

From: The Minister

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Our ref: AQW 28350 /22-27
Date: 8 July 2025

Mark Durkan MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

Dear Mark

AQW 28350/22-27 – INFORMATION TO BE PLACED IN THE ASSEMBLY LIBRARY

Due to the volume of detail required to answer AQW 28350/ 22-27, the information attached at Annex A has been placed in the Assembly Library.

Yours Sincerely,



**Gordon Lyons MLA
Minister for Communities**

This issue is an operational matter for the Housing Executive.

I have sought the requested information from the Chief Executive, who has advised me as follows:

- (i) *‘There are currently two schemes planned for Westway:*
 - An External Cyclical Maintenance (ECM) scheme that had been programmed to start on site this year but which has had to be slipped to 2027/28*
 - A Multi-Element Improvement (MEI) scheme that aims to address a number of issues in the properties, which is currently programmed for 2028/29.*

- (ii) *Delays in any planned schemes - regardless of where they are located - are the result of a number of factors:*
 - It is well known that the Housing Executive continues to experience a very significant shortfall in the funding that is available for investment in its stock. In simple terms this means that we do not have the funding to do all of the works that become due in our planned maintenance programme or that we would want to do in our capital stock improvements programme. As a result we have a considerable backlog going back several years to which most of our annual planned maintenance budget is directed, but that means that schemes that become due have to be slipped to later in the programme.*

- *The Housing Executive faces a difficult tendering environment - with issues of labour shortages and rising costs - and we have experienced considerable difficulties in procuring contractors for several of our programmes.*

- *While the Housing Executive has a robust scheme delivery process it is the case, unfortunately, that schemes can be delayed at the survey, design and approvals stages due to a number of factors; for example, technical complexity, internal and external resources, value for money considerations etc.*

The ECM scheme for Westway has been delayed due to the requirement for new procurement exercise to be undertaken for the programme in which it is included. The MEI scheme is part of a phased programme to address similar issues at four locations in the Creggan and wider area. These are technically complex and costly schemes and, given our limited budget and the need to also address other schemes in our improvement programme, the Housing Executive does not have sufficient resources to undertake all of these schemes at the same time. Therefore the Creggan programme has had to be phased and Westway has been programmed as the third of the four locations to be addressed.

(iii) With regard to the ECM scheme, the delay is due to a procurement issue, not that other schemes have been prioritised ahead of it.

As regards the MEI scheme, the programming of the four phases in Creggan was determined in relation to the condition of the properties.'