

TENANT PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE

Report of the Tenant Panel

1. SUMMARY

This report is to advise on progress against recommendations made by the Tenant Panel whilst undertaking reviews. Updates are shown in italics.

2. RECOMMENDATION

To note and comment on the information as detailed in this report

3 MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Complaints Review

1. Designated person to deal with stage 1 complaints.

The panel feel that a better quality service could be achieved if there was a single point of contact for all stage 1 complaints. This person would deal solely with the complaints, interacting with the complainant and relevant departments to ascertain the full details and bring the complaint to a satisfactory conclusion.

This position was put in place December 2012 and is working well.

2. Changes to standard letters

The panel feel that the final paragraphs should not include the word 'hope' as this infers that the response is possibly not good enough.

Letters have been changed.

3. Changes to procedure

The panel feel that the stage 3 should be referred to a Tenant Panel to make better use of the Board's time and resource. It will also put Tenants more at ease if they need to take a complaint to this level.

Changes accepted. Tenant Panel heard their first Stage 3 hearing on 3rd September 2013 and found in favour of Derby Homes, however, they did acknowledge errors had been made but felt confident everything possible had been done to correct these.

4. Quality sample checking

Tenant Panel to carry out sample checking of completed complaints for consistency and satisfaction for all concerned.

This is something the panel will look at further. They have received extensive complaints training and are now involved in Stage 3 complaints.

5. Staff training re completion of CSM notes

The panel felt there could be more training required for staff to ensure all CSM cases reflect the accuracy and consistency of cases. This is specifically in relation to any telephone conversations between staff and complainant.

Staff training is ongoing.

Local Offer 20

Local offer 20 - Encourage and support projects that benefit the communities in which our tenants live.

3.2 1. T16

This is now stagnant due to the loss of the youth services project coordinator. The panel feel it would be beneficial, given the Welfare Reform Bill, to investigate the relaunch of this scheme particularly in areas where it is felt future tenants would come from.

Due to loss of funding it is not possible to relaunch.

2. Junior Wardens

The panel feel the team would benefit from additional support, they understand that this would need to be via the use of volunteers but would like to see a concerted effort in increasing the number of engaged volunteers. They propose that communications are sent to outside agencies to assess interest. They also wondered if it would be possible to advertise on the TV screen in the Marketplace.

Volunteers are actively being sought across the organisation. During 2013, 3 new volunteers have been recruited to work with the Junior Wardens, 1 for Digital Inclusion and 5 for work experience.

Derby's big screen is coming down in a move that will save the City Council £30,000 a year. Work has started on its removal. It was a joint project funded by the BBC, the City Council and the University of Derby.

Council leader Paul Bayliss said: "The reason we're cutting it is that we haven't got the money for discretionary expenses."

3. General

Investigate the possibility of offering basic training courses for tenants who become involved. These courses could be written and delivered in house therefore not incurring high costs but potentially guarantee commitment and a higher retention of volunteers.

Once a bank of volunteers are gathered this is an option we will look at.

3.3 Local Offers 11/16

Local offer 11 – Provide new tenants with help and support to allow them to maintain their tenancy

Local Offer 16 – Provide vulnerable or elderly tenants with access to a range of services to help them live independently.

1. The first recommendation is across all teams

An administration assistant to be brought in to assist the Tenancy Support, Supported Living and Tenancy Sustainment Teams. This role could be filled by utilising the new Derby Homes Home 2 Work Initiative, enabling an apprentice to gain valuable work experience.

The panel have spoken to the Social Enterprise Manager who has confirmed this would be a viable proposition.

The benefit of this would alleviate staff of administration duties allowing them to concentrate on their support duties.

To confirm a decision was taken to bring the Supported Living Service to an end due to our Supporting People funding ceasing. The SLS is currently being wound down and a replacement service – the Intensive Housing Management Service will be fully operational from April 2014.

2. Supported Living

An investigation into the possibility of a more robust IT system which could be shared by both Carelink and Derby Homes staff to ensure information sharing is consistent and accurate.

An option in the short term would be to allow Derby Homes staff access to the current system used by Carelink.

This has been investigated: It is not possible to link the IT systems and due to the confidential nature of information held by Carelink, information sharing is not always possible.

3. Tenancy Sustainment

A second survey to be carried out after the full 12 months support has ended to ensure consistency throughout.

The Tenancy Sustainment Team are going to implement this idea, with a view to going live in January 2014.

4. Mental Health

A possible secondment from within the Mental Health Trust. The benefits of this would be support for Ruth, also enabling the secondee to gain valuable experience.

Ruth still manages Mental Health and provides advice and support, Emma and Tracy are providing the on the ground support, mental health also links to the new Intensive Housing Management Service and if the Mental Health resource is stretched, they can offer additional support. There is no admin resource available at all within Support Services. Due to the nature of the work it is

important that support workers do their own admin and case note recording and liaise and build relationships with relevant agencies.

3.4 Local Offer 5

Develop our own energy efficiency standards that will be above the government requirements.

The panel felt that Kendal provides an excellent service in her role, but is restricted by the fact that she is the only one who is qualified to offer this advice to tenants. During the winter and extreme weather conditions, enquiries tend to increase so therefore they feel assistance is required. They recommend that The Welfare Reform Team could support Kendal in this role.

On sign up to a new tenancy, an energy saving pack to be provided along with advice.

Energy saving packs are being put together. The Chair asked if the Tenant Panel could have a look at a pack before they are handed out.

We decided the bag should contain all of our relevant advice leaflets possibly put together in one booklet. Following Mary Holmes request to everyone, we have recently reviewed all of our leaflets and are waiting for updated versions to be put together by the Comms team.

We have given details to Shaun Bennett of the other items we want to put in the bags too.

We have 'costed up' bags and I am currently trying to get a sponsor for the bags themselves as we want to provide 'shoppers' that can be reused. I am waiting to hear whether Severn Trent are in a position to help us.

As soon as we have a goody bag ready we will let DACP see it. But we want the bags to go out asap with the view to extending them to all properties within the next year.

We are also still waiting to hear from Severn Trent. DCC have introduced us via another project they are working on so I am waiting to hear if they are able to sponsor us.

3.5 Customer Service Review – City Board 24 October 2013

1. IT equipment in enquiry centres slow

Investigate the possibility of an enhanced system to enable Enquiry Centre staff to access and record more detailed information. We feel this is necessary if the Enquiry Centre is to function efficiently as a 'one stop shop'. The main area of concern is the speed of Academy, as waiting time seems to have increased from previous visits, this causes frustration to both the customer and the member of staff.

The issue of slowness has been raised with Capita for quite some time now and was escalated in June, to the Director of Capita Software Services, Roger Birkinshaw.

The IT team have been working with Capita and testing enhancements and improvements that they have suggested on our test database. To date, none of these has proved successful. The issue is high on the IT teams' agenda and is being given a high priority within Capita. Mark Fairweather, in his monthly meetings with the Capita Account Manager and by more regular email contact is keeping the focus firmly on getting these issues resolved.

2. Enquiry centre staff found some resistance from housing officers to take calls.

The panel understand that housing officers are encouraged to be out on the estates more than they are in the office, so it may not be possible for the housing officer to take a call immediately. However, we feel that an email to the Housing Officer giving details of the query, with a proposed timescale for contacting the customer would be a step forward. This would ensure that both customer and housing officer are aware of expected timescales for response.

The Enquiry Centre has been instructed to email details of the enquiries to a general inbox for the particular office. The manager of the office monitors the content of the inbox to ensure that emails are dealt with promptly and will allocate work to other staff if necessary. We also encourage staff to transfer the calls to work mobile phones. Whilst it is not always possible to take calls when on visits, this is something we are trying to improve.

3. Repairs may be seen as completed on the dashboard but may not actually be finished.

Investigate allowing the word pending rather than completed to show on dashboard if a repair is on going.

In August we discovered we were using out-of-date data for repairs stages on the tenants Dashboard. This meant repairs could be incorrectly described as 'completed' when they were actually being scheduled or cancelled.

The Communications team ran a report of the latest repairs stages that are being used today then added a new description for each stage that made it easier for tenants to understand. The new list was viewed by Mick Archer, Terry Willis and then approved by Jane Robinson.

Our web development company updated the website with the new data last week.

This will be monitored to make sure we're using the latest repairs stages in the future.

The screenshot shows the Derby Homes My Derby Homes Dashboard. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like Home, About us, Our Services, Find a home, Welfare Reform, Get Involved, Careers, News, and Contact Us. Below this is a 'Derby Homes Dashboard | Welcome' section with a 'Repairs statement' table. The table lists repair requests with columns for Repair Number, Date Logged, Repair Description, Status, and Your Actions. The footer contains contact information, website links, and other pages.

Repair Number	Date Logged	Repair Description	Status	Your Actions
11395947	27.06.2013	REBOARD DAMAGED PLASTER AND RETILE IN BATHROOM 1 1/2 M2	Work completed or cancelled	Query this repair ✓ How did we do?
11394620	24.06.2013	TILES IN BATHROOM FALLING DOWN	Work completed or cancelled	Query this repair ✓ How did we do?
11394617	24.06.2013	EXTRACTOR FAN IN BATHROOM BROKE	Work completed or cancelled	Query this repair ✓ How did we do?
11394616	24.06.2013	TAP BROKE CONSTANTLY RUNNING WATER-CANT TURN OFF LEAK	Work completed or cancelled	Query this repair ✓ How did we do?
11380633	25.04.2013	CONF FAO DAVE PICKER AND JONES JONES TO LAG CONDENSE PIPE	Work completed or cancelled	Query this repair ✓ How did we do?

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

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

If Board Members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact:

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Background Information: None
Supporting Information: None