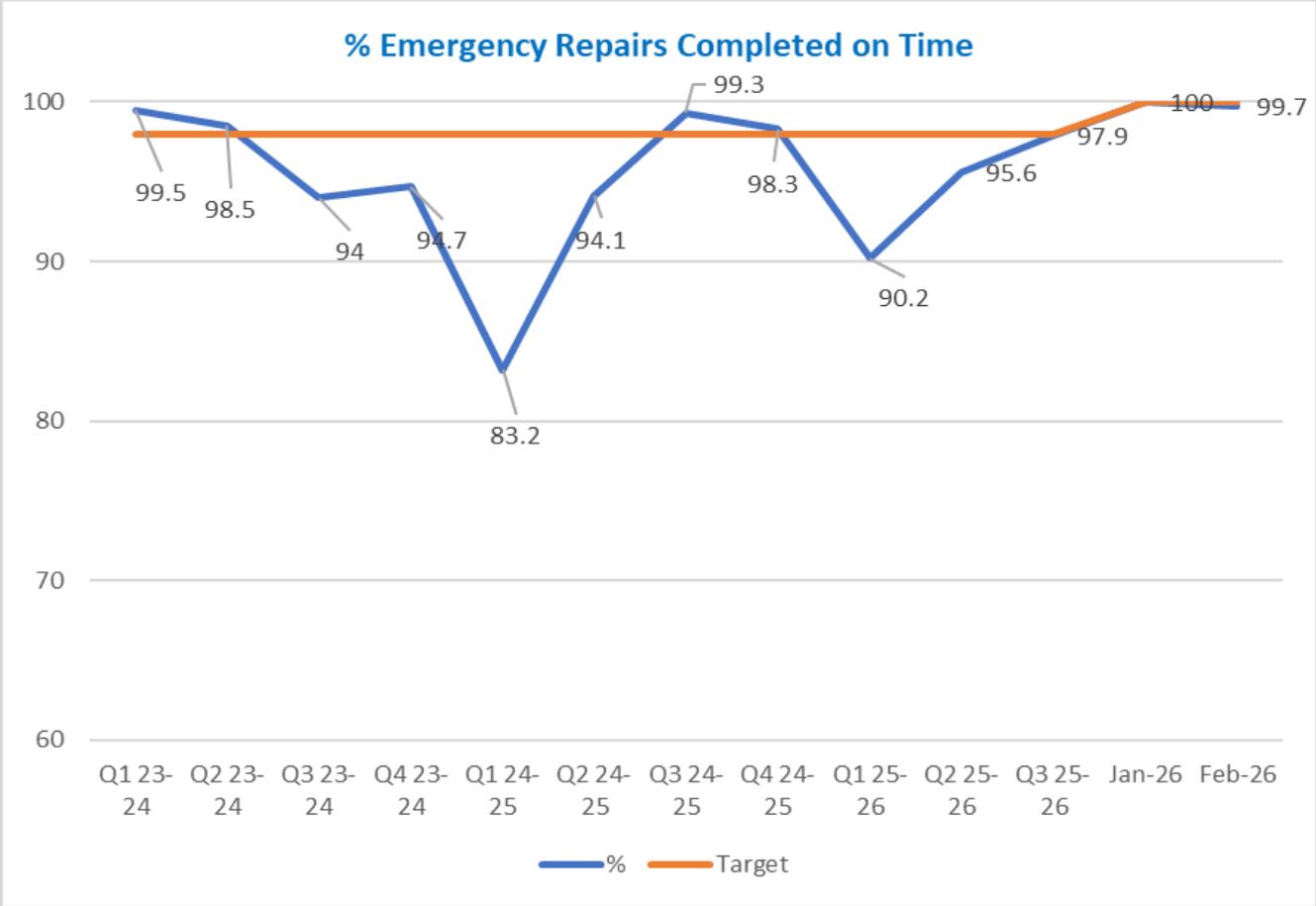
Customer Satisfaction with Repairs - transactional



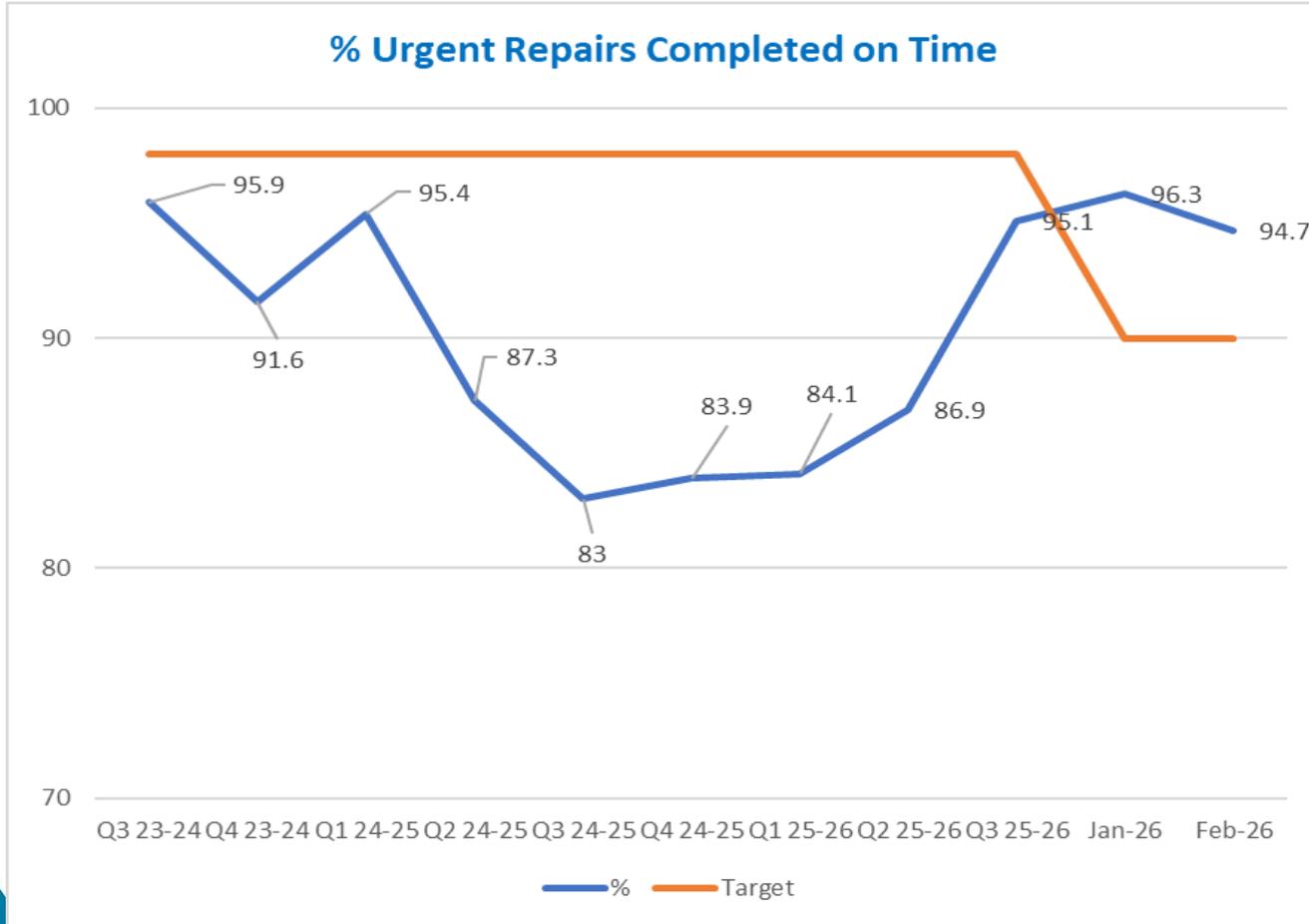
72% in February

At our lowest point we were only achieving 37%

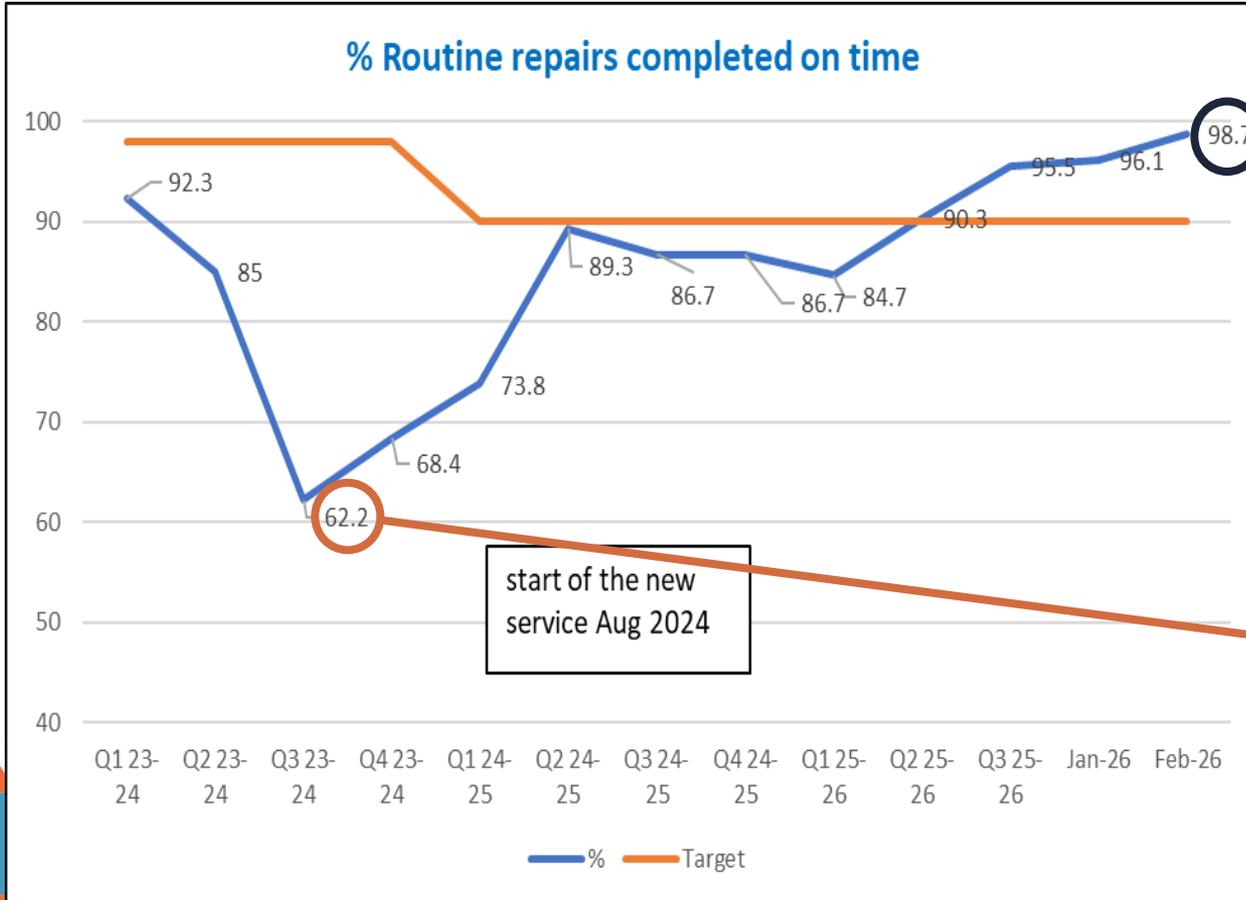
Emergency Repairs Performance



Urgent Repairs Performance



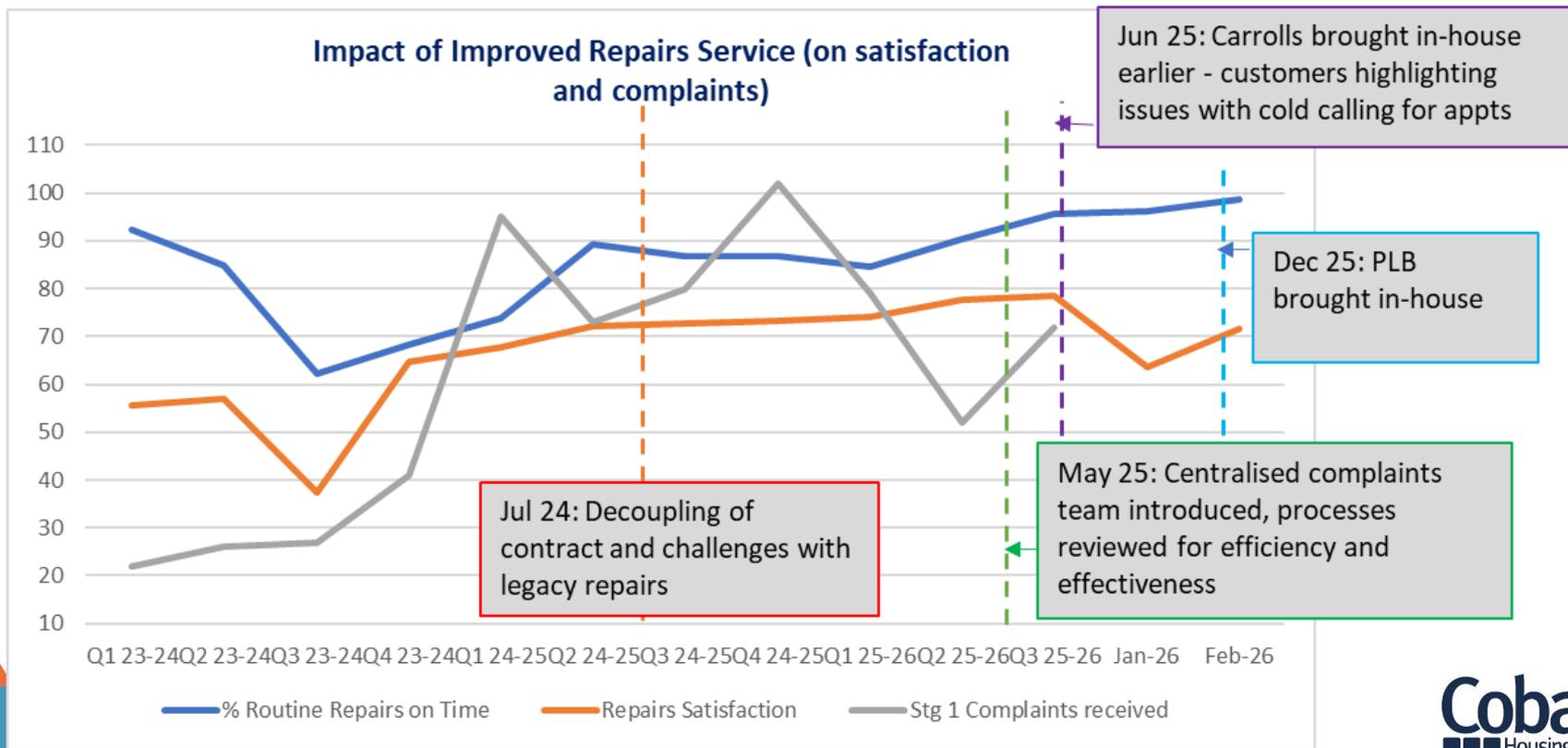
Routine Repairs Performance



98.7% completion rate achieved in Feb 2026

At our lowest point we were only achieving 62.2%

Impact on Satisfaction and Complaints



Customer Satisfaction: TSM's vs transactional

TSM s / Transactional Surveys - % Repairs Satisfaction



- Upward trend in both TSMs and transactional survey results
- Improvements in repair services are a major contributor to overall satisfaction
- Customers particularly value the enhancements made to the repairs service
- Strong assurance that investment and process changes in repairs are having a tangible impact

Customer Feedback

“Cobalt has really changed in terms of getting repairs done. They have been great and the last two guys absolutely went above and beyond.”

“Couldn’t have gone better, the job was completed by a very professional and polite person.”

“After previous issues with appointments please make sure the joiner from CHPS gets credit this man is top notch he has done three jobs for me and every single one has been perfect.”

“Absolutely fantastic work from A, polite, sociable and absolutely a wizard at his work. Very happy customer, thank you”

“Always on time for my jobs to be done and communication is top priority.”

“Would like to highlight one of your decorators he went above and beyond - he was friendly and kind and is a star. We wanted to give him the recognition he deserves.”

Continuous Improvement

- Fully insourced from Dec 2025
- Repairs Performance Group – customer voice
- Collocated stores with Huws Gray
- PowerBI reporting
- Data analytics
- Local employment and apprentices
- Investment strategy – proactive from reactive
- CHPS 5-year Business Plan
- Listen, learn and refine

