

## **DIRECTORS' UPDATE – DECEMBER 2008**

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.

### **Current Workloads and Pressures**

#### **New Build**

We continue to get closer to building new homes. The leasehold issue has been resolved and we get closer to signing the grant agreement. We are still negotiating some financial issues with the Housing Corporation.

Our development contract with Strata is close to completion and we have agreed start and finish dates with them and are finalising the development costs, against the backdrop of anticipated reduced levels of sales income.

The CLG have agreed the transfer of land to Derby Homes.

#### **Future Bids**

We have been informed there will be further opportunities to bid for more grant funding for new build. We are evaluating a number of sites to assess their viability. We hope to submit further bids to the Housing Corporation early next year.

#### **Estates Pride Large Scale Project Update**

We are fulfilling our commitment to attend Housing Focus Groups (HFGs) to communicate effectively with them on progress of agreed projects; a number of these have now been completed.

We are recommending to the Council that remaining funding be spent on more estate based improvements.

We recently held our annual consultation event for large scale work. The event was well attended and we are in the process of drawing up a list of projects for next year. These will be presented for approval at the next Local Housing Board meeting.

#### **New Business Ideas**

We are supporting a number of ALMOs that have recently become investment partners of the Housing Corporation. A number of these are keen to select development partners from our framework for an agreed fee.

We are keen to focus our efforts on extending some of our existing services into the private sector. Garden maintenance, decorating and fitting and maintaining alarms are three services that we feel we could make more progress on. Our resources have been focusing on new build over the past couple of months, so we are keen to see progress made in this area over the next few months. We are currently seeking legal advice on the impact new business could have on Derby Homes and whether there is a need to set up a trading subsidiary.

### **Stock Condition Survey**

We have now appointed a firm to carry out a stock condition survey. 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.

### **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, all taken from the Contractor's profit margin.

### **Junior Wardens**

Our Junior Warden scheme is now into its third month. Thirteen young people from in and around the Derwent area is working with our Community Watch Patrol learning more about the impact of anti-social behaviour on our communities. Derby Homes along with the Police and Fire & Rescue Service are concentrating on positive engagement with young people and on 19 December 2008 the young people will be showcasing the outcomes of the scheme to Board Members and Partners at Cardinal Square. I am particularly thrilled that we have approved a budget development for 2009/10 to finance a 12 month temporary position to roll out this scheme across the City.

### **Under Occupation Initiative**

We are now contacting tenants who are under-occupying their current homes to see if they would be interested in moving to smaller properties. We are working on a new and exciting partnership with Derwent Living. They are developing on the old university site at Mickleover and we have negotiated a deal with them to offer 50% of the smaller properties and flats to our tenants. We have already agreed four matches and we are working with the tenants to make the moves as smooth as possible.

### **Recent Good News**

We have recently been awarded a grant through the Low Carbon Buildings programme phase 2, to fit photo-voltaic solar panels to the roof of Rivermead House. I will continue to update the Local Housing Board on the progress of this project.

### **Investors In Excellence**

In September 2008 Derby Homes completed a self assessment against the Investors In Excellence standard. On 24 November 2008 we received confirmation that we had been successful in gaining the standard which confirms our commitment to delivering high quality services and continual improvement. We will use the feedback from the assessor to inform actions within our 2009/10 service plans. A detailed report will be presented to the Performance Management Committee in February 2009.