

No.	Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation	Comments from Management	Six-Month Update
1.	Audio aids to be working at all times for customers	During testing of the application process the audio facility did not work for the duration of the time of completing an application.	Advice to be taken from IT project team regarding this facility.	<p>Ongoing – spoken with IT team. Scoping needs to happen with Capita. Estimated completion date is 6 months due to Capita lead time.</p> <p>ReachDeck was authorised in January 2022 and a request placed with Derby City Council. It has now been tested and we are waiting for a final test before we can promote to Live. May time scale is still on track to be achieved.</p>
2.	Where no internet access is available to the customer, alternative access to be recommended. Access team to be clear on places / supporting partners for assistance in the application process i.e. library and council house.	CV found repeated issues around access to internet. It is evidenced in test runs, supporting services, post-let reviews and complaints report.	<p>Acknowledged that this has been impacted by Covid restrictions as previous options of signposting to Library or Council House were not appropriate during those times.</p> <p>We are able to assist any applicant with registering over</p>	<p>Complete/No actions to complete.</p> <p>We can assist with applications over the phone and on face-to-face visits.</p> <p>Access Team trained on how to signpost</p>

			the telephone, or face to face as appropriate. This information can be made clear with all those who are likely to come into contact with people wishing to be rehoused, including DH staff and supporting partners.	people to seek assistance.
3.	<p>Language barriers and additional support restrictions: at the beginning of the application form, give “what language” as an initial question and translate the entire application.</p> <p>Alternative ways (not internet) to complete the application process should be made available at sign-up. This is for customers requiring support and unable to complete the form.</p>	<p>DH should acknowledge that customers may have physical and personal restrictions to access based on disability, special requirements and languages.</p> <p>CV found that other housing associations were actively working to support those individual needs. Making translation available and alternative support clear provides equality of access.</p> <p>Will reduce customer complaints as the majority were based on access to information.</p>	<p>Investigation needed with the IT project team to see if the application form can be translated into other language?</p> <p>As above</p>	See Point 1. The same solution would be needed to address this recommendation.
4.	To include a banding explanation on the automated response after completion of the application.	CV found that the majority of customer service access team enquiries was around banding – e.g. what the banding meant, how it was determined and not being able to bid on properties out of their band. This would reduce unnecessary calls and complaints.	A document has already been drafted to be uploaded into the system that will address these points, including banding, and searching for and bid on properties.	<p>Include a link to a user guide to include all the information a customer will need. Lead time 6 weeks to complete.</p> <p>This was not possible in the way we had</p>

				previously hoped. However, the same information has been published on DH website
5.	There are a few questions that use corporate jargon. We recommend having an 'I' icon next to the question for customers to hover over and find out more information or remove the jargon.	During testing of applications we found some questions were not clear on what they were asking. Examples of questions: 'Category 1 Hazard need' 'Looked after child' By providing more information at the stage of application it will reduce the amount of admin having to take place from staff to rectify any errors during the validation process.	The help text for the I icons has all be written and tested and is ready to be promoted to the live system.	Complete
6.	All partners and Derby Homes to follow the same format for completing adverts	All advertisers follow their own layout and included information which makes it very inconsistent when trying to search for desired property and included assets. As evidenced in the case study, consistent inclusive information will reduce enquiries and inaccurate bidding.	<p>This is ongoing with work and training through the Homefinder steering group.</p> <p>Allocations team to check each advert before it is uploaded to help reinforce consistency.</p> <p>However, there are some system limitations which will need to be considered and may restrict some elements. This will be explored with IT Project Team.</p>	<p>Ongoing Standard agenda item on the Homefinder Steering Group meeting which takes place bi-monthly.</p> <p>Will keep reinforcing at Homefinder meetings.</p>

7.	<p>More information on advert i.e. Pictures on all adverts/ area/ ward/ school/ supermarket etc</p>	<p>Providing more information on property adverts will hopefully reduce the amount of refusals on properties, it will enable customers to be able to bid on properties they know are in an area suitable for them.</p> <p>Based on the research we have carried out, Leicester Home Choice (Leicester City Council) use a very good system, a weekly magazine that has information about the local area and thorough property details.</p>	<p>We have recently worked on refreshing the style and content of our adverts. Adverts now use more positive language and more specific information to allow the applicant to make a more informed choice.</p> <p>For DH adverts we always aim to include a photograph, these are often taken from Goggle Map images due to time constraints. A postcode map showing the location of the property is included for every property.</p> <p>Historically, local information has been provided but it was difficult to ensure it remained up to date</p>	<p>Completed - Scoping with IT team complete.</p> <p>Ongoing - Estimated 3-month lead time for completion.</p> <p>Further icons have been added to the system. Postcode links to Google maps work and we use Street View if we do not have a photo of the external property.</p>
8.	<p>Floor plan of properties and/or room sizes so can establish if rooms are double or single</p>	<p>Providing this information for customers will ensure that bidding only takes place if the size is suitable. Some customers require double bedrooms for mobility aids.</p>	<p>This is currently being investigated as to how floor plans could be achieved.</p> <p>The advert refresh work has included information on the size of bedrooms for each property.</p>	<p>Business decision needed on how we collect the data needed to create floor plans.</p> <p>As point 7, functionality can be added for this within the same timescale.</p>

				Technically this can be supported and has been tested. However, we have a logistical issue of how to obtain/create these. This is still being explored. Text information is now included as standard on the advert to say how many double and single bedrooms to enable the applicant to make a more informed choice
9.	More positive text on adverts (selling the property)	Derby Homes property adverts are currently focussed on eligibility, restrictions and are unattractive. We would recommend on the adverts being sold, sharing the properties benefits and locations encouraging customers to bid on them by selling it. The best examples we have seen are from Leicester City Council and Birmingham City Council.	Agree and links to point 7 above.	Completed/ongoing.
10.	On the summary advert page it doesn't tell you who the Landlord/provider is. Would	When looking down the summary list of suitable properties available, we would recommend the system having the landlord's logo to show customers	This may be a system restriction, but we will explore the IT options and capability to do this.	Logos have now been requested from our Partners and awaiting responses.

	recommend it showing the providers logo (see advert example in report)	who the provider is. Once you click on the advert it does tell you (sometimes). We feel some customers may have a preference of the landlord they wish to remain with or move to.	We would usually encourage all applicants to be as flexible as possible when considering suitable properties, areas, or landlords.	
11.	Provide a guide to customers that is automated after their application is received.	It would advise customers to review an area before bidding and also outline the process/ time taken etc. It could include basic rental and financial statement that is currently on every advert and would free up space for specific property details.	This will be included in the new worded email we have drafted. We will also be producing a FAQ page to be uploaded onto the website which will also answer the questions asked most often.	<p>We will include a link to a customer user guide within the automated email.</p> <p>Linked to Point 4. This hasn't been achievable in the planned manner. However, the information is now on the DH website. This can also be sent ad hoc to customers as required.</p>
12.	Include breakdown of service charges and if it's included with Housing benefit. Such as Decorating scheme, solar panels, furniture packs, etc	Additional charges could deter customers and be a deciding factor in applying for a property. Including the information would allow an informed decision when bidding on a property and reduce refusals.	The suggested layout for this is really good, there are however some system limitations in how the rent figure can be broken down. This will be explored further with It Project team.	This is an IT restriction. However, we have included standard text within adverts to help highlight what would and would not be covered by Housing Benefit/Universal Credit.

13.	Include customer services telephone number and the option to stop an application and save progress.	The helpdesk phone number isn't on the application page. Recommendation to add if a customer is stuck on the page.	You can currently save an application and return to complete it at a later date.  We will seek to have the contact number added to the page.	27 April – completed
14.	Main Derby based supporting organisations to be given the option to enter into a service level agreement with Derby Homes	It provides organisations, Derby Homes and the applicant with a holistic view. Lessens enquiries. Reduce misinformation and banding difficulties. Strengthens Derby Homes community relationships.	I think there is already some good partnership work that takes places between agencies and DH in relation to this. An offer for further training has been made to all the Homefinder partners, and supported housing advisors that we work closely with.  There is an option to nominate another person as the main point of contact, or with applicant's permission we will speak to another agency/support worker. I do not think a SLA is required for this.	Completed/no actions to complete
15.	Derby Homes to provide training to support services focusing on the application process, banding and allocations.	Addresses the issue of access, provides appropriate and informed support. Develops community links and consultation opportunities.	As in point 14, this is already in place and plans made to expand further. Training has been provided to Housing Management and Support teams, Customer Service and ASB teams within Derby	Complete/No actions to complete  Further training has recently been delivered to three external services

			Homes. We have also attended a DWP multi agency meeting explaining our services and support available.	
16.	Homefinder registration page to include guidance / contact details for anyone completing the application on behalf of a customer ie. external supporting services.	Provides a clear line of communication. Ensures that an allocated person can receive information on the process. Informs Homefinder when accessing and verifying applications.	Will be included in the FAQ page	As point 11 above.
17.	A waiver to be agreed between supporting organisations and customer that is endorsed by Derby Homes that doesn't impinge on customers data protection rights.	Ensures lines of communication and responsibilities are clear and agreed prior to application.	See point 14	Complete/No actions to complete
18.	Include a fraud warning on application.	Having a clear message regarding fraud and misinformation may reduce further investigation, verification and potential bidding suspension.	This is included as part of the Declaration statement at the end of the application, prior to submitting an application.	Complete/No actions to complete