

### SERVICE UPDATE

Report of Heads of Service

#### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This is a joint report prepared by Heads of Service. The report provides Operational Board Members with a general overview and update on current issues.

#### 2 Housing Management – Lorraine Testro

- 2.1 Please refer to appendix 1.

#### 3. Finance and Income – Michael Kirk

##### 3.1 Income Management

##### 3.1.1 Current tenants' arrears - Update as of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022

As of Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022 (rent week 17) the current tenants rent arrears were £2,308,122. When compared with the position at the same time last year the current rent arrears were £2,025,166 so the current position is £282,956 more than last year. This increase is not at all unexpected.

We do expect the rent arrears to rise at this time of the year due to

- Historical seasonal trend
- Larger technical arrears
- Increasing number of tenants claiming Universal Credit
- Tenants facing financial hardship due to the current economic environment which appears to be worsening by the month.

We are aware the cost-of-living inflation crisis is likely to make things more difficult for tenants as the year progresses.

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 increase of £0.3m is approx. 0.5% of the annual £58m charged.

##### 3.1.2 Housing Support Fund

One of the government measures of support that has been provided over the last 6 months was the Housing Support Fund (administered by Derby City Council). Derby Homes is assisting tenants who are contacting us, in many cases struggling with rent payments, in claiming these funds by raising awareness and making applications (as a trusted partner) to support tenants who said they were struggling financially. On the

initial fund up to the end of March 2022 we estimate that over 2,000 tenants were assisted in claiming around £200k before the fund ran out. A further allocation of funds was made available in 2022/23 and up 3<sup>rd</sup> August there have been 3,026 referrals made and applications to the scheme totalling £317,600 (all claims not just Derby Homes). On 3<sup>rd</sup> August there was still funding for a further 2,580 awards.

In addition to this Officers have also been supporting tenants facing eviction by claiming from the Vulnerable Renters Fund where possible.

Money Advice and Welfare Rights advice continues to be available for tenants as well.

### 3.1.3 **Difficult to engage tenants**

Challenges continue in dealing with tenants who are not cooperating or engaging with us. However, the court situation is beginning to improve now, and more cases are being put forward because on non-payment of rent. 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 these 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 direct to us from the DWP. The APA's once in place only contribute to current rent costs. The arrears can be applied for from the DWP by what is called a "Direct Payments" for the tenants UC award, but payments will only be made if the UC claimant is left with a minimum level of UC to live on. We are seeing more and more cases where the request for a Direct Payments is rejected and / or is of a minimal amount towards the arrears, this is linked to minimum level left to live on, plus technical differences between UC for those in work and not in work.

### 3.1.4 **Evictions**

Last year there were only 4 evictions. We expected there to be more this year because of the very low numbers over the last two years. Since the start of April there has only been 3 evictions 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.

However, coming up to 6 months we have not seen this increase and now believe a lower outcome of around 12 to 15 evictions as a maximum number for the year. One of the reasons for this is the higher arrears we are carrying on rent accounts of Universal Credit claimants. In these cases, APAs are being applied for where we can avoid eviction warrants being requested.

### 3.1.5 **Universal Credit Impact on Current Arrears**

Last year there nearly 800 tenants moving over to Universal credit. We are averaging around an additional 14 Universal Credit switches each week. On 31<sup>st</sup> July we have 4,596 tenants on Universal Credit. Once they move over to universal credit then unless they takeout an advance it will be at least 5 weeks before they get the first payment and most likely 5 weeks before they pay their rent.

The Government have recently announced that the migration of legacy benefit claimants to universal credit is going to resume after it was suspended because of the pandemic. Pilots have recommenced around the country but the 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.

### 3.1.6 **Welfare Reform update**

After the tenfold increase in Universal Credit 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. Currently we have 4,596 tenants claiming Universal Credit. Around 66% of the expected 7,000 final number.

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 inform them of what they can do to make sure universal credit 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 Direct Payments to help our most vulnerable universal credit claimants and subsequently reduce the impact on rent arrears.

We also check eligibility for and apply if appropriate for the Single Discretionary Award (SDA) which consists of Council Tax Hardship (CTH) and Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). If they qualify for CTH then they may also qualify for Council Tax Support (CTS). Make applications to the Household Support Fund (HSF), apply for other hardship payments and vouchers.

Earlier this year, those UC claimants that were able to restrict their initial job search in their preferred sector, can now only do so for a maximum of 4 weeks. This was previously for up to 3 months. This could lead to claimants finding work quicker and/or lead to an increase in sanctions.

In March, we wrote to our 4,432 tenants in receipt of UC advising them on how to update their UC journal with details of their new rent from 4 April 2022. 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.

In July, we also wrote out to our tenants that are in receipt of UC and live in Derby Homes owned properties. Their rents increased from 25 July 2022. both exercises are now completed and those in receipt of UC are being paid appropriately.

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.

The DWP has begun sending out forced Migration Notices moving claimants from legacy benefits to universal credit (UC) in the Medway and Bolton areas.

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 onto UC 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, the vast majority of legacy benefits claimants will not be affected yet.

Claimants will have three months from the date on their Migration Notice letter to complete their claim for universal credit.

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.

It has just been announced that Harrow is the next location that 'manage migration' will be rolled out. The DWP revealed that 250 claimants in the London Borough of Harrow will receive 'migration notices' from 'mid-August'. The DWP do not expect to announce any more locations during the summer.

There is no further news on Derby's migration of existing legacy benefit claimants to Universal Credit. It could happen sometime during late 2022 or more likely 2023. The government expects to finish moving existing benefit and tax credit claimants onto Universal Credit by September 2024. However, the Budget Red Book now shows that date as March 2025.

### 3.1.7 **Universal Credit Statistics**

#### **Highlights of tenants on Universal Credit (UC)**

- 4,596 tenants on UC
- 51% of UC arrears cases on APA's (where DWP pay directly to Landlord the housing claim for weekly rent costs)
- 12% on Third Party Deductions (where a deduction from the UC claim is paid direct to Landlord to cover rent arrears)
- 1,031 tenants (22%) with no arrears or in credit on their rent account

<b>As at week ending 31 July 2022</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Gross Arrears</b>
UC singles	1,663	£687,184
UC couples *(includes 43 mac)	337	£114,157
UC families *(includes 4 mac)	2,596	£1,167,199
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,596</b>	<b>£1,968,540</b>
Gross UC arrears	3,565	£1,968,540
Cases with no arrears/credits	1,031	(£200,752)
Net UC arrears	4,596	£1,767,788
<b>Average arrears per UC Case</b> (£1,968,540 / 4,596)	<b>4,596</b>	<b>£428</b>
Average Weekly APA Payments since April	441	£168,017
Average Monthly APA Payments since April	1,874	£714,074
Number/Amount of Daily Alternative Payment Arrangements (APA) since April	7,494	£ 2,856,294
4-Weekly Third-Party Deductions (TPD) since April (includes 52 APA adjustments for £21,442)	1,916	£ 79,914
<b>Total APA + TPD</b> *mac (mixed age couples)	<b>9,410</b>	<b>£2,936,208</b>

## 3.2 **Derby Advice Update**

### 3.2.1 **2022/2023 performance measures**

Satisfaction levels with Derby Advice, by our customers, was 100% based on 79 completed customer surveys for quarter 1.

### 3.2.2 **Cost of Living**

We continue to offer benefit checks through our telephone advice line to help maximise our client's income.

We are acting as approved referrers to the Household Support Fund to help our clients access support in the form of vouchers towards food.

Community Action Derby is co-ordinating support for residents and its website provides an overview of the organisations who can help, including Derby Advice.

<https://www.communityactionderby.org.uk/crisis-support/help-with-the-cost-of-living>

### 3.2.3 **Welfare Rights team**

As mentioned in the previous update, Allan Reynolds, Welfare Rights Officer specialising in mental health, completed his successful "take up" campaign working with the Early Interventions Team. He now, along with his new job share Leanne Scaysbook, moves on to his next project which is alongside the Depot and Clozapine clinic. This clinic sees patients who either receive their mental health medication monthly via long-acting injection or attend for regular blood tests for monitoring purposes. Referrals have been coming through steadily and Allan and Leanne are working through these to try and identify any missing benefit entitlements. The main work so far has been around rates of personal independence payment and missing elements in employment and support allowance.

Amriaz Latif, our Welfare Rights Officer based in the community in the Normanton and Peartree area of the city, has returned to running his advice sessions at the Indian Community Centre in person. These run on a Tuesday morning by appointment only. The session is proving useful for those that require a face-to-face appointment for help with benefit form filling or advice on letters of entitlement.

### 3.2.4 **Money Advice**

#### *Job Centre Plus pilot*

We are in the process of setting up a surgery at the Council House whereby the Job Centre Plus book face-to-face money advice appointments for our mutual customers with a Money Advice Officer on a fortnightly basis. The process is to be piloted for 2-3 months to assess demand and take up.

### 3.2.5 *Derby Homes Financial Inclusion and Capability Action plan*

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

- We have requested that Derby City Council's allowable expenditure figures for the Single Discretionary Award for 2022/23 are updated part way through this financial year given the cost-of-living crisis

- We have been given an additional grant of £1610 from the Institute of Money Advisers (IMA) to help fund the cost of credit reports used when applying for Debt Relief Orders for customers.

### 3.3 **Accountancy & Accounts Payable Team**

The Accountancy team are currently preparing for the new external auditors, who are due on site in September.

Workshops are continuing alongside the Council with Technology one (new financial system from April 23), we've now moved onto the configuration stage of the implementation which includes the behind-the-scenes system administration processes as well as the front-end processing outcomes. The project continues to be on track for April 2023. Alongside this the work is still continuing on the interface requirements from Open Housing rents, a second meeting with Capita has taken place to iron out errors/misinterpretations following the first round of testing and testing is still continuing following the changes.

The team are also working on the 2021/22 Housemark benchmarking return.

#### 3.3.1 **Rental Control**

The team are currently focusing on testing the new direct debit (DD) module in V17.4 of Open Housing (OH) and testing the new rents module due to go live in Autumn 2022. We continue to look at the options of introducing paperless direct debit forms for tenants. Capita have been asked to look at the point at bank details are entered into OH when setting up a DD to allow for a telephone set up option. Capita are also working on Online DD (Bank Instruction only) option.

#### 3.3.2 **Leasehold**

The team are currently collecting the data and preparing the actual service charges for the year, these will be finalised in September.

They have also been involved in preparing a Major Works Repayment Policy, this has also included a consultation with the leaseholders to gain their views on the proposal.

### 3.4 **IT Project Team update.**

#### 3.4.1 **One Housing Transition**

The pre-requisite upgrade testing is progressing well. One Housing now tentatively planned for summer 2023.

#### 3.4.2 **Repairs Diagnostic**

A new repairs diagnostic solution has been deployed into Test. Significant work is underway in configuring this new solution. In the longer term the new system will draw heavily from known information within the Housing Management system to provide a more intelligent and customised journey for both customers logging repairs online and for the Customer Services team.

### 3.4.3 **Financial Management System integration**

A new Financial Management System interface with Open Housing has been written and is currently being tested. The new interface will remove some of the existing manual steps required in the existing integration and will provide better 'built in' reporting.

### 3.4.4 **Mobile Void Inspections**

This is now fully Live, will be handed over to IT Support in September.

### 3.4.5 **LLPG**

A reload of the LLPG address data was attempted in July in Test however this didn't produce the desired outcome, further configuration changes have been made and another attempt is now planned for early September. Adoption of the LLPG addresses will enable better insight into service utilisation across Derby Homes and Derby City Council and all systems will use the same references for properties.

### 3.4.6 **Energy Data**

Derby Homes is in discussion with suppliers regarding integrating modelling tools (into Open Housing) that will allow us to determine which property improvements best support the decarbonisation agenda on an individual property by property basis.

## 3.5 **War Memorial / Imari Park shortlisting**

A simple but bespoke application and shortlisting process has been built into Open Housing to provide robust auditable shortlisting for both War Memorial and Imari Park properties. War Memorial properties will also be advertised online to raise their profile. This is currently in the User Acceptance Testing (UAT) phase within the service area.

## 4. **Capital Works – Ian Yeomans**

- 4.1 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 26 August 2022 – Figures included in this report based on that date).

### 4.2 **Estates Maintenance**

#### 4.2.1 **Grounds and Garden Maintenance**

The Grounds Maintenance Team commenced the cutting of grass to the 325 communal areas on the 15th March 2022, with the 6th cycle of mowing, completed 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 15th March. 2022, with the 7th cycle of gardening visits complete and the 8th 46% at the time of writing. Progress on both workstreams is updated weekly through an activity programme supplied by Streetpride to the Estates Maintenance Team.

### 4.3 **Estates Pride Programme 22/23 – Update**

## Proposals

- 4.3.1 Capital Budget - The decision of the Operational Board on 9th December 2021 was that all £250,000 Capital Budget to be expended on installing hardstandings. Key features of the programme are:
- 50% carried out by Streetpride - Works commenced May 2022
  - 50% carried out by McCabe Civils - Works commenced July 2022
  - Delivery split due to limitations in Streetpride's capacity to deliver.
- 4.3.2 Revenue Budget - Well Managed Highways Revenue Budget (other than small areas Well Managed Highways Revenue Budget (other than small areas). 150,000 of resurfacing will be programmed & completed by Streetpride.
- 4.3.3 Summary of Budget
- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| • Hardstandings – Stream 1 – Streetpride         | £125,000        |
| • Hardstandings – Stream 2 – McCabe Civils       | £125,000        |
| • Resurfacing of Car Parking Areas – Streetpride | <u>£150,000</u> |
|  | <b>£400,000</b> |

### Works delivered to date

- 4.3.4 Hardstandings
- Completed – 22Nr / Cost: **£84,000**
  - Programmed – 62Nr ( September:18Nr / October:11Nr / November:22Nr / January:11Nr)
  - Hardstandings programmed in January are those subject to Planning Permission)
- 4.4.5 Well Managed Highways
- Completed – Access road and car park adjacent to 21 to 31 Berwick Avenue - **£28,000**
  - Programmed – Works to various sites ( Wiltshire Rd / Nairn Ave / Shetland Close / Kinross Ave / Maine Drive / Mundy St / Second Ave). Works to be carried out October through November following the conclusion of any leaseholder / resident consultation.

## 4.5 Capital Works Team

### In House Team and Local Sub Contractors

- 4.5.1 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.

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

- 4.5.2 **Acquired Properties Work** – The CWT continues to focus on turning around large-scale refurbishments of passive voids and newly acquired homes. During Quarter 2 of 22/23, a further 15Nr properties are being refurbished.
- 4.5.3 **Bute Walk** – In November the Team will commence work to convert a disused care home to six apartments including considerable alterations to the internal layout, elevations and external works.
- 4.5.4 **Kitchen / Bathroom / Wet Rooms / Adaptations Works in Occupied Properties** – All workstreams are well underway, working in occupied properties, delivering the 2022/23 programme.
- 4.6 **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 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.

#### 4.6.1 **Delivery - External Main Contractors**

##### **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). Works Stream 1 is currently out to tender. Target Start on Site – Quarter 3/4, 22/23. Project Management through Arcus.

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.

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"><li>• Tree protection – Completed.</li><li>• Sustainable drainage strategy required – GCA completed.</li><li>• Biodiversity enhancement report required – Being completed.</li></ul>
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. Existing Garages on site demolished. Subject to several conditions. Full design development in progress.

## **Work Stream 2**

Address	Units	Project Managed by	Notes / Procurement Route
Grange Avenue	37 Bungalows	DH ARCUS Consulting	Design Planning Permission granted on 22.07.22. Subject to seventeen planning conditions. Full design development in progress. <u>Procurement</u> Appointment of a second Regional Contractor through tendered Mini Competition through EN Procure New Build Framework. Target Start on Site – Quarter 4 22/23. Project Management through Arcus.

## **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 – Initial event held early October 2021 with all options considered. Stage 2 – Feedback provided to all residents and focus consultation to further investigate favoured options – February 2022. Stage 3 – Open Day event held on 13 <sup>th</sup> through 15 <sup>th</sup> September 2022 to further explore new build / refurbishment options with residents.

### **4.7 Planned Maintenance Team**

The Planned Maintenance Team continues to project manage 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:

- 4.7.1 Re-roofing Works (Budget £2.4 million) – Our contractors, JAL Roofing and Avonside Roofing have completed three schemes, Cowsley Phases 7 through 9, replacing roof coverings and installing solar panels. These schemes straddled the 21/22 and 22/23 financial years.  
In August, JAL Roofing commenced works at Winster Road on Cowsley Phase 10 (Value £490,000) and in September will start work at Benson Street on Alvaston Phase 1 (Value £790,000). JAL Roofing are the principal contractor on the recently procured Roofing Framework. Both projects will be completed by March 2023.
- 4.7.2 Replacement External Doors & Windows (Budget £1.5 million) – Our contractor, Nationwide are mainly upgrading external doors and frames across the City, throughout the year.
- 4.7.3 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.

Derby Homes is currently preparing a bid for SHDF – Wave 2 funding which will afford the opportunity to upgrade the remaining approximately 120Nr. cast iron houses properties in Allenton. Closing date for submitting the bid is mid November 2022.

In addition, securing ECO 4 grant funding for energy efficiency improvements via our contractor partner, Westville, will enable us to carry out energy efficiency works, primarily external wall insulation, to 42 flats at Knightsbridge, Mackworth Estate. Works have commenced and are to be completed by December 2022.

Our contractor, Westville, are contracted to carry out the majority of these works, on both sites.

4.7.4 Redecoration Works – Internally (Budget £300,000) – As part of the Home Decoration Scheme, to be delivered by our contractor, Buxton Decorators.

4.7.5 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.

## 5 Repairs – Steve Bayliss

### 5.1 Day to Day

At the end of the first quarter of the financial year 2022/23, performance in terms of 'repairs completed in time' is as follows:

- Emergencies – 100%
- Very urgent works – 99.38%
- Urgent works – 96.48%
- Routine works – 87.19%
- Planned works – 73.3%

Performance up until the end of the first quarter 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 below target with routine and planned works being well below the 99% target.

Given the performance levels we have looked into each work area to see what resources are available from EEM frameworks, DH frameworks, currently used contractors and finally agency workers.

We have explored and will continue to explore any opportunities for Derby Homes to source additional support in order to achieve a more satisfactory performance levels on our Routine and Planned works.

Despite continued 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 98.32% up until the end of the first quarter. We have sent out 10283 surveys with a total of 233 customers

being dissatisfied. This was made up of customers who were dissatisfied with either the Day to Day, Gas and Electrical teams or that we have not been able to contact.

When we have been successful in 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 first quarter realising £10929.88

It does appear that job numbers reported are starting to stabilise compared to last year and with additional resources in place plus internal changes to the team our expectation is performance should improve. The issues have been exacerbated though by the sheer number of jobs in the system. Once these start to reduce turnaround times for longer priorities are expected to improve.

An area of concern though is the number of no accesses we have despite making appointments and sending texts. This is approaching a third of all appointable jobs. Clearly this has an impact on both how long we take in getting to jobs and has obvious cost implications. We are currently looking at ways we can reduce this figure to a more reasonable level.

## 5.2 Voids

With a relatively smooth start to this financial year 2022/23 there has been a significant improvement in performance with pleasing results.

In the first quarter the voids team completed 159 properties consisting of, 128 active voids, 31 passive voids with 36 temporary accommodation properties, compared to 216 properties in total in the last financial year. The active voids work turnaround time has improved from 21.8 days last financial year to 14.6 days this financial year. This will continue to improve for the remaining of this financial year as new measures that have been put in place to manage the team's performance. The downturn in voids numbers may also have contributed to the improved voids performance which we will continue to monitor moving forward.

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 has been showing good signs of improvements with information sharing.

The repairs team 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 confident that with the new measures now in place that void performance will continue to improve moving forward. We are also working with colleagues and the voids team trades to improve the quality of the void works to ensure all properties meet or exceed the lettable standard.

### 5.3 **Gas Team**

The first quarter of this year has remained a challenge for the gas team with engineers leaving and a high sickness rate, plus an increase with Covid related absences. However, through extensive perseverance and the dedication of all the staff within the gas department we have managed to keep on track by bringing in sub-contractors to make up the shortfall.

We ended the quarter with 12,476 properties having a certificate less than one year old. This means there were 38 properties with a certificate over 12 months old which equates to 99.69% compliance. Although this is an increase in certificates over one year old, we are continuing to make efforts to gain access to these properties working with colleagues and other departments where appropriate. In line with gas regulations we are compliant in that all reasonable efforts have been made to service properties within the anniversary date.

We are concerned though that one of the primary reasons for the increase in certificates over a year old is that we are visiting customers with a debt on their gas metre which means we are unable to service the property. We are currently looking at solutions to solving this problem.

The government has recently introduced legislation in that all rented accommodation should be fitted with carbon monoxide alarms. This means all homes with gas will need one or two CO alarms depending on appliances within the property. We have currently around 4000 properties with CO alarms and a programme is in place to complete all remaining homes.

### 5.4 **Electrical Team**

The Electrical Team have started this year strongly, ending the first quarter with 99.91% of properties having an in date Electrical Inspection Condition Report. Derby Homes work on a 5 year cycle, the current statutory requirement is a 10 year servicing requirement therefore Derby Homes are compliant.

To translate, 12,783 homes have received a satisfactory Electrical Safety Check with only 11 properties unfortunately overdue. The 11 homes that are overdue are all complex circumstances and we are working collaboratively with the relevant parties and colleagues to find a solution.

This financial year the team have completed 555 Electrical Safety Checks and 88 major repairs identified following the tests.

The Electrical Team have also continued to invest in upgrading our electrical installations across the city which includes completing 176 Consumer Unit upgrades incorporating new non-combustible equipment to improve fire safety and completing 111 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.

We are currently testing and fitting an electronic notice board at Pine Court. We believe this will provide our customers with important and relevant information and be updated more regularly than a standard notice board. This also contributes to net zero

de-carbonisation targets. Following successful trials we will be looking to install more across the city during this financial year.

## 5.5 Disrepair

We continue to face challenges from the number of disrepair cases we are receiving. Currently disrepair solicitors are paying canvassers to cold call estates throughout the country including Derby. During quarter one we received 17 new cases and 1 under the Environmental Protection Act for a mice infestation.

However, where reasonable to do so we do defend cases and during the quarter we paid out £995 in compensation and £1010 in legal fees.

We are currently looking at ways we can help our customers particularly through the increasingly difficult cost of living crisis. One way we are doing this is looking at how technology can help by way of using data loggers. These small devices can advise tenants of the need to increase ventilation or heating where possible and warn of conditions that may likely cause condensation and mould. It would also be an indication to us if property repairs are required such as damp problems.

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

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

For more information please contact:

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Background information: None

List of appendices Appendix 1 - Housing Management update

This report has been approved by the following

Managing Director	Maria Murphy Taran Lalria	09/09/2022 13/09/2022
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