

HEADS OF 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 Operations (Housing Management & Housing Options)

Summer Engagement Campaign

We have had a very busy summer engaging with tenants through our summer engagement campaigns. We have been in attendance at the following events:

June

3rd – Big One at Chaddesden Park

14th – VITAS Careers festival

24th – Great Get Together

July

7th – Osmaston Play day

14th – Sinfin Moor Play day

21st – Bramblebrook fun day

28th – Spondon fun day

31st Love Parks Markeaton

August

1st – Love Parks Chaddesden

2nd – Love Parks Darley Park

4th – Aspire Wrestling fun day

At many of these events we have been supported by a children's face painter, courtesy of Bell. We have also promoted the draft local customer priorities responses for comment, have sought feedback through customer surveys and promoted support for our charity of the year.

Homefinder Changes

We are changing the Homefinder IT system (the way people apply for social housing) from the current provider Abritas to OPEN Housing. We are keeping the domain name 'Homefinder', but it will be delivered through our OPEN Housing integrated IT system.

The new system of registration will be a single stage process making it easier for customers when applying for housing. Applicants will be able to upload relevant documents relating to their application to speed up the application process.. This new registration process will enable customers to bid immediately. Once registered, new customers will automatically be signed up for 'DH My Account', which will lay dormant until they become tenants of Derby Homes.

We have a detailed communications plan to notify all existing and potential new customers of the changes ahead. Using a variety of channels we will engage with customers through: emails, web messages, Derby Homes website, Homefinder website, Derby Homes News publications, social media channels, phone script messages when calling Housing Options and Derby Homes, letters and text messaging.

The new Homefinder system will launch on the 10th September 2018 and our communications plan to inform customers of the changes will commence 13th August.

We are able to identify customers whom we may class as vulnerable for a variety of reasons. These customers will have a specific detailed communication plan to ensure they are fully supported through the change from Abritas to OPEN. This will ensure that they are able to continue to bid throughout the changes.

Head of Operations (Income Management & Customer Service)

Customer Services

The brand new Customer First strategy and action plan was approved at the Operational Board in June. Included in the action plan is promoting accessing services on line.

We are continuing the Get on Line incentive scheme up to March 2019. Successfully 1200 customers were given the full £100 get on line award or part £50 award in April this year.

We are launching a brand new “24 /7 initiative” in August to further promote registering and accessing services via My Account.

At the time of writing 3,162 customers have registered on My Account. The target is 8,000 by March 2019, which is a huge task and requires buy in from everyone at Derby Homes to promote the facility and to push people to Get on line.

The Customer Communications Team, Complaints and Customer Service and Equalities Manager have moved into the Hub at London Road to work closely with the Customer Engagement team, to engage customers in reviews of services and establish customer working groups.

We have recruited a Customer Experience Support assistant to work with the Customer Experience Officer on customer satisfaction, complaints and compliments.

The Customer Service team will all be based at London road from 1 October 2018 and plans are in place to accommodate this move.

Customer Communications

The team has now moved offices at London Road are a back at The Hub, co-located alongside the Customer Services Manager, Customer Experience Officer and Customer Engagement and Community Development Team. This will see a greater focus on the Customer First Strategy with closer working from these teams. In addition, the team have just recruited to a new apprentice role which will begin in September: Creative Content Apprentice.

Key work at the moment involves the transfer of all website content onto a new site provided in-house by Derby City Council. Following the move, a more thorough review of our website will take place with a Customer First focus.

The process of producing the Annual Report for customers (2017/18) has started, with a greater focus on customer input to inform the content that should be included.

The team have created flyers to promote sign-up to MyAccount and the 24/7 initiative, which will be distributed to trade staff to give out on repair visits.

We submitted a successful entry into this year's Top 50 Social Landlords listing, published by 24 Housing Magazine, which saw Derby Homes make the list for the first time alongside four other ALMOs.

Income Management

The Derby Job Centre moved to full service for Universal Credit on 11 July. More information can be found in the Part B report. We continue to attend Housemark welfare reform groups as well as East and West Midlands best practice groups to learn from organisations who have been dealing with universal credit for the last couple of years and sharing best practice.

The Welfare Reform Team is co-locating at the Job Centre based at the Council House and is settling in well to the new working pattern. Monthly strategic meetings are held between the Job Centre managers and Derby Homes to discuss any issues and resolve.

Following training for Income Recovery Officers, a triage-style process to deal with the additional cases has been put in place. The Welfare Reform Team is involved in the initial set-up for Universal Credit claims and they then pass the cases on to Income Recovery Officers for monitoring. Income Officers then monitor and support tenants, making sure the rent is paid and will signpost tenants to services that may be able to support them if they are struggling.

We are looking at more efficient ways of helping address the additional workloads that will come. This includes looking deeper into the Mobyssoft product and depending on findings, we will be putting forward a business case for the product.

Mobyssoft is a bolt on product to the existing Open Housing system which can interrogate the system and identify tenants payment patterns and produce a shorter list of cases that need attention. This is important as universal credit will mean we have more cases to monitor and Mobyssoft may be able to free up time to focus on these cases and not look at cases where payment is likely.

Currently around 100 organisations have started to use Mobyssoft to help them manage their arrears cases.

Rental Control

The team has been restructured to reflect the level of duties undertaken within the team. The new structure takes into consideration the need for the business to adapt to future challengers.

Leasehold

A relatively small number of errors from last years' service charges have now been applied to the relevant accounts

We are working with other teams to streamline processes for notifying the Leasehold team on upcoming maintenance works and when works have been completed.

Derby Advice

The Derby Advice training programme for 2017/18 has now been delivered to over 100 delegates. Feedback on the 10 courses we offered was very good. Over 30% of the training attendees were Derby Homes' employees. Other came from Adult Social Care, NHS and other housing providers such as Derventio.

Customer satisfaction with Derby Advice was 97%. This is a pleasing result given the high demand for the service and pressures on time this creates. Comments from Derby residents included:

- "The adviser listened carefully and gave clear advice"
- "Everything was amazing"
- "Service is invaluable to people and was highly recommended by my friends"
- "Adviser was efficient and it was a job well done"

Our D2N2 'Money Sorted' project is still working on financial capability with some of the city's most financially vulnerable individuals. The project worker has also been invited to work every Tuesday morning in Job Centre plus in order to help some individuals claiming Universal credit for the first time.

Staff from Derby Advice had a stall at the 'Do what you want' event at Derby Velodrome for disabled people and their carers. We advised 50 people and gave out over 150 leaflets about our service. We also received lots of very positive feedback from other services exhibiting there, who refer people to Derby Advice.

Head of Repairs

Day to Day

At the end of June, quarter 1, performance in terms of 'repairs completed in time' is as follows:

- Emergencies – 100%
- Very urgent works – 100%
- Urgent works – 100%
- Routine works – 99.70%
- Planned works – 97.00%

Performance up until the end of quarter 1 is generally pleasing with all priorities above / better than the 99% targets other than planned works. There have been issues with certain contractor's performance and integrating new staff into the team taking on processes such as planning in scaffolding. We believe we have put plans in place to improve performance.

Void Repairs

Up to the end of June, quarter 1, the Voids Team has completed 191 active voids compared to 185 for the same period last year. Performance is currently averaging 18.66 days cumulatively to inspect and complete works.

The total number of void works carried out both active and passive is 252 voids compared to 256 voids last year.

The relet time is currently higher than what we would like. However it has improved significantly month on month since April and we perceive that this will continue and the average time will reduce.

Gas Servicing and Electrical Testing

At the end of June, quarter 1, both the Gas and Electrical teams have met target and have achieved full compliance. Gas servicing and electrical periodic testing both finished the quarter at 100%.

Up to the end of June the Gas team carried out 3856 services.

We attained high levels of first time access for gas servicing which ended the quarter averaging 81%. This is encouraging and interestingly has remained consistent. We are confident we should be able to sustain if not improve on this level of performance moving forward.

We are on track to go live with the Open housing Servicing module on both gas servicing and electrical testing within the next couple of months which will mean that all servicing information will be recorded on the main housing management system so customers and co-workers can see the individual services booked and all the certification will be completed and stored electronically.

We have now finished carrying out a feasibility study looking at installing air source heat pumps at Kestrel House. There is currently a consultation period being carried out. Depending on the results work is due to start in September and will last for a period of 6 weeks

Head of Governance & Corporate Services

Employee Development

The recruitment process for this year's intake of apprentices is in its final stages and we are currently preparing for the induction, the apprentices are due to start on 6 September 2018.

Derby Homes were runners up in the 2018 Derby Telegraph Business Awards in the category for Apprentice Employer of the Year. This is a great achievement for Derby Homes as we had strong competition from the winners Derby Teaching Hospitals and fellow runners up Bombardier Transportation. However, staff and apprentices attended the awards ceremony and a good evening was had by all.

Corporate Governance

The Board Member appraisal process is nearly complete and interviews with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Operational Board will take place once all forms have been returned.

Recruitment for Operational Board members is still slow although we have received a number of enquiries and are hopeful that applications will now start to be submitted.

The DACP has nominated Ian Veitch as its representative on the Operational Board. Ian recently stood down from the main Board and brings with him of many years of experience and engagement with Derby Homes.

Information Governance

Ensuring the security of all sensitive and confidential information is paramount to Derby Homes and we have been raising staff's awareness around secure email. We have provided a number of training sessions for staff that have been well attended with positive feedback.

Health & Safety

Violent, aggressive or abusive incidents towards staff are reported by staff using a formal reporting system. Appropriate action is always taken against the perpetrator. In May and June there were twenty reported cases of violence, aggression or abuse towards staff. All violence and aggression reports are discussed in more detail at the Employee Health & Safety Forum.

On 5th July 2018 Derby Homes was presented with the RoSPA President's Award in recognition of 12 consecutive Gold Awards. The RoSPA Awards scheme, which is open to businesses and organisations of all types and sizes from across the UK and overseas, judges consider entrants' overarching occupational health and safety management systems, including practices such as leadership and workforce involvement.