

**CITY BOARD**  
**28 APRIL 2013**

# **ITEM A6**

## **HOUSING AND LEASHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS AND EQUALITY GROUPS ITEMS**

Report of the Acting Chief Executive

### **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides the City Board with details of Customer Service Management (CSM) cases/issues raised at Housing Focus Groups (HFG's), Derby Leaseholder Focus Group and the Equality Groups.
- 1.2 It also looks at the methods we use to contact tenants around the City and the success rate of contact.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

The City Board is asked to note the content of this report.

### **3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 During the March round of meetings, 14 issues were raised which have been passed on to the relevant Housing Office and there are currently 13 cases awaiting response. See appendix one for case details and the attendance analysis.
- 3.2 This round of meetings delivered key information on:
  - Tenant Rewards Scheme Review
  - Tenant Panel
  - workforce on estates
  - the DACP Helping Hand Scheme
  - Derby Homes at the new Council House
  - electric fire feedback
  - Welfare Reform - Under Occupancy
- 3.3 In total 18 Estates Pride Quick Fix Bids were discussed and commented on.
- 3.4 At the HFG meetings the main subjects discussed were:
  - Tenant Reward Scheme - highlighted that there is a review of the Scheme looking at incentives for encouraging tenants to pay their rent.
  - Tenant Panel - the Panel provided information about how they were formed, what success has been achieved since their creation. They also talked about recruitment to the Panel and how to get involved if anyone wished to become a member.

- Workforce on estates – in the South West Paula Solowij and the Resident Involvement Team provided information about the Derby Homes Estates Pilot Scheme. This scheme aims to clean up and improve highlighted areas on Derby Homes Estates. We tested this in the Churchside Walk area where work was carried out to remove moss from pathways, overgrown weeds, and clean up highlighted shared gardens. Following this pilot being successful there will be the opportunity to carry this out in other areas across the City, subject to agreement from HFG's gaining funding from the HFG Quick Fix fund.
  - The DACP Helping Hand Scheme - a small grants scheme for children living in Derby Homes' properties. Tenants are encouraged to apply for support to enable their children to get involved in activities such as art or sport providing the funding to pay for equipment, membership or travel expenses.
  - Derby Homes at the new Council House - we informed that Derby Homes is now based at the Council House, Corporation Street and Cardinal Square is now no longer accessible by the general public unless an appointment has been made to visit there.
  - Electric fire feedback – we informed that there are currently two suppliers being looked at to install electric fires instead of gas fires. This will occur where a new gas central heating system is fitted or when a gas fire is condemned. There is a survey online showing the range of electric fires available from each supplier, it asks for the preference for which supplier. The results will help Derby Homes decide which one to choose. This survey has been sent to all Derby Homes dashboard members and a link is available for tenants who are not already registered.
- 3.5 We informed those who attended HFG's about the 'bedroom tax' charges which will begin from 1 April 2013. We encouraged people to contact our Welfare Reforms Team and make appointments for Derby Homes Housing Benefit surgeries if they are worried or know anyone who may be affected.
- 3.6 We also reminded everyone of Derby Homes new telephone number.
- 3.7 We highlighted that tenants and leaseholders can visit the Derby Homes website, where they can read online versions of the topics we discussed, also promoting our online services.
- 3.8 All of the things we discussed raised interest with the tenants and leaseholders present, allowing them to engage and give their views.
- 3.9 We used various methods of informing tenants about what we were discussing. The main aim here is to allow tenants to get involved in a way that suits them, rather than just inviting them to a meeting. We use targeted text messages (sent to people directly affected by the issues we are discussing), letters, Facebook and Twitter. A hyperlink to our website is included in all our communications that links directly to relevant content on our website. This hyperlink method generated four visits to the website content.
- 3.10 A total of 32 tenants and 3 leaseholders attended the HFG meetings. We also received a total of 4 SMS replies asking for more information and we followed these up with either calls or texts.

#### **4. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Consultation now takes place on our website, via SMS, Facebook and Twitter as well as at HFGs. Where we receive comments across these different channels, they are included in our feedback to Managers and teams.
- 4.2 Where CSM cases are raised, feedback is given directly to the individual who raised it at the meeting/relevant groups. Wider consultation is carried out where appropriate.

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  
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

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## Summary of the March 2013 round of Housing Focus Groups (HFGs)

## Statistics

	Attendance		Invites			Communication as a Result	
			Postal	Text		Reply with HFG	Visits from SMS
	Tenants	Leaseholders	Membership	Sent	Not Delivered		
North East HFG	4	0	61	166	56	0	0
North West HFG	15	2	63	124	32	1	0
South East1 HFG	5	0	54	192	58	1	3
South East2 HFG	1	0	66	148	50	0	1
South West HFG	7	1	89	168	70	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>798</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

## Summary of outcomes from each area

**North East - Wednesday 13 March 2013**  
**Craddock Avenue Community Room**

**0 Closed                      2 Currently Open**

## Issues raised

1. **79841 – Open** – Request for fencing around communal area on Craddock Avenue
2. **79843 – Open** – Request for installation of higher fence around rear of property due to new build properties on Craddock Avenue overlooking tenants property

**North West Tuesday 12 March 2013**  
**Whitecross House Community Room**

**1 Closed                      11 Currently Open**

## Issues raised

1. **79715 – Open** – Noise Nuisance issues reported
2. **79716 – Closed** - Following up progress of a previous bid where a lighting column was due to be installed
3. **79717 – Open** – Tenant reported still being charged for equipment they no longer have

4. **79719 – Open** – Request for fencing to be installed around un-established hedge rows
5. **79720 – Open** - Issue raised regarding the noise of the pump at Rivermead House
6. **79724 – Open** – Question raised regarding when will Britannia Court be demolished
7. **79728 – Open** – Complaint raised regarding no letterbox available at the Council House out of hours
8. **79726 – Open** – Tenant asked if their property has or could have Damp Proofing
9. **79729 – Open** – Various issues reported regarding Rebecca House
10. **79731 – Open** – Parking issue raised at Whitecross House
11. **79732 – Open** – Anti-social Behaviour issue reported in the Brook Street area
12. **78306 – Open** – Issues regarding bins being emptied at Rivermead House

**South East 1      Tuesday 5 March 2013**  
**Slindon Croft Community Room**

**0 Closed              0 Currently Open**

No Issues Reported

**South East 2      Thursday 7 March 2013**  
**Acorn Close Community Room**

**0 Closed              0 Currently Open**

No Issues Reported

**South West        Wednesday 14 March 2013**  
**Boyer Street Community Room**

**0 Closed              0 Currently Open**

No Issues Reported