

SERVICE UPDATE

This is a joint report prepared by Heads of Service. The report provides Operational Board Members with a general overview and update on current issues.

Head of Housing Management & Housing Options

Homeless Strategy Action Plan Event 20th June 2017

Derby Homes, in partnership with the Council, will be hosting a Homelessness Strategy Action Plan event on 20th June 2017, at the Derby Conference Centre. The event intends to refresh the City wide response to Homelessness and forms part of our commitment to Coordinating homelessness within the City.

The workshop will focus on the following themes within the context of Derby and the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act, which is due to be enacted early next year.

1. **Partnership** (this is an overarching theme that sets out governance arrangements, working groups etc.)
2. **Early Intervention**
3. **Crisis Prevention**
4. **Support & Stabilisation** (with particular emphasis on Under 35's, Rough Sleepers, move on support)
5. **Independence and Housing Supply** (developing the Private Rented Sector).

The current Homelessness Strategy, which runs from 2015 to 2019 outlines 3 Strategic Priorities:

- **Strategic Priority A:** Create and maintain a City Wide Framework to promote effective partnership working by all agencies
- **Strategic Priority B:** Maintain and improve measures to prevent homelessness
- **Strategic Priority C:** Help homeless people back into suitable housing and provide support to make this sustainable.

We hope the event will be a lively opportunity to develop a refreshed Homelessness Strategy Action plan that will refocus our combined efforts in tackling homelessness in Derby.

Head of Income Management & Advice

Derby Advice

TUPE

The TUPE of Derby Advice was planned for 1 July 2017, however in order to finalise Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) registration and complete TUPE consultation with team members this has been put back to 1 August 2017. There will be no impact of service delivery for Derby Advice customers.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction with the Derby Advice service for 2016/17 was 100%.

Income Team

Overall Benefit Cap

120 Derby Homes' tenants are currently affected by the lower cap of £20,000. Derby Homes is proactively contacting all tenants to apply for Single Discretionary Payments to cover the shortfall of Housing Benefit to the rent account. We will be monitoring the outcomes of these applications. We have an Income Advisor dedicated to supporting these tenants.

Networking / Best Practice

Managers continue to attend Housemark welfare reform forums as well as East and West Midlands best practice groups to learn from organisations that have been dealing with universal credit for the last couple of years and sharing best practice.

Regular meetings are held with colleagues at Derby City Council and Department of Work and Pensions to discuss operational issues around implementation of the reforms.

Derby Homes continues to hot-desk from Job Centre Plus every Wednesday to interview Derby Homes' tenants who make a claim for Universal Credit.

Triage Service – Pilot

The Income Team is piloting a Triage Service until October 2017. Customers contacting the Customer Services Team will note an option 2 for rent account enquiries. The aim of this pilot is to provide a specialist income triage service at first point of contact. Further information can be found in the Customer Service Strategy Update.

Head of Housing Investment

My usual update tries to show the broad area of works we are involved in, in maintaining and upgrading the condition of our homes. This time, however, amongst all the great work we are doing with new homes, estate improvements, and investment in modern facilities there is one area where we have recently expanded our expertise that stands out.

For a number of years we have been tackling the insulation issues we have had with our homes that cannot be remedied by the usual methods. Most board members will be familiar with cavity wall insulation as the tried and tested method of increasing the warmth of homes and reducing heating bills. Derby Homes has done this where possible but there are a range of properties where this solution is not possible. The alternative is to add an insulation layer to the inside (dry lining) or outside with an insulation and render covering.

Since 2014 we have internally insulated 287 properties using an in-house team to carry out the dry lining works. Discussions with tenants indicate that they have seen a reduction in their heating bills of approx. 40%. Whilst this is a significant saving the works have the added benefit of also makes the property feel much more comfortable, as this will heat up more quickly and stay warmer for longer.

The added reasoning for internal solid wall insulation rather than external system was down to a difference in costs. Contracted prices for external cladding were above the dry lining solution which we could carry out with an in house team. At this point we did not have the experience or training in fitting the external insulation system.

As this phase of insulation drew to a conclusion we still had 383 properties where tenants, for various reasons, had turned down the work. Some had elderly residents, some just simply not capable of dealing with that level of disruption to a property, others simply hadn't responded to letters and calling cards.

Late last year we were able to tap into some funding which enabled a subsidy to engage contractors to carry out some external insulation works to previously refused properties. After working with these contractors and monitoring their installation methods we looked into the possibility of completing insulation to the exterior of properties using our own labour, plasterers, who had been so instrumental in internal insulation.

After analysing the potential cost savings we re-trained the dry lining team to develop their skillset to complete External Wall Insulation. We have, through our partners at Buildbase, sourced a supplier for the External Wall Insulation. Our estimates show we can reduce the cost of insulation by approximately 30% over external contractor whilst tackling our commitment to make homes warmer and more energy efficient, decreasing carbon emissions and improving the external appearance of many older properties on our estates.

We have now started in the Spondon area, where we have 25 properties requiring external wall insulation, currently 18 of these have signed up, and others are making enquiries as the work progresses. In the future we plan to approach all those that missed out on insulation previously, for a variety of reasons. Amongst which are the Wimpey-no-fines (concrete) flats in Mackworth, whilst having a vision to be able to assist DCC with completing wall insulation on private properties throughout the City of Derby.

The initial works have gone well and the finished job is of a high standard, as the pictures below show. I think we can be proud that once again Derby Homes are not content to sit back and just carry out the easy works. We are willing to find new ways of meeting the needs .of our tenants where other works would prove difficult for them whist investing in our workforce and keeping jobs and investment spend within our area.



From the first slab of insulation

to rendering over

To the completed installation



The scaffold will soon be down and the tenant left to benefit.

Head of Repairs

Day to Day

At the end of May, performance in terms of 'repairs completed in time' are as follows:

- Emergencies – 100%
- Very urgent works – 100%
- Urgent works – 100%
- Routine works – 99.86%
- Planned works – 99.68%

Performance up until the end of May is pleasing with all priorities above / better than target.

The 'appointments kept' target ended the month in April at 99.70% against a target of 99.00%. Unfortunately the Insight report has failed in May and we have no up to date information on which to report on

Tenant satisfaction with repairs remains high and above target at 99.52% up until the end of May. Out of the 4345 text surveys sent out we have only received 21 negative responses this year.

We have generated rechargeable repairs up to the May realising £2600.00

We currently have 15 live disrepair cases

Void Repairs

Up until the end of May the voids team have completed 109 active voids compared to 126 for the same period last year. Performance is currently averaging 19.12 days to inspect and complete works.

The time to inspect and complete works in May was 20.6 days. Following a difficult start to the beginning of the financial year mainly due to the number of voids received, the void relet time is now reducing.

Gas Servicing and Electrical Testing

At the end of May, both the Gas and Electrical teams have met target and have achieved full compliance. Gas servicing and electrical periodic testing both finished the month at 100%.

Up to the end of May the Gas team have carried out 2301 services.

Up to the end of May the Electrical Testing team and Voids Repairs team have completed 400 EICR's which makes Derby Homes 100% compliant.

We are continuing to incorporate a dynamic scheduling system with smartphones for our operatives in the electrical testing team. Once the upgrade to the Open Housing system is completed we will be looking at Dynamic Scheduling for the Gas Team on the back off the excellent results we have achieved from the Electrical testing.

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

Clare Mehrbani, Head of Housing Management & Housing Options:

Tel 888596 Email clare.mehrbani@derbyhomes.org

Jackie Westwood, Head of Income Management & Advice:

Tel 888419 Email jackie.durham@derbyhomes.org

Andrew McNeil, Head of Housing Investment:

Tel 888545 Email andrew.mcneil@derbyhomes.org

Steve Bayliss, Head of Repairs:

Tel 888774 Email steve.bayliss@derbyhomes.org

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