

ENQUIRY CENTRE

Report of the Director of Housing and Customer Service

1. SUMMARY

This report provides analysis of calls taken by the Enquiry Centre and explains how we intend to improve efficiency and performance.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The City Board are asked to note the report.

3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Derby Homes Enquiry Centre is the first point of contact for tenants, leaseholders and other customers of Derby Homes. The following table shows a breakdown of all calls handled by the Enquiry Centre during the period 11 November 2010 to 11 November 2011. A detailed breakdown supporting this summary table is shown at Appendix 1.

| Total calls by category | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Category | Number | % of total |
| Repairs related | 80,258 | 45.29 |
| General enquiries | 50,926 | 28.74 |
| Transfers to other teams | 25,388 | 14.33 |
| Rent related | 16,259 | 9.17 |
| Other | 4,380 | 2.50 |
| Total calls | 177,211 | 100.00 |

- 3.2 Just under half of all calls are repairs related with the vast majority (43.5%) being about day to day responsive repairs and gas repairs, mainly heating.
- 3.3 Almost a third of all responsive repair calls, or 12% of all calls were people chasing up their repairs.
- 3.4 There are a number of reasons for initial service failure being worked on. I am confident that the implementation of a new IT system for repairs will improve this. We will reduce the amount of repeat calls by improving communication between the Enquiry Centre and the operational staff delivering the repairs service, particularly the work planners and supervisors.

- 3.5 For this reason, we plan to co-locate part of the Enquiry Centre with work planners and supervisors at London Road early next year. Telephony options will be introduced which will require customers to indicate which service they require when calling and their call will then be routed to the most appropriate location within the Enquiry Centre.
- 3.6 Logging of repairs is 32.69% or a third of all calls. We expect that tenants will continue to report the majority of repairs via the Enquiry Centre for the foreseeable future, however, tenants are now able to log repairs through the website. They can monitor the progress of their repairs and ask for updates via the tenants' dashboard. There is also an online diagnostic tool which helps tenants identify the exact repair they need doing. Numbers of repair requests via the website are low at the moment but we are actively marketing the dashboard and self service is increasing quickly.
- 3.7 The second largest category of calls is general enquiries at 28.74%. These calls are requests for information about almost anything relating to Derby Homes or Derby City Council services. I believe much of this traffic can eventually be redirected to Derby Homes and Derby City Council's website. We are actively marketing Derby Homes website for this reason.
- 3.8 Around 15% of all calls are technically switchboard calls where customers want to speak to a specific member of staff at Derby Homes such as their housing officer. Derby Homes policy is for the Enquiry Centre to be the first point of contact for customers.
- 3.9 Most, but not all letters go out to customers with the Enquiry Centre contact number rather than the direct line for the member of staff who sent it. There are arguments for and against this. We will continue to market and promote the Enquiry Centre number 711000 but will instruct staff that when they make direct contact with a customer they use their own mobile or direct line number. All Housing Officer contact numbers will also be publicised on the website.
- 3.10 Around 5% of calls are people making rent payments. The Enquiry Centre advisor processes this via the City Council's website while the tenant is on the telephone. We aim to reduce this workload by encouraging more tenants to make payments direct through the website.
- 3.11 A further 5% of calls are rent account queries. Many of these could be avoided if more tenants were able to use the tenant's dashboard. We are actively promoting the tenants dashboard for this reason.
- 3.12 There is clearly considerable scope to reduce customer contact by:
- promoting self service for general enquiries, repairs and rents
 - reducing repeat calls by 'getting things right first time' more often
 - promoting direct line numbers for Housing Officers and other staff where appropriate
- 3.13 This will improve performance levels which are already good and enable us to make service efficiencies. The aim will be to start to provide additional services from the Enquiry Centre including more joint working with Derby Direct.

4. FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS PLAN

Improvements to key service areas will better enable us to manage call handling and customer contacts. Further reports will concentrate on efficiencies and improved performance arising from these actions.

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

Consultation
Legal and Confidentiality
Council
Personnel
Environmental
Equalities Impact Assessment
Health & Safety
Risk
Policy Review

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:

Total calls by type

| Type | Number | % |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-------|
| Repair Logged | 49738 | 28.07 |
| General Enquiry | 43290 | 24.43 |
| Transfer to other team | 25388 | 14.33 |
| Chase up - Repairs Team | 14359 | 8.10 |
| Rent Payment | 8231 | 4.64 |
| Rent Account Enquiry | 7307 | 4.12 |
| Gas Repair logged | 6546 | 3.69 |
| Chase up - Gas | 6523 | 3.68 |
| Comment | 2584 | 1.46 |
| External Contractors | 1282 | 0.72 |
| Planned Programmed Maintenance | 1095 | 0.62 |
| Arrears | 721 | 0.41 |
| Allocations | 677 | 0.38 |
| Home Decs | 540 | 0.30 |
| Complaint | 440 | 0.25 |
| Gardening Scheme | 264 | 0.15 |
| ASB | 150 | 0.08 |
| Gas Work | 148 | 0.08 |
| Compliment | 105 | 0.06 |
| Furnished Tenancies | 100 | 0.06 |
| CSM | 51 | 0.03 |
| Void work | 27 | 0.02 |
| Allocations and Voids | 9 | 0.01 |
| | | |
| Total where detail recorded | 169575 | |
| No detail recorded | 7,636 | |
| | | |
| Total calls | 177211 | |

Total calls by category

| Category | Number | % |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| Repair Logged | 49738 | 28.07 |
| Chase up - Repairs Team | 14359 | 8.10 |
| Gas Repair logged | 6546 | 3.69 |
| Chase up - Gas | 6523 | 3.68 |
| External Contractors | 1282 | 0.72 |
| Planned Programmed Maintenance | 1095 | 0.62 |
| Home Decs | 540 | 0.30 |
| Gas Work | 148 | 0.08 |
| Void work | 27 | 0.02 |
| | | |
| Total repairs calls | 80258 | 45.29 |
| | | |
| General Enquiries | 43290 | 24.43 |
| No detail recorded | 7,636 | 4.31 |
| | | |
| Total General Enquiries | 50926 | 28.74 |
| | | |
| Total transfers to other teams | 25388 | 14.33 |
| | | |
| Rent Payment | 8231 | 4.64 |
| Rent Account Enquiry | 7307 | 4.12 |
| Arrears | 721 | 0.41 |
| | | |
| Total rent payments and enquiries | 16259 | 9.17 |
| | | |
| Total Other | 4380 | 2.50 |
| | | |
| | | |