

LOCAL HOUSING BOARD SOUTH
17 JUNE 2010

ITEM A3

QUESTIONS TO THE LOCAL HOUSING BOARD SOUTH

We have promoted Questions for the Local Housing Boards through the last edition of Derby Homes News and at reception counters. We have received to date 12 questions for the Local Housing Board South and the answers are below. Each questioner will receive an individual written response, following this meeting.

From	Sadler
Area	Littleover
Question	When are they going to start work on Central heating (updated) As I've still got a 1940's radiator in my house that needs updating.
Answer	This property has a Baxi Bermuda back boiler and heating system. This type of boiler has not yet been included in our replacement heating programme. This type of boiler is still maintainable and repairable. We will contact the tenant when this type of boiler is included in our replacement heating programme. Unfortunately we cannot say when this will be included in our programme.

From	Brookes
Area	Alvaston
Question	Council flats should only be let to the over-forties, young and old don't mix and trees should be kept pruned more often leaving less mess in the Autumn to clean up with leaves.
Answer	Derby Homes has not written the Allocations Policy. The Allocations Policy is written by Derby City Council and as an arm's length management organisation, Derby Homes has to adhere to the policy when allocating properties. We are aware that Derby City Council is currently reviewing the policy and if changes are implemented in the future we will ensure we continue to allocate properties in line with any of these changes. Trees do shed leaves in Autumn and we can't stop this. We refer to Derby City Council's tree policy and are guided by this when we manage trees on land managed by Derby Homes. A

	Housing Officer will visit the people who have raised the question to see if they have any concerns about trees where they live and if work is required we will liaise with the tree surgeon.
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From	Jordan
Area	Allenton
Question	The park on Lord Street is a big problem with kids as they cause a lot of problems, with the ball going into the gardens, kids climbing on fences into the gardens, kids climbing on metal frames shouting, swearing, drugs etc. What are you going to do about it?
Answer	<p>We have not received any complaints regarding anti-social behaviour in or around this play area from residents. However, Derby Homes does carry out estate inspections and have found graffiti and damage to the boundary fencing. As a result of this we consulted residents to establish the use of this play area and to find out if the community still wanted this facility on Lord Street. The result of the consultation showed residents in favour of this facility staying in the area but they would like to see improvements. We have secured funding to improve the boundary fencing around the play area and the neighbouring properties, where consulted on this, are in favour of this improvement.</p> <p>We have made the Police aware of this complaint and they will look to include this area on their patrols. The Housing Officer has spoken to the tenant and asked her to report future incidents to us and the Police.</p> <p>The tenant wants the play area to be closed as she feels she has no privacy when in her back garden as these youths are able to look into her garden when they are on top of the fencing and basketball court cage.</p> <p>We have advised the tenant that Derby Homes carried out a survey last year and asked residents their thoughts on the play area. We advised her that the majority of residents wanted the play area to be improved. On the back of this, new metal fencing around the play area is being looked at in the hope of improving security, vandalism and graffiti. The tenant felt that these improvements would not help her privacy whilst she is in her back garden.</p> <p>We have asked the tenant if she would consider being a key holder for the park and lock the gate of an evening but she was</p>

	<p>unable to do this due to work commitments. She went on to say that if the gate was locked these youths would only jump over it.</p> <p>We have asked her if she is able to identify these individuals but she unable to this.</p> <p>The tenant has not reported anything to the police for over twelve months as she feels this is a waste of time. We have advised that she must report incidents to the police and make a record of incident numbers, as we meet regularly with them and can raise her concerns at these meetings.</p> <p>We have advised the tenant to speak to her neighbours and see if they will support her in the closure of the play area and to come back to if this is the case.</p> <p>During the door knock exercise residents didn't really raise any concerns about youths causing a problem in the play area. We will speak to the PCSO's and ask them to patrol the area but as the tenant has said that it's only "now and again" We can't ask them to target specific times etc.</p>
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From	Dieudopnne
Area	Austin
Question	Why does it take a long time to rehouse people who are desperate?
Answer	<p>We are unable to give a time frame on how long it takes to re-house a person.</p> <p>The current system works on a banding system, Emergency (the highest band), through to Band A, and B and C. Within the bands there are a number of needs that can be awarded.</p> <p>We currently allocate a percentage of properties to the following bands, 30% of properties go to the Emergency Band, 30% to Band A, 35% to Band B and 5% to Band C.</p> <p>So those people with the greatest number of re-housing needs within each Band come to the top of the list. We ask all applicants to let us know of any changes in their circumstances. If an applicant is unhappy with their banding they can ask the Local Housing Office to review it anytime.</p>

From	Hutchby
Area	Austin
Question	<p>It would be nice to see, small photos in the Derby Homes News of the regular staff we speak to on the phone at the Call Centre.</p> <p>The Derby Homes' staff are always polite. The young man I dealt with earlier in the year when we had the snow and my electric had a surge. He rang back in the afternoon to see if all was ok which was very good.</p>
Answer	<p>In theory, we would be happy to do this, but we would need the co-operation of Enquiry Centre staff to check whether they would be happy to take part in publicity. Not everyone is comfortable with this, and it's not something we'd force our employees to do if they weren't happy about the idea.</p> <p>However, we have consulted the Enquiry Centre team to identify which staff would be willing to take part in an article, for Derby Homes News. The majority of staff in the have said they are happy to have their photographs taken, so we will include an article in the next edition.</p>

From	Poole
Area	Alvaston
Question	<p>Why can't people who live next door be made to keep their gardens tidy as they have 3 dogs? As there is a lot of junk in it I am surprised that they don't have rats?</p>
Answer	<p>The Housing Manager has spoken to the tenant that has raised this complaint and advised that the Housing Officer will be in touch with her to discuss this complaint and will keep in touch with her until the garden is brought to a reasonable standard by her neighbour. It is a condition of tenancy that garden areas are kept to the reasonable satisfaction of the council.</p>

From	Young
Area	Austin
Question	Is it not possible to make council tenants or private owners keep their back gardens in order adjacent to another council tenant i.e. overgrown gardens which encroach onto another. property damaging fences etc
Answer	Yes it is possible to deal with tenants to get them to keep their back gardens in order. However to deal with private owners Derby Homes can only make a polite request but we have no legal powers to enforce.

From	Nyakudya
Area	Allenton
Question	<p>When I occupied the property the cupboards were old and greasy. I was told that new cupboards were going to be fitted in 2 years time. I have been here for 4 years, when are you going to fit the new kitchen cupboards?</p> <p>I reported a leak in the bathroom, the plumber fitted a new bath tub why is it that the leak in the bathroom is still persistent? How are you going to stop the leakage? Is it because you have put old tarted tiles with less gap? When is this problem going to be resolved?</p>
Answer	<p>The kitchen was fitted in 1995 making it 15 yrs old. We expect to get 20yrs life where possible suggesting we will not look at this property until 2015.</p> <p>In response to the enquiry the surveyor has now visited the property and explained to the resident that the kitchen is not programmed to be replaced until 2015. Some minor repairs were identified to the existing kitchen units and orders will be raised to rectify these faults.</p> <p>The leak to the bath appears to be caused by a section of loose ceramic tiling directly above the bath. These need to be replaced and the supply feeds to the bath checked to ensure there are no hidden leaks.</p> <p>The following remedial repairs have now been placed and this work will be completed by the 14 June 2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair plaster finishes to hall ceiling.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renew defective ceramic tiling above the bath • Renew mastic sealant to the bath. • Renew a small section of worktop in the kitchen area and adjust drawer to base unit and adjust door to adjoining base unit. • Investigate potential leak on water service to bath and repair as required. <p>Work will be checked on completion to ensure the customer is satisfied and repair issues resolved.</p>
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From	Spencer
Area	Chellaston
Question	Why don't we get a caretaker anymore, between Aston Close and Filbert Walk Chellaston it's covered in leaves paper bags and bottles and cans, the lads and girls drink and leave their rubbish lying around.
Answer	<p>The caretaker service was reviewed and restructured at the end of 2008.</p> <p>We now only have a team of 4 full time caretakers and 2 apprentices to cover the whole of the City.</p> <p>We respond to requests for service via the local office staff. Due to reduced staffing we now have to prioritise our workload and the vast majority of our work consists of the removal of fly tipping from our estates.</p> <p>However if requests are received for this type of work we will endeavour to respond as soon as workload allows. We only respond to requests for service on land managed by Derby Homes. Other area requests should be made through Derby Direct.</p>

From	Jackson
Area	Allenton
Question	When you decorate one room of a bungalow why don't you do all the rooms of the property?
Answer	<p>I am not sure if this referring to the Home Decoration Scheme or was a recently void (empty) property. We only do one room a year on the Home Decoration Scheme. We would normally decorate a bungalow at void stage, but may only do one room if the property was in good decorative order.</p> <p>As many of the tenants on this scheme are elderly or disabled and the properties are one bedroom bungalows/flats, it is not an ideal option to decorate throughout all in one visit, many of the tenants have a large amount of furniture/personal belongings meaning they have to empty one room into another, this also means that by completing one room per year the cost of the decoration is then kept to a minimum, spread throughout the year.</p>

From	Bates
Area	Osmaston
Question	<p>When Elton Road was resurfaced a few months ago, all residents received a letter saying that the pavement would be swept immediately and then again 7 days later - it hasn't been.</p> <p>The pavement is covered in grit and it's not acceptable. 87-103 Elton Road (come and have a look at it)</p>
Answer	Derby Homes is not responsible for maintaining the roads and pavements. However we have contacted Derby Direct who have advised that they will pass this complaint to Derby City Council Highways Department and ensure that the pavement is swept within the next few days.

From	Semiz
Area	Sunny Hill
Question	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why have other people had new doors, kitchens and security doors alarms and most of us down Sunny Hill have not? 2. I have lived in this house for 13 years and nothing has been done but other homes have been done.
Answer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This tenant moved in, in 1997 following a full modernisation. Therefore the kitchen is only 13 years old, we expect them to last at least 20yrs. 2. A burglar alarm is already installed at this property. 3. We are currently finishing off our window programme (2012) and once completed the investment will continue with our newly appointed Contractor to supply and fit composite doors to the rest of the City. If there is a problem with their door then an inspection could be arranged, the door should have two mortice bolts and a five lever lock, spy hole and security chain fitted.