

DIRECTORS' UPDATE – DECEMBER 2011

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

New Build

We are continuing in our attempts to build new homes. We are currently in discussion with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and Derby City Council to agree a way forward for the Glossop Street site following the departure of the travellers. The larger regeneration of Osmaston is still progressing and the Council's Regeneration Team are working closely with Derby Homes and OSCAR on various options.

We have just taken handover of five new homes at St. David's Close, these homes have been built to high standards of thermal efficiency and tenants will be in for Christmas.

Asset Management

We are working on a new Asset Management Strategy as part of the Business Plan supporting the review of the HRA. Shaping our investment priorities from feedback from tenants we hope to be able to maintain all homes to a good standard into the future. Early indications of the deal through the review are good and we are feeling confident that we can deliver the improved improvement standards in the future.

Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP)

We are making good progress across pre-war estates and will complete all work within the next 12 months. Many homes will benefit from extra insulation and new heating systems. This work is disruptive and we have increased liaison support to this project to help tenants through the work.

Solar Panels

We have fitted 650 systems so far, the Government has now cut the feed in tariff by over 50%. This makes it difficult to continue the programme to small roofs that are not south facing. We are proposing to invest a further £2m between now and the end of March, focusing on large roofs on blocks of flats that face south. We plan to feed the electricity into the harder to let ground floor flats.

Repairs Team Update

New vans are arriving in January, we are looking forward to operating them with plenty of commonly used materials on board. This will help us to provide a reliable, efficient service to tenants.

Satisfaction and performance is continuing to improve with almost all indicators expected to achieve targets this year.

Under-Occupation

We are starting to prepare for the impact of the Government's proposals for welfare benefit reform. One area that will affect our tenants is under-occupation. The current proposals are to reduce housing benefit in certain cases where tenants (of working age) are under-occupying by one or more bedrooms. Although the final details are not yet fully known, and there is speculation that the proposals are to be reviewed, we are starting to make contact with tenants that are under occupying by more than two bedrooms and explaining the implications of the proposed changes to them. We will offer support and advice and, where tenants are interested in moving to smaller accommodation, we will try to meet their needs.

Changes to Office Opening Hours

As previously reported to the City Board changes to office opening hours will take effect from January 9 2012. Appropriate notices are displayed in all offices to notify customers of the changes.

If Board members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact the author, or Phil Davies, Chief Executive, phil.davies@derbyhomes.org – Phone: 01332 888528

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Background Information None

Supporting Information None