

## UPDATE CONCERNING THE PROGRESS OF CONSULTATION PROCESSES HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Head of Housing Development

### 1. SUMMARY

This report is intended to update the Operational Board on progress since the last meeting of the 28 April 2016 where recently introduced consultation and choice processes in the development of new homes were discussed for the first time.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

That:-

1. The Board is invited to note the content of this update and ask further questions if they so wish.
2. The Board sets out for the Development Team what further feedback and reviews it would like to see about the development of new homes how often and when.

### 3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 During discussion at the last Operational Board, although it was felt that whereas the 'direction of travel' of the feedback was on the whole positive, a number of niggling issues needed to be explored and resolved.

- a. **Gas Central Heating Controls** - 3 respondents felt that these have been 'very poor'.
- b. **Kitchen Choices** – feedback indicated that 2 respondents felt that facilitation of choice concerning kitchen could be improved.
- c. **Storage Space** - 5 respondents said this was average and 2 responded that storage space was very poor.

#### d. Future Development Team attendance at Operational Board

- 3.2 Although up to 3 sets of responses could be possibly discounted because local feedback indicated that these came from respondents who had issues with other aspects of their housing (such as not liking the area or a neighbour dispute) the issues have been dealt with as follows:

## **a. Gas Central Heating Controls**

We investigated how new tenants were shown how to use these controls.

Standard practice is for the New Build Team After Care Officer and the Heating Engineer to take the new tenant through the heating system using the illustrated instructions that come with all controls. The amount of time spent on this is around 20-30 minutes and includes getting the client to practice the mechanism.

One client needed 3 visits to explain the system in the above manner.

### **Discussion & Resolution**

It has emerged that people moving in have got used to the older style heating controls in their previous home and that the change in the design is a problem. Adapting to change could be made worse by underlying learning disabilities or a reduction in cognitive capacity (the ability to understand things).

As a result we will be fitting more traditional central heating controls forthwith to new developments scheduled for completion in 2016/2017.

## **b. Kitchen Choices**

This was handled by the New Build Team initially but their workload has increased as a result of new requirements concerning Construction Design Management (CDM).

### **Discussion & Resolution**

As of now, the Development Team will work with the DH Allocations Team to ensure that new tenants allocated to new build homes get to choose their kitchen using the exact same process as those existing tenants who are having their homes modified. The Development Team will ensure that the choice is made via a personal visit; the choice will be confirmed in writing and the prospective tenant will have a week in which to change their mind. If the new tenants drops out the next tenant will have to accept the kitchen as it is for obvious reasons although we will try if we can to offer a choice.

## **c. Space Standards**

All DH constructed properties meet HCA National Space Standards as part of the funding agreement for 2015-2018 Approved Housing Programme. As of 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016, these standards have been changed in order to make improvements in living and storage space.

Although we cannot change the space standards for homes currently under construction and part of the 2015-18 Programme, we will adopt these new space standards from projects currently at the feasibility stage onwards.

#### **d. Future Development Team Reporting to the Operational Board**

The Development Team would like to share our work with the Operational Board. We would like to know how often the Operational Board would like to receive reports about our activities.

We suggest that you may wish to receive reports for every 20 additional properties we complete as this will be a statistically significant amount of properties to discuss both progress and customer reaction.

However, we await the Operation Board's advice and we look forward to sharing our work with you.

#### **4. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS**

Revised consultation processes have been detailed in this report.

#### **5. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

There is a risk that if we do not respond to feedback from the end users of our new homes as early as possible, the amount of dissatisfaction there may be will become more statistically significant as we build more and more homes. The consultation and choice mechanism outlined in this paper will mitigate that risk.

The areas listed below have no implications directly arising from this report:

Financial and Business Plan  
Legal & Confidentiality  
Council  
Personnel  
Environmental  
Equalities Impact Assessment  
Health & Safety

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

Mark Crown / Development Team Leader / 01332 888595 / Email [markcrown@derbyhomes.org](mailto:markcrown@derbyhomes.org)

Background Information: None

Supporting Information: Please Note Appendix 1 which has a copy of the questionnaire feedback previously discussed.

## Appendix 1

### Results from Feedback questionnaire – The First 20 Properties

		V. good	Good	Average	Poor	V. poor
General repair issues	16	1	1	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Kitchen	18	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Shower / bathroom	16	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	1	
Windows	18	1	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Running costs of heating / hot water	17	1	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(too soon)
Locks and security	18	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Lighting	20	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Plasterwork (cracking excessively?)	13	6	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Fire protection	17	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
GCH controls (how they work?)	15	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	
Soundproofing	14	1	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Storage space	12	1	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	
Freedom from condensation	15	4	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Garden where applicable)	15	1	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(3 n/a)
Fencing	16	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	(3 n/a)
Communal areas	17	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(3 n/a)