

**OPERATIONAL BOARD
9 JUNE 2022**

ITEM B1

SERVICE UPDATE

This is a joint report prepared by Heads of Service to give a general overview and update on current issues.

HEAD OF SERVICE UPDATE – FINANCE & INCOME

Income Management

1. Current tenants' arrears - Update as of 7th May 2022

- 1.1 Commentary on the 2021/22-year end arrears figures is included in the Performance Management paper elsewhere on the agenda.
- 1.2 For 2022/23 - As at Sunday 7 May 2022 (rent week 5), the current tenants rent arrears were £1,844,084. When compared with the position at the same time last year the current rent arrears were £1,672,824 so the current position is £171,260 more than last year.
- 1.3 We expect the rent arrears to rise now due to the historical seasonal trend, the larger technical arrears, the increasing number of tenants claiming Universal Credit and the financial hardship which tenants may experience due to the current economic environment,
- 1.4 The cost-of-living inflation crisis is only going to make things more difficult for tenants as the year progresses, although the government has suggested it may do more to support in this.
- 1.5 This crisis and the additional number of tenants moving over to universal credit means we are anticipating the current arrears to end the year around the £2.2m mark (March 2022 £1.9m). Around £0.3m higher – this is approx. 0.5% of the annual £58m charged.

2. Housing Support Fund

- 2.1 One of the government measures of support that has been provided over the last 6 months was the Housing Support Fund. Derby Homes assisted tenants in claiming these funds by assisting and making applications (as a trusted partner) to support tenants who said they were struggling financially. We estimate that 2,000 tenants were assisted in claiming around £200k. This scheme which was administered by Derby City Council came to an end at the end of March 2022 when the funds were used up. A further allocation of funds will be made available soon but when this starts and the criteria to be applied is not known at the moment.
- 2.2 In addition to this Officers have also been supporting tenants facing eviction by claiming from the Vulnerable Renters Fund.
- 2.3 Money Advice and Welfare Rights advice continues to be available for tenants.

3. Difficult to engage tenants

- 3.1** There are still challenges in dealing with tenants who are not cooperating or engaging with us. However, the court situation has begun to improve although not at pre pandemic levels. It also needs to be said that the use of Alternative Payment Arrangements (APA's) also mean that some cases don't need to go to court now but in the main tenants have to have at least 8 weeks arrears outstanding when you apply and likely to have around 13 weeks arrears by the time, we receive a payment from the DWP.

4. Evictions

- 4.1** Last year there were only 4 evictions. Since the start of April there has only been 1 eviction so far. As the year progresses, we still expect the number of eviction warrants requested to start increasing because of non-engaging tenants and therefore evictions as well, though we will continue to do our utmost to avoid the eviction happening by working with tenants where engagement is possible including accessing any supporting funds that may be available.

5. Universal Credit Impact on Current Arrears

- 5.1** Last year there nearly 800 tenants moving over to Universal Credit (UC). The majority of these will have been receiving weekly housing benefit. Once they move over to UC then unless they takeout an advance it will be 5 weeks before they get the first payment and most likely 5 weeks before they pay their rent.
- 5.2** The Government have recently announced that the migration of legacy benefit claimants to UC is going to resume after it was suspended because of the pandemic. Exact plans for Derby are not know but it could mean more tenant moving over than the figure of 800 who moved over last year. These tenants are likely to need support which the Welfare Reform Team will provide but will also mean there may be more rent arrears as well.

6. Welfare Reform update

- 6.1** After the tenfold increase in UC claims at the start of the pandemic in April 2020, the numbers have settled down to more manageable levels and we now get around 14 new cases a week.
- 6.2** Currently we have 4,432 tenants claiming UC. Around 63% of the expected 7,000 final number.
- 6.3** 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 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.
- 6.4** In March, we wrote to all our tenants in receipt of UC advising them on when and how to update their UC journal with details of their new rent. We carried out the same exercise this time last year. This is to help ensure that the Housing Costs element within the UC claim continues to be paid at the correct amount and on time.
- 6.5** This year an added challenge given to us by the DWP in February was that we are required to verify every single rent variation for the 4,432 tenants" in receipt of UC from the 4 of April.

- 6.6** Initially we had over 900 verifications in the first few days and cases were continually coming through at the rate of 30-50 cases per day. We had to streamline and reprioritise our everyday duties to make sure everyone got their UC paid correctly and on time. We are currently receiving about 30-40 cases per day and have around 80 cases outstanding at the end of each working day. Because of the way the verification system is set up, it allows tenants to go into their UC claim and make several verifications over time which then generates several tasks for us to carry out. This means some cases have been verified several times over (subject to the checks) and we estimate that we have already confirmed 4,500-5,000 rents. In addition, we are also now contacting everyone that has not verified their rent thus far and advising them on how to request a back-date on their April Housing Costs which will have been paid based on the pre-April rent.
- 6.7** Early signs are that we will be carrying out this exercise again next year due to the DWP IT systems inability to cope with bulk verifications, which they were able to do previously. We have an open request with the DWP to be a pilot authority on any digital solution they propose for this increasing administratively burdensome task.
- 6.8** The DWP has begun sending out the first 500 forced Migration Notices moving claimants from legacy benefits to UC in the Medway and Bolton areas.
- 6.9** Initially just 500 claimants will be affected as the DWP tries to work out how exactly it is going to move 2.6 million claimants accross by the end of 2024. Currently, if you do not live in either the Bolton or Medway areas you are unlikely to receive a Migration Notice. Even in those two areas, most legacy benefits claimants will not be affected yet. However, no details have been given for when other areas will be brought into the programme or when numbers will increase.
- 6.10** Claimants will have three months from the date on their Migration Notice letter to complete their claim for UC.
- 6.11** If you are unable to complete the claim in time you can contact the Universal Credit Migration Notice helpline and ask for an extension of the time limit.
- 6.12** We envisage that Derby's migration of existing legacy benefit claimants is likely to happen sometime during late 2022.
- 6.13** The Government expects to finish moving existing benefit and tax credit claimants onto UC by September 2024. However, the Budget Red Book now shows that date as March 2025.

7. Universal Credit Statistics

7.1 Highlights of tenants on Universal Credit (UC)

- 4,432 tenants on UC
- 60% of UC arrears cases on APA's (where DWP pay directly to Landlord the housing claim for weekly rent costs)
- 16% on Third Party Deductions (where a deduction from the UC claim is paid direct to Landlord to cover rent arrears)
- 1,475 tenants (33%) with no arrears or in credit on their rent account

7.2

| As at week ending 8 May 2022 | Number | Gross Arrears |
|---|--------------|-------------------|
| UC singles | 1,612 | £539,576 |
| UC couples *(includes 38 mac) | 331 | £81,653 |
| UC families *(includes 4 mac) | 2,489 | £909,734 |
| Total | 4,432 | £1,530,963 |
| | | |
| Gross UC arrears | 2,957 | £1,530,963 |
| Cases with no arrears/credits | 1,475 | £348,402 |
| Net UC arrears | 4,432 | £1,182,561 |
| Average arrears per UC Case (£1,530,963 / 4,432) | 4,432 | £345 |
| | | |
| Average Weekly APA Payments since April | 428 | £160,676 |
| Average Monthly APA Payments since April | 1,788 | £670,396 |
| | | |
| Number/Amount of Daily Alternative Payment Arrangements (APA) since last quarter report | 6,029 | £ 2,235,703 |
| 4-Weekly Third-Party Deductions (TPD) since last quarter report (includes 27 APA adjustments for £11,583) | 1,916 | £ 79,914 |
| Total APA + TPD | 7,945 | £2,315,617 |

*mac
(mixed age couples)

8. Derby Advice Update

8.1 2021/22 performance measures

- Derby Advice met all its performance targets for 21/22 despite there still being significant backlogs, post pandemic, at the DWP in assessing disability benefits claims.
- Satisfaction levels with Derby Advice, by our customers was 98.3% based on just under 200 completed customer surveys.
- The financial value of additional benefits raised for Derby residents was £5,446,694 across 2,554 cases. Notionally that is an average assistance of over £2,100 per case. In reality, most cases are below, this with a fewer number of large awards, increasing the average.

9. Cost of Living

- Up to date information for staff to support tenants with the 'cost of living crisis' is now available on our intranet. This information is based on the presentation given to colleagues at the staff briefing. The Derby Advice Manager also gave an interview on Radio Derby about welfare benefits and the cost of living.
- The Derby Advice Manager is part of Derby City's Strategic Action Group: Rising Cost of Living. The group is currently focusing on getting simple and accessible

communications about available support out to Derby residents. We are also looking at how to manage demand for support through the Derby Community Hub.

10. Mental health welfare rights take up work.

- Allan Reynolds, Welfare Rights Officer is embedded in the multi-disciplinary Community Mental Health Teams in Derby. His work focuses on Derby residents who have acute and/or chronic mental health problems.
- He has undertaken a piece of benefits “take up” work with the Early Interventions Team. Staff in the Early Interventions Team working with patients following a first episode of psychosis. Maximising the income of patients can be an important factor in maintaining their health and reducing the risk of relapse, and staff spend a lot of time helping patients with their benefits and finances. The take-up work was initiated to identify where patients are failing to claim or not receiving their correct amounts and to help ensure that all patients received their full entitlement.
- Outcomes. The table below shows the outcomes from the take up work. Most of the new benefits that were identified were either Universal Credit or Personal Independence Payments claims.

| | | |
|-------------|---|-----------------|
| 10.1 | No. of benefit checks undertaken | 48 |
| | No. of patients claiming extra benefits | 24 |
| | No. of extra claims made | 31 |
| | Weekly extra benefit claimed | £2,134 |
| | Annual extra benefit claimed | £110,951 |

11. Supporting families from Ukraine.

11.1 The Derby Advice Manager will be part of a Derby City and Derbyshire Tactical Co-ordinating Group (TCG) that can support with, and escalate concerns about, benefits issues for people arriving from Ukraine.

11.2 The group will look at what is in place; what issues there are; and how these could be escalated and resolved.

12. Money Advice

12.1 *Recast properties*

We have established a new procedure with Area Managers for tenants who need adaptations to a property because of overcrowding/a disability in the household. The Money Advice team will be advising these tenants on how they may be able to manage any increase in rent and utilities before the works are agreed, we also check if they are claiming all eligible benefits. This is a sensible proactive example of support to a small group of tenants.

12.2 *Revive*

One of our Money Advice Officers has been carrying out a fortnightly outreach surgery at the Revive Centre since 23rd February 2022. So far, we have seen 12 clients, 9 of which have been Derby Homes tenants. This is an example of where we are looking to develop the service in the localities.

12.3 Derby Homes Financial Inclusion and Capability Action plan

We have completed our 6 monthly review of the Action Plan. Actions include

- We have reviewed Derby City Council's allowable expenditure figures for the Single Discretionary Award for 2022/23. The suggestions have been implemented.
- The Money Advice Team Leader is continuing to chair monthly meetings with Citizens Advice Mid Mercia and Derby City Mission to discuss updates in the debt advice sector
- Communications for Debt Awareness Week 2022 were posted on Derby Homes' social media.
- The Money Advice Team Leader has been working with the Information Governance team to start a new process whereby we can obtain credit reports on behalf of clients. Credit reports are a pre-requisite to applying for a Debt Relief Order and can often be a barrier for clients pursuing a Debt Relief Order. By the team being proactive on this, it can significantly reduce the time taken for a Debt Relief Order being granted.

13. Accountancy & Accounts Payable Team

- 13.1** The Accountancy team are currently preparing the 2021/22 Financial Statements, a first draft copy has been sent to the Council. We are now awaiting final pension figures from the actuary, to go into a revised draft which will be sent to our Auditors in due course.
- 13.2** At the time of drafting this update, we are currently completing the tender process for new External Auditors. A recommendation to appoint a firm is to be discussed by the Board at their meeting on 19 May.
- 13.3** Workshops have begun alongside DCC with Technology One to discuss and document the configuration requirements for the new financial management system, due to go live in April 2023. To date workshops have taken place in General Ledger, Taxation, Banking and Fixed Assets; Accounts Payable, Debtors and Procurement workshops are planned over the next couple of weeks also. Alongside this work is also commencing on the interface requirements from feeder systems in particular Open Housing (then leading onto One Housing), a meeting with Capita is taking place in the next couple of weeks is taking place to review the requirements for the rent interface into the new FMS. It is hopeful that a switch to a modern system will provide considerable time savings for the team, replacing many workarounds which are in place with the current system.
- 13.4** The team are also working alongside Lloyds Bank to start the process to implement procurement cards, thus hopefully reducing the requirement for numerous online debit card transactions and the use of petty cash. We are looking to roll it out initially to the homelessness teams, as this is where the highest level of reactive transactions is generated from. Again, this should be a more efficient method than the current facility.

14. Rental Control

- 14.1** The team successfully completed the annual rent variation pack. This involved posting circa 12,500 letters to tenants informing them of the new year rents and service charges, of which this year was completed using a new printing firm. This was completed on time.
- 14.2** We continue to look at the options of introducing paperless direct debit forms for tenants. This has been delayed by the postponement from Capita of the "One DD Module". This will now be introduced alongside a version upgrade to Open Housing in Autumn 2022. Once introduced this should save on administration and time for both tenants and ourselves.

14.3 Leaseholders

The team held a hybrid Leaseholder forum on April 27. The main topic of discussion was the plan to work with the Council to introduce a Major Works Repayment Policy. The aim of this is to provide a framework for both Leaseholders and Derby Homes (on behalf of the Council) to use when large contributions are required towards major repair / replacement works to their block of flats. We aim to introduce the policy in late 2022.

15. Projects Team Update

15.1 Open Housing to One Housing Transition

A pre-requisite version upgrade to Open Housing has been identified that will elongate the delivery plan for the move to One Housing. The version upgrade is planned for late 2022 and the switch to One Housing is now tentatively planned for summer 2023.

15.2 Mobile Void Inspections

Functionality is now technically live however resource constraints have prevented the first operational usage.

Once fully up and running it will:

- Remove duplication – by removing back office scanning tasks and removing the lag between the work being identified and raised on the system to an operative / contractor.
- Increase visibility of where the supervisors are. The TM solution utilises the Open Housing Scheduler which in turn can be synchronised with Outlook calendars.
- Introduce multi-trade tickets – improving our job costing and work scheduling procedures.

15.3 Planned Maintenance module in Open Housing

Work is ongoing on this. It will provide tenants with greater visibility of upcoming planned works and provide us with a more robust method of tracking and reporting on the progress of any given scheme.

15.4 Local Land & Property Gazetteer (LLPG)

Final data quality review iteration has been completed and 99.6% of addresses within the city boundary have the relevant Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) included.

This work will enable greater cross partner service working and increased visibility of the need of citizens across communities within Derby. This level of UPRN completeness will also now enable us to load in GIS mapping data with a view to exploiting this within future reports.

15.5 Energy Data

The RDSAP energy data (this is a measure of a property's components, which contribute to an overall property energy rating – e.g., EPC C) has been updated. This is a pre-requisite for adopting modelling tools that will allow DH to make data driven decisions regarding the most appropriate energy efficiency property improvements required to an individual property - so it meets a particular energy efficiency rating. This modelling is key in supporting the decarbonisation plans for the housing stock and will form the basis on how the Councils HRA cyclical Capital programme will be set in the future.

15.6 War Memorial online adverts

A proof-of-concept process that will allow Derby Homes to advertise War Memorial properties online has been completed. Detailed work is now underway. This will raise the visibility of these properties.

15.7 Mobile Housing Management

Housing Management staff have been the first recipients of the laptop refresh programme that was planned for this year. These devices are laptops that fold over to become tablets as required. This will complement the mobile app that was developed last year and improve their ability to work in the field and the efficiencies this provides.

HEAD OF SERVICE UPDATE – HOUSING MANAGEMENT

- 16.** My report this month focuses on some of the excellent work completed within Housing Management by the Tenancy Sustainability Teams who work assisting tenants to maintain and sustain their tenancy.

17. Tenancy Sustainment Team

All new tenants are assessed to establish whether they require additional help when setting up their new home and settling into the community. The service is currently provided to around 42% of tenants. The help continues during the period of the introductory tenancy. This is usually 12 months but can be extended to 18 months if concerns are identified. The help provided ensures that tenants are equipped to maintain and sustain the tenancy.

18. Intensive Housing Management Team

The officers help secure tenants where it is identified that they are struggling to maintain their tenancy. A member of the team will visit the tenant and carry out an assessment with them. An action plan will then be put in place with the tenant to address the concerns.

19. Complex Needs team

Some of the officers in this team work more intensely with individuals and families that are experiencing multiple issues that impact on their ability to manage a tenancy. Other members of the team work with tenants who have learning disabilities, mental health problems or are victims of domestic abuse. The team have strong links with organisations and agencies that can provide specialist support in these areas.

20. Maximising Income

We are currently facing some of the hardest economic challenges of our generation. The rises in energy, fuel and food prices will have a massive impact on our tenants, many of whom are already in financial hardship. Below are some examples of how the team have helped tenants to improve their personal circumstances and overall quality of life.

20.1 Charitable Grants

Between January and March 2022, the teams were successful in applying for 27 charitable grants applications for people receiving the service.

20.2 Housing Support Fund

The officers made a total of 54 successful referrals to the Household Support Fund with £8,460 being awarded. A couple of examples are highlighted below.

A Tenancy Sustainment officer (TSO) applied to the fund on behalf of a single male who was subsequently awarded £140 in vouchers. The TSO helped him write a shopping list for ASDA for all the essential items he needed for his new home. As he has no transport the TSO went to ASDA on his behalf and purchased the items that he would not have been able to manage them on the bus. They included bedding, crockery, a microwave and a large bin. He was very grateful for this additional support that helped him make his new house a home.

An Intensive Housing Management Officer (IHMO) referred an elderly gentleman for the Household Support Fund and he was awarded £140 in vouchers. As he suffers with arthritis he can only manage to shop at the local Tesco Express which doesn't sell all the items he wanted to buy. The IHMO helped him write a shopping list of items he wanted, and then went to ASDA to purchase the items on his behalf. This included things like a new broom, dustpan and brush, mop and bucket. She also purchased some new reading glasses as he had broken his old pair. When he put them on, he was overjoyed to be able to see better again and read his newspaper. Small acts of kindness can make a big difference to tenants, particularly in these challenging times where many of our tenants are having to make every penny count.

20.3 Christmas Lunch on Jesus

Every Christmas the team make referrals to Christmas Lunch on Jesus to support tenants in financial hardship. Last Christmas they made 267 referrals, the highest amount ever. Vouchers were hand delivered to tenants in the week leading up to Christmas which enabled them to purchase food items from Aldi.

20.4 Benefit Support

An Intensive Housing Management Officer (IHMO) supported a tenant to make a claim for personal independence payments which was backdated to 2018 and resulted in him receiving £10,000. The tenant was paid £2,000 every 2 weeks and the IHMO supported him to pay off all his debt.

A Complex Needs Officer has secured £6,000 benefits back payment for a tenant, she used the money to pay off her rent arrears and improve her property.

20.5 Small Scale Bid

The team worked with carers and residents at Pine Court to put together a bid to obtain Estate Pride funding for a sensory garden. Pine Court is an independent living scheme for young people with learning disabilities. During the pandemic it was recognised by staff that the outdoors area required improvement. This resulted in a meeting being held with residents where it was agreed to incorporate a sensory garden which will be home to garden mirrors, colourful flowers, a vegetable patch, and a rockery and should help to improve the quality of life for residents.

21. Work providing additional benefits

21.1 Improving the White Goods Package

To support Derby Homes customers, the team initiated a review of the Derby Homes white goods package. As a result, rather than having to have 3 items, it is now possible for tenants to request and pay for individual items, making it far more flexible and user friendly.

21.2 Maintaining Gardens

Over the winter months 10 households struggling to manage their overgrown gardens were given one off help to return their gardens to a manageable state. This was on the understanding that they maintain the gardens in the future. Gardening equipment has been sourced and gifted to the tenants. The team will work with tenants to ensure that the gardens are maintained in the future.

21.3 Hoarding

Derby Homes have funded Staywell Derby who are delivering a pilot project that provides support to tenants who hoard to change their mindset and behaviours. The pilot currently supporting 10 Derby Homes tenants and will end on 31 May 2022. The help includes decluttering their properties and some therapeutic sessions to prevent the hoarding reoccurring.

21.4 Successful Move on

A Complex Needs Officer has supported a tenant to move away from an area where he was experiencing severe ASB and hate crime – the tenant had been suffering acutely with his mental health during this time and has been rehoused in a smaller, quiet block of flats in an area close to family and is settling in very well.

21.5 Domestic Abuse Housing Accreditation (DAHA)

Complex Needs Officer support victims of Domestic abuse, either within their current homes or in finding suitable alternative accommodation.

Their work involves partnership working with several agencies across the city. They carry out a risk assessment of the situation and will refer to the Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference where they consider the tenant to be high risk. If the tenant remains in their current property, they will assess whether any target hardening measures are needed in the property to keep them safe. These can include:

- Providing alarms for personal use and internally on windows and doors of the property.
- Assessing home security by reviewing the present property in terms of doors and to look at replacement and modernisation. Door chains and door entry systems can be fitted to provide further security.
- Supplying and fitting dummy or real CCTV cameras for 28 days in conjunction with the ASB Team To provide increased reassurance for the tenant and a deterrent for perpetrators.
- Work in partnership with Estates to change factors in the garden such as reviewing the integrity of external boundaries of the property including side gates and increasing fencing height for added security, privacy and deterrence.

Where the current accommodation isn't suitable or safe, the team will work in partnership with Housing Options to source alternative accommodation which could initially be a refuge.

During the year they have been working hard to gain DAH accreditation, something they hope to achieve by the end of the year. They are in the process of pulling together a portfolio that evidences the Domestic abuse work that they carry out.

The accreditation has given them a framework to work with that ensures they are considering Domestic abuse from all angles. Derby Homes currently have a Domestic abuse policy which is due for review. The previous policy included both staff and tenants. The current policy has been updated and there is now a separate policy for staff, both for consideration on 9 June at the Operational Board meeting.

The Complex Needs Manager attends a DAHA steering group meeting every 2 months as well as meeting with the regional lead in between meetings. As a result of the work being carried out, we now have 9 Domestic Abuse champions in place across the organisation.

We are also looking to introduce additional training as follows:

- A Domestic abuse e-learning course is currently being developed
- Intersectionality training will be sourced and delivered to relevant staff and managers across the organisation. This training recognises that and minority groups are less likely to report Domestic Abuse and looks at how workers can recognise this and better support them.

22. I will keep the board updated on progress.

HEAD OF SERVICE UPDATE – CAPITAL WORKS

23. This update, across all Teams within the Capital Works Division (Capital Projects / Development / Estates Maintenance / Planned Maintenance Teams) summarises; the main issues impacting on the Team, the works undertaken by the Teams, and the upcoming activities prior to the next meeting of this Operational Board. (Update written on 16 May 2022 – Figures included in this report based on that date.

Estates Maintenance

24. Grounds and Garden Maintenance

The Grounds Maintenance Team commenced the cutting of grass to the 325 communal areas on the 15 March 2022, with the third cycle of cutting, 33% complete at the time of writing this update. The Garden Maintenance Teams commenced the cutting of Lawns and the delivery of garden maintenance to 462 properties on the 15 March. 2022. Progress on both workstreams is updated weekly through an activity programme supplied by Streetpride to the Estates Maintenance Team.

25. Grounds Maintenance – Winter Works

Further to the update on the Management of Trees and the Cleaning Service, at the last Operational Board Meeting in December 2021, We have reviewed the delivery of the Winter Works carried out between October 2021 and March 2022, a summary of which is below.

25.1 Leaf clearance

97% of Derby Homes sites received 2 clearance visits. The decision to invest in an increase in the number of collection machines enabled us to make more rapid progress in this area. and to have a presence in more areas of the City. It must be noted that the weather was drier the average, so we had optimum conditions for collection by the type of machine we have. Most leaves were collected within 2 operations, we did on an ad hoc basis visit some sites on a third occasion.

There are a couple of problem areas though:

- Car parking areas remain a difficult area to collect leaves.
- Fenced in areas where access is an increasing problem not only for mowing but leaf collection too. These areas have to be cleared manually, this is labour intensive and continue to pose a potential health and safety issue in respect of manual handling injuries and contact with sharps.

25.2 Shrub pruning

Every site with shrubs areas received a pruning visit, shrubs in Mackworth, Normanton, Chaddesden received a heavy reduction as did some on the Keldholme Lane Estate. The programme of heavy reduction continues over the next couple of years in other areas of the City. Obviously heavily pruning shrubs takes longer and generates vast amounts of green waste and is again labour intensive. Going forward it would be sensible to invest in equipment that could shred this material and either return it to the shrub beds(the more eco-friendly way) or at the very least enable it to be more efficiently transported to the disposal site.

25.3 Hedge cutting

All sites with hedges received a winter hedge cut.

25.4 Lawn edging

This operation was not so successful this year, however very few of the grass areas look like they are encroaching significantly on to paved areas. The operation was forced to a halt this year by mechanical breakdown and with the machines being obsolete, parts were unobtainable.

25.5 Bark mulching of shrub beds

For the second season we have not applied bark mulch, primarily because we have no suitable storage area now where we can handle articulated lorry loads of bark. Whilst in some areas this may have detracted from the aesthetics, in other areas it has simply saved street cleansing picking it up off the highway and taking it to the tip. The effectiveness of bark mulch as a weed suppressant is much reduced in the presence of certain species such as willow herb dandelions and cleaver.

25.6 Future Years

Going forward for future Winter works we feel it is important review planted areas which will inevitably mean some are grubbed out and grassed over. In many areas this will improve the outside space around the housing stock. Where shrub beds are still appropriate, they for the

most part need re planting with new stock which may be more appropriate to the area. There are cases where new planted areas should be created on selected sites.

This season onwards we would like to introduce a bulb planting programme, this could bring some colour to areas and have a lot of impact relative to cost. We would be acting in line with good practice if we started introducing more wildlife friendly areas, whilst this is not winter works as such it possibly will have a maintenance implication in the winter. This may also reduce a bit of maintenance pressure in the summer as well as introducing interest to the open areas.

Capital Works Team

26. In House Team and Local Sub Contractors

New Build Programme Delivery

The Schemes are being delivered through a mix of external local contractors constructing the substructure, external superstructures (building shell) and the external works, with the in-house team generally completing the internal fit out. The table below summarises the current programme of new build work on site or programmed to start on site during 2022/23.

The focus of the In house delivery team is on; smaller sites (say less than 10 units), structures two storeys or less and in locations that external contractors may find uneconomic due to their scale or location.

| 26.1 | Address | Units | Project Managed by | Actual / Completion Status on Site | Proposed Date – |
|------|---|---|----------------------------|---|-----------------|
| | Projects on Site – Quarter 1 22/23 | | | | |
| | Berwick Ave | 1 x 3b Bungalows | Derby Homes Arcus | SOS – October 2021 / ECD – August 2022 Substructure & Superstructure complete. Internal fit out underway. | |
| | Cummings Street | 4 x 2b Houses | Derby Homes DCC Architects | SOS – March 2022 / ECD - March 2023 Sewer Connection complete Substructures under construction | |
| | Chesapeake Road | 6 x 2b Houses + 2 x 4b Houses (8 units) | Derby Homes DCC Architects | Substructures under construction | |
| | Projects to start on Site during 22/23 | | | | |
| | Whittaker Street | 2 x 4 bed houses | DH DCC Architects | SOS – June 2022 / ECD – March 2023 | |
| | Monyash Close | 1 x bungalows M4(2) | DH ARCUS Consulting | SOS – October 2022 | |

26.2 Acquired Properties Work

The CWT continues to focus on turning around large-scale refurbishments of passive voids and newly acquired homes. During Quarter 1 of 22/23, a further 14Nr properties are being refurbished.

26.3 Kitchen / Bathroom / Wet Rooms / Adaptations Works in Occupied Properties

All workstreams have commenced, working in occupied properties, delivering the 2022/23 programme.

26.4 Development Team

The Team continued to work with our consultants in preparing scheme feasibility reports, designs and working drawings for future new build projects. To increase the scale and pace of delivery of the New Build Programme, external Contractors are currently being procured to deliver a range of projects. The Procurement route will depend on; the level of design information available or required of the contractor, timing of delivery or level of contractor expertise required into the project. A set of Employers Requirements have been written to ensure Derby Homes Standards are incorporated into the projects.

27. Delivery - External Main Contractors

27.1 Work Stream 1

Procurement

Appointment of a Regional Contractor through tendered Mini Competition through EN Procure New Build Framework. Initial Phase of Barlow Street and Compton Street (Planning Constraints almost resolved / design advanced). Target Start on Site – Quarter 2 22/23. Project Management through Arcus.

27.2 Further Projects at Oaklands Avenue and Patterson Avenue to be supplemented consequent to the resolution of the Leaseholder negotiations at Oaklands and the site clearance / design finalisation at Patterson.

27.3

| Address | Units | Project managed by | Notes |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------------|--|
| Barlow Street | 12 3b/5p TA flats | DH ARCUS Consulting | Planning permission granted in June 21 subject to a number of planning conditions. Remediation strategy required for ground investigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree protection – Completed • Sustainable drainage strategy required – GCA completing • Biodiversity enhancement report required – Being completed |
| Crompton Street | 6 x 1 bed flats | DH ARCUS Consulting | Construction Information 90% Complete Protracted Leaseholder issue resolved. Garage buildings demolished in December 2021 and Garage bases in January 2022. |
| Oaklands Avenue | 6 x 1 bed flats | DH ARCUS Consulting | Construction Information 90% Complete Protracted Leaseholder issue On conclusion of agreement Storeroom Building on site to be demolished – Contractor ready. |
| Paterson Avenue | 6 x 1 bed flats | DH ARCUS Consulting | Planning Permission granted on 21.07.21. Subject to several conditions. Full design development in progress. |

27.4 Work Stream 2

| Address | Units | Project Managed by | Notes / Procurement Route |
|---------------|--------------|------------------------|--|
| Grange Avenue | 37 Bungalows | DH ARCUS Consulting | <u>Design</u> Full Planning Permission Package in preparation by ARCUS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design being changed to satisfy highways. • Landscaping/Biodiversity strategy and Energy Survey required and being prepared. <u>Procurement</u> Appointment of a second Regional Contractor through tendered Mini Competition through EN Procure New Build Framework. Target Start on Site – Quarter 3 22/23 Project Management through Arcus. |

27.5 Work Stream 3

| Address | Units | Project Managed by | Notes / Procurement Route |
|----------------|--|------------------------|--|
| Bretton Avenue | Both Redevelopment & Refurbishment under consideration | DH ARCUS Consulting | <u>Consultation Process</u> Stage 1 - Event held early October with all options considered. Stage 2 – Feedback provided to all residents and focus consultation to further investigate favoured options – February 2022 <u>Procurement</u> Stage 3 – Direct Appointment of Regional Contractor during June 22 for EN Procure New Build Framework to develop design in consultation with community. Target Start on Site – Quarter 4 22/23 Project Management through Arcus. |

28. **Planned Maintenance Team**

The Planned Maintenance Team has commenced the project management of a wide variety of capital and revenue works, to be delivered during the 2022/23 financial year programme. The headline items can be summarised as follows:

- Re-roofing Works (Budget £2.4 million) – Our contractors, JAL Roofing and Avonside Roofing are carrying out re-roofing works across the Cowsley and St Albans Estates, throughout the year.
- Replacement External Doors & Windows (Budget £1.5 million) – Our contractor, Nationwide are mainly upgrading external doors and frames across the City, throughout the year.
- Energy Efficiency Works – Significant additional funding, £802,000 has been obtained, through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund – Wave 1 (SHDF), which has afforded considerable opportunities to carry out energy efficiency works. 80 cast iron properties at Allenton, will benefit from; external wall insulation, new windows and external doors, and improved ventilation. Works to be completed by March 2023. The overall cost of the works is approximately £2 million.
In addition, securing ERDF grant funding for energy efficiency improvements via our joint bid with Nottingham City Council, will enable us to carry out energy efficiency works, primarily external wall insulation, to 42 flats at Knightsbridge, Mackworth Estate. Works to be completed by March 2023. Our contractor, Westville, are contracted to carry out the majority of these works.
- Redecoration Works – Internally (Budget £300,000) – As part of the Home Decoration Scheme, to be delivered by our contractor, Buxton Decorators.
- Major Adaptations and Extensions (Budget £700,000) – The Team have a number of such projects utilising the services of external contractors and the in-house workforce.

HEAD OF SERVICE UPDATE – REPAIRS

29. Day to Day

At the end of the financial year 2021/22, performance in terms of 'repairs completed in time' is as follows:

- Emergencies – 100%
- Very urgent works –99.62%
- Urgent works – 98.39%
- Routine works – 94.66%
- Planned works – 82.88%

Performance up until the end of the year on higher priority jobs is generally pleasing with the emergency and very urgent works above/better than the 99% target.

There has been a slight dip in performance on the Urgent works targets which is just slightly below target with routine and planned works being well below the 99% target.

Despite nationwide supply chain issues our supplier has made great efforts to ensure as far possible that materials are available to enable us to carry out repairs. Although there have been some shortages this has not had a major impact on our carrying out and completing of repairs.

Tenant satisfaction with repairs remains slightly below target at 98.82% up until the end of the year.

During the year we have sent out 40,322 surveys with a total of 476 customers being dissatisfied. This was made up 241 customers who were dissatisfied with the Day to Day team, 118 were with the Gas and Electrical teams and the remainder of 117 is where no contact / messages have been left with the customer.

We have been contacting customers to ascertain what their issues are and how we can quickly resolve them and also to analyse trends to implement positive steps to improve the customers experience.

We have generated rechargeable repairs up to the end of the year realising £39981.63.

We have experienced an increased demand for repairs by completing nearly 36000 jobs this year, which is a significant increase compared to the previous six years. Clearly this and issues with materials and vacancies has had an impact. However the team is reviewing how we can improve processes and working practices and we are looking forward to a much improved year.

30. Voids

From a relatively difficult start to the last financial year 2021/22 there has been a significant improvement throughout the year giving some pleasing results.

In total the voids team completed 884 properties consisting of 555 active voids, 219 passives voids with 111 temporary accommodation properties compared to 871 properties in total in the last financial year. The active voids work turnaround time has improved from 24 days last financial year to 16.1 days this financial year and this will continue to improve into the next

financial year with the new measure that have been put in place to manage the team's performance.

The voids team are continuing to have weekly active voids meetings with housing managers and the allocations team to explore new ways of improving the service and to share and update keys to keys information that is now recorded for audit purposes. These practices are being replicated in the passive voids fortnightly meeting which are showing good signs of improvements with information sharing.

We have worked hard with our suppliers to ensure material shortages have very little negative impact to void works performance. We are still working hard with our suppliers to ensure that materials that we require, or replacements / alternatives are available when materials become obsolete.

We are very confident that continued improvements in void performance will continue into the next financial year

31. Electrical Team

The Electrical Team have finished the year strongly, ending the year with 99.94% of properties having an in date Electrical Inspection Condition Report.

To translate, 12,824 homes have received a satisfactory Electrical Safety Check with only 8 properties unfortunately overdue. The 8 homes that are overdue are all complex circumstances and we are working collaboratively with the relevant parties and colleagues to find a solution.

This year the team have completed 2701 Electrical Safety Checks and 347 major repairs identified following the tests. These are our highest figures reported in the last 3 years.

The Electrical Team have also continued to invest in upgrading our electrical installations across the city which includes completing 270 Consumer Unit upgrades incorporating new non-combustible equipment to improve fire safety and completing 184 Smoke Alarm Upgrades, expanding the fire detection in our customer's homes.

Additionally to this the team are 100% compliant in emergency lighting, fire alarm servicing and sprinkler servicing.

Plans are in place to ensure that these efforts are continued into the next year where we are hopeful to remain in this strong position.

32. Gas Team

Performance in the last financial year has been very pleasing. We ended the year with 12,561 properties having a certificate less than one year old. This means there were only 6 properties with a certificate over 12 months old. This is the best performance we have ever achieved and is a result of the hard work from the team. Obviously we are continuing to make efforts to gain access to these properties working with colleagues and other departments where appropriate. This means we are currently 100% compliant in line with gas regulations.

We are pleased with performance as the year has had its challenges with recruitment and material availability. We have though ensured that these challenges have not had an impact on the good results we have seen this year.

We have also engaged a gas company in the last quarter of the year to assist us and our internal installs team with fitting new boiler replacements and central heating systems. The start has been encouraging and we are confident that moving forward they will help us be more resilient to ensure this area of work remains on track to achieve our gas installation targets.

In March we also started installing carbon monoxide detectors in properties with gas appliances as part of the gas service. This was in expectation of new government legislation which has now been rolled out. This has given us a good head start and should mean this work is completed in the 2022/23 financial year.

The team are now looking forward to ensuring that our results achieved this year can continue in the next 12 months.

33. Disrepair

This year has been a challenging year with regard to disrepair claims. There has been a significant increase in claims from companies canvassing for business and is unfortunately a national trend in the last few years.

In the last 12 months there has been 40 new disrepair cases and 2 environmental protection agency claims.

The compensation payments for the year totalled £14,398 and the legal fees £36,660.

We have also been working with our housing management and other colleagues to ensure that when visiting our customers any issues discovered are reported back and dealt with. This will help sustain tenancies and also ensure our properties do not fall into disrepair particularly if we are not aware of ongoing issues. We have also looking at ways to help our customers with issues of fuel poverty by installing where appropriate positive ventilation systems as well as sign posting them to support services.

To try and be proactive and ensure our customers are not suffering from reoccurring issues we are contacting disrepair cases and complaints for mould and damp after 6 months of their complaints being closed. We are finding so far that a majority of these cases have not had reoccurring issues.

It is fair to say that with the cost of living crisis, potentially it will get harder for our customers to adequately heat and ventilate their homes. We continue to work with colleagues and look at best practice to see where we can help customers struggling with condensation and mould in their homes.

HEAD OF SERVICE UPDATE – GOVERNANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

34. Employee Development

Work is now well under way for this year's Apprentice recruitment, we have had an great response to the vacancies and interviews are planned for late June/early July. Apprentices will start employment with Derby Homes in September 2022. The positions we have this year are:

- 1 x Electrical Apprentice
- 2 x Joinery Apprentices
- 1 x Plastering Apprentices

- 2 x Plumbing & Heating Apprentice
- 1 x Bricklayer Apprentice
- 1 x Surveying Apprentices
- 5 x Housing Apprentices
- 1 x Business Admin Apprentice
- 1 x Customer Service Apprentice

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

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Background None

Information:

Supporting None

Information:

This report has been approved by the following

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|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| Managing Director | Maria Murphy | 27/05/2022 |
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