

DIRECTORS' UPDATE – AUGUST 2011

This is a joint report prepared by the Director of Investment & Regeneration and the Director of Housing & Customer Service. The report provides City Board Members with a general overview and update on current issues.

New Build

Our bid to the HCA for funding for new build was not successful, the East Midlands region did not do well at all, the bidding was very competitive and those bids in the south of the region benefitted more from the shift to affordable rents.

We are considering other options including a community led bid for new build in Osmaston.

Further discussion with the Council and the local community will be taking place over the next few weeks.

Capital Projects

Our procurement process for a new painting contractor is almost complete and we hope to have identified our new partner for this work soon. We are looking forward to getting back on track with external painting.

We have teamed up with Nationwide Solar to fit solar panels, we are investing £5m in panels over the next eight months and are aiming to install about 800 systems. Concentrating on bungalows, we have made a good start on the Mackworth area of the City.

Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP)

We are making good progress with this much needed energy efficiency work. Insulating homes and providing an efficient heating system has a huge impact on fuel bills.

The work around the Victory Road area is quite intense with most homes requiring significant work. We are packaging this work into a works contract to enable the various strands of work to be co-ordinated by one contractor.

Repairs Team Update

Our new Gas Servicing and Repair team is up and running. We have appointed sixteen engineers and are now much less reliant on sub-contractors.

I am pleased to announce that the Repair team has gained full Micro-generation Certification Scheme (MCS) accreditation to fit and connect solar panels. This followed an intensive assessment process. We have set up two teams and are planning to install ten systems a week.

Derby Homes Awards

Derby Homes has recently been awarded two awards by the National Federation of ALMO's. The Arboretum Cafe is a project which has been supported by our Community Initiatives Team. The cafe, situated within Arboretum Park, is run by 15 part-time volunteers, both deaf and hearing. Apart from giving participants practical and communication skills, work discipline and enhanced self worth the cafe delivers many other benefits which include sign language lessons for local schools and a translation service providing help and advice with forms and other correspondence that people need.

The second award was for our 'It's Not Good Enough' DVD. A dramatisation by the Neighbourhood Safety team on the Pilkington tragedy. This won the category for best use of communication as a training and awareness raising tool to improve knowledge and understanding of people with learning difficulties.

Social Media

We are looking at how Derby Homes can use social media, Facebook and Twitter for example, to communicate with tenants and leaseholders. The Derby Association of Community Partners has been 'tweeting' for a while now and Derby Homes is to follow suit and look to expand our use of this communication tool. Further detail will follow in Derby Homes' news.

Travellers Site – Russell Street

Work on the permanent travellers' site on Russell Street is due for completion mid September 2011. Derby Homes is the appointed management agency for the new site and we are currently working closely with the Council to plan for the transition of the travellers from the current illegal site on Glossop Street to the new purpose built site. We are also working closely with OSCAR, the residents association on Osmaston, to keep everyone informed in terms of progress and plans for the future of the site.

If Board members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact the author, or Phil Davies, Chief Executive, phil.davies@derbyhomes.org – Phone: 01332 888528

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Background Information
Supporting Information