

### SERVICE DELIVERY REPORT

#### Report of Heads of Service

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#### 1. SUMMARY

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

#### 2. HEAD OF FINANCE AND INCOME – HELEN SAMUEL

##### 2.1 Income Management & Welfare Reform

##### 2.1.1 Current tenants' arrears - Update as 7 August 2023

As of Sunday 7 August 2023 (rent week 18) the current tenants rent arrears were £2,564,042. When compared with the position at the same time last year, the current rent arrears were £2,350,858 so the current position is £213,184 (9%) more than last year. This increase is not at all unexpected given that rents increased by 7%, very low numbers of evictions and the cost-of-living crisis continuing longer than originally predicted. For the same period a year ago the current rent arrears had increased 12.3% on the previous year.

Currently, Derby has current tenant arrears of 3.95% of the annual rent debit of circa. £62.83m. It is important to take into account that the majority of these arrears were accrued over previous years.

The key KPI is the amount of cash collected against the £63m due during the current year. Currently, that collection rate is 98.86% and by the end of the year we will be aiming to achieve our yearly target of 99%

Due to the cost-of-living crisis and the additional number of tenants moving over to Universal Credit, means we are anticipating the current arrears to end the year around the £2.5m mark (March 2023 £2.182m); around £0.3m higher – this increase of £0.3m is approx. 0.5% of the circa annual £63m charged. Universal Credit being paid 4 weeks in arrears to new claimants and tenants moving over/

migrating from housing benefit is likely to be the main factor in any expected rise in arrears levels.

A recent survey carried out by the National Federation of Housing, in which 28 councils and ALMO's contributed clearly highlighted that Universal Credit being paid in arrears, as being the major factor in rising arrears. The more tenants claiming Universal Credit the bigger the impact on arrears levels. Nationally some areas have had more tenants move over to Universal Credit than others so comparing arrears levels is not so clear at the moment. Derby Homes has over 40% of tenants already claiming Universal Credit with a further 38% claiming some housing benefit.

### 2.1.2 **Rent Free Weeks**

The timing of the rent free weeks with 2 of them being around Christmas time and the other 2 around the end/start of the financial year, plays a role in arrears levels across the year.

In previous updates we had mentioned that the role that the rent-free weeks have in reducing the headline arrears figure. Arrears increase in the lead up to the rent-free weeks. This was because we have a technical build-up of arrears during the year (on monthly or 4-week payers and some months have 5 weeks). So, in the case of direct debit payments and APA payments and also some monthly payers, 12 equal payments are requested or paid meaning the build-up of these technical arrears. Week 52 was a rent-free week and, in the instances, mentioned we receive 4 weeks rental income. In addition, we write to tenants in arrears and remind them they should continue with payments as agreed as their accounts are in arrears.

The current arrears before the rent-free week (week 51) were £2,539,210 owed by 4,443 tenants and the collection rate was 98.76% (DH R&RA PM04). Current Arrears as a % of the debit the arrears were 4.28% (DH R&RA PM01).

The figure at the end of week 52 (the first rent free week) was £2,182,243 owed by 3,792 tenants and the collection rate was 99.25%. Current Arrears as a % of the debit the arrears were 3.68%.

This meant the arrears reduction over the rent-free weeks, due to technical arrears catching up, such as direct debits and APA's, plus tenants paying over this rent-free week was £356,967. This is a significant figure collected.

### 2.1.3 **Vulnerable Renters Fund**

### 2.1.4 **Evictions**

Since April we have carried out <5 evictions.

We did expect evictions to start to increase this year due to the low levels (12) over the last 3 years. Previously evictions would have numbered between 20 and 40 a year. The main reason for decrease is that those tenants with higher arrears are Universal Credit claimants. In these cases, Alternative Payment Arrangements (APAs), where possible, are being applied for, to maximise incomes and avoid eviction warrants being requested. Whilst the APA's may contribute a small amount against the arrears, tenants' arrears balances will remain relatively high. For example, if a tenant has a £2,000 arrears balance and the APA now covers future

rent and say £20 towards the arrears, the residual level of arrears will stay within the overall arrears figure and partly explain the reason why this is increasing annually.

#### 2.1.5 **Welfare Reform update as of 7 August 2023 (wk18)**

Currently we have 4,993 tenants claiming Universal Credit. Around 71% of the expected 7,000 final number.

As part of our support function to mitigate the effects of Universal Credit on rent arrears, we attend team meetings for other support services such as Tenancy Sustainment, to inform and update them of what they can do to make sure Universal Credit claimants get the best possible start to their claim. Help identify vulnerabilities at the earliest stage. We can then apply for Alternative Payment Arrangements (APA) and Direct Payments to help our most vulnerable Universal Credit claimants and subsequently reduce the impact on rent arrears.

To help maximise claimant's income, we also check eligibility for and apply if appropriate for the Single Discretionary Award (SDA) which consists of Council Tax Hardship (CTH) and Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). If they qualify for CTH then they may also qualify for Council Tax Support (CTS). Make applications to the Household Support Fund (HSF), apply for other hardship payments and vouchers. In July, we wrote out to our 58 tenants that are in receipt of UC and live in Derby Homes-owned properties (101). The letter advised on how to update their UC journal with details of their new rent from 24 July 2023. This is to help ensure that the Housing Costs element within the UC claim continues to be paid at the correct amount and on time. This helps to minimise errors leading to concern for the tenant and an administrative task for both Derby Homes and the DWP.

'Managed migration' is the final phase of the rollout of Universal Credit. The DWP will contact those who are still claiming legacy benefits to notify them that those benefits will be ending and inviting them to claim Universal Credit instead.

The first cohort of migration notices were issued in May 2022 in Bolton and Medway, as part of the DWP's managed migration 'discovery work'. This discovery work is focused on learning what works and developing the managed migration service going forward to ensure most legacy benefit claimants make a successful move onto UC.

The proposed plan for the roll out of managed migration:

During 2023/24 - Tax Credit only cases

During 2024/25 - Income-Related ESA with Tax Credits, Income Support, Income Based JSA, HB only or with Tax Credits

During 2028/29 - All other Income-Related ESA cases

In Derby, the DWP started sending out managed migration notices from 1 August 2023 to those that are claiming tax credits and are single. Tax Credit-only couples are expected to be affected from October. DWP say an explanatory leaflet will be sent to claimants in September. Some claimants who receive Housing Benefit as well as tax Credits may receive the leaflet but should not be affected by this phase of Managed Migration.

The number of Migration Notices issued nationally is scheduled to increase to 30,000 a month, then 80,000 by the end of the year. They are starting with tax credit

claimants because results from their discovery work suggest these cohorts require minimal support in the move to UC. No further details have been released regarding scheduling of the areas or numbers involved.

Once a managed migration notice has been received, the recipient will have 3 months + 1 day to make a claim for UC. The DWP will have publicity campaigns and provide extra resources at the jobcentres and over the phone for all digital and non-digital claims. We have updated guidance on our Derby Homes website, social media channels and an article will appear in the Derby Homes Newsletter.

#### 2.1.6 Highlights of tenants on Universal Credit (UC) – 7 August 2023 (wk 18)

- 4,993 tenants on UC
- 56% of UC arrears cases on APA's (where DWP pay directly to Landlord the housing claim for weekly rent costs)
- 12% on Third Party Deductions (where a deduction from the UC claim is paid direct to Landlord to cover rent arrears)
- 1,150 tenants (23%) with no arrears or in credit on their rent account

<b>As at week ending 6 August 2023 (wk18)</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Gross Arrears</b>
UC singles	1,846	£800,690
UC couples *(includes 46 mac)	360	£118,665
UC families *(includes 3 mac)	2,787	£1,365,864
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,993</b>	<b>£2,285,219</b>
Gross UC arrears	3,843	£2,285,219
Cases with no arrears/credits	1,150	(£236,304)
Net UC arrears	4,993	£2,048,915
<b>Average arrears per UC Case (£2,285,219/4,993)</b>	<b>4,993</b>	<b>£458</b>
Average Weekly APA Payments since April	531	£218,140
Average Monthly APA Payments since April	2,256	£927,095
Number/Amount of Daily Alternative Payment Arrangements (APA) since April	9,482	£3,898,506

4-Weekly Third-Party Deductions (TPD) since April (includes 41 APA adjustments for £16,121)	2,358	£108,209
<b>Running Total APA + TPD since April</b>	<b>11,840</b>	<b>£4,006,715</b>

\*Mac (mixed age couples)

## Cost of living update – Derby Homes Income Management Team

The National Federation of ALMO's has recently published the findings of a survey they have conducted called On the Edge – Cost of Living Findings From The Council Housing Sector.

This survey draws on data provided by 28 local authorities and ALMOs across England which collectively manage around 294,000 local authority homes, measuring outcomes between March 2022 and March 2023.

This is a brief note about some of the key findings which reflect many of the challenges Derby residents will also be experiencing.

The survey shows the cost-of-living crisis is hitting households in the social rented sector hard. Nearly all Income Managers report:

- increased food bank use
- increased demand for their support services and increased demand for hardship funds
- 85 per cent report higher rent arrears
- Nearly 75% report increased pressure on local homelessness and housing advice services.

The survey also highlighted.

- 4 in 5 landlords surveyed reported an increase in rent arrears.
- Total number of households in arrears have risen four per cent, from 97,220 to 101,203.
- Amount owed has risen by 11 per cent to over £60 million.
- Average amount owed by households rose from £427 to £527 (up 23 per cent – or approximately an additional week's rent).
- Universal Credit does contribute a significant amount to overall arrears due to payments to claimants being in arrears.

Nationally, rent arrears have risen by 11% but here in Derby, as one of the Councils with possibly more areas of deprivation than some of the other organisations reporting, the arrears increased by 15%. As well as levels of rent

arrears increasing the number of tenants and the average rent arrears owed increased as well in rent.

Derby City Council tenants March 2022 March 2023 Percentage increase

Number of households in rent arrears

3,560 3,792 6.51%

Value of rent arrears (current tenants)

£1,891,881 £2,182,243 15.3%

Average percentage of households in arrears

28.8% 31% 7.6%

Average amount owed.

£531.42 £575.48 8.3%

Local authorities are provided with a pot of money for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) to support households who facing financial difficulties in managing day to day expenditure. Nationally, this pot was cut by £40 million between 2021/22 and 2022/23 and is now frozen until 2024/5. During 2022/23 Derby spent £571,963 on 902 awards to the city's residents. Derby Homes officers have been assisting in helping Derby Homes tenants claim this support.

Demand for advice services has increased also has increased in Derby with backlogs for appointments increasing. Support Teams are accessing a wide range of hardship funds as they try and help tenants.

In terms to the approach in collecting rent arrears the survey showed 79% of organisations have specialist Income Collection teams as does Derby Homes, 14% collection service was through generic housing officers and 7% a mixture of both.

### **Universal Credit – Main Factor in Rising Rent Arrears.**

The survey shows that Universal Credit and the way it is paid is one the major contributing factors in the increase of arrears. Nationally now nearly a third of the council tenants are claiming Universal Credit, a third housing benefit and a third paying without claiming housing benefit or housing costs. Derby Homes are a little higher with 40% of tenants on Universal Credit and 38% receiving some amount of housing benefit.

Migration of working tax and child tax credit only recipients is due to commence in the Derby area from Aug 2023 and managed migration for working age households on legacy benefits will start from April 2024, with the exception of ESA-only claimants which will be moved by 2028. This does indicate that rent arrears levels are likely to continue to rise.

A lot of the increase in rent arrears is being put down to Universal Credit and the Cost-of-Living Crisis.

Universal Credit is the new benefit to replace most existing legacy benefits. Universal Credit puts the emphasis on tenants to pay the rent through Housing Costs which are paid directly to tenants. Universal Credit is a major factor in increasing arrears not only because the housing costs are paid to tenants but also because they are paid 4 weeks in arrears.

The number tenants on Universal Credit continue to increase with 4934 tenants claiming by the end of March 2023. This was 13% more than end of March 2022. The current arrears were 2,182,243 and of this figure 1,671,397 (76.59%) was owed by tenants claiming Universal Credit. Although Universal Credit claimants owed over three quarters of the current arrears total, £1,200,222 of the arrears were accrued before going on to Universal Credit. This still means Universal Credit claimants have accrued a further £471,175 since claiming Universal Credit. Alternative Payment Arrangements (APA's) are where the DWP pay the rent landlord directly. APAs are requested and granted normally when tenants have accrued over 8 weeks rent arrears or are known to have difficulties in paying their rent. 46% of tenants claiming Universal Credit are now paying their rent via an APA's.

Direct Payments are payments taken from tenants Universal Credit to be paid towards outstanding rent arrears. (APA's cover the rent) Around 9% of all Universal Credit claimants have Direct Payments deducted. This figure is lower than previous years due to Universal Credit claimants either too little Universal Credit or because the maximum deductions allowed has already been taken for other priority debts.

## 2.2 **Rental Control (RC)**

- The planned upgrade of the Direct Debit (DD) module in Open Housing (OH) is now W/C 18th September 2023. We currently have three show stopping issues we are waiting for Capita to resolve so we can begin retesting.

- The current financial climate continues to have an impact on the tenants who pay by DD. The number of returned payments (effectively this is the DD "bouncing") continues to stay high. The number tenants paying by DD fell slightly in July by 1.27% We are still seeing an increase in tenants asking to change their DD payment date. This delays payment and widens the gap between DD payments so creates or increases rent arrears. There is also an increase in number of tenants setting up a DD then cancelling before paying.

- The Derby Homes owned property annual Rent Variation process is now complete, including updating all the Direct debit payment plans.

Tenant refunds / tenants payments for Disturbance & Compensation are currently taking longer since the introduction of the new finance system, CIA. Internally we are reviewing processes to minimise these delays as much as possible, working alongside Council colleagues as necessary.

## 2.3 **Accountancy & Accounts Payable Team**

Financial Statements and External Audit 22/23

The 22/23 Financial Statements have been audited and presented to Audit Committee and the Board. The underlying day to day operational surplus was £0.37m before deductions for loan interest of £0.151m and corporation tax of £0.03m. Hence, the management account surplus was just under £0.2m. We reported a projected breakeven management account position for 2022/23 at the 26 January 2023 Board meeting.

There were no significant deficiencies in internal control identified from the audit. Two minor weaknesses were noted:

- The monthly Payroll Reconciliation control account was not signed off as being evidenced by the Head of Finance.
- There remains examples where signed contracts of employment are not on employee files. Best practice would be to hold signed copies on file.

These will be picked up by Management and reviewed.

### **New Finance System CIA**

The team did an outstanding job in pulling together the accounts, the working papers for audit and dealing with audit requirements and queries at the same time as the new finance system (CIA) going live. The system is not without its teething issues, so the team are working closely with DCC colleagues to iron these out and are also continuing to role out the system to teams in Derby Homes and provide relevant training.

The old system Oracle will be turned off at the end of September 2023, so there is also work to transfer historical data into CIA, before this point in time.

Housemark

Following the completion of the annual statements, the work for Housemark benchmarking has been completed and entered before the deadline at the end of August, the results of which will follow later in the year

### **Staffing**

A new Accountancy Team Manager (replacement for Helen Samuel) has started in the team, Dawn Richardson, but unfortunately a Principal Accountant has recently left, so the this position is being currently recruited to.

## **2.4 Derby Advice Update**

### **Advice Pro Update**

- Advice pro is the industry leading case management system for specialist advisers working in Social Welfare Law. This includes all case management for both the welfare rights and money advice teams in Derby Advice.
- All staff have received initial training on the new system.
- We have moved into the customisation phase of implementation. Managers and key staff have been briefed on how to customise the system to meet our needs. The implementation timeline has been impacted by leave over the summer.

- Customisation should be completed by the end of September. Managers to receive training on the reporting functions of Advice Pro
- The system will be run in parallel to Flare for a month as a pilot/test in October.
- Final customisation and 'go live' in November.

### **Derby Advice Training Programme**

- The Derby Advice Training programme 22/23 was successfully delivered by the end of Spring 2023.
- The courses were delivered both online and in person. Feedback from the courses was excellent. 50% of course attendees did not express a strong preference as to whether the courses were delivered online or in person. The remaining 50% were split in half as to their preferred method of delivery. As a result, we will offer a mix of delivery methods in 23/24 programme.
- The money advice courses are timetabled for Autumn 2023 to be completed by Christmas.
- The welfare rights courses will commence in the New Year
- The new programme will be advertised shortly

## **2.5 Cost of Living**

This continues to increase pressure on our services from increasing numbers of referrals.

Our money advice apprentice has created a catalogue of local schemes offering support and initiatives, for example warm spaces, so our advisers can refer to this when advising clients on benefit and debt matters as the need arises.

We are once again acting as approved referrers for the next stage of the Household Support Fund Scheme, (HSF4).

During these difficult times we have, unfortunately, noticed a slight uptick in clients feeling suicidal. We have discussed this with our team, liaised with our Safeguarding & Compliance Manager, Bobby Howe, and our Safeguarding Champion, Vanessa Peters, and will be providing a briefing to staff on best practice in dealing with suicidal clients at our Service Meeting in May.

## **2.6 Welfare Rights Team**

- A part time Welfare Rights Officer vacancy has been advertised on 2 occasions and there have not been applicants to shortlist. We will look to fill this vacancy as it impacts on ability to meet demand.
- The Macmillan project is now fully staffed and receiving a high number of referrals into the project for specialist welfare rights advice. In July we dealt with 56 new cases, closed 46 cases and helped Derby residents with a cancer diagnosis, claim £193,251.09 in benefits.

## 2.7 Money Advice

- Energy Support Scheme applications re-opened in July. The Energy Support Scheme forms part of the Household Support Fund (HSF). We can apply for one off fuel vouchers for clients/tenants. We are trusted referrers and completing these for tenants on an on-going basis.
- The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) consumer duty- came into effect on 31/7/23. A report went to Board which included an action plan to ensure compliance.

## 4. Head of Repairs – Steve Bayliss

### 4.1 Day-to-Day

At the end of the first quarter of 2023/24, performance in terms of 'repairs completed on time' is as follows:

Emergencies (2 hours)	100%
Very urgent works (24 hours)	99.93%
Urgent works (5 working days)	96.66%
Routine works (25 working days)	83.51%
Planned works (60 working days)	73.37%

Performance up until the end of the first quarter on higher priority jobs is generally pleasing, with the emergency and very urgent works above/better than the 99% target.

Performance on the urgent works targets is below the 99% target. It is pleasing that there is an improvement on the previous quarter.

Overall performance on routine and planned works remains challenging, although there are some signs of improvement on the figures from last quarter.

We are constantly looking at ways to improve performance across the service area, we have carried out a number of actions including the following:

1. Reviewed and adjusted the time needed to complete works, to reduce measures and increase right first time fixes
2. Using external contractors to reduce the backlog of works
3. Introduced a new Contractor portal to enable us to understand the progress of contractor works
4. Close repairs jobs after one visit to reduce the number of no accesses.
5. We have engaged a contractor to manufacture obsolete kitchen doors which will be fitted by a designated in house team

Tenant satisfaction with repairs remains slightly below target, at 97.46% up until the end of the first quarter.

During the first quarter we have sent out 9609 surveys, with a total of 244 customers being dissatisfied; These surveys are for day to day repairs, gas and electric.

We have been contacting customers to ascertain what their issues are and how we can quickly resolve them, and to analyse trends to implement positive steps to improve the customers' experience.

We have generated rechargeable repairs up to the end of the first quarter, totalling £19492.43

The team is continually reviewing how we can improve processes and working practices. Although we have had a reasonably good start to the year we are mindful of the need to continue to make progress.

The new damp and mould policy has now been completed. The actions requested at the last Operational Board to ensure that information on how we will work with leaseholders has been included. This covers how we work on the structures of the buildings when required and how we will also give advice to leaseholders on how they can best deal with condensation and mould within the property.

## 4.2 Voids

In the first quarter, the voids team completed 129 void properties consisting of 102 active voids and 27 passive voids with 15 temporary accommodation properties, compared to 196 properties, including temporary accommodation, in the same period last financial year.

There was a difficult start to the financial year with regards to the time taken to carry out void works. However there has been significant improvement during the quarter with a turnaround time of 18.9 days. We are expecting this improvement to continue in the coming months.

We are continuing to post inspect all voids following the works to ensure the properties meet our lettable standard. We are also currently working with the Customer Voice as to look at ways with our customers in how we can improve the service further.

## 4.3 Gas Team

Performance in the first quarter of the year report has been very pleasing. We currently have 12,401 properties having a certificate less than one year old. This means there are currently only 3 properties with a certificate over 12 months old and this gives us a first quarter end percentage of 99.97%. This is a very pleasing result and the best we have ever achieved and is a result of all the hard work from the team.

Obviously, we are continuing to make efforts to gain access to these remaining properties working with colleagues and other departments where appropriate. This means we are currently 100% compliant in line with gas regulations.

We are pleased with performance as the year has had its challenges with absences, and material availability throughout the year. We have though ensured that these challenges have not had an impact on the excellent results we have seen so far this year.

For the second consecutive year we have successfully managed to maintain our targets required for the installation of gas central heating boilers and systems being carried out which is a great achievement.

Other pressures that were added to the team were the introduction from the government of the installation of CO alarms which we have incorporated within the team and delivered on the target of fitting these alarms within a year which we understand is industry leading performance.

The team are now looking forward to ensuring that our results achieved in this first quarter carry on at the same successful rate for the remainder of this year.

#### **4.4 Electrical Team**

The Electrical Team have started the year in strong form, meaning at the end of the first quarter 99.89% of properties now have an in date Electrical Inspection Condition Report.

This means 12,516 homes have received a satisfactory Electrical Safety Check with only 14 properties unfortunately overdue. Of the 14 homes that are overdue, 10 are of complex circumstances and we are working collaboratively with the relevant parties and colleagues to find a solution. For the remaining 4 properties Derby Homes failed to complete all attempted visits within the service window. The reasons for this were due to moving visits as per tenants' requests outside of service windows and also some staffing issues which have now been resolved.

This quarter the team have completed 504 Electrical Safety Checks to date with 9 major repairs identified following the tests.

The Electrical Team have also continued to invest in upgrading our electrical installations across the city which includes completing 27 Consumer Unit upgrades incorporating new non-combustible equipment to improve fire safety and completed 7 Smoke Alarm Upgrades, expanding the fire detection in our customer's homes. The slight drop in figures is due to health and safety requirements of intrusive asbestos surveys for all planned works. This will improve over the next quarter as the new process is now implemented.

Additionally to this the team are 100% compliant in emergency lighting, fire alarm servicing and sprinkler servicing.

Upgrades are being rolled out to all of the fire detections systems that are reliant on telephone lines to call Carelink. This upgrade will significantly improve where calls are not received by Carelink due to technical issues and this will vastly improve fire safety across the city.

#### **4.5 Disrepair**

We continue to face challenges from the number of disrepair cases we are receiving. During the first quarter we received 49 new cases. Interestingly though 14 cases were withdrawn during the quarter which is a fairly new development.

As the board is aware we continue to defend cases when appropriate and during the quarter we settled 2 cases paying out £3,134 in compensation and £2,750 in legal fees.

Since fitting the new data loggers we have been able to glean interesting information on some of our properties in respect to heat and humidity. The system is capable of showing if these levels are within reasonable parameters and whether the property is likely to have increased risks of developing mould. Although early days we are hoping these systems will be useful for both ourselves and our customers in combatting possible mould issues within their homes.

Our recently introduced damp and mould technical officer has in this quarter started to make visits to our customers homes. He has been able to give advice, carry out mould washes and inspect the properties for any property related issues. We are finding that this post enables us to visit our customers in a more timely fashion, prioritising those with vulnerabilities. We are looking forward to see how this develops in the coming months.

## 5. **Head of Housing Options and Homelessness – James Joyce**

### 5.1 **Councillor Training and Development Evening**

We recently held a Councillor Training and Development session specifically focussing on Housing Options and Homelessness in Derby. The presentation was based on a slimmed down version of the recent Board Workshop session that we delivered on Housing Options and Homelessness. The evening was very well attended and stimulated lots of debate around housing and homelessness within the City and how Councillors can assist and influence change. We spent well over an hour following the presentation, answering questions and discussing the housing crisis and ways the City can respond.

#### **Homeless Reduction Act 2018 Updated Training Days**

We are currently embarking on a wide scale Housing Option team refresher training programme based around the Homeless Reduction Act 2018. These sessions will include refreshed documents that officers use when administering their duties. Alongside this, we are introducing a pre-training self-assessment questionnaire tool, supplied by the training provider that all officers will complete. These self-assessment tools will enable officers to identify any gaps they may have in their knowledge base, enabling them to have a clear focus when they attend the training days. This will ensure that we maximise the use of the training and get personalised development for officers.

#### **Staff Member Shortlisted in Team Derby Awards**

We are really proud that one of our REST Team officers (A) has been nominated by DCC Adult Social Care Social Worker for the Transforming Lives Award, which is part of 'Here For Derby Awards 2023', being held at Derby Arena Monday 4 September. Out of over 140 amazing nominations, the awards panel have whittled it down to just three finalists, handpicking your nomination as a shining example of Team Derby. A fantastic achievement for (A), to be selected from 140 nominations is a massive achievement in itself. This is also a wonderful recognition for the whole

team as this is what they set out to do each day, to try and assist in helping to improve the lives of some of the City's most vulnerable people. I am fully aware of the work and customer that (A) has been nominated for, it truly is a fabulous piece of dedicated and collaborative work that they have done, demonstrating how, we as a service, can have such a positive impact of someone's life.

## 6. **Head of Housing Management – Carl Tring Willis**

I have included Family Intervention tenancies as part of this report, as there is not enough information to warrant a separate report.

### **Head of Housing Management – Carl Tring Willis**

#### 6.1 **Family Intervention Tenancies (FIT)**

Family Intervention Tenancies (FIT) came into force in 2009 to allow Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords to work more effectively with families whom have been involved in Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Nuisance and Domestic Abuse. Those landlords can offer a FIT to existing tenants who are/or could be at risk of losing their secure/assured tenancy through possession proceedings, due to their behaviour or those living with them.

FITs can also be offered to tenants who do not have a secure/assured tenancy. A FIT should be used for the purpose of supplementing behaviour support to the family, which must be clearly outlined in a written behaviour contract between the landlord and tenants.

A tenant is not obliged to accept the FIT, but it should be made clear that possession action may be continued on their current tenancy. FITs are not secure tenancies and do not offer any rights to succession and the landlord can end the FIT by following set procedures.

Since Derby Homes' Complex Needs Team was set up in 2016, the Intensive Intervention Officers have managed a total of 9 FITs. We currently have one active FIT which opened in October 2022; this case is on track to transition, successfully, onto an Introductory Tenancy.

The previous 8 FITs, of which there were a total of 26 children under the age of 18 within the household - all successfully transitioned into introductory tenancies and were subsequently made secure. This demonstrates that a FIT is a positive tool in providing a framework to work intensively with families and prevent homelessness through enforcement action.

#### **Violence Against Women and Girls**

#### 6.2

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is one of the most widespread, persistent, and devastating human rights violations in our world today, and remains unreported due to the silence, stigma and shame surrounding it. The term VAWG encompasses a wide range of harms, including:

- domestic violence and abuse
- sexual violence (including rape)
- sexual exploitation

- sexual harassment
- stalking
- prostitution and trafficking
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage.
- honour-based violence
- faith-based abuse

Derby Homes has helped lead the creation of a new Partnership Forum to better connect, coordinate, and collaborate on activities aimed at addressing Violence Against Women and Girls in the City.

The aim of the new forum, is to identify and discuss emerging issues, communicate updates from across all sectors, and to enable diverse groups operating in the City to mobilise and connect to tackle violence, abuse, and harassment directed towards women and girls.

Our Safeguarding & Compliance Manager is the Vice-Chair, and Derby Homes provides support to facilitate and administrate the new forum with Derby City Council.

### **Annual Safeguarding Campaign - Neglect**

6.3

We continue to run successful annual safeguarding campaigns for both our staff and customers. Previous themes included Domestic Abuse in 2021 and Exploitation in 2022. This year's theme is Neglect, in response to this being the single biggest category of Abuse in 2022.

'Neglect' includes a range of abuse, including the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs; the most prevalent form of child abuse, whereby a child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision, or health care.

It also includes self-neglect, when someone is unable, or unwilling, to care for their own essential needs, and covers a wide range of behaviour including neglecting personal hygiene, health, or surroundings, refusal of necessary support and obsessive hoarding.

The campaigns provide a platform to highlight key messages, provide information and advice and communicate changes in legislation, policy, and procedures.

Derby Homes has a network of Safeguarding Champions across the organisation, who connect and coordinate to advance awareness around Safeguarding, and ensure it is embedded across Derby Homes. The campaigns also provides the opportunity to reinforce the internal message that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, but also through external platforms how customers can report their concerns too.

### **Parklands View (PLV)**

6.4

Lastly, Parkland View celebrated its 7th Birthday in style on 25th July.

Located at the gateway to the UNESCO world heritage site and overlooking the River Derwent and Darley Park, PLV consists of eighty-two extra care apartments

spread over four stories. All apartments have two bedrooms, a spacious open plan kitchen, dining and living area and a fully accessible wet room.

Derby Homes provides the housing management function at PLV, which also boasts a courtyard garden, restaurant/café, a communal lounge, along with hobby and therapy rooms and a laundry room.

Over the years PLV has won national awards, including a Gold Award at the Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC) Awards 2019. The scheme was also recognised by the Dignity in Care Awards, along with being a finalist in the TPAS Awards for Excellence in Engagement in Support and Care.

The team who manages PLV is entirely focused on ‘creating community,’ and this was no more evident than during the celebrations, with staff and residents joining forces to host a spectacular birthday party with food and drinks, activities, and entertainment, and even dancing.

## 7. **Head of Quality and Consumer Regulation – Holly Johnson**

Since the last Head of Service update, there has been an introduction of a new Head of Quality and Consumer Regulation. From the 1 August 2023, I have been fortunate enough to be successful to this post, and so I would like to provide an update on some of the new initiatives and changes that will be taking place.

As a new service area, the focus will be on leading and driving quality services for the organisation in line with the Consumer Standards. The teams that will fall under this service area include:

- IT Projects Team
- Customer Engagement
- Customer Communications
- Customer Experience Team
- Empty Homes Coordinator

Work is underway to prioritise and capture work in this area for the next 12 months, to ensure we are leading on key projects which align to the Regulator of Social Housing. Detail of the main projects is outlined below:

### **Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's)**

Since 1 April 2023, work has been underway to capture all 22 TSM's for the Regulator of Social Housing. Of the 22 measures, 10 are measured by the landlord, directly, and 12 are measured by a tenant perception survey.

The ambition for Derby Homes is to develop reports for the TSM's which are fully automated. The intention is, that reports will be provided to the Senior Management Team, monthly, for monitoring, before being reported to the Council and Board. Reporting to the Regulator is required on an annual basis, with the submissions for 2023/24 due around summer 2024.

Definitions have been agreed with the Council on the measures, and reports are being developed and continue to be defined. Major changes have needed to be made to the way we currently report the ‘measured by landlord’ indicators, which

has caused delays to some of the measures. An example of this is for Lift Safety. Previous iterations of this report contained compliance of the lift itself, whereas the new definition means that we need to measure how many properties are being affected by the lift. This new methodology has created additional needs from our current reporting mechanisms, to ensure we are consistent to the Regulator's expectations.

For the perception measures, the results for the 12 perception measures are being benchmarked with Housemark's early adopters of the TSM's. The report will need to be able to outline the methodology of the survey collection, the demographics of the customers surveyed and if the results are representative of our tenant population.

We are working to gain insight from Shared Ownership tenants by the end of the year, and Derby Homes Limited tenants by next year.

## **Consumer Standards**

Last year, we had an independent review on our position against the current consumer standards; this assessment was extremely positive but gave areas where we could still improve. This action plan is still live and going forward progress will be reported to Board.

On 25 July 2023, The Regulator of Social Housing issued a consultation document on revisions to the Consumer Standards. The consultation period will run until 17 October 2023. The Regulator is seeking the views on four consumer standards that set out the specific expectations and outcomes registered providers will be expected to achieve from April 2024; replacing the existing consumer standards that are currently in place. Officers are assessing the proposals and will draft a response to the consultation document which will be presented to the Main Board at the September 2023 meeting. In addition to the draft response, Board Members will also receive a self-assessment of Derby Homes compliance with the proposed standards. This assessment will be supplemented by detail of actions required to achieve compliance by April 2024.

## **Data integrity**

As part of the new Consumer Standards, it is widely recognised that improvement of our existing data is a high priority. As such, working closely with the IT Projects team across the organisation is paramount. Conversations have started to review recommendations from the Housing Ombudsman for a Knowledge and Information Strategy. The design and project implementation of this strategy which will shape the future culture and design of how we capture data to ensure compliance to the standards.

## **8. Head of Capital Works – Shaun Bennett**

- 8.1** This update, across all Teams within the Capital Works Division (Capital Projects / Development / Estates Maintenance / Planned Maintenance Teams) summarises; the main issues impacting on the Team, the works undertaken by the Teams and the upcoming activities prior to the next meeting of this Operational Board.

## 8.2 Grounds and Garden Maintenance

Streetpride have been working to the agreed grass cutting cycles and maintain our grassed areas to a good standard.

## 8.3. Planned Maintenance Team

The Planned Maintenance Team is project managing of a wide variety of capital and revenue works, during the 2022/23 financial year programme. The headline items can be summarised as follows:

Re-roofing works to various locations across the city, both of our contractors are making good progress. We continue to integrate solar panels where roofs are suitable.

Decarbonisation works are progressing very well, we were successful in our bid for Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding to complete the insulation work to the remaining cast iron homes in Allenton, work has now started on this phase, we have an 18 month programme to complete work to over 150 homes.

Replacement External Doors & Windows– Our contractor, Nationwide are upgrading external doors and frames across the City including works to the cast iron properties at Allenton, referred to above.

Redecoration Works – Internally– As part of the Home Decoration Scheme, being delivered throughout the year by our contractor, Buxton Decorators.

Major Adaptations and Extensions) – The Team have a number of such projects using the services of external contractors and the in-house workforce.

## 8.4. Capital Works Team

### In House Team and Local Sub Contractors

New Build Programme Delivery - The Schemes are currently being delivered through a mix of external local contractors constructing the substructure, external superstructures (building shell) and the external works, with the in-house team generally completing the internal fit out. The table below summarises the current programme of new build work on site during 2022/23.

The focus of the in-house delivery team is on; smaller sites (say less than 10 units), structures two storeys or less and in locations that external contractors may find uneconomic due to their scale or location.

Address	Units	Project managed by	Actual/proposed completion date – status on site
Berwick Ave	1 x 3b Bungalows	Derby Homes Arcus	Project Complete
Cummings Street	4 x 2b Houses	Derby Homes DCC Architects	Project Complete

Chesapeake Road	6 x 2b Houses + 2 x 4b Houses (8 units)	Derby Homes DCC Architects	SOS – February 2022 / ECD – Quarter 3 23/24 Superstructure brickwork complete and roofs on. Work so far has been complex which has impacted on progress on site. We have designed and built a structural retaining wall around the rear perimeter of the site as required by the planning regulations. We have also finalised negotiations and moved a BT fibre optic cable and agreed solutions to the access of the existing mobile phone mast.
Whittaker Street	2 x 4 bed houses	Derby Homes DCC Architects	SOS – December 2022, start was delayed due to a redesign on the method of piling due to the close proximity of neighbouring homes. ECD – pushed back to Quarter 4 23/24. Substructures now under construction.
Monyash Close	1 x 4 bungalows M4(2)	Derby Homes Arcus	Programmed SOS – Start has been delayed until quarter 3 23/24 due to longer than anticipated procurement

			timescales in selecting our contractor for the sub and super structure.
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**Acquired Properties Work** – The CWT continues to focus on turning around large-scale refurbishments of passive voids and newly acquired homes.

**Kitchen / Bathroom / Wet Rooms / Adaptations Works in Occupied Properties** – All workstreams are well underway, working in occupied properties, delivering the 2023/24 programme. We are procuring an external contractor to help provide more support for replacement kitchens.

## 8.5. Development Team

The Team continued to work with our consultants in; preparing scheme feasibility reports, designs and working drawings, seeking planning permission and discharging conditions attached to planning permissions, for future new build projects.

To increase the scale and pace of delivery of the New Build Programme, external Contractors are being procured to deliver a range of projects. The Procurement route will depend on; the level of design information available or required of the contractor, timing of delivery or level of contractor expertise required into the project. A set of Employers Requirements have been completed to ensure Derby Homes Standards are incorporated into the projects.

The table below summarises the main projects currently in development with the Team:

Address	Units	Project managed by	Notes
Barlow Street	12 3b/5p TA flats	DH ARCUS consulting	<p>Planning permission granted, subject to a number of planning conditions.</p> <p>Remediation strategy required for ground investigation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree protection – Completed.</li> <li>• Sustainable drainage strategy required – GCA completed.</li> <li>• Biodiversity enhancement report required – completed.</li> </ul> <p>Tender documents being prepared by our consultants to outsource this project.</p>

Crompton Street	6 x 1 bed flats	DH ARCUS consulting	Construction Information Complete. Protracted Leaseholder issue resolved. Garage buildings and bases demolished. Tender documents being prepared by our consultants to outsource this project.
Oaklands Avenue	6 x 1 bed flats	DH ARCUS consulting	Construction Information Complete Protracted Leaseholder issue. On conclusion of above issue Storeroom Building on site to be demolished.
Paterson Avenue	6 x 1 bed flats	DH ARCUS consulting	Planning Permission granted. Existing Garages on site demolished. Subject to several planning constraints currently being discharged. Tender documents being prepared by our consultants to outsource this project.
Elm Tree Avenue	2 x 4 bed houses M4(3)	DH ARCUS consulting	Planning Permission granted. Subject to a number of conditions Full design development in progress.
Falcon News Shop, Sinfin	2 x 4b/7 person houses 2 x 1b bungalows	DH ARCUS consulting	Planning Permission granted. Subject to several conditions Full design development complete. Existing building demolished.
Cricklewood Road	5 x 2 bed houses	DH ARCUS consulting	Planning Permission granted. Subject to several conditions Full design development complete. Existing building demolished.
Grange Avenue	37 bungalows	DH ARCUS consulting	Planning Permission granted. Subject to seventeen planning conditions being discharged Full design development in progress. Civil engineering design in progress. Project Management through Arcus. Tender documents being prepared by our consultants to outsource this project.

Address	Units	Project managed by	Notes/Procurement notes
Bretton Avenue	Both Redevelopment & Refurbishment under consideration	DH ARCUS consulting	<p>Consultation Process</p> <p>Stage 1 – Initial event held early October 2021 with all options considered.</p> <p>Stage 2 – Feedback provided to all residents and focus consultation to further investigate favoured options – February 2022.</p> <p>Stage 3 – Open Day event held on 13th through 15th September 2022 to further explore new build / refurbishment options with residents.</p> <p>Stage 4 - Feedback provided to all residents / Councillors during November 2022.</p> <p>Stage 5 – Arcus commissioned to commence initial design for planning application. Consultation on design with residents during autumn 2023.</p>
Spring Street	4 x 4 bed /5x 2b houses	DH ARCUS consulting	<p>Planning permission granted.</p> <p>Planning conditions currently being discharged.</p>

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

For more information please contact:

Individual Heads of Service  
Via Corporate.support@derbyhomes.org

Background information: None

List of appendices None

This report has been approved by the following:

Governance Services (checked)	Jane Haywood	22.08.2023
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