

ESTATE MANAGEMENT PIT – ESTATES WALKABOUTS

Report of the Director of Housing and Customer Service

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

A Process Improvement Team (PIT) was set up in September 2008 to review Estate Management processes. The Audit Commission's Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) was used as a framework. The group, comprising tenants and staff, focused on reviewing estate inspections and walkabouts.

The recommendations of the Process Improvement Team are included in the body of this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Local Housing Board approves the Process Improvement Teams recommendations to improve estate inspections and walkabouts.

3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Estate Inspections

The existing Estate Inspection process relies on a one off evaluation that determines the frequency and priority of Estate Inspections. This is felt to be inadequate as it does not account for any changes brought about by intense Housing Management.

The Estate Management PIT discussed the existing process and recommended the following:

1. Estates will be inspected on a monthly basis as per the Tenants Top Ten Targets. The general areas identified by tenants as part of an estate inspection are as follows:
 - Overgrown/untidy gardens
 - Vandalism & Graffiti
 - Litter/fly tipping
 - Tenancy breaches
 - Condition of hard & soft landscape
 - Condition of void properties
 - Abandoned vehicles and illegal parking
2. Each Housing Officer patch will be evaluated on a quarterly basis, taking into account anything identified on the monthly inspections and subsequent actions to revise the priorities for inspection within that patch.

3. Each street will be evaluated using an appropriate scoring criteria resulting in streets being scored by a traffic light system. This will be reported back to each Local Housing Board and Housing Focus Group.
4. Evaluations will be carried out every 3 months by Housing Officers
5. Trials for this evaluation are currently ongoing around the scoring system. A further report will be brought to the April Local Housing Boards.

3.2 Evaluations of blocks of flats will be included in the process.

3.3 **Estate Walkabouts – Walk or Talk**

There are 29 Housing Officer patches throughout the city. Each patch has been split into 3 or 4 areas and each area has 2 walkabouts a year. Residents are invited to attend walkabouts via: Derby Homes News, the interactive website and by personal contact with key tenant activists.

Unfortunately, the walkabouts have very low take-up and on occasion, no residents attend at all. The Process Improvement Team considered all the issues that concerned residents which are summarised as follows:

1. Winter months are unpopular
2. There is a lack of consistency between housing offices.
3. Times and dates of walkabouts do not offer sufficient choice.
4. Attendees are unhappy because of poor feedback
5. Some residents do not want to or are unable to walk the estates.
6. Marketing of the events needs to be improved.

3.4 As a result the Process Improvement Team recommend the following:

1. Events should only take place during the summer months; April to September.
2. Marketing and publicity will improve, including promoting the events through Neighbourhood Teams.
3. Tenants will be consulted on the timings of the walkabouts to suit their circumstances.
4. Feedback will be in the form of a report, '**You said we did**' and sent to all attendees. Quarterly updates will be publicised in Derby Homes News and presented at Focus Groups. The Local Housing Boards will receive a summary report.
5. Housing Offices will give tenants the option of walking a patch or staying within a venue to discuss issues. Maps and proposed improvements or developments will be available for discussion.
6. Because tenants have an option to walk with us or talk with us, a new name is proposed 'Walk or Talk'.

4. **CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS**

The issues have been thoroughly discussed with the residents through Process Improvement Team.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

By regularly carrying out these evaluations it will provide us with up to date information on where we need to prioritise our resources to ensure we continue to improve the cleanliness, appearance and repair of our estates.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSEMENT

Offering a wider choice and opportunity will open the process to a more diverse group of tenants.

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

- Financial and Business Plan
- Legal and Confidentiality Implications
- Personnel Implications
- Health & Safety Implications

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