

Agenda for Housing Review Board

Thursday, 15 January 2015; 6.00pm



[Members of the Committee](#)

Venue: Council Chamber, Knowle, Sidmouth, EX10 8HL

[View directions](#)

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- 1 [Public speaking](#)
- 2 Minutes for 6 November 2014 (pages 3 - 8)
- 3 Apologies
- 4 [Declarations of interest](#)
- 5 [Matters of urgency](#) – none identified
- 6 To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including press) have been excluded. There are no items that officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.

Part A Matters for Decision

- 7 **Housing Review Board forward plan** (pages 9 - 10)
Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
- 8 **Housing Revenue Account draft budget 2015/16** (pages 11 - 18)
Plus Appendix A - Budget Book Statements
Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
- 9 **Financial Monitoring Report** (pages 19 - 27)
Plus Appendix A - Revenue Budget Monitoring 2014/2015 and
Appendix B - HRA Business Plan Operating Account
Housing Accountant
- 10 **Housing Service Plan** (pages 28 - 44)
Plus Appendix A - Service Planning 2015/16
Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
- 11 **Standardised Tenants and Residents (STAR) Survey Results** (pages 45 - 47)
Information & Analysis Officer supported by presentation from BMG Research
- 12 **The future of support services at East Devon District Council** (pages 48 - 79)
Plus Appendix A – Tenants Consultation Results and
Appendix B - notes from the Supported Housing Review Group meeting
Landlord Services Manager

- 13 **Men's Shed proposal** (pages 80 - 91)
Tenants and Communities Manager
- 14 **Community Development update** (pages 92 - 94)
Tenants and Communities Manager
- 15 **Devon Home Choice policy update** (pages 95 - 103)
Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
- 16 **Gas Safety checks – access procedure** (pages 104 - 112)
Plus Appendix A - Gas Safety & Servicing Procedures and
Appendix B - Annual Servicing Procedure
Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
- 17 **Fire Risk Assessments** (pages 113 - 116)
Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
- 18 **Dampness eradication programme** (pages 117 - 118)
Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
- 19 **Annual Report to Tenants** (pages 119 – 126)
Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment

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[Decision making and equalities](#)

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EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Housing Review Board held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 6 November 2014

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 7.30pm

***41 Public Speaking**

Victor Kemp read a statement to the Board stating that GPs should make a recommendation of support for housing allocations applicants. Dennis Boobier, Housing Needs & Strategy Manager responded on behalf of the Board and stated that the Exeter Health and Wellbeing panel did not have a GP member but did have social workers, health practitioners and occupational therapists. They review health needs with property needs; it was about the impact of the property on health ground issues not the actual health of the person themselves. In most cases common sense prevailed; bias could arise if a medical person was on the panel as health would be their priority over the property. He did not think that setting up a Task & Finish Forum was necessary. Comments from the Board were that they did have a representative on the Health and Wellbeing panel and it was recommended retaining the status quo. It was suggested the Panel ought to look at long-term needs of people needing assessment and to respond to these in the future.

Cllr Elson, Portfolio Holder – Sustainable Homes and Communities reminded the Board of the lack of two bedroom properties for live-in carers and large hospital equipment required by the patient - often meaning they was no room for anyone else to use or even get into the bedroom. She agreed the situation needed looking into long-term. The Housing Needs & Strategy Manager stated that the Devon Home Choice Board were reviewing the health and wellbeing criteria in the Devon Home Choice Policy. He would give an update at a future meeting.

***42 Minutes**

The minutes of the Housing Review Board meeting held on 4 September 2014 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

***43 Declarations**

Mike Berridge

Personal Interest - Family member lives in a Council owned property; Housing tenant.

Douglas Hull

Personal Interest - Sister lives in Council owned property.

Rob Finch

Prejudicial interest - Agenda items 17 & 18 works for Devon & Cornwall Housing

Joyce Ebborn

Personal Interest - Housing tenant

John Powley

Personal Interest - Housing tenant

Pat Rous

Personal Interest - Housing tenant

***44 Exclusion of the Public**

RESOLVED:

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including press) have been excluded. There were two items that officers recommended should be dealt with in Part B.

***45 Housing Review Board forward plan**

The Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment presented the forward plan and advised Members that the forward plan would help act as a reminder of agenda items to come forward to future meetings.

RESOLVED:

that the forward plan be noted.

***46 Financial Monitoring report**

The Board was presented with a summary of the overall financial position on the Housing Revenue Account, HRA Capital Programme and the Business Plan for 2014/15 at the end of month six (September 2014).

Regular monitoring was intended to highlight any areas of concern or unforeseen expenditure in the HRA and associated capital programme, enabling corrective action to be taken as required. Any variances would be reflected in the Business Plan. There are currently no areas of concern.

A large proportion of the Capital spend would be on the new IT software system. The Right to Buy fund had been bolstered by the sales of 15 Right to Buy properties and 1 garage so far this year.

Current monitoring indicated that:

- The Housing Revenue Account Balance would be maintained at or above the adopted level and currently shows a surplus of £4.7m
- The position on the HRA Business Plan remained healthy.

RESOLVED:

That the variances identified as part of the HRA revenue and capital monitoring process up to month six be acknowledged.

47 Review of Asbestos Procedures

Dennis Boobier, Housing Needs & Strategy Manager highlighted key points from his report. In March 2011 Members agreed the Council's revised Asbestos Policy and Procedures. This document had been revised further to reflect good practice and was presented to Members for approval. The information held about asbestos in the Council's housing stock was being updated through the asbestos 'management' surveys carried out on each void property. The survey results of each void property could be shared with similar properties of the same size, build type and build date in the same street/location.

Members of the Board had previously agreed to undertake a Demolition and Refurbishment Survey in place of the Management Survey, where necessary and additional funds had been approved for this purpose. Outcomes identified were that annual reviews of properties where asbestos materials was known to exist were not being carried out; of the 3000 properties on the housing database, 75% have some form of asbestos material. This is a requirement of Health and Safety legislation and action must be taken to ensure that this was carried out. Members were asked to approve the appointment of 1 x FTE new member of staff to undertake this work.

RECOMMENDED:

Members agreed approval for an additional FTE post to undertake the annual review of council properties where asbestos materials were known to exist in accordance with current legislation.

***48 Handy Person Scheme**

The Board was asked to consider the principle of introducing a Handy Person Scheme for day-to-day repairs and minor works that are the tenant's responsibility. It was proposed that the Board set up a time limited Task and Finish Forum (TAFF) to develop the scope and key criteria for a Handy Person Scheme. The Board agreed to this TAFF made up of the following members:

Cllr Stott, Cllr Drew, Cllr Bond, Joyce Ebborn, John Powley, Pat Rous and 1 support officer from the housing team.

Discussions included the following:

- Service to be more than just a repair scheme – responsive repairs normally undertaken by a contractor. Operatives would be the 'eyes and ears' of the housing service as would report back other repair issues.
- How other schemes are run; with some of these being free of charge to the tenant.
- TaFF could consider how best to provide the service, such as if the handy person was a dedicated employee, or a contractor but managed by the housing service.
- Exmouth Town Hall has a similar scheme that does light jobs for free – the Housing Needs & Strategy Manager would look into how this scheme operates.

RESOLVED:

that a Task and Finish Forum be set up to develop the concept of a Handy Person Scheme and to propose a local scheme approved by the HRB.

49 Tenant Inspectors

The Board was asked to consider whether or not to introduce tenant inspectors for day-to-day repair maintenance service to help manage the quality of workmanship by the Council's contractors, and to better understand tenant satisfaction with the service.

Discussions included the following:

- Initial inspections would be to look at void properties, including improvements to kitchens and bathrooms and compliance with the void standard.
- Not every repair would be inspected as it would be too time consuming.
- If a tenant was dissatisfied with any work the inspector would be called in.
- Experience from the Mid Devon scheme would be reviewed and taken into account.

RECOMMENDED:

that the introduction of tenant inspectors for the Council's repair service be recommended for approval in principal.

***50 Older Persons Targeted Support**

Sue Bewes, Landlord Services Manager gave an update to the Board on the position regarding the impact of the termination of Devon County Council (DCC) Supporting people contract and options for the future of the Council's support service for sheltered housing residents. The service was in the process of conducting tenant consultations with over 400 people having already attended a roadshow session. Initial results showed that 109 tenants preferred option 1 (charging all customers) and 211 tenants preferred option 2 (an enhanced management service plus the opportunity to buy more support hours). The Landlord Services Manager thanked Cllr Peter Sullivan who came to the Sidmouth consultation and helped with initial questions raised at the start about issues affecting local government in general. Some of the comments already received during the consultation were shared with the Board.

A full report will be presented to the Board in January and would be looking for the recommendation to start from 1 April 2015.

Pat Rous thanked Sue and her team for the help and support in this matter as well as thanking Cllr Jill Elson for providing information to the press.

RESOLVED:

that the contents of the report be noted.

***51 Home Safeguard activity report**

Amy Gilbert, Support Services Manager gave an update on the work of the Home Safeguard team due to changes to the service. It had been a challenging year especially the implementation of the new Operator working rota that changed staff times of work; this had led to some staff leaving. The new team was now in place and working well with a day team and a night team, set up to meet customer demand. Devon County Council cuts would affect Home Safeguard but the team was ready for these challenges.

There had been good marketing feedback on the new logo and publications with lots of talks with community groups. There is already an increase in business for installations and October was a record month with the highest number of installations for quite some time.

The Home Safeguard team had passed another Telecare Services Association (TSA) accreditation for the fourth year in a row and was now accredited to 2016; subject to a further successful annual inspection in 2015. The TSA accreditation provided a 'health check' in all areas of the service with particular focus on speed of response and customer satisfaction.

John Golding, Strategic Lead – Housing Health and Environment thanked Amy Gilbert, Sue Bewes, and Sue Hodges for the new rota and the continuous 24/7 service provided. They ensured the service is always covered, sometimes at very short notice and sometimes covering shifts themselves. The Chairman asked that the team be nominated for a 'bouquet' in the next Team Brief on behalf of the Housing Review Board. Cllr Jill Elson congratulated the whole Home Safeguard and Housing teams. The Chairman gave her support for this growing scheme and said it was a great comfort to many people knowing someone was there.

Discussions included the following:

- Concerns over County Council cuts to support services and hope that officers could cover these challenges.

The Support Services Manager intended to seek further corporate contracts to see if these could generate extra income.

John Golding reported that next year's budget was a challenge and was being prepared. He intended for the draft budget to be cost neutral for the Home Safeguard team. This process would be presented at the next meeting. Any revised charges should be kept affordable, and with a flow of new people accessing this is a strong demonstration of need for the service.

RESOLVED:

that the changes in the Home Safeguard work plan as set out in the report be approved.

***52 Right to Move consultation**

The Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment presented a report from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) who were consulting on proposals to give social housing tenants a right to move to take up a job offer or to live closer to employment or training. He advised that the Government may impose targets. Cllr Jill Elson stated that as a council this was already the practice but recognised the shortfall of suitable affordable rented properties would make the process difficult. If changes are made to national guidance on allocations, this will be reflected in our Devon Home Choice scheme.

RESOLVED:

that the proposals in the consultation paper on Right to Move be noted.

***53 Tenants Leading Change**

The Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment updated the Board on the DCLG Tenants Leading Change initiative, promoting tenant involvement and its benefits to the delivery of improved services. He added that the Council had good examples of this, including tenant scrutiny and mystery shoppers. John Golding thanked Pat Rous for being on all interviews for HRA staffing and quoted this as another example of good practice.

RESOLVED:

that the report on Tenants Leading Change be noted.

***54 Exclusion of the public**

RESOLVED:

that under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt and private information (as set out against each Part B agenda item), is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing the items in private session (Part B).

55 Danby House/Exebank – DCC updated proposals

Members were asked to view correspondence between DCC and the Council regarding proposals over the future of these two DCC owned properties. The Board was asked to support an 'in principle' offer to purchase subject to contract, surveys, further investigations etc.

RECOMMENDED:

that the opportunity to acquire the site be progressed.

***56 Submission of Offers – Manstone Depot, Sidmouth**

As part of the office relocation project the Council had appointed Savills to market Manstone Depot and the Knowle. The Manstone Depot site was considered to be of a suitable size and location consistent with the Council's ambitions for own build and therefore an offer subject to contract has been submitted.

RESOLVED:

that the offer submitted for the purchase of Manstone Depot, Sidmouth be noted.

Attendance list

Present:

Cllr Pauline Stott (Chairman)
Cllr Susie Bond
Cllr Christine Drew
Cllr Douglas Hull

Co-opted tenant members:

Mike Berridge (Vice Chairman)
Pat Rous
Joyce Ebborn
John Powley

Co opted independent community representatives:

Rob Finch,

Also present:

Cllr Jill Elson, Portfolio Holder – Sustainable Homes and Communities

Tenant Scrutiny Panel

Jose Ireland
Eric Howard

Officers

John Golding, Strategic Lead - Housing, Health and Environment
Dennis Boobier, Housing Needs & Strategy Manager
Sue Bewes, Landlord Services Manager
Jane Reading, Tenant & Communities Section Leader
Amy Gilbert, Support Services Manager
Giles Salter, Solicitor
Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer

Apologies:

Julie Adkin
Harry Roberts
Cllr Steph Jones

Chairman Date.....

HOUSING REVIEW BOARD – FORWARD PLAN

This forward plan identifies reports and other agenda items for future meetings of the Housing Review Board. It is also intended to assist agenda management and act as a reminder of items to come forward to future meetings.

Report title	Meeting date	Author
Housing Service Plan	January 2015	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Housing Revenue Account draft budget 2015/16	January 2015	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Changes to support services	January 2015	Landlord Services Manager
Devon Home Choice policy update	January 2015	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Gas Safety checks – access procedure	January 2015	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Fire Risk Assessments	January 2015	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Dampness eradication programme	January 2015	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results	January 2015	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Men’s Shed proposal	January 2015	Landlord Services Manager
Community Development update	January 2015	Landlord Services Manager
Annual Report to tenants	January 2015	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Benchmarking survey results	March 2015	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Property acquisitions update	March 2015	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Quarterly performance reports and regular report		
Responsive repairs	Quarterly report	Asset and Property Manager
Letting of Council homes/voids	Quarterly report	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Devon Home Choice	Quarterly report	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Rent management	Quarterly report	Landlord Services Manager
Systems Thinking leading & lagging measures New Tenants Survey	Quarterly report	Head of Housing
Forward Plan	Every meeting	Head of Housing

Formal Complaints	Annual report	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Benchmarking survey	Annual report	Head of Housing
Evaluating the achievements of the Board	Annual report	Head of Housing

Board Members can propose agenda items during meetings/debates that can be included on the Forward Plan for future meetings, or outside the meetings with the agreement of the Chairman and Vice chairman.

Report to: **Housing Review Board**

Date of Meeting: 15 January 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None



Agenda item: 8

Subject: **Draft Housing Revenue Account 2015/16**

Purpose of report: This report provides the Housing Review Board with details of the draft Housing Revenue Account for 2015/16. This account shows the main areas of anticipated income and expenditure on landlord activities for the year ahead. Producing a Housing Revenue Account has been a statutory requirement for Councils who manage and own their housing stock, and therefore a key document for the Board to influence.

2012/13 saw the major reform to social housing finance and a move to self-financing, which involved the Council taking on debt rather than paying a subsidy to government from tenants' rents. As a result we are showing a healthy HRA balance going into the new financial year. The budget has been produced in accordance with our Housing Revenue Account Business Plan assumptions.

The Council has a timetable for the production of its budgets for 2015/16, which involves the development of draft estimates and scrutiny by various member and officer groups. This report presents an opportunity for the Housing Review Board to input into this process.

Recommendation: **The Housing Review Board is invited to approve the report on the 2015/16 Housing Revenue Account and recommend it to Cabinet.**

Reason for recommendation: To give the Housing Review Board an involvement opportunity to contribute towards the development of the main housing service budget.

Officer: John Golding Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment – jgolding@eastdevon.gov.uk

Tel: 01395 517567

Financial implications: These are included in the report.

Legal implications: -----

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk

Links to background information: www.eastdevon.gov.uk/business_plan_hra_2014

Link to Council Plan: Living in this outstanding place

Report in full

1 Housing Revenue Account for 2015/16

- 1.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is the landlord account and is a statutory account that is operated by all local authorities that own and manage their own housing stock. The account must be maintained in surplus and cannot go into a deficit position. The HRA sets a financial context for the operation of the Council's landlord service and now demonstrates some of the flexibilities we enjoy and considerable freedom from central government control.
- 1.2 The HRA has to be set out and operated in accordance with prescribed regulations. This means that it is not particularly easy to understand and interpret, and is usually prepared by our specialist Housing Accountant. The draft 2015/16 HRA is shown as **Annex 1** and will eventually appear, possibly in a modified form, in the Council's revenue budgets alongside the General Fund and Capital Plan. We have included a series of notes which explain the main variations from the 2014/15 HRA budget.
- 1.3 Our annual HRA is underpinned and influenced by a 30 year HRA Business Plan (updated September 2014), which was a requirement of the housing stock options appraisal, and is intended to demonstrate that the Council can afford to maintain and manage its housing stock to an acceptable standard over the long term. The HRA Business Plan considers income and expenditure over a 30-year period based upon known stock condition data, tenant aspirations, projections on staff costs, inflation and interest payments. The draft budget is closely aligned to the HRA Business Plan.
- 1.4 This Board is charged with keeping under review the options for the future ownership and management of the housing stock. I would suggest that the financial environment that we work in (including Welfare Reform) is likely to be one of the main influences on our thinking in respect of options other than the Council retaining the housing stock 'in-house'. We made the change to the self-financing regime in April 2012 which involved the Council taking on a share of the national housing debt (£84.4 million).
- 1.5 We have created East Devon Homes as a business unit of the Council charged with providing landlord services for EDDC tenants. We are in a good position to maintain and improve the housing stock to a good standard and employ staff resources to deliver an excellent housing service. You will recall from the benchmarking work we have undertaken that we are lean when compared to many similar sized housing organisations and relatively high performing. Current projections suggest an improving financial picture for the HRA now that we have left the subsidy based system.
- 1.6 We have funded the acquisition of new homes in Exmouth from the HRA and retained Right to Buy receipts during 2014/15 without the need to borrow to finance the purchase. We have made no specific provision for new build or acquisitions in 2014/15, although a nominal budget of £30,000 has been included for feasibility work, and will present site specific proposals as and when they arise together with a statement on the financial impact.
- 1.7 The HRA is presented in a familiar format that shows a summary with a breakdown of income then a range of expenditure items grouped under headings for repairs (day to day, annual, cyclical and improvements), supervision and management (essentially direct and support staff costs with premises, transport etc), other expenditure and major repairs.
- 1.8 It can be seen from the draft 2015/16 HRA budget that income from rents and other charges amounts to an estimated £18.1 million. This assumes an average 2.44%

increase in Council home rents, in line with the government's rent convergence formula, and a 1% increase in garage rents. This will make our average rent £81.93 per week in 2015/16. The income figures include our estimation of support charges income which will replace the Supporting People income previously received from Devon County Council (supporting people income was shown under Supervision & Management Special).

- 1.9 The major areas of expenditure are various repairs and maintenance activities - £9.2 million; Staffing, supervision and management costs (general) - £4.8 million; and the interest and principal repayments on PWLB loans - £3.58 million. This replaces the HRA subsidy where we paid £6 million in 2011/12 to the Treasury.
- 1.10 From the draft HRA you can see planned expenditure on repairs and improvements under the section headed Major Repairs (Major Repairs Account) - £4,996,000, other expenditure - £283,160 and, under the section Repairs and Maintenance, responsive maintenance - £1,908,000, annual programme maintenance - £832,000, cyclical maintenance - £155,000 and Repairs and Maintenance special works - £1,020,690.
- 1.11 The budget page on Supervision and Management shows the staffing and associated costs. You can see that Housing Revenue Account employees cost £2,194,320 per annum, with a lesser amount (£1,094,010) for support services. It is estimated that £437,910 will be spent on premises, transport and supplies and services per annum. Special items which cover grounds maintenance, communal cleaning, play areas, Mobile Support Officers etc amount to £1,487,890 for the year ahead.
- 1.12 I have allowed £5,000 for the ongoing updating of the Business Plan. The budget shows £3,290 for the annual Residents' Conference. I have kept the removal expenses budget to £75,000 following the review of downsizing and increased funding for community development (£30,250). I have increased the budget (£50,000) for estate management works. The budget for Supporting People funding has been removed as no further DCC funding will be available towards the cost of support services.
- 1.13 The staffing costs have been grouped into three teams – Housing Needs & Strategy, Landlord Services and Asset and Property Services in the supervision and management section of the budget.
- 1.14 We are showing greater investment in the repair and improvement of tenants' homes and there is a projected end of year surplus on the HRA of £7,753,645 (including £2,900,000 in a volatility reserve). I intend to maintain the surplus at a higher level during the next few years as we continue to acclimatise to the self-financing regime. I have also made an increased provision for bad debts/voids rising from 1.5% and increasing each year by 0.5% until we reached 3% of the rent roll in 2014/15.
- 1.15 The HRA now meets its own capital programme requirements each year. We have used the capital funds identified for re-modelling sheltered schemes to part fund the demand for adaptations in sheltered housing and upgrade Home Safeguard equipment.

- 1.16 The capital programme is part financed by the sale of council homes under the Right to Buy and the sale of other assets. The contribution to capital from the HRA will be £425k in 2015/16 to provide a total programme of £625K. The capital programme for 2015/16 is reproduced below.

HRA Capital Programme	2015/16
	£000
Major Improvements/Extensions to Existing Dwellings	175
Off Street Car Parking	50
Re-modelling of Sheltered Schemes	200
Social Services Adaptations	200
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	625

- 1.17 The HRA is still in draft and will take a journey through Overview and Scrutiny Committee/TaFF then to the Cabinet before being finalised and agreed by Council. Your officers will use the budget set for service delivery over the next financial year.
- 1.18 Over the last few years we have funded additional work to stock and increased staffing to deliver improved services to tenants. We have acquired additional homes and taken advantage of the changes in HRA financing. This coming financial year we are maintaining these investment levels, but there are more limited opportunities for supplementary bids in year if we are to maintain our HRA surplus and Debt Repayment Volatility Fund at current levels.

2014/15		HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	2015/16	
Estimate			Estimate	Variance
Original	Revised			
£	£	£	£	
(17,622,000)	(17,622,000)	INCOME		
(71,600)	(71,600)	Gross Property Rent including Garages	(17,868,180)	(246,180)
(17,693,600)	(17,693,600)	Other Rents & Income	(257,500)	(185,900)
		Total Income	(18,125,680)	(432,080)
		EXPENDITURE		
		Repairs & Maintenance		
2,612,270	2,602,270	General	2,895,000	292,730
1,078,000	1,208,000	Special Works	1,020,690	(187,310)
		Supervision & Management		
2,885,340	2,913,530	General	3,315,980	402,450
907,360	912,360	Special	1,487,890	575,530
278,760	278,760	Other Expenditure	283,160	4,400
7,761,730	7,914,920	Total Management & Maintenance	9,002,720	1,087,800
1,106,740	1,106,740	Depreciation - dwellings	1,089,230	(17,510)
85,030	85,030	- other	142,810	57,780
4,043,260	4,043,260	Transfer to Major Repairs Reserve	3,763,960	(279,300)
12,996,760	13,149,950	Total Expenditure	13,998,720	848,770
		NET COST OF SERVICE	(4,126,960)	416,690
3,140,450	3,140,450	Loan Repayments: Interest & Principal	3,584,920	444,470
(33,360)	(33,360)	Interest on Balances	(34,000)	(640)
(80)	(80)	Interest on Council House Sales	(60)	20
3,107,010	3,107,010		3,550,860	443,850
		NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE - Deficit / (Surplus)	(576,100)	860,540
525,000	525,000	Revenue Contribution to Capital Expenditure	425,000	(100,000)
(1,064,830)	(911,640)	Deficit / (Surplus) for the Year	(151,100)	760,540
		BALANCES		
(4,048,653)	(3,890,905)	Balance brought forward HRA	(4,702,545)	
(1,710,000)	(2,900,000)	Balance brought forward Volatility Reserve	(2,900,000)	
0	100,000	Predicted net variation as at 30 November 2014	0	
(1,064,830)	(911,640)	Deficit / (Surplus) in year	(151,100)	
(6,823,483)	(7,602,545)	Balances carried forward	(7,753,645)	

2014/15		Staff Numbers Fulltime Equivalents	2015/16	Variance
2.0		Senior Housing Management	3.0	1.0
22.0		Landlord Services	26.3	4.3
18.0		Housing Needs & Strategy	21.3	3.3
17.2		Asset & Property Team	18.0	0.8
2.1		Communal Areas Cleaning	2.1	0.0
18.7		Mobile Support Officers	18.8	0.1
80.0		Total	89.5	9.5

Significant changes and areas of interest in 2015/16

In line with HRA Self Financing accounting guidelines, the charge for **depreciation** on dwellings will be credited to the **Major Repairs Reserve** as will a contribution from the HRA for the difference between the Major Repairs expenditure and the depreciation figure. Major Repairs expenditure will then be funded from the Major Repairs Reserve.

Loan repayments of interest and principal include a self financing loan repayment of £1,022,794.

The **revenue contribution to capital expenditure** is to fund the HRA capital programme after a deduction for estimated usable capital receipts.

The increase in staff numbers is due to the transfer from capital of the Systems Team for the new Housing IT system, three additional Housing apprentices, a Community Development Worker, a Maintenance/Asbestos Surveyor and the new post of Service Lead.

The 2014/15 surplus could be affected by how much is recovered from insurance for the storm damage at the beginning of 2014.

2014/15		HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	2015/16	
Estimate			Estimate	Variance
Original	Revised			
£	£			
(17,210,000)	(17,210,000)	INCOME		
(412,000)	(412,000)	Gross Property Rents	(17,450,000)	(240,000)
(71,600)	(71,600)	Garage Rents	(418,180)	(6,180)
		Other Rents and Income	(257,500)	(185,900)
(17,693,600)	(17,693,600)	TOTAL INCOME	(18,125,680)	(432,080)
		REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE		
		Repairs and Maintenance - General		
1,870,270	1,870,270	Response Maintenance	1,908,000	37,730
		Annual Programmed Maintenance		
25,000	25,000	Communal Areas Maintenance	37,000	12,000
80,000	80,000	Solid Fuel Servicing	80,000	0
30,000	30,000	Emergency equipment test & repair	30,000	0
450,000	450,000	Gas Boilers Servicing	500,000	50,000
0	0	Electrical Inspections	100,000	100,000
35,000	35,000	Lift Maintenance & replacement	85,000	50,000
620,000	620,000	Total Programmed Maintenance	832,000	212,000
		Cyclical Programmed Maintenance:		
100,000	100,000	External Painting Programme	150,000	50,000
12,000	12,000	Interior Decoration	0	(12,000)
0	0	Service of Rainwater Harvest Systems	5,000	5,000
10,000	0	Gutter Repairs (moved to Special Works)	0	0
122,000	112,000	Total Cyclical Maintenance	155,000	43,000
		Total Repairs and Maintenance - General	2,895,000	292,730
2,612,270	2,602,270	Repairs and Maintenance - Special Works		
100,000	100,000	Social Services Adaptations (minor works)	75,000	(25,000)
20,000	20,000	Fence Programme	20,000	0
50,000	170,000	Fire Safety Works	250,000	80,000
70,000	70,000	Condensation & Damp Eradication	150,000	80,000
75,000	75,000	Carbon Management	0	0
0	0	Loft Insulation	10,000	10,000
2,000	2,000	Woodworm Treatment	0	(2,000)
0	0	Fuel Efficiency Measures	150,000	150,000
20,000	20,000	Improvements Voucher Scheme	20,190	190
3,000	3,000	Sanctuary Scheme	3,500	500
115,000	115,000	Asbestos Work	150,000	35,000
0	10,000	Gutter Repairs/Improvements	10,000	0
0	0	Decoration Scheme	36,000	36,000
20,000	20,000	Replacement Floors	20,000	0
20,000	20,000	Structural Works - Subsidence	30,000	10,000
3,000	3,000	Grant Via Tenant Participation	6,000	3,000
15,000	15,000	Energy Performance Certificates	20,000	5,000
20,000	20,000	Path Repairs	10,000	(10,000)
5,000	5,000	Minor Schemes	20,000	15,000
10,000	10,000	Flat Roof Repairs	10,000	0
30,000	30,000	Chimney Repairs	30,000	0
500,000	500,000	Catch up Repairs	0	(500,000)
1,078,000	1,208,000	Total Repairs and Maintenance - Special Works	1,020,690	(112,310)

Significant changes and areas of interest in 2015/16

Dwelling rents have been increased by an average of 2.44% (September CPI +1% +/- £2) in line with the government's social rent convergence policy but have been offset by a provision for bad debts and voids of 3% and an allowance for sales of properties. The average rent has increased from £80.02 to £81.97. Garage rents have been increased by 1%.

Other Rents and Income now includes support charges previously shown under Mobile Support Officers.

Response Maintenance includes an inflation uplift for the contracts.

A new budget for **Electrical Inspections** has been included within Annual Programmed Maintenance.

Fire Safety Works has been increased to reflect the works that need to be carried out to ensure compliance with Fire Regulations.

Condensation & Damp Eradication has been increased to deal with the negative effects of better insulation of properties.

The **Carbon Management** budget has been increased and reallocated to **Loft Insulation** and **Fuel Efficiency Measures**.

The budget for **Asbestos Work** has been increased to reflect the cost of routine surveys/sampling and the subsequent works required.

The **Decoration Scheme** for vulnerable elderly and disabled tenants was agreed by HRB on 5th June 2014.

The budget for **Catch Up Repairs** has been allocated over other specific headings.

2014/15		HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	2015/16	
Estimate			Estimate	Variance
Original	Revised			
£	£			
		SUPERVISION & MANAGEMENT		
		Supervision & Management - General		
1,855,320	1,883,510	Employees	2,194,320	310,810
64,020	64,020	Premises	140,820	76,800
105,960	105,960	Transport	110,260	4,300
150,240	150,240	Supplies & Services	186,830	36,590
1,152,510	1,152,510	Support Services	1,094,010	(58,500)
3,328,050	3,356,240	Total Expenditure	3,726,240	370,000
(3,070)	(3,070)	Income	(3,120)	(50)
3,324,980	3,353,170	Net Expenditure before Recharges	3,723,120	369,950
(439,640)	(439,640)	Recharges	(407,140)	32,500
2,885,340	2,913,530	Net Supervision & Management - General	3,315,980	402,450
		Net Expenditure Analysis by Cost Centre		
622,750	622,750	General Operational Management	695,100	72,350
233,640	233,640	Senior Housing Management	255,640	22,000
869,650	882,590	Landlord Services	1,062,150	179,560
736,110	736,110	Housing Needs & Strategy	873,310	137,200
838,500	853,750	Asset & Property Team	807,390	(46,360)
24,330	24,330	Council House Sales	29,530	5,200
3,324,980	3,353,170	Net Expenditure before Recharges	3,723,120	369,950
(439,640)	(439,640)	Recharges	(407,140)	32,500
2,885,340	2,913,530	Total Analysis by Cost Centre	3,315,980	402,450
		Supervision & Management - Special		
50,360	50,360	Communal Areas Cleaning	52,470	2,110
41,850	41,850	Community Centres	40,670	(1,180)
12,000	12,000	Choice Based Lettings	12,180	180
299,000	299,000	Maintenance of Grounds	319,800	20,800
20,040	20,040	Play Areas	20,200	160
40,000	45,000	Estate Management	50,000	5,000
410	410	Caretaking & Window Cleaning	410	0
34,240	34,240	Communal Areas Lighting	36,980	2,740
30,000	30,000	Communal Areas Heating	31,500	1,500
9,000	9,000	STAR Survey	0	(9,000)
3,240	3,240	Tenants' Conference	3,290	50
30,000	30,000	New Build Feasibility	30,000	0
15,000	15,000	ASW Procurement	15,000	0
10,000	10,000	De-commissioning Costs	10,000	0
5,000	5,000	Business Plan Update	5,000	0
287,490	287,490	Mobile Support Officers	841,940	554,450
14,990	14,990	District Offices Running Expenses	14,360	(630)
4,740	4,740	Sewage Treatment Works	4,090	(650)
907,360	912,360	Total Supervision & Management - Special Expenses	1,487,890	575,530

Significant changes and areas of interest in 2015/16

An allowance for a 1% pay award and additional posts (see Summary page) have been included in the **Employees** budgets.

Supplies & Services include an increase in court fees of £23,000 which were previously charged to the Legal Service.

£71,000 has been included in **Premises** costs for an increase in the insurance premium due to recent claims.

General Operational Management includes internal recharges from other services, rates, insurance, fees for external audit, software licences, Treasury Management advice and the annual valuation of the housing stock.

The Streetscene recharge to **Maintenance of Grounds** has increased.

The **STAR Survey** is conducted every other year; the next survey will be in 2016/17.

Mobile Support Officers - the anticipated income from charges to tenants for the support they receive is shown under Income on the previous page. This replaces supporting people income which has been withdrawn by Devon County Council.

2014/15		HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	2015/16	
Estimate			Estimate	Variance
Original	Revised			
£	£			
		Other Expenditure		
13,480	13,480	Sewerage - Repairs, Maintenance & Emptying	13,680	200
53,500	53,500	Tenant Participation	44,350	(9,150)
5,330	5,330	Tenant Scrutiny	5,230	(100)
2,000	2,000	Storage	2,030	30
7,000	7,000	38 St Pauls Road Heathpark	5,100	(1,900)
20,100	20,100	Community Development Work	30,250	10,150
5,000	5,000	Minor Management Schemes	5,050	50
20,000	20,000	Road Repairs	20,000	0
1,000	1,000	Signs on Estates	1,020	20
8,000	8,000	Eviction Expenses	8,120	120
3,000	3,000	Off Street parking - Grants to Tenants	3,000	0
3,000	3,000	Pest Control Expenses	3,050	50
3,000	3,000	Gully Cleansing	5,200	2,200
28,550	28,550	Tree Felling and Planting	31,200	2,650
5,000	5,000	Landscaping	5,000	0
75,000	75,000	Removal Expenses (Downsizing)	75,000	0
300	300	Private Water Supplies - Service & Maintenance	0	(300)
18,000	18,000	Removal of Rubbish & House Clearances	18,270	270
7,500	7,500	Best Value - Housemark	7,610	110
278,760	278,760	Total Other Expenditure	283,160	4,400
		Major Repairs (capital expenditure)		
200,000	200,000	Central Heating Replacement	200,000	0
150,000	150,000	Electrical Updating	150,000	0
250,000	250,000	Roof Renewal	150,000	(100,000)
400,000	400,000	Replacement uPVC fascias etc	400,000	0
1,000,000	1,000,000	Replacement Kitchens	650,000	(350,000)
300,000	300,000	Replacement Bathrooms	300,000	0
600,000	600,000	Replacement Doors	480,000	(120,000)
800,000	800,000	Replacement Gas Boilers	720,000	(80,000)
250,000	250,000	Electrical Works on Change of Tenancy	350,000	100,000
1,200,000	1,200,000	Change of Tenancy Other Expenditure	1,596,000	396,000
5,150,000	5,150,000	Total Major Repairs	4,996,000	(154,000)

Significant changes and areas of interest in 2015/16

Tenant Participation has decreased due to a reduction in recharges for printing and postage.

Community Development Work has been increased to take account of new initiatives such as digital awareness and helping people get back into work.

Major Repairs are classed as capital expenditure and are now included in the HRA capital programme but are shown here for information. They are fully funded by the HRA through the Major Repairs Reserve.

Report to: **Housing Review Board**

Date of Meeting: 15 January 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None



Agenda item: **9**

Subject: **HRA Financial Monitoring Report 2014/15 - Month 8 November**

Purpose of report: This report gives a summary of the overall financial position on the Housing Revenue Account, HRA Capital Programme and the Business Plan for 2014/15 at the end of month eight (November 2014).

Regular monitoring will highlight any areas of concern or unforeseen expenditure in the HRA and associated capital programme and enable corrective action to be taken as required. Any variances will be reflected in the Business Plan.

Current monitoring indicates that:

- The Housing Revenue Account Balance will be maintained at or above the adopted level.
- The position on the HRA Business Plan remains healthy.

Recommendation: **That the variances identified as part of the HRA revenue and capital monitoring process up to month eight be acknowledged.**

Reason for recommendation: The report updates the Board on the overall financial position of the Housing Revenue Account and Business Plan following the end of each month and includes recommendations where corrective action is required for the remainder of the financial year.

Officer: Mandy White Accountant Ext 2357

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Financial implications: Details are contained within the report.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications requiring comment

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk

Current monitoring indicates that the HRA and Business Plan balances are being maintained at or above the adopted levels. In compiling this report we have looked at all large, high risk and volatile budget areas. Predicted spending patterns have been linked to operational activity and all material budgets have been subject to thorough risk assessments by operational managers and finance staff. Any continuing variances in spending patterns will be considered and incorporated into the Business Plan.

Links to background information: • [Housing Revenue Account Business Plan](#)

Link to Council Plan: Funding this Outstanding Place.

Financial Monitoring Report 2014/15 – To Month 8 November

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this monitoring report is to update members of the Board on the overall financial position of the Housing Revenue Account and Business Plan following the end of month eight.

2. Housing Revenue Account Position

2.1 A summary of the predicted over and under spends to the year end is shown below:

	Variation at Month 8 £000	Predicted Outturn Variation £000
Supervision & Management – employees – vacant posts	(40)	(25)
Court fees for evictions, etc	21	25
Variations as at month 6		100
Total variations		100

There are some variances within the Repairs & Maintenance budgets but overall these are expected to balance with budgets by the year end.

2.2 The following table shows the original budget surplus set for the year and the total variations as identified above, which are likely to affect the budget to give a revised budget surplus for the year.

	£000
Original Budget surplus	(1,065)
Supplementary estimates (HRB 05/06/14):	
Dray Court fire risk works	120
New posts – Building Surveyor & Estate Management Officer (for 6 months in 2014/15)	28
Estate Management work (6 months in 2014/15)	5
Month 8 predicted net (under)/overspend to year end	100
Predicted Budget Surplus	(812)

Although the Board on 5 June also agreed to fund up to £0.98m of storm damage works, this sum has not been deducted from the balance as it is hoped that the majority will be reclaimed through insurance.

Appendix A gives a more detailed breakdown of the HRA budgets and actual expenditure and income to date.

2.3 These variations will have the following effect on the Housing Revenue Account

Balance:

	£000
Housing Revenue Account Balance (01/04/14)	(3,891)
Predicted budget surplus as above	(812)
Predicted HRA Balance (31/03/15)	(4,703)

The recommended level for the HRA balance has been agreed at £2.1m (£500 per property). The current balance is well above the recommended level and will be used for further investment in the housing stock including building or buying new stock, to offset any adverse effects of Welfare Reform and to ensure sufficient funds are available to service the self-financing loans - the first principal repayment is due at the end of this financial year.

In addition £2.9m is held in a volatility reserve.

3. Capital Programme Position

3.1 The following table shows the HRA Capital Programme totalling £1.450m and the expenditure to date. Capital receipts will be used to fund part of this sum with the balance to be met by a revenue contribution from the HRA.

HRA Capital Programme Summary	Budget £000	Spend to date £000
New Housing IT System	263	63
Major improvements/extensions/loft conversions to existing dwellings	175	21
Off street car parking	50	10
Re-modelling of sheltered schemes	200	7
Social Services Adaptations	200	112
Works to HMO in Exmouth	203	35
Works to 105 Bradham Lane Exmouth	16	0
Purchase of 19 Midway Exmouth	172	172
Purchase of 2 Sadler Close Exmouth	171	160
Total Programme	1,450	580

- 3.2 The following table shows the capital receipts received in the year to date and how those receipts must be used.

Capital Receipts	£000
Sale of council houses/flats	(2,086)
Other receipts including sales of land/garages	(16)
Total capital receipts received	(2,102)
Allocation of receipts:	
Retained for provision of new social housing	(1,088)
Retained for funding other HRA capital expenditure	(726)
Paid to HM Treasury	(288)
Total capital receipts allocation	(2,102)

There have been 26 Right to Buy sales and 1 garage sale completed so far this year.

Under the terms of the agreement we've signed with the government which enables us to retain Right To Buy receipts, we must commit to spend those receipts within a rolling 3 years or they have to be paid over to the government with interest.

- 3.3 The table below shows the current situation regarding how much we must spend on providing new social housing, only 30% of which can be funded by retained RTB receipts, and the dates by which that expenditure must be incurred. As at the end of March 2014 we had spent £1.591m so are ahead of the required schedule.

Required new social housing expenditure £000	Date by which expenditure must be incurred	Funding from retained RTB receipts (30%) £000
286	30 September 2015	86
638	31 December 2015	191
1,463	31 March 2016	439
2,291	30 June 2016	687
3,096	30 September 2016	929
4,033	31 December 2016	1,210
4,481	31 March 2017	1,344
5,616	30 June 2017	1,685
6,727	30 September 2017	2,018

4. HRA Business Plan

- 4.1 Appendix B shows the Business Plan Operating Account which reflects the above changes in 2014/15 and the subsequent impact on balances for future years.

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2014/2015
SUMMARY OF HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT
 Period to 30 November 2014

2014/2015			Service	2014/2015	2014/2015
Budget				Actual	Variance
Original	Revised	Year to Date		£	£
£	£	£			
			INCOME		
1	(17,622,000)	(17,622,000)	Gross Property Rent including Garages	(11,709,834)	151,126
2	(71,600)	(71,600)	Other Rents & Income	(86,782)	(31,022)
3	(17,693,600)	(17,693,600)	Total Income	(11,796,616)	120,104
			EXPENDITURE		
			Repairs & Maintenance		
4	2,612,270	2,652,270	General	2,284,713	516,390
5	1,078,000	1,258,000	Special Works	609,840	(243,653)
			Supervision & Management		
6	2,885,340	2,913,530	General	2,183,528	(18,792)
7	907,360	912,360	Special	635,176	(107,254)
8	278,760	278,760	Other Expenditure	159,213	(39,627)
9	7,761,730	8,014,920	Total Management & Maintenance	5,872,470	107,063
10	0	0	Adjustment to Bad Debt Provision	0	0
11	1,106,740	1,106,740	Depreciation - dwellings	1,106,740	0
12	85,030	85,030	- other	85,030	0
13	4,043,260	4,043,260	Transfer to Major Repairs Reserve	2,967,005	(466,328)
14	12,996,760	13,249,950	Total Expenditure	10,031,245	(359,265)
15	(4,696,840)	(4,443,650)	NET COST OF SERVICE	(1,765,371)	(239,161)
16	(33,360)	(33,360)	Interest on Balances	0	0
17	3,140,450	3,140,450	Principal & Interest Payable (PWLB loans)	1,256,870	(27,720)
18	(80)	(80)	Interest on Council House Sales (mortgages)	(37)	23
19	3,107,010	3,107,010		1,256,833	(27,697)
20	(1,589,830)	(1,336,640)	NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE - Deficit / (Surplus)	(508,538)	(266,858)
21	525,000	525,000	Revenue Contribution to Capital Expenditure	0	0
22	(1,064,830)	(811,640)	Deficit / (Surplus) for the Year	(508,538)	(266,858)
			BALANCES		
23	(4,048,653)	(3,890,905)	Balance b/f HRA	(3,890,905)	0
24	(1,064,830)	(811,640)	Deficit / (Surplus) in year	(508,538)	(266,858)
25	(5,113,483)	(4,702,545)	Total Balance C/F	(4,399,443)	(266,858)
26	(1,710,000)	(2,900,000)	Balance b/f Volatility Reserve	(2,900,000)	0

(2,127,500) required balance: £500 per property

(2,575,045) (over)/under required balance

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2014/2015
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - DETAILED STATEMENT
 Period to 30 November 2014

2014/2015			Service	2014/2015			Comments		
Budget				Actual	Variance	Committed			
Original	Revised	Year to Date							
£	£	£	£	£	£				
			INCOME						
1	(17,210,000)	(17,210,000)	(11,583,660)	SB	Gross Property Rents	(11,423,853)	159,807	!	voids £125k. Timing issue
2	(412,000)	(412,000)	(277,300)	SB	Garage Rents	(285,981)	(8,681)		
3	(71,600)	(71,600)	(55,760)	SB	Other Rents and Income	(86,782)	(31,022)		service charges, garden licences, IGM
4	(17,693,600)	(17,693,600)	(11,916,720)		TOTAL INCOME	(11,796,616)	120,104	0	
			REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE						
			Repairs and Maintenance - General						
5	1,870,270	1,870,270	1,246,990	DB	Response Maintenance	1,335,873	88,883	!	
6	0	0	0		Storm Damage	355,266	355,266		HRB 05/06/14 agreed addtl cost up to £980k
			Programmed Maintenance						
7	25,000	25,000	16,640	DB	Communal Areas	2,113	(14,527)		
8	0	0	0	DB	Fire Extinguishers	0	0		
9	30,000	30,000	20,000	DB	Emergency Lighting and Fire alarms	1,627	(18,373)		
10	80,000	80,000	53,360	DB	Solid Fuel Appliances	91,976	38,616	!	
11	450,000	450,000	300,000	DB	Gas Appliances - Servicing	417,829	117,829	!	timing?
12	35,000	35,000	23,360	DB	Lift Maintenance	34,746	11,386	!	
13	620,000	620,000	413,360		Total Programmed Maintenance	548,291	134,931	0	
			Cyclical Maintenance						
14	100,000	150,000	99,973	DB	External Painting Programme	39,316	(60,657)	72,000	potential £150k spend
15	0	0	0	DB	Extras to Painting Programme	132	132	!	
16	0	0	0	DB	Service of Rainwater Harvest Systems	4,773	4,773		
17	10,000	0	0	DB	Gutter Repairs	0	0		moved to special works
18	12,000	12,000	8,000	DB	Interior Decoration	1,062	(6,938)		
19	122,000	162,000	107,973		Total Cyclical Maintenance	45,283	(62,690)	72,000	
20	2,612,270	2,652,270	1,768,323		Total Repairs and Maintenance - General	2,284,713	516,390	72,000	
			Repairs and Maintenance - Special Works						
21	100,000	100,000	66,640	DB	Adaptations For Disabled	43,262	(23,378)		
22	20,000	20,000	13,360	DB	Fence Programme	14,709	1,349	!	
23	50,000	170,000	141,360	DB	Fire Safety Works	192,280	50,920	!	£120K Dray Court HRB 05/06/14
24	0	0	0	DB	Window Renewal	1,117	1,117	!	
25	75,000	75,000	50,000	DB	Carbon Management Programme (loft insulation)	14,602	(35,398)		
26	2,000	2,000	1,360	DB	Woodworm Treatment	1,796	436	!	
27	20,000	20,000	13,360	DB	Improvements Voucher Scheme	12,268	(1,092)		
28	3,000	3,000	2,000	DB	Sanctuary Scheme	3,010	1,010	!	
29	115,000	115,000	76,640	DB	Asbestos Works	118,253	41,613	!	
30	0	10,000	6,640	DB	Gutter Repairs	3,966	(2,674)		
31	0	0	0	DB	Rechargeable Works	26,400	26,400		
32	3,000	3,000	2,000	SB	Grant Via Tenant Participation	2,682	682	!	
33	20,000	20,000	13,360	DB	Replacement Floors	5,200	(8,160)		
34	500,000	500,000	333,360	DB	Catch Up Repairs (per Stock Condition Survey)	0	(333,360)		
35	15,000	15,000	10,000	DB	Energy Performance Certificates	17,586	7,586	!	

36	70,000	120,000	66,693	DB	Dampness Eradication & Condensation	76,034	9,341	! potential spend of £120k
37	20,000	20,000	13,360	DB	Path Repairs	6,626	(6,734)	
38	5,000	5,000	3,360	DB	Minor Schemes	6,434	3,074	! £6k drainage works Springfield Membury
39	0	0	0	DB	Soundproofing	0	0	
40	10,000	10,000	6,640	DB	Flat Roof Repairs	3,405	(3,235)	
41	30,000	30,000	20,000	DB	Chimney Repairs	41,864	21,864	!
42	20,000	20,000	13,360	DB	Structural Works - Subsidence	18,346	4,986	!
43	1,078,000	1,258,000	853,493		Total Repairs and Maintenance - Special Works	609,840	(243,653)	0

**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2014/2015**

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - DETAILED STATEMENT

	2014/2015			Service	2014/2015			Comments
	Budget				Actual	Variance	Committed	
	Original	Revised	Year to Date					
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
				SUPERVISION & MANAGEMENT				
				Supervision & Management - General				
1	1,855,320	1,883,510	1,252,640	Employees	1,212,247	(40,393)	addtl posts HRB 05/06/14	
2	64,020	64,020	64,020	Premises	69,780	5,760	!	
3	105,960	105,960	74,680	Transport	72,085	(2,595)		
4	150,240	150,240	100,110	Supplies & Services	109,680	9,570	!	
5	1,152,510	1,152,510	1,152,510	Support Services	1,152,510	0		
6	3,328,050	3,356,240	2,643,960	Total Expenditure	2,616,302	(27,658)		
7	(3,070)	(3,070)	(2,000)	Income	6,866	8,866	!	
8	3,324,980	3,353,170	2,641,960	Net Expenditure before Recharges	2,623,168	(18,792)		
9	(439,640)	(439,640)	(439,640)	Recharges	(439,640)	0		
10	2,885,340	2,913,530	2,202,320	Net Supervision & Management - General	2,183,528	(18,792)	0	
				Net Expenditure Analysis by Cost Centre				
11	622,750	622,750	600,030	JG General Operational Management	586,857	(13,173)		
12	233,640	233,640	196,300	JG Head of Housing	209,132	12,832	!	
13	869,650	882,590	634,950	SB Landlord Services	660,568	25,618	! Estate Mgmt Officer HRB 05/06/14	
14	736,110	736,110	540,950	DB Housing Needs & Strategy	539,066	(1,884)		
15	838,500	853,750	646,400	DB Asset & Property	602,831	(43,569)	Bldg Surveyor HRB 05/06/14	
16	24,330	24,330	23,330	SB Council House Sales	24,714	1,384	!	
17	3,324,980	3,353,170	2,641,960	Net Expenditure before Recharges	2,623,168	(18,792)		
18	(439,640)	(439,640)	(439,640)	Recharges	(439,640)	0		
19	2,885,340	2,913,530	2,202,320	Total Analysis by Cost Centre	2,183,528	(18,792)	0	
				Supervision & Management - Special				
20	50,360	50,360	36,310	SB Communal Areas Cleaning	33,909	(2,401)		
21	41,850	41,850	31,920	SB Community Centres	27,309	(4,611)		
22	12,000	12,000	6,000	DB Choice Based Lettings	4,255	(1,745)		
23	299,000	299,000	298,360	SB Maintenance of Grounds	297,000	(1,360)		
24	20,040	20,040	15,040	SB Play Areas	11,899	(3,141)		
25	40,000	45,000	28,320	SB Estate Management	18,973	(9,347)	addtl £5k HRB 05/06/14	
26	0	0	0	SB Noise Nuisance Issues	0	0		
27	0	0	0	SB Anti Social Behaviour	0	0		
28	410	410	240	SB Caretaking & Window Cleaning	103	(137)		
29	34,240	34,240	22,800	DB Communal Areas Lighting	18,473	(4,327)		
30	30,000	30,000	20,000	DB Communal Areas Heating	11,352	(8,648)		

31	9,000	9,000	6,000	SB	STAR Survey	0	(6,000)	
32	3,240	3,240	3,240	SB	Tenants' Conference	2,093	(1,147)	
33	30,000	30,000	20,000	DB	New Build Feasibility	5,986	(14,014)	
34	15,000	15,000	15,000	JG	ASW Procurement	14,016	(984)	
35	10,000	10,000	6,640	AG	Decommissioning Costs	3,499	(3,141)	
36	5,000	5,000	3,360	JG	Business Plan Update	0	(3,360)	
37	14,990	14,990	11,980	AG	District Offices running expenses	10,210	(1,770)	
38	287,490	287,490	212,620	AG	Mobile Support Officers	171,719	(40,901)	
39	4,740	4,740	4,600	DB	Sewage Treatment Works	4,380	(220)	
40	907,360	912,360	742,430		Total Supervision & Management - Special	635,176	(107,254)	0

**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2014/2015**

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - DETAILED STATEMENT

2014/2015				Service	2014/2015			Comments
Budget			Year to Date		Actual	Variance	Committed	
Original	Revised	£						
OTHER EXPENDITURE								
1	13,480	13,480	9,770	DB	Sewerage - Repairs, Maintenance & Emptying	8,896	(874)	
2	53,500	53,500	37,600	SB	Tenant Participation	37,697	97	!
3	5,330	5,330	3,500	SB	Tenant Scrutiny	1,723	(1,777)	
4	2,000	2,000	1,360	SB	Storage	2,299	939	!
5	7,000	7,000	4,880	SB	Honiton - 38 St Pauls Road Heathpark	553	(4,327)	
6	20,100	20,100	13,370	SB	Community Development Work	(822)	(14,192)	£12k funding received
7	5,000	5,000	3,360	SB	Minor Management Schemes	2,408	(952)	
8	20,000	20,000	13,360	DB	Road Repairs	0	(13,360)	
9	1,000	1,000	640	SB	Signs on Estates	623	(17)	
10	8,000	8,000	5,360	SB	Eviction Expenses	3,679	(1,681)	
11	3,000	3,000	2,000	DB	Off Street parking - Grants to Tenants	0	(2,000)	
12	3,000	3,000	2,000	DB	Pest Control Expenses	1,330	(670)	
13	3,000	3,000	3,000	DB	Gully Cleansing	5,155	2,155	!
14	28,550	28,550	25,570	DB	Tree Felling and Planting	25,957	387	!
15	5,000	5,000	3,360	DB	Landscaping	2,927	(433)	
16	75,000	75,000	50,000	DB	Removal Expenses (downsizing)	48,070	(1,930)	
17	300	300	210	DB	Private Water Supplies - Service & Maintenance	0	(210)	
18	18,000	18,000	12,000	SB	Removal of Rubbish	11,201	(799)	
19	7,500	7,500	7,500	SB	Best Value - Housemark	7,517	17	!
20	278,760	278,760	198,840		TOTAL OTHER EXPENDITURE	159,213	(39,627)	0
MAJOR REPAIRS ACCOUNT								
21	200,000	200,000	133,333	DB	Central Heating	13,083	(120,250)	
22	700,000	700,000	466,667	DB	Gas Appliance Replacement	809,614	342,947	! contract let for £493k
23	150,000	150,000	100,000	DB	Electrical Updating	156,043	56,043	!
24	250,000	250,000	166,667	DB	Roof Renewal	60,355	(106,312)	
25	1,000,000	1,000,000	666,667	DB	Replacement Kitchens	552,611	(114,056)	160,000
26	600,000	600,000	400,000	DB	Replacement Doors	(133,843)	(533,843)	Prestor & Exmouth over accrual in 13/14
27	400,000	400,000	266,667	DB	Replacement uPVC fascias etc	73,221	(193,446)	
28	300,000	300,000	200,000	DB	Replacement Bathrooms	107,414	(92,586)	
29	0	0	0	DB	Modernisation	0	0	
30	250,000	250,000	166,667	DB	Electrical Works on COT	346,515	179,848	!
31	1,300,000	1,300,000	866,667	DB	COT: Other Expenditure	981,992	115,325	!
32	5,150,000	5,150,000	3,433,333		TOTAL MAJOR REPAIRS ACCOUNT	2,967,005	(466,328)	160,000

**East Devon DC
HRA Business Plan
Operating Account**
(expressed in money terms)

APPENDIX B

		Income					Expenditure										Net Operating (Expenditure) £,000	Provision for repayment of loans £,000	Transfer from / (to) MRR £,000	RCCO £,000	Surplus (Deficit) for the Year £,000	Surplus (Deficit) b/fwd £,000	Interest £,000	Surplus (Deficit) c/fwd £,000
Year	Year	Net rent Income £,000	Other income £,000	Misc Income £,000	RTB Admin £,000	Total Income £,000	Managt. £,000	Depreciation £,000	Responsive & Cyclical £,000	Other Revenue spend £,000	Cost of Rent Rebates £,000	Misc expenses £,000	Total expenses £,000	Capital Charges £,000										
1	2013.14	17,042	475	0	13	17,530	(3,438)	(1,232)	(3,541)	(240)	0	10	(8,441)	(2,564)	6,525	(5)	(4,403)	(32)	2,084	4,680	27	6,791		
2	2014.15	17,223	452	0	20	17,694	(3,826)	(1,192)	(3,910)	(279)	0	0	(9,207)	(2,559)	5,928	(580)	(4,043)	(525)	780	6,791	32	7,603		
3	2015.16	17,450	656	0	20	18,126	(4,733)	(1,232)	(3,916)	(283)	0	0	(10,165)	(2,556)	5,406	(1,029)	(3,764)	(425)	187	7,603	34	7,824		
4	2016.17	18,401	437	0	20	18,857	(3,983)	(1,145)	(4,180)	(293)	(17)	0	(9,617)	(2,562)	6,678	(1,490)	0	(3,754)	1,435	7,824	44	9,303		
5	2017.18	18,935	450	0	20	19,405	(4,082)	(1,141)	(4,298)	(300)	(47)	0	(9,868)	(2,575)	6,961	(1,310)	0	(3,897)	1,753	9,303	53	11,110		
6	2018.19	19,464	464	0	20	19,948	(4,184)	(1,137)	(4,419)	(308)	(66)	0	(10,114)	(2,558)	7,276	(1,587)	0	(4,034)	1,655	11,110	62	12,827		
7	2019.20	19,994	478	0	20	20,491	(4,289)	(1,133)	(4,543)	(315)	(78)	0	(10,359)	(2,534)	7,598	(1,917)	0	(4,174)	1,507	12,827	71	14,404		
8	2020.21	20,529	492	0	20	21,040	(4,396)	(1,129)	(4,671)	(323)	(86)	0	(10,605)	(2,499)	7,935	(2,259)	0	(4,318)	1,358	14,404	78	15,840		
9	2021.22	21,116	507	0	20	21,642	(4,506)	(1,125)	(4,803)	(331)	(115)	0	(10,881)	(2,453)	8,308	(2,619)	0	(4,578)	1,111	15,840	85	17,037		
10	2022.23	21,629	522	0	20	22,170	(4,619)	(1,121)	(4,938)	(340)	(94)	0	(11,111)	(2,394)	8,665	(2,889)	0	(4,732)	1,043	17,037	91	18,171		
11	2023.24	22,199	538	0	20	22,756	(4,734)	(1,117)	(5,056)	(348)	(97)	0	(11,352)	(2,325)	9,079	(3,288)	0	(5,926)	(135)	18,171	94	18,131		
12	2024.25	22,831	554	0	20	23,404	(4,852)	(1,113)	(5,198)	(357)	(129)	0	(11,650)	(2,240)	9,514	(3,718)	0	(6,115)	(319)	18,131	93	17,905		
13	2025.26	23,382	570	0	20	23,972	(4,974)	(1,109)	(5,345)	(366)	(104)	0	(11,897)	(2,139)	9,936	(4,180)	0	(6,309)	(553)	17,905	92	17,444		
14	2026.27	23,997	587	0	20	24,604	(5,098)	(1,105)	(5,495)	(375)	(107)	0	(12,180)	(2,021)	10,402	(4,675)	0	(6,507)	(780)	17,444	89	16,752		
15	2027.28	24,627	605	0	20	25,251	(5,226)	(1,101)	(5,650)	(384)	(110)	0	(12,471)	(1,886)	10,894	(2,427)	0	(6,711)	1,755	16,752	92	18,599		
16	2028.29	25,272	623	0	20	25,915	(5,356)	(1,097)	(5,809)	(394)	(114)	0	(12,769)	(1,816)	11,330	(2,710)	0	(8,053)	567	18,599	98	19,265		
17	2029.30	25,935	642	0	20	26,597	(5,490)	(1,093)	(5,972)	(404)	(116)	0	(13,074)	(1,735)	11,787	(3,081)	0	(8,296)	409	19,265	101	19,775		
18	2030.31	26,615	661	0	20	27,296	(5,627)	(1,089)	(6,140)	(414)	(120)	0	(13,390)	(1,641)	12,265	(3,483)	0	(8,546)	235	19,775	103	20,114		
19	2031.32	27,312	681	0	20	28,012	(5,768)	(1,085)	(6,313)	(424)	(125)	0	(13,714)	(1,532)	12,766	(3,915)	0	(8,802)	48	20,114	105	20,267		
20	2032.33	28,027	701	0	20	28,748	(5,912)	(1,081)	(6,490)	(435)	(127)	0	(14,045)	(1,407)	13,296	(6,063)	0	(9,065)	(1,832)	20,267	101	18,536		
21	2033.34	28,760	722	0	20	29,502	(6,060)	(1,077)	(6,673)	(446)	(131)	0	(14,386)	(1,209)	13,907	(6,735)	0	(8,783)	(1,611)	18,536	92	17,017		
22	2034.35	29,512	744	0	20	30,276	(6,211)	(1,073)	(6,861)	(457)	(135)	0	(14,737)	(987)	14,552	(7,413)	0	(9,044)	(1,905)	17,017	84	15,195		
23	2035.36	30,283	766	0	20	31,069	(6,367)	(1,069)	(7,054)	(468)	(138)	0	(15,095)	(740)	15,234	(8,137)	0	(9,313)	(2,216)	15,195	73	13,053		
24	2036.37	31,075	789	0	20	31,884	(6,526)	(1,065)	(7,252)	(480)	(142)	0	(15,465)	(470)	15,949	(8,911)	0	(9,588)	(2,550)	13,053	61	10,564		
25	2037.38	31,886	813	0	20	32,718	(6,689)	(1,060)	(7,456)	(492)	(148)	0	(15,845)	(169)	16,704	(225)	0	(9,869)	6,610	10,564	72	17,247		
26	2038.39	32,717	838	0	20	33,574	(6,856)	(1,056)	(7,665)	(504)	(152)	0	(16,234)	(167)	17,173	(20)	0	(11,067)	6,086	17,247	106	23,438		
27	2039.40	33,570	863	0	20	34,453	(7,028)	(1,052)	(7,881)	(517)	(156)	0	(16,634)	(171)	17,647	(21)	0	(11,387)	6,239	23,438	138	29,815		
28	2040.41	34,445	889	0	20	35,353	(7,203)	(1,048)	(8,102)	(530)	(160)	0	(17,044)	(176)	18,133	(22)	0	(11,715)	6,396	29,815	172	36,382		
29	2041.42	35,342	915	0	20	36,276	(7,383)	(1,044)	(8,330)	(543)	(165)	0	(17,466)	(181)	18,629	(23)	0	(12,051)	6,555	36,382	206	43,143		
30	2042.43	36,261	943	0	20	37,223	(7,568)	(1,040)	(8,564)	(557)	(169)	0	(17,898)	(186)	19,139	(25)	0	(12,396)	6,718	43,143	242	50,103		

Report to: **Housing Review Board**

Date of Meeting: 15 January 2014

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None



Agenda item: 10

Subject: **Draft Housing Service Plan 2015-2016**

Purpose of report: This report presents the draft Service Plan for the Housing Service covering the period 2015-2016.

The Service Plan is a document produced annually, and sets out the key achievements over the past year and the forthcoming issues to be faced by the Service, a range of Service improvements are identified, performance data reported, consultation proposals outlined, budget information etc.

The Service Plan is presented in draft form for the Board's consideration.

Recommendation: **To consider, comment on and approve the Housing Service Plan for 2015 – 2016.**

Reason for recommendation: To enable the Housing Review Board to influence the production of the Service Plan.

Officer: John Golding, Strategic Lead – Housing, Health & Environment.

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Financial implications: Financial implications have already been included in budgets or, if additional expenditure is required, a report will be brought to the Board before any expenditure is incurred.

Legal implications: None

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk

Links to background information: [Housing Service Plan 2014/15](#)

Link to Council Plan: Living in this outstanding place.

Report in full

1 Producing a Service Plan

- 1.1 For some time now all the Council's services have organised an annual Service Planning exercise and produced a Service Plan, which sets out details of past performance and achievements, and future challenges and targets. Service Planning events have in some services become a lighter touch exercise.
- 1.2 The Service Plan is produced using a corporate template and it shows how the service improvements link with the Corporate Strategy, identifies the key Service objectives, challenges ahead, and outlines areas of performance that we should measure. It also considers efficiencies, key risks, training needs, equalities, opportunities to do things differently, and workforce planning.
- 1.3 For Housing the Service Plan links with and complements the Homes and Sustainable Communities Plan and Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, Homelessness Strategy, Private Sector Renewal Plan, Empty Homes Strategy, Energy Conservation Act Plan and other service specific policies, the Council Plan and various housing budgets.
- 1.4 The Service Plan is intended as a working document and the Service managers will cascade the contents of the Plan at their team meetings. It is a good discipline to complete an annual statement of what the Service expects to achieve, set out in a structured way, using a template, involving staff, service users, and members in the process. I have tried to capture both the core housing activities we undertake and the areas for service development/improvement.
- 1.5 We have refreshed a number of our policy documents during the course of the year and have given a number of new commitments as well as agreeing a series of 'stretch targets'.
- 1.6 The Service Plan reproduces our ten key aims in the Homes and Communities Plan. It also sets out a series of Systems Thinking purposes to capture 'what matters' to our customers.
- 1.7 I have drafted the Service Plan following consultation with Service managers to a point where it is ready for the Board's consideration. I have reproduced the draft Service Plan in **Annex 1**.
- 1.8 It will be noted that many of the dates in the Service Plan for particular actions are on-going activities for the service and therefore do not sit comfortably with the presumed start and completion date in the template.
- 1.9 I welcome the Housing Review Board's input into the Service Plan before it is finalised and reported to the Cabinet.



Service Planning 2015/16

Housing Service

Version 0.2

April 2015 – March 2016

Strategic Lead: John Golding

Portfolio holders: Cllr Jill Elson & Cllr Stephanie Jones

Housing Review Board Chair: Cllr Pauline Stott

Housing Service Plan 2015-2016: Contents Page

- Section 1 Brief description of service and purpose(s)
- Section 2 Key achievements in 2014/15
- Section 3 Looking forward: what we will do in 2015/16
- Section 3a Looking forward: any Service challenges or pressures for next 3 years
- Section 3b Looking forward: options for doing things differently
- Section 3c Looking forward: what we will measure, how often and for whom
- Section 4 Resources and workforce planning
- Section 5 Training and development
- Section 6 Service risks: current and new/emerging
- Section 7 Equalities

Section 1 – Brief description of service and purpose(s)	
What we do and who we deliver to	<p>In Housing we aim to secure - A decent home for all.</p> <p>We have also adopted the following purposes where we have undertaken Systems Thinking reviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>To match the right people with the right home (voids & allocations).</i> ➤ <i>Do the right repair at the right time, get it right first time, and stay fixed (responsive repairs).</i> ➤ <i>Do the right service/repair at the right time, and leave safe (gas servicing).</i> ➤ <i>To collect the right amount of rent at the right time (rent management).</i> ➤ <i>Deal with customer emergencies promptly (Home Safeguard).</i> ➤ <i>Better housing, better health (private sector housing).</i> <p><i>To deliver outstanding Support Services to residents of East Devon regardless of housing tenure.</i></p>
How we deliver and ensure equal access	<p><i>Service delivery is through a variety of direct or in-house provision and a number of contracts/partnerships with partners.</i></p> <p><i>In Landlord Services we work to an adopted specific housing diversity commitments and Housing Customer Charter.</i></p> <p><i>We set service standards with customers.</i></p>
How we compare	<p><i>We use HouseMark for periodic benchmarking exercises of Landlord Services and report the results to the Housing Review Board. We have also undertaken a STAR tenant satisfaction survey.</i></p> <p><i>The Devon Housing Options Partnership uses the Quality Standards Framework which we have reported to Cabinet.</i></p>
Statutory elements of the service	<p><i>Landlord services</i></p> <p><i>Homelessness/Housing Advice</i></p> <p><i>Housing Register and Allocations</i></p> <p><i>Tenancy Strategy</i></p> <p><i>Private sector housing enforcement, Private Water Supply assessment and enforcement, Caravan Site Licensing, Provision of Disabled Facilities Grants, Environmental Pollution associated with Rural Drainage, public health/statutory nuisance.</i></p>
Current net budget (excludes Internal support charges and capital budget)	<p><i>Housing Revenue Account has an annual turnover of £18 million.</i></p> <p><i>Housing General Fund budgets are annually circa. £272k for private sector housing; £450k for homelessness; and a trading surplus for Home Safeguard.</i></p>

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2014/15		
	<i>Briefly describe key achievements and what outcomes were created. This will inform Annual Report at year end.</i>	<i>Strategic link to Council Plan priorities</i>
1	<p>Housing Needs and Strategy 311 new affordable homes produced. Acquisition of HRA houses, flats and shared house. Bids for sites/property acquisitions submitted. Fourth Annual Report to Tenants produced. Homeless prevention increased and reduced use of temporary accommodation. Improved engagement with the private sector Rough Sleeping initiative maintained to ensure no second night out. Operating a Local Welfare Support scheme. Reprovision of software supporting Devon Home Choice. Reduced numbers of applicants on the Housing Register. Housing management software upgrade commenced.</p>	<p>Council Plan</p> <p>Homes and Communities Plan</p> <p>HRA Business Plan</p> <p>Homelessness Strategy</p>
2	<p>Landlord Services Maintaining a high proportion of rent collection and managing the impact of Welfare Reform (Bedroom Tax). Launch of Home Safeguard rebranding and publicity. Home Safeguard maintaining TSA accreditation (no improvement notices) and new working patterns established. Home Safeguard Annual Report published. Completed an options appraisal and consultation exercise for reshaping support services. Social inclusion and Get Digital project being rolled out. Increased use of community centres. Engaged with Targeted Families and key workers appointed. Extension and consolidation of community development activities with new work plan developed. Community orchard feasibility study completed. Honiton Together established A programme of Tenancy Audits has been undertaken. Mapping project of housing land undertaken. SWITCH Project extended into Axminster & Honiton with the Countryside Service. Grounds maintenance TaFF identified improvements. Housing Matters magazines issued. Designated Tenant Complaint Panel established Tenant Scrutiny report and review of voids produced and recommendations acted upon, now working on tenant participation review.</p>	<p>Council Plan</p> <p>Homes and Communities Plan</p> <p>HRA Business Plan</p> <p>Tenant Involvement Strategy</p>
3	<p>Property and Asset Services Maintaining Council homes in good condition. Stabilised the responsive repairs contract. Undertaken extensive works to cure water penetration/storm damage to tenants homes. Procurement efficiencies and sharing good practice through Advantage South West. Powell Close, Seaton estate improvements completed. Accelerated improvement programmes leading to higher spend on tenants homes. Fire Risk Assessments being rolled out and fire protection works undertaken</p>	<p>Council Plan</p> <p>Homes and Communities Plan</p> <p>HRA Business Plan</p>

	<p>Asbestos procedures updated and annual surveys instigated. Car parking and garage reviews undertaken and actions being implemented. New lift for Trumps Court, Sidmouth. Restructured service to increase staff capacity. Met void turnaround target. Began feasibility and evaluation of 'off gas' homes to enable us to access ECO funding.</p>	
4	<p>Private Sector Housing Empty Homes Strategy refreshed. Private water supplies monitoring and risk assessments completed within deadlines. Input into the Drinking Water Inspectorate annual report. Improving housing conditions with an increase in regulatory action taken. Repair & Renew Grant promoted and administered. Home Improvement Loans promoted. Disabled facilities Grants administered and clients supported. Implementing the Home Energy Conservation Act Plan.</p>	<p>Council Plan Homes and Communities Plan Private Sector Housing Renewal Plan Empty Homes Strategy</p>
5	<p>General Housing Revenue Account Business Plan updated. Risk Register reviewed and updated. Public Health Plan produced with outcome to improve resident's health and wellbeing. Housing volatility fund being built up. HRA loan portfolio being monitored and managed. STAR tenant satisfaction survey undertaken. Plans, strategies and website updated. Housing Review Board considering a wide range of issues. Team building days undertaken. Staff engagement action plans produced and implemented.</p>	<p>Council Plan Homes and Communities Plan HRA Business Plan</p>

Section 3 – Looking forward : what we will do in 2015/16				
Key Service Objectives (<i>please include consultation or procurement activity required</i>)	Financial/ corporate resource	Lead Officers	Start date	End date
1) Living in this outstanding place				
Our Homes & Communities Plan aims are:				
1. Provide a range of affordable housing to meet housing needs.	HRA/Capital Plan	DB	Ongoing	
2. Prevent homelessness wherever possible, and otherwise ensure that accommodation is provided for those who do become homeless.	General Fund	DB	Ongoing	
3. Maintain and manage the council owned housing stock to a high standard, actively involving tenants in all aspects of the	HRA HRA/General	SB	Ongoing	

service.	Fund/Capital Plan	MS	Ongoing	
4. Bring sub-standard housing (of all tenures) up to current standards.	Ditto	MS	Ongoing	
5. Improve the use and safety of housing.	Ditto	MS/SB	Ongoing	
6. Enable elderly persons, disabled people, and people with special needs to live as Independently as possible and remain in their own homes if they so wish.	Ditto	MS/DB	Ongoing	
7. Improve the sustainability and energy efficiency of housing and eliminate fuel poverty.	Ditto	DB	Ongoing	
8. Widen the choice of housing, especially for those in priority need.	Ditto	SB	Ongoing	
9. Support the improvement and regeneration of local communities by encouraging social inclusion, involving children and young people in housing issues, and enabling residents to actively participate in their communities.	Ditto	All	Ongoing	
10. Have consistently satisfied customers.				
2) Working in the outstanding place				
Implement the Staff Engagement Survey actions 2014.	HRA/GF	DB/SB/MS	June 2013	June 2014
3) Enjoying this outstanding place				
Run a range of activities and initiatives that promote community cohesion and inclusion.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
4) Outstanding Council				
Core Service Specific Actions				
Produce at least 100 new affordable homes per annum.	Capital Plan/HRA	DB	Ongoing	
Produce at least one rural affordable scheme per annum.	Capital Plan	DB	Ongoing	
Maintain a healthy Housing Revenue Account, manage debt/loan portfolio, and programmes of maintenance, improvement and adaptations to tenant's homes.	HRA	JG	Ongoing	
Manage and utilise all housing assets to best effect and consider disposal where assets are not	HRA	JG	Ongoing	

meeting their purpose.				
Maintain high levels of rental and other income whilst achieving affordable homes and affordable warmth for tenants.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Manage the impact of Welfare Reform including Universal Credit to minimise any adverse impact on tenants and the business.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Procure services and programmes efficiently achieving value for money for service users.	HRA	JG	Ongoing	
Explore opportunities for introducing fair and proportionate service and support charges.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Comply with the regulatory framework and evidence achievement of the standards.	HRA	JG	Ongoing	
Support the Tenant Scrutiny process, Tenant Representative Group and Service Review Groups.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Deliver service efficiencies and improvements through the application of Systems Thinking techniques and ensure that we do 'what matters' for customers.	HRA/GF	All	Ongoing	
Improve the environment on selected estates.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Engage with identified Troubled/Targeted Families.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Continue the programme of estate walkabouts and Blitz Days.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Implement the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Refresh and implement the Tenancy Fraud strategy/policy and maintain robust tenancy checks.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Deliver continuing improvements in communal cleaning and grounds maintenance.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Undertake Fire Risk Assessments in flats and implement any improvements required to comply with good practice advice.	HRA	DB	Ongoing	
Implement the Private Sector Housing Renewal Plan delivery actions.	GF	MS	Ongoing	
Implement the loan scheme to provide alternative assistance through partners for elderly and vulnerable home owners to carry out repairs to their properties and to remain in their own homes.	GF	MS	Ongoing	
Ensure that private landlords register with a regulator under the Redress Scheme, and ensure estate agents and managing agents display fees in a clear and effective manner.	GF	MS	Ongoing	

Improve conditions in the private rented sector using advice and enforcement, specifically targeting houses in multiple occupation.	GF	MS	Ongoing	
Implement the Home Energy Conservation Act Strategy aimed at improving the thermal efficiency of homes in the district.	Capital Plan/GF	MS	Ongoing	
Implement the Empty Homes Strategy and revise the action plan.	GF	MS	Ongoing	
Reshape the Disabled Facilities Grant scheme in accordance with the Better Care Fund.	GF	MS	Ongoing	
Implement the Mobile Homes Act 2013.	GF	MS	Ongoing	
Complete the risk assessments of private water supplies and maintain a sampling regime, providing an annual report on progress to the Drinking Water Inspectorate.	GF	MS	Ongoing	
Develop the Switch project for training and employment opportunities for younger people.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Develop targeted community projects and facilities for young tenants to develop their skills.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Maintain the Devon Home Choice regional Choice Based Lettings scheme and ensure that we match the right people with the right home.	HRA/GF	DB	Ongoing	
Increase Home Safeguard income and ensure that the service is self-funding.	GF	SB	Ongoing	
Expand the use of Home Safeguard including lone working and telecare services.	GF	SB	Ongoing	
Support tenants in holding an annual tenant conference.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Expand homeless prevention work and have less temporary accommodation in use and fewer homeless acceptances.	GF	DB	Ongoing	
Continue to reduce the average void times and End to End times.	HRA	DB	Ongoing	
Achieve all responsive repairs within target timescales and at tenant's convenience.	HRA	DB	Ongoing	
Resolve penetrating dampness issues and ensure wind and weather tight properties.	HRA	DB	April 2015	
Meet the local offers/standards commitments to tenants contained in Our Commitments to You.	HRA	JG	Ongoing	
Implement a new housing management IT system to improve customer journeys, and facilitate mobile working and document management.	HRA	JG	Ongoing	

Encourage tenants to use digital self service and upgraded website.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Promote projects that improve resident's health and wellbeing.	HRA/GF	JG	Ongoing	
Continue to explore the Housing HUB concept for improved customer service.	HRA	DB	Ongoing	
Introduce the Countryside outreach project for tenants.	HRA	SB	Ongoing	
Undertake a longitudinal study of tenant opinion.	HRA	DB	April 2015	Ongoing
Act on the STAR tenant satisfaction survey results.	HRA	DB	April 2015	Sept 2015
Enable the introduction of Tenant Inspectors.	HRA	DB	Jan 2015	Ongoing
Explore the options for a Handy Person Service.	HRA	DB	April 2015	Ongoing
Implement a programme of fuel efficiency measures for off gas properties.	HRA	DB	Sept 2015	March 2016
Refresh the Homes and Communities Plan.	HRA	DB	April 2015	

**Section 3 a – Looking forward: any Service challenges or pressures for the next three years?
(Revenue/Capital)**

1. Operating the Housing Revenue Account under the self-financing regime and managing high levels of debt whilst continuously improving services for customers and delivering our development/acquisition ambitions.
2. Managing the transition to Welfare Reform which may lead to the loss of income if tenants struggle to pay their rent and service charges.
3. Improving housing standards in the private sector.
4. Preventing homelessness and increasing housing options.
5. Managing the reduction in revenue funding for supported housing for vulnerable groups and likely ending of the Local Welfare Support Scheme.
6. Managing the loss of Supporting People income and integration with Social Care.
7. Housing demand increasing faster than our ability to supply housing options.
8. Insufficient subsidy/grant/opportunities to provide new affordable homes.
9. Insufficient resources to achieve our private sector housing ambitions and improving conditions.
10. Implementing the Health and Wellbeing priorities.

11. Improving the energy efficiency of tenant's homes.
12. Assisting the development of a sense of community in Cranbrook and high quality homes.
13. Improved tenancy sustainment and wellbeing of tenants and communities.
14. Changing the lives of identified Troubled/Targeted families.
15. Implementation of a new housing management IT system/Worksmart/Electronic Document Management.
16. Recording all non housing assets and producing an inspection schedule and programme maintenance schedule.
17. Recruitment and training of technical staff to have the right staff in the right job.

Section 3 b– Looking forward: options for doing things differently –

financial savings / increasing income

1. Establishing East Devon Homes as a standalone business unit of the Council
2. Self-financing of Council housing with the freedoms from government control.
3. Implementing the new software package for housing, implementation and the introduction of mobile working.
4. Encourage generic working and review the 'patch' arrangements. Continue to explore the Customer Hub concept.
5. Continue the shift from responsive to proactive asset management for all Housing assets.
6. Explore opportunities for shared working and improving value for money from services/activities.
7. Providing a mobile support service in the private sector.
8. Continue to extract savings from the homelessness budget through early intervention and prevention initiatives, without compromising service delivery.
9. Attracting more Home Safeguard business, including Telecare, through marketing and promotion of our services.
10. Facilitating activities through our community development programme with a focus on health and wellbeing.
11. Introducing a Service Charge regime and examine incentive schemes.
12. Greater enforcement presence in the private sector.
13. Responding to findings of the new STAR survey and Viewpoint survey results.

Section 3 c – Looking forward: Changes to measures and performance indicators - what we will measure, how often and for whom					
Measure/indicator	How often – monthly, quarterly, bi-annually, annually	For whom? Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny	Link to Corporate Priorities (listed on page 3 1,2,3 or 4)	Responsible Officer for production of management information	Retain this measure (yes/no) or new
1. Homes and Communities Plan.	Quarterly	Overview & Scrutiny	Living in an outstanding place	John Golding	Yes
2. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.	Quarterly	Housing Review Board	Living in an outstanding place	John Golding	Yes
3. Housing Revenue Account budget.	Quarterly	Housing Review Board	Living in an outstanding place	John Golding	Yes
4. Private Sector Renewal Plan & Home Energy Conservation Act Plan.	Quarterly	Overview & Scrutiny	Living in an outstanding place	Meryl Spencer	Yes
5. NI155 Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (LAA).	Quarterly	Overview & Scrutiny	Living in an outstanding place	Paul Lowe	Yes
6. NI156 Number of households living in temporary accommodation.	Quarterly	Overview & Scrutiny	Living in an outstanding place	Andrew Mitchell	Yes
7. NI158 % non-decent council homes.	Quarterly	Housing Review Board	Living in an outstanding place	Jonathan Burns	Yes
8. Capability at Point of Transaction - Ability to deal with customers at first contact	Quarterly	Overview & Scrutiny	Living in an outstanding place	John Golding	Yes
9. Percentage of Customer Satisfaction within the Housing Service.	Quarterly	Housing Review Board	Living in an outstanding place	Dennis Boobier	Yes
10. Percentage of preventable demand in the Housing Service.	Quarterly	Overview & Scrutiny	Living in an outstanding place	John Golding	Yes
11. Responsive repair End to End times & right first time.	Quarterly	Housing Review Board	Living in an outstanding place	Mark Dale	Yes
12. Number of empty properties returned to use.	Quarterly	Overview & Scrutiny	Living in an outstanding place	Meryl Spencer	Yes
13. Risk assessments of private water supplies.	Quarterly	Overview and Scrutiny	Living in an outstanding place	Meryl Spencer	Yes

14. % of rent due on council owned homes collected.	Monthly	Cabinet	NA	Sue Bewes	Yes
15. End to End time for a void property.	Monthly	Cabinet	NA	Mark Dale	Yes
16. Time taken between the start of a tenancy (keys to the new tenant) until the point when the first rent or benefit payment is received.	Monthly	Cabinet	NA	John Golding	Yes

Section 4 – Resources and workforce planning	
Full time equivalents/Headcount as at 01/04/2014	FTE = 89.11 Headcount = 97
Turnover (April 2013 to March 2014)	Voluntary Turnover = 7% Voluntary & Non Voluntary Turnover = 11%
Absence (April 2013 to March 2014)	Days lost per person: 10.5 days
Which posts have you found it difficult to recruit for/retain in last 12 months?	Programme Works and Technical Officers/Maintenance Surveyors
Number of staff rated below 'meets' in Performance Excellence Review?	A small number of people are being performance managed with close supervision, support and task monitoring.
Number of 'high potential staff'	We have several officers on professional education courses and a Service Training programme that seeks to develop staff.
Notes	Succession planning to cope with the retirement of key staff. Supporting the Apprentice scheme to help 'grow our own'.

Section 5 – Training and development			
Team based skills/development required	Who for	Expected outcome	When
1. Customer service	All staff	Improved customer service and complaint handling	During 2015

2. Equalities	All staff	Awareness of our responsibilities	During 2015
3. Safeguarding children	All staff	Awareness of the Councils policy and reporting procedure	During 2015
4. Safeguarding adults	All staff	Awareness of the Councils policy and reporting procedure	During 2015
5. Data protection and information security	All staff	Awareness of the Councils policy	During 2015
6. Social Media policy and use	All staff	Appropriate and positive use of social media	During 2014
7. Systems Thinking	Managers	Take forward the next series of reviews	During 2014
8. Mental Health Awareness	Selected staff	Improved understanding of mental health issues	During 2015
9. Continuing Professional Development/professional training	Selected staff	Maintaining high standards of professional service	During 2015

Section 6 – Risks			
New/emerging risks description – See attached Risk Register for current service risks	Impact [minor, significant, serious, major]	Likelihood [remote, unlikely, likely, very likely]	How managed/controlled What action will you take to reduce/minimise risk
From HRA Business Plan Loans taken out to meet the cost of self-financing of Council housing	3	2	Loans kept to the minimum required and negotiated at low/fixed interest rates. Maintain a healthy HRA surplus.
Rents do not rise or are not collected as anticipated due to Welfare Reform and/or other factors.	3	3	Provision made for increased bad debt. Welfare Advisors appointed. Promote Credit Unions and use of Discretionary Housing Payments.
Right to Buy receipts exceed predictions which need to be reinvested	2	2	Cancel the agreement with the CLG and repay receipts with interest.
Right to Buy sales are lower than	1	2	Costs could be reduced, probably in the

planned.			major repairs area. Loans could be increased.
Loss of Supporting People income and/or a cut in the funding for the community alarm system.	3	3	New business generated and/or service charges increased.
The programme to bring sheltered housing up to fit for purpose standards.	2	2	Reschedule costs, bid for external funding reprioritise work planned.
The cost of maintaining the planned cyclical repairs programme exceeds budget.	3	2	Costs in other areas could be reduced. Loans could be increased.
The achievement of the major repairs programme proves more expensive than anticipated.	3	3	Programme items may need to postponed or lengthened. Expenditure in other areas may need to be cut back, threatening other plan objectives Additional loans may be taken on to ensure slippages do not occur.
The demand for responsive repairs exceeds planned levels.	3	2	Costs in other areas could be reduced.
Failure of responsive repair contractor.	3	3	Other partnering contractor takes over the area.
Changing cost of borrowing.	3	2	Reschedule borrowing and/or work programmes.
Decent Homes Standard raised significantly.	3	2	Business Plan to be reviewed in light of changes.
Unforeseen expenditure required on Council homes.	3	2	Programmes in other areas adjusted to compensate.
New development schemes, locally and nationally creating labour shortages.	3	2	Other costs could be reduced.
Ability to attract and retain suitably qualified housing staff.	3	3	Ensure that recruitment packages are attractive.
Housing staff lone working	2	2	Policies in place to mitigate the risk and Home Safeguard monitoring.
General Fund risks			
Increase in homelessness	2	2	Homelessness Strategy actions.
Failure of private water supply	3	2	Risk assessments.
Home Safeguard system failure/interruption to service	2	2	Disaster recovery arrangements and maintenance contracts.
Data Protection	3	2	Corporate policies and training.
Lone working	2	2	Corporate policies and training.
Grant fraud	1	2	Checks as part of the application process.
Affordable housing scheme failure	1	2	Financial appraisal of development schemes.

Section 7 - Equalities		
Equalities Analysis Requirements	Impact Level [High, Medium, Low]	How managed/controlled
1. Homes and Communities Plan 2012	Medium	Equality Analysis undertaken with details.
2. HRA Business Plan 2014	Medium	Equality Analysis undertaken with details.
3. Homelessness Strategy	High	Equalities Analysis being refreshed with new strategy.
4. Private Sector Renewal Plan 2012	Medium	Equalities Analysis being refreshed with new strategy.
5. Devon Home Choice	High	Equality Analysis undertaken with details.
6. Tenant Involvement Strategy	Medium	Equality Analysis undertaken with details.
7. Local Welfare Support Scheme	High	Equality Analysis being refreshed as the scheme is changed

Report to: **Housing Review Board**

Date of Meeting: 15 January 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None

Review date for release None



Agenda item: 11

Subject: **Standardised Tenants and Residents (STAR) Survey Results**

Purpose of report: To provide some of the key results from the 2014 STAR survey and support the presentation by BMG Research on their findings.

Recommendation: **To approve BMG Research's 2014 STAR survey reports.**

Reason for recommendation: The STAR survey provides statistical information about our housing service. This information is critical for performance monitoring and service delivery improvement.

Officer: Natalie Brown
nbrown@eastdevon.gov.uk

Financial implications: The report is for information and there are no financial implications.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications.

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk

Links to background information: -----

Link to Council Plan: Living in this outstanding place

1 Background

- 1.1 The results from STAR surveys provide important information about how our services are performing. The last STAR survey was in 2012. It is recommended that Councils undertake a satisfaction survey at least every two years. Unlike many other surveys, a more in depth analysis can be performed on STAR survey data since they are more statistically robust. This enables a greater understanding of what the data is saying.
- 1.2 In July 2014 East Devon District Council commissioned BMG Research to carry out EDDC's 2014 STAR surveys. Fieldwork began in September and was completed at the end of October 2014. Three surveys were sent out to general needs, sheltered tenants and leaseholders. Questions were kept the same as the 2012 survey to allow for comparison and for performance monitoring. With the implementation of the new housing system it was recommended that some additional questions on tenant/resident internet usage be included since we currently know very little about this topic.

- 1.3 In total 1,108 general needs and sheltered tenants responded to the survey.
- 1.4 It is worth noting that although the methodology was the same as in 2012, a slightly larger sample was taken from Honiton and Exmouth. This was in an attempt to boost the numbers of young people responding since this group were shown to be the most dissatisfied with our services in 2012 and it was argued that having a larger response from this group would enable better insight into this group.

2 Results

- 2.1 Overall, satisfaction scores are positive and EDDC housing service is performing well. However, compared to the 2012 survey there has been a slight decline in reported satisfaction with our services (see table 1 below for summary). This is in line with other landlords. Figures published in the year end accounts of the 50 biggest landlords (housing associations) reveals a drop in average overall customer satisfaction from 82.5% of tenants satisfied in 2012/13 to 81.5% in 2013/14.
- 2.2 General Need (GN) Tenant Highlights:
- 88% of respondents are satisfied with the overall housing service.
 - Those living in Honiton report higher levels of dissatisfaction compared to all other areas.
 - 35-54 year olds were significantly more dissatisfied with the service overall compared with other age groups. Please note the 16-34 year old group has a small sample size.
 - Respondents are more likely to be dissatisfied with the service if they had had contact with us in the last 12 months or experienced anti social behaviour (ASB).
 - Overall, repairs and maintenance, quality of home and dealing with ASB are the top three priority areas for respondents.
 - Respondents are most likely to have experienced ASB if they live in Honiton or Exmouth.
 - Repairs and maintenance remains the most important service to GN respondents.
 - High satisfaction with repairs and maintenance is the driver for reporting better overall satisfaction with the housing service.
 - The top three neighbourhood problems reported by respondents are car parking, noisy neighbours and rubbish or litter.
 - Across all areas of the contact service respondents who are employed show more dissatisfaction with this aspect of the service compared to other groups.
 - 70% of GN tenants aged 16 to 64 years use the internet whilst. 23% of 65+ years use the internet.
- 2.3 Sheltered Tenant Highlights:
- 91% of respondents are satisfied with the overall housing service.
 - Those who said their disability limited them and who were under 65 years of age show greater dissatisfaction with our services.
 - Respondents living in Sidmouth are significantly more satisfied than those living in Honiton and Seaton.
 - Respondents who have had a repair in the last 12 months are more likely to be satisfied overall with the service.
 - Respondents who contacted the housing service in the last 12 months (not about a repair) were less satisfied than those who had not had contact.
 - Repairs and maintenance, quality of home and the emergency call system are the three most important housing related services.
 - 36% sheltered tenants have access to the internet.
 - Those who live in Axminster, Exmouth and Honiton are significantly more likely to say they have experienced ASB in the last 12 months than those in Sidmouth.
 - Those who are under 65 and have a disability are significantly more likely to say they have experienced ASB in the last 12 months.

2.5 Below are some of the data highlights. Full reports are available using the links above. BMG Research will present the findings in more detail during the meeting.

Table 1: A summary of satisfaction scores by tenant group

Question (% respondents satisfied)	2012 Overall %	2014 Overall %	2012 General %	2014 General %	2012 Sheltered %	2014 Sheltered %
Overall service	91	90	89	88	96	91
Quality of the home	89	89	86	85	94	92
Value for money for rent	92	92	91	90	95	93
With the neighbourhood as a place to live	91	91	89	90	93	92
Repairs and maintenance	91	89	88	86	96	92
That the housing service listens to views and acts upon them	76	76	73	71	82	80
Final outcome of contact with service	81	76	80	74	84	78

Table 2: A summary of satisfaction scores for leaseholders

Question (% respondents satisfied)	2012 Overall %	2014 Overall %
Overall service	68	64
Quality of the home	94	88
Value for money for service charges	57	62
With the neighbourhood as a place to live	78	74
Repairs and maintenance	60	55
That the housing service listens to views and acts upon them	38	45

3 Conclusions

- 3.1 Despite a small decline in satisfaction, scores show that EDDC Housing Service is performing well. This success deserves to be celebrated. However, there are key areas which are worth exploring further – contact with our services, repairs and our neighbourhoods (particularly into ASB). Similarly, there are groups of tenants who are not as happy with the services we provide, such as younger age groups, those living in Honiton and Exmouth and differences in housing tenure. Deeper analysis and future research looking into these issues and groups need to be planned.
- 3.2 Further presentations are planned for staff and tenants where the findings can be discussed and feedback to be prepared and sent out to those who responded to the survey. Future work on how we can use the results to inform decision making and make service delivery changes will also need to be planned.

Report to: **Housing Review Board**

Date of Meeting: 15 January 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None

Review date for release None

Agenda item: 12

Subject: **The future of support services at East Devon District Council**

Purpose of report: To set out the options for taking the service forward from April 2015, including tenant feedback from the consultation meetings, following the termination of Supporting People contracts by Devon County Council. The report summarises and concludes the comprehensive consultation journey and conversation on the future service delivery model for housing related support and enhanced housing management in sheltered housing.

To continue our valued support service for sheltered housing residents officers are recommending a simple flat rate support charge to cover the cost of alarm and mobile support services, offset by Housing Benefit contributions towards housing management activities, for those eligible. This approach will enable us to maintain a service close to the historical service developed over a number of years and sufficiently flexible to adapt to changing tenant expectations.

Recommendation: The Housing Review Board is asked to choose option 1 (b) to take the support service forward from April 2015.

Option 1 (b) Charging for support by way of a flat rate of support to all sheltered tenants, and with housing benefit (HB) covering the current housing management element of the service (subject to meeting HB eligibility criteria);
And,
That the Board sanction the additional cost of £1400-£3000 to pay for VAT consultant advice in relation to these service models.

Reason for recommendation: To ensure the Board is provided with all necessary information to make an informed choice of service option for the future.

Officer: Sue Bewes, Housing Landlord Services Manager x 2220
sbewes@eastdevon.gov.uk

Financial implications: These have been indicated in the report however there is still some uncertainty about which elements of support are eligible for housing benefit.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications requiring comment at this stage.

Equalities impact: High Impact
Vulnerable customer base due to age and/or infirmity

Risk: High Risk
Some customers will not be eligible for financial help and therefore unable to access crucial support to enable them to remain living in their own homes



Links to background information: -----

Link to Council Plan: Living in this outstanding place

1. Background

- 1.1 The Housing Review Board has received a series of reports during the year detailing the impact of Devon County Council's (DCC) service of notice on our Older Persons Targeted Support Agreement from April 2015, and the work we are doing to try to safeguard the future provision of support services in East Devon.
- 1.2 We presented the Board with several potential options for taking the service forward (June 2015) when the Supporting People grant ceases. Of these it was agreed to that we would consult with tenants on two separate options - (1) keeping the service as it currently is and charging everyone according to the level of support they require; and (2) introducing an enhanced housing management service and charging tenants only for the support they specifically request. Under both options the Home Safeguard alarm would also be charged for.
- 1.3 Further details of the options and outcome from the consultation are given below in sections 2, 3 and 4.
- 1.4 We have continued to work with DCC during this period of change and have notified them of all tenants who we consider already have (red) or should be assessed for (amber) a social care package. We understand from DCC that they will begin to contact and assess tenants from December 2014. We have asked them to let us know the outcome of their assessments so that we are aware of which of our tenants are receiving funding for a social care package.
- 1.5 The Board is also aware that we are working with the consultants Support Solutions and Housing Benefit colleagues to see whether and how much we can claim through Housing Benefit (HB) for the enhanced housing management service. If we are able to then tenants in receipt of HB would not have to pay for this element of the costs in options 1a, 1b and option 2.

2. The options

- 2.1 The two options that we consulted tenants on:
 - Option 1 – retaining the service as it is and charging everyone for each element of the service provided.
 - Option 2 – enhanced housing management with tenants paying for support as and when it is needed.Full details of these options were given to the Board on 5 June 2014.
- 2.2 Support Solutions have advised us that under option 2 in order to claim extra Housing Benefit we would need to show that the two roles (housing management and support) are clearly separate. This is covered further below.
- 2.3 Discussing these options with Support Solutions and taking into account feedback from the consultation sessions, we realise that there is also another possible option which is close to option 1. This option (1a) involves claiming from HB for the housing management work that our Mobile Support Officers currently undertake (about 40% of their current workload). The amount received via HB would reduce the amount that we would need to charge tenants in receipt of housing benefit and so reduce the costs of option 1 for some 80% of our tenants.
- 2.4 We could also consider reclaiming the housing management costs in Option 1 from HB but instead of having a different charge for low, medium and high levels of support we charge a flat rate of support to all sheltered tenants (1b).

2.5 As we will no longer be receiving SP funding we will no longer be constrained by the terms of the Older Persons Contract. We can now be more creative in the type of support offered to tenants, so we could extend the service to offer a wider range of support options, such as accompanying tenants to medical appointments and shopping, in a similar way to option 2. We would be able to introduce this part of the service gradually, and so gain a feel for the potential uptake.

3. Outcome of our consultations with sheltered housing tenants

3.1 As requested by the Board we consulted with tenants on options 1 and 2. Options 1a and 1b have only just been realised and so we were not able to consult with tenants on the details of these variations.

3.2 In October and November we held 19 consultation events across the district attended by over 500 tenants, family members and friends. We gave a presentation outlining why we have to make changes to the service and explained the possible future options. At the end of each session we asked tenants if they would like to indicate which of the two options they preferred (see **Annex 1**).

3.3 As you would expect the topic provoked much lively discussion. Many tenants who attended said that they greatly value the service, but some felt that they did not use or need it. Some people asked why they could not opt out of the service and have the alarms removed. We explained that our sheltered housing is in high demand, is compatible with our local demographics and ageing population and is a type of accommodation suitable for people with support needs. Others wanted to have just the alarm service and we explained that this would be possible under Option 2 for those on housing benefit, but self-funders would have to also pay the enhanced housing management cost.

A full report of the comments, questions and answers from all the consultation events is attached as **Annex 1**.

3.5 Some tenants who would have liked to come to the meetings were unable to due to mobility, sickness, or other commitments. Our mobile support officers have visited many of these tenants individually to discuss the options with them. The opportunity to be consulted and show a preference has been given to all sheltered tenants (1347 properties) - 527 tenants cast a preference. Of these, 126 preferred option 1 and 342 preferred option 2.

3.6 Also 13 tenants did not want either of these options and said they wanted to be offered alternative options, some were unable to decide. Many said that they did not want to pay anything, but some of these chose one of the options anyway.

3.7 It should be remembered that the majority of tenants attending the meetings are those with low level support needs. This may influence their choice of option and the overall majority showing for Option 2 may not truly reflect the wishes of supported housing tenants as a whole.

4. Feedback from our mobile support officers and the Sheltered Housing Review Group

Our mobile support officers (MSOs) were able to give their feedback on the various options at a meeting on 10 December. We also consulted with the Sheltered Housing Review Group on that day. Feedback from both these meetings is given in **Annex 2**.

5. Work with Support Solutions and housing benefit

5.1 We are working with Support Solutions to scope the approach to Housing Benefit with regard to getting the range of housing management functions performed by our mobile support officers covered by HB.

5.2 They have recommended that we approach housing benefit once HRB has decided which option to take forward from April 2015, but we have initiated discussions in advance of the decision to ensure that we are considering realistic and workable options.

5.3 We estimate the following charges per tenant per week;

Option 1 (a)	
Support charge (60%* of service)	£5.83
housing management (40%* of service)	£3.50
Option 2	
Enhanced housing management	£6.74

* subject to meeting HB eligibility criteria

5.4 A summary of the effect of the options and the cost to tenants is shown in the table below (NB these assume that 40% of the housing management figure would be HB eligible – this has yet to be confirmed and the percentage which is eligible may be reduced):

	Low support needs	Medium support needs	High support needs
Option 1	£9.86	£16.02	£22.18

	Low support needs	Medium support needs	High support needs
Option 1 (a) for self funders	£9.86	£16.02	£22.18
Option 1 (a) for those on housing benefit (cost of £3.50 for housing management deducted)	£6.36	£12.52	£18.68

Option 1 (b)	£3.70 alarm + £5.83 support = £9.53 for tenants on HB + further £3.50 for 'self funding' tenants = £13.03
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Option	No support	30 minutes support*	60 minutes support*
Option 2 – tenants on HB £9/30mins support	£3.70	£12.70	£21.70
Option 2 – Self funders includes EHM charge of £6.74	£10.44	£19.44	£28.44

*£9/30mins support

- 5.5 We need to fully understand the potential financial implications of these changes to our most vulnerable tenants and will carry out an equality impact assessment once we know the amount of housing management costs that will be HB eligible.
- 5.6 When Universal Credit is introduced HB payments to working age people will be paid directly to the individual. As the large majority of our sheltered housing tenants are pensioners this is unlikely to have a significant effect on our ability to recoup the agreed housing management costs through HB payments.

6. The financial situation

- 6.1 For many years the Supporting People income from DCC was not sufficient to meet the actual cost for the Sheltered Housing service provided by the Council and so the service was subsidised by the Housing Revenue Account. With this in mind it is a giant step to introduce a new charging structure and at the same time come in on budget. We have indicated that for existing tenants we will phase in the charges over the next three years. Therefore, we need to look at the financial situation in 2017/18 when the charges set need to be meeting the full costs to us.
- 6.2 The cost of the service for 2015/16 is estimated at £623,940 and this cost will no doubt rise by the time we reach 2017/18. Because of this the following budgets under the various options are in excess of the 2015/16 budget and we have advised tenants that we will not increase any of the charges for the options until 2017/18 and this will be the ideal time and opportunity to recalculate all of the charges with 'break even' in mind.
- 6.3 The charge of £3.70 for the alarm service would not go to the HRA but to the General Fund as it is a Home Safeguard charge and this has been excluded from the budget figure of £623,940.
- 6.4 Under option 1 and 1 (a) we would recoup £631,031 as shown below:
- 761 tenants on low per week of $(£9.86 - £3.70) \times 52 = £243,764$
 549 tenants on medium per week of $(£16.02 - £3.70) \times 52 = £351,711$
 37 tenants on high per week of $(£22.18 - £3.70) \times 52 = £35,556$
- (NB - the number of tenants in each category reflects the current situation).
- 6.5 With option 1 (b) we would recoup £653,511 $(£13.03 - £3.70) \times 52 \times 1347$ tenants)
- 6.6 So under options 1, 1 (a) and 1 (b) we would cover the costs of the service to the HRA on the current budget figure (once the charge is fully introduced).
- 6.7 We cannot at this stage predict the income we may receive under option 2 as we do not know the likely take up of support services from our tenants. However, if this is the option which the Board decide to take forward we would look to extend our support services out to both our general needs tenants and the private sector.
- 6.8 Charges for support and management services may incur VAT at 20%. To be certain about this we would need to ask our VAT advisors and they would charge for this work. We would ask that the Board sanction this additional cost which would be in the region of £1400-£3000. If VAT is payable is it likely that some tenants with specific health needs would not have to pay the VAT on the support charge.
- 6.9 Adding VAT to the options would give the following maximum weekly figures, but these figures do not include the alarm charge of £3.70 per week, which is exempt from VAT:

For options 1 & 1 (a)

$$£6.16 + £1.23 \text{ VAT} = £7.39$$

$$£12.32 + £2.46 \text{ VAT} = £14.78$$

$$£18.48 + £3.70 \text{ VAT} = £22.18$$

For option 1 (b)

£9.33 per week plus £1.87 VAT would give a figure of £11.20.

For option 2

For 30 minutes support of £7.50, VAT would be £1.50 giving a figure of £9.

7. Comparing the options

Option	Key features	What will tenants pay for	Housing benefit input	Feedback from staff and tenants
1. Charging everyone for everything	<p>Very similar to our current arrangements</p> <p>The option will be phased in over 3 years so reducing the impact of changing from a 'free' to a charged for service</p>	<p>The HSG alarm</p> <p>The level of support they require - minimum/medium/high</p>	None	<p>Tenants - 24%* of those who came and who expressed a preference wanted this option</p> <p>*9% of all sheltered tenants</p>
1 (a) .Similar to option 1 but with HB covering current housing management service and the ability to offer a greater range of support options	<p>Support at similar levels as we currently offer Minimum/medium/high but tenants can also have the ability to buy extra services such as an MSO accompanying them shopping/to doctors</p> <p>We could phase in the charges for existing tenants</p>	<p>The HSG alarm</p> <p>The level of support required but costs will be reduced for 80% of tenants as HB will cover the housing management element</p> <p>Tenants could also buy extra specific support such as trips out</p>	HB should cover for the amount of housing management that we currently offer	We did not consult with tenants on this option
1(b). Similar to 1 (a) but all tenants are charged the same amount	<p>All tenants pay for the alarm and support element and self funders will pay for enhanced housing management.</p> <p>The support charge will be equal for everyone regardless of level of need.</p>	<p>The HSG alarm and a support charge.</p> <p>Self funders will also pay for enhanced housing management.</p>	HB should cover for the amount of housing management that we currently offer	We did not consult with tenants on this option

Option	Key features	What will tenants pay for	Housing benefit input	Feedback from staff and tenants
2. Enhanced housing management and paying for support as wanted	<p>Some officers will provide the housing management option and some the support element</p> <p>The support on offer will be much wider than currently offered</p>	<p>The HSG alarm</p> <p>Housing management charges (self funders only)</p> <p>Any support that they wish to buy</p>	<p>HB should cover the enhanced housing management costs for tenants on HB</p>	<p>Tenants – 67%* of those who came and who expressed a preference wanted this option</p> <p>*25% of all sheltered tenants</p>

SWOT analysis

Option	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
1. Charging everyone for everything	<p>The service is known to tenants and staff</p> <p>No changes needed to job descriptions or carry out staff consultations</p>	<p>Some tenants feel this is an expensive option</p> <p>Everyone pays even if they don't need the support</p>	<p>Maintains the current service</p>	<p>Dissatisfied tenants who resent paying for a level of service they feel they are not receiving</p>
1 (a). Similar to option 1 but with HB covering current housing management service and the ability to offer a greater range of support options	<p>The service is similar to that offered now and so known to tenants and staff</p> <p>No changes needed to job descriptions or undertake staff consultation</p> <p>Lower costs than option 1 for most tenants as HB covering the housing management option</p>	<p>We have not consulted on this option with tenants</p>	<p>The potential ability to offer a wider range of support options</p> <p>The ability to test this out whilst we have the safety net of a service tenants and staff are familiar with</p>	<p>Some tenants who are not eligible for HB may resent paying for a level of service they feel they are not receiving.</p>

Option	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
1 (b). Similar to 3 but all tenants are charged the same amount	<p>The service is known to tenants and staff</p> <p>No changes needed to job descriptions or carry out staff consultations</p>	<p>Tenants may feel this is an expensive option</p> <p>Everyone pays even if they don't need the support</p>	<p>Tenants can switch easily between the level of support they require without worrying about increasing or decreasing charges</p> <p>We will know exactly what our income stream will be</p> <p>The potential ability to offer a wider range of support options</p> <p>The ability to test this out whilst we have the safety net of a service tenants and staff are familiar with.</p>	<p>Some tenants who are not eligible for HB may resent paying for a level of service they feel they are not receiving.</p>
2. Enhanced housing management and paying for support as wanted	<p>Much more flexibility to offer a much wider range of support services</p> <p>Tenants on HB who do not want support will only have to pay for the HSG alarm</p>	<p>Tenants may not opt to pay for support and this may leave vulnerable tenants at risk</p>	<p>The ability to offer a much wider range of 'support' options</p> <p>The opportunity to offer the support service to general needs tenants and eventually potentially to private clients</p>	<p>We do not know the likely take up for support which will affect our income stream.</p> <p>This will put jobs at risk.</p>

8. Staffing

- 8.1 Options 1, 1a and 1b are based on our existing service delivery. We undertook an activity analysis which showed that currently approximately 40% of staff time is spent on housing management and 60% on support. Under option 1 we would re-allocate the costs between housing management and support based on what work staff are actually undertaking now. Nothing would change in terms of service delivery and no adjustment is needed to the job descriptions.
- 8.2 Option 2 would be a standalone housing management service. This would therefore require new posts and job descriptions. This would be funded through service charges. Any support service that you choose to provide and subsidise, or collect through personal charges from tenants would need to be a separate service delivered by a specified team of staff.
- 8.3 We have drafted job descriptions for the potential new roles under option 2. We would need to go through a consultation process with staff and this would take several months.

9. The Home Safeguard alarm and Housing proactive system

- 9.1 Housing Benefit will not pay for the personal alarm service through Home Safeguard as they see this as providing support to individuals rather than being property based.

- 9.2 In the report to the HRB meeting of 6 November 2014 we outlined a property based alarm system known as 'housing proactive' which may be eligible for housing benefit subsidy. We outlined some of the possible advantages of this type of alarm in that report.
- 9.3 We can foresee a service whereby we install both types of alarms into sheltered properties – the Home Safeguard alarm for personal emergencies and the housing proactive alarm for property based matters such as reporting repairs, door entry systems etc.
- 9.4 We have not made any further progress with investigating this alarm, but we will be speaking to the company again in the New Year once we know the direction of travel for the support service as a whole.

10. Selecting an option

10.1 The Housing Review Board are asked to select option 1 (b) to take forward for the sheltered service from April 2015

10.2. There are several advantages to Option 1 (b) including:

- the service is very similar to our present service, and as such is familiar to tenants and staff, but with the potential to offer a wider range of support and more flexible service that consultation shows us is important to tenants.
- charging a flat rate means there is easy flexibility for tenants to move between levels of support need without the requirement to discuss charges at the very time when they are the least able to do so e.g. if a tenant suddenly requires more support due to ill health, the support can be put in immediately. It may also be preferred by future paying customers if we take the service into the private sector, as it represents a simple, straightforward concept of one price for all, regardless of level of need.
- we will know exactly what our income stream will be year on year.
- we will not need to change job descriptions and will not need to undertake the lengthy staff consultations required by option 2, which could lead to a reduction in staff numbers if they do not like the new roles or are nervous for the future of their jobs.
- this is one of the less risky options put before the Board, as it does not rely heavily on the unpredictable uptake of the support services offered to break even, as is the case with option 2.

10.3 The disadvantages to Option 1 (b) include:

- some tenants may feel they are having to pay for a service they do not want or do not receive. However, sheltered housing is for individuals with an identified support need. If tenants do not have these needs and do not wish to pay for support they must contact Housing Needs with a view to moving to more appropriate (general needs) accommodation.
- We consulted tenants on two possible options and of these option 2 was preferred by the majority of tenants who expressed a preference. However, it should be remembered that only 39% of sheltered housing tenants have expressed a preference, and that the majority of those preferences cast came to us via the consultation events. Arguably the fact that many attendees favoured option 2 is not surprising, as the more mobile tenants that are able to come out to events are the same ones likely to prefer an option that provides the ability to pay for support only as and when it is needed. The preference of those on higher levels of support, and not able to come to events, is not likely to be the same, but is a lot harder to elicit.
- We did not consult on option 1 (b) as it did not reveal itself until after the consultation. However, consultation did make it plain to attendees that the decision taken by the Board would be based upon a variety of critical elements (such as

relative risks, opportunities, costs, etc) and that tenant opinion would form just one of these.

11. **Recommendations**

11.1 The Housing Review Board is asked to choose option 1 (b) to take the support service forward from April 2015.

Option 1 (b) involves charging for support by way of a flat rate of support to all sheltered tenants, and with HB covering the housing management element of the service.

11.2 That the Board sanction the additional cost of £1400-£3000 to pay for VAT consultant advice in relation to these service models.

Outcome of tenant consultation on the future of support services

VENUE	Number of attendees	OPTION		
		1	OPTION 2	OTHER
Clayton House	15	1	12	2
Woodbury (both sessions)	27	6	11	0
Trumps Court	36	1	15	1
Ratcliffe House	40	9	17	0
Palmer House	46	9	29	0
Bidmead	33	7	33	0
Lymebourne	55	17	38	0
Millwey	33	5	15	3
Churchill Court	28	2	18	0
Dunning Court	20	3	13	0
Yonder Close	17	13	2	0
Albion Court	16	0	11	1
Morgan Court	21	0	17	0
Broadview	16	8	8	0
Mackarnass Hall, Honiton	16	1	13	0
Musbury	11	3	8	0
Seaton	42	4	31	0
Budleigh Salterton	30	14	9	0
Sidford	11	3	5	0
Preferences from home visits	14	20	37	6
Running Total	527	126	342	13

Synopsis of the main comments and questions raised:

- What if we only want the alarm but no call, or if we don't want the service at all?
- Do the changes only affect those that pay at the moment?
- Please keep the alarm service – it is crucial to our security especially if you live alone
- Will the new charges apply to everyone, even those on HB?
- Staff capacity – will they be able to deliver all that's set out under Option 2?
- Why can't some tenants have option 1 and some option 2?
- What happens if I don't pay the charge, will I be evicted?
- Feel you should be looking at this and embracing personal care
- No vote disgusted!! As do not want any services and forced to pay for them! All I need is a place to live and have family to support me
- I don't use the service so why should I have to pay in the future – can I opt out?
- I really value the service and can't do without it

- The pendant is invaluable but I don't need the mobile support officers so much as I have carers four times a day – is it possible just to have the alarms?
- The fact that my mother has the system is very reassuring and gives me peace of mind that she's looked after
- Why can't the alarms be removed if not wanted?
- Doesn't our rent pay for housing management anyway?
- I currently pay for the service – what is my position?
- Will you help us move to general purpose accommodation if we want?
- Most valuable part of the service is the smoke alarms and knowing someone's there if they go off
- Feel it is all very expensive if you are on a low wage - £18/hour is a lot of money to pay someone
- I don't need the service now but I might in a few years so it's worth it to me
- Can we have a third option which is just the alarm?

Questions and comments from each session

Question/Comment	Response
Clayton House, Monday 13 October 15 tenants or family members attended	
Everyone values what we're getting – it satisfies needs and would be very hard to give anything up	
What will happen if everyone says we can't afford it – take everything out? What about the MSOs jobs?	HRB have discounted the option of closing the service. We will not allow individuals to opt out. Help will be available – staggered payments at start etc
Have you considered sponsorship from suppliers etc – sources of other income etc	Need to be careful as we are a council so individual's may not be prepared to sponsor
Care allowance – can this be used?	Need to be clear that there is a difference between 'care' and 'support'. Devon CC pay for care costs (if eligible) but not support – care means personal care such as washing and dressing
With option 1 would we have to pay even if we don't require 20 minutes a week?	Yes – this is only an estimate figure and equates to current low level of support. May not use 20 minutes a week but the service is still there for you to use if wanted, and we need to have certain basic information about every tenant, collected via support plans etc

Woodbury Community Centre, Thursday 16 October (run over 2 sessions) 27 tenants or family members attended	
What if we only want the alarm but no call, or if we don't want the service at all?	Under Option 1 will have to pay for minimum level of support, which would cover more or less a similar service to the one currently received – support as & when/paperwork/checking equipment. If you don't want any service could consider moving to general needs property
There is a hospital car that takes people to the hospital from the surgery 3 days a week	We will try to liaise with voluntary services
I have enablers 2 days a week – what is the difference between what they do and option 2	Very few people have access to enabling support. Also you can choose who provides these services and use our service if you wish to
Under option 2 will the service be provided by the current MSOs	Yes
What if the service goes to Option 2 but I don't want to buy any extra services	Would only pay for the alarm (and intensive housing management if not on HB – cant yet give a estimate of cost for intensive housing management service)
Do the changes only affect those that pay at the moment?	No they will affect everyone
What about attendance allowance?	Can use AA as you like but it can be used to help pay for support – it is intended to help you remain independent at home.
Don't Social Services already provide services similar to Option 2 for £3/hour?	Not as far as we are aware. Social Services will only pay towards personal care, in most cases.
Trumps Court, Thursday 16 October 36 tenants and family members or support workers	
Please keep the alarm service – they are crucial to our security especially if you live alone	
Moved into East Devon from out of the area and the MSO visited weekly until we had settled in	
If the smoke alarm goes off Home Safeguard rings us – we need this service	
Is my tenancy in jeopardy if I don't pay?	EDDC considered affordability issues and is putting help in place. If option 1 is chosen you will have no choice and will have to pay for at least the minimum service
How will it be decided – by majority vote?	We will report back to the Housing Review Board, including all the comments received from tenants and their preferences. HRB will make the final decision, which council will need to ratify.
Under Option 1 can I just have the alarm service?	No
If people want to move out of sheltered housing is there help?	Yes
Will the payments be reviewed?	Yes, and may be increased year on year
Comment – if its worth having its worth paying for	

Will the new charges apply to everyone, even those on HB?	Yes
What are other councils doing?	Some other councils in Devon with sheltered housing are planning to cut out the service
Comment – wonderful service, value highly	
Is 1 hours the minimum amount under Option 2?	No could buy half an hour
System will be very difficult for someone with dementia. The current service is proactive so going in to see people	Officers will still be on site and so would hopefully realise when people aren't engaging as they used to
Are these options likely to change?	These are the options which will go to HRB in January. Only unknown at moment is the cost of the intensive housing management service.
Staff capacity – will they be able to deliver all that's set out under Option 2?	If the support at home option takes off we may have to recruit more staff
Will we have to pay if we receive attendance allowance?	Yes but could use your attendance allowance towards costs
Why can't some tenants have option 1 and some option 2?	Logistics, staffing, keeping a good service – if you feel that we should offer both please make that clear to us
Private sector firms do some of the things listed under Option 2	It will be down to customer choice who they use. We will not be offering personal care and will not register with the CQC
What if Housing Benefit changes?	We can't guarantee the future of HB
Ratcliffe House, Exmouth 20 October 2014 -Well attended around 45	
Value from Service Alarm System Service generally If not for alarm service parents would not have been able to live independently. Mobile Support Officers	
Supposing we do not want to pay	If someone said no to service we would ask if financial issue, if still adamant would give opportunity to move. Sheltered Housing is for tenants who have needs. If everyone says No to service then basically the service would not survive. We have to find ways to move forward. Option 2 offers flexibility but would still have to pay for alarm for either service. You may not have need now but can purchase when needed.
What happens if I don't want to/agree to pay the charge, am I being evicted	Amy explained about attendance allowance and how it can be used to pay towards support/help. Can offer more choice, offers flexibility
If someone does not want service they would have to move out.	No we would look at the circumstances. But if adamant they wished to move we would look at general purpose.
Can you dip in and out – use as and when?	

How does option2 work	Amy explained carried out detailed risk assessments done case scenarios, visited other authorities running similar scheme confident it can work
Don't see option 2 being beneficial to the council	Council in unique position and will be able to offer service to general purpose/general public. Council want to keep service and looking at how this can be achieved.
Why are you offering option 1 if option 2 works	Giving people the choice.
If people adopt as and when payment scheme how would it fund staff	We have done huge amount of risk assessment and are confident that brand new service would potential allow recruitment of additional staff.
At present if you are talking more staff then how will it be financed	We are in unique position we have general stock who want this service.
Would it be run as stand alone?	No it would only stand alone if we went to private sector.
Very difficult to get balance right	We have to get balance right, we are lucky in we can go to General Purpose and the Private Sector.
Would you be in direct competition with others in area?	We would not be offering personal care
Feel you should be looking at this and embracing personal care.	
Comment – No vote disgusted!! As do not want any services and forced to pay for them! All I need is a place to live and have family to support me (name and address supplied)	
Palmer House, Exmouth 22 October Attendance 46	
I don't use the service so why should I have to pay in the future – can I opt out?	No not at present
I really value the service and can't do without it	
I don't think I could manage without the service as I fall down often	
The pendant is invaluable	
The pendant is invaluable but I don't need the wardens so much as I have carers four times a day – is it possible just to have the alarms?	Please listen to the options
I like to get the call each day to see I'm OK	
The fact that my mother has the system is very reassuring and gives me peace of mind that she's looked after (reiterated by the son of another tenant)	
Will the changes affect the running of the social club?	Not necessarily as we are not reviewing the community centres at the moment
I don't envisage using the system at the moment so will I have to pay weekly even if I don't use it?	Will depend on the option chosen but will have to pay for the alarm in both options. Under option 1 every one will have to pay for at least the low level of support – but this will be introduced gradually for existing tenants

Will housing benefit pay for anything?	Not under option 1 but under option 2 it will pay for the intensive housing management element – it won't pay for support as it is only about housing
Why can't the alarms be removed if not wanted?	We need the sheltered properties, with alarms, for those people who have support needs. Many schemes are hard wired which means the alarms link together.
If I don't need support and don't want to pay will you help me move?	We will help as best we can to support people to move to general purpose properties and so free up sheltered housing for those who need it
I may not use it now but may need in the future	
Could option 2 including checks on state of the guttering	Yes
How will we be billed – separately?	We need to work this out but will probably bill for the support element of option 2 separately. The alarm charge (payable under both options) will almost certainly be included with service charges on the rent. Option 1 would be charged via a service charge with the rent
Are these figures fixed?	Final figures until April 2017 – we are directed by government as to how much we can increase rent and service charges each year
If everyone goes for Option 2- paying for help as it is needed – will we also have to pay a regular charge under Option 1	No they are separate options – either one or the other will be chosen. Under option 2 you will pay for the alarm and intensive housing management but only for the amount of support that you personally want
If more prefer Option 1 and that is chosen will the service stay as it is?	Yes more or less. If your level of need went up the amount of support the MSOs give can go up to the next level and your charge would be increased to match it
Under option 2 what safety checks will be in place to ensure that high users can afford to pay for the service?	People with high support needs will probably have attendance allowance which they could put towards these costs
What about gas safety checks?	These are separate and are the responsibility of the council
Doesn't our rent pay for housing management anyway?	Under option 2 sheltered schemes would get a more intensive service and MSOs would be out and about on the schemes most days to check everything is OK – in other areas we often rely on tenants reporting issues
	Housing benefit should pay for the intensive housing management (under option 2) but not for self funders who will have to pay for this element of the service
Under option 2 if the MSO is out for say 4 hours with one tenant what happens to the others on the scheme?	This is a new service for us but it is working satisfactorily in Somerset. If necessary we will recruit more staff.

Will option 2 only be available during office hours?	Possible that we may provide it 7 days a week and in the evenings
Will I have to pay for a weekly visit under option 2?	Yes all support will be paid for separately
Can we have option 1 but also buy in the extra support?	Unfortunately we can't offer both options as we don't have the capacity
Will the current work to upgrade the system mean costs go up?	No
Why don't you just raise council tax?	The housing service is not run through the council tax but from tenants rent money
Several people commented that the print out had been very helpful and that the presentation was excellent.	
Bidmead Community Centre, Exmouth 22 October 33 people attended	
The pendant/pull cord is very important for those on their own, as is the visit by the MSO	
I need the contact in the morning and the pull cord as very disabled	
I value the security and knowing someone is there to help	
Are we in this position as we are no longer useful to the state?	We are in this situation because Devon CC has cut our funding
Have decisions already been made so that we are here just to listen?	No
Will the decision be made by democratic vote?	No the decision will be made by the Housing Review Board but we will tell them the outcome of the tenant preferences.
Why not ask the European Commission for funds?	
The government is always cutting benefits – how can you help us find enough to pay for this service?	
I have worked with EDDC as a tenant representative and I feel confident that they will do their best to keep costs down	
Will payments be included with the rent?	Yes for option 1
I currently pay for the service – what is my position?	Under option 1 it will depend on the level of service you are on
I don't know if I will be able to pay!	
Under option 2 will you be losing MSOs	No we want to keep the service and grow it if possible
How will the limited number of MSOs be able to provide option 2?	We don't know yet what the take up of the support service would be under option 2. We may be in the fortunate position where we have to recruit more staff.
If I just want the alarm what will it cost?	Under option 1 you can't just go for the alarm. Under option 2 you can have just the alarm and the intensive housing management (covered by HB if you are entitled)
Can we say we don't want the alarm?	No

Will you help us move to general purpose accommodation if we want?	Yes
What about a handyman scheme?	This is under consideration
Those that make the decision should come out to see the tenants	Tenants can attend the HRB meeting on 15 January 2015 where the decision will be made. Or you can talk to your councillor
No one in the room can afford the options – who would pay for us to go to Knowle to the meeting?	
It is the government that is to blame for these changes so tenants should write to their MPs	
Lymebourne Community Centre 27 October attended 55 residents and family members	
If on option has bigger percentage will HRB take this into account	This will be part of the element of decision.
If HRB go against tenants preference would we be able to appeal?	Would not have thought it would be possible as this has to be in place by 1 st April 2015. However you will be offered feedback on results of meeting and can also see the HRB minutes.
So it's not democratic	Yes it is because we can only make decisions and hope they take on board.
Cllr Peter Sullivan Councillors here to listen and take back, Councillors throughout the district are attending and very involved. I am here to listen to your views and am also a tenant. I think the second Option is good and deals with individual needs. People who are most vulnerable will need it most. Views will be heard at full council. HRB consists of Officers, Tenants and Independent Reps Officers do not vote.	
If you are paying £3.70 for alarm per week what do you pay for service?	This would depend on service you have at present (e.g medium would be £12.00 plus alarm)
Is the alarm compulsory	Yes – alarms are part of Sheltered Housing.
How is the money to be collected?	Will appear on rent statement but there are many different ways of making payment.
So you have not decided on how you are going to collect the money?	Will ensure everyone has a way to pay. Council very firm that they want to keep Sheltered Housing.
Both options are good can see a preferred option because of cost -	You need to think how it will affect your individual needs.
What happens to people who need help but cannot afford it?	If they are suffering financially we can help with guiding them to the right types of benefits available. You need to have some trust in us, some tenants have benefits but don't always use them for the support they need. Officers will be on site and will be keeping eyes out for people who may be having issues.
I see the MSO three times a year would I have to pay for the minimum 20 minutes	Yes it takes into account alarm testing, SAP and its an average. It may be that you may need a couple of weeks extra support so it is spread over the year. Its more a reassurance

Why can we not have a warden on site has this been costed?	This is not an option
I need safety net as my son is very vulnerable but if something happened to me what would happen to him.	You pay for alarm service and IMS paid for by benefit
I live next to a 90 and 92 year old MSO calls me to check if they are OK whose paying for that nothing to do with me?	Difficult to answer this but cannot say until we have looked into this. I will discuss this at end of meeting.
At the moment you only get the service 9.00 to 5.00 w	If Option 1 then this would remain the same, If Option 2 looking at weekends and longer days.
If on HB would it cover both options	Would not cover Option 1
Whitton Court If people still working under 60 and in Sheltered Housing would they have to pay	If Option 1 would have to pay minimum amount if Option 2 alarm and IMS
I have been lucky not to have paid for alarm for all these years	
Millwey Community Centre 27th October – 33 residents and family members	
Why have we lost this money	DCC grant cut and their decision that they do not want to put into Sheltered Housing.
So Nothing to do with someone's pension	No
Is it because of what happened in Dawlish last year	
By cutting benefits elderly and vulnerable going to suffer – nice to see someone from t EDDC everything stops at Sidmouth. Why moving all that money spent, why not stay put and spend the money on the people that need it.	
Why has Devon been hit	With regards to SP this is national and we have been lucky to still receive up to this point, other areas lost it 2/3 years ago.
Why do the Council not band together and stand up to Government If they can change law by protesting why can they not do this	Sue - this is a valued point
Why are they not here? As soon as we are asked what we value we lose it.	(referring to Cllr Jefferies)
How do we know we are going to get option we want?	Part of decision making
If Housing Support why not direct rather than the County Council	Always been dealt with like this
Can we have another colour to show "we eat or heat" today.	You can just mark either blue or orange slip with E H.
Can we just have alarm System?	No
Can we get rid of alarm system?	We have invested heavy in the system and feedback has shown most residents like the alarm.
Alarm system very poor it is quicker to ring 999	Investing in new alarm system and upgrading the system
Can we not get the Energy Providers to pay for service you can get £2,000 p.a. grant.	This has to be submitted by individual householder.

Some properties have been decommissioned and still have alarm is it going to stay.	A few years ago we had to decommission properties due to updated criteria. Some tenants wanted to stay in the service and these properties will be decommissioned when they move out. Alarms will be upgraded.
So you have to pay for the alarm whether you want it all not	Yes
How would we pay for it	On your rent statement and invoiced separately for the IMS.
I live alone and am housebound. I have lived here since 1993 and sometimes the only people I see are the MSOs I want them to keep coming to see me as they take my prescriptions to the doctors and are my only contact with the outside world. Please don't cut them as I value them.	
Churchill Court, Lympstone 28 attendees	
Most valuable part of the service is the smoke alarms and knowing someone there if they go off	
Some issues raised about specific concerns about the service – some felt not getting visits and some issues around the alarms in Glebelands. Tina/Steve addressed these issues personally with individuals concerned	
Many don't get much help from the MSOs at the moment	Tina explained about the SAP assessment and the fact that support could be there if needed at later date
Why are we having to pay?	DCC have cut the funding
Can we opt out of the service?	Not under Option 1 and not completely under option 2 Sheltered housing is there to help support tenants. If you feel that you really don't need that support you can talk to us about moving to general purpose accommodation
Is there any way we can stop this proposal (lose of funding)?	
Feel it is all very expensive if you are on a low wage - £18/hour is a lot of money to pay someone	This is not what staff will be paid – it also covers overheads etc
Do the changes affect those on housing benefit?	Yes
I don't need the service now but I might in a few years so its worth it to me	
Who set the amounts that you're proposing?	We have to cover what it costs us to run the service
Can we just pay for the alarm?	Yes if option 2 is chosen and you are on Housing Benefit If you only get partial housing benefit the Enhanced Housing Management element will still be paid for
How will we pay?	We will have various options – similar to our rent payments

Will this affect exemption from bedroom tax if I only pay for the alarm?	No – you will still be exempt
The MSOs work very hard and I would like to give them a sincere vote of thanks.	
Money saving suggestion – MSOs could hand deliver letters from EDDC	We are keen to encourage tenants to have correspondence via email
We get lots of paperwork when there is a repair	
	We are introducing a new housing computer system next year and this will have a tenant portal where tenants can view their rent account etc
Dunning Court, Honiton 20 tenants and family members attended	
The alarm and MSO service gives reassurance and peace of mind	
We don't mind the cluster group arrangement but would prefer to just see one MSO on a regular basis and not have the change over	(Similar comment made at Lymebourne and Axminster events)
There were no questions raised	
Yonder Close, Ottery St Mary 17 tenants attended	
1 tenant raised concerns about the smoke alarms not being tested/working properly. Call alarm not connected to Home Safe Guard.	Amy replied that the smoke alarms should be tested regularly and connected to Home Safeguard. She advised she would discuss with the details with the individual and investigate the matter.
MSO's keep changing, don't know who they are, or their names. Had about 15 MSO's. Do not want or receive any support from them.	Tina replied that this was not the case.
What do you mean by minimum support	Amy explained that tenants would continue to receive the same level of support that they already did.
Can you chose to opt out if you do not want/receive any support	If you don't want any service could consider moving to general needs property. Council would do everything to help move, dependant on suitable general purpose accommodation being available
With option 1 would we have to pay even if we don't require 20 minutes a week?	Amy replied that yes and that 20 minutes only an estimate figure and equates to current low level of support. May not use 20 minutes a week but the service is still there for you to use if wanted, and we need to have certain basic information about every tenant, collected via support plans etc
Don't need the help from the MSOs at the moment, what do they do.	Bridget explained about the SAP assessment and that support was there could be there if required at later date. Links to Homesafeuard, and vital that information is kept up to date.
Aware that several properties have had the alarms be removed. Why can't I have the alarm removed I don't want it. Have asked for it to be removed	We need the sheltered properties, with alarms, for those people who have support needs. If alarm system has been removed it has been for a reason and once the property is void the system will be replace

How can make a choice you if you cannot tell us how much Option 2 will be.	You are making a preference vote between Option 1 and Option 2. The information will be taken to the HRB. Still waiting for figures form HB to advise of amount payable under Option 2.
Not happy about either option. Not happy about paying for smoke alarms when they are not being checked or working properly. I am paying for an alarm service that could have killed me.	
Why am I on medium level of support and not low, as I do not receive any support.	Amy explained that would be the charge in 2015, and explained about the set charge for the Yonder Close scheme. She explained that it was likely they would be paying less in 2015 if they received low support.
You will be chargin £25 per month that's £300 a year. It's a lot of money for 1 form and a couple of cord checks.	Amy explained about the charges and level of support. Charge was competitive. A lot of research had been done charges worked out as an average, not able to look at everyone on an individual basis. There if you need the service. Option 2 offers tenants the choice of a service more designed to suit their own personal needs.
Albion Court 16 tenants and family attended	
We need continuity so that we know who is coming to visit us	
I need to know who I will get and what I'm paying for	
We only have a basic service and don't have any dealings with the MSOs	Under Option 1 the time allotted includes visits for completing paperwork, testing alarms etc and also provides for the service to be there should you need it in future
Can you move from level 1 to level 2 or 3?	Yes – MSOs would do another SAP with you to assess level of need
If I don't need anyone for say 6 months will I still have to pay the minimum?	Yes – see response above re basic service
Under Option 2 will you need to employ more MSOs?	Initially no but we will take on more if necessary. We do want to expand the service. If there is not enough work for them initially there will be other work on our estates for them and we also plan to go out into general needs properties
Have any other areas brought in Option 2.	Yes South Somerset have brought in a similar service – been running successfully for several years. It is used mainly by their sheltered tenants but they also go out to the private sector
Is there an option to pay for the alarm only?	Under Option 2 this could be the case if you are on HB and don't purchase any support.
What if I really can't pay? I have support from outside agencies so don't really need the service	We will offer financial advice and there is the hardship fund if needed. The models only work for people needing some sort of support/alarm. It is down to individual choice where the support comes from but you would have to pay a minimum amount.

Can we go to outside people for advice on these changes?	Yes of course
What if I feel neither option would work for me?	Let us know and we will register this
I am self funding and never pull the cord – what is best for me?	Under Option 1 you would need to pay for the low service. Under option 2 you would pay for the alarm and the enhanced housing management charge but you would only pay for the support you requested. Remember your circumstances may change in the future
Its very important to me that I know my father will get a visit	
Under Option 2 would I have to pay for support if I am on HB	Yes – only the enhanced housing management is covered by HB
How would we pay for option 2?	The set charges would probably be included with our rent charges. Any support would probably be invoiced
One lady was concerned about handling the financial side of things	Reassured her that the MSOs and other officers would be able to assist her
Morgan Court 21 tenants and family attended	
We value having the MSOs and the alarm	
We value everything as it is today	
What is your opinion on the two options?	We don't want to influence your choice of preference
The main thing is that help is there when its needed – as long as people can afford it	EDDC is determined to keep the service going
Could you find a different way to explain the 'hardship' fund – don't like word 'hardship'	
I have a lot of family support and can't afford the extra money – can I ask system to be taken out?	No the service goes with the property. We have to go this way to make the service viable
Broadview, Broadclyst 16 tenants and family	
This is the first experience of pull cords and cannot see how pull cords answer the need. Ok if in the room where pullcord is but if away from is no use and waste of money. Agreed by a few people.	
In private accommodation hs pendat and pullcords – lots don't like pendants around neck and wear wrist bands - Pendants wonderful but agree with others on pull cords	Any explained that on new equipment there are a lot of options.
With Option 2 will it balance the books	Sue – we know how much grant we are losing and how much we need. Our ambition is we can get MSO to do other things. Focus groups with tenants have been held . Only told this year we would lose funding for 2015. Some areas have been aware and funding has been reduced on a year by year basis. Although Option 2 will have to be grown we have seen in Somerset how they have achieved this . We are not just sheltered housing we have general stock and could offer

	this service to these. We do believe that we can make it work. As it is now option 2 more individual.
Have you looked at figures in to going into care.	Maybe in future , we cannot just say we are going into care. Lots of obligations with training etc.
If you are going to spend money on Food Hygiene, Health and Safety how much more would it cost under one umbrella	We need to focus on housing and want to continue to do. There is a difference between providing help and needing care. Our core business is sheltered housing and offering support for that.
Have you thought about advertising sheltered housing	We always have more tenants wanting sheltered than properties available. It would not be so difficult if not under such strict restrictions.
Would it make any difference if everyone took out pull cords	Amy we are in the process of looking at different schemes hard wired or dispersed and looking at just having one pullcord in the bathroom. together with pendant.
Must be a difficult time for you	There have been a lot of issues but it is nice to be able to get out and seeing customers.
Mackarness Hall, Honiton 16 tenants attended	
We don't like the change over between MSOs – would prefer just one	
I don't see why I should pay if I don't use it	
I thought we already paid for it in our rent?	Rents are separate from service charges. Service charges can only cover the actual cost. We can't make a profit from them.
Who will pay for the maintenance of alarms/smoke alarms?	Maintenance costs are included in the costs quoted
Discussion about new fire regulation requirements and buggies in sheltered housing	Sue Bewes offered to ask the fire service to talk to tenants of Tucker Court – she will organise for the Estate Management Manager to go out to speak to tenants
I've lost confidence in the council	
Do the costs include the smoke alarms?	Yes
Why should we pay for these – council responsibility	In sheltered housing the smoke alarms ring through to HSG. They assess the situation and will call out the emergency services if needed. In general needs properties it is down to individuals to respond and call services if required
What if we don't want the home safeguard service	There is no choice as it comes with the property
I'm sometimes asked to take action on issues I've raise such as sorting out a blocked drain, or faulty smoke detector	There are some items we do expect tenants to sort out but we have a list of vulnerable tenants who can't do this, and don't have people near by to help them, and we will organise this for them.
Musbury Village Hall – 11 tenants attended	
People on own need more support than couples difficult to make standard statement. Does not make sense have Warden on site and goes to Axminster and vice versa.	A couple of years ago we made changes to cluster working. In the past with living on site they were in theory on call 24/7 which was against the Law.

Could change next year with General Election	
Which of the two cards is minimum payment	Would depend on personal circumstances
Feel we are being blackmailed into having service	
You will have to employ more staff	Potentially Yes
If they take shopping do we have to pay petrol money	Not from tenant
What happens if we say don't want service	You will still have alarm. Alarm on its own is not an option
Can we not have a third option which is just alarm.	The board is keen to keep service.
I have people call once a month if I have to pay I want them every day.	The 20/40/60 is an average of the face to face . creation of the Support Plan and the opportunity to access support as and when needed.
In Option 1 does individual have choice of 20/40/60	It should be the same as it is today but could change if circumstances change.
Will the voting cards be the option	No it will be up to the HRB but they will look at tenants views.
Do you count the cards	We count after every session.
Vote could be rigged	
In 2013 we were given the option to opt out	Because of criteria we could no longer claim for under 55 so some people have been able to opt out if under 55
If not in receipt of benefit – what about the alarm system being available to general needs i	It is available to general needs and private sector and we charge for the alarm service. What we have tried to do is a line what we charge for sheltered housing and general needs
Feel strongly it should be optional	You are in sheltered housing and the equipment is in the property.
I understand what you are saying but can it not be separated and switch off one system. The equipment has not worked since I have been in property.	We will discuss after meeting
If we say don't want the alarm will we have to move	If we have tenants who do not need service perhaps they would be better in general purpose. It is to do with individual circumstances but not saying you have to move.
Garages – cost of rental too high	Garage review on going at the moment
Rent, Council tax etc go up every year so will these prices go up	These prices are fixed until 2017.
We are all on a fixed income and being put in a position which we cannot afford I feel you are not being fair to us	We are looking at ways of getting money and why option 2 would be a good choice.
So you are charging £18 an hour. What are set charges?	Tina – Option 1 will have no choice. Option 2 pay for alarm service. If on HB they will paid for you. You only buy support as and when needed.
How many sheltered properties	Just over 1300
	If any one wants to discuss options please see us, we are not mixing options it will either be Option 1 or Option 2 .

Seaton Methodist Church – 42 tenants attended	
I have heard that people will have to buy the pendants and also pay for having the alarm checked?	No the charge for the alarm of £3.70 per week covers the equipment and its upkeep. No extra charges
Why can't we test the alarms ourselves – I do it regularly so why should I pay?	Will still have to pay – cost covers annual check and update of personal data etc
Who calculated the figures for option 1?	Took the cost of the service over 12 months and divided by number of service users. We cannot make a profit from these services
What about option 2?	We are working with housing benefit on this.
Option 2 will cost less and its what tenants want	
Will HRB go with what the majority say they want?	They asked us to undertake the consultation so they should take this into account
I can't afford the extra service	
If we go for option 2 what happens to the MSOs?	If no one takes up the support element of option 2 there is plenty for the MSOs to do around housing management. Also we could offer the service to a wider group eg general purpose or even private sector housing
Will we all be forced to take the decision made by HRB?	We will either have option 1 or option 2 – you can't opt out
What about local charities helping – have you approached them?	As a local authority we can't enter into that sort of agreement with a charity. However MSOs may be able to get help for certain individuals from local charities as they do sometimes at the moment
Many people in sheltered housing don't leave their homes so if the MSOs are only doing property checks or checks on estates they won't see them	The MSOs will be the 'eyes and ears' on a scheme. They will be aware of what is going on and can be a point of contact
What about the money being spent on the monument in Seaton – this would pay for the service for several years	Can't comment on the monument. Housing Revenue Account which pays for the support service is ring fenced so can't be used to fund other council activities.
Is it possible to have a talk from someone who can explain the benefits we could get?	Yes good idea. (comment that Age Concern would help with this too)
We hear that Housing has borrowed £84M – why can't some of this be used	The money is on a long term rolling basis and must be used for all housing activities over a considerable period of time.
Previous papers to HRB talked about claiming under HRB	Housing Benefit will not pay for the alarm service. Under Option 2 we could claim for some of the housing management function from HB – people receiving full or partial HB would not have to pay for this
What about those tenants who can't get to the meetings?	The MSOs will talk to them and explain the possible changes
Under option 2 if I want to see an MSO will I have to pay?	Yes
What if I just stop them in the street?	No

I think it's time we paid a big thank you to the carers (MSOs).	
Budleigh Salterton 30 attendees	
I am not a resident but my mother is – it gives her peace of mind that there is the alarm and it is essential and helps me	
The alarm is essential to us – we have no one we can call on and can't cope without the service. We know someone is coming each week	
The MSOs help with forms and getting our point across	
Thank you – I suffer from falls and have called through the alarm and always got help	
What's been explained is very complex and I can't make a decision today.	That's fine just tell your MSO which option you prefer by early December
I am a support worker for a lady who has care 24 hours a day. She therefore doesn't need the service	She will still have to pay as the service goes with the property.
Struggling people who don't use the service will have to pay!	
Why don't you stop putting flowers in all the flower beds	Finance for housing is separate to the general council funding. We use the rent money which goes to the Housing Revenue Fund. This money can't be used by the council for flowers etc. If the Housing Revenue Fund paid for the service that would not be fair on those tenants in general purpose properties who can't access the service.
If the majority go for one option will the HRB accept this?	The Board will make the final decision (which has then to be ratified by Full Council) but they asked us to consult with tenants, so feel they will take your views into account.
With option 2, if I don't have any extra support what will it cost?	Everyone will have to pay £3.70 per week for the alarm. Those not on HB will have to pay a charge for enhanced housing management (we don't yet know how much this will be). For those on HB this will be covered, even if on partial HB
On my tenancy agreement rent and service charges are shown separately. I'm already paying a service charge of about £9/week – will I pay on top of this?	No that service charge will go and you will have to pay depending on which option is chosen.
If I need more support can I get this?	Yes under option 1 you would discuss with your MSO and change the level of support you need – you will pay more for a higher level of support Under Option 2 you can buy in support at the level you need it

What happens if I can't afford it? Will I have to do without? If I don't pay will I have to leave sheltered housing?	We will try to help you decide and there is an independent financial service which can review your finances with you to see if you can afford it. We will also have a hardship fund for cases of real need.
This is very political – a hardship fund is limited and how long will it be there?	It will only be available for existing tenants – new tenants from April 15 will have to pay in full for the service. We haven't got a particular amount in the hardship fund but will look at each case individually.
Some people have come into sheltered housing to free up larger houses. They may not need support.	
What about a mass protest? This is not really a lot of money for the government.	It is not just these services which are being cut. Devon CC is having to also cut other services. They have to ensure they can still fund the statutory services. We can't advise as to whether its too late to protest. Cuts are happening nationally
What are other Devon district councils doing?	Some are shutting their sheltered housing altogether. Others are only providing the alarm service.
People are living longer and being more independent – I feel these options are good as they provide a safety net if needed.	
You don't get something for nothing – the options seem fair – both will provide help.	
Sidford 11 tenants and family attended	
Why is the alarm being charged for under both options?	We can't get help towards the costs of the alarm – housing benefit will not pay for this
Can't the alarms be disconnected if we don't want them?	No they go with the property – we need to keep the sheltered stock in tack as there are others who would like such property and need support
This is unfair – if you don't want it why should you have to pay?	
Can you give me a property without an alarm?	We will put you in touch with Housing Needs – if you don't require support you could look at other options
What happens if I don't pay?	We will put financial advice and support in place to make sure people are claiming the right benefits etc We will also have a hardship fund New tenants from April 15 won't have this help available Ultimately if you don't pay you could lose the property
I wouldn't claim from the hardship fund – my finances are personal	It will be available for those who wish to access it and are eligible
Is there a shortage of sheltered housing?	Yes
Isn't it breaching our tenancy agreement to now start charging?	No – it hasn't been free in the past but has been covered by supporting people for those on HB

I feel strongly that we should have the option to opt out	
For option 1 is it just the alarm?	No there is a minimum level of support that is included in the cost 20 minutes is an average figure across the year and includes all contacts, checking of alarm, updating of information and the fact that the service can be called on at short notice

Feedback from our mobile support officers

Our mobile support officers (MSOs) were able to give their feedback on the various options at a meeting on 10 December. Some felt that tenants did not really understand the implications of Option 2 and that they would not get their current level of calls and visits without paying for them. Many tenants have expressed a wish to keep the existing service, but also have the option to buy additional services.

One MSO had spoken to several local social workers, all of whom felt Option 1 was most suitable to their clients' needs, and the need to protect the most vulnerable and prevent crises.

Several MSOs welcome the idea of being able to provide other, more enabling services, but some expressed concerns about staff capacity. And some are concerned that the take up under option 2 will not be enough to fund the service. There are agencies already doing these activities and some charge less for them.

Some MSOs would not welcome the split between the housing management and support roles necessary under option 2, as they much prefer the support element of the current job. Some raised concerns about using their cars to take tenants to and from appointments.

All welcomed the freedom that moving away from Supporting People will give in relation to the completion of paperwork and forms.

There was concern that in some options they would be 'clock watching' but with option 1b there is freedom to give tenants the amount of time they really require

**NOTES FROM MEETING OF THE SUPPORTED HOUSING REVIEW GROUP
WEDNESDAY 10TH DECEMBER 2014**

PRESENT: Amy Gilbert, Harry Roberts, Pat Rouse, Janet Sullivan, Phil Portman,
Dorothy Page, Lee Hourd, Julie Toy, Jackie Taylor, Margaret Whitehouse

Amy began the meeting by saying that this was the biggest consultation we have undertaken. A good turnout with 500 tenants and family attending 23 sessions in various Community Centres, Church Halls and Village Halls throughout the district. Generally very positive but some very tough sessions. MSOs also did home visits to residents who were unable to attend any of the sessions.

The sessions started with a brief presentation with three staff explaining the purpose of the meeting, the two options available and the financial implications this would have from April 2015. After the presentation which lasted about 20 minutes residents were encouraged to ask questions express concerns etc. Staff were also available for one to one sessions for residents who did not like to ask questions in front of all and lots of residents took this opportunity to express their worries and concerns.

Notes were taken at all the meetings and questions noted, some of the most common questions

- What if we only want alarm
- Would we have to pay even if we don't need 20 mins a week
- Do the changes only affect those who pay at the moment
- Please keep the alarm service piece of mind for my mother and myself
- How will it be decided
- If we don't want service can we move
- Will the charges apply to all even those on Housing Benefit
- What happens if we don't pay
- I don't want you to know my financial situation
- Disgusted all I want is a place to live and have family support
- Can I opt out of the service

The above are a few of the questions raised.

Report which will be going to the HRB in January will include all questions raised; we found a lot of common issues but asked in different ways.

We asked residents to give their preference to Option 1 and Option 2, and stressed that this was not a vote but purely for us to see preferred option. Amy then went through the Options again for the group.

Majority of preference was 342 for Option 2, 126 Option1 and the remaining had no preference. As Amy mentioned this was not a vote but would give us an indication of what

residents wanted. It was clear that Option 2 was preferred but this was mainly due to the financial implication.

Should Option 1 be chosen this will be phased in and the full amount would not apply until 2017. Margaret asked about monitoring of the payments, this will be done by Peter Richards Rental Team.

Dorothy felt some would be happy to have one off assistance, going shopping, etc with carers you need to be able to book well in advance. At the moment we are not looking to do personal care.

Some residents want to move out of sheltered housing to general purpose. Amy explained that there is a historic problem with some residents being put in SH on a temporary basis and never being moved on and for these cases we will be working closely with residents, especially if they feel they should not be in SH, we will do all we can to get them into GP. It is in our interest if people do not have a support need as we have a waiting list for SH.

Margaret mentioned de-commissioned properties, some tenants in the past have been asked if they would like their property decommissioned, if they have wanted to stay SH then once the tenant leave the property and if it has been marked for decommissioning then this would take place.

One of the questions asked was what would happen if we don't pay, Amy has said they would be treated the same as any other non payment of rent. However, we would try and find out why they cannot pay and see if we can offer help. Over the last few weeks we have been working with consultants who are expert in this area. Lots of Councils over the past two years have been in a similar situation and our contractors Support Solutions are expert in this field and can help with the transaction.

Amy said the report will be going to the HRB on the 15th January and they want to bring to the board a slight change to Option 1.

Option 1 (a) we may be able to get Housing Maintenance paid for and therefore the amount of £9.86 would reduce to £6.70.

Option 1(b) Same transaction – Support will not split in to low, medium, high and will be a flat rate charge for all would be £8.96 to include alarm.

Julie asked if the service stayed the same would residents still have to pay. Amy commented that self funders would most probably be better off under all the options.

Julie Option 1 will we be able to expand our services. Amy whatever plays out we are looking to take away some of the restrictions which have been forced on us in the past by DCC. Our job as a team is to work out how we would manage the extra work. If we had three residents who say wanted to go shopping then we need to work out how this could be done. It is going to be a lot of work to start with but will get better – we are looking at

major changes and it will be tough, we need to work through as a team and the best case scenario is we grow.

January 16th will start the step forward.

We need to get to 4th April, lots to sort out to get this transition in place. We will need to allow it to play out for the first few months then look again. Obviously there is a desire to include general purpose in the future and maybe in a couple of years include the private sector which would increase the number of staff we would need.

Amy ended the meeting by saying this is an exciting time, not having to answer to DCC on how to run the service and being able to make our own decisions and doing more of what our resident want.

It was decided to arrange a meeting in January (sometime after the 15th) to discuss the outcome of the HRB meeting and the way forward.

On a different matter, Amy asked if we could have a volunteer to go on to the TRG, Harry Roberts said that he was happy to take this on a temporary basis.

Meeting ended at 11.30.

Report to: **Housing Review Board**

Date of Meeting: 15 January 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None



Agenda item: 13

Subject: **Men's Shed proposal**

Purpose of report: This report gives an update on the Men's Shed project in Exmouth and asks the Board to consider proposals for the expansion of the project.

Recommendation: **To consider the proposals put forward by Opendoor, Exmouth regarding the expansion of the Men's Shed project on the Littleham estate.**

Reason for recommendation: To bring the Housing Review Board up to date with the project.

Officer: Jane Reading, Tenants and Communities Manager
jmreading@eastdevon.gov.uk

Financial implications: The proposed recommendation will result in rent income for the HRA.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications highlighted.

Equalities impact: Medium Impact

Risk: High Risk
Reduced involvement and support of this initiative will have a high impact on the health and well being of families and especially men and a potential increase in social isolation amongst men.

Links to background information: -----

Link to Council Plan: Achieve thriving, balanced communities

Report in full

1. The Housing Review Board will be aware of the very successful project run by Opendoor. **Opendoor** is a Christian social action charity, and has established Men's Shed on the Littleham estate in Exmouth. The project Men's Shed is based around the increased and worrying social isolation amongst men in our society.
2. Historically men that do not work tend not to join clubs or socialise in the same way as women. Men tend to stay indoors and have a tendency to become isolated. This can lead to depression and a low morale.

3. Towards the end of 2013 we were approached by the Opendoor with a proposal to set up a new project on the Littleham estate, and run it from the Clayton House Community Centre. Our Community Development and Support Services teams worked with representatives from Opendoor and Men's Shed to set up the project and gave advice, provided the venue at a reduced rate for an initial period, assisted with publicity in Housing Matters (tenant's newsletter), a press release and the delivery of leaflets.
4. The project has now run for just 12 months and provides a place for men to go to talk, socialise, share skills, learn new skills, access the internet and have a game of pool. The project runs over three days each week and regularly attracts around 20 men, some have additional needs and attend the project with their support workers. This has proved to be so successful it has outgrown the Community Centre.
5. Over the last 12 months we have had concerns about noise and environmental pollution caused by wood dust in the centre and the surrounding area. We have worked with the project and offered advice from the Councils Health and Safety Advisor and Environmental Health team. The project has taken on board the recommendations and installed extractor fans and works hard to keep noise to a minimum. The situation has improved but as landlords of the Community Centre we do still have some reservations regarding dust in the centre which is used by young people on a regular basis.
6. Opendoor approached us in the summer with a proposal (**annex 1**) to rent a piece of land to erect a wooden shed on land at the side of the centre, currently rented to two flats. Opendoor has confirmed that it will fund and build the new structure and pay the rent required for the land.
7. We have been working with Opendoor to help them develop these proposals further. Informal discussions have been held with the planning and environmental health teams and the Housing Enabling Officer. A planning officer advised that the main concern is the close proximity of residential properties and that any application would need to include details on how pollution caused by noise and dust will be managed. Environmental Health have met with Men's Shed and provided guidance on both the existing building and the new structure. The Housing Enabling Officer does not have any plans for the land for the development of homes due to mains services running under the site. The Senior Technical Officer (Asset Management) has been asked to comment on the proposal.
8. Opendoor has looked at alternative sites within the Littleham area and has not found any site that provides the same accessibility to Littleham and our tenants as the Clayton House site.
9. The proposal provided by Opendoor in November 2014 now provides:
 - A temporary wooden structure;
 - On a slab base;
 - Includes ventilation;
 - Includes noise insulation to a standard recommended by our Environmental Health section;
 - Sets out how water and electricity will be provided;
 - Sets out how the presence on the site of mains services will be managed;
 - Results of consultation carried out with nearby residents.
10. The Housing Service has no plans for this piece of land although it is considering the use of Clayton House for additional office space and extended community activity. This proposal would not impact on these plans. If the Board agree to the principle the proposal still needs tenants to give up some of their garden and any necessary permissions.

MEN'S SHED EXMOUTH

**Proposed new
shed/workshop**

Men's Shed proposal in Littleham Exmouth

Environmental issues

Three things have been raised as possible problems with building a workshop on this site

1 Dust

This is a big problem at present because we cannot provide permanent dust extraction, as the equipment has to be locked away at the end of each session.

The new shed will be fitted with a powerful Scheppach dust extractor with a Micro particle filter. This machine can then be permanently connected to all the saws, lathes and sanders etc collecting the dust and shavings for disposal. This will resolve the major dust issue making the shed a pleasant place to work.

2 Noise

At present the noise reverberates around the hall due to the construction of the building.

The proposed new building will be very well insulated to stop noise escaping into the local environment. We are insulating the walls and the roof to a very high specification and we will have double glassed windows. The timber construction should help to stop internal reverberation.

The proposal also includes anti vibration pads under all the permanently mounted machinery to stop the transmission of machine noise.

It should be noted that none of the machines are used continuously.

3 The underground electric cable

We have included a copy of Western Power Distributions drawing sent to us by EDDC, the cable highlighted in pink is the only one on the land.

This is a Low Voltage (LV) supply feeding 4 flats. There does not appear to be any High voltage (HV) cables anywhere in the area we are proposing to use. It is normal for LV cables everywhere to be built over without any problems.

We would if given approval for the shed contact Western Power Distribution to establish the exact position of this cable and if possible avoid going over it.

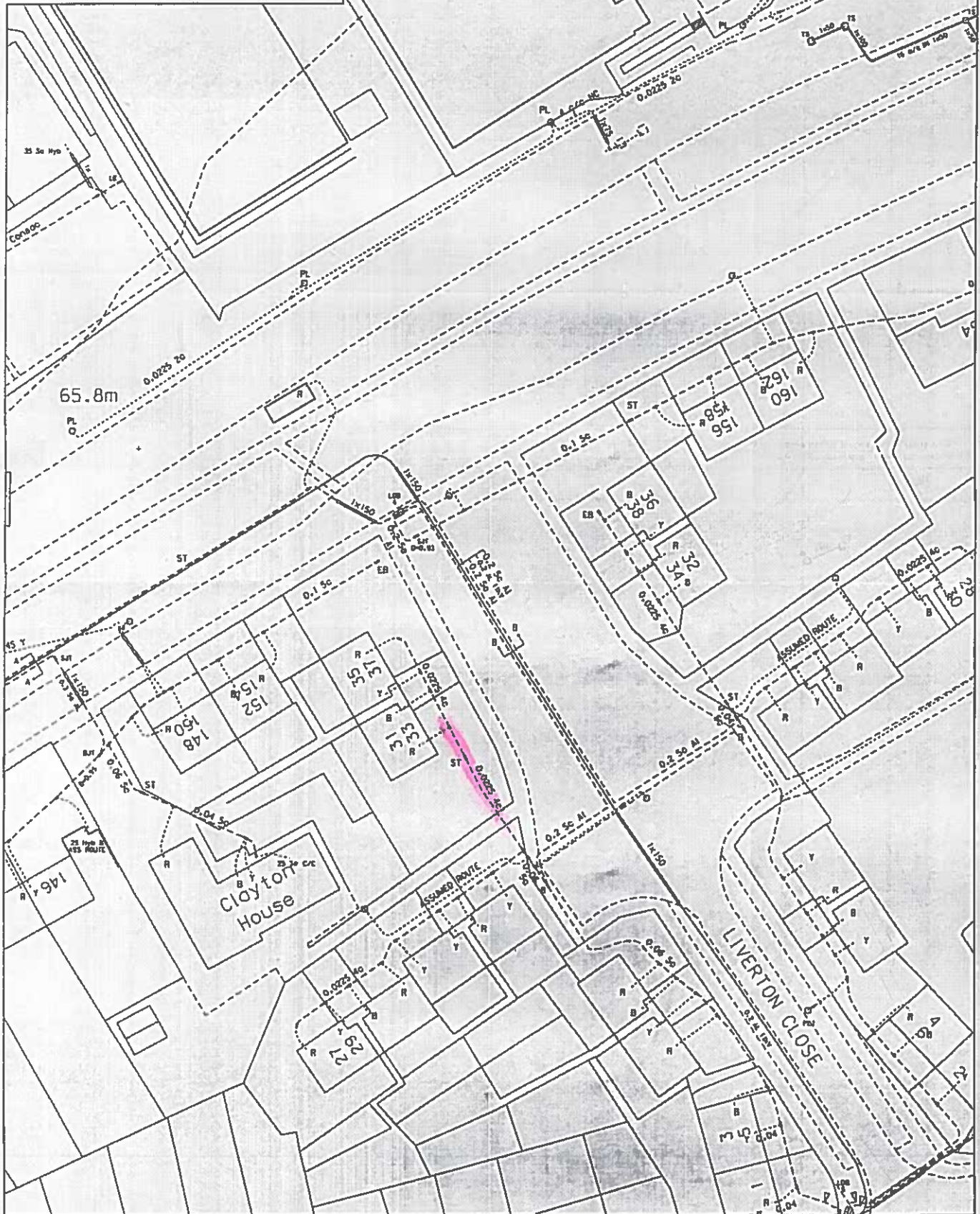


WESTERN POWER DISTRIBUTION

Serving the South West and Wales

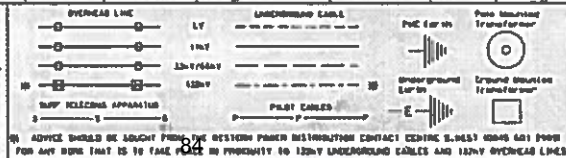
PLEASE NOTE: This plan ONLY shows assets owned by Western Power Distribution. Electricity assets owned by IDNO's (Independent Network Operator) MAY be present in this area.

Information is given as a guide only and its accuracy cannot be guaranteed.



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DATE: 23-5-2011
 SCALE: 1: 500
 REPLY BY: Neil Bertorelli
 OUR REF: 164475/1
 MAP REF: 5Y0281NW

Men's Shed Exmouth – Clayton House Littleham

The initial idea for Men's Shed Exmouth was formed by a small group of local men with a vision to meet and help other men in our community.

We were aware of many retired men keen to help mentor younger men who are lacking positive role models. Men's Shed provides a way to invite men to socialize, build friendships, share and learn new practical skills.

It provides a way for self-esteem to grow with potential for more job opportunities, and ways to help the community with practical tasks.

We brought that idea to Open Door, a local organisation, run by local staff and volunteers, whose mission is to meet the needs of the vulnerable in our local community.

When holding an initial evening meeting to tell the community about the idea of Men's Shed, 30+ local men attended to register their interest, some willing to help set up Men's Shed and some keen to attend once it is up and running.

We were successful in raising necessary funding to establish the project from the People's Health Trust. The trust specified that the project must operate in an area of social need and it was agreed that Littleham Exmouth would meet all the criteria.

We set up the project in Clayton House Littleham in January 2014 with the much welcomed support and backing of EDDC.

We purchased tools and equipment suitable for the space available to us in Clayton House. We open three days a week on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10am to 4pm.

It has proved to be very popular and we can have as many as 20 men attending the Shed on any one day. (this is the maximum we can safely cope with).

Importantly we believe we are attracting a broad spectrum of men from young unemployed men who can be mentored and use the IT facilities to look for employment, to retired men who are happy to share their skills, to those who just want a place to meet up and to men who come along with their carers to enjoy the banter of the work place.

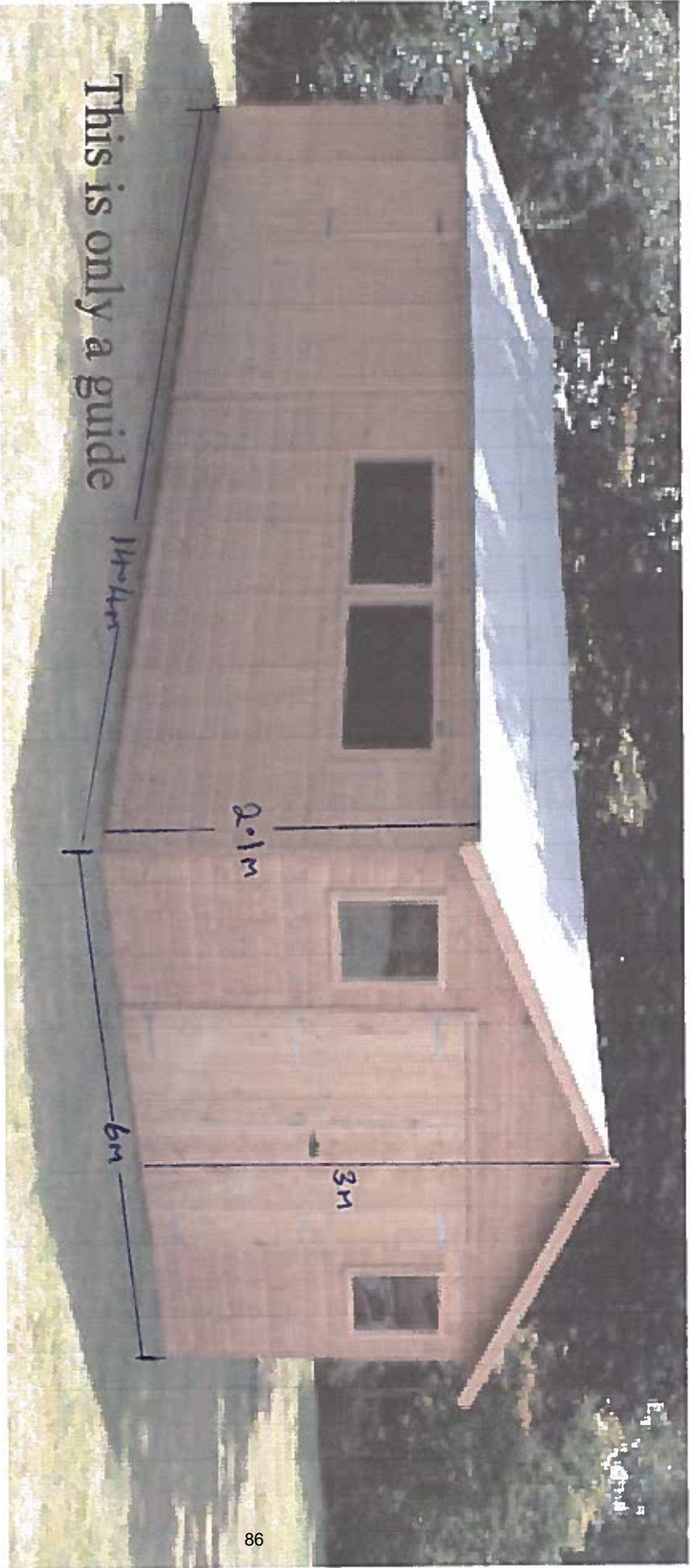
We have been involved in a number of community projects in Littleham. We built go-karts for children to race at the Littleham Fun Day which were a huge success. A total garden makeover for a young single mum with young toddlers, who now have a safe place to play. Raised beds for a local disabled lady who can now enjoy gardening again and three outside seats around the trees at Littleham primary school.

We also have a list of requests from the residents who live in the vicinity of Clayton House as they avail themselves of having helpful skilled men on their doorstep three times a week. The men who attend have already developed strong friendships and they are all keen to share their skills and to help in the community.

As Clayton House is a community hall used by other organisations, we try very hard to keep it clean, however dust and the lack of permanent work areas is a serious problem.

We have ongoing projects that need to be left setup with all the associated equipment until completed. We all agree that a purpose built workshop would be the answer. If we had our own space it would allow us to broaden our range of activities.

We know that we are fulfilling a real need in the community and as word spreads we will continue to grow and expand on the base we have already built.

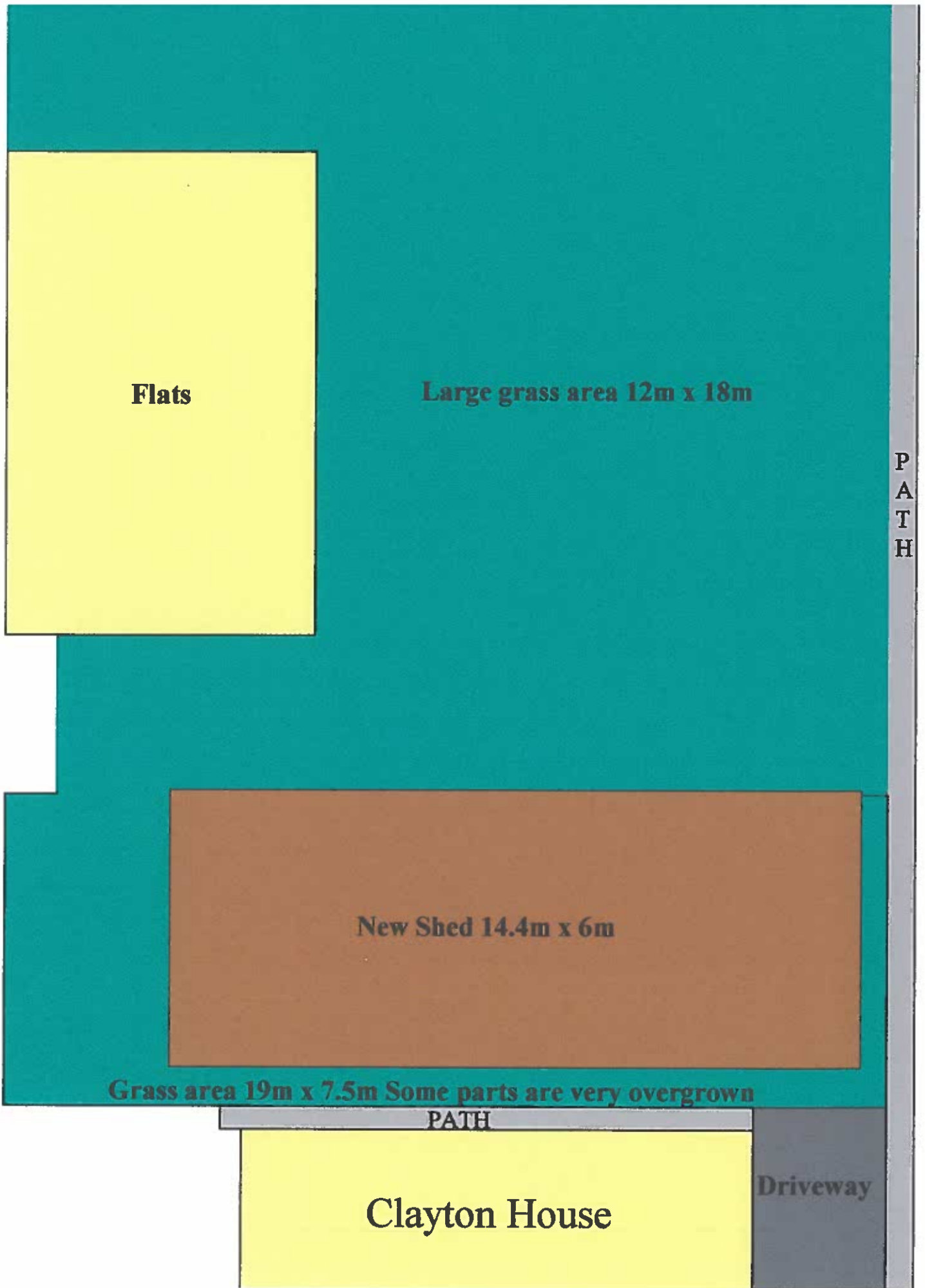


The shed would be of wooden construction in natural timber on a concrete base
Walls and roof will be fully insulated to stop noise and heat lose
Ventilation is provided by opening windows and doors as well as a high level extractor fan.
Entrance to the shed would be ramped if necessary for wheelchair and limited mobility access

Men's Shed proposal

Shed features

- 1. The shed will be clad in shiplap or tongued and grooved timber, treated with water proofing to retain the natural colour. Internally the walls will be boarded for strength and security. This will also reduce the internal and external noise levels.**
- 2. The walls and roof will be insulated with glass fibre or celotex type material**
- 3. The roof will be covered in good quality felt and lined inside to support the insulation**
- 4. Positioning of doors and windows to be agreed, dependent on the location**
- 5. All doors and emergency exits to be wide enough for wheelchair access and any ramps or slopes needed will be built in.**
- 6. Ventilation will be from open windows and doors as well as high level extract fans**
- 7. Emergency lighting will be included in the main lighting**
- 8. Power to be provided from Clayton house by overhead catenaries or buried underground**
- 9. Safety emergency stop buttons that shut off power to all the machines will be fitted around the shed. This will include a key lock switch to disable the power when the shed is not in use.**
- 10. Stand alone smoke detectors will be fitted as needed around the building**
- 11. Natural light is important, so as many windows as is practical will be installed, these may have security grills or shutters fitted, which will be removed when the shed is in use.**
- 12. Permanently fitted dust extraction units will drastically reduce the existing dust problem that exists in Clayton house.**
- 13. It is not proposed to install toilets in the shed, but to continue to use Clayton house**
- 14. A stand alone security system will be installed and activated when unoccupied**
- 15. An internal secure store will be built to house portable equipment when the shed is closed**
- 16. Noisy equipment will be located within the shed as far away from occupied dwellings as is possible**
- 17. The construction of the shed will be designed to adsorb noise and not amplify it, as is the case with the concrete and brick construction of Clayton House. This will substantially reduce the noise levels for shed users.**



Large grass area 12m x 18m

Flats

Possible vegetable gardens, run by men's shed for local users

**New Shed
6m x 14.4m**

P
A
T
H

Communal grass area 19m x 7.5m Some parts are very overgrown which could be cleared as part of the project

P
A
T
H

Clayton House

Driveway



OPTION 'A' PREFERRED

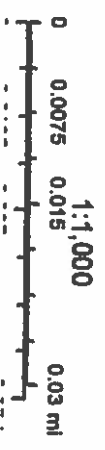


NEW SHED

GRASS AREA



OVER GROWN



MEN'S SHED OPTION 'B'



NEW SHED OPTION 'B'

GRASS AREA \$1,000 OVER



Report to: **Housing Review Board**

Date of Meeting: 15th January 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None



Agenda item: 14

Subject: **Community Development – update report**

Purpose of report: This report gives an update on the work of the Community Development team.

Recommendation:

- 1. To note the work carried out by the Community Development Team.**
- 2. Increase the capacity of the team by 0.6 (FTE), as well as taking on an apprentice, and increase the budget by £10,000 per annum.**

Reason for recommendation: To bring the Housing Review Board up to date with the project

Officer: Jane Reading, Tenants and Communities Manager.
jmreading@eastdevon.gov.uk

Financial implications: The financial implications are stated in the report and have been included in the draft 2015/16 HRA budget.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications.

Equalities impact: Medium Impact

Risk: High Risk
Reduced involvement and support of this initiative will have a high impact on the health and well being of families and young people a potential increase in Anti Social Behaviour across the district.

Links to background information:

Link to Council Plan: Achieve thriving, balanced communities

Report in full

1. The Housing Review Board has received several reports about the work of the Community Development Team over the last four years.
2. In November 2013 the Housing Review Board agreed to make a temporary post permanent and an additional full time post. This increased the capacity of the team to 3.4 FTE and the people employed to carry out Community Development to five (2 x full time, 2 x 3 days per week and 1 x 1 day per week).

3. The team currently deliver a range of projects including SWITCH; structured clubs for young people in Axminster and the Littleham area of Exmouth, and arrange and deliver community festivals and fun days across the district. In addition, the team recruits and trains volunteers, supports youth groups and other groups by providing advice and guidance, runs trips and activities for young people some of which have been in partnership with the Countryside team.
4. We also support and work with the targeted families support project, are the key players in the development of the Honiton Together initiative and in the securing of significant funds for this to be developed into a new and innovative way of working collaboratively in Honiton. We have also been working to facilitate community groups in securing the future of youth centres in Axminster, Honiton and Sidmouth, provide one to one and group support for young people and work with the Support Services team promote and encourage the use of our community centres and support new users of community centres such as the Open Door Church set up the very successful Men's Shed project in Littleham.
5. A review of the work of the team was completed earlier this year. This recognised the valuable work the team does and developed a Community Development plan to build on this. The team is committed to delivering what is wanted and needed by our tenants and their families.
6. Our Community Development work is enhanced by the projects such as get digital and the increase in coffee mornings and social events facilitated by our Mobile Support Officers for the predominantly older tenants in sheltered housing.
7. The key objective of all Community Development projects is to see an outcome in at least one of the areas below:
 - Health and Wellbeing;
 - Worklessness and financial inclusion;
 - SWITCH;
 - Targeted Families;
 - Community Centres.
8. The projects, activities etc used will aim to:
 - Get children back into education;
 - Get young people in employment or further education;
 - Get adults into work;
 - Reduce crime and anti social behaviour;
 - Provide activities, clubs and events to engage with young people and give them something to aspire to;
 - Work alongside key workers and the Targeted Families project;
 - Provide opportunities to encourage digital inclusion;
 - Healthy eating and lifestyles including diet, cooking, exercise and outdoor interests;
 - Provide parenting and life skills.
9. Some new initiatives in delivering this families and young people have been established, these include:
 - Digital projects;
 - Support group for parents on the targeted families register;
 - Honiton Together;
 - Projects to work with young people fitting the Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETs) criteria;

- Joint working with the Countryside team to identify and develop at least one Community Orchard;
- Work experience, apprenticeships and training opportunities;
- Jobs fair;
- Supporting people into work by helping with training, CV's, skills and some costs;
- Building confidence with all residents by for example supporting young people to achieve the John Muir award.

10. To develop the work further in the way envisaged we will need to:

- Increase the capacity of the team by an additional 0.6 (three days per week). The cost will be £17,391 on scale 6, and includes National Insurance and Superannuation.
- Recruit and train a Community Development apprentice.
- Increase the Community Development budget by an additional £10,000 per annum.

Report to: **Housing Review Board**

Date of Meeting: 15 January 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None



Agenda item: **15**

Subject: **Devon Home Choice – Proposed Policy Changes**

Purpose of report: The Devon Home Choice Policy is reviewed annually. This report sets out the proposed changes agreed by the Devon Home Choice Board following the policy review in November 2014, that require Member approval.

Recommendation:

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

1. Consider the options set out in the report, and
2. Agree recommendations set out in paragraph 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10 below.

Reason for recommendation: Changes to the Devon Home Choice policy have been agreed by the Devon Home Choice Board and these require approval by the Board.

Officer: Dennis Boobier, Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
dboobier@eastdevon.gov.uk

Financial implications: No financial implications have been identified.

Legal implications: Any changes to the DHC policy could lead to legal challenge by those excluded through the courts via Part VI Housing Act 1996.

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk

Links to background information: -----

Link to Council Plan: Living in this outstanding place

Report in full

1. The Devon Home Choice Partnership Agreement states that an annual policy review will be undertaken from 1 September each year.
2. The Devon Home Choice (DHC) Board has completed the annual review for 2014 and has set out proposals for change to the DHC Policy that will be introduced in early 2015. These changes require approval by Members before they can be introduced.
3. This paper summarises the issues that partners have considered and sets out the recommended change (or not) to the policy agreed by the DHC Board.

4. Right to Move

- a. The government has recently consulted on the introduction of a Right to Move for social tenants who need to move to take up a job or live closer to employment or training. The consultation paper (the HRB considered this at the November meeting) is available at:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/352299/140909_Right_to_Move_final_con_doc.pdf

- b. The key proposals set out in the consultation paper are:
 - i. Allocation policies should make clear that social tenants who need to move to take up a job or live closer to employment or training are included in the 'hardship' reasonable preference category (or the consultation paper questioned whether a new reasonable preference category for those who need to move for job related reasons should be created).
 - ii. Any residency (or local connection) requirement introduced as a result of the Localism Act provisions should not apply to social tenants who need to move for work.
 - iii. That local authorities set aside a proportion of lets to enable existing social tenants to move across local authority boundaries within England for work related reasons, and publish this quota (and the rationale behind it) as part of their allocation policy. The government suggest a minimum of 1% of lettings.
 - iv. That area-based schemes, like Devon Home Choice, provide for cross boundary movement between local authorities for tenants moving for work related reasons
- c. It could be argued that the Devon Home Choice policy as it stands does not adequately cover the 'hardship' reasonable preference category for social tenants seeking to move to Devon to take up work. The health and wellbeing framework would be used for most 'hardship' cases but does not specifically address people who need to move into Devon for work.
- d. The policy did initially provide priority, within Band C, to applicants (regardless of whether they were social tenants) who needed to move to work in Devon, where they would otherwise have needed to travel more than 30 miles (each way) from home to their place of work. Work was defined as having permanent employment with a minimum of a 16-hour contract per week. Proof of employment was required in order to be placed in this category. However, this category was removed following the 2012 policy review as it was very little used
- e. The Devon Home Choice Management Board considered the following:
 - i. Whether the policy should be strengthened to make clear that social tenants who need to move for work are provided with reasonable preference.

- ii. What Band applications are placed in. For example, should the Band C category for Moves for Work be reinstated, or should such applications be placed in Band B given that there are small numbers and that people will need to move quickly if they are coming from another part of the country to take up a job or would otherwise have commute over a long distance?
- iii. Should any priority apply to other applicants needing to move for work (unless they can afford to resolve their own housing needs) or just social tenants?
- iv. What proportion of lets should be allocated to enable existing social tenants to move across local authority boundaries within England for work related reasons, if the consultation proposals are agreed? Or could this be seen to be addressed if any such applicants were awarded a level of priority (e.g. Band B) that would enable them to be rehoused?

f. Recommendations

- i. That the Band C category for Moves for Work be reinstated for all applicants (not just social tenants) who need to move to work in Devon, where they would otherwise have needed to travel more than 30 miles (each way) from home to their place of work. Work is defined as having permanent employment with a minimum of a 16-hour contract per week. Proof of employment would be required in order to be placed in this category.
- ii. The normal income & capital limits will apply (e.g. applicants will be placed in Band E or removed from the register if they need to move for work but are above the Devon Home Choice income and savings limits).
- iii. Applicants in the Moves to Work category are not considered in the calculation of cross LA moves.
- iv. That a quota is not specified unless required by legislation. If a quota is required it is felt that this is best addressed by the labelling of adverts.

5. Local Connection

- a. At the end of December 2013 the government issued statutory guidance on 'Providing social housing for local people'. The guidance encourages local authorities, in deciding who qualifies for social housing, to prioritise applicants who can demonstrate a close association with their local area by adopting a residency requirement as part of their qualification criteria. The Government believes that a reasonable period of residency would be at least two years (e.g. that only households who had lived in that area for at least 2 years could join the housing register).
- b. For areas like Devon where local authorities share a common allocation policy with their neighbours, the guidance states that local authorities may wish to adopt a broader residency test which would be met if an applicant lives in any of the partners' districts (e.g. the whole of Devon rather than an individual district). It is suggested in the guidance that such an approach might be particularly appropriate where an established housing market area spans a number of local authority districts, and could therefore help promote labour mobility within a wider geographical area.
- c. Alongside a residency requirement, the guidance suggests that local authorities may want to adopt other qualification criteria to ensure that applicants who are not currently resident in the district/ area but who can still demonstrate a strong association to the local area are able to qualify (e.g. through family association or employment).

- d. The guidance makes it clear that local authorities cannot apply a local connection test to prevent members of the armed forces (who have served within the last 5 years) or their bereaved partners from joining the housing register.
- e. The guidance also suggests that local authorities may wish to consider whether there should be other exceptions to any residency/ local connection requirement. A number of examples are provided:
 - i. People who need to move away from another area, to escape violence or harm.
 - ii. Those who need to return, such as homeless families and care leavers whom the authority has housed outside their district.
 - iii. Those who need support to rehabilitate and integrate back into the community.
- f. Except in Torbay, local connection is not one of the factors considered in the current policy when determining whether someone is a qualifying person and can therefore join the Devon Home Choice register (see Section 2.5 of the policy).
- g. Applicants who have no local connection to Devon can currently register with Devon Home Choice but will have their application placed in either:
 - i. Band D if they are assessed as having a housing need (whether this be high, medium or low need), or
 - ii. Band E if they are assessed as having no housing need (in those areas that register applicants with no housing need).
- h. Local connection is defined in the current Devon Home Choice policy as:
 - i. Resident in Devon for 6 of the last 12 months, or 3 out of the last 5 years, or
 - ii. Work in Devon (defined as permanent work with a minimum of a 16 hour contract per week for the previous 6 months, and without a break in the period of employment for more than three months), or
 - iii. Have immediate family (parents, siblings and non-dependent children) who have lived in Devon for five years.
- i. The exceptions to the local connection assessment set out in the policy are:
 - i. Tenants of partners landlords living outside Devon;
 - ii. Members of the armed forces (who have served within the last 5 years) or their bereaved partners.
- j. On 1 April 2014 Torbay introduced a local connection test requiring the applicant (or member of the applicant's household) to have; lived within Torbay for 5 years; or work in Devon (using the same criteria as the Devon Home Choice local connection test); or Have family in Devon (using the same criteria as the Devon Home Choice local connection test).
- k. The following groups are excluded from the new Torbay local connection test:
 - i. Existing social housing tenants in Devon

- ii. Members of the Armed Forces and former Service personnel, where the application is made within five years of discharge.
 - iii. Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner.
 - iv. Serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service.
 - v. Households assessed as being in Band A or Band B, and
 - vi. Applicants requiring Sheltered Housing.
- l. Exeter City Council have recently completed a consultation that included a proposal to introduce a local connection test (to Devon rather than Exeter) as part of the qualification criteria to join the Devon Home Choice register.
- m. Devon County Council (DCC) have raised concern about the possible consequences of introducing a residency/ local connection test for people that they fund and have had to place out of Devon into specialist accommodation as local provision had not been available. Under the Winterbourne Review, DCC are now seeking to repatriate these clients back within the County, often into community based settings and not residential care home settings. It is argued therefore that the Devon Home Choice policy must allow this to happen (e.g. by making these applicants exempt from the residency/ local connection test) and continue to place such applications in Band B for move on from supported accommodation so that they can move back as soon as possible.
- n. The Devon Home Choice Management Board considered the following issues:
- i. Whether a local connection test should be part of the qualification criteria to join the Devon Home Choice register?
 - ii. If this is agreed, what should the length of any residency test be?
 - iii. Whether any of the other local connection tests (re: employment or family connection) should be amended in light of this?
 - iv. Should the local connection test apply to Devon as a whole?
 - v. Whether there should be any exceptions to a residency/ local connection requirement, in addition to members of the armed forces or their bereaved partners, those fleeing violence or harassment and social tenants, applicants who have been funded by DCC, Torbay or Plymouth CC and placed outside of Devon who wish to return?

o. Recommendation

- i. No change is made to the policy. It was felt that there is no evidence to suggest the policy needs to be changed. Applicants with no local connection to Devon are already restricted to Band D at the most.

6. Should applicants who have not bid for 12 months or refuse 3 reasonable offers be removed from the register?

- a. On 1 April 2014 Teignbridge and Torbay introduced changes to the Devon Home Choice policy in their areas so that applicants who have not bid for 12 months or turned down 3 reasonable offers will be removed from the Devon Home Choice register. Exeter City Council's recent consultation included the same proposal.
- b. The Devon Home Choice Board considered whether the current policy is robust enough to deal with unreasonable refusals and whether an applicant who has been 'inactive' during the previous 12 months should remain on the waiting list.

c. Recommendation

- i. Applicants who have not bid or logged on for 12 months should normally be removed from the Devon Home Choice register. This recommendation was agreed on the conditions that:
 - 1. There is appropriate protection for vulnerable applicants, and
 - 2. This can be fully automated using the Home Connections Inactivity module.
- ii. That no change is made to the policy with regard to applicants who have refused offers. The current policy gives each partner the opportunity to review individual applicants circumstances when considering what further action should be taken.

7. Applicants with rent arrears, including those who don't declare rent arrears or make false statements/ omissions on their application

- a. Concern has been raised that there should be tougher rules on applicants with rent arrears, and that there are a number of applicants that do not admit rent arrears on their application.
- b. Applicants should be excluded from the register if they have significant rent arrears (e.g. over £500) or have breached their 'tenancy obligations where no attempt is being made to repay the debt or remedy the breach (as a minimum it would be normally be expected that applicants had agreed and kept to a repayment schedule and/ or not breached their tenancy obligations for at least 3 months)'.
 - c. However the policy does state that 'Partner social landlords within Devon Home Choice have different policies relating to applicants with rent arrears. Whether a bid for home is accepted will therefore be subject to the policies of the each partner social landlord. More information is available from each Devon Home Choice partner'. There is scope therefore for landlords to take a tougher stance on rent arrears if they wish to do so.
- d. Similarly, local authorities should be taking action on applicants who provide false statements on their application or omit certain information.
- e. An issue has been identified with an inconsistency in the wording of the policy relating to rent arrears that needs to be addressed. Paragraphs 2.5.2 and 2.5.3 make clear that:

“Households assessed by one of the Devon local authorities as being guilty of unacceptable behaviour will not be considered as a qualifying person. This will apply where a Devon local authority is satisfied that the applicant, **or a member of their household** have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make the applicants unsuitable to be a tenant.”

- f. However paragraph 2.6.3. states

“Applicants with rent arrears to any social landlord above £500 will be placed in the No housing need band (E) or removed from the Devon Home Choice register in those local authority areas which do not register households with no housing need”

- g. The text does not explicitly refer to other members of the household who have rent arrears and it is therefore proposed that the text is amended as follows:

Where an applicant, or a member of their household, has rent arrears to any social landlord above £500 their application will be placed in the No housing need band (E) or removed from the Devon Home Choice register in those local authority areas which do not register households with no housing need

- h. The Devon Home Choice Board considered the following:
 - i. Does the policy need to be strengthened further on rent arrears, or is it a question of the policy being applied as intended?
 - ii. Is there a need to strengthen the policy on the consequences of making a false statement or omitting information?
 - iii. Does the Management Board approve the proposed change to the wording of paragraph 2.6.3? – See f. Above.

i. Recommendations

- i.** Concern was raised about the work needed at the application stage to assess whether any rent arrears are the applicant's fault or due to problems with Housing Benefit etc. The key time to assess rent arrears is at point of offer. Landlords need to feedback to LAs if they come across applicants with rent arrears where this is not declared on the application.
- ii.** The only changes that are therefore proposed are to make very clear in the policy that making a false statement or omitting information is tenancy fraud, and to amend the wording of paragraph 2.6.3 as follows:

“Where an applicant, or a member of their household, has rent arrears to any social landlord above £500 their application will be placed in the No housing need band (E) or removed from the Devon Home Choice register in those local authority areas which do not register households with no housing need”.

8. Is Devon Home Choice the best means of allocating accessible or adapted properties?

- a.** Concern has been raised that Devon Home Choice is not the most appropriate way of allocating accessible or adapted properties.
- b.** This issue was considered as part of the 2012 policy review, with the Management Board confirming that accessible and adapted properties should continue to be advertised and allocated through Devon Home Choice. The Management Board agreed a number of recommendations in an attempt to address issues that had been raised.
- c.** It has been proposed that this issue is considered again in light of:
 - i.** the joint working that district councils are undertaking with health across the County,
 - ii.** the new Care Act (which introduces specific duties on the County Council to work with District to meet an individual's greater care, health and wellbeing needs), and,
 - iii.** continuing concerns that adaptations are being removed from properties a result of the choice based letting process.
- d.** It has been suggested that adapted property should be allocated via a panel outside of Devon Home Choice, in a similar way to how extra care, as the care need /accessibility need takes priority over housing need.
- e.** The Devon Home Choice Board considered what evidence is required in order to confirm how accessible and adapted properties should be allocated (e.g. from Devon Home Choice data and practice elsewhere) and agreed that a multi agency short-life group should consider the evidence and make recommendations to the Management Board.

9. Does the assessment of how someone's health & wellbeing is affected by their current home need to be reviewed and amended?

- a. It has been proposed that, given the introduction of the new Care Act, the health and wellbeing framework needs to be reviewed. Housing is now explicitly referenced as part of local authorities' new duty to promote the integration of health and care. It has therefore been suggested that the health and wellbeing banding criteria (and the Health & Wellbeing form) be reviewed to take into account the definitions around 'well-being' in relation to housing.
- b. Some concerns have also been raised about the process for awarding health and wellbeing priority, and who makes these decisions. However, as these issues are procedural it is suggested that these issues are considered by the Operational Group.
- c. The DHC Management Board agreed that the health and wellbeing framework should be reviewed by a multi agency short-life group and make recommendations to the Management Board.

10. Move-on from supported accommodation

- a. The DHC Board asked a short-life working group to propose any changes to the policy and procedures relating to people moving on from supported accommodation.
- b. The group proposed that the following statements are added to the policy relating to move-on:
 - i. Where supported accommodation is being decommissioned, residents will only have their application placed in Band B for move-on if it is assessed that they are ready for independent living. Those applicants who are not assessed as being ready for independent living will have their application assessed by their local authority in line with the Devon Home Choice policy
 - ii. There is no standard definition of supported accommodation. Local authorities will determine what they consider to be supported accommodation in their area. This will be based on those projects that the local authority works with to meet strategic needs.
- c. Recommendation**
 - i. That the above statements are added to the policy relating to move on.

11. Members are asked to agree to the recommendations made by the Devon Home Choice Board as set out in this report.

Report to: **Housing Review Board**

Date of Meeting: 15 January 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None



Agenda item: **16**

Subject: **Gas Safety Checks and Servicing – Access Procedure**

Purpose of report: This report sets out proposals to change our existing process for gaining access to properties where the tenant is not cooperating with the Council to undertake the annual gas safety checks and servicing required by law.

Recommendation: **Recommendation**
Members are asked to approve the proposed access procedure set out at Annex B to the report.

Reason for recommendation: To provide and update for Board members.

Officer: Dennis Boobier, Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
dboobier@eastdevon.gov.uk

Financial implications: The financial implications are already included in budgets.

Legal implications: The risk is that the shorter process adopted circumvents the current EDDC tenancy agreement and interferes with the “peaceful enjoyment” of the property. Officers are adopting wording to a revised tenancy agreement so that entry can be gained, without the need for a civil Injunction or Magistrates’ warrant, within a 7 day period.

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk

Links to background information: -----

Link to Council Plan: Living in this outstanding place

Report in full

1. As a Landlord we have a duty of care under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, to ensure that an annual safety inspection of all gas appliances in each of our properties is undertaken.
2. Our current gas safety and servicing procedures set out how we will achieve the annual safety check and servicing of our properties that have gas central heating and other appliances. A copy of our procedure is reproduced at **Annex A**.

3. Each year we undertake around 3,200 annual gas safety checks. In most cases tenants allow the service engineer to complete the service at the appointed time. Our procedure allows for appointments that have been changed by mutual agreement. However, there are tenants who do not allow access or are not available at the appointed date/time and a further appointment is scheduled and a letter informing the tenant is sent by the Contractor. The following shows the annual success/failure rate of our current process.
 - a. Still no access following Contractor 2nd letter - 722
 - b. No access following Contractor 3rd letter - 453
 - c. No access following Council letter (14 day letter) - 136
 - d. No access following Council 2nd letter (7 day letter) - 86
 - e. No access following 'legal' notice (24 hour letter) - 14
 - f. Taken to Court - 3
 - g. Further Court action - 1

4. We propose to adopt a more robust approach that is shorter and more effective at gaining entry. This approach is used by other landlords, including Exeter City Council and Bristol City Council. In future we propose to adopt the process outlined in the flowchart at **Annex B**.

5. In summary, the process that Robert Heath Heating (RHH) uses to gain access will continue. When RHH refer the access issue to the Council, we propose to write our normal 7 day letter requesting access providing a date and time when we will attend to complete the gas safety check. If the tenant is in and gives us access then the gas safety check and service will be carried out. If the tenant denies us access then we will immediately apply to the court for an injunction to gain access. Then if the tenant is not home we will force entry and complete the gas safety check and service, change the locks and ensure a notice is left asking the tenant to contact us for the new set of keys required to get into their home. We will also install a "cut off" valve in the system to ensure the gas supply is interrupted at the next annual safety check cycle to help the tenant to be more cooperative when we next try to undertake the annual service.

6. This proposal is required to ensure the Council minimises the number of annual gas safety checks not completed within the 12 month period; protect our assets; and protect other tenants and neighbours. This is a statutory duty and we must take appropriate action to ensure we comply with the law. A number of landlords have been criticised recently by the regulator where their approach is not considered suitably robust.

GAS SAFETY AND SERVICING PROCEDURES

ANNEX A

Introduction

As a landlord East Devon District Council has a statutory duty to carry out a gas safety check, at least once every twelve months, of the gas appliances, flues and the associated pipe work that we are responsible for. If we do not do this, the Council can be prosecuted under regulation 36 of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and/or the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. To avoid prosecution it is necessary to show that we have taken all reasonable steps to comply with our duty.

Sensible health and safety is about managing risks. The risks presented by domestic gas appliances can be easily controlled where landlords are aware of their duties and act upon them. Any appliance which burns fossil fuels, such as gas, coal or oil, can give off carbon monoxide. Excess gas, which is poisonous, is produced when the fuel does not burn properly. It can kill or maim without warning in just a matter of hours.

Every year people die from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by gas fires, central heating boilers, cookers and flues that have not been properly installed or maintained. In many cases these deaths could have been prevented if a maintenance regime was followed and an annual safety check performed.

As a consequence the Council has adopted a policy approach to take all reasonable actions to discharge our duty as a landlord and carry out a gas safety check every twelve months of the gas appliances which we are responsible for with the aim of:

- Reducing the risk to tenants from faulty appliances, and;
- Protecting the Council from the risk of prosecution.

Regulation 36 details the duties of landlords to 'ensure that each appliance and flue to which the duty extends; has been checked within a 12 month period, that proof of this is kept for two years and is available for the tenant(s) of the premises. The relevant sections of the guidance to this Regulation are:

208. Regulation 36 places important duties on most landlords of domestic property to ensure that gas appliances and flues are maintained in a safe condition, annual safety checks are carried out, and records are kept and issued (or in certain cases displayed) to tenants. These duties are in addition to the more general ones that landlords have under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
209. All reasonable steps should be taken by landlords (including through tenancy agreements) to ensure access to property for safety checks and maintenance work to be done, this may involve giving written notice to a tenant (e.g. by recorded delivery) explaining the reasons why access is required and requesting arrangements to be made (at a mutually agreed date/time); follow-up action, including personal visits, might be required, for instance, if there is no response to a written request. Tenants should co-operate with landlords in allowing the necessary access to their accommodation. However, landlords should keep a record of their action in case a tenant refuses entry and it is necessary to demonstrate the steps taken to discharge their duties

GAS SAFETY AND SERVICING PROCEDURES

(see regulation 39). Action to gain access does not involve making arrangements for forced entry into property. See also paragraph 245.

The key words within the above paragraph are **'including through tenancy agreements'** and the **'follow-up action including personal visits'** after there has been no response to a more formal approach.

In order to meet this duty we will enforce our right of access to our property and will, if necessary:

- Take action under the terms of the tenancy agreement;
- Make an application to the courts for an injunction.

Policy position

1. We aim to service all Council owned gas appliances annually. We have a gas servicing contract and a close working relationship with Robert Heath Heating (RHH) our Service Contractor appointed for this purpose.
2. Our legal responsibility is to undertake an annual gas safety check, but we combine this with an annual service of all gas appliances. It is therefore imperative that our appointed Gas Engineers carry out the necessary safety check and service all gas appliances every year. 100% compliance with this procedure is necessary.
3. Our Tenancy Agreements under Access to Your home states that - You must allow our employees or representatives reasonable access to your home to inspect its condition, do repairs or improvements to the property or a adjoining property, or deal with any health and safety issue including the annual gas safety inspection and servicing of the Council's gas appliances.
4. We aim to complete the servicing of gas appliances within An 11 month period.
5. Our property records include details of all 3,100+ gas appliances. Our Host Access system has a gas safety page for each property where gas appliances are fitted.
6. We will confirm annually that our contractor has a valid and up to date GasSafe (formerly CORGI) registration for the company and the Gas Engineers.
7. We will comply with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. As a landlord we must:
 - Ensure that only persons approved by the Health and Safety Executive carry out work on gas fittings (such person must be CORGI registered);
 - Not permit a gas appliance to be used if we suspect it to be unsafe or inadequately ventilated;
 - Undertake an annual gas safety check by an approved person on appliances, flues and pipe work that we own;
 - Keep records of all inspection defects and action taken, and make such records available to tenants.

GAS SAFETY AND SERVICING PROCEDURES

Gas safety procedures

8. We have clear procedures for gas servicing which commence with the production of a schedule of properties and appliances to be visited where appliances are due their annual safety check. This list was produced by the Senior Technical Assistant and sent to RHH prior to commencement of the contract. This list was based on the schedule of properties requiring an annual gas safety check based on the anniversary from the previous year of serviced appliances, plus updates (additional appliances and deleted appliances).
9. Each property is given an anniversary date which is held on the property database. This is to ensure that the property has its gas safety check and service within 12 months since it was last checked for gas safety.
10. RHH issue letters to tenants with survey forms and offer the tenant an appointment date/time for the gas safety check (Annex 2). In addition RHH offer the tenant the opportunity to make alternative arrangements if the tenant is unable to make the offered appointment.
11. RHH attend the appointment and where possible undertake the annual gas safety check.
12. Where RHH do not gain access to undertake the gas safety check they will leave a calling card asking the tenant to contact them. Appointments for the gas safety check and service can be made directly with RHH or through the Council's repair service.
13. RHH will maintain accurate and comprehensive records of visits, failed appointments and notifications left for the tenant, and will provide a daily report to the Technical Officer of third visits with no access.
14. If the gas safety check and service is undertaken the Gas Engineer completes the service and safety inspection and issues the LGSR certificate. A copy of the LGSR is imported from RHH database by the Repairs Advisor to our property database weekly or on request.
15. RHH will inform the Technical Officer if they get no response to the 3rd calling card they have left at the property following a failed visit.
16. The Technical Officer will send a standard (14 day) Council letter requesting access to the property to undertake the gas safety check (Annex 3) to tenants who have not responded to the calling cards left by RHH.
17. If we receive no response from the tenant after 14 days a standard (7 day) letter (Annex 4) from the Council's Solicitor is hand delivered to the property and handed to the tenant if possible.
18. If no response is received from the tenant within 7 days then a letter from the Council's Solicitor is hand delivered to the property giving 24 hours notice (Annex 5) or an appointment where RHH will attend to undertake the gas safety check.

GAS SAFETY AND SERVICING PROCEDURES

19. If this appointment is not kept and there is no contact from the tenant, the Council's Solicitor will be instructed to issue a Notice of Seeking Possession or to obtain an Injunction. Legal will decide the most appropriate course of action based upon individual circumstances of the case.
20. Host Access shows the outstanding appliances that require servicing and the attempts made to access the property to undertake the gas safety inspection. HOST shows a red flag on the property history page following the letter from the Technical Officer at paragraph 17 above.
21. This is to identify to staff that a gas safety check is outstanding if the tenant reports any repair. If this happens the Repairs Advisor will invite the tenant to make an appointment for the gas safety check.
22. The Technical Officer will maintain accurate and up to date records of actions taken on the HOST system.
23. The Technical Officer will keep the Property and Asset Manager informed of progress
24. RHH will make appointments with tenants at their reasonable request including early mornings and evening where necessary.
25. Void properties will receive a gas safety check prior to the new tenant taking up occupation of the property. This will be ordered by the Maintenance Surveyor following the void inspection and change of tenancy process.
26. The LGSR certificate will be placed on the property file when the gas safety check has been undertaken.
27. A flowchart depicting the stages in the gas safety and servicing procedure is shown in Annex 6.
28. A good Practice Gas Safety Checklist is shown in Annex 7.
29. We employ EnergyServ UK to undertake monthly random audits of the gas safety check and service carried out by RHH. EnergyServ UK send a report to the Technical Officer on the performance of our contractor.
30. The Technical Officer reviews the audit report. If there are issues relating to the gas safety check the Technical Officer raises these issues with the Manager of RHH to ensure any defects are corrected and that efforts are made to minimise these issues arising again

This procedure was last updated in 2013.

GAS SAFETY AND SERVICING PROCEDURES

GAS SAFETY CHECKLIST

1. *Governance, Monitoring and Compliance*

- Is there a clear procedure to gain access to properties to undertake a gas safety check every 12 months?
- Is this followed and clearly documented/recorded?
- Are actions taken within the prescribed timescales?
- How many properties have CP12s older than 12 months and what stages of action are they all at?
- In cases of no access how is the housing organisation ensuring it meets its legal obligations?
- Is the final stage letter sent by Recorded Delivery or hand delivered?
- In cases where Recorded Delivery has been found to be locally ineffective have other options been considered?
- Has the fitting of limiting devices been considered?¹
- Is there a 'policing' role for gas safety check within the landlord function? If so are they suitably qualified?
- Is progress on safety checks and servicing monitored at least weekly?
- Does the landlord do its own cross-checks upon completion of servicing?
- Does the landlord cross-check whether paperwork has been completed appropriately?
- Are front line housing staff and other agencies involved in cases of persistent no access?
- Are there clear procedures for dealing with persistent no-access properties and prioritising them for access in subsequent years?
- Has the housing organisation's gas servicing policy been approved and reported through its governance structures?
- Have the governance structures been informed of risk in relation to its policy on gas servicing and are there assessments of progress and effectiveness of its practices?
- Do the governance structures receive progress or monitoring reports on a regular or an exceptions basis?
- Does the organisation involve contractors, quality assurance agents and residents in reviewing the effectiveness of its arrangements for servicing and the legal remedies available to it?
- Is there an external independent quality & compliance audit?

2. *Contractors*

- What checks does the housing organisation undertake to ensure the competency of the contractors they employ?
- Are the same competency checks of contractors applied to planned maintenance contract works?
- What quality checks are undertaken of the gas paperwork and by who?
- Is servicing approached on a structured basis (area/street etc) and clear procedure for advising tenants in advance

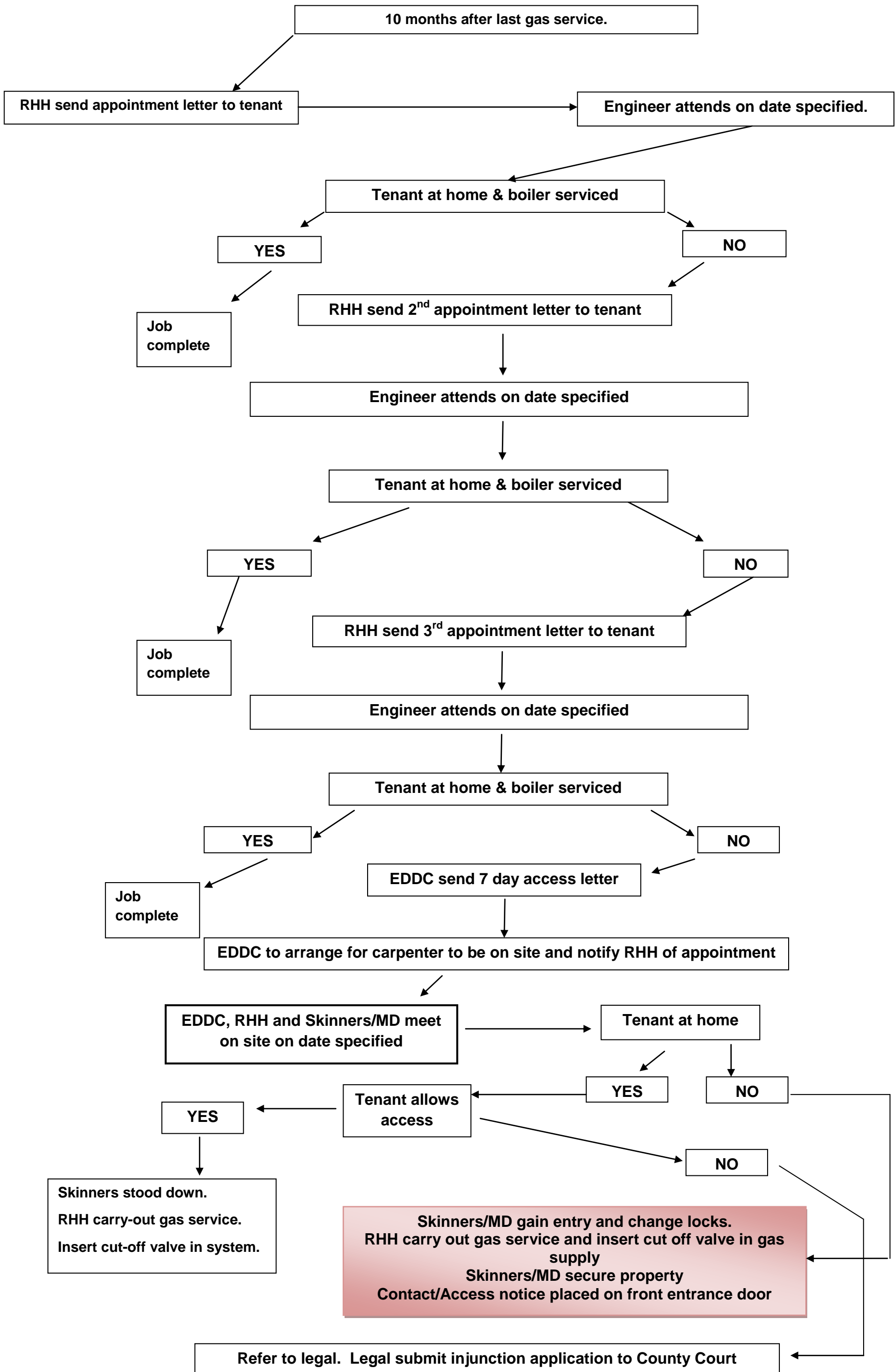
Residents

- Do tenants know when gas servicing will take place?

GAS SAFETY AND SERVICING PROCEDURES

- What measures are in place to identify and make specific access arrangements for vulnerable and non-English speaking residents?
- Do the procedures have a safety net built in for potentially vulnerable tenants or those with particular needs?
- Is the importance of gas safety positively promoted to tenants?
- Are CP12 (safety certificates) provided to tenants at the time of the safety check and are they also issued to any new/incoming tenants?
- Are customer satisfaction surveys undertaken on a regular basis?
- Are newsletters, letters, and local press used to inform tenants of the importance of gas checks?
- Is there specific provision within the tenancy agreement to the obligation to provide access for servicing?
- Is there an escalation procedure based on risk assessment of the length of period overdue, property type, and previous non compliance by the resident?
- Are access arrangements for servicing works widely available and customer focussed?
- Is sufficient notice given to residents of their proposed appointment and is there sufficient opportunity to rearrange it to a mutually convenient appointment?
- Are appointment reminders sent to residents? Some positive examples seen to date include the use of SMS text messaging, follow up letters and advance phone calls

GAS ANNUAL SERVICING PROCEDURE



Report to: **Housing Review Board**

Date of Meeting: 15 January 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None



Agenda item: 17

Subject: **Fire Regulations, FRA's and Block of Flats**

Purpose of report: This report provides an update relating to the Council meeting the Fire Regulations in terms of Fire Risk Assessments in our Blocks of Flats.

Recommendation: **Recommendation**
Members are asked to note the report.

Reason for recommendation: To provide and update for Board members.

Officer: Dennis Boobier, Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
dboobier@eastdevon.gov.uk

Financial implications: Budgets have been included in 2014/15 and 2015/16 for this work.

Legal implications: As the landlord EDDC has a duty of care to all tenants to ensure that communal access areas, entry and egress points are safe should there be an incident. The Housing Authority has a duty to comply with all Fire Regulations and in carrying out improvement works under the advice of the Fire Safety Officer. Housing Officers continue to be vigilant in ensuring that our communal areas are safe by undertaking regular Fire Risk Assessments.

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk

Links to background information: -----

Link to Council Plan: Living in this Outstanding Place

Report in full

1. We have been undertaking Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) on our blocks of flats over the last two years. An update report was presented to Members in March 2014.
2. The Council owns 225 'blocks' of flats, including sheltered schemes and community centres. A FRA has been completed at each block of flats. The FRA recommends the work that needs to be done to bring the fire safety within each block up to the required standard.

3. We are required to undertake regular reviews of each FRA and that is an ongoing process. Some of the reviews are undertaken by an external specialist consultant, particularly our blocks of sheltered accommodation and community centres; and our other 'large' blocks of flats e.g. Ridgeway Court, Axminster and Custance House, Honiton. All other blocks of flats are being reviewed by housing officers who have undertaken training on Fire Risk Assessments.
4. This involves a Housing Officer visiting each block and checking that the correct signage is in place and that any hazards on the initial report have been rectified. Any signs missing are replaced. If our instruction to tenants in the block of flats has not been complied with and personal items or combustible materials are found in corridors, stairways or means of escape, then tenants are asked to clear items and not to do this again. If this persists then a further letter is sent reminding tenants of the requirement for them to keep these areas clear of trip hazards and obstructions and we also remove personal items to store if found in corridors, stairways or means of escape. If this persists, a letter is sent explaining the breach of tenancy agreement, and that possession proceedings will be taken against the tenant.
5. Fortunately, most tenants are complying with our instructions, many reluctantly and not without voicing their concerns, but we have not had to progress to seeking possession of a tenant's home yet. Usually once the Housing Officer has issued the second letter the corridors, stairways and means of escape are being kept free of trip hazards and obstructions.
6. Each FRA identifies the fire precaution measures in place and recommends any further changes or improvements to the fire safety at individual blocks of flats. This may include:
 - a. Upgrade or provision of 'emergency' lighting;
 - b. Provide up to date Fire Action signs;
 - c. Provide additional signage to clearly show the exits and means of escape to residents and visitors;
 - d. Making sure existing doors and door closures are fit for purpose include half hour fire protection.
7. We are undertaking work in a number of blocks of flats and we are progressing a programme of improvements to emergency lighting systems. We have completed this work in 48 blocks of flats and another 51 blocks are in the process of being done, with 19 of these requiring new power supplies to be installed by Western Power by the end of January 2015. In addition we have undertaken or are progressing the following:
 - a. Completed a full refurbishment of Powell Close Seaton and we are progressing the conversion of 4 x bedsits into 2 x two bedroom flats in Powell Close also.
 - b. Brooklyn Park, Exmouth – new anti slip flooring with integrated fire resistance mat at entrance to each block of flats and removed unused stairlift.
 - c. Whitton Court, Sidmouth – upgrade of present bin store/washing line area.
 - d. Country House, Sidford – new bin stores are going to be provided and planning permission is being sought.
 - e. Westcott Way, Honiton – replacing the existing exterior doors to the balconies/storage areas with a fire door, this will enable the tenants to continue to use these areas for drying washing etc but not to store any 'personal' items because of fire risk.
 - f. Churchill Court, Lypstone – new bin stores built to the rear of the blocks.
 - g. Glebelands, Lypstone – new bin stores built at the side and front of the blocks.

- h. Manor Close, Seaton – Plan to refurbish in 2015 to carry out major improvements to all the blocks – similar to Powell Close e.g. new flooring, decoration and new flat entrance doors and external front and back doors.
 - i. Kendall House Honiton – Plan to refurbish in 2015 to carry out improvements similar to Powell Close e.g. new flooring, decoration and new flat entrance doors and external front and back doors.
 - j. Dolphin Street Colyton – new storage area created at the rear of the block for all tenants to use with external fire door.
8. We are also progressing a feasibility study to refurbish Custance House, Honiton in 2015 and incorporate all the required work recommended by the FRA. This year we are replacing the ‘fin lock’ gutter system which will help reduce damp penetration and improve thermal efficiency of the upper part of the building.
9. We have been concentrating on Dray Court, Exmouth to comply with the Enforcement Notice issued by the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service. We will be holding a review meeting with the Fire Officer in January 2015 at Dray Court which will hopefully confirm that we have complied with all the requirements of the Enforcement Notice.
10. The Dray Court, Exmouth FRA recommended certain actions that required the cooperation of tenants. I can now confirm that tenants are complying with our instructions to ensure that all corridors, stairways and means of escape are free from obstructions and trip hazards. The key areas we had to improve which are now complete are:
- a. Fire protection – minimum half hour for flat entrance doors and one hour for flat compartmentalisation protection (fire stopping work).
 - b. Emergency lighting improvements.
 - c. Clear instructions and briefing of residents.
 - d. Clear training and guidance for staff.
 - e. Regular checks of communal areas, emergency lighting and means of escape routes.
 - f. Compliance by residents to Landlord requirements.
11. The Mobile Support Officers and Estate Management Officers in particular are taking the appropriate action recommended by the FRA and our strong stance on any breach of fire regulation or our instructions to residents is now working well.
12. Lockable bollards are proposed as external wall mounted weather protection rated charging sockets allied to 3 or 4 mobility scooter hard standings evenly dispersed around the periphery of the rear of the building.
13. We have provided lockable, fire protected storage for recyclable waste such as bottles, tins and papers underneath the internal staircase on each floor. All other household waste must be stored either in tenant’s flats or outside the building. We are providing a suitable external bin store to enable tenants to store household waste prior to collection.
14. The work at Dray Court will enable us to adopt a “stay put” policy in the event of a fire. We have agreed to write to all tenants and explain this policy so they are clear that in the event of a fire they are safe to remain in their home until evacuated by the Fire and Rescue Service. This does not mean that residents and visitors cannot leave the building if they wish to do so, but it will give some reassurance to tenants and their families that they can remain in their home if a fire occurs.
15. In our other ‘large’ blocks of flats we will probably adopt a stay put policy if we are able to ensure flat entrance doors are half hour fire protected and one-hour fire protection measures are provided that protects each flat as well as ensuring that tenants comply with

our instructions to keep corridors, stairways and means of escape free from trip hazards and obstructions.

16. We propose to undertake an assessment of the fire stopping measures we will need to undertake at Morgan Court and Albion Court, Exmouth as well as an asbestos survey of each block of flats. This will give us a clear idea of what we will need to do to comply with Fire Regulations. The proposal is to do the same at the following locations (no particular order and no timescale/deadline agreed at this stage) and some essential unavoidable work has been done knowing that it is required at some of these blocks of flats:

- a. Morgan Court Exmouth, including community centre.
- b. Albion Court Exmouth, including community centre.
- c. Trumps Court, Sidmouth, including community centre (new lift to be installed by March 2015).
- d. Poplar Mount, Axminster – A feasibility scheme to rebuild all 3 lifts & stair well in 3 new housings on the front of the building is underway.
- e. Ridgway Court, Axminster
- f. Brooklyn Park, Exmouth
- g. Custance House, Honiton
- h. Dunning Court, Honiton, including the Community Centre
- i. Westcott Way, Honiton
- j. Churchill Court, Lypstone, including the Community Centre
- k. Spencer Court, Ottery St Mary
- l. Country House, Sidford

17. A progress report will be presented to Members at a future Board meeting.

Report to: **Housing Review Board**

Date of Meeting: 15 January 2015

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None



Agenda item: **18**

Subject: **Damp and Water Penetration Work - Update**

Purpose of report: This report provides an update relating to the work we are undertaking on the 400+ Council properties that were affected by damp/water penetration following last winter's bad weather.

Recommendation: **Recommendation**
Members are asked to note the report.

Reason for recommendation: To provide an update for members.

Officer: Dennis Boobier, Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
dboobier@eastdevon.gov.uk

Financial implications: The final figures are unknown at this stage but the total expenditure less the amount we are able to reclaim from insurance will affect the HRA balance.

Legal implications: Members should be aware of claims by tenants for damage to personal property from water penetration from the impact of the wet weather. Tenants may not have their own insurance cover and there are currently claims with the Council insurers that the poor state of repair of the property has caused significant damage to personal household items. There may need to be out of court settlement of claims which will add to the financial impact.

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk

Links to background information: -----

Link to Council Plan: Living in this Outstanding Place

Report in full

1. A report was provided to the Housing Review Board (HRB) on 5 June 2014 about the damp penetration and water egress in our properties following the bad winter weather. This report set out the work to be undertaken and the likely cost, as well as a timescale for completion of the works to tenant's homes.
2. The original timescale for completion of work was October 2014, which was based on the information available at that time. Having discussed with our contractors and the Senior

Technical Officers, I believe the original programme of work will not now be complete until June 2015.

3. A lot of work has been completed and all the affected properties have had the cavity wall insulation removed; assistance to help dry the property out and where necessary minor repairs carried out. In some properties that work resolved the problem of damp getting into the property. However, around 250 properties required much more extensive work and it was hoped that this work would be finished around October/November 2014. This will not now be the case.
4. The picture has changed since June 2014 and we have a better understanding of what we must do and how long this will take. Originally we considered the extent of work found on the first few affected properties, which showed greater extent of work, once we had opened up the problem areas. We extrapolated that work expectation across the number of affected properties. We then assessed the consequential cost increase to the insurance claim by incorporating an interim phase of winter screening protection measures. It was considered that this would add a considerable cost to the winter storm response work and would not be accepted by our insurance company as work would primarily be considered as an interim measure, not the final remedy to the relevant event which caused the damage. So we are not doing the winter screening protection work as an interim measure, but focusing on completing the full works required to each property. We think it better to do it right than do it quickly.
5. Since my report in June, a consultant has worked with the Senior Technical Officer (Asset Management) and together they identified what needed to be done to most of the affected properties. The work mainly consists of fully repointing walls; replacing cavity trays and lintels; sealing around windows and doors; and repointing of roof verges, and in many cases this is more than one elevation and sometimes the whole property. Each property requires a scaffold system and although we have a number of teams doing work, managing scaffolding and moving from property to property is a time consuming logistical process. We are also redecorating rooms in most properties where the damp has damaged internal wall coverings or where plaster has needed to be replaced. In a very few cases we are moving the tenants out of their home because the work needed cannot be done whilst occupied. We are keeping tenants informed of progress and most are continuing to be patient with us and understand fully the scale of the issues we are addressing.
6. The real extent of work is not truly known until we start opening up the external wall and the contractor begins work. The average time to complete work to a single property is around 7-8 days – much longer than originally anticipated. Each contractor has 4-5 teams (2 x Operatives) working at any one time. We have been dealing with the worst affected properties first.
7. The real benefit of getting this right is that we reduce ultimate costs and also the need to carry out this kind of work on the property in future. New materials, products and best practice techniques for dealing with damp issues are being applied to the work we are doing, and each property should be better prepared for future severe wet weather.
8. Our insurance claim is still being processed. We have been working with the underwriter to maximise the value of our claim, however, there will be an excess applied to each of the affected properties of £100 and therefore our claim will reduce by £40,000+.
9. We are still getting 4- 5 properties a week where tenants are reporting damp issues and we are dealing with them in a similar way, but through the responsive repairs process. The priority at the moment must be to complete this programme of work, without it being compromised by deadlines which may detract from the effectiveness of the final solutions and the consequential associated increased costs.
10. A further progress report will be provided to a future HRB meeting.

ANNUAL REPORT TO TENANTS 2013/14



Assisting those with support needs: the way we provide our support services and how they are paid for is changing and we're asking tenants for their views **Page 7**

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

Each year we produce an annual report to tenants outlining our performance during the year, our key achievements, the challenges we have faced, how we are meeting the local standards and information on what we will be doing over the next 12 months.



Local standards

This icon stands for local standards. Local standards are things which you have said are important to you. In this report we show you how we have met some of these standards. Over the next year we will be consulting with you to review these standards.

INSIDE:

1 YOUR HOME	4
2 YOUR COMMUNITY	6
3 WELFARE REFORMS	8

FAST FACTS

Money



Income

Where the money came from

2012/13 total: £16,697,000

2013/14 total: £17,566,869 ▲

Rent: £17,042,182

Garage rents: £411,258

Interest and other income: £113,429

Expenditure

Where the money was spent

2013/14 total: £17,566,869

Repair and maintenance:
£9,380,201

Staff salaries:
£3,678,211

Loan interest:
£2,569,194

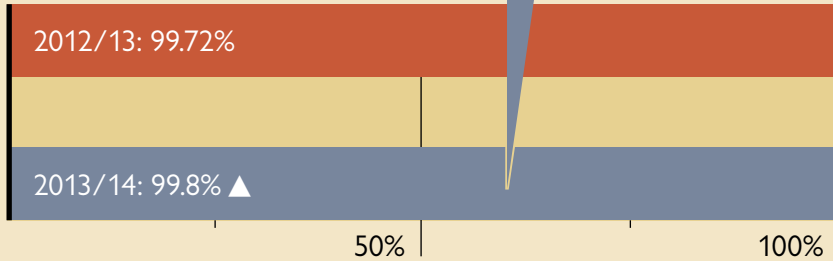
Housing Revenue
Account surplus:
£1,939,263

For more information about repairs and maintenance expenditure see page 5

Rent

Collections

We collected 99.8% of rent due, another record achievement this year – thank you to all our tenants who pay their rent promptly.



An easy way to pay your rent

We encourage all our tenants to pay their rent by direct debit. There are a number of ways to pay your rent – please refer to the tenants handbook or contact us on 01395 517444

✓ **36%** Paying tenants (not in receipt of benefits) paying by direct debit

Arrears

We repossessed three properties for rent arrears. This is fewer than previous years in spite of challenging times with welfare reforms.

£129,146 Total rent arrears

Housing stock

4,279

Properties (as at 31/3/2014)

23

houses sold under right to buy

5

new houses purchased

Lettings

278

properties let

2,426

on our waiting list

53

downsized to smaller homes

62%

of lettings were to those in high housing need (band B)

60

mutual exchanges/ house swaps

1,157

new applications in the year

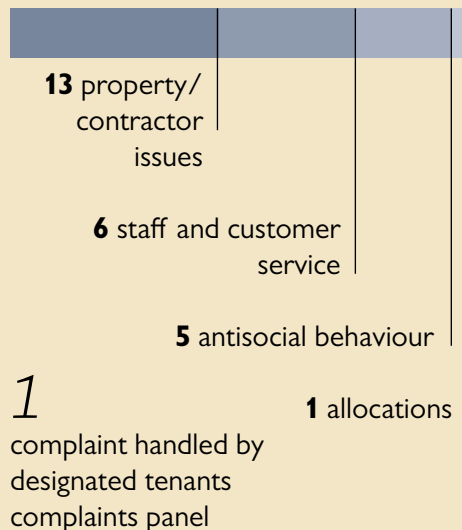


See page 5

Complaints

25

Complaints



Customer satisfaction: estate management

83% satisfied with helpfulness of staff

63% satisfied with outcome of complaint

74% satisfied with how a complaint is dealt with

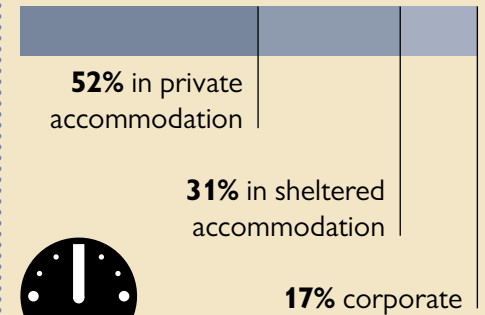
86% satisfied with the ease of reporting a complaint

*48 responses received

Home Safeguard

4,334

customers



97.5%

of calls answered within one minute

1 YOUR HOME

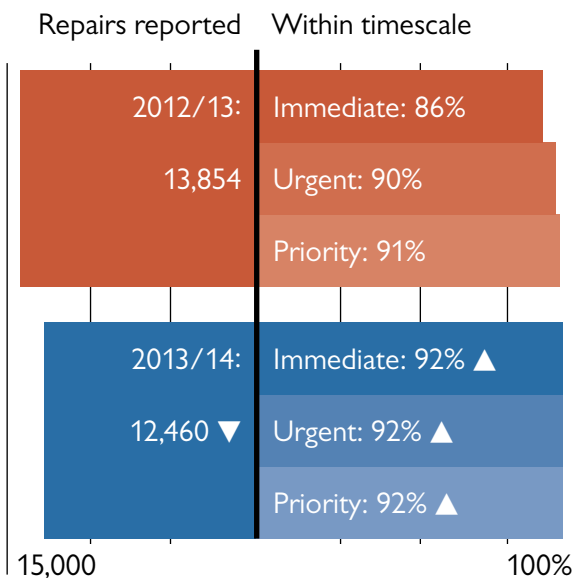
How we are looking after it

RESPONSIVE/REACTIVE REPAIRS

Response times

12,460 repairs were reported and our repair response times have improved during the last year.

REPAIRS AND RESPONSE TIMES

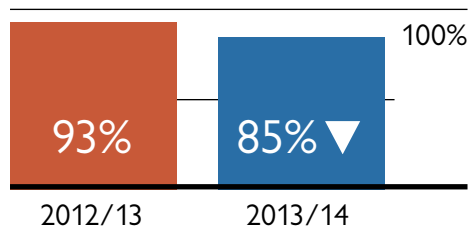


Right first time

We completed 85% of our repairs correctly the first time. This is not as good as last year (93% for 2012/2013). Some of the repairs unfortunately cannot be fixed the first time, such as problems associated with damp, which require 'drying out' before work can commence.



REPAIRS CORRECT FIRST TIME



We monitor how many repair orders we have to chase up or recall. A recall is when the repair has been done but the work is not satisfactory and the contractor has to go back. We want to get the repair right the first time as we know this is important to you.

FAST FACT

Total spent on day-to-day repairs and routine maintenance:

£2,932,000

AMOUNT OF RECALLS IN WORK ORDERS

EmmDee: 5%

Skinner's: 4%



VALUE FOR MONEY

We belong to Advantage Southwest Procurement Consortium which enables us to achieve value for money on essential parts and items for maintaining and updating our houses. These items include taps, fans, doors, kitchens, bathrooms and aids and adaptations. The parts also come with extended warranties and service agreements.

We have saved £124,000 in the last three years through our membership and it is predicted that we will save in the region of £165,000 next year alone.

What's next?

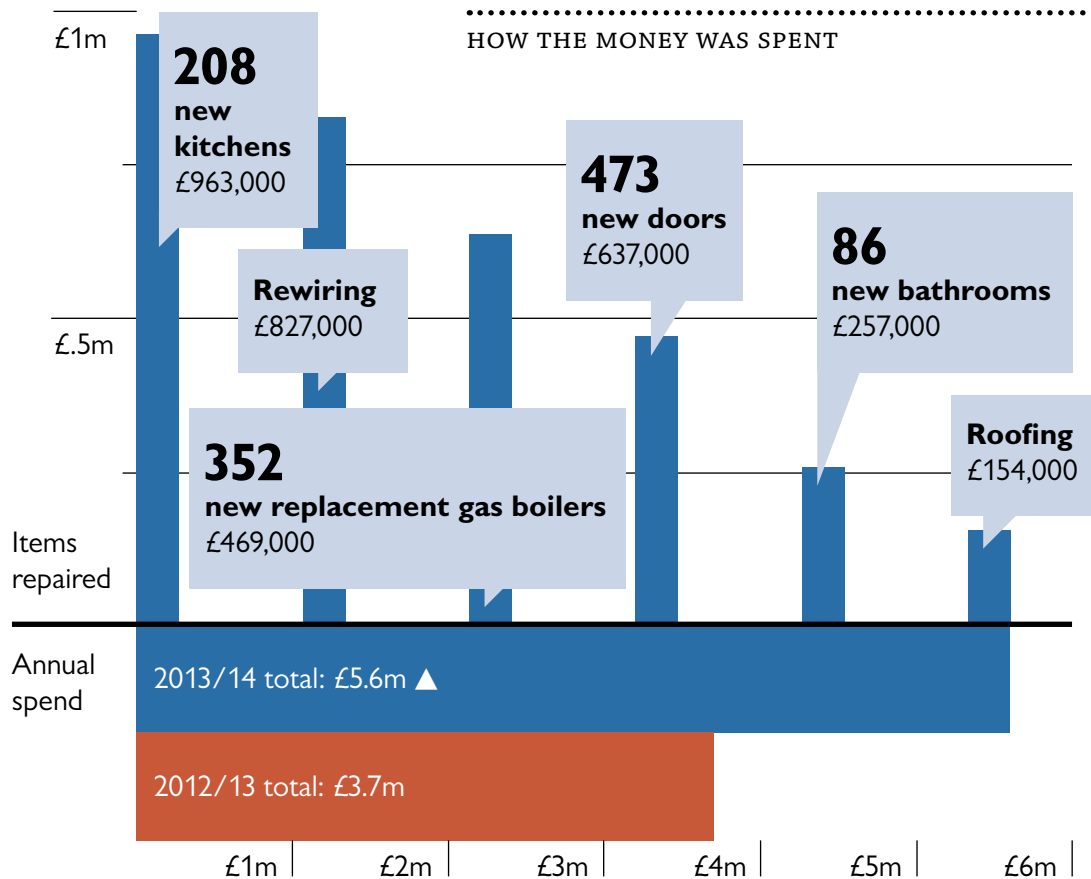
We are changing the timescales for repairs. Currently repairs are categorised (immediate, emergency, urgent, priority and non-urgent) depending upon the nature of the repair. This will be changing to an appointment based system to suit you.

Repairs deemed as emergency/priority will have a contractor on site within two hours and the work completed or made safe within four hours. All other repairs will be given routine priority with the appointment day and time to be agreed between you, the tenant and the contractor. All repairs will still be dealt with within 30 days.



PLANNED MAJOR REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS

This year £5.15 million was allocated for major repairs and improvements – £1.45 million more than last year. We actually spent rather more than this – £5.6 million.

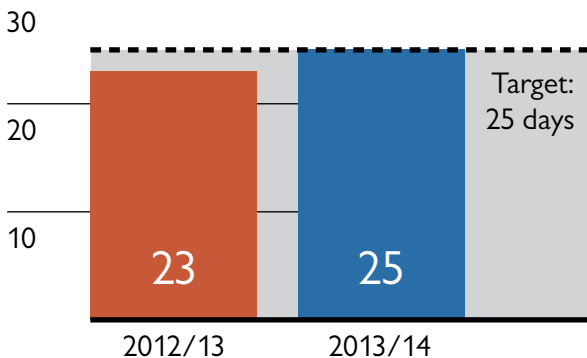


Our empty properties (voids)

This year we spent £2.18 million on preparing 289 empty properties for new tenants. Our average expenditure was £7,600 per property. When a property becomes vacant we carry out improvements works which may include a new kitchen, a new bathroom, electrical and central heating upgrades where necessary. We will ensure that all our homes are in the best possible condition when a new tenant moves in.

Our average time to re-let a property once empty and after allowing for improvement works to be completed was 25 days (target time of 25 days).

AVERAGE DAYS TO RE-LET A PROPERTY



The 'outs and ins' of the void process

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel did an investigation in 2013 called *The outs and ins of the void process*. The panel found the voids process to be very positive and working reasonably well, with our target time for re-letting voids being met. We revised our void standard and made it clearer for new tenants to understand the work to be done to their new home.



Where are we with our five-year rolling plan?

Our budget for major repairs and improvements has increased significantly – this is due to the changes in our funding, which has allowed us to progress well with our rolling five-year plan. Each year we update the programme, which you can view on our website by searching for 'planned maintenance'. Alternatively you can contact the repairs team for information.



What's next?

The bad weather has had an impact on our housing stock with some housing having damp penetration. We have identified 400+ properties that require attention and we will be looking at repairing these as a priority over the next year. Thank you to all those tenants affected for their patience whilst we 'dry out' your home before work can start.

2 YOUR COMMUNITY

What we have done to improve it

ESTATE INSPECTIONS

We carry out estate inspections and the dates of these can be found in the *Housing Matters* magazine. The estate officer along with tenants, local councillors and the police will walk part of an estate or area, knock on doors and address issues such as untidy gardens, damaged fencing, abandoned or untaxed cars and littering.

In 2013/2014 we carried out estate inspections in Colyton, Kilmington, Dalwood, Axmouth, Coombe Pyne, Rousdon, Clyst St Mary, Clyst Honiton, Membury, Ottery St Mary, Stockland, Beer and various locations in Exmouth (Burnside, Nutbrook, Gibson Close and Cheshire Road).



TENANTS LIVING IN BLOCKS OF FLATS

Over the last two years we have been doing **fire risk assessments** (FRAs) in our blocks of flats and community centres. These are now complete and areas for improvement have been identified. We are working methodically to upgrade the electrical installations and other facilities in our properties, where necessary, to maintain safety standards.

As a result of the FRA we have requested that personal items such as plant pots, mats, wheelchairs are not stored in communal areas and

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

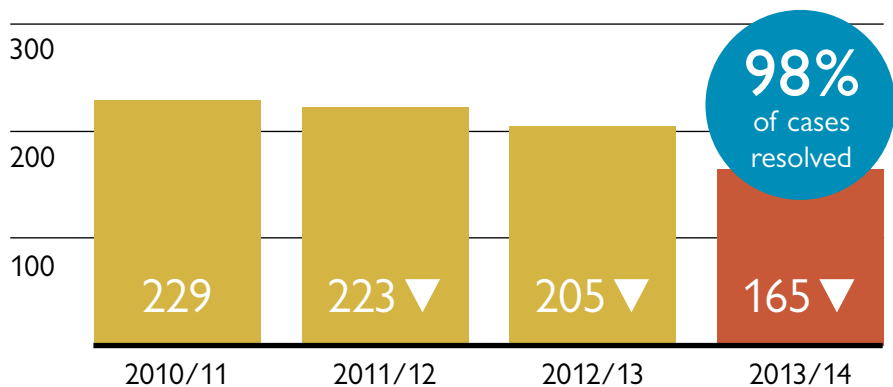
We take antisocial behaviour very seriously. Last year 165 antisocial behaviour cases were reported. The most common complaints concerned noise, pets and animal nuisance, litter, rubbish and fly-tipping.

What's next?

We will be working with residents to produce plans for improving the quality of life for tenants on several estates. Look out for more information in *Housing Matters*.



REPORTED CASES OF ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR



mobility scooters are removed from inside the building. These measures are being taken to ensure all means of escape are free from obstruction and trip hazards.

We have a duty of care to all occupants of our residential flats to ensure the property is safe

To keep you safe, we are tightening up our procedure for managing communal areas in flats and will be doing regular checks to ensure they are kept clear

and complies with UK fire safety regulations.

Communal cleaning

We are reviewing our communal cleaning and aim to have this carried out and the findings of the survey implemented by April 2015.

PDSA DOG HEALTH CHECKS

In July we worked in partnership with the PDSA and our colleagues in environmental health and organised a week of free health and well being checks for dogs. This was so successful another week is being arranged for 2014/2015.

COUNTRYSIDE AND COMMUNITY AT HONITON BOTTOM

Our community development workers have linked up with the countryside team to meet a local need in Honiton. The vision 'to enhance the value of Honiton Bottom for wildlife and the community' aims to engage a wide range of people providing them with a social outlet as well as the opportunity to develop skills, whilst also helping to provide practical management of the nature reserve.

TENANCY FRAUD

Tenancy fraud is becoming more widespread. This year we have helped form the **Devon Social Housing Fraud Group** and three officers have been appointed Devon-wide to tackle tenancy fraud.

ASSISTING THOSE WITH SUPPORT NEEDS

We are rebranding our **Home Safeguard** service to ensure that we are competitive compared to other alarm providers in the region. We are attempting to expand further into the community to ensure people with a range of support needs can access the service. Together with a new range of literature which includes information on the telecare services we provide, we are continuing to develop the Home Safeguard service.

We are committed to helping residents with support needs and this year we have been busy **providing a more tailored day-to-day support package** for tenants in our sheltered accommodation. This has included more work to promote our digital agenda in an attempt to ensure as many of our sheltered residents as possible have access to the internet to help them with all aspects of their day-to-day life.

What's next?

Our funding from Devon County Council to provide this service will be stopped in April 2015. This will mean changes to the way in which we provide our support services and how they are paid for. We are working closely with Devon County Council and looking at a number of possibilities to continue to fund the service.

SWITCH

During the year we carried out an extensive review of our **community development** function. In addition to the usual SWITCH activities the team will now be working to increase the number of tenants of all ages using computers, working with residents to help get people into work by providing access to skills, volunteering and training to enable our tenants to find and sustain employment.

The team are also keen to help with the health and wellbeing of our tenants and we will be carrying out a number of events and activities to encourage people to get out into the countryside and promote a healthy diet and cooking on a budget.

EVENTS

This year we saw **community festivals** in Honiton, Exmouth and Axminster. Fun days in Budleigh Salterton, Sidmouth, Clyst Hydon and Upottery. The **annual tenants' conference** was held in May at Stowford Community Centre.

Join one of our tenants groups

- Tenants and Residents Associations
- Service Review Groups
- Editorial Panel
- Tenants Conference
- Tenants Scrutiny Panel
- Designated tenants complaints panel

We will be reviewing our tenant involvement plan over the next year. If you would like to get involved please contact us (see page 8 for details).

TRAINING

We ran training events to help provide tenants with the skills required to be effectively involved in the housing service. The training also helps tenants who are looking for paid employment.

Training events included food hygiene, day to day repairs, report writing, energy advice, equality and diversity, working as a team, resident involvement and meeting skills.



3 WELFARE REFORMS

How we have been helping you

LOCAL WELFARE SUPPORT SCHEME

From April 2013 Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans, which helped people on welfare benefits and low incomes, were abolished. To help ease some of the impact of this on vulnerable and low income households we started a local Welfare Support Scheme. The scheme provides support and assistance for those in financial crisis.

FAST FACTS

343

People contacted us for help

133

Food vouchers were handed out

£9,000

Was spent on essential items like furniture and white goods to help people setting up home for the first time

643

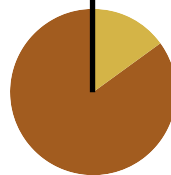
Co-Op vouchers (mostly for gas and electric) were given out

SPARE ROOM SUBSIDY AND BENEFIT CAP

243 tenants of working age and claiming housing benefits are under occupying their homes and having to pay part of their rent themselves.



Approximately 15% of the current rent arrears is due to under-occupancy



We have helped 53 of our tenants to downsize to smaller accommodation therefore avoiding the spare room subsidy

Forty-five tenants who under-occupy their homes are claiming Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP). Discretionary Housing Payment is awarded to tenants who have been financially assessed and are taking steps to improve their financial situation.

We're here to help

If you are having difficulty in paying your rent, we can give advice and support to help. Phone us as soon as you have any problems on 01395 517444

CONTACTING US

Full telephone and email contact details for all sections of the housing service can be found in your tenant handbook which can also be viewed at www.eastdevon.gov.uk.

Write to us or visit us

East Devon District Council
Knowle
Sidmouth
EX10 8HL
(Mon to Fri, 8.30am to 5pm)

Keep up to date

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/eastdevon
East Devon Homes
@eastdevonhomes
Monthly electronic newsletter
www.eastdevon.gov.uk/enews



To request this information in an alternative format or language please phone 01395 517453 or email tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk

Get a reminder for your recycling and rubbish collection days and more at www.eastdevon.gov.uk/app