

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

At the time of writing this report the national 4-week lock down has just been announced and we are looking at what actions we need to take with regards to Derby Homes services and supporting the wider Derby City partnership. I do however feel confident that the changes we have made over recent months and the risk assessments we have undertaken to ensure safe methods of working will stand us in good stead for the challenges ahead.

A lot of the updates for my service area are already contained in other reports. I was particularly impressed to read the report on repairs completed by the Customer Voice. It is clear that a lot of time, effort and thought has gone into this and I am sure that there will be a lot of value in exploring the recommendations made.

Celebrating National Poetry Day at Parkland View

National Poetry Day was held on 1 October 2020, and to celebrate, the Derby Book Festival visited Parkland View Extra-Care facility. East Midlands Today went along to film the event, which was held outside in the Parkland View courtyard. Reading Co-ordinators from the Derby Book festival group usually visit Parkland on Friday mornings to read poetry and literature with members of the residents Shared Reading group. Due to COVID-19 safety restrictions, the usual readings haven't been taking place. However, with a few modifications, we were able to hold the event safely outside in line with Government guidelines. Residents were interviewed and a feature appeared on East Midlands today during the evening news programme.

The Derby Homes extra care team at Parkland View have worked with the co-ordinators at Derby Book festival group throughout the pandemic to ensure all group members have kept in touch and received their weekly newsletter, full of poetry, seasonal notes, observations and humour. We have also delivered poetry postcards, handwritten by members of the Derby Book Festival group and supported them to consult with group members on how the sessions could be delivered safely when guidance is relaxed. The newsletters and postcards have been very popular and have kept residents involved and engaged. Residents are able to write their own poetry for the newsletter.

The event was so successful there is support for more outdoor activities to take place once current Covid restrictions allow. Derby Homes plan to build a covered seating area on the patio for residents to safely meet for activities whilst socially distancing. In

the meantime, a smaller project to waterproof, light and heat an existing smaller outdoor structure will go ahead over the next few weeks to provide a safe and sheltered outdoor space.

Creating Outdoor meeting spaces at the Category 2 schemes

Following a report to the last Operational Board, a consultation is currently underway with residents at Kestrel House, Whitecross House and Rebecca Court regarding improving the outdoor areas at the schemes. If the consensus is that customers are in favour of the improvements being carried out, the work will be completed as soon as possible.

Head of Finance & Income

COVID Commentary

All teams are predominately working from home and this will continue to be the case during the second “lockdown”. We do not anticipate a material impact to the service or to customers from another lockdown, providing staffing levels are maintained in service teams. Each team has an existing business continuity plan to adopt in the event of a “lockdown”.

Rental Control & Leasehold Teams

Rent Variation Calendar Review

Please note our planned changes to the future supply of the (physical) annual rent calendar.

We have reviewed the contents of the annual rent variation pack which is posted to around 13,000 annually. This currently contains:

- Cabinet letter
- Rent Calendar
- Important Information Sheet
- Rent Variation letter

We discussed the ongoing need for a physical rent calendar with a virtual panel of (approx. 50) tenants in August 2020 and received 28 replies to our questionnaire which confirmed our underlying assumptions on how the rent calendars are currently being used / not used by tenants.

Key findings from the tenant survey were:

- Just under half find the calendar useful
- Less than a fifth (18%) positively stated that they use the printed rent calendar
- The majority (60%) positively stated they would use an online rent calendar, with 46% saying they would prefer an online version over a printed copy.

Comments in the free text area were particularly helpful. Key themes were:

- Recognition that not all tenants have internet access
- There is an environmental aspect to consider when producing a paper rent calendar
- Some tenants find a paper version acts as a visual prompt

Taking on board the comments received, from April 2021 we are planning to:

- Exclude the rent calendar as a standard inclusion in 13,000 rent variation packs
- Include the details in a future edition of Derby Homes News and the “Important Information Sheet” sent with the rent variation pack that the rent calendar
- Have a rent calendar available on the DH website for reference and as a

- downloadable pdf file if a tenant wants to print it themselves
- Tenants can request a printed copy either via email or by phoning us and we'll post one out

We have looked at the Concierge service charge at Rivermead House and from April 2021 intend to "de-pool" the CCTV and Cleaning elements from the Concierge service charge. This will mean that the separated CCTV and Cleaning service charges will be eligible for Universal Credit, whilst the core Concierge service is not. Whilst the total amount charged to tenants won't change (other than inflation) it maximises amounts tenants can claim via Universal Credit. Tenants on Housing Benefit and Leaseholders are not affected by this change.

The DWP are planning to go live with Daily UC payments (to the Council) from the W/C 2nd November 2020. There are some behind the scenes IT issues to resolve beforehand, but the end result should mean that DWP payments are received more regularly and tenants rent account balance are more up to date (some currently show "technical" arrears until the 4 weekly DWP payment is received).

All the team are continuing to work from home and service levels are continuing. The team leaders are carrying out regular 'check-up' calls via telephone or skype along with providing support to any staff members that are finding the isolation of working from home an issue.

Leasehold

At the beginning of October, all work was completed in preparing and issuing the annual actual service charge statements. The team are currently dealing with some Leasehold breaches which will require in depth and time-consuming work to resolve. There appears to be an increase in complaints around painting of communal areas – our Team Leader is working with relevant service team to try and resolve.

Derby Advice

D2N2 Money Sorted Project.

Derby Advice are one of 12 delivery partners in the D2N2 area delivering budgeting support and financial capability advice to those furthest away from the job market. We have exceeded our target number of people assisted for 5 consecutive quarters including 2 quarters since the beginning of the pandemic. A number of the other partners have struggled to meet targets whilst working remotely, but our project worker has been successful in signing up new participants for the project and delivering outcomes.

Customer feedback -mid-year review.

We have achieved 100% client satisfaction in the first 2 quarters of this year. We are proud of this outcome as it has been challenging to deliver specialist welfare rights and money advice entirely remotely, and to represent Derby city residents at benefit appeal tribunal via conference calls.

Comments on the surveys included

- 'brilliant service'
- 'the lady I spoke to was so helpful.....she was lovely'
- 'best advice I've ever had, Kalash was really helpful and kind'
- 'really good, got back to me quickly'
- 'I just want to say thank you -I thought how brilliant and caring Derby Advice were. Thank you, Becky,'

Overall benefit cap

We have specifically targeted support on 60 tenants who are in receipt of Housing

Benefit and are affected by the Overall Benefit Cap. We contacted all 60 tenants and offered money advice and/or budgeting support including an income maximisation check. To date 10 tenants have requested and have received support.

These numbers exclude tenants who have moved onto Universal Credit and we know that there is an increasing number impacted by the Overall Benefit Cap. However, actual numbers and names are not made available by the DWP. Hence, we rely on those tenants to directly contact us for assistance.

Money Advice Service - Staff Development

Nicole Dayaram is now an approved Debt Relief Order intermediary through the Institute of Money Advisers. (She achieved a 100% pass in her exam and the lecturer at Staffordshire University intends to use Nicole's paper as a teaching tool for future cohorts).

Having such accreditation in place helps with discussions with creditors over tenants' debts. Creditors have increased confidence in Money Advice teams that are accredited to deliver Debt Relief Orders, and this improves the offers of repayment they accept on behalf of tenants. More technically, tenants are unable to apply for Debt Relief Orders themselves, they must seek independent, specialist money advice on all of their options and then seek assistance from a qualified intermediary to complete the application on their behalf. By having Debt Relief Order intermediaries in the team, it means that we are able to advise the tenant on this as being an option for debt relief and are also able to follow it through to completion, without having to refer them to an external agency.

Income Management

Currently the whole team (bar one employee) are working from home. All essential roles are being covered.

Arrears Update

As at week ending Sunday 1st November 2020, the current rent arrears position were £2.34m. Same time last year they were £1.59m, this is an increase of over £0.7m on the year before. We now expect to the year-end outcome to be around the £2.3m level.

There is a small minority of tenants (1,150 around 9%), which are accounting for £1.45m (60%) of the current tenants arrears figure. Included within in this group are some tenants who do not engage with us, to discuss their arrears and hence arrears are simply accumulating for them.

The stay on possession proceedings expired on 20 September 2020 and we were able to start re-listing possession claim through the courts on a priority basis. We had seven listings booked for December. However, there is currently a pause on enforcement of evictions, this means that evictions in England will not be enforced until the 11 January at the earliest, except in the most serious circumstances.

The Judge in Derby has said that we can continue to enter cases for court and eviction so they are in the pipeline for when things start up again. Additionally we will continue to send our routine arrears collection letters and attempt to contact tenants to provide assistance in them paying their rent.

There is no doubt that the inability to progress arrears cases through the courts has increased arrears. Many tenants delay engagement and payment plans until the very last opportunity and the longer that is delayed the higher their arrears will accrue.

Additionally we believe that arrears continue to increase because the Covid situation is having an impact on tenant's employment and incomes. More and more tenants have had to claim Universal Credit either because they have lost their job, on reduced hours or been furloughed. The extension of the Job Retention Scheme to March 2021 (reviewed in January 2021). Then a move onto the Job Support Scheme. We do anticipate when this happens it will lead to an increase in tenants needing to access benefits such as universal credit or housing benefit.

Despite the uncertainty over the next few months we think the arrears figure will now stabilise, assisted by the forthcoming rent free weeks and the extension to the Job Retention Scheme.

Other Information

Due to the government's suspension of evictions there have been no evictions carried out since the start of April. There had also been no notices served up to the end of June which was a decision made in conjunction with the Council.

From The 1st July initial arrears letters recommenced and more serious enforcement arrears letters re-commenced from the start of September for non -paying tenants.

Current actions not being fully carried out due to current situation

- Office Appointments
- Home visits (other than really essential ones)

Other areas of work such as looking at other arrears prioritisation IT systems such as Mobysoft had been delayed.

Welfare Reform Team

After the tenfold increase in universal credit claims at the start of the financial year, over the summer months the numbers settled down to more manageable levels. Since the middle of September, the number of new universal credit claims has steadily increased and we are seeing net increases of about 30 claims per week, considering claims and tenancies that have ended. We would normally expect a net increase of 20 per week.

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 educate and inform them of what they can do to make sure universal credit claimants get the best possible start and so that we can identify vulnerabilities at the earliest stage. We can then apply for Alternative Payment Arrangements (APA) and Third-Party Deductions (TPD) to help our most vulnerable universal credit claimants and subsequently reduce the impact on rent arrears.

Previously, if you were 75yr and over, you did not have to pay for your TV Licence. From 1 August 2020 the rules had changed, and payment was required unless you were claiming Pension Credit. So, we wrote to our 329 tenants who were 75yr and over and not on Pension Credit. (Pension Credit is a means-tested benefit for people on a low income who have reached the Pension Qualifying Age). The letter encouraged this cohort to check if they were eligible to claim Pension Credit and therefore be exempt from paying their TV Licence. It also asked to contact us if they had any difficulty paying their rent. The information was also promoted on our various social media channels

As noted in the Rental Control update, from November we are due to receive APA and TPD payments from the DWP on a daily basis, the same time as our tenants receive their universal credit payments. Currently we receive these payments on a 4-weekly schedule. The daily payments will make it easier to manage our rent accounts because we will be able to more readily identify which payment relates to which period and it will iron out the peaks and troughs every time, we received the 4-weekly payment schedule. The last DWP payment schedule was over £0.4m.

The managed migration pilot project in Harrogate, began in July 2019. Under managed migration, all claimants get “transitional protection”, which means that they will not be worse off on universal credit compared to the legacy benefits system. The pilot was paused in March 2020 because of the coronavirus pandemic. As of 27 January 2020, just under 80 households had participated in the pilot, and only 13 had been moved on to Universal Credit. It is not clear how many households had moved by the time the pilot was suspended.

We envisage that Derby’s migration of existing legacy benefit claimants to Universal Credit is likely to happen sometime during 2021. The government expects to finish moving existing benefit and tax credit claimants onto Universal Credit by September 2024.

Universal Credit Statistics

As at 19th October 2020	Number	Gross Arrears
UC singles	1,049	£538,449
UC couples *(includes 16 mac)	200	£82,274
UC families *(includes 2 mac)	1,568	£868,451
Total	2,817	£1,489,174
Gross UC arrears	2,140	£1,489,174
Cases with no arrears/credits	677	-£127,471
Net UC arrears	2,817	£1,361,703
Average arrears per UC Case (£1,489,174 / 2,817)	2,817	£528.64
Monthly Alternative Payment Arrangements (APA)	1069	£374,977
Monthly Direct Deduction (DD)	661	£30,239
Total	1,730	£405,216

*mac (mixed age couples)

Highlights of tenants on UC

- 2,817 tenants on UC
- 38% on APA’s (where DWP pay directly to Landlord the housing claim for weekly rent costs)
- 23% on Direct Deduction (where a deduction from the UC claim is paid direct to Landlord to cover rent arrears)
- 677 tenants (24%) with no arrears or in credit on their rent account
- £405k income claimed “automatically” from DWP each month via APA’s & Direct Payments

Accountancy & Accounts Payable teams

The team are currently working on preparing budget proposals and reserve forecasts in anticipation of the 2021/22 budget setting process. The team look through the forecasts in the current years management accounts and identify those areas where they are likely to be budget pressures and savings available. The team challenge Managers on savings areas and where possible will look to re-align budgets with actual spend levels, this helps to identify savings that help to balance the budget but don't impact on service delivery.

The team are also in the process of setting up a number of money market bank accounts (effectively deposit accounts) so that the current cash at bank holdings (circa £15m) are distributed across a wider group of financial institutions. This aligns with changes introduced in the recent Treasury Management policy agreed by the main Board.

We have just completed a large payment in advance of £3.4m to prepay expected employer pension contributions through to March 2022. This is in anticipation of greater financial returns for the cash being delivered through the pension scheme rather than in deposit accounts. There is no guarantee that such an investment will prove to be the right option, but we are forecasting a benefit of between £50k and £85k from this move. This will be netted off the pension scheme deficit, which at March 2020 was £19m.

Head of Housing Options & Homelessness

Next Steps Accommodation Programme

Derby Homes has been successful in our application for funding through the next steps accommodation programme (NSAP). This is the first of two rounds for NSAP funding, designed to assist Local Authority areas with move on accommodation following the "Everyone In" call made by Luke Hall MP.

Derby Homes was amongst the first areas in the country to move rough sleepers on from the hotel provision having developed a series of pathways with our partners and housing providers in the City. This included provision for non-qualifying people from the European Economic Area (EEA), High intensity supported accommodation, Interim supported accommodation and housing first.

The award received through the NSAP bid included B&B for 9 people over the winter months, 4 Covid secure sleeping pods for Safe Space as well as the provision for non-qualifying EEA's.

In addition to these revenue streams we have been successful in the first round of moderation, at the time of writing, with a capital bid to purchase 20 properties for rough sleepers or people at risk of rough sleeping worth £1.2 million. Alongside the capital funding there is further revenue funding to support customers housing in this accommodation worth circa £140k per annum.

Allocations Policy

The updated allocations policy was approved by Derby City Council at Cabinet in September following 18 months of development and consultation to help shape the policy. These discussions with key groups assisted us greatly in the creation of the new

The creation of a new policy has required Derby Homes, to rewrite/map the Homefinder portal to ensure that it is in line with the new Allocations Policy. A key change has seen the allocations policy move from 2 bands to 3 bands. This will provide greater flexibility to ensure social housing is allocated where it is most needed, addressing pressures within the City and a whole.

Registered Providers Call For Action

Derby Homes and Derbyshire District and Borough Councils are organising an event that reaches out to all housing providers and landlords, to help us offer accommodation to everyone brought in during the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown.

Supported housing projects across Derbyshire have been at full capacity for some time. There is currently limited room to offer much needed spaces to the people we housed during lockdown. Likewise, social landlords including councils and housing associations have not been allocating due to the risks associated with the virus.

We are reaching out to all our partners and key organisations to make a pledge, large or small, to help us end rough sleeping once and for all.

- We need all our supported housing partners across Derbyshire to make space available for the people we brought in since the start of the pandemic.
- We need Registered Providers to move people on that are ready to move to make room for those that need more support and where independent living is not possible yet.
- We need supported housing providers to work together to create capacity between projects by looking at a step down approach from more support to less to create capacity
- We need all social landlords, housing associations and those responsible for managing housing stock to help facilitate capacity by working with supported housing providers by allocating properties to those ready to move out of projects.
- We need Registered Social Landlords to offer up accommodation for our cause.
- We need priority allocations from all applicable social landlords in the form of direct offers where people are assessed as being ready to live independently.

Head of Capital Works

This update, across all Teams within the Capital Works Division, summarises the main issues impacting on the Team following the restart of works, after the first Covid-19 Lockdown, between June and October 2020 (Update written on 23 October 2020 – Figures included in this report based on that date).

Planned Maintenance Team

The Planned Maintenance Team has project managed a wide variety of capital and revenue works, delivering the 2020/21 programme. The headline items can be summarised as follows:

- Replacement of External Doors – Our contractor, Nationwide Windows, recommenced work on the 10th August 2020. 207 new composite external doors, valued at £178,000, have been installed, mainly to properties in the Cowsley

Estate and across the City, picking up properties where access had been previously denied.

- Re-roofing Works – Our contractors, JAL Roofing & Avonside Roofing recommenced work on the 3rd and 8th June 2020 respectively. They have completed between them the re-roofing of 114 properties valued at £508,000, across the Cowsley Estate.
- Solid Wall Insulation Works - Our contractor, Westville recommenced work on the 15th June 2020. 23 poorly insulated properties in Austin and Mackworth estates have received external wall insulation.
- Redecoration Works - Internally – As part of the Home Decoration Scheme, our contractor, Buxton Decorators, who recommenced work on 1st June 2020, have provided a decorating service to 140 customers by decorating 188 rooms.
- Redecoration Works - Externally – The Repairs Prior to Painting & External Painting, carried out by Allsopp & McCleod and Bell Group respectively, recommenced on 29th June 2020. To date the teams have visited and completed all required remedial works to 706 properties and redecorated 93 properties.
- Major Adaptations and Extensions – The Team have a number of such works utilising the services of external contractors and the in-house workforce.

Throughout the period, our lifting equipment contractors, Prism and Stannah, provided a servicing and repair service, subject to access restrictions, with Prism providing a 24/7 standby service to deliver hoists / stairlifts for customers discharged from local hospitals. Both contractors are now able to carry new equipment installations.

The contractors on the major programmes by value, roofing and windows, are confident that they can catch up the time lost during the Lockdown, through the deployment of additional labour resources onto the Derby Homes Contracts. Proactive contract management will ensure that these works are delivered as originally programmed.

Capital Projects Team

Major Improvement Works – Kitchen & Bathrooms

Kitchen / Bathroom / Wet Rooms / Adaptations Works – All workstreams restarted on 3rd August 2020. The Kitchen Programme is initially starting to be delivered with two teams of in-house tradesmen, however this will be increased to four over the coming months to ensure the annual delivery requirement of 750 kitchens / year over the next five years, is achieved. Two other in-house teams are delivering Bathrooms, Adaptations and DFGs.

To date, since the return from Lockdown, the in-house Major Improvement Team have delivered the following number on Component upgrades:

- Kitchen Upgrades - 47
- Bathroom Upgrades - 26
- Wet Room Installations – 23
- DFGs - 6

Acquired Properties Work – Post the first Lockdown, the Capital Projects Team continued to focus on turning around large-scale refurbishments of passive voids and newly acquired homes. Since the last update 12 properties have been completed. A schedule of properties currently subject to work and due for completion before the end of 2020, is listed below.

Acquired Property Addresses	Estimated Completion Date
72 Cheviot St	25/11/2020
43 Ripon Cres	25/11/2020
45 Blagreaves Ave	05/11/2020
85 Borrowfield Rd	27/11/2020
7 St Annes Cl	27/11/2020
17 Cheviot St	27/11/2020
40 Kerry St	27/11/2020
32a Shamrock	27/11/2020
84 Parliament St	12/11/2020
22 Palmerston	25/11/2020
20 Wolverley Gr	27/11/2020
13 Ramshaw Way	03/12/2020
123 Hawthorne	13/11/2020
57 Walbrook Rd	27/11/2020
70 Shakespeare St	02/11/2020
3 Prestbury Close	01/12/2020
111 Caxton St	01/12/2020
70 Shakespeare St	27/11/2020

New Build Programme

Delivery - The New Build Programme restarted in a staged manner, post the first Lockdown, with care being taken to ensure compliance with Covid 19 working practices and working through the gradual restart of the construction industry and the attendant issues with the supply of contractors and materials. The Schemes are being delivered through a mix of external local contractors constructing the substructures, external superstructures (building shell) and the external works, with the in-house team generally completing the internal fit out.

The first two projects at Carson Road and Hatfield Road are complete with the others progressing towards completion over the next three months.

The table below summarises the current programme of new build work on or recently on site.

Address	Units	Project Managed by	Proposed Practical Completion Date
Carson Road	2 x 2 Bungalows	Derby Homes DCC Architects	Practical Completion – October 2020
Hatfield Rd	2 x Bungalows	Derby Homes Arcus	Practical Completion – October 2020
Perth Street	7 x 2b Houses + 4 x 4b Houses (11 units)	Derby City Council	Practical Completion - November / December 2020 (Two Phases)
War Memorial Village	6 x 1 b Bungalows 3 x 1 b flats (9 units)	Derby Homes Arcus	Practical Completion - November 2020 (Two Phases)
Bracknell Drive	1 x 2b Bungalows	Derby Homes DCC Architects	Practical Completion - November 2020
Gerard Street	4 x 2b Houses	Derby Homes Letts Whittaker	Practical Completion - January 2020

		Architects	
Total: 29 Units			

In addition, the demolition of Chesapeake Road Community Centre in Chaddesden due to complete in November 2020, with clear the site for an upcoming project comprising; 7 (2 bed houses) and 2 (4 bed houses), total 9 houses.

Development Team

The Team continued to work with our consultants in preparing scheme feasibility reports, designs and working drawings for future new build projects, such that a prompt start can be made when the projects currently on site are completed.

In addition, the Development Team are re also reviewing the risks for new projects that were due to start during the second half of 2020/21. Activities include:

- Identifying a Contractor for the demolition of the Crompton Street Garages and Blagreaves Avenue Storage building. Preparatory work for the housing projects
- Identifying different ways of delivering future schemes, mixing delivery between; inhouse teams, SME local contractors and larger regional contractors. Pre-programming commencement on site dates for Crompton Street, Blagreaves Avenue, Cummings Street and Whitaker Street.
- Carrying out preparatory design work for Barlow Street flats and Grange Avenue bungalows, both projects that we are keen to get into the planning process as soon as possible.

In addition, the Team are integral in the purchasing of 20 additional, individual properties under the Homelessness Properties Acquisition Programme (NSAP) between August and December 2020. Depending on the scale of works required, either the Active or Passive Voids Teams will refurbish the properties. All works to be complete before the end of 31 March 2021.

Supply Chain Issues

Progress on all sites is dependent of the availability of materials and their quality surprisingly continues to present problems, with the following supplies affected by shortages:

- Plaster and plasterboard;
- Floorboards and Skirtings
- Sanitary ware
- Ironmongery
- External timber items such as fence panels and posts;
- Paints and coatings for external use;
- Bagged cement and concrete.

To mitigate the risk of running out of plaster 8 pallets of plaster, 512 bags, are stored at the London Road Depot.

The Team are working with our supply chain partner, Buildbase, to improve supplies but the situation remains difficult. Many manufacturers decided to halt production in the early stages of Lockdown are now “playing catch-up and haven’t caught up yet” with renewed demand.

A further difficulty has arisen due to the merger of our kitchen supplier, Rixonway, with their partner company Magnet, to create a new company Magnet Contract Kitchen Solutions. As a consequence of the merger:

- the Procurement Consortia, Efficiency East Midlands, through which we sourced the supplier, are required to set up revised conditions of contract
- the kitchen unit specification has been altered, small but impactful changes to unit sizes etc.
- changes to operational and senior managers – discontinuation of existing relationships
- postponing our review of the kitchen offer with our tenants
- improved local offer in terms of supply, delivery and storage, which could significantly improve service delivery.

Note – EEM are re-procuring the Kitchen Supply for next April 2021, so current issues are a short-term concern.

Estates Maintenance Team

This Service is subject to a Grounds Maintenance Service Update Report elsewhere in this Operational Board agenda. Commentary of recent performance is included.

Head of Repairs

Day to Day

Following on from our last update staff sickness levels in the day to day team have remained consistently low and that we have continued to provide a first-rate service to our customers.

The increased levels of priority 42 jobs (around 600 per month), which have a target of 24 hours to attend has remained constant this year, which is approximately 25% higher than the same time last year.

One problem we have encountered is the increased number of leaks in our homes, which we believe is due to industries shutting down over the lockdown and not using water which increases pressure in the service pipework.

We have and will continue to provide an essential and urgent repairs services to ensure our customers are Safe, Warm and Dry.

The Surveying team are offering a full range of services to our customers to carry out inspections, mutual exchanges and technical support to other colleagues. All Surveyors have been allocated days in which they carry out inspections, this has worked well with the CST allowing flexibility for other staff to carry out home working and cover in times of peak demand.

We are identifying materials that we can store in London Road such as roof tiles and sheeting to ensure that we have a steady supply and are not affected by material shortages.

Our subcontractors have continued to provide excellent support to our directly employed tradespersons. There has been some difficulty with contractors that furloughed staff however we have used our frameworks to ensure continuity of service.

At present we are currently preparing for what we will believe will be a second lockdown in November.

Void Repairs

The voids team has continued to run a full service despite some staffing issues relating to Covid-19.

The voids team are focusing on void properties to meet the allocation team requirements, which are currently one & two bedroom properties. The prioritisation may have a slight impact on the overall active voids' turnaround time.

The voids team will continue to meet with the allocations team on a fortnightly basis to focus on properties with the most demand.

There has been a slight decrease in number of voids throughout the first half of the year due to coronavirus. However, the numbers of voids have now started to increase to normal levels.

As with Day to Day, the voids team have been some issues relating to materials, particularly with kitchens and numbers of core stock items. This was initially down to furloughing. We are working with our suppliers to resolve these issues.

The voids team have put further measures in place to ensure business continuity moving forward. We will continue to monitor the workflow situation and adjust the service accordingly.

Electrical Servicing

Electrical Testing in properties was suspended on 23rd March and re-commenced on July 15th. At the time of commencement there were 305 Electrical Test overdue and 260 Electrical Repairs following the safety check outstanding.

The objective was to reduce those numbers ASAP. The Electrical Team with the help of a contractor have excelled in their performance and at the end of September there were 133 Electrical Tests Overdue and 99 Repairs outstanding.

Numbers are continuing to reduce and we are confident that all overdue services will be caught up by the end of 2020.

During days of difficult access the planners are working hard to arrange alternative tests and repairs with tenants and where this has not been achievable the Electrical team are assisting other departments.

The Electrical Team remain 100% compliant with Emergency Light and Fire Alarm servicing.

Electrical Upgrades

The Electrical Upgrade Team are continuing to upgrade Electrical Installations across the city, one highlight is that all Bollards on Bretton Avenue have been changed to more efficient LED lighting. They are soon to start the upgrade to communal blocks of flats specifically focusing on the removal of the asbestos back boards in the meter cupboards.

Gas Breakdowns

In this quarter, quarter 2 we have carried out a full gas breakdown service to ensure all tenants have heating during the pandemic and met all of our targets within target times.

Gas Servicing

Gas servicing in quarter 2 has been a lot harder to carry out due to the pandemic. We had a high backlog of reappointments due to the tenant's telling us they were shielding throughout the initial lockdown and we have had to reduce those as well as keep the normal programme of works on target. To do this we have had our own engineers working later in the evening and at weekends and also have received assistance from our contractors to ensure we cleared the re-appointments. The numbers of outstanding services are continuing to reduce.

We are still having a lot of tenants not letting us in due to self-isolation and we are talking with them to make sure they understand that Derby Homes are working to the Government guidelines to protect them and our own engineers and carrying out the servicing safely. We are rebooking these calls when they come out of self-isolation.

Gas Heating Installation

In quarter 2 we continued to carry out the programme of upgrading gas boilers and central heating systems but due to the pandemic and shutting down the programme we will have reduced numbers this year. We are contacting all tenants on the programme and are carrying out a face to face survey of the property explaining how we are now doing the work in line with the Public Health guidelines of tradespeople working in homes.

Water Safety (legionella)

Throughout the current pandemic we have carried on the programmed sampling and testing regime in the buildings that required it. Due to the pandemic Derby Homes have closed all the communal rooms to everyone except emergency personnel, therefore this means that we have had to suspend the weekly/monthly water testing regime of the water safety guidelines on these rooms. However once it is felt the Derby Homes are in a position to open them again a full water risk assessment and test will be carried out and the property will go back to the normal sampling and testing regime. We are keeping up with the policy of making sure that all void properties have had a Water Risk Assessment carried out before the property is let.

Head of Governance & Corporate Services

Governance

Following a meeting of the Board on 27 October, Mike Ainsley has been re-appointed Chair of Derby Homes. Bob MacDonald and Councillor Sarah Russell have been appointed Vice Chairs.

We currently have a vacancy on our main Board for a Tenant, following the death of Finbar Richards. Tenants and Leaseholders are invited to apply for this vacancy; details can be found on our website www.derbyhomes.org/about/governance/board-vacancies/.

We are also hoping to fill a number of vacancies on the Operational Board. Information can be found using the link above.

The closing date for all applications is Monday 14 December and interviews will be held in January 2021. The Board has appointed a panel of Board Members to recruit to the vacancies on both Boards. The panel are Bob MacDonald, Jsan Shepherd and Lucy Care.

Our main Board meetings are now broadcast live on Derby Homes' YouTube channel.

Apprentices

It is pleasing to report that we have still been able to recruit to our apprenticeship programme this year. In September, five Housing Apprentices joined our Housing Management team and a female Painting Apprentice joined the Voids Team.

We are currently in the process of arranging the induction for the rest of the trade apprentices to start with us, we are working towards late November 2020. This was delayed due to the recruitment being later and also they were not required to attend the day release at college until November and we tie these two elements together. We have joining us two electricians, one joiner and one maintenance operative, of these two are females.

This brings our total of apprentices at Derby Homes to 35.

Our existing apprentices are continuing to do well, they have progressed to years 2, 3 and 4. We continue to support them by with working in partnership with their training provider to ensure that development is taking place.

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

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Supporting Information: None