

WEBSITE STRATEGY

Report of the Director of Housing and Customer Service

1. SUMMARY

The website strategy has been updated and contains our current vision, goals and aspirations for the Derby Homes Website. The website strategy will work within the overarching Customer Service Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Board is requested to approve the attached strategy.

3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The Website Strategy is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The internet is a key access channel for Derby Homes and our customers. Not only do web technologies provide access to services and information beyond traditional office hours, they allow Derby Homes to provide services more cost effectively.
- 3.3 We will actively seek the involvement of customers in the ongoing development of Derby Homes Website. A Process Improvement Team held on 12 November 2010 gained support for the proposals contained within the Roadmap attached at Appendix 1 and customers rated the current website as 7/10.
- 3.4 We have already identified the log on process as a potential barrier to increasing the usage of the website and have already proposed a new single-sign in process which will simplify this process and encourage the use of electronic services through the site.
- 3.5 Many of the proposals within the strategy are ongoing, examples of this are investment in new services within the website. Detailed milestones for the strategy are consolidated in the Delivery and Business Plan, Service Plans and Business Transformation Targets. Progress is monitored through the Business Transformation Team with reports to Chair's Briefing and Board. Further reports on key develop work will be brought back to the City Board and main Board with full implications for approval prior to implementation.

3.6 We expect that customers will see improvements through the website in the following ways:

- Greater ease of log-in
- Easier to contact us, at times and in ways that suit the customer
- Greater ease of navigation through the website
- A phased approach to introducing additional electronic access to a wider range of services
- Access to a greater range of information.

4. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The strategy has been developed through discussion with the Website Process Improvement Team.

4.2 Further consultation will follow as individual projects are progressed. This will take place through Housing Focus Groups and Special Interest Groups.

5. FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Implementing this strategy will result in significant expenditure, particularly with the implementation of new functionality within the website. Detailed costs will be identified and monitored within the Business Transformation process and future budget processes.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

All developments within the strategy will be subject to Equalities Impact Assessment prior to implementation. Content will be accessible to a wide range of customers, including those with special needs and meet BS8878 standards on accessibility.

7. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Health and Safety risk assessments will be carried out prior to implementation of new working practises.

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

- Legal and Confidentiality
- Personnel
- Environmental
- Risk
- Policy Review

If Board members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact the author, or the Chief Executive, phil.davies@derbyhomes.org - Tel 01332 711010

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Background Information: None.

Supporting Information: None.



**Derby Homes
Website Strategy**

November 2010

DRAFT

Introduction

Derby Homes is an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) that manages, maintains and improves the housing of Derby City Council. It was set up in 2002 by the Council as an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) and is the largest provider of social housing in Derby with just under 14,000 properties.

The organisation has an excellent national reputation. In 2002, Derby Homes was inspected by the Audit Commission and was awarded the highest rating of three stars for excellent services. Following re-inspection in February 2006, the organisation retained its 3-star status. Derby Homes has also achieved and retained a number of other significant awards including Investor in People, Chartermark accreditation, ISO9001, Positive About Disabled People and a RoSPA Gold for commitment to health and safety.

The internet is a key access channel for Derby Homes and our customers. Not only do web technologies provide access to services and information beyond traditional office hours, they allow Derby Homes to provide services more cost effectively.

Purpose of this strategy

The purpose of this document is to describe the vision, goals and aspirations for Derby Homes' website and its relationship with other strategies such as the Customer Services Strategy.

Vision: putting the customer at the centre

Customers are key to our website strategy. We will enable customers to communicate with Derby Homes by their preferred channel by ensuring that a range of options are available through personal contact or via the website.

We have re-designed our current website with customers in mind and have taken their views into account.

Aims of the website strategy

4.1 Allow ease of use for all our customers

- Customers will be able to retrieve information easily through clear navigation, meaningful web addresses (URLs) and via the search engine.
- Content will be searchable irrespective of its format. For instance, PDF documents, Word files and web pages should be indexed by the search engine.

- Site navigation will reflect the needs of customers, rather than the organisational structure of Derby Homes.
- Information will be presented according to the type of customer (e.g. to differentiate between tenants and business users).
- Content will be accessible to a wide range of customers, including those with special needs, and meet the BS8878 standards on accessibility.

5. Provide services customers want

- The Derby Homes Customer Service strategy requires an increasing range of online self-service facilities, including the ability to report repairs, register complaints, comments and compliments, pay their rent, view their rent statements and access other information relating to their tenancy, such as the dates of estate walkabouts and Housing Focus Group meetings. This web strategy will ensure that these facilities are available through the Derby Homes website with seamless links if the service is hosted externally.
- The development of facilities that will allow customers to access online services will require a system of customer verification, and security issues will be considered carefully when developing these services.
- An additional benefit of user validation will be the ability to offer content via the website that is geared towards the individual customer. We will aim to provide information about housing offices, housing focus group meetings and any maintenance scheduled for a customer's home area.

6.0 Provide a platform for customers to have their say

- We will provide a forum on the website which will allow customers to interact with Derby Homes via electronic means. Some areas that we will develop include the ability to :
 - locate their nearest housing office or common room
 - complete online forms and surveys
 - check an online diary for dates of meetings and estate walkabouts
 - comment on our discussion forums
 - watch relevant videos relating to services offered
 - email their patch based housing officer, Local/Neighbourhood Manager or team Senior Management.

7.0 Supports publication of high quality content

- The content of the Derby Homes website will be accurate and up-to-date. We will use a Content Management System to create and update content easily.
- We will also consider the use of RSS feeds which would allow customers to subscribe to Derby Homes' news and also to be able to consume RSS feeds from other organisations such as our strategic partners. RSS enables users to read dozens of websites on the same page and the sites can be scanned in seconds, rather than having to load them individually.
- Derby Homes will define technical and usability standards which will provide the means of publishing multimedia content to its website. We will also ensure that the appropriate technical infrastructure is in place to support the additional load on the network and web servers.

8.0 Has an appropriate technical infrastructure

- The web is constantly changing and new technological advances are emerging all the time. We will be proactive in the evaluation of any new technology that may benefit Derby Homes and its customers.
- The technical infrastructure will be robust and resilient and have enough capacity to meet current and future needs. Data will be backed up regularly and system downtime will be minimised, particularly as more online self-service applications are introduced to the Derby Homes website.
- E-Commerce solutions must be secure. For example, credit card numbers and personal details must be encrypted (SSL) when sending information across a network as part of a transaction via the web.

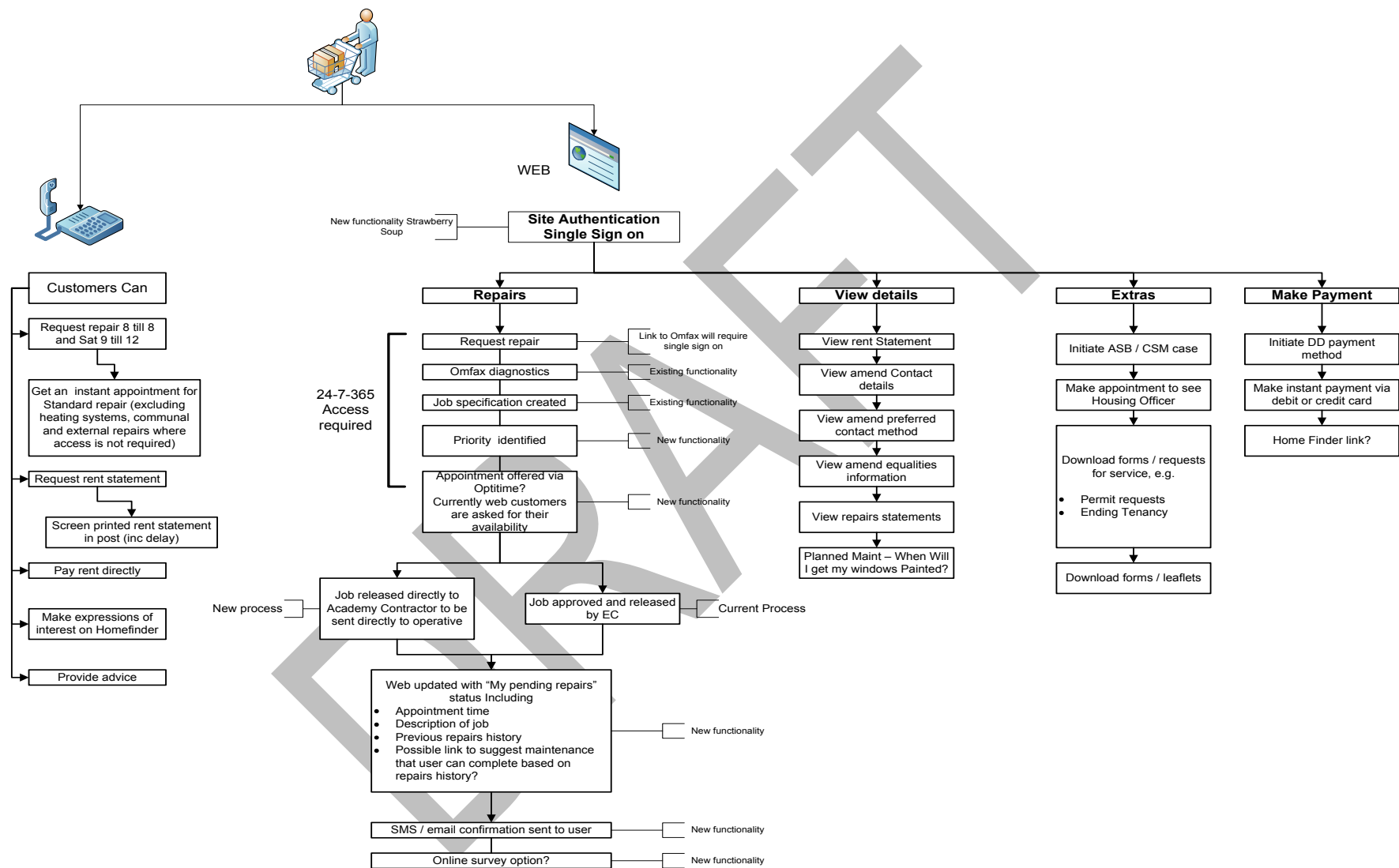
9.0 Complies with legislation and standards

- This strategy will be reviewed in the light of any changes to legislation that may impact on the web. This legislation includes (but is not exclusive to) Data Protection, Disability Discrimination, Equal Opportunities, Human Rights and Freedom of Information.
- There will be clear differentiation between official Derby Homes information and information provided by third parties.

- We will develop our website according to web standards, BS 8878 accessibility standards, security standards and industry good practice.
- A single point of entry will be provided into the website which will comply with industry standards.
- We will monitor the use of our website and set targets to increase the numbers of customer using electronic services as shown below:

Customer Accessing Website			
	Current No of Tenants	By April 2012	By April 2015
General Enquiries	1.5%	5%	13%
Cash Collection and repair ordering	1%	5%	10%

Appendix 1 shows the road map for developing and extending the use of Derby Homes' website in line with this strategy.



Login Process

