

## **HEADS OF SERVICE UPDATE**

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

### **Head of Housing Management and Housing Options**

#### **Resolve National ASB Awards**

I am delighted to advise that Derby Homes has been shortlisted as finalists in the 'team of the year award' category of the Resolve National ASB awards.

We submitted our entry, entitled 'Derby Homes Collaborate Cross Agency ASB Team', in recognition of the strong partnership approach to ASB within Derby.

The winners will be announced at the Resolve ASB Annual Conference Dinner on the 8 November 2016 at the St John's Hotel, Solihull, Birmingham.

If any Operational Board member would like to view our submission, please let me know.

#### **Parklands View Extra Care**

Lettings at Parkland View are well underway, with 49 flats now occupied, including 3 shared ownership properties. There are just 7 rental properties left now to allocate.

A training session on Complex Needs & Extra Care was recently held at Parklands View. If anyone was unable to attend and would like to view this excellent facility, please let me know.

### **Head of Income Management & Advice**

#### **D2N2**

Derby Advice, as part of a D2N2 consortium, has been successful in securing money from European Structural and Investment Fund –'Building Better Opportunities' programme to deliver a financial inclusion project across the D2N2 area. The aim of the project is to work intensively with hard to reach vulnerable people to improve their financial capability and resilience. To that end we have been awarded funding for a full time 'Personal Navigator' for 3 years. Recruitment will be commencing shortly.

#### **Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP)**

We continue to work with tenants on claiming DHP's but also on helping tenants to maximise their income and consider moving as a long term solution. An Income Advisor has been dedicated to support tenants with downsizing. The Senior Money Advice Officer receives detail of those that have been refused a DHP to offer them Money Advice and enable them to pay rent due. The Single Discretionary Payment service is due to launch on 26 September 2016. The new service incorporates the funding for Local Assistance, Council Tax Hardship and Discretionary Housing

Payments into one pot and each claim is assessed and triaged to other support services who may be able to help the tenant with issues they may have. A referral process has been designed for Derby Homes' tenants who may need to access Welfare Rights or Money Advice services.

### **Money Advice, Income and Advice Surgeries**

These continue to be very well attended and working well in providing support to tenants who need advice and support on claiming housing benefit. We are also delivering a National Lottery funded service in the Derwent area for debt and money advice. These sessions are monthly and are well attended.

### **Tenants Home Contents Insurance**

Team members recently undertook training from our provider of tenant's home contents insurance. The training was well received and has enabled more team members to talk to tenants about the Insurance scheme we offer.

We are continuing to promote the insurance scheme via the DH website and Derby Homes News.

### **Overall Benefit-Cap Roll Out**

Overall Benefit Cap - the roll out is due to start on 7 November 2016 starting with the Local Authorities with the least affected. The roll out will take place over a 12 week period. Derby Homes is proactively contacting all tenants who are going to be affected by the cap to check if any can be excluded by the exemptions to the reform and provide support and guidance on Money Advice and debt management as their income reduces. The Welfare Rights and Money Advice Teams are working with the Income Advisors to provide help and support to the tenants.

### **Networking**

We continue to attend Housemark welfare reform events as well as East and West Midlands best practice groups to learn from organisations who have been dealing with Universal Credit for the last couple of years and sharing best practice.

We are now taking part in the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) 'working together to collect rents' project. There will be five workshops over the next year with the third one being held in September; at the end of the workshops an action plan will be prepared.

### **Board Training**

In August the Income team delivered a training session on income collection and welfare reform this was well received and feedback was good.

## **Head of Housing Investment**

### **Lift Replacement for Eaton Court, Whitecross House and Rivermead House**

The lifts at Eaton Court and Rivermead House have now reached the end of their effectiveness. Breakdowns at both sites led us to opt for replacement rather than maintenance. The contractor for the replacements has been appointed, they are Rubax. The contractor is now mobilising their workforce and obtaining all the hardware ready to install; which is expected to start at Eaton Court at the end of October. Residents at Eaton Court have met with Derby Homes to consult about the timescale and scale of the works. Issues on individual residents are to be handled by our dedicated liaison officers, Kendal Hodder and Alistair Crosdale. Both have a strong background of liaison from the Decent Homes programme and the solar panel installation programme. All residents have been contacted with either a face to face or telephone conversation where appropriate. The majority of residents needs will be met by a variety of methods including staff assistance with deliveries etc. At present there are a small number of residents who may require temporary moves and we are exploring the options for these individuals. Ultimately it will be the choice of the residents concerned to take up alternative accommodation.

Following Eaton Court the lift replacement is programmed to move onto Whitecross House after the New Year and then on to Rivermead House. Consultation with Whitecross House residents has now been carried out as per Eaton Court and individual needs are being addressed. Although consultation has not formally started at Rivermead House the concierge service has been pro-active in informing residents and linking back to Kendal and Alistair.

### **Development and in-house new build**

Work continues at Coronation Avenue, Peel Street and Whitecross Street. Coronation Avenue remains our largest in-house build project so far, with fifteen new homes. Wood Road now has planning permission for six houses and we are progressing with the purchase of the land as these will be owned by Derby Homes.

Work on the old Co-op and fishing tackle shop at Nightingale Road is nearing completion with 5 flats being formed within the building and the refurbishment of the next door two bed house. The original property was a commercial building, purpose built to fit in with the surrounding terraced housing. Modifications over the last 80-100 years resulted in a range of structural challenges that the refurbishment team has faced. However the flats are now substantial, high quality and in the process of being let.

The project has given our apprentices the opportunity to demonstrate and develop their skills. In many cases the work carried out on site has directly contributed to the core skills achievements and competencies needed for their college qualifications.

The refurbishment of the building rather than a demolition and rebuild is part of the wider regeneration plans for the Osmaston area. The building was a landmark in the area with local resident groups and planners wanting to see the building brought back into use. The project is a great example of the Derby Homes 'can do' attitude with quality homes being provided alongside training opportunities for our apprentices.

## **Head of Personnel**

### **Apprentices**

This year's intake of apprentices started with us on 1 September 2016, all have settled in and are progressing well. Our existing apprentices are continuing to secure further employment with us, since the last meeting in August a further three apprentices have gained roles within Derby Homes.

A traineeship opportunity in Repairs and Maintenance for a young person leaving care has been created and the individual will gain valuable work experience for a period of up to six months, this potentially could lead into an apprenticeship with Derby Homes.

### **Health & Safety**

Over the last few months we have been running a range of health awareness events for employees. Working with organisations such as the British Heart Foundation, Local NHS and training providers the events have proved successful. Offering employee access to health information is one way in which we help maintain excellent employee attendance and wellbeing.

## **Head of Repairs**

### **Day to Day**

At the end of the August 2016/17, performance in terms of 'repairs completed in time' are as follows:

Emergencies – 100%  
Very urgent works – 100%  
Urgent works – 99.84%  
Routine works – 99.98%  
Planned works – 100%

Performance up until the end of August is pleasing with all priorities above/better than target.

The 'appointments kept' target ended the month at 99.94% against a target of 99%.

Tenant satisfaction with repairs remains high and above target at 99.11% up until the end of August. There has been a slight reduction in satisfaction this month and we have looked into the reasons why. There appears to be no worrying trends, however we will continue to monitor this target closely.

The new smartphone/PDA's have now been fully tested and are performing well with no issues. This phone is the latest model from Vodafone and we will be looking to roll these out during the beginning of October.

### **Void Repairs**

Up until the end of August the team has completed 333 voids compared to 358 for the same period last year. Performance is currently averaging 17.2 days to inspect and complete works.

In recent months we have had a steady increase in the number of voids and we envisage carrying at least the same number of voids as last year.

## Gas Servicing and Electrical Testing

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

We have recently brought door entry systems work, emergency call out equipment, fire alarm repairs and fire-fighting equipment servicing in house. We have created a specialist team who we believe will provide a better service and provide cost savings over the previous contractor. In the first 3 months 1067 jobs have been raised.

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

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