

DIRECTORS' UPDATE – SEPTEMBER 2009

This is a joint report prepared by the Director of Investment & Regeneration and the Director of Housing & Customer Service. The report provides Local Housing Board Members with a general overview and update on current issues.

New Build

We have started on site, foundations have been laid at Penalton Close and the developer is currently demolishing Sancroft Court.

The appeal against the planning decision for Martin Drive is progressing, we have not been given a date for the hearing, at the time of writing.

Future Bids

We have submitted a bid for more new homes through the Local Authority New Build route. We have worked closely with the Council to bid for 33 new homes. Eight of these are in the North of the City at the Cornwall Road site, we hope to build 8 family homes on the site, a mix of three and four bedrooms, all homes will be available for rent.

It is difficult for us to submit bids in our own right at this time. The Council is keen to pursue the less onerous route of direct Council build.

Estates Pride Large Scale Project Update

Some of the large scale projects have now been completed and many more are being procured and will start on site over the coming weeks. The extensive work at Church Street Spondon has been finished following some frustrating snagging items, over £80k was spent on this project.

Repairs Service

Environmental Services Department has appointed two consultants to tackle some of the issues on performance;

- action plans have been agreed following the operative away days
- a backlog of orders is being worked through
- dates have been agreed for the introduction of handhelds for operatives and the migration to a consolidated pay structure.

Performance continues to improve we are above target on many of the key performance indicators for the repairs service.

Capital Programme

We are making good progress in the North of the City with the replacement kitchen project. We plan to work our way through Derwent over the next five years.

Stock Condition Survey

The Stock Condition Survey is now complete. It identifies a shortfall of around £5m per year in resources to maintain the decent home standard into the future. The survey will help provide information on future investment need. This will be required for a future option appraisal that is planned to be carried out over the next 18 months. Both Derby Homes and the City Council agree that we need to consider options that lever in enough resources to maintain the stock to a modern standard into the future.

Energy Efficiency

Following the installation of the photo-voltaic panels on Rivermead House we have installed solar thermal panels to four homes, we are monitoring their performance over the next six months. One tenant has commented that he has not used his boiler since the panels were fitted.

Energy Display monitors and Power Down devices

Letters have now been sent to all tenants and leaseholders explaining how they can claim these free devices. So far over 4,000 tenants have claimed them, we plan to remind those that have not in the next Derby Homes news.

Compensation payments for missed appointments

The Local Housing Board asked that I kept them updated on the number of compensation payments made through the repairs service:

- from 25 September 2008 to 26 November 2008, 28 payments were made
- from the 26 November to the 26 January 2009 only 10 payments were made
- from 26 January to 16 March 2009 only 9 payments had been made
- from 16 March to 26 May 2009 24 payments were made.
- from 26 May till now 11 payments were made.

Junior Wardens

We have now started to extend the successful Junior Warden scheme and are working with young people in the Mackworth, Stockbrook Street, Derwent and Osmaston area. During August members of the Chaddesden Junior Wardens gave presentations to the new recruits and their parents on what they can expect from getting involved. On the 28 August 2009 we held a successful 'It's a Knock-Out' competition at Darley Park which brought together younger and older people to compete in fun activities.

Family Intervention Project

Yet again I am pleased to report that the Family Intervention Project has received further funding to carry out more work with young people under the Government's Think Family Agenda.

Walk and Talks

We are now into the fourth month of the new 'Walk and Talks' – this is the new process for involving residents in estate inspections which was developed through the Estate Management Process Improvement Team. Disappointingly attendance remains low despite high levels of advertising and promotion. We are now looking for alternative ways of working with residents to ensure ongoing consultation and involvement in improving our communities.

Private Sector Management

We recently completed a management agreement to provide the management services for a privately owned block of flats in Mackworth. This is the first venture of this kind for Derby Homes and we are keen to develop more agreements of this kind with private landlords/owners. The flats are now all accepted with the majority of the tenants in occupation. We have received positive feedback from the owner of the flats.

Sustainability Team

We are now well advanced in developing a new team to work with new tenants to provide intensive support and guidance to enable them to successfully sustain their new tenancies. A report will be presented to the Council Cabinet in September 2009 and we are still aiming to commence the new service from October 2009.