

CROWDING AND SPACE HAZARDS POLICY

Report of the Director of Housing Services.

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report explains that the existing Policy has been reviewed and updated following consultation. It also gives an update on progress in resolving cases.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 Operational Board approve the attached revised Policy. The proposed alterations to the existing Policy are shown as tracked changes

3. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The revised Policy has been based on the successful operation of the existing Policy since 2014 and has been refined following necessary updates and consulted on.

4. MATTER(S) FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 Operational Board approved the current Policy on 25 August 2016. We have carried out a review of the Policy and found that it is generally fit for purpose but required some up dating to reflect current procedure
- 4.2 The amendments make clear that if the situation needs to be resolved by rehousing then solutions within the private rented sector will be considered equally and alongside any solution within Derby Homes managed stock.
- 4.3 Since the current Policy was approved we have introduced a process for carrying out consultation with tenants and leaseholders and whilst the comments arising from that do not inform any changes to the Policy, this report addresses those
- 4.4 Since implementing the original procedure in 2014, we have improved the living conditions of 92 households where families lacked 3 or more bed spaces. We are currently working with a further 47 households, and continue to identify new cases on an ongoing basis through regular reporting and through our normal management activities. The 92 households we have been able to help so far break down as follows:
- 21 have been resolved through rehousing
 - 8 have had their homes altered or extended with a further 15 alterations or extensions approved

- 32 have been resolved by other means
- 31 households have reduced in size, meaning they are no longer classed as overcrowded.

5. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 None. On 10 April 2014, a report was presented to City Board outlining the development of a Crowding and Space Hazard procedure, following the serious case review which examined the factors leading up to the fire at 18 Victory Road, in which 6 children were killed. The necessity for a Policy arose from that.

IMPLICATIONS

6. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 A consultation exercise has been carried out with tenants and leaseholders. The DACP and Tenants Voice were also directly consulted
- 6.2 Of the 16 respondents, 1 individual did not consent to their response being stored and processed so there were 15 responses that we can report on. Of those, 12 were DCC tenants, there was 1 leaseholder respondents and there were 2 respondents from other residents of Derby
- 6.3 Of the 15 respondents
- Only 1 thought the policy was not fair, 9 thought it was and 5 did not express a view
 - Only 2 thought the policy was not fit for purpose, 11 thought it was and 2 did not express a view
 - There was strong support for the current policy of 3 alternative offers of accommodation – 12 respondents thought that was right as opposed to 3 who did not.
- 6.4 There were some specific comments that were made.

Comment	Response
the 3 offers is fair, but automatic bidding? That sounds like being forced to take a property	automatic bidding means that the system will place bids for an individual so they don't have to do so. It means that they never miss an opportunity. In crowding cases, suitable properties come up infrequently
prioritise people with more than 3 children in upper floor 2 bedroom flats	the allocations policy already does this. An applicant in that situation would receive the following needs as a minimum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacking 1/2 bedspaces • Severe overcrowding • Unsatisfactory housing conditions (child under 10 in

	upper floor flat) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Initiative • Cat 1 hazard
--	--

- 6.5 Our approach to a case of overcrowding in an upper floor flat would be to move the family to a 3 bedroomed house that is suitable for extension. This is because our stock of 4 bedroomed houses is small and the turnover is low. A minimum of 5 needs would normally be sufficient to enable this to happen fairly quickly in any case, but we would look at the circumstances and deal with it immediately if necessary. I would add that we only have one applicant in a crowded situation in a flat at the moment, and that is a ground floor 3 bedroomed flat

7. POLICY REVIEW IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This is a key policy of Derby Homes and is included in the Key Policy Review Schedule. In accordance with Derby Homes Board Minute 10/51 this policy will be reviewed no later than 3 years from the date of this meeting.

The areas listed below have no implications directly arising from this report:

- Financial and Business Plan
- Legal and Confidentiality
- Council
- Personnel
- Environmental
- Equalities Impact Assessment
- Health & Safety
- Risk

For more information please contact:

Murray Chapman / Housing Services Manager / 01332 888593 / Email murray.chapman@derbyhomes.org

Background information:

List of appendices

This report has been approved by the following

Managing Director	Maria Murphy	[31.05.2019]
-------------------	--------------	--------------