

Date: 23 August 2013  
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To: Members of the Housing Review Board:  
(Councillors Pauline Stott (Chairman), Susie Bond,  
Douglas Hull, Jim Knight, Peter Sullivan.  
Tenant/leaseholder representatives Sue Saunders (Vice  
Chairman), Victor Kemp, John Powley, Pat Rous.  
Independent community representatives Julie Adkin, Rob Finch)

Other Members of the Council for Information  
Members of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel  
Members of the Tenant Representative Group  
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**Meeting of the Housing Review Board  
Thursday, 5 September 2013 at 6.00 pm  
Council Chamber, Knowle, Sidmouth**

The above meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at East Devon District Council Offices, Knowle, Sidmouth, to consider the matters detailed on the agenda below.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting.

- There is a period of 15 minutes at the beginning of the meeting to allow members of the public to ask questions.
- The Chairman has the right and discretion to control questions to avoid disruption, repetition and to make best use of the meeting time. The Chairman is entitled to interrupt the speaker to ask for their question to be put.
- In addition, the public may speak on items listed on the agenda. After a report has been introduced, the Chairman (Leader of the Council) will ask if any member of the public wishes to speak and/or ask questions.
- All individual contributions will be limited to a maximum period of 3 minutes – where there is an interest group of objectors or supporters, a spokesperson should be appointed to speak on behalf of the group.

Should anyone have any special needs or require any reasonable adjustments to assist them in making individual contributions, please contact Alethea Thompson (contact details at top of page). A hearing loop system will be in operation in the Council Chamber.

Councillors and members of the public are reminded to switch mobile phones to silent during the meeting.

## AGENDA

<b>PART A</b>	<b>Page/s</b>
<p>1 <b>Public question time</b> – standard agenda item (15 minutes)            Members of the public are invited to put questions to the Board through the Chairman.            Councillors also have the opportunity to ask questions of the Chairman and/or Portfolio Holders present during this time slot. Members of the public are given priority at this part of the agenda.</p>	
2 To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Review Board held on 20 June 2013.	5 - 10
3 To receive any apologies for absence.	
4 To receive any declarations of interests relating to items on the agenda.	
<p>5 To consider any items which, the Chairman thinks, should be dealt with as matters of urgency because of special circumstances.            (Note: such circumstances need to be recorded in the minutes; any individual wishing to raise a matter under this item is requested to notify the Chairman before the meeting).</p>	
6 To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded. There is one item which Officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.	
7 Housing Review Board forward plan.	Head of Housing 11 - 12
8 Tenant Scrutiny Panel report on void properties.	Tenant Scrutiny Panel 13 - 26
9 Housing Revenue Account review – one year on.	Head of Housing 27 - 29
10 Rent management review.	Landlord Services Manager 30 - 35
11 Housing Revenue Account budget monitoring report.	Housing Accountant 36 - 44
12 Draft annual report to tenants.	Housing Project Officer 45 - 94
13 Car parking review update.	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager 95 - 99
14 Garage review update.	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager 100 - 111
15 Repairs performance monitoring report.	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager 112 - 126
16 Grounds Maintenance Task & Finish Forum – interim report.	Landlord Services Manager 127 - 131
17 Quarterly performance digest – Quarter 1.	Head of Housing 132 - 148
<p>18 <b>The Vice Chairman to move the following:-</b>            “that under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, of the description set out on the agenda, is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing this item in private session (Part B).”</p>	148

19 Axminster affordable housing offer.

Housing Enabling  
Officer

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**Decision making and equality duties**

- The Council will give due regard under the Equality Act 2010 to the equality impact of its decisions.
- An appropriate level of analysis of equality issues, assessment of equalities impact and any mitigation and/or monitoring of impact will be addressed in committee reports.
- Consultation on major policy changes will take place in line with any legal requirements and with what is appropriate and fair for the decisions being taken.
- Where there is a high or medium equalities impact Members will be expected to give reasons for decisions which demonstrate they have addressed equality issues.

**Members and co-opted members remember!**

- You must declare the nature of any disclosable pecuniary interests. [Under the Localism Act 2011, this means the interests of your spouse, or civil partner, a person with whom you are living with as husband and wife or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners]. You must also disclose any personal interest.
- You must disclose your interest in an item whenever it becomes apparent that you have an interest in the business being considered. Make sure you say what your interest is as this has to be included in the minutes. [For example, 'I have a disclosable pecuniary interest because this planning application is made by my husband's employer'.]
- If your interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest you cannot participate in the discussion, cannot vote and must leave the room unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Council's Monitoring Officer or Standards Committee.

## Getting to the Meeting – for the benefit of visitors



The entrance to the Council Offices is located on Station Road, Sidmouth. **Parking** is limited during normal working hours but normally easily available for evening meetings.

The following **bus service** stops outside the Council Offices on Station Road: **From Exmouth, Budleigh, Otterton and Newton Popleford – 157**

The following buses all terminate at the Triangle in Sidmouth. From the Triangle, walk up Station Road until you reach the Council Offices (approximately ½ mile).

**From Exeter – 52A, 52B**

**From Honiton – 52B**

**From Seaton – 52A**

**From Ottery St Mary – 379, 387**

Please check your local timetable for times.

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The Committee Suite has a separate entrance to the main building, located at the end of the visitor and Councillor car park. The rooms are at ground level and easily accessible; there is also a toilet for disabled users.

**For a copy of this agenda in large print, please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01395 517546**

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of a meeting of the Housing Review Board held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 20 June 2013**

**Present:**

Councillors:

Pauline Stott (Chairman)  
Susie Bond  
Douglas Hull  
Jim Knight  
Peter Sullivan

Co-opted Tenant Members:

Victor Kemp  
Sue Saunders (Vice Chairman)

Officers:

Sue Bewes, Landlord Services Manager  
Jan Reading, Tenant & Communities Section Leader  
John Golding, Head of Housing  
Dennis Boobier, Housing Needs & Strategy Manager  
Giles Salter, Solicitor  
Chris Lane, Democratic Services Officer  
Mandy White – Accountant

**Also Present:**

Councillors:

Paul Diviani – Leader  
Christine Drew  
Jill Elson - Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities  
Phil Twiss –Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services  
Stephanie Jones – Deputy Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities  
John Powley – Tenant Scrutiny Panel

**Apologies**

Co-opted Independent Community Representatives:

Julie Adkin  
Rob Finch

Co-opted Tenant Member:

Pat Rous

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 7.45pm.

**\*1 Public question time**

There were no questions raised by members of the public. The Chairman welcomed Councillor Susie Bond to her first meeting of the Board.

Councillor Douglas Hull reported on a recent fete held at Millwey Rise Football Club and expressed concern that to his knowledge the event had not been licensed. He wondered whether Axminster Town Football Club could have their field licensed for such events. The Communities Portfolio Holder agreed to look into this issue.

**\*1 Public question time (Cont)**

Councillor Douglas Hull asked when representatives for the Virtual Development Team would be re-elected? The Communities Portfolio Holder reported that the Virtual Development Team was not part of the Housing Review Board and not

formally constituted. It was a steering group of Councillors and Officers set up to talk through issues. It had met once and discussed issues regarding the proposal to purchase a shared house (House in Multiple Occupation) to be owned and managed by East Devon Distinct Council (see minute 9 below). The Virtual Development Team would report to the Board.

**\*2 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Housing Review Board held on 9 May 2013, were confirmed and signed as a true record.

**\*3 Matters Arising**

An introduction to the new 'designated person' and new arrangements for dealing with complaints by tenants (minute \*81 refers)

The Head of Housing reported that he had written to the Housing Ombudsman to inform him that the Council had established a Tenant Complaints Panel. He would check whether the Panel would be covered for insurance. However, legal advice had been given that the Panel should not be indemnified by the Council for their activities.

**\*4 Appointment of Vice Chairman**

**RESOLVED** that tenant representative Sue Saunders be appointed Vice Chairman of the Board for the ensuing year.

**\*5 Declarations of interest**

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Minute number</b>	<b>Type of interest</b>	<b>Nature of interest</b>
Jim Knight		Personal	His daughter lives in a Council owned property.
Jim Knight		Personal	Devon County Council Councillor
Sue Saunders		Personal	She is a sheltered housing tenant.
Peter Sullivan (Sidmouth Ward Member)		Personal	He is a sheltered housing tenant.
Douglas Hull		Personal	His sister lives in a Council owned property.

**\*6 Exempt Information**

**RESOLVED** that the classification given to the documents to be submitted to the Sub-Committee be confirmed and that the report relating to exempt information be dealt with under Part B of the agenda.

**\*7 Housing Review Board forward plan**

The Head of Housing presented the forward plan. Members noted that the item on Danby House/Exbank had been referred to the Devon County Council Asset Management Team for consideration. The September meeting would consider an update on Garages and parking, and there would also be an update during the year on Grounds Maintenance.

**RESOLVED:** that the forward plan be noted and updated.

**8 Housing Revenue Account Outturn Report 2012/13**

The Board noted that during 2012/13 the monthly budget monitoring reports had informed members of the anticipated year end position. The report contained the final position for the year end and compared this outturn position against the budgets set for 2012/13.

The Tenant Representative Group had questioned whether adequate provision was already in place to cushion the HRA against the unforeseen. Why was it now thought necessary to draw off £1.71m to create a Debt Repayment scheme? The Head of Housing reported that the Business Plan did make adequate provision but that a cautious approach had been taken in the first year due to the large debt that had been taken on. Future reports would be brought to meetings of the Board requesting that some of this 'volatility fund' money be spent on development projects. The money was essentially a 'set aside' fund. The Head of Housing also expressed concern that the impact of welfare reforms on rent collection rates may prove worse than anticipated in the Business Plan.

Councillor Jim Knight questioned the £315K under spend on door replacements. The Head of Housing reported that concerns had been expressed about the door supplier and the quality of which had slowed down the programme.

Councillor Stephanie Jones asked what measures the Council took when tenants left properties in a poor state? The Housing Needs & Strategy Manager reported that there was a policy of recharging for any repair works required at the end of a tenancy. Due to the age profile of much of the Council's housing stock there was often a need to replace kitchens and bathrooms during a change of tenancy.

Councillor Douglas Hull questioned whether the Council carried out a yearly inspection of properties? The Housing Needs & Strategy Manager replied that officers were regularly entering properties and were reporting if any were in a poor state. There were also tenancy audits that were carried out periodically.

## 8 **Housing Revenue Account Outturn Report 2012/13**(Cont)

The Tenant Representative Group had questioned why £175k would be held as unapplied capital receipt for future use. They considered that the Capital Programme was designed to fund one off projects not only the acquisition of new properties. The Head of Housing reported that the capital programme money would be used for new build projects and Right to Buy receipts had to be used for new build and acquisitions.

- RECOMMENDED:**
1. that the HRA outturn position for 2012/13 be agreed;
  2. that the level of reserves detailed and the transfer of £1.715m from the HRA Balance in to 'Debt Repayment Volatility Fund' to safeguard the HRA against any fluctuations in the Business Plan be agreed.

## 9 **Property and Asset team – Restructure and Staffing**

The Housing Review Board (HRB) received the report which set out a proposal to restructure the Property and Asset team into three sections and a request for approval to fund additional posts. An Architectural and Building Surveying consultancy was currently employed to help with implementing programmed works, build/housing development and other aspects of work.

It was proposed that rather than retendering the work this financial year, the work be brought in-house and staff employed directly. The existing Senior Technical Officer was a qualified and experienced Architect who was already doing some of the tasks previously undertaken by the external contractor/consultant. The cost of using the external contractor was £79,366 in 2012/13. To provide the additional staff and restructure the Property Asset team as set out in the report was £81,344, and therefore the cost to the HRA was broadly neutral. The Housing Needs & Strategy Manager reported that a number of his team were currently away from work on ill health and holiday. It was hoped that this restructure could also create more capacity within the repairs contact centre.

- RECOMMENDED:**
- 1 that the changes to the staffing structure of the Property and Asset team be approved;
  - 2 that the proposal to bring in-house the existing work undertaken by a contractor be approved;
  - 3 that the funding required for the additional staff for the Property and Asset team as outlined in the report be approved.



10 **Proposal to purchase a shared house (House in Multiple Occupation – HMO) to be owned and managed by East Devon District Council**

The Housing Enabling Officer's report outlined a proposal and business case to purchase a suitable property in Exmouth that would provide accommodation for up to seven individuals living in separate bedrooms with their own en-suites, but sharing a communal kitchen, and dining area. The report explained the background to the proposal, the funding available and likely costs involved. It also considered how rooms would be allocated and how the property would be managed. It considered the potential risks and how these could be mitigated if the project was agreed.

Members were supportive of the proposal but wished to emphasize the importance of good management and control of the scheme, ideally through the appointment of a caretaker or responsible tenant.

- RECOMMENDED:**
- 1 that it be agreed that this type of accommodation would be a beneficial addition to the current Council property portfolio, making available another form of accommodation for single people within the district;
  - 2 that the Housing Service ensures that adequate provision is put in place to effectively manage the shared house/HMO and support tenancies, as necessary;
  - 3 that the commuted sum available in Exmouth of £350,000 and up to £100,000 from the Right to Buy receipts be allocated towards the purchase and refitting of a property in Exmouth to provide up to seven units of HMO type accommodation. If property A was no longer available, suitable alternative accommodation would be sought up to the budget available for purchase and refit of £450,000.

\*11 **Advantage SW procurement club review**

The Housing Review Board (HRB) received the report which showed the performance specific to East Devon of the Advantage SW procurement club that the Council joined in 2009. The group existed to improve value for money for its members in the building products used and in relation to new build. The report provided a review of the activities undertaken during 2012/13 and highlighted some of the good practice being undertaken.

Members noted the influence that tenants had on the products purchased due to the Council's strong customer focus. Victor Kemp, Tenant Representative, reported that he considered there was a need to notify tenant groups more quickly to enable them to be more involved in the procurement process. This could be through inviting a tenant group to be involved in the process.

- RESOLVED:**
- 1 that the report be noted.
  - 2 that the intention to remain a member of Advantage SW be confirmed.

**\*12 Housing Service display boards**

Members of the Board noted that for information and display purposes a new set of housing display boards had been acquired. These had been designed by the print room to professional quality, but at reasonable cost. The boards would help tell the Housing Service story and project a professional image of the Service. The Board requested that details of the housing display boards should be put as an insert in the Tenant Newsletter.

**RESOLVED:** that the existence of the Housing Service display boards be noted.

**\*13 Exclusion of the Public**

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, of the description set out on the agenda is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing this item in private session (Part B).

**14 New housing management software procurement**

The Housing Review Board noted that the Housing Service was currently operating on a number of software packages that were not integrated and some were outdated. There was a strong case for procuring and implementing a new comprehensive housing management software system to help achieve service aspirations, including improved mobile working. The report provided an update on the procurement of a new housing management software system and made a recommendation of a preferred supplier.

The Head of Housing confirmed that he would work with tenants to introduce any new working practices that were possible through the implementation of new housing management software.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the preferred supplier identified in the report be commissioned to implement and support a new housing management software system.

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
Tenant Scrutiny Panel report on void properties	September 2013	Tenant Scrutiny Panel
Housing Revenue Account Review one year on	September 2013	Head of Housing
Rent management review	September 2013	Landlord Services Manager
Budget position	September 2013	Housing Accountant
Draft Annual Report to Tenants	September 2013	Housing Project Officer
Parking update	September 2013	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Garage update	September 2013	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Repairs review	September 2013	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Axminster affordable housing offer	September 2013	Housing Enabling Officer
Grounds Maintenance TaFF – interim report	September 2013	Landlord Services Manager
Quarterly Performance Digest	September 2013	
Telecare services	TBC	Home Safeguard Manager
Danby House/Exbank – DCC updated proposals	Reliant on DCC timetable	Head of Housing
<b>Quarterly performance reports and regular report</b>		
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	Quarterly report	Head of Housing
New Tenants Survey		
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
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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.

Meeting dates – 7 November 2013; 9 January 2014; 6 March 2014; 8 May 2014.

Agenda item: 08



## Tenant Scrutiny Panel Report

# THE 'OUTS AND INS' OF THE VOIDS PROCESS

July 2013

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## Introduction

### Who we are:

We are the Tenant Scrutiny Panel, known as 'Spanners', made up of 5 tenants and chaired by Roger Pell.

'Spanners' stands for:

- Scrutinise
- Performance
  - Analyse
    - Negotiate
    - Network
      - Evaluate
      - Report
      - Support

### What we do:

We investigate our chosen topics and report recommendations to the Housing Review Board on our findings. Whilst we are independent of the council, we liaise with officers and tenants to gain information. This enables us to give a balanced perspective to support the Housing Service to regulate and improve its performance.

### Why we chose to scrutinise the voids process:

We considered a range of topics – including those recommended by staff and the Tenant Representative Group - and eliminated those that were going through a process of internal review. We examined performance information and considered value for

money as well. Residents often see empty properties and wonder why it appears to take a long time to 'let' them. Voids fitted well within these criteria and so was selected as our next scrutiny project.

## How we did our investigations

We developed a **plan**<sup>1</sup> (scoping paper) which outlined the areas to explore and set boundaries around the topic to make sure we stayed focused.

We then agreed which methods we wanted to use to complete our investigations. This included:

- Work shadowing Tenancy Sustainment Officers at various void properties at different stages
- Interviewing tenants, staff and contractors
- Undertaking a staff survey
- Examining the voids standard and voids procedure documents
- Speaking to new tenants
- Examining the new tenants satisfaction survey
- Reviewing the welcome pack and Tenant Handbook
- Examining Housemark benchmarking data and comparing our Voids Standard with Exeter City New Homes Property Standard

During the work shadowing phase we visited a total of 19 properties, at different stages along the process. We had hoped to follow several properties through from start to finish but this did not occur. We feel that there were some properties where timescales moved very quickly and we did not always get notified of the next stage. Also we did not want to hold up the process. However we feel that those properties which we did visit, a mix of sheltered and general needs, houses, flats and bungalows, gave us a good overview as to how the process was working and on which we could make comments.

Copies of all our findings can be found in our evidence box file.

It was decided not to include Devon Home Choice and allocations in this scrutiny investigation.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A



This scrutiny investigation took us ten months to complete. All recommendations are based on evidence provided by officers, contractors and tenants. It may be that there is information that we were not made aware of, which may impact on our findings.

## What we found

Overall, we found the voids process to be very positive and working reasonably well. EDDC is meeting its target turn around time for voids. The staff involved seem to genuinely care about the process and the tenants. Tenants (and the Panel) have commented on the friendliness of all staff involved. We compare reasonably to others in the sector when it comes to the length of time a property is void.

Whilst we are spending more than others in the sector on void repairs and void management (and we understand this is largely due to the age of the homes and fitting things like new kitchens and bathrooms during the void period) we find that the overall voids/lettable standard is a bit vague and needs clarification to avoid ambiguity. Occasionally this led to tenants being given different messages regarding what would be done to the property from staff<sup>2</sup>.

Currently tenants are given no choice as to the date and time of accompanied viewings<sup>3</sup>. Whilst we understand the need to let homes as quickly as possible in order to collect the rental income, there needs to be a balance between this and the need for tenants to be able to fit the viewings into their daily lives – this will also give more time for staff to be able to complete paperwork.<sup>4</sup>

Staff need to remember that some tenants will be looking at their potential new home through rose-tinted glasses which means they may not take in or may misunderstand the information given. Staff need to take time with tenants to ensure they give this information at a speed and in a way which works best for the prospective tenant<sup>5</sup>.

Our key recommendations include:

- Void/lettable standard to be clarified and made more specific

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<sup>2</sup> Void process visits

<sup>3</sup> Staff interview

<sup>4</sup> Staff survey

<sup>5</sup> Tenant interviews and staff survey

- Tenants to be given clear information on the work to be done on their new home and the standard they can expect the property to be in at start of their tenancy in writing
- Tenants to be given choice over dates and times of viewings

## Our recommendations

RECOMMENDATION ONE				
1. Void/lettable standard to be clarified and made more specific				
Further recommendations	Evidence	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
1.1 Revise the current Void/Lettable Standard so that there is no ambiguity as to meaning in line with our detailed review (see Appendix B)	Void/Lettable Standard			
1.2 East Devon staff (and tenants) to carry out a percentage of spot checks at the end of the void period to ensure the standard is being maintained.	Contractor interviews			
1.3 Develop a detailed specification for the standard of cleaning similar to that in the Exeter City Council leaflet to include within the Voids/Lettable Standard.	New Tenants Telephone Survey and tenant interviews			
1.4 Ensure this is given to the cleaners and spot checks need to be carried out to verify the standard is being upheld.	New Tenants Telephone Survey and tenant interviews			
1.5 Develop a detailed specification for the standard of gardens at the end of the void period	Staff Survey			
1.6 Move electric fuseboxes and stop cocks so that they are easily accessible to tenants and are disability-friendly	Contractor interviews Void shadowing Tenant interviews			
1.7 Decorate general needs homes to similar standard as sheltered homes	Staff survey Void shadowing			
1.8 Provide 'buggy stores' and a safe place to recharge electric disability scooters in blocks of	Tenant Interviews			

flats				
1.9 Ensure that parts required are easily accessible and that no delays to work occur as a result of issues with suppliers, for example current kitchen supplier	Contractor Interviews			
<b>RECOMMENDATION TWO</b>				
2.0 Tenants to be given clear information on the work to be done on their new home and the standard they can expect the property to be in at start of their tenancy in writing				
<b>Further details</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Priority 1</b>	<b>Priority 2</b>	<b>Priority 3</b>
2.1 Provide tenants with a check list of what is going to be done to their new home. This should cover works agreed by the Maintenance Surveyor and any fixtures, fittings and other items that are to be left. This will give new tenants clear information as to what they can expect in their new home.	Voids shadowing and tenant interview			
2.2 Provide tenants with guideline floor plans and measurements in order to give an idea of room size. It should be made clear that these measurements should not be used to order carpet or other floor coverings	Voids shadowing			
2.3 Provide a leaflet similar to the one produced by Exeter City Council. This leaflet should reflect our voids standard	The New Home Property Standard, Exeter City Council			
2.4 Ensure the information given to tenants by all staff is consistent by training staff on the voids standard and other important housing policies such as communal cleaning and grounds maintenance.	Tenant interviews and staff survey			
2.5 Use the recommended checklist and leaflet to explain to tenants what will be done to their new home during the void period. Make sure that time is taken to explain this clearly and ensure	Tenant interviews and staff survey			

tenants have understood.				
<b>2.6</b> Make sure staff are clear about important housing policies such as communal cleaning and grounds maintenance. Tenants will then know what East Devon will do and what their responsibility is once they have moved into their home, so they do not feel misled.	Tenant interviews and staff survey			
<b>2.7</b> Use the Tenancy Agreement and Tenant Handbook to explain tenants' rights, entitlements and responsibilities. Make sure that time is taken to explain this clearly and ensure tenants have understood.	Tenant Interviews and staff survey			
<b>2.8</b> Clarify the garden areas in relation to all properties especially blocks of flats. Ensure tenants are clear when they move in which piece of garden is their responsibility, or whether they are communal gardens.	Staff survey			
<b>2.9</b> Give tenants a copy of electrical safety certificate. Alert tenants to the fact that the current energy supplier is British Gas but they can change supplier if they wish	Voids shadowing Review of the Tenants' Handbook and Welcome Pack			
<b>RECOMMENDATION THREE</b>				
<b>3.0</b> Tenants to be given choice over dates and times of viewings				
<b>Further recommendations</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Priority 1</b>	<b>Priority 2</b>	<b>Priority 3</b>
<b>3.1</b> Provide a choice of times for the accompanied viewings, including weekends and evenings	Voids Shadowing and Staff Survey			
<b>3.2</b> Ask tenants moving into sheltered accommodation if they wish the Mobile Support Officer to be present at the accompanied viewing	Staff Survey			
<b>3.3</b> Provide tenants with a named member of staff to contact for information and advice regarding their move	Tenant Interviews			

<b>RECOMMENDATION FOUR</b>				
<b>4. General</b>				
<b>Further recommendations</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Priority 1</b>	<b>Priority 2</b>	<b>Priority 3</b>
<b>4.1</b> Identify criteria where flexibility can be used with regard to rent payment, for example, at the beginning of a tenancy where a tenant might be struggling to pay outgoing rent on a previous property, or at the end of a tenancy, where the tenant has died	Tenant Interviews			
<b>4.2</b> Review Welcome Pack in line with our detailed review ( <b>see Appendix C</b> )	Review of current Welcome Pack			
<b>4.3</b> Research why 50% of tenants responding to the New Tenants Telephone Survey had issues with their homes within four weeks of moving in	New Tenants telephone Survey			
<b>4.4</b> Mobile Support Officer to introduce themselves to new sheltered residents during their first week of occupancy to make sure emergency information is given and recorded on the system	Staff Survey			

## Conclusion

This was our second scrutiny activity and focussed on a service being provided by the council. There was much more work involved but we are getting more experienced in the scrutiny techniques needed and are growing as a scrutiny group.

We learned a lot about the challenges involved in delivering this housing service and hope that our recommendations help to address some of these.

We are pleased to find there are positive practices to balance our recommendations. We found the voids process to be very positive and working reasonably well, with target times met and staff who genuinely seem to care about the process and tenants.

To recap, our top three recommendations are:

1. Void/lettable standard to be clarified and made more specific
2. Tenants to be given clear information on the work to be done on their new home and the standard they can expect the property to be in at start of their tenancy
3. Tenants to be given choice over dates and times of viewings

We are pleased to recommend this report to the Housing Review Board.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following for their contribution and support during this project:

- Officers of the council who supported us, allowed us to shadow them and patiently searched for information in answer to our questions
- Tenants, Contractors and staff who took part in our surveys and interviews
- Trafford Hall for the free training

A special thank you goes to the Housing Needs Team and Emma Charlton for their patient help in facilitating this project

## Appendix A - Scoping paper

### Tenant Scrutiny Panel : Review of Voids – procedures and efficiency

<b>BROAD TOPIC AREA</b>	Review of procedures relating to re-lets and voids
<b>SPECIFIC AREAS TO EXPLORE</b>	<p>Void Management</p> <p>Pre let visits</p> <p>Tenant visits (accompanied)</p> <p>Review Tenant welcome pack</p> <p>Length of time empty</p> <p>Tenant feedback – survey</p> <p>Void repairs / maintenance</p>
<b>AREAS NOT COVERED</b>	<p>Devon Home Choice: ease of access / landlord interaction with system</p> <p>Allocations</p> <p>Repairs system</p> <p>Routine maintenance any works not directly concerning re-lets</p> <p>Complaint system</p> <p>Garden maintenance (grass cutting)</p>
<b>DESIRED OUTCOMES</b>	<p>Attend visits and observe procedures</p> <p>Review, observe and recommend</p> <p>New tenant survey, staff interviews and contractors</p> <p>Look for and comment on improvement in current procedures etc</p> <p>Cut out duplication and waste</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attend visits and observe procedures</li> <li>2. Review system and procedures</li> </ol> <p>Look at systems to improve income flow</p> <p>Value for money</p>
<b>WHO SHOULD BE CONSULTED TO OBTAIN EVIDENCE</b>	<p>New tenants – survey, questionnaire</p> <p>Contractor's staff</p> <p>Mystery shoppers</p>

## Appendix B – Review of Voids/Letable Standard

Number in specification	Comment
1. Visual inspection of exterior	Feel repairs should be done to steps and footpaths Need to fit grills over outside drains
2. Security	Don't feel that all windows are checked – eg Property 11 Also Panel feel double glazing units should be replaced if seals have been broken and condensation between panes
3. Electrical specification	Need to add into the specification that extractor fans in bathrooms and kitchens should be checked and where missing fitted in appropriate location. Specification to be updated to the current minimum standards required.
7. Fittings and fixtures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Contractors need to be made aware that specification says 'smooth to touch' in several places – at meeting did not seem to be aware of this and was not always the case for properties visited</li> <li>ii. specification needs to be clearer as to whether the 3m run of worktops is one continuous run or can be broken up</li> <li>iii. Panel found that not all units are left clean (Properties 1 &amp; 11)</li> <li>iv. Specification doesn't say anything about a space for a cooker</li> <li>v. Specification should say that if gas supplied to property then fittings for both gas and electric cookers should be put in kitchen</li> <li>vi. Panel feel that specification should say that new toilet seats should be fitted</li> <li>vii. Specification says toilets and baths free from limescale but panel feel this is not always the case</li> </ul>
8. Decorative order	Says 'walls prepare ready for re-decoration' but feel needs more explanation about this – fill holes, smooth etc In light of changes to the way we are 'labelling' properties and recent decommissioning need to look again at which properties will be re-decorated prior to reletting. Perhaps all properties into which an older person or disabled person is moving in should be redecorated?
9. Cleaning	Panel would like to see a separate, detailed specification for the standard of cleaning similar to that in the Exeter City leaflet. This needs to be given to the cleaners and spot checks need to be carried out to check standard being upheld. Panel would like to see nicotine stains all removed (use steam cleaners?)



## Appendix C – Review of the Welcome Pack

Original list	Current welcome pack (7/3/13)	Recommendation	Priority
Welcome Letter	Not included	New letter to be drafted and included in pack	1
Information about the local area (including details about doctors, dentists etc)	Not included	Sheet of local information to be put together for each area	2
Info on a leaflet to say where to find this infoServices into and within your home	Included	Leaflet on how to switch to another provider to be drafted and included in pack	1
Easy Reference Card for Repairs & Maintenance	Not included – but information in Tenant Handbook	Key phone numbers etc to be collated onto laminated card for easy reference	1
Refuse and recycling leaflet	Not included	Leaflet to be included	3
The Tenants Charter	Replaced by Tenant Handbook	No change required	
How to get involved with the Housing Service	Not included – but information in Tenant Handbook	No change required	
Housing Customer Charter Right to Repair leaflet Right to compensation leaflet Housing Benefit/Council Tax benefit claim form Home Safeguard leaflet Leaflet on dispersed alarm service Booklet on low cost home insurance	This information is now in the Tenant Handbook and/or Annual Report	No change required	
Advice on damp, condensation and mould problems Leaflet	Included	No change required	
Local 'handy pages' directory (if available for area)	Not included	No change required	
Copy of latest Housing Standard or Partnership News newsletter	Housing Matters included	No change required	
Tenant Participation Agreement	Now the Tenant and Council Partnership Agreement - in the Annual Report	No change required	

Original list	Current welcome pack (7/3/13)	Recommendation	Priority
	Flyer about Introductory tenancies	No change required	
	Leaflet on Heating Systems and controls	No change required	
	Annual Report	No change required	
	Home Focus	No change required	

DRAFT

## Agenda Item: 09

Housing Review Board

5 September 2013

jg



### HRA reform – a year on

#### Summary

This report considers research and a recent from PwC and The Smith Institute on the impact of the reform of social housing finance and the self-financing initiative a year after the introduction of the scheme.

The radical change in local authority landlord finances was intended to bring new freedoms and flexibilities in moving away from the housing subsidy system and the research report looks at how effective this has been.

#### Recommendation

To note the contents of the report.

#### a) Reasons for Recommendation

To keep the Board appraised of how the self- financing initiative has worked in other areas.

#### b) Alternative Options

There are no alternative options.

#### c) Risk Considerations

The risks are all considered and mitigated in the HRA Business Plan.

#### d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

These are set out in the report.

#### e) Date for Review of Decision

We will monitor developments and changes occurring in other local authorities.

---

### 1 Housing Revenue Account reform – one year on

- 1.1 We spent considerable time and effort in preparing for the reform of local authority housing finance. We welcomed the opportunity that the reforms were presenting, but had natural reservations about the size of the debt we were required to take on.

- 1.2 In preparing for the move to self-financing we reviewed and rewrote our Housing Revenue Account Business Plan. We included the loan portfolio and repayment schedule and updated the risk assessment. The Business Plan shows increasing levels of surplus and proposals on how that will be reinvested into housing services, works to tenants homes, and new build/acquisitions.
- 1.3 It is interesting to see how other authorities have assessed the reforms and the issues that have arisen as a result of taking on varying levels of debt.
- 1.4 The key results of the research show:
- **Officers are, on the whole, satisfied with HRA reform.** In particular, they value the freedom and certainty that reform has promoted, allowing authorities to operate their HRA more like a social business. It has levelled the playing-field with housing associations and the private sector.
  - **The building of new homes is a priority in HRA business plans.** Other priorities are maintaining the decent homes standard and estate regeneration.
  - **A majority see investment in new or existing stock as more of a priority than reducing HRA debt.**
  - **Most officers are confident in the success of their business plans but there are clear challenges.** Welfare reform is seen as the issue most likely to undermine the viability of HRA business plans; in particular, the introduction of Universal Credit is viewed as likely to result in a rise in rent arrears.
  - **Officers believe that they have more resources available for council housing as a result of the reforms.** But, for many, these resources can only be realised over the long-term.
  - **The debt cap was highly criticised,** either because of its inclusion at all or because it was set at too restrictive a level. A debt cap is deemed inconsistent with the principles of self-financing, preventing parity with housing associations and the private sector.
  - **The removal of the ring fencing of HRA funds** was considered unnecessary and unhelpful, with strong opposition to its removal.
- 1.5 We will maintain a watching brief on how other local authorities are managing their new freedoms and achieving their ambitions and consider any good practice that we identify.

---

### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications.

## **Consultation on Reports to the Cabinet**

None.

## **Background Papers**

- [HRA Reform: One Year On](#)
- 

John Golding  
Head of Housing

Housing Review Board  
5 September 2013

## Agenda Item: 10

**Housing Review Board**

**5 September 2013**

**PR**



### **New Rent Calculation Scheme**

#### **Summary**

This report looks at the new rent calculation scheme announced in the recent government spending review and what possible effects this will have on the Housing Revenue Account 30 year Business Plan.

#### **Recommendation**

That the contents of the report be noted.

#### **a) Reasons for Recommendation**

To update the Board on recent changes to government policy and ensure that we take any necessary action to update the HRA Business Plan accordingly.

#### **b) Alternative Options**

To take no action at this time.

#### **c) Risk Considerations**

Expected income not being sufficient to cover our debts or planned expenditure over the coming years.

#### **d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations**

This recommendation conforms with existing Council policy and budget.

#### **e) Date for Review of Decision**

In six months.

---

## **1 Introduction**

1.1 This report looks at the new social/affordable rent calculation scheme announced in the recent government spending review and what possible effects this will have on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 year Business Plan.

1.2 The brief history of the Rent Restructuring scheme introduced by the then Department of the Environment Transport and Regions (DETR) is explained below.

The **Rent Restructuring scheme** commenced in April 2002 and the key objectives of the scheme are:

- 1) That social rents should remain affordable in the long term;
- 2) That social rents should be fairer and less confusing for tenants;
- 3) That there should be a closer link between rents and the qualities which tenants value in properties;
- 4) That unjustifiable differences between the rents set by local authorities and by registered social landlords should be removed.

A **rent formula** was devised so that social rents would reflect:

- 1) The size, condition and location of properties;
- 2) Local earnings, so as to take account of affordability;
- 3) Property size.

- 1.3 The new rent calculated by this formula is called the '**target rent**' and each property now had two rents, an actual rent and a target rent. Historically East Devon have always charged low affordable rents by following the recommendations for increasing social rents issued by the DETR and in doing so our social rents were at a very low starting point for this new scheme. For the majority of East Devon properties, actual rents were much lower than target rents, but a small number were higher.

## **2. Achieving Rent Convergence**

- 2.1 The next stage of the scheme was to achieve convergence of the actual and target rents. This involved moving the actual rent to converge with the target rent over a ten year period. To achieve this actual and target rents were calculated at the value of the Retail Price Index (RPI) at September of each year plus half of one per cent, plus a maximum uplift of £2 (obtained by dividing the difference between the rents by the number of years left to run, but limited to £2 per week). Of course if the target rent was lower there would be a maximum deduction of £2 per week. These calculations applied from April of the following year.
- 2.2 Over the years the scheme has varied very little except for the length of time to achieve convergence which has increased and decreased on occasions to where it will now cease in March 2015.

## **3. New Rent Calculation Scheme**

- 3.1 From 2015/16 the government announced in last month's spending review that rents will now be calculated using the formula of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) figure plus one per cent for 10 years.
- 3.2 RPI/CPI comparison.

The following table 1 tracks the relationship between RPI and CPI from September 2003 to September 2012.

Table 1

Date	RPI%	CPI%	Difference
Sept 2003	2.8	1.4	1.4
Sept 2004	3.1	1.1	2.0
Sept 2005	2.7	2.5	0.2
Sept 2006	3.6	2.4	1.2
Sept 2007	3.9	1.8	2.1
Sept 2008	5.0	5.2	-0.2
Sept 2009	-1.4	1.1	-2.5
Sept 2010	4.6	3.1	1.5
Sept 2011	5.6	5.2	0.4
Sept 2012	2.6	2.2	0.4
		Total	6.5

- 3.3 Only on two occasions has RPI been lower than CPI and over the ten year period the difference is 6.5%. Before looking at the impact that the new rent formula calculation will have to the HRA 30 year Business Plan, there are two more tables to consider. Table 2 gives the increases applied to rents using RPI plus half of one per cent and RPI plus half of one per cent plus the maximum uplift of £2 per week.

Table 2

Date	RPI + 0.5% Increase for target rent	RPI + 0.5% + max £2 pw Increase for actual rent	Difference
April 2004	3.3	5.09	1.79
April 2005	3.6	5.11	1.51
April 2006	3.2	5.75	2.55
April 2007	4.1	6.56	2.46
April 2008	4.4	5.72	1.32
April 2009	5.5	3.10	-2.40
April 2010	-0.91	1.87	1.96
April 2011	5.1	6.92	1.82
April 2012	6.1	7.86	1.76
April 2013	3.1	4.90	1.80
		Total	14.57

This table shows that actual rents moved towards convergence to target rents by increasing at a higher rate of 14.57% over the ten year period.

- 3.4 The following table 3 looks at the comparison of using the proposed new rent formula calculation set against the current formula for the last ten years and compares the difference.

Table 3

Date	RPI + 0.5%	CPI + 1%	Difference
Sept 2003	3.3	2.4	0.9
Sept 2004	3.6	2.1	1.5
Sept 2005	3.2	3.5	-0.3
Sept 2006	4.1	3.4	.70



Sept 2007	4.4	2.8	1.6
Sept 2008	5.5	6.2	-0.7
Sept 2009	-0.09	2.1	-2.19
Sept 2010	5.1	4.1	1.0
Sept 2011	6.1	6.2	-0.1
Sept 2012	3.1	3.2	-0.1
Total	38.31	36.0	2.31

- 3.5 Over the past ten years RPI + 0.5% has outperformed CPI + 1.0% by just 2.31% giving an annual average difference of just 0.23%. If this were also to be the case for the ten year period from 2015/16 onwards then annual income loss will be approx £400,000. This is based on this year's figures and does not take into account increases to rents for successive years.

#### 4. Rent Convergence

- 4.1 What the new rent increase formula from 2015/2016 does not have, is a mechanism to move the actual rent towards the target rent over and above the rent increase to achieve convergence. An article in the Inside Housing magazine of 19 July 2013 highlights this fact and goes on to state "We expect a significant number of local authorities to be badly affected. Many Business Plans won't work if convergence is ended early".
- 4.2 At present we have 899 properties that will not achieve convergence by March 2016 and the following table 4 gives a banding of how these rents are affected.

Table 4

Banding Value	Number of properties
£0.1p to £1	201
£1.00 to £5.00	438
£5.00 to £10.00	238
Over £10	22
Total	899

- 4.3 The new formula to calculate rents of CPI plus 1% is due to commence from April 2015 this means that the existing scheme will finish 12 months earlier than planned. The result of the early termination of this scheme is the loss of one year where we could move actual rents towards target rents by a maximum of £2 per week.
- 4.4 Any remedies to Convergence?

This will move considerably more rents into non convergence and a loss of income for this final year. Is there anything that can be done to offset the effect of more rents not achieving convergence and the loss of income? When a tenancy is terminated and the property is offered to the new tenant, it could be offered at the target rent value. This would be a drip feed effect because there are approximately 300 properties that become void each year, but some of the rents would have achieved convergence and already be at the target rent. However, there are disadvantages to this process:

- 1) The government may rule against housing providers using this method to uplift rents.

- 2) The scheme was originally designed for similar properties in similar areas to have similar rents. Up rating individual rents will see neighbours with different rent levels.
- 3) Up rating rents by this process will move the average rent towards the 'limit rent'. If the 'limit rent' is exceeded there will be a penalty imposed on the Housing Benefit subsidy granted by the government, but there is no confirmation or otherwise that the 'limit rent' will exist from 2015.

## 5. HRA 30 year Business Plan

- 5.1 What will be the effect of the new rent calculation scheme on the 30 year Business Plan? Looking back at table 3 the previous 10 year comparison is that RPI+0.5% was greater than CPI+1% by 2.31%. The table also shows the averages over the 10 year period of 3.83% for RPI+0.5% and 3.6% for CPI+ 1%. All the time that CPI is above 2% the income from rents will be above 3% taking into account the additional 1% increase allowed in the scheme. The 30 year Business Plan assumes that rental income increases by a constant of 3% each year. If performance of CPI for the next 10 years from 2015/16 is similar to the previous 10 year period then the Business Plan will be largely unaffected.

## 6. The effects of Welfare Reforms

- 6.1 Will welfare reforms have an impact on the 30 year Business Plan?  
From 1 April 2013 under occupancy and from July 2013 benefit caps are the welfare reforms that have been introduced so far. There are currently 273 tenants under occupying their homes, receiving housing benefit and below pensionable age. Of these, between 40 and 50 are not making regular payments towards the rent due. If these tenants paid no rent at all the annual loss of income would be approx £35,000. There are approximately 6 tenants affect by benefit caps and if they did not pay the rent due, the annual loss of income would be approx £24,000. There is a potential annual income loss of £59,000, but this is assuming that none of these tenants pay.

### 6.2 Possible Increasing Debt

At the end of the rent year 2012/2013 rent arrears for current and former tenants amounted to £197,820. The potential bad debt situation at the end of 2013/2014 could be £256,820 (£35,000, £24,000 & £197,820). **The current position is that rent arrears for current and former tenants amounts to £192,160. It is important to note here that this figure includes any debts arising from default on payment of the welfare reforms introduced so far i.e. under occupancy and benefit caps. If this level of performance continues to the end of the rent year, the potential bad debt situation could be held at £200,000.** The bad debt provision allowed in the HRA for this year is 2.5% which in monetary terms equates to £430,000. For the following 2 years the provision will increase by 0.5% for each year and for the remaining years the bad debt provision is fixed at 3.5%.

- 6.3 Unless there is a sustained performance of CPI + 1% below 3% and bad debts increase above the provision allowed, there is unlikely to be any threat to the 30 year Business Plan, but all the time that rental income increases above 3% and bad debts fall well below the provision allowed, a monetary cushion is developing and building. The 30 year

Business Plan will be robust and going from strength to strength. Referring back to the article in Inside Housing it broadly comments that many self-financing housing providers will be re-writing their Business Plans, will struggle to make their debt repayments and the loss of income will impact on the provision of affordable housing reducing the capacity to build.

## **7. Future Welfare Reforms**

- 7.1 There are some welfare reforms still to be introduced by the government such as Universal Credit (UC). UC is currently being piloted in 6 Councils and in due course the government will announce any changes to the current proposals and time scales. If the current proposals for UC are confirmed it will mean that approx 1,200 of our tenants will receive their Housing Benefit in with their UC payment. In monetary terms between £4m to £4.5m will be paid direct to tenants each year as Housing Benefit and they will then have the responsibility to pay this sum as rent to us. Some tenants will of course do this, but there will unfortunately be a percentage that will not.
- 7.2 Another issue is that UC will be paid monthly in arrears to tenants and all our tenancy agreements and policies state that rent is due in advance. This situation can be turned around slowly by arranging with tenants to pay additional contributions until they are paying in advance. This can be achieved, but it may take several years to do so, but UC is for working age tenants and some may be in and out of work frequently. I am sure that the government announcements for UC are eagerly awaited by many Councils.
- 7.3 If the current proposals for UC are confirmed this will have a massive affect on the 30 year Business Plan, not for income, but for the provision of bad debts which will affect the money available for budgets. Depending on the outcome of the pilots there is hope that UC will not include Housing Benefit and HB will continue to be paid directly to tenants rent accounts as it is now.

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### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications.

### **Financial Implications**

The financial implications have been included where known and current calculations indicate that the business plan has adequate resources to cope with a small increase in arrears/bad debts. The situation regarding universal credit is unclear at present but could have a significant adverse effect on the business plan.

### **Consultation on Reports to the Cabinet**

None

### **Background Papers**

- [HRA Business Plan](#).

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Peter Richards Ext 2380  
Rental Manager

Housing Review Board



## **Agenda Item: 11**

**Housing Review Board**

**05 September 2013**

**MW**



## **HRA Financial Monitoring Report 2013/14 – Month 4 July**

### **Summary**

This report gives a summary of the overall financial position on the Housing Revenue Account, HRA Capital Programme and the Business Plan for 2013/14 at the end of month four (July 2013).

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 four be acknowledged.**

#### **a) Reasons 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.

#### **b) Alternative Options**

To disagree with the recommended actions proposed.

#### **c) Risk Considerations**

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.

**d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations**

This report highlights all budgetary variances and then comments on the level and adequacy of balances.

**e) Date for Review of Decision**

Updated positions are to be presented to future meetings of the Board.

**Financial Monitoring Report 2013/14 – To Month 4 July**

**1. Introduction**

1.1.1 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 four.

**2. Housing Revenue Account Position**

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

	<b>Variation at Month 4 £000</b>	<b>Predicted Outturn Variation £000</b>
Higher property insurance premiums	31	31
Responsive Maintenance – settlement of disputed Connaught invoices	60	60
Responsive Maintenance – higher than expected demand	140	140
<b>Total variations</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>231</b>

It is anticipated that there will be underspends or increased income in other areas that will be identified as the year progresses which will offset the overspends above.

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.

	<b>£000</b>
<b>Original Budget surplus</b>	<b>(1,696)</b>
Month 4 predicted net (under)/overspend to year end	231
<b>Predicted Budget Surplus</b>	<b>(1,465)</b>

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:

	<b>£000</b>
<b>Housing Revenue Account Balance (01/04/13)</b>	<b>(2,970)</b>
Predicted budget surplus as above	(1,465)
<b>Predicted HRA Balance (31/03/13)</b>	<b>(£4,435)</b>

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, to offset any adverse effects of Welfare Reform and to ensure sufficient funds are available to make the first repayment of principal on the self-financing loans due in 2014/15. In addition there is £1.710m held in a reserve.

### 3. Capital Programme Position

- 3.1 The following table shows the HRA Capital Programme totalling £1.425m and the expenditure to date. Capital receipts and a S106 receipt will be used to fund part of this sum with the balance to be met by a revenue contribution from the HRA.

<b>HRA Capital Programme Summary</b>	<b>Budget £000</b>	<b>Spend to date £000</b>
New Housing IT System	350	3
Major improvements/extensions/loft conversions to existing dwellings	175	24
Off street car parking	50	0
Re-modelling of sheltered schemes	200	54
Social Services Adaptations	200	28
Purchase of HMO in Exmouth	450	0
<b>Total Programme</b>	<b>1,425</b>	<b>109</b>

At HRB on 20 June 2013 it was agreed to purchase a house for multiple occupation (HMO) in Exmouth for a maximum of £0.450m, this sum to be funded by a Section 106 receipt of £0.350m and the balance from retained capital receipts for social housing.

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

<b>Capital Receipts</b>	<b>£000</b>
Sale of council houses/flats	(706)
Sale of land/garages	(64)
<b>Total capital receipts received</b>	<b>(770)</b>
Allocation of receipts:	
Retained for provision of new social housing	(439)
Retained for funding other HRA capital expenditure	(181)
Paid to HM Treasury	(150)
<b>Total capital receipts allocation</b>	<b>(770)</b>

There have been 8 Right to Buy sales and 8 garage sales 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.

Currently we are required to spend £2.3m on the provision of new social housing by 30 June 2016 of which £0.690m can be funded from retained receipts.

#### **4. HRA Business Plan**

4.1 Appendix B shows the Business Plan Operating Account which reflects the above changes in 2013/14 and the subsequent impact on balances for future years.

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#### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications identified.

#### **Financial Implications**

Details are contained within the report.

#### **Consultation on Reports to the Cabinet**

Not applicable.

#### **Background Papers**

- HRA budget monitoring statement
- [HRA Business Plan](#)

Mandy White (HRA Accountant) Ext 2357

**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL  
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013/2014**

**SUMMARY OF HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT  
Period to 31 July 2013**

2013/2014			Service	2013/2014	2013/2014	
Budget				Actual	Variance	
Original	Revised	Year to Date		£	£	
£	£	£				
			<b>INCOME</b>			
1	(17,200,000)	(17,200,000)	(5,516,985)	Gross Property Rent including Garages	(5,626,359)	(109,374)
2	(65,000)	(65,000)	(10,000)	Other Rents & Income	(13,457)	(3,457)
3	<b>(17,265,000)</b>	<b>(17,265,000)</b>	<b>(5,526,985)</b>	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(5,639,816)</b>	<b>(112,831)</b>
				<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
				<b>Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b>		
4	2,203,570	2,403,570	980,543	General	922,707	(57,836)
5	998,000	998,000	326,040	Special Works	191,001	(135,039)
				<b>Supervision &amp; Management</b>		
6	2,602,020	2,633,020	1,414,220	General	1,404,596	(9,624)
7	885,680	885,680	665,700	Special	607,656	(58,044)
8	243,470	243,470	107,920	Other Expenditure	101,650	(6,270)
9	6,932,740	7,163,740	3,494,423	<b>Total Management &amp; Maintenance</b>	3,227,610	(266,813)
10	0	0	0	Adjustment to Bad Debt Provision	0	0
11	2,155,900	2,155,900	0	Depreciation - dwellings	0	0
12	78,190	78,190	0	- other	0	0
13	5,150,000	5,150,000	1,716,640	Major Repairs Account	1,060,999	(655,641)
14	(2,155,900)	(2,155,900)	0	Transfer to Major Repairs Reserve	0	0
15	<b>12,160,930</b>	<b>12,391,930</b>	<b>5,211,063</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4,288,609</b>	<b>(922,454)</b>
16	<b>(5,104,070)</b>	<b>(4,873,070)</b>	<b>(315,922)</b>	<b>NET COST OF SERVICE</b>	<b>(1,351,207)</b>	<b>(1,035,285)</b>
17	(36,130)	(36,130)	0	Interest on Balances	0	0
18	2,569,200	2,569,200	0	Principal & Interest Payable (PWLB loans)	(27,727)	(27,727)
19	(90)	(90)	(30)	Interest on Council House Sales (mortgages)	(24)	6
20	<b>2,532,980</b>	<b>2,532,980</b>	<b>(30)</b>		<b>(27,751)</b>	<b>(27,721)</b>
21	<b>(2,571,090)</b>	<b>(2,340,090)</b>	<b>(315,952)</b>	<b>NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE - Deficit / (Surplus)</b>	<b>(1,378,958)</b>	<b>(1,063,006)</b>
22	875,000	875,000	0	Revenue Contribution to Capital Expenditure	0	0
23	<b>(1,696,090)</b>	<b>(1,465,090)</b>	<b>(315,952)</b>	<b>Deficit / (Surplus) for the Year</b>	<b>(1,378,958)</b>	<b>(1,063,006)</b>
				<b>BALANCES</b>		
24	(2,717,227)	(2,969,563)	(2,969,563)	Balance b/f	(2,969,563)	0
25	(1,696,090)	(1,465,090)	(315,952)	Deficit / (Surplus)	(1,378,958)	(1,063,006)
26	<b>(4,413,317)</b>	<b>(4,434,653)</b>	<b>(3,285,514)</b>	<b>Balance C/F</b>	<b>(4,348,521)</b>	<b>(1,063,006)</b>
		(1,710,000)		Amount held in Reserve account		

(2,145,000) required balance: £500 per property

(2,289,653) (over)/under required balance



EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL  
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013/2014

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - DETAILED STATEMENT  
Period to 31 July 2013

2013/2014			Service	2013/2014			Comments
Budget				Actual	Variance	Committed	
Original	Revised	Year to Date		£	£	£	
£	£	£					
			<b>INCOME</b>				
1	(16,800,000)	(16,800,000)	(5,388,680) SB	Gross Property Rents	(5,491,097)	(102,417)	
2	(400,000)	(400,000)	(128,305) SB	Garage Rents	(135,262)	(6,957)	
3	(65,000)	(65,000)	(10,000) SB	Other Rents and Income	(13,457)	(3,457)	service charges, garden licences, IGM
4	<b>(17,265,000)</b>	<b>(17,265,000)</b>	<b>(5,526,985)</b>	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>(5,639,816)</b>	<b>(112,831)</b>	<b>0</b>
			<b>REPAIRS &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>				
			<b>Repairs and Maintenance - General</b>				
5	1,550,270	1,750,270	716,950 DB	<b>Response Maintenance</b>	716,946	(4)	incl £60k Connaught settlement
			<b>Programmed Maintenance</b>				
6	15,450	15,450	5,160 DB	Communal Areas	663	(4,497)	
7	0	0	0 DB	Fire Extinguishers	0	0	
8	10,000	10,000	3,320 DB	Emergency Lighting and Fire alarms	75	(3,245)	
9	80,000	80,000	26,680 DB	Solid Fuel Appliances	22,189	(4,491)	
10	400,000	400,000	179,153 DB	Gas Appliances - Servicing	153,403	(25,750)	
11	35,000	35,000	11,680 DB	Lift Maintenance	8,617	(3,063)	
12	<b>540,450</b>	<b>540,450</b>	<b>225,993</b>	<b>Total Programmed Maintenance</b>	<b>184,947</b>	<b>(41,046)</b>	<b>0</b>
			<b>Cyclical Maintenance</b>				
13	100,000	100,000	33,320 DB	External Painting Programme	15,895	(17,425)	
14	0	0	0 DB	Extras to Painting Programme	2,725	2,725	!
15	0	0	0 DB	Gutter Repairs	355	355	!
16	12,850	12,850	4,280 DB	Interior Decoration	1,839	(2,441)	
17	<b>112,850</b>	<b>112,850</b>	<b>37,600</b>	<b>Total Cyclical Maintenance</b>	<b>20,814</b>	<b>(16,786)</b>	<b>0</b>
18	<b>2,203,570</b>	<b>2,403,570</b>	<b>980,543</b>	<b>Total Repairs and Maintenance - General</b>	<b>922,707</b>	<b>(57,836)</b>	<b>0</b>
			<b>Repairs and Maintenance - Special Works</b>				
19	100,000	100,000	33,320 DB	Adaptations For Disabled	24,763	(8,557)	
20	0	0	0 DB	Water Service Renewal	1,324	1,324	! no budget
21	0	0	0 DB	Window Renewal	1,133	1,133	! no budget
22	2,000	2,000	680 DB	Woodworm Treatment	1,170	490	!
23	55,000	55,000	11,680 DB	Dampness Eradication & Condensation	57,232	45,552	! budget for year now spent
24	100,000	100,000	33,320 DB	Carbon Management Programme (loft insulation)	13,600	(19,720)	
25	20,000	20,000	6,680 DB	Improvements Voucher Scheme	9,371	2,691	!
26	3,000	3,000	1,000 DB	Sanctuary Scheme	1,394	394	!
27	40,000	40,000	13,320 DB	Asbestos Works	17,576	4,256	!
28	20,000	20,000	6,680 DB	Structural Works - Subsidence	7,488	808	!
29	3,000	3,000	1,000 SB	Grant Via Tenant Participation	402	(598)	
30	0	0	0 DB	External Light	0	0	
31	15,000	15,000	5,000 DB	Energy Performance Certificates	6,944	1,944	!
32	20,000	20,000	6,680 DB	Path Repairs	2,960	(3,720)	
33	10,000	10,000	3,320 DB	Soundproofing	0	(3,320)	
34	5,000	5,000	1,680 DB	Minor Schemes	0	(1,680)	
35	50,000	50,000	16,680 DB	Fire Safety Works	3,214	(13,466)	
36	10,000	10,000	3,320 DB	Flat Roof Repairs	2,830	(490)	
37	10,000	10,000	3,320 DB	Chimney Repairs	21,064	17,744	! budget for year overspent
38	15,000	15,000	5,000 DB	Fence Programme	7,112	2,112	!
39	20,000	20,000	6,680 DB	Replacement Floors	0	(6,680)	
40	500,000	500,000	166,680 DB	Schemes to be identified per Stock Condition Sur	11,424	(155,256)	
41	<b>998,000</b>	<b>998,000</b>	<b>326,040</b>	<b>Total Repairs and Maintenance - Special Works</b>	<b>191,001</b>	<b>(135,039)</b>	<b>0</b>

**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL  
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013/2014**

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - DETAILED STATEMENT**

2013/2014				Service	2013/2014			Comments
Budget			Actual		Variance	Committed		
Original	Revised	Year to Date						
£	£	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>SUPERVISION &amp; MANAGEMENT</b>								
<b>Supervision &amp; Management - General</b>								
1	1,616,430	1,616,430	550,150	Employees	533,290	(16,860)		
2	94,130	125,130	119,870	Premises	124,956	5,086		! insurance premiums £31k
3	104,090	104,090	41,440	Transport	41,720	280		!
4	134,880	134,880	48,950	Supplies & Services	51,235	2,285		!
5	1,150,660	1,150,660	1,150,660	Support Services	1,150,660	0		
6	3,100,190	3,131,190	1,911,070	Total Expenditure	1,901,861	(9,209)		
7	(2,000)	(2,000)	(680)	Income	(1,095)	(415)		
8	3,098,190	3,129,190	1,910,390	Net Expenditure before Recharges	1,900,766	(9,624)		
9	(496,170)	(496,170)	(496,170)	Recharges	(496,170)	0		
10	<b>2,602,020</b>	<b>2,633,020</b>	<b>1,414,220</b>	<b>Net Supervision &amp; Management - General</b>	<b>1,404,596</b>	<b>(9,624)</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Net Expenditure Analysis by Cost Centre</b>								
11	595,270	626,270	591,310	JG General Operational Management	586,880	(4,430)		insurance premiums £31k
12	252,720	252,720	179,920	JG Head of Housing	178,879	(1,041)		
13	794,480	794,480	366,770	SB Landlord Services	377,700	10,930		! Targeted Families Officer - no budget
14	641,580	641,580	306,810	DB Housing Needs & Strategy	302,790	(4,020)		
15	737,950	737,950	419,740	DB Asset & Property	409,927	(9,813)		
16	20,950	20,950	18,950	SB Council House Sales	18,960	10		!
17	4,300	4,300	4,140	DB Sewage Treatment Works	4,099	(41)		
18	50,940	50,940	22,750	SB Communal Areas Cleaning	21,532	(1,218)		
19	3,098,190	3,129,190	1,910,390	Net Expenditure before Recharges	1,900,767	(9,623)		
20	(496,170)	(496,170)	(496,170)	Recharges	(496,170)	0		
21	<b>2,602,020</b>	<b>2,633,020</b>	<b>1,414,220</b>	<b>Total Analysis by Cost Centre</b>	<b>1,404,597</b>	<b>(9,623)</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Supervision &amp; Management - Special</b>								
22	46,160	46,160	14,810	SB Community Centres	12,340	(2,470)		
23	10,000	10,000	3,320	DB Choice Based Lettings	0	(3,320)		
24	0	0	0	SB Targeted Families Programme	(9,674)	(9,674)		covers officer's salary above
25	327,170	327,170	322,490	SB Maintenance of Grounds	320,620	(1,870)		
26	30,430	30,430	13,800	SB Play Areas	6,637	(7,163)		
27	40,000	40,000	13,320	SB Estate Management	(105)	(13,425)		
28	10,000	10,000	3,320	SB Noise Nuisance Issues	0	(3,320)		
29	2,000	2,000	680	SB Anti Social Behaviour	0	(680)		
30	410	410	200	SB Caretaking & Window Cleaning	205	5		!
31	32,000	32,000	10,680	SB Communal Areas Lighting	9,573	(1,107)		
32	24,000	24,000	8,000	SB Communal Areas Heating	4,867	(3,133)		
33	3,240	3,240	3,240	SB Tenants' Conference	2,720	(520)		
34	0	0	0	DB New Build Feasibility	2,520	2,520		! re 24/26 Normandy Close
35	15,000	15,000	15,000	JG ASW Procurement	13,935	(1,065)		
36	10,000	10,000	3,320	SB Decommissioning Costs	3,416	96		!
37	5,000	5,000	1,680	JG Business Plan Update	0	(1,680)		
38	8,960	8,960	1,510	SB District Offices running expenses	3,377	1,867		!
39	321,310	321,310	250,330	SB Mobile Support Officers	237,225	(13,105)		
40	<b>885,680</b>	<b>885,680</b>	<b>665,700</b>	<b>Total Supervision &amp; Management - Special</b>	<b>607,656</b>	<b>(58,044)</b>	<b>0</b>	

**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL  
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013/2014**

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - DETAILED STATEMENT**

	2013/2014			Service	2013/2014			Comments
	Budget				Actual	Variance	Committed	
	Original	Revised	Year to Date					
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
				<b>OTHER EXPENDITURE</b>				
1	13,080	13,080	3,640	DB Sewerage - Repairs, Maintenance & Emptying	3,300	(340)		
2	38,050	38,050	22,040	SB Tenant Participation	23,313	1,273		!
3	5,150	5,150	1,720	SB Tenant Scrutiny	1,278	(442)		
4	2,000	2,000	680	SB Storage	443	(237)		
5	2,600	2,600	680	SB Honiton -38 St Pauls Road Heathpark	852	172		!
6	9,750	9,750	3,240	SB Community Development Work	2,881	(359)		
7	5,000	5,000	1,680	SB Minor Management Schemes	1,110	(570)		
8	20,000	20,000	6,680	DB Road Repairs	2,994	(3,686)	10,000	
9	1,000	1,000	320	SB Signs on Estates	360	40		!
10	3,000	3,000	1,000	DB Off Street parking - Grants to Tenants	2,036	1,036		!
11	8,000	8,000	2,680	DB Other Expenses (pest control, eviction expenses)	6,345	3,665		!
12	3,000	3,000	1,000	DB Gully Cleansing	422	(578)		
13	29,940	29,940	23,260	DB Tree Felling and Planting	22,689	(571)		
14	5,000	5,000	1,680	DB Landscaping	450	(1,230)		
15	75,000	75,000	25,000	DB Removal Expenses (downsizing)	20,871	(4,129)		
16	400	400	120	DB Private Water Supplies - Service & Maintenance	0	(120)		
17	15,000	15,000	5,000	SB Removal of Rubbish	5,427	427		!
18	7,500	7,500	7,500	SB Best Value - Housemark	6,879	(621)		
19	<b>243,470</b>	<b>243,470</b>	<b>107,920</b>	<b>TOTAL OTHER EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>101,650</b>	<b>(6,270)</b>	<b>10,000</b>	
				<b>MAJOR REPAIRS ACCOUNT</b>				
20	200,000	200,000	66,680	DB Central Heating	249,424	182,744		! annual budget overspent
21	800,000	800,000	266,680	DB Gas Appliance Replacement	34,770	(231,910)	375,000	
22	150,000	150,000	50,000	DB Electrical Updating	8,197	(41,803)		
23	250,000	250,000	83,320	DB Roofing Renewal	79,028	(4,292)		
24	1,000,000	1,000,000	333,320	DB Replacement Kitchens	30,867	(302,453)	221,000	
25	600,000	600,000	200,000	DB Replacement Doors	17,470	(182,530)	440,000	
26	400,000	400,000	133,320	DB Replacement uPVC fascias etc	21,188	(112,132)		
27	300,000	300,000	100,000	DB Replacement Bathrooms	642	(99,358)		
28	250,000	250,000	83,320	DB Electrical Works on COT	201,300	117,980		! £49k left for year
29	1,200,000	1,200,000	400,000	DB COT: Other Expenditure	418,113	18,113		!
30	<b>5,150,000</b>	<b>5,150,000</b>	<b>1,716,640</b>	<b>TOTAL MAJOR REPAIRS ACCOUNT</b>	<b>1,060,999</b>	<b>(655,641)</b>	<b>1,036,000</b>	

APPENDIX B

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

Income Expenditure

Year	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
	Net rent income £,000	Other income £,000	Misc income £,000	RTB Admin £,000	Total income £,000	Managmt. £,000	Depreciation £,000	Responsive & Cyclical £,000	Other Revenue spend £,000	Cost of Rent Rebates £,000	Misc expenses £,000	Total expenses £,000	Capital Changes £,000									
1 2013.14	16,485	767	0	13	17,265	(3,519)	(1,156)	(3,401)	(243)	0	0	(8,320)	(2,564)	6,382	(5)	(4,072)	(875)	1,430	4,680	36	6,145	
2 2014.15	17,119	414	0	13	17,545	(3,624)	(1,153)	(3,955)	(250)	0	0	(8,982)	(2,563)	6,000	(580)	0	(309)	5,110	6,145	130	11,386	
3 2015.16	17,768	424	0	13	18,205	(3,733)	(1,151)	(4,065)	(256)	0	0	(9,208)	(2,559)	6,438	(1,029)	0	(8,098)	(2,688)	11,386	8,848	151	8,848
4 2016.17	18,334	437	0	13	18,794	(3,845)	(1,148)	(4,186)	(262)	0	0	(9,441)	(2,562)	6,781	(1,490)	0	(3,889)	1,402	8,848	143	10,393	
5 2017.18	18,888	450	0	13	19,351	(3,960)	(1,145)	(4,306)	(269)	0	0	(9,681)	(2,541)	7,129	(1,310)	0	(4,030)	1,769	10,393	169	12,351	
6 2018.19	19,439	464	0	13	19,916	(4,079)	(1,143)	(4,430)	(275)	0	0	(9,928)	(2,521)	7,467	(1,587)	0	(4,176)	1,704	12,351	198	14,253	
7 2019.20	19,992	478	0	13	20,483	(4,202)	(1,140)	(4,558)	(282)	0	0	(10,182)	(2,496)	7,806	(1,917)	0	(4,326)	1,563	14,253	226	16,042	
8 2020.21	20,552	492	0	13	21,057	(4,328)	(1,137)	(4,689)	(289)	(5)	0	(10,449)	(2,459)	8,149	(2,259)	0	(4,479)	1,411	16,042	251	17,704	
9 2021.22	21,122	507	0	13	21,641	(4,457)	(1,135)	(4,824)	(297)	(6)	0	(10,719)	(2,410)	8,512	(2,619)	0	(4,751)	1,142	17,704	274	19,120	
10 2022.23	21,706	522	0	13	22,241	(4,591)	(1,132)	(4,963)	(304)	(8)	0	(10,998)	(2,349)	8,894	(2,889)	0	(4,916)	1,088	19,120	295	20,503	
11 2023.24	22,305	538	0	13	22,855	(4,729)	(1,129)	(5,095)	(312)	(9)	0	(11,263)	(2,277)	9,315	(3,288)	0	(6,133)	(106)	20,503	307	20,704	
12 2024.25	22,920	554	0	13	23,487	(4,871)	(1,126)	(5,231)	(319)	(10)	0	(11,558)	(2,190)	9,739	(3,718)	0	(6,336)	(315)	20,704	308	20,697	
13 2025.26	23,552	570	0	13	24,136	(5,017)	(1,124)	(5,361)	(327)	(11)	0	(11,861)	(2,087)	10,188	(4,180)	0	(6,545)	(537)	20,697	306	20,467	
14 2026.27	24,201	587	0	13	24,802	(5,167)	(1,121)	(5,506)	(336)	(11)	0	(12,172)	(1,967)	10,683	(4,675)	0	(6,759)	(770)	20,467	301	19,998	
15 2027.28	24,868	605	0	13	25,486	(5,322)	(1,118)	(5,696)	(344)	(12)	0	(12,483)	(1,829)	11,164	(4,272)	0	(6,979)	1,758	19,998	313	22,069	
16 2028.29	25,553	623	0	13	26,189	(5,482)	(1,116)	(5,859)	(353)	(14)	0	(12,823)	(1,756)	11,609	(2,710)	0	(6,357)	542	22,069	335	22,946	
17 2029.30	26,257	642	0	13	26,912	(5,646)	(1,113)	(6,028)	(361)	(14)	0	(13,163)	(1,673)	12,076	(3,081)	0	(6,621)	374	22,946	347	23,667	
18 2030.31	26,979	661	0	13	27,653	(5,816)	(1,110)	(6,201)	(370)	(14)	0	(13,512)	(1,576)	12,566	(3,483)	0	(6,892)	191	23,667	356	24,215	
19 2031.32	27,722	681	0	13	28,416	(5,990)	(1,108)	(6,380)	(380)	(16)	0	(13,874)	(1,464)	13,078	(3,915)	0	(9,170)	(7)	24,215	363	24,571	
20 2032.33	28,484	701	0	13	29,199	(6,170)	(1,105)	(6,563)	(389)	(16)	0	(14,244)	(1,336)	13,619	(4,363)	0	(9,455)	(1,900)	24,571	354	23,025	
21 2033.34	29,268	722	0	13	30,003	(6,355)	(1,102)	(6,752)	(399)	(17)	0	(14,626)	(1,135)	14,242	(4,735)	0	(9,184)	(1,677)	23,025	333	21,681	
22 2034.35	30,073	744	0	13	30,830	(6,546)	(1,100)	(6,946)	(409)	(18)	0	(15,019)	(910)	14,901	(5,111)	0	(9,669)	(1,982)	21,681	310	20,010	
23 2035.36	30,899	766	0	13	31,679	(6,742)	(1,097)	(7,146)	(419)	(18)	0	(15,423)	(660)	15,586	(5,437)	0	(9,763)	(2,304)	20,010	283	17,989	
24 2036.37	31,749	789	0	13	32,551	(6,944)	(1,094)	(7,352)	(430)	(20)	0	(15,839)	(387)	16,325	(5,911)	0	(10,064)	(2,651)	17,989	250	15,588	
25 2037.38	32,621	813	0	13	33,447	(7,153)	(1,091)	(7,563)	(440)	(21)	0	(16,268)	(85)	17,096	(6,137)	0	(10,374)	6,498	15,588	283	22,368	
26 2038.39	33,517	838	0	13	34,368	(7,367)	(1,089)	(7,781)	(451)	(22)	0	(16,710)	(77)	17,581	(225)	0	(11,629)	5,931	22,368	380	28,680	
27 2039.40	34,438	863	0	13	35,313	(7,588)	(1,086)	(8,004)	(463)	(23)	0	(17,164)	(78)	18,071	(20)	0	(11,982)	6,068	28,680	476	35,223	
28 2040.41	35,384	889	0	13	36,285	(7,816)	(1,083)	(8,234)	(474)	(23)	0	(17,631)	(80)	18,574	(21)	0	(12,343)	6,209	35,223	575	42,007	
29 2041.42	36,354	915	0	13	37,283	(8,051)	(1,081)	(8,471)	(486)	(24)	0	(18,113)	(81)	19,089	(23)	0	(12,715)	6,351	42,007	678	49,035	
30 2042.43	37,352	943	0	13	38,307	(8,292)	(1,078)	(8,715)	(498)	(25)	0	(18,608)	(82)	19,617	(25)	0	(13,097)	6,495	49,035	784	56,314	

## Agenda Item: 12

**Housing Review Board**

**5 September 2013**

**EC**



### **Draft of the Annual Report to tenants 2012/13**

#### **Summary**

The Housing Review Board is asked to comment on and approve the attached draft of the Annual Report to tenants 2012/13. The draft is in word text format only and will be graphically designed once the wording has been finalised.

This report outlines the background and content of the report and highlights key changes from last year's report. The report has been drafted by the Housing Projects Officer with input from housing staff and tenants.

The draft may still require some changes following consultation with the East Devon Readers Panel, the Tenant Reading Panel, the Tenant Representative Group and the Housing Review Board. There is also a small amount of information still outstanding from the HouseMark benchmarking report, which is still awaited.

#### **Recommendation**

- 1 That the Housing Review Board notes and comments on the current draft of the Annual Report to tenants 2013.
- 2 That any suggested changes are incorporated into the report before it is published on the website in October and sent out to tenants in December.

#### **a) Reasons for Recommendation**

To meet with good practise and provide information to tenants and other service users.

#### **b) Alternative Options**

Not to produce an Annual Report.

#### **c) Risk Considerations**

No significant risks have been identified.

#### **d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations**

There are printing and postage costs connected to the Annual Report but these are kept to a minimum by printing the report in black and white (except for colour covers) and posting out the report with the December Housing Matters magazine.

## e) Date for Review of Decision

The report is produced annually in October.

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### 1 Background

- 1.1 This is our fourth Annual Report and last year's report can be viewed at [http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/annual\\_report\\_2012.pdf](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/annual_report_2012.pdf)
- 1.2 In 2010 the Tenant Services Authority (our then regulator) required Local Authorities with housing stock to produce an annual report to tenants, similar to those already produced by housing associations. Our first Annual Report was published in October 2010 and although there is no longer a specific requirement to do so we have produced a similar report each year since then.
- 1.3 Following feedback from our tenants we amended the format of the Annual Report in 2011. We received very positive comments on these changes and have continued to use a similar format for last year's and this year's report.
- 1.4 As in previous years we have drafted the report in consultation with tenants and are particularly grateful to those tenants who have put in considerable time to read and comment on the draft.

### 2 Content of the report

- 2.1 The report covers the financial year April 2012 to March 2013. In some cases it also gives details of work carried out since then. A draft is included as **annex 1**.
- 2.2 The report gives a wide range of information including how we let our properties, how we make sure they are well looked after, how we tackle antisocial behaviour, how tenants are involved with us, and how the service is funded. It sets out our local standards and what we are doing to meet these.
- 2.3 This year we have included two new sections. The first is at the start of the report and gives an overview of key performance information. The second is 'Renting our properties' which gives details of rent levels, preparations for welfare reform and the general work of the rental team.
- 2.4 We have also included information about flexible tenancies (introduced during the year); more information on the Home Safeguard alarm service; background to the new designated tenant complaints panel; and information about our community centres and guest bedrooms.
- 2.5 As requested by tenants we have tried to include more 'personal views' from tenants about the services they receive and the ways they have been involved.
- 2.6 We have tried to give a balanced picture of our performance, stating both where we are meeting or exceeding targets and where we are not meeting our adopted standards. In these cases we try to say what we will do to make improvements.

### 3 Layout of the report

- 3.1 Board members are requested to remember that this is a draft document in word text only. Once the content of the report has been finalised the draft will be passed to our Graphic Design colleague in the print room for the layout and graphic work. Our



Graphic Designer has worked with us on each Annual Report to date and the graphic design of the report has always received considerable praise.

- 3.2 It is intended that the final design will be similar in layout to last year's report, using as many graphic representations (pie or bar charts, tables etc) as possible and with 'pull quotes' at the sides to highlight key information.
- 3.3 Feedback from tenants supports the production of the report in black and white with colour just for the front, back and inside covers. This helps to keep the costs down.
- 3.4 The report is lengthy, but we have taken the decision that it is important to include as much key information as possible to give a true picture of our service. Through the layout and graphics we will endeavour to clearly pull out key information so that anyone who just wants to scan through the report can easily pick out the most important facts. For the first time key performance information has been set out in a separate section at the start of the report as well as within the report.

#### **4 Working with tenants and staff to draft the report**

- 4.1 The Housing Projects Officer has had the overall task of drafting and co-ordinating the Annual Report, in conjunction with other members of staff and tenants.
- 4.2 All housing managers have been asked to supply information for and review the sections relevant to their area of work.
- 4.3 Tenant members of the Customer Care Commitments Service Review Group and those tenants who helped with last year's report were invited to a meeting to review and comment on the Annual Report. Three tenants (Sue Saunders, Sue Dawson and Helen Moore) and the Chair of the Tenant Representation Group, Vivienne Ash, met with the Housing Projects Officer to go through the draft report and make recommendations for additions and changes. We are very grateful for their input and help with its preparation.
- 4.4 Tenant chairs of our Service Review Groups have been asked to comment on the sections that are particularly relevant to the areas covered by their review group.
- 4.5 The Engagement and Funding Officer has sent out the report to members of the East Devon Reading Panel, and the Tenant Participation Officer has sent out copies to the members of the tenant reading panel; all comments will be taken into account in the finalised draft.
- 4.6 It has been suggested that a summary report only is sent out to tenants with a full copy of the report being made available on the Council's website or on request. The Board's view on this approach is invited.

#### **5 Timescales**

- 5.1 There is no longer a requirement for the report to be available by 1 October. However, we will endeavour to have the report loaded on to the EDDC in early October.
- 5.2 This means that the draft needs to be finalised and with our graphics colleagues by late August. However, should the HRB request any changes to the draft these will be made to the document before it is loaded on to the website.

5.3 To save on postage a decision was taken last year to send the report to all tenants with the December copy of the Housing Matters magazine.

## **6 Recommendations**

6.1 That the Housing Review Board notes and comments on the current draft of the Annual Report to tenants 2013.

6.2 That any suggested changes are incorporated into the report before it is published on the website and sent out to tenants in December.

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### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications.

### **Financial Implications**

Financial information is included in the report.

The cost of producing the report can be met from existing budgets.

### **Consultation on Reports to the Cabinet**

Outlined in Section 4 of the report.

### **Background Papers**

Annual Report to Tenants 2011/12 [http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/annual\\_report\\_2012.pdf](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/annual_report_2012.pdf)

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Emma Charlton ext 2982  
Housing Projects Officer

Housing Review Board  
5 September 2013



# Annual Report 2013

## Contents

Writing this annual report (as for Annual Report 2012)

Contacting us (as for Annual Report 2012)

Key performance information

Introducing this report

Letting our properties

Renting our properties

Looking after our properties

Living on our estates

Supporting elderly and vulnerable tenants and working with the community

Involving tenants

Caring for our customers and dealing with complaints

Funding the service

## Key housing information

**(needs to present as some form of graphic)**

Our housing stock at 1 April 2013	4293
The average time to let our voids	23 (target 25)
% of rent collected in the year	99.72%
Total number of properties repossessed	6 for rent arrears and 1 for ASB
% of immediate and emergency repairs completed	
Within target time	86%
% of repairs completed right first time	93%
% of tenants satisfied with the overall outcome of a Estate management issue	67%
% of calls to Home Safeguard answered within One minute	97.7%
Number of formal complaints received in the year	24

### Key developments in the year

Entered a new funding regime giving us more money to spend on your homes  
Purchased 11 new council homes in Axminster  
Designated tenant complaints panel set up  
The ability for Home Safeguard to offer telecare products such as fall detectors and pill dispensers  
Axminster SWITCH have taken on an allotment  
The introduction of flexible tenancies for some new tenants  
Work in response to the welfare reform changes

**For all of these could have reference page number for more details**

## Introducing this report

### **Statement from: John Golding, Head of Housing and Pat Rous, Tenant Vice Chair of the Tenant Representative Group**

Welcome to our fourth Annual Report to Tenants. The report tells you about what we have done during the year 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 and some new developments that have come in this year.

The government's Localism Act 2011 changed the way housing is financed and regulated, and puts tenants at the very heart of decision making. Our Tenant and Council Partnership Agreement (see on P X) sets out the commitment that we have with tenants, leaseholders and staff. We are proud of the level of involvement that tenants have had with our services over the past years. This year has seen the setting up of a designated tenants complaints panel (more details on PX).

Fifty tenants attended the annual Residents Conference in June 2012 which focused on 'communities', forty-two tenants entered the 2012 Garden Competition, and SWITCH ran a successful writing competition for young people (see Section X).

Due to the way in which housing is now financed our budget for the year 2012-13 increased compared to previous years, giving us significantly more funding to deliver services of importance to tenants. It also allowed us to purchase eleven new council properties in Axminster. For further details about this please see Section 8 Housing finance and value for money.

We hope that you will find the report interesting and informative. We look forward to working with all our tenants in future to achieve our shared aims and to keep improving our housing services.

### ***Tenant and Council Partnership Statement***

*This is a commitment between the Council, tenants, leaseholders and staff. It sets out how the Council will help tenants to get involved in influencing and shaping decisions taken to deliver a housing service which meets the needs and priorities of tenants.*

*These are the key commitments that we will jointly deliver to enable tenants to be involved in the decision making processes related to Council housing.*

*Together we will:*

- *provide a housing service that actively works for continuous improvement in quality and value for money;*
- *give tenants a voice in the decisions which affect their homes;*
- *identify priorities based on tenants' requirements ;*
- *know what standards tenants want – 'local standards';*
- *give tenants an opportunity to challenge and ask questions about how the Housing Service is operated;*
- *support existing and new tenant groups and encourage engagement and participation;*
- *support tenants to carry out scrutiny of housing services;*
- *provide ongoing and joint training for tenants, staff and Councillors.*

*Signed by the Head of Housing, the Chair of Housing Review Board and the Vice Chair of Tenant Representative Group **replace this with signatures?***

## **Your responses to our 2012 Annual Report**

Thank you to everyone who responded to the questionnaire sent out with our last Annual Report. We were received 350 completed questionnaires. Of those who responded:

- Ninety seven percent found the report interesting and informative
- Ninety eight percent found it attractive and easy to read
- Six percent said that there was further information they would like to see included, and where possible we have tried to put this into this year's report.

The additional information requested included:

- Information on the energy efficiency of council dwellings (see PX)
- When residents can expect to have new doors/further details about upgrades to homes (see PX)
- Information on steps being taken to improve parking on estates (see PX)
- How residents can find out about council homes that become available if they don't have access to the internet (see PX)

## Local Standards

As a Local Authority with council housing we are required by our regulator, the Homes and Communities Agency, to agree with our tenants some local standards for the following areas:

- **Tenant involvement and empowerment** (customer service, choice and complaints; involvement and empowerment; and understanding the diverse needs of tenants)
- **Home** (quality of accommodation; and repairs and maintenance)
- **Tenancy** (allocating properties; and tenure)
- **Neighbourhood and community** (neighbourhood management; local area co-operation; and antisocial behaviour)

We have also set some local standards about rent and one regarding living in flats.

Over the past three years we have worked with you to draw up local standards for these areas, and have reported on them in our previous Annual Reports.

We give information about how we are meeting our local standards in the shaded boxes at the end of each section.

## Letting our properties

*Quote: Our aim is to match the right people with the right home*

### About our properties

Between April 2012 and March 2013 we sold 15 properties under 'Right to Buy' and purchased 11 new properties in Axminster. So as at 1 April 2013 we had 4293 properties of various different types and sizes.

(diagram similar to last year's annual report)

Property type	Quantity		
One bed	1189		
Two bed	1424		
Three bed	1598		
Four bed	66		
Five bed	5		
Bungalows	989	Sheltered	1169
Flats/bedsits	1358	General needs	3124
Houses	1946		

### Our waiting list

We allocate most of our properties through Devon Home Choice (DHC). The number of DHC applicants seeking accommodation in East Devon varies from week to week. However overall the number of people on our waiting list has decreased since last year. On 1 April 2013 we had 3059 applicants compared to 4005 on 1 April 2012. This has decreased further to 2884 on 26 June 2013. The reduction is mainly due to the fact that we have carried out a review of applicants in Band E (no recognised housing need). We are now carrying out a review of applicants in Band D.

Do pie chart to show breakdown according to housing band

### Percentage of applicants in each housing band as at 1 April 2013

Band A (emergency housing need)	0%
Band B (high housing need)	13%
Band C (medium housing need)	23%

Band D (low housing need)	36%
Band E (no housing need)	28%

If you would like to know more detail about the bandings or application process please view the Devon Home Choice website [www.devonhomechoice.com](http://www.devonhomechoice.com) or talk to our Housing Needs team on 01395 517469.

**We let fewer properties this year than last year** When we allocate our properties we try very hard to match the right people to the right home. We made a total of 301 lettings during 2012/13. Of these 177 were general purpose properties and 124 were sheltered properties.

#### **Comparison of the number of lettings and re-let times year on year**

Year	Number of lettings	Average time to relet an empty property
2009/10	343	28
2010/11	311	22
2011/12	303	24
2012/13	301	23

*Quote: More tenants moved out of East Devon (78) than those moving in from other areas (26)*

**We continue to meet our target time for re-letting properties** The target time for re-letting empty properties is 25 working days and it took us an average time of 23 working days to re-let properties this year.

*Quote: We continue to meet our target time for reletting of void properties*

#### **Managing our tenancies**

Most new tenants begin with an introductory tenancy. Using introductory tenancies allows us to identify tenants who may struggle to meet their tenancy conditions. We can then support the tenant and work with them so that any problems and issues are addressed before a further tenancy is put in place. If this is not possible or if the tenant does not engage with us and the problems

are not resolved, we can either extend the introductory tenancy for a further six months or take action to end the tenancy.

Between April 2012 and March 2013 we granted 166 introductory tenancies.

*Quote: Using introductory tenancies helps us to identify and support tenants with any problems they may have with maintaining a tenancy*

### **Flexible tenancies**

A new development for us this year is the introduction of flexible tenancies, brought in by the Localism Act 2011. Flexible tenancies are for a fixed time (usually 5 years) and are reviewed at the end of that period. We will be using these mainly for new tenants going into our general needs properties so allowing us to make sure that those in greatest housing need can be housed in appropriate accommodation. Existing secure tenants will not be affected. Further details are given in our Tenancy Policy available on our website.

Between 3 December 2012 and 31 March 2013 41 new tenants were told that they will have a flexible tenancy after their introductory tenancy. Of these 37 are in general needs properties and four in sheltered properties.

*Quote: We anticipate that the introduction of flexible tenancies will allow us to better manage our properties and ensure the right people are living in the right sort of accommodation.*

### **Who did we let properties to this year? (figures in brackets are for 2011/12)**

From the Devon Home Choice	66% (65%)
Homeless applicants	16% (13%)
Mutual Exchanges	18% (22%)

### **Transferring to another property or exchanging your property**

If you wish to transfer to another property you need to register on line with Devon Home Choice. If you are unable to access the internet yourself you could consider asking a friend or relative to help you. Alternatively you can access a copy of the newsletter by telephoning the Housing Needs team, calling into our Sidmouth office, or visiting your local library where the newsletters are displayed. Copies of the newsletter are also on display at



Exmouth Town Hall. For certain tenants in bands B and C we can arrange for a copy of the newsletter to be sent to them each week. Please call Housing Needs to discuss this.

To help people who want to exchange their home with another council or housing association tenant, we subscribe to 'Home Swapper'. This service allows tenants to look for exchange properties in the area they would like to move to and that will suit their requirements. EDDC council tenants can register on [www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk).

**We continue to make improvements to our downsizing scheme to help release more family housing** Our tenant profiling information shows that a large number of three and four bedroom properties are under-occupied. To tackle this we have a 'downsizing' scheme to help tenants move to a smaller home. We make a cash payment depending on the number of bedrooms by which someone downsizes (see the table below). Also we can now offer help with moving such as arranging phone connection, carpet fitting and other support. Please telephone our Housing Needs team on 01395 517469 for further details or ask for one of our 'downsizing' leaflets.

During 2012/13 twenty four tenants took advantage of this scheme, compared to twenty one in 2011/12 and eighteen in 2010/11. This released 15 three-bedroom properties, and 9 two-bedroom properties.

**Insert table from P7 of last year's Annual Report**

*Quote: We've improved our downsizing scheme and can now help you with moving arrangements*

### **A personal view**

#### **Mrs Hodge, Exmouth**

'We were finding our large three bedroom family home too much for us and used the downsizing scheme to help us move to a two bedroom bungalow. We did have to wait nearly two years for a suitable property owing to the fact that I really wanted a two bedroom home, but we are delighted with position of our new home which looks out over the estuary. The bungalow was refurbished and had a new kitchen and bathroom fitted before we moved in

and now looks lovely. The money we received under the downsizing scheme helped us with new carpets and curtains. Despite the wait for a smaller property we are very happy with the scheme and would recommend others to use it – just be patient and it will happen. Our thanks go to all the Housing Needs team for the efforts they made on our behalf.’

### **Letting our new properties at Morton Way, Axminster**

During the year we purchased eleven new properties at Morton Way, Axminster, from the developer Betterment Homes. The houses are all two bedroom with gardens and parking. They were let to families with a local connection to the area. Six went to overcrowded households, two went to families threatened by homelessness, one went to a family with high health needs, one went to a family whose existing property needed considerable repair and one went to a family downsizing from a larger property.

How we are meeting our current local standards	
Standard	How we are meeting the standard
We will aim to register your fully-completed Devon Home Choice application form within ten working days of receipt	During the year we processed a total of 1418 new applications, all within ten working days of receipt.
We will review housing applications on Devon Home Choice for bands A, B, C and D every two years	During the year we completed a review of Band E applications and are now reviewing Band D applications. During 2013/14 we will carry out a review of all Band B and C applications
We will let our properties within twenty-five working days to ensure we maximise our rental income	It took us an average of 23 days to re-let our empty properties this year.
We will offer an accompanied viewing to all new tenants when we let an empty property	Every successful applicant is offered the opportunity to go with the Tenancy Sustainment Officer to view the property. Most tenants take up this offer.
When possible, you will be given the opportunity to take on responsibility for fixtures and fittings left by the previous tenant	Where there are items left in a reasonable condition, such as carpets, curtains or garden sheds, we leave them in the property if the new tenant wishes to have them.

## Renting our properties

### Collecting the rent

Keeping your rents affordable is one of our priorities. The average weekly rent levels (excluding any service charges) for 2013/14, compared to 2011/12 and 2012/13, are set out below.

<b>Property type</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
Bedrooms 1	£60.76	£65.23	£68.06
2	£66.64	£71.71	£74.94
3	£71.79	£77.88	£81.99
4	£75.10	£81.56	£85.67
5	£78.62	£85.35	£93.90
6	£95.20	£103.01	£105.76

We are also the landlord for about 750 garages. The weekly rent for these is £11.33. (Anyone who is not a council tenant and rents one of our garages will also have to pay Value Added Tax). If you wish to apply to rent a garage please contact our Housing Needs team on 01395 517469.

*Quote: We aim to keep your rents affordable, and have achieved excellent rent collection rates this year*

During the year, rental income collection performance was again at an all time high of 99.72% (an improvement of 0.7% on the previous year).

### Information below to be put into a chart

Rent collection figures for last 3 years

2010/11 = 99.09%,

2011/12 = 99.65%,

2012/13 = 99.72%.

For tenants that allow rent arrears to build up we will take debt recovery action and for the 2012/2013 rent year, six properties were repossessed due to arrears of rent. This is less than for the last two years.

Repossessions due to rent arrears:

2012/13	6
2011/12	10
2010/11	11

### **Welfare reform preparation**

In early December 2012 our Housing Benefits team identified 305 tenants who were receiving housing benefit and also under occupying their home, which meant that they would lose some of their housing benefit when the changes came in in April 2013.

The Rents team contacted all of these tenants by phoning, writing or visiting them to discuss the options they could take. The majority were pleased to be made aware of and prepared for the impact of the housing benefit restriction.

Of these 305 tenants:

- 33% indicated that they would stay in the property and pay the charge
- 29% said that they wished to apply for Discretionary Housing Payment (this is a short term payment for which only some tenants qualify for)
- 13% wanted to move to a smaller home (downsize)
- 10% were exempt mainly due to living in supported accommodation and being actively supported
- 10% would not engage with us
- 3% wanted to apply to have a bedroom reclassified (if the floor area is less than 50 sq ft)

(James – could do this as a diagram)

### **Rental advice at the sign up interviews**

We carry out tenancy sign up interviews with our Housing Needs team at which tenants are asked to pay a week's rent in advance and they can choose

the frequency and method of the payment of their rent. These interviews are for all new tenants and are conducted some 2 -3 weeks before the tenancy commences. This new procedure has helped to improve rent collection performance and maximise rental income.

**General work of the rental team**

The main activity of the team is rent account management. This involves giving our tenants help and assistance to pay and manage their rent accounts. All of our tenancy agreements state that rent must be paid in advance. We aim to identify early on in the tenancy any tenant who is having difficulty paying their rent. We phone, write to or visit these tenant to discuss flexible payment arrangements. In addition to this we have a floating support agency that provides free and independent financial support and advice. With the tenant’s agreement a support worker from the agency will work with them and start to help them resolve their financial difficulties.

With all our letters we also send details of other free and independent debt advice agencies including the Citizens Advice Bureau, plus details of housing benefit surgeries that are held around the area.

**A personal view**

A tenant from the rural area of Honiton received financial support and advice from this agency. She thanked us for providing this service and commented that “her support worker has been great”. She has now resolved all her financial issues.

<b>How we are meeting our current local standards</b>	
<b>Standard</b>	<b>How we are meeting the standard</b>
We will publish each year what we have spent your rent on in the annual report to tenants	See Section X Housing finance and value for money
We will let you know how much the rent and other charges of running the home will be	This is explained to tenants at the sign up interview and included in the offer letter. There is a legal requirement for us to let you know of any changes.

<p>We will provide you with a number of ways to pay your rent</p>	<p>We prefer tenants to pay by direct debit but several other methods are available. These are set out in the Tenant Handbook.</p>
<p>We will take swift action against tenants who do not pay their rent</p>	<p>We have an excellent rent collection performance but we do take action against tenants who do not pay their rent and this year repossessed 6 properties due to rent arrears.</p>
<p>We will provide you with a rent account statement every six months.</p>	<p>We will produce and send to all our tenants a detailed statement showing for each week the rent due and the rent paid plus any entitlement to Housing Benefit. This will give you the opportunity to check that we have received all the payments you have made and to identify and remedy any problems.</p>
<p>To help prevent rent arrears we will provide tenants with information on where to obtain debt advice and financial support.</p>	<p>When tenants fall behind with their rent payments, we will send with our letters, information and advice regarding Citizen's Advice Bureau contact details, details of Housing Benefit surgeries and details of where they can obtain debt advice and financial support from free and independent agencies.</p>
<p>We will contact tenants prior to Court Hearings to discuss options and possible outcomes.</p>	<p>Where tenants have not responded to receiving a Court summons, we will make every effort to contact them prior to the Court Hearing.</p>

## Looking after our properties

### Repairing and maintaining your homes

We have adopted a simple process for repairs 'do the right repair at the right time, get it right first time, and stay fixed'. If we and our contractors achieve this, we will have provided tenants with the repairs service they have asked for.

This year we changed the timescales for undertaking responsive repairs (those which are not planned ahead).

	<b>Revised repairs response times</b>	<b>Previous repairs response times</b>
Immediate repairs	4 hours	one day
Emergency repairs	24 hours	three days
Urgent repairs	5 days	seven days
Priority repairs	20 days	one – three weeks
Non urgent repairs	30 days	three-six weeks
Gas servicing	24 hours	

During the year we carried out almost 14,000 responsive repairs most of which were completed within the timescales set out above.

	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>
Immediate and emergency repairs	91%	86%
Urgent repairs	90%	90%
Priority and non priority repairs	92%	91%

We did not perform quite as well as for the previous year, which may be due partly to the new contractor, EmmDee Building Services Ltd (MD), needing time to settle in. In July 2012 MD became the day to day repairs contractor for the west side of the district. Skinners Ltd continue to do the work on the east side.

*Quote: We have not met our timescales for repairs as well this year as last year and will work with our contractors to improve this.*

## Meeting our targets and tenant satisfaction

The STAR survey (Survey of Tenants and Residents) showed that overall tenant satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service is high. However there is a lower level of satisfaction when it comes to repairs being completed ‘right first time’. Together with the Repairs Service Review Group and our contractors we are monitoring the situation. We record how many repair orders we have to ‘chase up’ (when the contractor does not do the repair within the required time) or ‘recall’ (when the repair has been done but the work is not satisfactory and the contractor has to go back). The table below gives further details.

(please note that MD did not start working for us until the second quarter of the year)

	Skinners		MD		Robert Heath	
Total number of orders	6675		5086		2093	
	Chasers	Recalls	Chasers	Recalls	Chasers	Recalls
1 <sup>st</sup> quarter	0	70	-	-	0	29
2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter	6	63	22	61	0	20
3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter	7	60	54	134	0	44
4 <sup>th</sup> quarter	6	82	112	151	0	52
Total	19	275	188	346	0	145
Total number of recalls and chasers as a % of total orders	4%		7%		7%	

For all three contractors	Number
Total number of orders placed	13854
Total number of chasers	207
Total number of recalls	766
Total number of recalls and chasers as % of overall total	7%



We will continue to monitor these figures and aim to be able to report an improvement to you in next year's Annual Report.

### **Managing our void properties**

Each year we carry out a significant amount of work to bring empty, or void, properties up to standard. We are very grateful to all tenants who look after their properties and leave them in a good state of repair at the end of their tenancy.

Between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013 we had 249 void properties and it cost us approximately £1.7 million to prepare these for new tenants. This includes fitting new kitchens, bathrooms and upgrading central heating where necessary. This is a cost effective process and means that improvements can be done to the properties when empty so minimising disruption to the tenants in the future.

The following pie chart shows the reasons for the properties becoming vacant:

Figures for 2012/13

Deceased	82
Evicted	4
Moved to care home	35
Moved to private sector	62
Transferred	66

*Quote: This year it cost us about £1.7 million to prepare 249 void properties for new tenants*

### **Major repairs and improvements**

This year the Housing Review Board allocated £3.7 million for major repairs and improvements, nearly £1.5 million more than last year.

For the year we spent almost £2.5 million of this budget as shown below. We planned to spend more on replacing boilers, kitchens and doors during the year but unfortunately we did not achieve this, mainly due to staff resources.

## Proportion of major repair and improvement budget spent on each item upgraded

(figures to be presented in similar way to last year's report P9)

Doors	£285,000
Boiler and gas appliance replacement	£449,000
Kitchen & bathrooms	£1,052,000
Roofing	£337,000
Rewiring	£389,000 (figure for last year was £453,000)

We also spent £119,000 on external painting.

Major items are usually replaced using 'life cycle' periods. We would expect to replace boilers after about 15 years, kitchens after about 20 years, and bathrooms and external doors after about 30 years.

If your property is due to have any major work carried out on it during the year we will write to you in the spring to tell you what we plan to do. You can see our five year programme on our website at [www.eastdevon.gov.uk/5yearprogramme\(dec2012\)](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/5yearprogramme(dec2012)) This will show you the street and the number of properties in the street where we plan to undertake work. It will also tell you the type of work and the year in which it will take place. Unfortunately we are not permitted to publish individual addresses on the website. If you are unable to access this, or would like any further information, please ring us to check if we plan any work on your property in the next five years.

### Improving the energy efficiency of our properties

We make sure that where possible our properties are properly insulated with roof and cavity wall insulation. In the past we have fitted our cornish unit properties with external cladding to improve their thermal efficiency. Where we have built our own properties we have made sure that they are both thermally and energy efficient. For some properties not on gas we have no alternative but to fit night storage heating systems.

We are trialling air source heat pumps in a few properties and by monitoring these systems we can see that they make a significant difference to the heating performance and in the reduction of fuel bills.

To date we have not progressed with extensive installation of solar panels, air source heat pumps and other alternative energy efficiency measures in our properties. We are putting together a programme for upgrading rural properties that have no gas supply, are older or have solid fuel, oil or liquid gas heating systems first. We hope to start upgrading these properties in the near future and are working with specialists who have access to 'match funding' so reducing the costs to the Council. We will look for the best solution according to the area and type of property. In some places this may be air source heat pumps alone while in others it may be a combination such as air source heat pumps with solar panels and external cladding.

We will report further on this exciting development in the next Annual Report.

### **Improvement voucher scheme**

If you have recently made, or are thinking about making, improvements to your home you may be able to get some financial assistance. We have an improvement voucher scheme and depending on the work you have done you may be entitled to up to £1500 towards the costs. Please contact our Repairs section for further information on 01395 517458.

During 2012/13 we gave 43 tenants money under this scheme and we spent a total of £23,700.

### **Garages**

We have over 750 garages of which about 120 were vacant at the start of 2012 causing a loss of rental income of about £70,000 per annum. At the request of the Housing Review Board we have been reviewing all our garage sites over the last year with a view to seeing which were generally in good condition and well used and which were under used. We have taken the decision to sell off some garage sites and develop a few others for housing.

We will be looking to sell the garages at Lashbrook, Talaton; Eyewell Green, Seaton; Combe Orchard, Axmouth; Higher Doatshayne, Musbury; Churchill Road, Exmouth; Moorhaven, Budleigh Salterton; and Farway, Colyton.

The garage sites at Prestor, Axminster, Elizabeth Way, Seaton, and George Street, Honiton will be investigated to see if they are suitable for housing development in the future.

<b>How we are meeting our current local standards</b>	
<b>Standard</b>	<b>How we are meeting the standard</b>
We will produce a rolling five-year plan to identify improvement works to our properties, prioritising areas highlighted by the stock condition survey and feedback from the local standards consultation.	Each year we refresh the five-year programme and the revised programme is published on our website at <a href="http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/5yearprogramme(dec2012).pdf">http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/5yearprogramme(dec2012).pdf</a> You can see if properties in your street are due for any programmed works and the year in which this should be done. Alternatively you can ring the Repairs team to find out if any work is planned for your property in the next five years.
We will ensure all our contractors treat you with respect and courtesy. We will monitor the standard of workmanship and aim for a 'right first time' service.	We hold monthly meetings with our contractors Skinners and MD. We monitor the customer satisfaction forms you send back to us and discuss any issues of concern with the contractors. If a job is not completed satisfactorily we ask the contractors to return to complete the work. The Repairs Service Review Group meets regularly and the contractors are invited to attend every other meeting. The Repairs SRG is now monitoring the number of recalls and chasers that have to be made (see above)
We will introduce a question to ask when you report a repair to establish if there is a repeat repair issue occurring.	Tenants nearly always tell us if their call is about work already requested. Also the repairs officers always check to see if a similar request has been made within the last six months. If this is the case it will be marked as a 'recall' and will appear in the information monitored by the Repairs SRG.

## **A Personal View**

### **Sue Dawson, member of the Repairs and Maintenance Service Review Group**

I've been an EDDC tenant for 16 years, and involved with tenant participation for 5 years. I joined the Repairs and Maintenance Service Review Group 2 years ago and am now vice chairperson.

The group has both tenant and Council Officers as members with representatives from the day to day contractors, suppliers and other members of Council staff attending as required. We meet every 2 months to discuss issues about the repairs and maintenance service.

This year the group began to monitor 'recalls' (when a contractor has to return to a property more than once for the same job), considered the 5 year programmed works, looked at and agreed to the replacement of wooden fascia boards with UPVC to save on painting costs. This is just a sample of the things the group gets involved with.

During 2012 the Council put out to tender the day to day contract and I along with another member of the group was invited to be on the interview panel for this important contract. We found the process very interesting.

## Living on our estates

### Looking after the estates

We are proud of our estates and want to improve the environment for our tenants.

We have four Estate Management officers who spend time most days on the estates where they pick up issues about the area such as untidy gardens and rubbish.

During the year we carried out estate inspections in eight different areas of the district - Musbury, Shute, Wilmington, Cotleigh, Offwell, Upton Pyne, Brampford Speke and Beer. We took the opportunity to talk to residents and address any issues raised or that we identified during the inspection. We found some unpleasant issues that have had to be addressed such as untidy gardens, rubbish and minor graffiti but to balance these we also found a lot of really nice well cared for gardens and estates.

*Quote: We want to make your neighbourhood a great place to live*

We ask our tenants to complete a customer satisfaction survey for all our estate management issues. From this we can see that overall satisfaction with the way a complaint was dealt with has decreased this year. We are taking steps to address this. The Tenant and Communities Manager speaks to tenants who are not satisfied how the case was handled to find out the reason for this. Usually this is not due to the way in which we handled the case but more to the fact that the tenant was not satisfied with the final result and this is often something outside of our control.

### Living in flats

One of our local standards commits us to improving the living environment for tenants in blocks of flats. We carried out a survey of all tenants and leaseholders living in flats with communal halls, stairs and landings. The results showed that we need to improve our communal cleaning and we are currently working with Streetscene and the Estate Management Service Review Group to agree what needs to be done.

Throughout the year we have been carrying out fire risk assessments on our blocks of flats and community centres. Altogether we own 211 blocks of flats and 14 community centres. The 'blocks' of flats range from groups of four flats converted from two semi-detached houses to purpose built blocks of up to 28 flats per block.

Each block and community centre has been assessed to identify the fire precaution measures currently in place and recommend any further changes or improvements to fire safety. These may include upgrading or providing 'emergency' lighting; providing up to date fire action signs; providing clear signage of exits and means of escape; ensuring doors and door closures are fit for purpose.

When we carry out our initial visit we find that many blocks of flats are self contained with their own separate entrances and private internal stairways (98 to date). These blocks of flats do not require a fire risk assessment as this is unnecessary under current fire safety legislation. Of the remaining 127 we have now carried out assessments on 112, leaving 15 still to be done (figures up to June 2013)

We also make sure that tenants do not store items such as rugs, cycles, or furniture in the communal areas. Another area of concern is the storage of mobility scooters and we are undertaking some further work to decide the best way to approach this issue.

We have taken the decision to remove fire extinguishers from communal areas. It is better to evacuate the building than to try to tackle a fire, however small. Fire extinguishers should only be used by people trained to do so.

We are also working to improve the grounds maintenance on our estates. The Housing Review Board has set up a Task and Finish Forum (TAFF) to look at this and make recommendations before the end of the current financial year.

### **Car parking on our estates**

Most residential areas in East Devon have seen a significant increase in the use of cars since the housing was built, causing car parking problems. Most of the roads are public highways and the responsibility of Devon County Council.

Where possible we do small car parking improvements using funds from the Housing Revenue Account (tenants rent) that will primarily benefit tenants. Although all residents in that area will usually benefit from these improvements we will not undertake work where most of the people who would benefit as not council tenants, as this is not a good use of the HRA.

Last year we undertook some improvements to car parking areas at Churchill Court, Lymptone; Albion Court, Exmouth; Orchard Close, Talaton; and Arcot Park, Sidmouth. We are progressing further car parking improvements at Arcot Park in the 2013/14 financial year.

Other car parking schemes such as Brookfield Road, East Budleigh and Mead View, Honiton have been considered, but we have decided not to progress any work either because tenants have stated they are happy to leave the situation as it is and continue to monitor the problem, or because costs are too high and the benefit to tenants would be minimal.

Car parking improvements at Millwey Rise, Axminster; St Andrews Orchard, Colyton; and St Gregory's Court, Seaton are progressing. Tenants have been consulted and proposals are being progressed with the Planning Department and work will be done in 2013/14.

#### **Update on car park improvements**

Location	Current situation
Churchill Court, Lymptone Albion Court, Exmouth Orchard Close, Talaton	Improvement work undertaken last year
Arcot Park, Sidmouth	Improvement work undertaken last year, and further work to be done in 2013/14
Brookfield Road, East Budleigh Mead View, Honiton	Work will not be progressed as either tenants are happy to monitor the situation or costs are too high for the potential benefits.
Millwey Rise, Axminster St Andrews Orchard, Colyton St Gregory's Court, Seaton	Tenants have been consulted and work is progressing with the Planning Department – to be done in 2013/14



## **Tackling antisocial behaviour**

'Antisocial behaviour' is anything that causes fear, harm alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household. This means 'behaviour which impacts negatively on a resident's or visitor's quality of life in and around their home'.

Our tenants should act in a reasonable manner at all times and have respect for their property, their surroundings and their neighbours. Tenants are also responsible for the actions of their family, others who live with them, their visitors and the behaviour or noise of their pets.

Examples of antisocial behaviour can include:

- abandoned vehicles
- rubbish
- vandalism
- graffiti
- noisy neighbours, late night parties or
- loud music
- drug dealing or drug related behaviour
- noise from and behaviour of pets.

During the year we dealt with 205 reports of antisocial behaviour. Of these 105 were about noise, 33 about pets and animal nuisance and 25 about litter and fly tipping. Notices of Seeking Possession were served in six cases and one tenant was evicted because of antisocial behaviour issues. During the year we referred three cases to Devon Mediation Service, two of these were successfully resolved and one is ongoing.

**Do bit above as a graphic**

## **Customer satisfaction with our service**

We ask our tenants to complete a customer satisfaction survey for all our estate management issues. From this we can see that overall satisfaction with the way a complaint was dealt with has decreased this year. We are taking steps to address this. The Tenant and Communities Manager speaks to tenants who are not satisfied how the case was handled to find out the reason for this. Usually this is not due to the way in which we handled the case but more to

the fact that the tenant was not satisfied with the final result and this is often something outside of our control.

### Results from the Estate Management Customer Satisfaction survey

	2011/12 % giving a positive rating	2012/13 % giving a positive rating
Ease of reporting a complaint	86	91
Was the staff member helpful	93	94
Overall satisfaction with how complaint was dealt with	80	76
Overall satisfaction with outcome of the complaint	73	67

*Quote: We always try to work out a positive solution to an issue but unfortunately we cannot always resolve issues to the tenants complete satisfaction*

### Signing up to the Respect Charter

During the year we signed up to the new Respect Charter. This aims to improve antisocial behaviour services and has seven core commitments. We have carried out a review of each of these commitments. For each one we have looked at the key recommendations, what we are currently doing, and what we could consider doing in the future. Where appropriate we also highlight areas of good practice that we can learn from. By doing this we aim to improve the service we give to our tenants when dealing with matters of antisocial behaviour.

*Quote: We have signed up to the Respect Charter and will use this to improve our services regarding antisocial behaviour*

How we are meeting our current local standards	
<b>Estate management issues</b>	
Standard	How we are meeting the standard
As well as our current local estate walkabouts we will introduce regular in-depth estate inspections. In 2011	We did not hold any in depth estate inspections during the year. These

we will piloted this in Honiton and Axminster	were replaced with Estate Inspections which are now being carried out most months (see above).
We will work to improve the living environment for tenants who live in blocks of flats.	Fire risk assessments have identified areas for improvement. These are being addressed as they come to our attention (see above). We will also be making improvements to our communal cleaning during 2013/14
<b>Antisocial management issues</b>	
Standard	How we are meeting the standard
We will work with other local agencies to tackle antisocial behaviour issues. Incidents reported by EDDC tenants will be monitored by Housing officers who will feedback regularly to the person reporting the problem.	Reported antisocial behaviour is monitored by our Housing officers. The Estate Management team work with police, social services, youth groups at all times to tackle antisocial behaviour. We try to give regular feedback to the person making the complaint. However our latest customer feedback scores this quite low and therefore this is an area where improvements need to be made. Meetings have been held with the Estate Management officers to agree how this can be achieved.
We will undertake partnership working to resolve issues about parking, signposting, street lighting and dog fouling	We have worked with other teams within East Devon District Council (EDDC) and Devon County Council to resolve issues. This included the EDDC dog warden attending community events in Axminster.

## **A personal view**

### **Sue Saunders, member of the Estate Management Service Review Group**

I've been an involved tenant for almost 10 years now. Membership of the group gives me the opportunity to be part of a team helping to deliver a service which complies with national guidelines and at the same time supports the views of tenants. The group is chaired by a tenant and has seven tenant and two staff members. It's a real challenge to be part of a group which covers so many aspects of the Housing Service dealing with the concerns of individual tenants. Last year the group dealt with a range of issues including changes to the tenancy policy; signing up to the Respect Charter; reviewing estate management procedures; social housing fraud; communal cleaning and grounds maintenance. We are always looking at ways to improve the service that tenants receive, and there's always something interesting on the agenda.

## **Supporting elderly and vulnerable tenants and working with the community**

*Quote: At East Devon we aim to 'deliver outstanding support services to residents of East Devon regardless of housing tenure'.*

### **Support for tenants living in our sheltered housing**

Housing support is delivered through a 'cluster' model with 'teams' of Mobile Support Officers (MSOs) working from district offices within our communities. They work closely together to deliver support and every three months they rotate between schemes. This way of working means that residents get to know the whole team involved in their support rather than being dependant on one individual officer.

**Map of locations of district offices as in tenant handbook – with the contact details**

**Broadclyst to be linked to Exmouth**

Our support service continues to be based around the individual needs of each resident. The correct level of support is offered through the completion of a 'single assessment process'. This focuses on:

- Improving the physical health and wellbeing of the resident
- Improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of the resident
- Helping the resident to maintain and develop activities of daily living
- Motivating and helping the resident to maintain self care and personal hygiene
- Improving the social wellbeing of the resident
- Helping the resident to manage their medication
- Helping the resident to stay safe and reduce and risks

*Quote: East Devon's support services are committed to ensuring our sheltered housing residents live as independently as possible.*

### **Taking the support service out into the community**

We are committed to making sure that housing support services go to those who need them regardless of the type of housing they live in. In association

with Supporting People (a government programme helping people live independently) we have just started to expand our services to tenants living in our general purpose housing and at a later date will look to also provide support to residents in private sector housing. If you would like to know more about what we can offer please contact the Senior Support Officer on 01395 512537.

### **Tackling social isolation**

We continue to run a programme of weekly training for residents on how to access the internet and how this can help them in many aspects of their day to day life. Throughout the year we hold sessions at the Churchill Court Community Centre, Lymington. We aim to run two sessions in the morning for 'beginners' and two in the afternoon for 'intermediates'.

Case studies have shown just how beneficial these sessions have been to some of our residents. One gentleman, who before coming to the sessions had little contact with friends or family, was helped to get in touch with previous war time colleagues through the social network site 'Friends Re-united' and now meets an old friend once a month for coffee when they talk about memories from the past.

Another resident who due to her deafness found communicating on the phone with her family who live abroad very difficult was keen to learn how to email them. Now instead of the previous welfare checks done over the phone (which were very difficult both for her and for the Mobile Support Officers) she emails the team daily emails so they know she is OK.

### ***A personal view***

#### ***Mary Eyke, Exmouth***

*When I bought my laptop I did not have a clue how to use it but the Mobile Support Officers of EDDC persuaded me to go to computer lessons weekly where they helped me so much, as did one of the volunteers. I am very hard of hearing and they needed a lot of patience with me – but it worked!!*

*I used to feel rather isolated from people but now I am in touch with so many, from my relations in Australia and Trinidad to friends and relations in five*

counties in England. I am nearly 88 now but hope to carry on for a long while yet.

We have installed broadband into about half of our community centres so that residents have a hub to go to where they can meet up and also use the internet to find out information and contact friends and family living further away.

We continue to run regular Xbox Kinect sessions which give residents the opportunity to join in some gentle exercise as well as have some fun. Between April 2012 and March 2013 we held six Xbox Kinect sessions in different community centres across the district, attended by 120 tenants.

This was so successful at Lymebourne Park in Sidmouth that residents raised funds to provide their own equipment for the community centre.

*“The new Xbox provides a great chance for people to come here, in the warm, have a lot of fun and not have to sit in their own flat looking at four walls. Now they can see their friends, have a cup of tea and some biscuits, give the games a go and have a good laugh.” (Yvonne White, Treasurer and Events Coordinator of Lymebourne Park Residents Association)*

In May 2012 we used the Xbox Kinect sessions to run a very successful ‘Going for Gold Xbox challenge’ with an Olympic theme. Similar events have been held in the past on Silver Surfers Day but this year we pushed the boat out and ran activities for a whole week. Residents of sheltered housing competed against each other in a ten-pin bowling challenge on the Xbox Kinect and the four highest scorers from each heat went into the final, attended by over 30 tenants. The ‘gold medal’ was won by a resident from Seaton.

We also used the project to look at ways that we can interact with the wider community and have linked up with local schools in a variety of ways. We worked closely with Brixington Primary School, whereby the children held one to one computer training for some of our tenants at the school and also participated in some of our Xbox Kinect sessions.

### **Home Safeguard alarm service**

The Home Safeguard alarm service monitors the alarms with East Devon’s sheltered housing as well as installing and monitoring dispersed alarms in

other properties, both Council and private, across the district. All calls made on the alarms go through to the alarm centre at Lymebourne House in Sidmouth where they are answered by one of our trained operators.

We continue to grow and expand the service. We currently have 5500 connections covering:

- East Devon District Council’s sheltered housing
- Private individuals living throughout East Devon
- Monitoring of some Abbeyfield properties in East Devon
- Monitoring for the Teachers Association property in Paignton and Christchurch
- Monitoring of some of the alarm services for North Devon
- Lone worker connections for East Devon and Teignbridge

Our target times for installing new connections are 2 days for urgent and 5 days for non urgent cases, and our target times for repairs are 2 days for critical and 10 days for non critical repairs.

	2011/12	2012/13
Number of calls responded to	143,185	155,823
% answered within 60 seconds	97.7%	97.7%
Number of new customers per month	40	41
Number of repairs per month	28	30

For 2012/13 our charge to general needs or private sector customers is £3.59 per week.

We record all our calls for training and monitoring purposes and to help us improve the service we give to you. For the second year running we gained accreditation from the Telecare Services Authority (the industry body for telecare and telehealth).

The Tunstall PNC6 equipment also allows for monitoring of a range of other telecare products including fall detectors, pill dispensers, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and a number of other sensors.



*Quote: We have been working hard this year to grow our telecare services and we are pleased to now be offering telecare services to a number of customers.*

As well as dealing with all the calls made through our alarms the operators at Lymebourne House deal with all the 'out of hours' calls made to the Council as a whole. This could include enquiries about a lost dog, a tenant reporting a major leak, or a call from a member of the public about noise or antisocial behaviour.

### **Supporting activities for our younger tenants**

We run two SWITCH projects in Axminster and Exmouth; both projects are very successful with often more than 20 young people attending the clubs.

Exmouth SWITCH has now been running for three years and Axminster SWITCH celebrated its first birthday on Shrove Tuesday. To celebrate the young people carried out the same activity as they did at the first club meeting 12 months earlier - preparing, cooking and enjoying pancakes.

Axminster SWITCH has now started working with a local healthy eating and nutrition organisation Health and Local Food for Families (HALFF). In December HALFF gave up their time to the SWITCH Christmas party where they helped the older SWITCH club prepare, cook and serve food for the younger SWITCH club and themselves. HALFF regularly support SWITCH events in Axminster and over the next 12 months will be working with young people to support healthy eating.

Axminster SWITCH has just taken on an allotment on the Millwey estate and aims to get young people learning gardening and growing vegetables and salad items. These will then be cooked and eaten by the young people attending the SWITCH club.

In September Exmouth SWITCH (based in Littleham) starting working with a local author Haydn Middleton who ran a very successful writing competition "Friend or Foe". Two local children from the Littleham area were the successful winner and runner up. The Devon Cliffs Holiday Park very generously donated a spa treat for the girls, their family and friends.

Exmouth SWITCH is now building closer links with Devon Cliffs Holiday Park who are supporting SWITCH to provide exciting activities for young people and the local community.

You can follow us on facebook [James to put this in](#)

#### Quotes from young people attending SWITCH

*'SWITCH is a great place to be, you can socialise, and sing, make animations - also you can make awesome puppets. You can win some cool competitions and win nice prizes. There are even some great fun days like swimming at Sandy Bay. You can even help organise a great fete not forgetting about all the other amazing events.'* (Caitlyn)

*'I love SWITCH because I get to see my mates and we have done some amazing singing in Manor gardens and we get to do things together and we can do homework and just chill and I love the children that come. We all love Polly.'* (Tanyeta)

*'I come to see my mates, be with my friends and get out of the house. I've enjoyed singing and I like the food. I was in the Exmouth festival. I've been coming for over a year.'* (Georgia)

*'I come mostly because my boyfriend comes and my friends. Its fun and I like coming because of darts and spending time with people. I've been coming to SWITCH since March.'* (Lay Lee)

<b>How we are meeting our current local standards</b>	
<b>Standard</b>	<b>How we are meeting the standard</b>
We will engage young people in positive free time activities that help them create positive outcomes for their lives	SWITCH is still very successful both in Littleham and Axminster. Please see the section above for more details.

## Involving tenants

Include reference to facebook

We have recently updated our Resident Involvement Strategy which sets out the many different ways tenants can get involved with the housing service and the impact involvement has had over the last few years. It can be seen on our website [www.eastdevon.gov.uk/residentinvolvementstrategy2013](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/residentinvolvementstrategy2013) or for a copy please call Tenant Participation on 01395 517459.

Ways of getting involved now include two new and exciting groups; “the designated tenants complaint panel” (see Page X for further details about the work of this group) and the virtual housing development group. This group is made up of officers, councillors and a tenant and considers opportunities for new developments of affordable housing. During the next few months the group will be working with the Housing Enabling Officer to develop plans for a house of shared accommodation in the Exmouth area.

*Quote: We are always looking for new ways to involve tenants and this year has seen two new ‘involvement’ groups set up – the designated tenant complaints panel and the virtual housing development group.*

**The Tenant Representative Group** was set up in October 2011 to replace the Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel. The group, which meets every two months, is made up of representatives from each Service Review Group and has an independent chair person. It receives reports from all Service Review Groups, considers matters going to the Housing Review Board and any other housing related issues. **Viv Ash to add something**

**(include TRG logo at some point)**

**The Tenant Scrutiny Panel** was set up in 2011 and last year completed its first report on the use of our community centres. The report was presented to the Housing Review Board who accepted all the recommendations and as a result an officer was appointed to look at ways to improve the use, management and financial viability of the centres. This shows that officers and the Housing Review Board are committed to working with the Panel to improve services to tenants. The table below shows the location of our community centres and

guest bedrooms all of which are available for tenants to use. To book them please contact the relevant area office as listed below.

<b>Location of area office</b>	<b>Community Centre</b>	<b>Guest bedroom</b>
Lymebourne Park, Sidmouth 01395 519162	Lymebourne Park, Sidmouth	None
	Trumps Court, Sidmouth	Trumps Court, Sidmouth
	Yonder Close, Ottery St Mary	None
Palmer House, Exmouth 01395 260368	Palmer House, Exmouth	Palmer House, Exmouth
	Morgan Court, Exmouth	Morgan Court, Exmouth
	Albion Court, Exmouth	None
	Churchill Court, Lympstone	None
	Park Close, Woodbury	Park Close, Woodbury
Burnside, Ratcliff House, Exmouth 01395 227401	Burnside, Exmouth	Burnside, Exmouth
	Bidmead, Exmouth	None
	Clayton House, Exmouth	Clayton House X 2
Poplar Mount, Axminster 01297 34042	Millwey Community Centre, First Avenue, Axminster	None
Dunning Court, Honiton 01404 549521	Dunning Court, Honiton	None
Broadclyst 07814481045	Broad View, Broadclyst	Broad View, Broadclyst

The Scrutiny Panel has now just finished its second project which looked at how we manage our empty (void) properties. It presented a report to the Housing Review Board in September. Further details in next year's Annual Report.

**The Housing Review Board (HRB)** The HRB includes five tenant members. It met six times between April 2012 and March 2013. The HRB looks at all aspects of the landlord function of the Housing Service. Work during the year included considering the future of sheltered housing, work with troubled families, the results of the STAR survey (Survey of tenant and residents), the

Green Deal and Welfare Reform and bedroom tax. The Board approved a number of new policies and strategies including the Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy, the Resident Involvement policy, the Respect Agenda and Antisocial behaviour policy, and the Safeguarding vulnerable adults policy.

### Training for tenants

We are keen that our tenants have the resources they need to be fully involved and arrange free training courses throughout the year. During 2012/13 we ran a variety of training courses.

Subject	Date	Number of tenants attending	Training organisation
Age UK awareness	April 2012	6	Age UK
Scrutiny training	June, July and August 2012	5	Jenny Vernon
Loan shark awareness	July 2012	1	Illegal Money Lending team
Treasure Trial – help with accounts	July 2012	8	TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service)
Scrutiny training	November 2012	1	Trafford Hall
Understanding best practice in engagement	December 2012	4	South West Forum
Money Management	February 2013	2	Westcountry Housing Association
Making the most of your money and how to get advice	February 2013	2	Citizens Advice Bureau
Designated Complaints	March 2013	10	The Board Development Agency

### What tenants say about the training:

“I thoroughly enjoyed the training and found it useful”

“The venue was all on one level and as I am disabled it was easily accessible for me”

“Everything was said in easy terms and in plain English without the jargon”

“Thank you for arranging free transport for me to attend the training”

If you would like to know more about the training we offer please contact Tenant Participation.

<b>How we are meeting our current local standards</b>	
<b>Standard</b>	<b>How we are meeting the standard</b>
We will hold meetings at small local venues throughout the district and ensure that the right staff attend.	Our Support Services staff used our community centres and other local halls to consult on changes to the way they work. Many of our service review groups meet in local community centres and try to rotate these meetings across the district to make it easier for tenants to attend.
As well as meetings we will use a range of involvement methods which will be widely published. We will listen to what you tell us and make service improvements as a result.	We have a wide and varied menu of involvement which allows all customers to be involved at the level and in the way that best suits them.
We will work with the Tenant Representative Group (TRG) to monitor our services to make sure that they are being carried out to your satisfaction and to identify opportunities for improvement.	The TRG work closely with members of Service Review groups to monitor and question the services provided. The TRG receives reports from housing officers about service improvements and has the opportunity to question and comment on the reports before they are presented to the Housing Review Board.

## Caring for our customers and dealing with complaints

### What we are doing to improve our customer care

Although we had a low response rate to the questionnaire which went out with last year's annual report (7.9%) nearly everyone who responded was happy with the services we deliver, and felt their housing issue had been dealt with in a positive manner.

*Quote: We need to make sure that you are told the name of the member of staff dealing with your query and kept informed of progress with your issue.*

We try to give information to tenants in a clear, understandable way, free from jargon. We are pleased that tenants continue to give positive feedback to our Housing Matters magazine, the Annual Report and the tenant handbook.

**The STAR Survey (Survey of Tenants and Residents)** We are using the results of the STAR survey (carried out in 2012) to improve our service. We have drawn up an action plan to make sure that the issues raised are addressed. The table below gives you more detail on what we are doing.

Item raised by the STAR survey	Comment	What we are doing about it
Car parking	Respondents living in Sidmouth and Seaton are most likely to see car parking as a problem (74% and 72%)	We have a car parking improvement plan. We have completed the first year and are now consulting on the second year of improvements.
Rubbish and litter	51% of respondents in Exmouth and 50% in Sidmouth see this as a problem in their area	Estate Management organise estate walkabouts and litter picks and we promote a 'litter free environment' at all community events.
Noisy neighbours	Those respondents living in Seaton (38%) and Honiton (37%) consider there is a problem	New advice about dealing with noisy neighbours has gone into our Tenant Handbook (available on request). There is also advice on our website. We have also signed up to the new Respect Charter.

Dissatisfaction with the housing service	This is highest among our younger tenants	We are beginning to use Facebook as a way of communicating key issues to tenants. Most of our community development work is carried out in Exmouth where we have the highest number of residents under 35
Contacting staff and their helpfulness	Most people say it is easy to contact the right person but the number who feel staff have been helpful has declined since 2008	Details of who to contact appear in the Tenant Handbook, Service Directory, Housing Matters and on the website. Our Estate Management officers are spending more time out and about on the estates, attending coffee mornings and carrying out estate walkabouts
Improvements to the home and problems with mould and damp	These matters continue to be of concern to tenants	We update our 5 year improvement plan regularly and this is now available on our website (see Page X). We continue to give advice to tenants about dealing with damp and condensation (see the tenant handbook and our website). If this does not address the problem we will visit and carry out remedial work to help address the issue if appropriate.
Nothing is done about complaints	This is still a cause for dissatisfaction among our tenants	We continue to promote how people can make a formal complaint and have introduced the Designated Tenant Complaints Panel.

### Monitoring our response times

The section below will need to be updated with this year's figures (still awaited)



During June 85 people used our Housing Options service in Exmouth.

Wait time	Number
42	5 minutes or less
2	6-10 minutes
1	30 minutes
40	unrecorded

### **What we are doing about complaints**

Within the Housing Service we use the EDDC complaints system for dealing with formal complaints. During 2012/13 we received 24 formal complaints about the Housing Service, compared to 18 last year. These took an average of 10 days to investigate (at Stage One).

**To be put into pictorial form as last year:**

- 6 – staff and customer service
- 6 – property and contractor issues
- 7 – Allocations
- 1 – Antisocial behaviour
- 4 – Other

The Customer Care Commitments Service Review Group continues to meet quarterly to look at issues around customer service and complaints. In order to give tenants an opportunity to raise issues of concern the group sent out the 'Have your say' questionnaire in the spring 2012 Housing Matters. The response rate to this survey was low (only 148 responses), but of the replies 43% were compliments, 29 % complaints and 28% comments. The main issues of concern were about the door replacement programme, parking problems and the poor appearance of some of our estates. All the issues raised were investigated by the relevant housing team.

*Quote: We are learning lessons from the complaints we get and trying to make service improvements*

We continue to work with staff to make sure that they call tenants back and respond to queries within a reasonable time. We need to make sure that we

explain our policies and procedures clearly and be prepared to say ‘sorry’ where our service has fallen short of the standards we have set.

During the year one complaint to Home Safeguard has helped us to improve the service we give by using the tape recording of the conversation for training purposes.

### **Setting up a designated tenants complaints panel**

From 1 April 2013 the Localism Act 2011 put in place new arrangements for dealing with complaints by social tenants against their landlords. District councillors, Members of Parliament, and designated tenants panels can now play a more active role in resolving complaints at the local level.

The Tenant Representative Group approached the Housing Review Board to ask them to recognise a Designated Tenant Complaints Panel. The new panel has eight tenant members. Tenants can go to the panel if they feel that their complaint has not been sufficiently addressed through the corporate complaints process. The panel will also have a wider remit than just to act as a designated panel for formal complaints and will look at how it could be involved with complaints at an earlier stage.

More details about the role of the Designated Tenant Complaints Panel can be found in the spring 2013 edition of the Tenant Handbook.

<b>How we are meeting our current local standards</b>	
Standard	How we are meeting this standard
When you contact us we will answer you promptly, listen carefully, and treat you with respect.	Those of you who responded to the questionnaire with last year’s Annual Report (2012) told us that your housing issue was dealt with in a positive manner (95%), in a way you could understand (95%), and that you were treated fairly, without discrimination (95%). There is always a duty Estate Management Officer available to respond to telephone calls or visits to our offices. For accreditation purposes calls to Home Safeguard are sampled on a monthly basis

	and areas for improvement raised with staff.
When you contact us about issues which are not repairs related we will put you in touch with the right person to answer your query straight away. They will keep you informed of the progress of your case.	90% of those who responded to last year's questionnaire had been put through to the right member of staff to deal with their non-repairs related query but only 82% had been told the name of the officer. We need to continue to improve this. All staff should now tell you their name when answering a telephone query.
We will have an easily accessible complaints process for housing. Officers will be able to help you with this on request.	Only 68% of respondents knew how to make a complaint about the service they had received. The Customer Care Commitments SRG and the Designated Tenants Complaints Panel are working to make sure that tenants know how to make a complaint if necessary.
Repeat service requests (excluding repairs) will be logged as complaints by the receiving officer.	Managers are dealing with issues that have not been resolved satisfactorily first time and these are being logged as complaints.
Complaints will be monitored quarterly by the Customer Care Commitments SRG. Feedback will be given in the Annual Report to Tenants.	Please see 'what we are doing about complaints' above.

## **Funding the service**

In April 2012 we celebrated the new financial freedom for housing which gives us more flexibility to develop and grow. It is an exciting development and should lead, in time, to significant improvements in our services.

The changes have come about due to the way the Government treats Local Authorities with housing stock. Under new legislation we have bought ourselves out of the old subsidy system by taking on a loan of just over £84 million.

We will be investing more money in new kitchens, doors and heating systems as well as initiatives to provide affordable warmth and energy efficiency. We will also be funding more disabled adaptations, sheltered housing upgrades, car parking improvements and building or acquiring new council homes.

### **How much do we spend on your homes?**

This year we had an annual budget of just over £16.7 million. We spent £6.8 million on repairs and maintenance which was less than we had anticipated because we had built in contingency sums to the budgets which were not required. £3.3 million was spent on staff costs (including salaries and costs for transport, premises, support services, supplies and other services). This was less than we had expected due mainly to staff vacancies and lower insurance premiums. We also had to pay £2.6 million interest on our self-financing loans. The balance of about £4 million represents the Housing Revenue Account surplus achieved in the year 2012/13.

### **Our total income and expenditure**

Diagram as per P23 of last year's report with updated figures

Also express as piechart in one £ coin

We spent £889,000 to purchase 11 new council properties in Axminster (see Section X). Primarily the money for this purchase came from capital receipts (money received from the Right to buy income) and section 106 monies (money received by way of development within the district).

### **How we are achieving value for money and maximising our income**

We were pleased to be able to obtain very good rates of interest on our self financing loans (totalling £84 million) through the Public Works Loans Board. These were significantly lower than our original estimates which means we will have more to spend within the Housing Revenue Account than we anticipated for the year.

Our rental income was higher than budgeted due to the fact that tenants continue to keep up to date with rental payments. This produced our highest annual rental collection to date (see Section X).

We have achieved some savings by not filling certain vacancies immediately. Existing staff have taken on additional responsibilities and covered for vacancies in the short term.

We belong to Advantage Southwest Procurement Club which enables us to achieve best value for money in purchasing equipment and supplies for maintaining our houses. **Can we give figures as to savings?**

**Benchmarking** Each year we take part in a benchmarking exercise carried out for us by Housemark (an organisation which seeks to help the social housing sector to improve performance and achieve value for money). We provide Housemark with information about a wide range of our services and they use this to compare us ('benchmark') with social housing providers.

The primary purpose of benchmarking is as an internal performance management and self assessment tool. It helps us understand current levels of performance and costs so we can improve the quality and value for money of the services we deliver to you. Benchmarking also has other benefits. In particular it enables us to identify service areas where costs can be reduced with minimum impact on service delivery.

For 2012/13 we ranked – **waiting for up to date benchmarking report**

We will use all this information to continue to develop and improve our services to you.

**Our service plan** Each year we refresh and update our service plan.

In Housing we aim to secure - ***A decent home for all.***

We have adopted the following purposes for the services where we have undertaken Systems Thinking reviews:

- To match the right people with the right home (voids & allocations).
- Do the right repair at the right time, get it right first time, and stay fixed (responsive repairs).
- Do the right service/repair at the right time, and leave safe (gas servicing).
- To collect the right amount of rent at the right time (rent management).
- Deal with customer emergencies promptly (Home safeguard).
- Better housing, better health (private sector housing).

The current service plan, and the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, can both be viewed on [www.eastdevon.gov.uk](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk).

<b>How we are meeting our current local standards</b>	
Standard	How we are meeting the standard
We will ensure the Housing Review Board approves the annual Housing Revenue Account budget and monitors expenditure	The Housing Review Board considered this at their meeting on 20 June 2013
We will inform tenants of our value for money savings through our annual report and Housing Matters and set out future plans for savings	See 'how we are achieving value for money' above.

## Agenda Item: 13

**Housing Review Board**

**5 September 2013**

**DB**



## Car Parking Improvement Schemes

### Summary

The report provides an update to members on the implementation of the car parking improvement schemes approved by the Board in January 2012. Officers have been progressing implementation of appropriate schemes following consultation with tenants where necessary. A briefing note showing progress was presented to the Board in November 2012.

### Recommendation

Members are asked

1. To note the progress made by Officers implementing approved the car parking improvement schemes.
2. Consider the off road parking proposal at West Underleys, Beer.

#### a) Reasons for Recommendation

To provide the Board with an update on the implementation of agreed car parking improvements.

#### b) Alternative Options

None.

#### c) Risk Considerations

None identified.

#### d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

Any significant budgetary implications are included in the report

#### Positive Impact Overall

Affordable Homes.

Safe Environment.

Green Environment.

Excellent Customer Service.

Inspirational Council.

Providing same service at less cost.

## e) Date for Review of Decision

September 2014

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### 1 Background

- 1.1 The Housing Review Board set up a Car Parking Task and Finish Forum (TAFF) in 2011 to consider the car parking problems reported by tenants. The TAFF considered whether any action should be taken and what solutions should be implemented to resolve identified car parking problems on a number of our housing areas.
- 1.2 The minutes of the TAFF dated 25 November 2011 set out clearly the housing areas that have been considered; the TAFF's findings and the recommended action for approval by the Board. The Board approved the recommended actions at their meeting on 12 January 2012.
- 1.3 The Board was presented with an update report at their meeting on 8 November 2012.

### 2. Update on Implementation of the Car Parking Improvements

2.1 The following car parking improvements have been completed:

- Orchard Close, Talaton – Resurface 'lay-by' and designate for disabled parking.
- Churchill Court, Lypstone – provide additional off road parking for tenants.
- Albion Court, Exmouth – remove bushes and provide additional parking spaces.

2.2 The following car parking schemes have not been progressed:

- Dunning Court, Honiton – consultation with residents resulted in agreement not to progress any works to eliminate non resident parking. Although some landscaping works were undertaken to make parking easier for residents.
- Mead View, Honiton – tenants expressed their satisfaction with existing car parking arrangements even though it appears there are obvious car parking problems – no further action.
- Kendall House, Honiton - no identified car parking issue – no further action.
- Brookfield Road, East Budleigh – A number of feasible schemes were prepared and tenants were consulted. No consensus on the preferred scheme and complaints from tenants affected by the preferred scheme and how they would be affected were received. The preferred scheme was costly and would provide an additional 3 parking spaces only. Parking problems on the public highway would continue and it was considered that tenants (HRA) would not get value for money – no further action.



### **3.0 Schemes in Progress**

- 3.1 Millwey Rise, Axminster – A scheme providing off road parking in two areas on housing land has been developed and planning permission has been sought. We are awaiting the planning decision.
- 3.2 Courtnay Drive, Colyton – Access across a private owner's front garden is key to providing off road parking on garden frontage of three Council homes. Discussions with the owner have taken place in October 2012 but no approval given. The Housing Needs and Strategy Manager has written again to the owner seeking approval to use part of the front garden to gain access to our properties. A previous site visit and correspondence has received no reply from owner.
- 3.3 St Gregory's Court, Seaton – A scheme has been developed based on tenant requirements. A planning application has been submitted but will not be registered until a tree survey has been provided. The tree survey has been completed and raises a number of issues. The existing Cherry trees have large shallow roots and the excavations for the proposed 4 no. car parking space option would be too intrusive and would require a "no dig" system up to 100mm. This effectively means that the parking surface would need to be 100mm above the grass surface which is already about 100mm above the road surface. Tenants have suggested an alternative - a parallel parking option with 2 no. spaces, and we are considering the provision of a 3 no. space scheme as well. We are consulting on alternatives and will then submit chosen scheme for planning approval.
- 3.4 Arcot Park, Sidmouth – We have already provided off road parking for tenants on Arcot Park. The main problem is the parking of commercial vans and Lorries on the road and on housing land (parking areas). Efforts to discourage 'illegal' parking on our land have not been successful. We have marked out car parking spaces for residents of 1-13 on the small 'triangle' parking area. We have been considering the possibility of extending the lay-by car park by the flats as much as possible with the aim of adding parking spaces. To ensure tenants have access to parking it may be necessary to provide secure bollards to prevent misuse by other residents. However, extending the car park may not be possible as the extension will require the removal of a large (and high) bank and removal of large trees. This will be expensive and provide minimal gain in terms of parking spaces. The informal view of planning is being sought and this will be reported at the meeting.

### **4.0 Proposal for Improved Parking at West Underleys, Beer**

- 4.1 The Car Parking TAFF recognised an on road parking problem in this area and considered the opportunity to provide off road parking for residents in West Underleys. Members concluded that this was public highway and as the majority of residents were private owners, felt that HRA funds should not be spent supporting any car parking scheme in this area.
- 4.2 The Garage TAFF undertook a site visit to this area to consider the continued use of this site as garages; the condition of the garages and their useful life expectancy and whether any development opportunities exists for this garage site.
- 4.3 Councillor Pook has identified the opportunity to provide off road parking on this garage site and has suggested Members consider the provision of parking as indicated on the plan at **Annex A**. There is a need to maintain vehicular access to

the adjacent works for emergency vehicles. The parking spaces could be rented to residents and provide an income stream to the HRA. There will of course be a cost to providing these parking spaces and possibly the provision of lockable bollards to ensure misuse is minimised. However, Officers have concerns about the ongoing parking problems in this area that require resolution by Devon County Council. The provision of these new parking spaces may simply provide space on the road for more parked vehicles.

- 4.4 Members are asked to consider Councillor Pook's proposal for the provision of off road parking on this garage site. A detailed feasibility may need to be undertaken if it is agreed to proceed.

---

### **Legal Implications**

There are no current legal implications however Legal Services will provide advice on individual basis which requires the acquiring of land from an individual tenant to implement the parking scheme.

### **Financial Implications**

£50,000 has been included in the HRA capital programme for off street car parking.

### **Consultation on Reports to the Cabinet**

None.

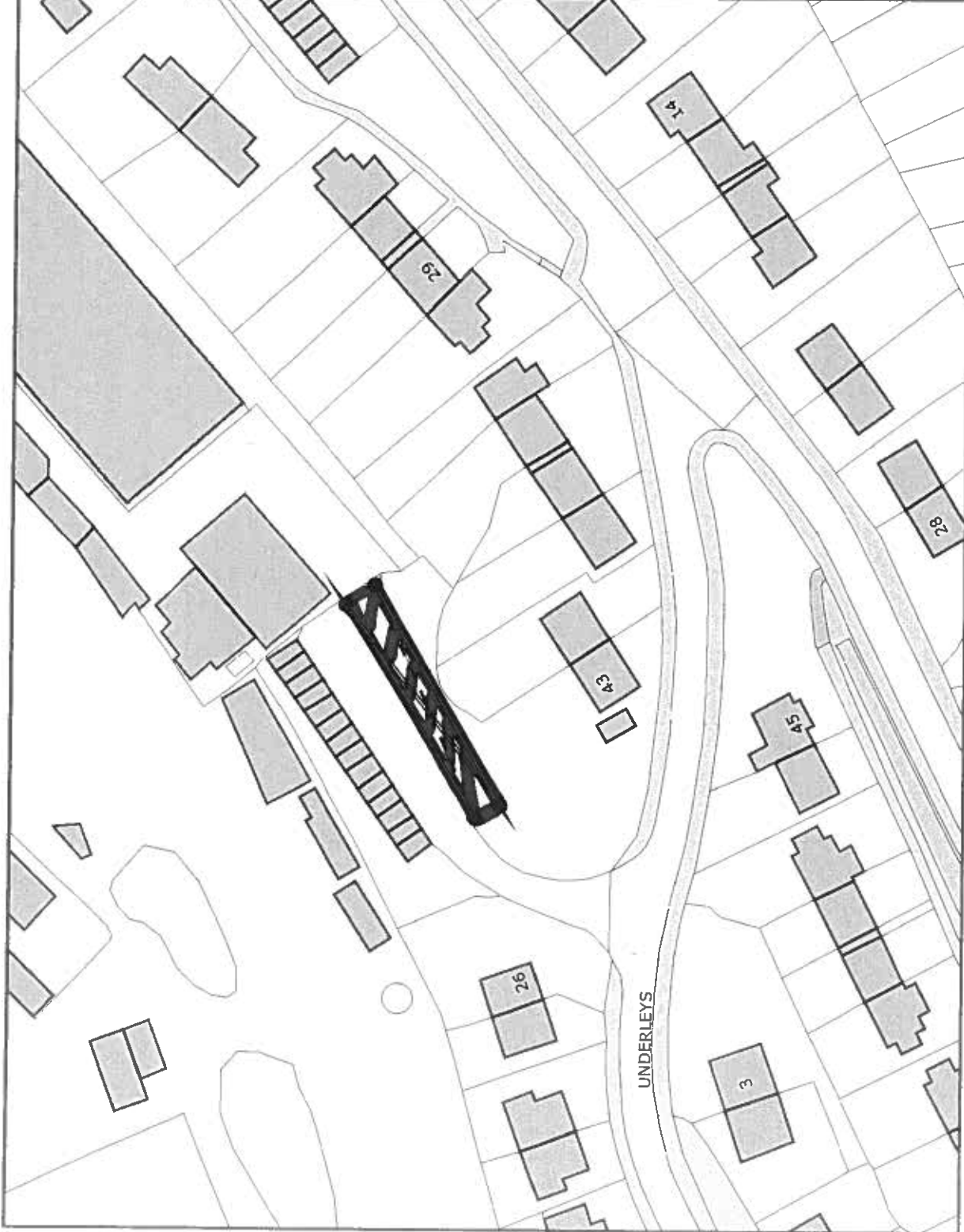
### **Background Papers**

- [TaFF agenda 12 August 2011](#)
  - TaFF minutes [12 August 2011](#), [7 October 2011](#) and [25 November 2011](#).
- 

Dennis Boobier  
Housing Needs and Strategy Manager

Housing Review Board  
5 September 2013

Proposal to provide parking spaces on garage site and maintain vehicular access to adjacent works



**West Underleys Garage Site**

Map Tile: SY2289SW Full Reference: SY2227 8911

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## Agenda Item: 14

**Housing Review Board**

**5 September 2013**

**DB**



### Garages – update on review

#### Summary

This report provides an update to members on progress on the agreed actions following the report to the Housing Review Board on 6 September 2012 on the garage review undertaken by the Task and Finish Forum.

#### Recommendation

Members are asked to:

1. Note the progress made by Officers in implementing the garage proposals agreed by Housing Review Board on 6 September 2012.
2. Agree the actions identified in the report.
3. Approve a budget of £50,000 to undertake the feasibility, scheme design and other necessary work to progress a programme of housing developments on some of our garage sites.

#### a) Reasons for Recommendation

To provide the Board with an update on the implementation of agreed action following the Garage Review.

#### b) Alternative Options

None.

#### c) Risk Considerations

None identified.

#### d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

Any significant budgetary implications are included in the report.

#### Positive Impact Overall

Affordable Homes.  
Safe Environment.  
Green Environment.  
Excellent Customer Service.  
Inspirational Council.  
Providing same service at less cost.

## e) Date for Review of Decision

September 2014.

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### 1 Background

- 1.1 The Housing Review Board set up a Garage Task and Finish Forum (TAFF) in 2012 to review the HRA garage portfolio and consider which garages should be retained, which garage sites had housing development potential and which sites should be disposed of.
- 1.2 The report to the Board on 6 September 2012 included an Annex that provided a summary of each garage site, the condition of garages and a recommendation for action.
- 1.3 The Board approved the recommended actions.

### 2. Progress on Garage Sites with Potential for Housing Development

- 2.1 The following garage schemes were identified as potential development sites for housing. All of the proposed development opportunities could be used to add housing units to our existing housing stock. At **Annex 1** is location maps for some of the garages referred to below.

#### 2.1.1 Elizabeth Way, Seaton

Planning has provided advice on a possible small housing development on this site. The access off Harepath Road as well as serving the garages also provides a pedestrian route to the play area to the east of the site; this would need to be maintained. Maintaining access to this part of the site, respecting the pattern of development in the vicinity and ensuring an appropriate relationship with existing properties would therefore restrict development potential. It might be possible to provide a single detached bungalow at the western side of the site. This would be subject to determining the available width of the site for development, after public access is provided.

**Action: To develop proposals for a single storey dwelling on this site and submit for planning approval. Funding required.**

#### 2.1.2 Summersby Close, Seaton – not progressed yet

Possible development with the demolition of one of the garage blocks near Flats 15-20 using part of adjacent land owned by DCH. Consider using other garage block in Summersby Close as part of development. Alternatively demolish and provide parking spaces for residents.

The site sits between two existing residential developments with a 3 storey block of flats to the south and a 2 storey terrace and parking area to the north. The garages and fencing on the adjoining part of the site are all that separates the two developments. Highways may have concerns about access and the need to link DCH and EDDC sites for vehicular access. No discussions with DCH yet.

**Action: To progress discussions with DCH on the development opportunity.**

#### 2.1.3 Courtenay Drive, Colyton

Planning has approved development on this site in principle. Would not want development to go to the west too much as there are large trees at this end of the site which offer screening of this part of the town. 2 pairs of semi detached properties could be provided on south side. On the north side of the site, possibly another pair of semi detached properties, but again development limited because of trees. Planning application would need to be accompanied by a tree survey.

**Action: Develop feasibility/design scheme to provide 4-6 units on this site and seek planning permission. Funding required.**

#### 2.1.4 Plymtree – not progressing yet.

Planning has indicated they would not support additional residential development on this site as it is located in open countryside, outside and far removed from the built-up area boundary of Plymtree. The Council's policies for development outside of built up area boundaries makes it clear that new development should be located in sustainable locations which are contiguous with the built up area boundaries of towns and villages. Unfortunately this site does not adjoin the built up area boundary of Plymtree. In addition, the site is located in close proximity to the Plymtree United Reformed Church which is a grade II listed building where redevelopment of the site may also give rise to concerns in terms of the impact on the setting of the listed building.

**Action: To leave as a garage site for time being.**

#### 2.1.5 Prestor, Axminster

Planning support a proposal for two no. semi detached properties on this site.

**Action: To develop a feasibility/design scheme to provide 2 no. large semi detached properties on this site and submit planning application. Funding required.**

#### 2.1.6 Millwey Rise (Blocks A,B&C) Axminster – not progressed yet.

Planning has indicated that there is some scope for development on this site. Removal of the two existing dwellings at the North West edge of the site within our ownership would make it easier to position other dwellings. For this site, the proximity to the factory; screening and housing not positioned near this boundary although this could be rear gardens; and sound proofing to houses may be required. It may not be appropriate to build on site of blocks A and B as these front other existing dwellings – any new dwellings here would probably cause overlooking issues to existing two storey houses to east and west.

**Action: Seek support from DCC Highways for access from the north west of the site from Second Avenue. Draw up feasibility/design scheme for this site. Funding required.**

2.1.7 George Street, Honiton – progressing opportunity to secure new build 3 bed detached property on this site

We have negotiated with a developer to link our garage site with an adjacent housing development that will be seeking planning permission soon. We have negotiated a 3 bedroom house with garden and parking area in exchange for giving up our garage site to enable access to the adjacent development site. Part of garage site will be used with adjacent development. The cost of our garage site is considerably less than the value of the property that will be transferred to our ownership.

**Action: Await outcome of planning application and finalise terms with the developer.**

2.1.8 Hillside, Payhembury

Following site visits with DCC Highways we have concluded that although residential development of this site would be acceptable in principle, access and parking are likely to be significant constraints. Any new dwellings would need to be accessed via a new road off the existing main road. We would also need to ensure that parking for existing residents is maintained.

**Action: To develop feasibility/design scheme to be considered for this site. Funding required.**

2.2 These development opportunities require a budget to take forward feasibility studies and to develop and design housing development schemes for consideration and subsequent submission for planning approval. Members are asked to approve a budget of £50,000 to progress the schemes above. Each scheme will subsequently be brought back to Members for approval and allocation of funding to progress our own new build schemes.

2.3 These developments will take place over the next 3-5 years depending on funding and staff capacity. Officers are currently working on the purchase of 9 properties in Axminster and the shared house in Exmouth. Two developments in particular – Hillside and Millwey Rise will require significant funding and this will not be known fully until the feasibility study is complete and options for development completed and submitted for consideration by Members. Members are asked to agree to a programme of own build housing developments beginning with developments at Prestor Axminster and Elizabeth Way Seaton.

### **3. Garages Sites Approved for Sale**

3.1 The following garages have been sold or are in the process of being sold:

- Churchill Road Exmouth – offer made and accepted – progressing sale
- 1 and 2 Farway – sale completed 8 July 2013
- 1 and 2 Coombe Orchard, Axmouth – sale completed 25 June 2013
- 1 and 2 Lashbrook – sale completed 25 June 2013
- 4 Lashbrook – sale completed 17 June 2013
- 1 Eyewell Green Seaton – sale completed 10 June 2013
- 2 Eyewell Green Seaton - sale completed 10 June 2013
- 3 Eyewell Green Seaton – offer made and accepted – progressing sale

- 1 and 2 High Doatshayne Musbury – offer made and accepted – progressing sale
- Moorhaven Budleigh Salterton – currently being advertised.

#### **4. Garage Sites – No further action**

4.1 The following garage sites that were identified for possible housing development or sale have not been progressed or alternative actions have been implemented:

- Peazen Flats, Beer – Existing tenant will maintain tenancy until either garage no longer required or where major repair works are required. If tenancy of garage ends then we will consider sale.
- Turner Close, Newton Poppleford – the garages at bottom of the road are not Council owned. The two pairs of garages that we do own are all tenanted. At this stage it is proposed that we do not sell these garages as they are in demand.
- Salters Meadow, Sidmouth - 3 garages retain for time being – all tenanted.
- Fairview, Honiton – Although there is some interest in purchasing the separate large block on this site (retaining the two pairs of garages on the opposite side of road) it is recommended that we retain the garages until major repairs are required and then demolish and retain the site as a parking area and rent the parking spaces to residents.
- Charles Road, Honiton – Valuation indicates that there is development potential even though planning and highways have indicated their concerns about loss of parking and general congestion in this area. Some interest in purchasing site and/or individual garages. It is recommended that we continue to use the garages until they require major repairs and then consider demolition and retain as parking area. We may also wish to consider the opportunity to sell this site as a potential development opportunity.
- Jerrards Close, Honiton – although the site is not one of those for disposal, it is recommended that we retain the garages until such time as major repairs are required, and then to demolish and retain the site as a parking area.

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#### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications at the present time however Legal Services will provide advice as schemes develop.

#### **Financial Implications**

These are included in the report where known.

The HRA balance is currently being maintained above the minimum level required and therefore a budget of £50,000 for feasibility/design costs for potential new builds can be accommodated.

#### **Consultation on Reports to the Cabinet**

None.

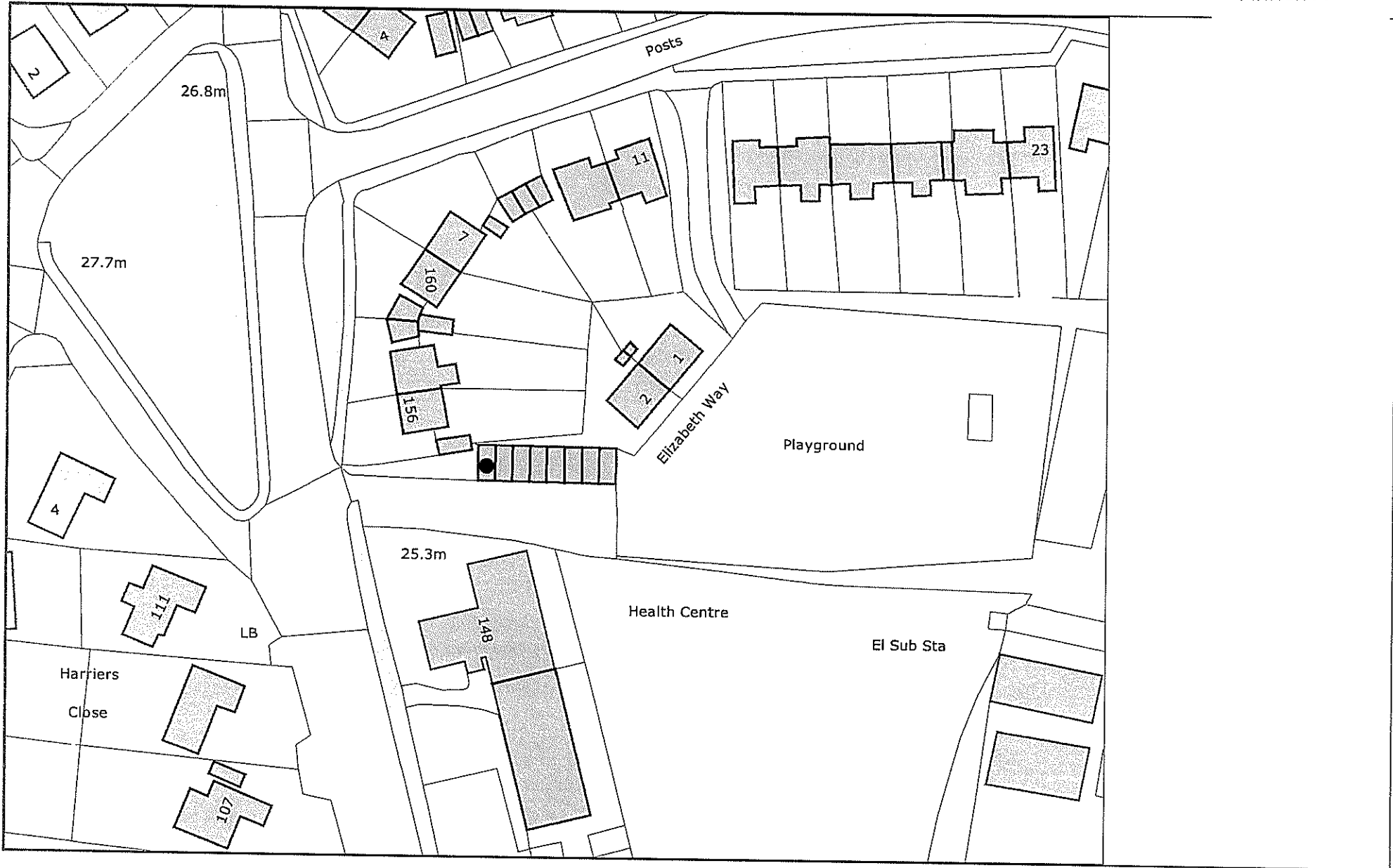


## **Background Papers**

- TaFF agenda [2 March 2012](#) and [15 June 2012](#).
  - TaFF minutes [2 March 2012](#) and [15 June 2012](#) and [tour table](#).
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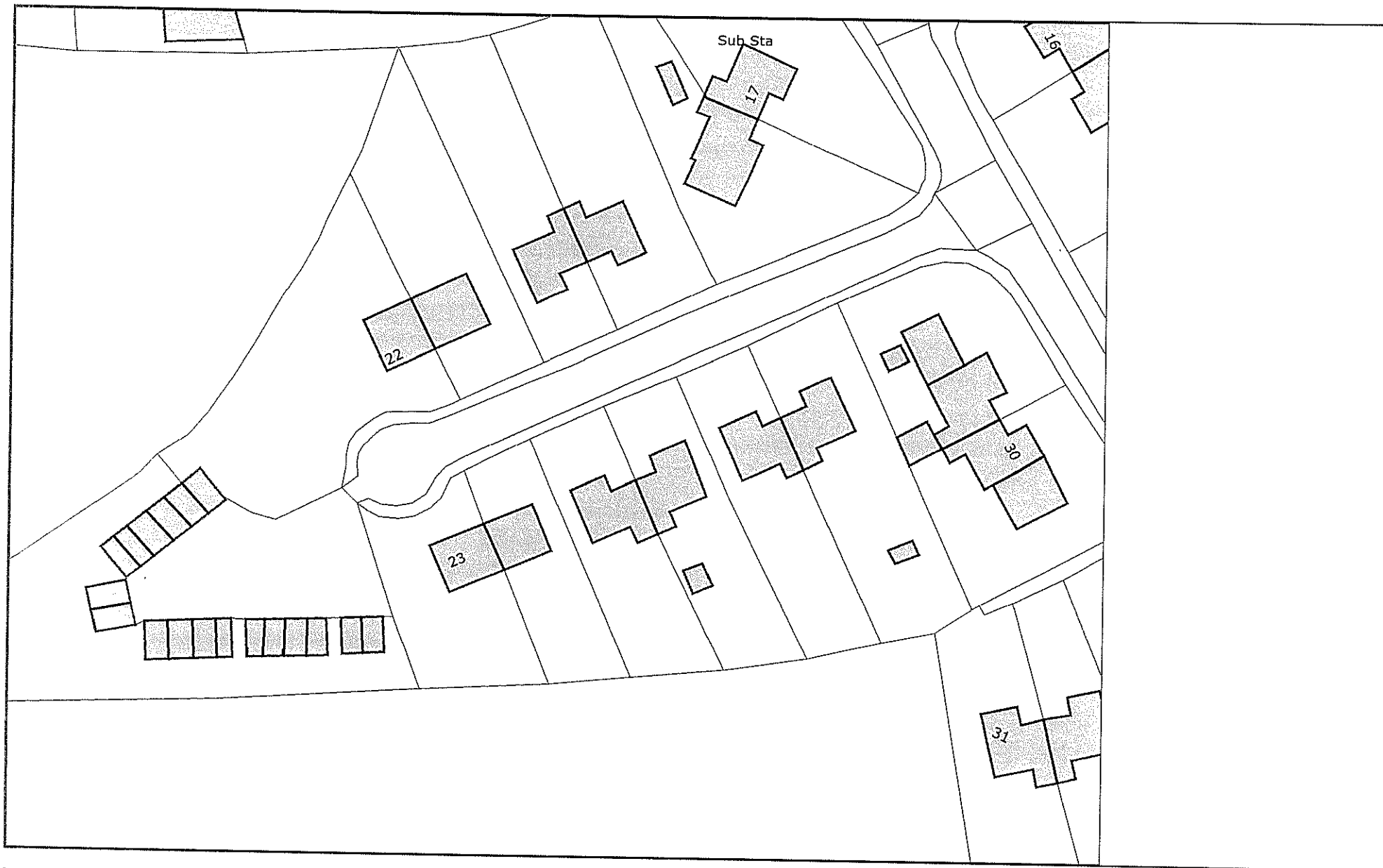
Dennis Boobier  
Housing Needs and Strategy Manager

Housing Review Board  
5 September 2013



Elizabeth Way Seaton Map Tile: SY2490NW Full Reference: SY2426 9096

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Courtenay Drive Colyton

Map Tile: SY2493SE Full Reference: SY2475 9322

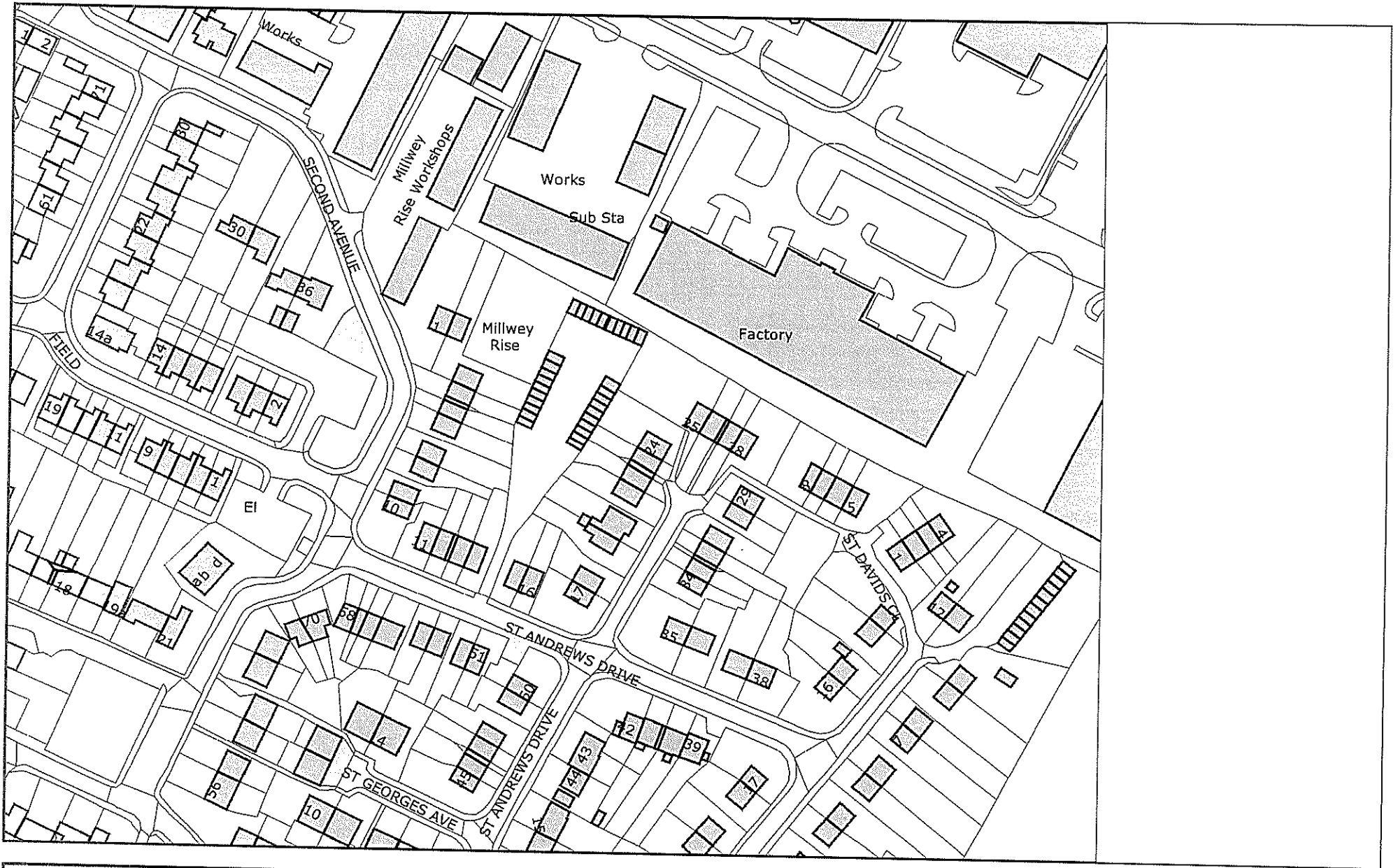
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Prestor Axminster

Map Tile: SY3098SE Full Reference: SY3051 9821

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Millway Rise Axminster

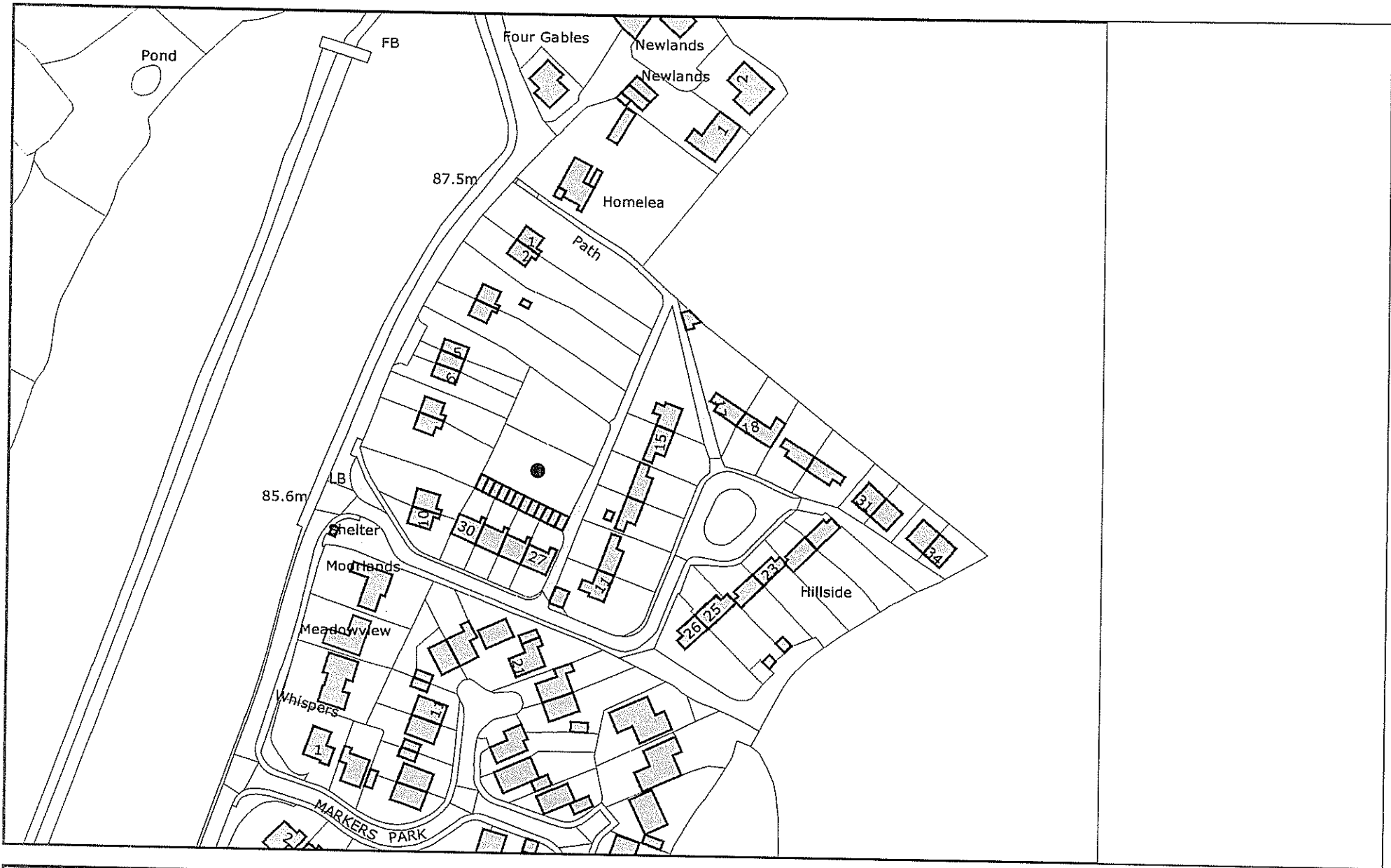
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George Street Honiton Map Tile: ST1600NW Full Reference: ST1613 0078

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Hillside Payhembury

Map Tile: ST0801SE Full Reference: ST0893 0149

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## **Agenda Item: 15**

**Housing Review Board**

**5 September 2013**

**JG/DB**



### **Repairs Performance Monitoring Report**

#### **Summary**

This report sets out the day to day repairs (including voids) performance. The report provides detailed performance information for the period April 2012 – March 2013. Maintaining and improving tenants' homes is a core landlord activity and an area in which the council and contractors performance has a direct impact on tenant's quality of life and enjoyment of their homes.

This report provides information on the number of repairs reported and undertaken; the speed, quality of service, and tenant satisfaction levels.

We have achieved a consistent level of good performance and high tenant satisfaction throughout the year and undertaken the retendering of the responsive day to day repairs contract. We have also dealt effectively with one contractor's performance that was below our expectations.

#### **Recommendation**

**To note the performance on responsive repairs to Council homes set out in the report.**

##### **a) Reasons for Recommendation**

To inform the Board about the performance of our contractors in relation to repairs to council housing and tenants homes. This performance monitoring activity is one of the main functions of the Housing Review Board.

##### **b) Alternative Options**

To receive less detailed reports, or reports covering different aspects of the repairs and maintenance process.

##### **c) Risk Considerations**

Poor performance in this area of work indicates a failure of the landlord to meet its statutory duty and obligations under the tenancy agreement.

##### **d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations**

#### **Positive Impact Overall**

Affordable Homes.

Safe Environment.



Green Environment.  
Excellent Customer Service.  
Providing more service at same cost.

#### e) Date for Review of Decision

An annual report on repairs performance will be submitted.

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### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Members are aware that a new Responsive Day to Day Repair Contract began on 2 July 2012. The successful contractors were Skinner Construction Ltd (Skinners) and MD Building Services Ltd (MD).
- 1.2 The contract sets priorities for repairs and voids (see below), and we assess tenant satisfaction in relation to the works undertaken. We operate a Repairs Contact Centre for tenants and contractors in order to deliver an efficient and effective repairs service.

### 2. Repairs Budgets 2012/13

- 2.1 Our repairs budgets are set annually as part of the Housing Revenue Account and in 2012/13 we budgeted £1,401,360 in respect of responsive or day to day repairs. In addition, we made provision of £1,150,000 for works to void properties.
- 2.2 The HRA budget for 2012/13 also contained provision for:
- |                                      |              |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| ➤ Gas servicing                      | - £400,000   |
| ➤ Painting programme                 | - £200,000   |
| ➤ Minor adaptations                  | - £103,000   |
| ➤ Stock condition – Catch up repairs | - £515,660   |
| ➤ Boiler Replacement                 | - £500,000   |
| ➤ Kitchen replacement                | - £1,000,000 |
| ➤ Door replacement                   | - £600,000   |
- 2.3 The total budget available for repairs and improvements amounted to £7.128m in 2012/13. This was a significant increase from 2011/12. Our expenditure on responsive repairs was £2,379,000 and expenditure on improvements was £3,664,000. Total expenditure was £6,043m.
- 2.4 During the course of this financial year we managed to reach an agreement with Lovell for outstanding payments due to Connaught under our old responsive repairs contract. Lovell effectively acquired the Connaught business following the period of administration. When we refused the opportunity of novating the contract to Lovell they sent us an invoice for circa. £160k for works completed by Connaught, but not invoiced. We argued that we should be able to deduct an amount for the inconvenience caused and having to retender. Some work was partially undertaken and required other contractors to complete the work. We entered into 'without prejudice save as to costs' dialogue over the size of the claim. After a lengthy dispute we settled at £60k a sum which appears in our 2013/14 expenditure as a full and final settlement.

### **3. Day to Day Repair Contract Issues in 2012/13**

- 3.1 Following the demise of Connaught in 2010, Skinners provided the day to day repair service until we had retendered the day to day repair contract and appointed new contractors, a comprehensive exercise which was complete by July 2012.
- 3.2 Skinners and MD were appointed responsive day to day repair contractors from 2 July 2012.
- 3.3 Although performance generally has been good and we are satisfied with Skinners, MD has experienced some difficulties fulfilling all the requirements of the contract. A meeting was held with MD on 7 February 2013 to discuss a number of issues relating to their performance. A comprehensive note of the meeting was made and a formal letter was sent to MD requiring improvements in a number of areas.
- 3.4 The terms and conditions of the contract set out the key performance measures MD (and Skinners) must meet relating to customer satisfaction; appointments kept; work completed within target times; quality of workmanship; customer complaints; voids and team work. In addition we expect work to be “Right repair, right time, fix and stay fixed”. During the period November 2012 to April 2013 we experienced a significant rise in ‘recalls’ relating to the work done by MD. These are repairs that the tenant reports have failed or have not been completed fully. In addition, problems with completing work on time; making appointments; turning up at the appointed time; van stocks; right tradesperson for the job; payment to sub contractors; missed appointments; notification of work completed and invoicing were dealt with during this period.
- 3.5 MD was given a three month period to improve significantly. By the end of April 2013 MD had improved performance, but not as fully as we had expected. A further month was given to enable MD to meet our expectations. Further meetings were held on 6 June; and on 17 July 2013 we confirmed that MD had improved significantly, enough to discontinue the specific monitoring meetings on MD’s current performance. Comprehensive notes of these meetings have been maintained.
- 3.6 Regular operational meetings are held with both contractors involving the Maintenance Surveyors and the Senior Technical Officer. In addition strategic contract meetings are held quarterly with Skinners and MD involving the Head of Housing and the Housing Needs and Strategy Manager.
- 3.7 The contractors (including Robert Heath Heating) are invited regularly to the meetings of the Repairs Service Review Group where contractor performance is reported and discussed.

### **4. Gas Servicing Contract**

- 4.1 Robert Heath Heating (RHH) – the management of this contract and the key performance measure relates to the gas servicing of appliances in the housing stock. We have around 3,100 properties where we must undertake an annual safety inspection of the gas appliances. We programme a safety inspection every 11 months to ensure we comply with current legislation on gas safety and measure both the programme and the annual outstanding

safety inspections.

- 4.2 At **Annex A** is the LGSR performance for the 2012/13 financial year. Current figures show RHH performing well. At any one time there are properties where gas safety checks have not been completed in the 11 month cycle, although they may be completed by the annual deadline.
- 4.3 We do have difficulties with some tenants refusing access. Usually the efforts of RHH and Council staff secure entry to do the work. In some cases we require a Court Order to gain access to the property to carry out our legal duties. However, some tenants are repeat offenders each year and we are considering the options available to us to ensure the gas safety check takes place on time.
- 4.4 A gas servicing satisfaction survey is conducted each quarter and the result for 2012/13 is at **Annex B**. This shows overall performance is good. We are reviewing question 1 as the way it is worded can be misunderstood. Rather than “Did you need to make an appointment with the contractor”, we will change it to something like “Did the contractor make an appointment with you”. In practice RHH make an appointment with every tenant for the gas safety inspection.

## 5. Performance of Repair Contractors

- 5.1 Repairs are categorised when they are reported to the Repairs Contact Centre. The table below gives the priority timescales and examples of how certain repairs are categorised.

<b>Immediate (4 hours)</b>	Burst pipes, gas leaks, blocked drains with serious leaks of sewerage, faulty power supply.
<b>Emergency (1 day)</b>	Loose missing roof tiles, less serious blocked drains, loose electrical switches/sockets.
<b>Urgent (5 days)</b>	Reglazing communal areas, blocked or broken gutters and down pipes,
<b>Priority (20 days)</b>	Refix rainwater pipes; replace WC pan
<b>Normal (30 days)</b>	Repair/replace door numbers, knockers and bells; ease and adjust doors

- 5.2 During the period April 2012 to March 2013 a total of 11761 orders were issued. Below is a table showing the percentage of jobs completed within timescales by our main contractors. Although not directly comparable with previous year's performance as there were different priority timescales for the first three months of the financial year, the key issue is whether the target (whatever that may be) has been met.

Contractor	4 hours	24 hours	5 days	20 days	30 days
Skidders	87%	89%	90%	88%	96%
MD	85%	90%	90%	93%	89%

5.3 The issues identified above relating to contractors not meeting target timescales for work have been highlighted to contractors through the Strategic Contract meetings.

5.4 It is intended over the next 12 months to introduce a different appointment system for tenants/contractors. The proposal is to retain the 4 hour timescale and to allow tenant and contractor to decide a mutually convenient day/time for all other repair work to be done. This is a proposal from our Redesign of the repair service following a Systems Thinking review. The proposal will be brought back to Members for approval prior to introduction.

5.5 We have introduced target timescales for void turnaround for contractors. These are:

Category	Timescale hours
One	5 working days
Two	10 working days
Three	15 working days
Four	Maximum of 20 days

5.6 A list of voids in 2012/13 is attached at **Annex C**. A total of 249 voids at an average of 23 days turnaround were completed in the financial year. The contractor's completion timescales are shown in diagrammatical form at **Annex D**. Although significant numbers of voids properties were completed by the contractor within the timescales above, Members will note a large number outside this timescale. The main reason for this is the amount of work required to bring a property up to the lettable standard.

5.7 Set out below is a summary of the work required at some of the longest void properties to show the extent of work required that explains the reason for the significant length of time taken to relet these properties:

- 4, Hillside, Buckerell – Asbestos to be removed requiring specialist contractor, new ceilings, new bathroom, new kitchen, and central heating and electrical system upgrade
- 13 Cridlake, Axminster – outgoing tenant had removed ceiling joists and structural survey required as well as implementing subsequent works.
- 36 Streamers Meadow, Honiton, - Asbestos to be removed, central heating and electrical system upgrade, new kitchen and bathroom.
- 12 Dumpdon View, Monkton – Asbestos removal, structural issues and full refurbishment to bring up to

lettable standard.

- 2 Foretown, Clyst St Lawrence – Property abandoned, rat infestation, new ceilings, floors, ceiling, central heating upgrade, and significant pest control measures.
- 37 Longdogs Lane, Ottery St Mary - New roof, upgraded central heating upgrade and new, kitchen and bathroom.
- 6 Colleton Close Exmouth – full internal decoration, external ground works, new kitchen and central heating upgrade.
- 3 Cott Park, Woodbury - new kitchen and central heating upgrade. Full damp proof works throughout ground floor.

5.8 Other than 13 Cridlake, the tenants of the above properties had been tenants for a considerable time and in one case since the property was built. During the tenancy, the tenant had not agreed with our proposal to provide improvements to the property such as, new kitchen, bathroom, central heating, etc, and all this work had to be done at the time the property was void. For example the tenancy of 12 Dumpdon View started in October 1978 – 35 years.

5.9 Recalls and Chasers are a key performance measure. It indicates how successful our contractors are in ‘right repair, right time, fix and stay fixed’. We take on face value that tenants report recalls to us. This is work that may not have been completed or has been undertaken, but has failed. Contractors are asked to attend and do the work again or complete the job at no extra cost to the Council. Following investigation by the Contractor, around 50% of recalls were found not to be a recall mainly because the identified problem reported by the tenant was not the same repair, or the failure was not a failure, but fair wear and tear or damage by the tenant.

	Skinner's	MD	Robert Heath
Total number of recalls and chasers as a % of total orders	4%	10%	10%

For all three contractors	Number
Total number of orders placed	13854
Total number of chasers	207
Total number of recalls	766
Total number of recalls and chasers as % of overall total	7%

## 6. Tenant Satisfaction

6.1 We monitor tenant satisfaction with responsive day to day repair work. The contractors provide tenants with the satisfaction form and return envelope for immediate and emergency repairs and we send out the satisfaction form with



a prepaid envelop for the tenant to complete and send back to us for all other repairs.

- 6.2 We ask 5 key questions and an analysis of the satisfaction levels between April 2012 and March 2013 are set out below:

Advised when Calling	Reasonable Time	Reasonable Standard	Completed One Visit	EDDC Staff Satisfactory
86%	93%	97%	86%	98%

- 6.3 What this shows is that the work was of a good standard and tenants were happy with our service. What respondents thought could be improved is appointments and completing work in one visit. These issues have been raised at Strategic Contract meetings with both contractors.

## 7 Conclusions

- 7.1 The repair and improvement of tenants' homes is the key activity of the repairs service. We strive to provide a good quality service through our own staff and partnerships with our contractors. Although performance is good there is room for improvement in our contractors' performance. We will continue to monitor contractor performance and seek continuous improvement to ensure contractors meet our expectations fully and provide the service tenant's require.

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### Legal Implications

There are no legal implications set out within the report requiring comment.

### Financial Implications

There are no financial implications set out within the report requiring comment.

### Consultation on Reports to the Executive

The Repairs Service Review Group regularly meets with the main day to day contractor.

### Background Papers

None.

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Dennis Boobier  
Housing Needs and Strategy Manager

Housing Review Board  
5 September 2013

## East Devon Compliance Report April 2012 – March 2013

## Annex A

	<b>Properties under contract</b>	<b>Properties without a valid LGSR</b>	<b>Compliance %</b>
<b>APRIL 2012</b>	3114	0	100.00
<b>MAY 2012</b>	3113	0	100.00
<b>JUNE 2012</b>	3113	8	99.74
<b>JULY 2012</b>	3112	6	99.81
<b>AUGUST 2012</b>	3113	7	99.78
<b>SEPTEMBER 2012</b>	3112	13	99.58
<b>OCTOBER 2012</b>	3111	9	99.71
<b>NOVEMBER 2012</b>	3113	8	99.74
<b>DECEMBER 2012</b>	3123	9	99.71
<b>JANUARY 2013</b>	3123	12	99.62
<b>FEBUARY 2013</b>	3123	4	99.87
<b>MARCH 2013</b>	3123	3	99.90

<b>Quarter 1 Average</b>	99.91
<b>Quarter 2 Average</b>	99.72
<b>Quarter 3 Average</b>	99.72
<b>Quarter 4 Average</b>	99.80

<b>Yearly Average</b>	99.79
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Gas Safety Satisfaction Survey

Q4 2012-13

Question no:	Question:	Response:
1a	Did you need to make an appointment with the contractor?	Yes
		No
1b	If Yes did the contractor keep the appointment?	Yes
		No
2	Shown ID?	Yes
		No
3	Was the work finished in one visit to your home?	Yes
		No
4a	Speed rating	Very good
		Fairly good
		<b>Positive rating</b>
4b	Attitude rating	Very good
		Fairly good
		<b>Positive rating</b>
4c	Dirt and mess rating	Very good
		Fairly good
		<b>Positive rating</b>
4d	Needs into account rating	Very good
		Fairly good
		<b>Positive rating</b>
4e	Overall service rating	Very good
		Fairly good
		<b>Positive rating</b>

<b>Total surveys returned</b>
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## Annex B

Q1 2012-13	Q2 2012-13	Q3 2012-13	Q4 2012-13	Latest year
48.0%	47.5%	47.7%	44.2%	46.9%
52.0%	52.5%	52.3%	55.8%	53.1%
94.5%	96.4%	96.2%	90.9%	94.3%
5.5%	3.6%	3.8%	9.1%	5.7%
81.1%	85.5%	88.1%	82.4%	83.4%
18.9%	14.5%	11.9%	17.6%	16.6%
96.6%	98.4%	95.6%	98.9%	97.6%
3.4%	1.6%	4.4%	1.1%	2.4%
88.6%	89.3%	91.3%	88.5%	89.1%
9.4%	9.9%	6.5%	8.3%	9.0%
<b>98.0%</b>	<b>99.2%</b>	<b>97.8%</b>	<b>96.9%</b>	<b>98.1%</b>
93.2%	95.0%	93.3%	92.7%	93.6%
6.1%	5.0%	6.7%	5.2%	5.6%
<b>99.3%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>97.9%</b>	<b>99.3%</b>
92.6%	96.7%	91.1%	89.6%	92.9%
7.4%	3.3%	8.9%	7.3%	6.3%
<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>96.9%</b>	<b>99.3%</b>
90.4%	95.8%	90.2%	91.5%	92.2%
8.2%	4.2%	4.9%	6.4%	6.3%
<b>98.6%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>95.1%</b>	<b>97.9%</b>	<b>98.5%</b>
91.9%	94.1%	93.5%	90.5%	92.4%
4.7%	5.9%	6.5%	7.4%	5.9%
<b>96.6%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>97.9%</b>	<b>98.3%</b>

151	122	46	97	416
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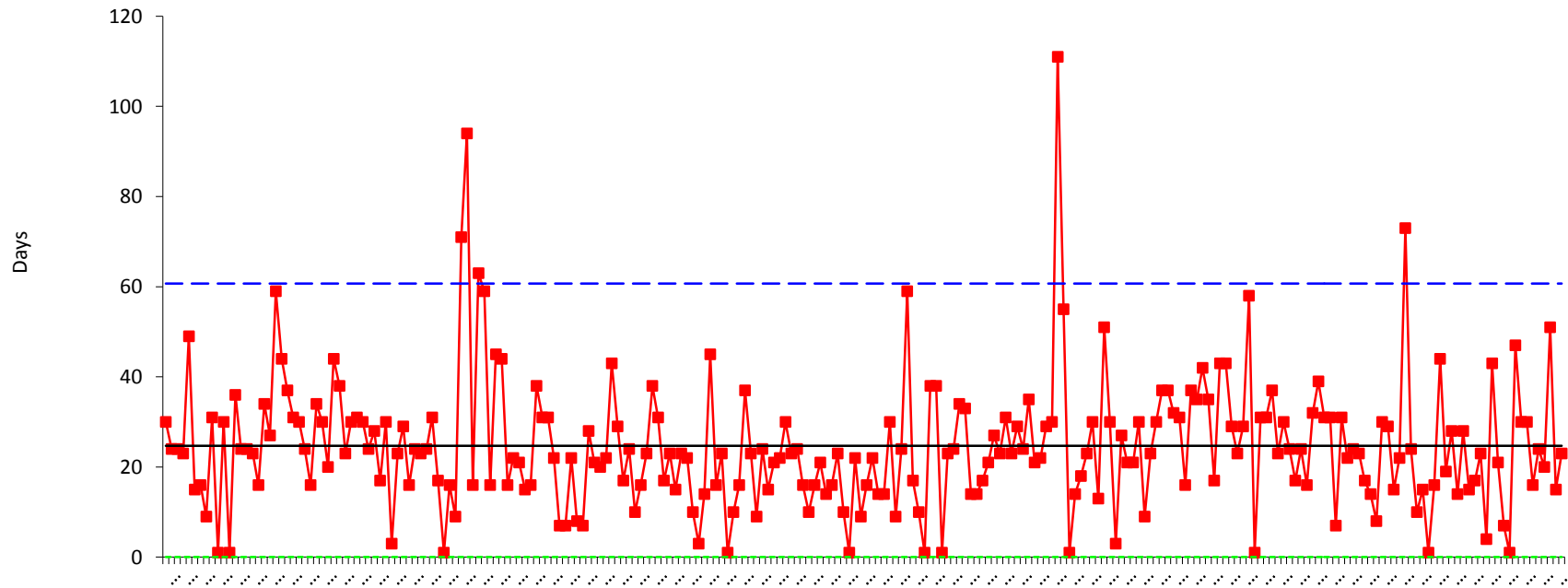
Voids - Average Time to Relet - April 2012-March 2013						
Case	Start Event	End Event	Measure	BVPI	Termination Reason	Post Code
4311	24-Sep-12	25-Feb-13	154	4	Moved to Private Sector	EX15 2NJ
4211	20-Aug-12	17-Dec-12	119	4	Deceased	EX14 9QJ
3950	12-Mar-12	25-Jun-12	105	4	Deceased	EX11 1HX
4037	26-Mar-12	25-Jun-12	91	4	Transfer	EX14 3ES
3898	30-Jan-12	16-Apr-12	77	4	Evicted	EX13 5BT
4050	16-Apr-12	2-Jul-12	77	4	Deceased	EX14 4QT
4224	10-Sep-12	19-Nov-12	70	4	Private Sector	EX14 4TY
4052	30-Apr-12	2-Jul-12	63	4	Moved to Private Sector	EX5 5JB
4285	15-Oct-12	17-Dec-12	63	4	Moved To Care Home	EX14 2DN
4403	3-Dec-12	4-Feb-13	63	4	Transfer	EX8 3AL
3938	5-Mar-12	30-Apr-12	56	4	Transfer	EX8 3PU
3951	12-Mar-12	14-May-12	56	4	Deceased	EX10 9HX
4040	26-Mar-12	21-May-12	56	4	Transfer	EX14 2DR
4055	16-Apr-12	11-Jun-12	56	4	Transfer	EX5 1NP
4333	29-Oct-12	24-Dec-12	56	4	Moved To Care Home	EX8 3AQ
4434	26-Nov-12	21-Jan-13	56	4	Deceased	EX13 7EF
4456	24-Dec-12	18-Feb-13	56		Evicted	EX10 9YH
4420	24-Dec-12	18-Feb-13	56	4	Moved To Care Home	EX8 3PP
4449	24-Dec-12	18-Feb-13	56		Deceased	EX8 4DQ
4535	14-Jan-13	11-Mar-13	56		Deceased	EX14 1HH
3982	12-Mar-12	30-Apr-12	49		Transfer	EX10 9HX
3897	12-Mar-12	30-Apr-12	49	4	Deceased	EX8 3PX
3960	26-Mar-12	14-May-12	49	4	Moved To Care Home	EX13 5LQ
4065	21-May-12	9-Jul-12	49	4	Moved To Care Home	EX10 9DG
4073	21-May-12	9-Jul-12	49	4	Deceased	EX8 3AH
4231	13-Aug-12	1-Oct-12	49	4	Deceased	EX24 6RZ
4290	1-Oct-12	19-Nov-12	49	4	Transfer	EX8 2LU
4354	15-Oct-12	3-Dec-12	49		Transfer	EX10 0EN
4189	30-Jul-12	17-Sep-12	49	4	Deceased	EX8 2BE
4413	10-Dec-12	28-Jan-13	49		Moved To Care Home	EX12 2UD
4432	10-Dec-12	28-Jan-13	49		Transfer	EX13 5LQ
4469	10-Dec-12	28-Jan-13	49		Transfer	EX14 1NH
4425	17-Dec-12	4-Feb-13	49		Moved to Private Sector	EX13 5ET
4408	17-Dec-12	4-Feb-13	49		Moved to Private Sector	EX14 1JE
4404	17-Dec-12	4-Feb-13	49		Transfer	EX14 2JH
4445	24-Dec-12	11-Feb-13	49		Deceased	EX10 9PW
4447	24-Dec-12	11-Feb-13	49		Moved to Private Sector	EX10 9XS
4450	24-Dec-12	11-Feb-13	49	4	Transfer	EX8 2PS
4466	31-Dec-12	18-Feb-13	49		Deceased	EX10 9JR
4460	31-Dec-12	18-Feb-13	49		Moved To Care Home	EX24 6PQ
4493	21-Jan-13	11-Mar-13	49	4	Deceased	EX8 3AH
4503	28-Jan-13	18-Mar-13	49	4	Transfer	EX14 1JE
4508	4-Feb-13	25-Mar-13	49	4	Deceased	EX24 6PP
4308	4-Feb-13	25-Mar-13	49	4	Deceased	EX8 2PG
3998	19-Mar-12	30-Apr-12	42		Deceased	EX13 5NL
3947	19-Mar-12	30-Apr-12	42	4	Deceased	EX14 2DN
4012	2-Apr-12	14-May-12	42	4	Deceased	EX24 6LT
4039	9-Apr-12	21-May-12	42	4	Deceased	EX10 9HX
4201	27-Aug-12	8-Oct-12	42	4	Deceased	EX8 3DH
4328	8-Oct-12	19-Nov-12	42	4	Transfer	EX8 2PU
4296	15-Oct-12	26-Nov-12	42	4	Private Sector	EX13 5EN
4295	15-Oct-12	26-Nov-12	42	4	Private Sector	EX14 2RZ
4330	29-Oct-12	10-Dec-12	42	4	Moved To Care Home	EX14 1JE
4141	2-Jul-12	13-Aug-12	42	4	Moved To Care Home	EX8 2BE
4134	16-Jul-12	27-Aug-12	42	4	Moved to Private Sector	EX8 3AH
4148	23-Jul-12	3-Sep-12	42	4	Moved to Private Sector	EX15 2NE
4143	23-Jul-12	3-Sep-12	42		Moved To Care Home	EX9 6SN
4414	3-Dec-12	14-Jan-13	42		Deceased	EX8 2PH
4428	10-Dec-12	21-Jan-13	42		Transfer	EX14 1NQ
4433	10-Dec-12	21-Jan-13	42		Transfer	EX8 5JB
4431	17-Dec-12	28-Jan-13	42		Moved to Private Sector	EX5 1NG
4461	24-Dec-12	4-Feb-13	42		Moved to Private Sector	EX14 1QD
4492	31-Dec-12	11-Feb-13	42		Transfer	EX11 1BN
4464	31-Dec-12	11-Feb-13	42		Deceased	EX12 2NR
4463	31-Dec-12	11-Feb-13	42	4	Deceased	EX9 6LY
4500	14-Jan-13	25-Feb-13	42	4	Transfer	EX9 6PX
4496	21-Jan-13	4-Mar-13	42		Deceased	EX13 5LA
4603	4-Feb-13	18-Mar-13	42	4	Evicted	EX8 2PJ

3913	27-Feb-12	2-Apr-12	35		Deceased	EX10 9PS
3907	27-Feb-12	2-Apr-12	35		Moved to Private Sector	EX14 2JH
3929	5-Mar-12	9-Apr-12	35		Moved to Private Sector	EX8 3AZ
3937	12-Mar-12	16-Apr-12	35		Moved to Private Sector	EX8 4DH
3959	19-Mar-12	23-Apr-12	35		Transfer	EX14 9RZ
3962	19-Mar-12	23-Apr-12	35		Deceased	EX5 2LR
3981	19-Mar-12	23-Apr-12	35		Deceased	EX8 2PD
3961	26-Mar-12	30-Apr-12	35		Moved to Private Sector	EX10 9UW
4020	2-Apr-12	7-May-12	35		Transfer	EX14 1QD
4011	2-Apr-12	7-May-12	35		Move to Care Home	EX9 6QX
4021	9-Apr-12	14-May-12	35		Deceased	EX14 1HH
4022	16-Apr-12	21-May-12	35		Deceased	EX8 3EG
4068	23-Apr-12	28-May-12	35		Transfer	EX14 1QE
4070	7-May-12	11-Jun-12	35		Deceased	EX12 2BY
4076	14-May-12	18-Jun-12	35		Transfer	EX10 9TF
4092	4-Jun-12	9-Jul-12	35		Deceased	DT7 3XJ
4104	11-Jun-12	16-Jul-12	35		Deceased	EX5 1BJ
4140	25-Jun-12	30-Jul-12	35		Deceased	EX8 2PX
4118	25-Jun-12	30-Jul-12	35		Deceased	EX8 2QP
4126	25-Jun-12	30-Jul-12	35		Deceased	EX8 5JB
4245	27-Aug-12	1-Oct-12	35		Transfer	EX10 9PS
4207	17-Sep-12	22-Oct-12	35		Deceased	EX8 5JB
4244	24-Sep-12	29-Oct-12	35	4	Private Sector	EX13 5ET
4260	1-Oct-12	5-Nov-12	35		Deceased	EX10 0RG
4272	1-Oct-12	5-Nov-12	35		Private Sector	EX8 4BN
4252	1-Oct-12	5-Nov-12	35	4	Deceased	EX8 4DH
4349	29-Oct-12	3-Dec-12	35		Deceased	EX14 1FQ
4332	29-Oct-12	3-Dec-12	35		Deceased	EX8 4SG
4383	5-Nov-12	10-Dec-12	35	4	Transfer	EX10 9PU
4340	5-Nov-12	10-Dec-12	35		Deceased	EX8 3QN
4429	19-Nov-12	24-Dec-12	35		Transfer	EX8 2PB
4155	9-Jul-12	13-Aug-12	35	4	Deceased	EX8 2JS
4144	23-Jul-12	27-Aug-12	35		Moved to Private Sector	EX10 9PQ
4180	30-Jul-12	3-Sep-12	35		Transfer	EX8 2PE
4423	10-Dec-12	14-Jan-13	35		Transfer	EX14 1BR
4384	17-Dec-12	21-Jan-13	35		Transfer	EX14 1JE
4455	24-Dec-12	28-Jan-13	35		Moved to Private Sector	EX12 2DR
4458	31-Dec-12	4-Feb-13	35		Moved To Care Home	EX24 6LT
4486	14-Jan-13	18-Feb-13	35		Deceased	EX11 1HE
4515	14-Jan-13	18-Feb-13	35		Transfer	EX14 1FQ
4490	14-Jan-13	18-Feb-13	35		Deceased	EX9 6LY
4422	28-Jan-13	4-Mar-13	35		Deceased	EX11 1HE
4505	11-Feb-13	18-Mar-13	35	4	Transfer	EX13 5ER
4527	11-Feb-13	18-Mar-13	35		Moved to Private Sector	EX14 1BR
4537	18-Feb-13	25-Mar-13	35	4	Transfer	EX8 3PT
4540	18-Feb-13	25-Mar-13	35	4	Deceased	EX8 3QT
3952	5-Mar-12	2-Apr-12	28		Deceased	EX5 3HA
3922	5-Mar-12	2-Apr-12	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX8 2PH
3943	5-Mar-12	2-Apr-12	28		Transfer	EX8 4PB
3940	12-Mar-12	9-Apr-12	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX10 9JR
3944	12-Mar-12	9-Apr-12	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX14 2RR
3939	12-Mar-12	9-Apr-12	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX5 1NQ
3983	26-Mar-12	23-Apr-12	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX14 1BR
3967	26-Mar-12	23-Apr-12	28		Deceased	EX14 3LZ
3963	26-Mar-12	23-Apr-12	28		Moved To Care Home	EX5 5JB
3955	26-Mar-12	23-Apr-12	28		Transfer	EX8 2PJ
3986	26-Mar-12	23-Apr-12	28		Transfer	EX8 4BW
4006	2-Apr-12	30-Apr-12	28		Deceased	EX11 1HE
4007	2-Apr-12	30-Apr-12	28		Transfer	EX13 7NG
3985	2-Apr-12	30-Apr-12	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX8 3AL
4044	23-Apr-12	21-May-12	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX10 9BW
4054	22-May-12	21-May-12	28		Transfer	EX5 4BB
4051	30-Apr-12	28-May-12	28		Deceased	EX9 6LX
4060	7-May-12	4-Jun-12	28		Transfer	EX8 4BN
4074	21-May-12	18-Jun-12	28		Deceased	EX10 0RG
4094	21-May-12	18-Jun-12	28		Deceased	EX14 1XU
4102	18-Jun-12	16-Jul-12	28		Deceased	EX10 9HZ
4103	25-Jun-12	23-Jul-12	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX14 1DX
4237	3-Sep-12	1-Oct-12	28		Deceased	EX14 3DZ
4233	10-Sep-12	8-Oct-12	28		Transfer	EX12 2NR
4219	10-Sep-12	8-Oct-12	28		Care Home	EX14 2JA

4220	10-Sep-12	8-Oct-12	28		Private Sector	EX15 2JN
4234	10-Sep-12	8-Oct-12	28		Deceased	EX8 2PB
4250	24-Sep-12	22-Oct-12	28		Care Home	EX9 6QB
4270	8-Oct-12	5-Nov-12	28		Care Home	EX10 9PQ
4293	15-Oct-12	12-Nov-12	28		Transfer	EX5 2BT
4366	22-Oct-12	19-Nov-12	28		Deceased	EX10 0LN
4306	22-Oct-12	19-Nov-12	28		Private Sector	EX14 1HE
4362	22-Oct-12	19-Nov-12	28		Transfer	EX9 6QH
4348	5-Nov-12	3-Dec-12	28	4	Moved To Care Home	EX10 9NT
4334	5-Nov-12	3-Dec-12	28		Moved To Care Home	EX5 1NQ
4353	5-Nov-12	3-Dec-12	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX8 1UD
4369	12-Nov-12	10-Dec-12	28		Deceased	EX10 9HZ
4359	12-Nov-12	10-Dec-12	28	4	Moved To Care Home	EX14 2RS
4390	12-Nov-12	10-Dec-12	28		Transfer	EX15 2NJ
4386	19-Nov-12	17-Dec-12	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX8 4BP
4371	19-Nov-12	17-Dec-12	28		Nom. to Housing Assoc	EX9 6SN
4131	9-Jul-12	6-Aug-12	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX10 9HX
4151	23-Jul-12	20-Aug-12	28		Moved To Care Home	EX5 3HA
4190	30-Jul-12	27-Aug-12	28		Deceased	EX5 1NQ
4158	30-Jul-12	27-Aug-12	28		Deceased	EX9 6QJ
4169	6-Aug-12	3-Sep-12	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX10 9PS
4205	6-Aug-12	3-Sep-12	28		Transfer	EX13 5EY
4213	13-Aug-12	10-Sep-12	28		Deceased	EX12 2AG
4223	13-Aug-12	10-Sep-12	28		Transfer	EX14 1BR
4210	20-Aug-12	17-Sep-12	28		Deceased	EX8 2JS
4199	27-Aug-12	24-Sep-12	28		Deceased	EX8 1UD
4448	10-Dec-12	7-Jan-13	28		Transfer	EX8 5JA
4452	17-Dec-12	14-Jan-13	28		Deceased	EX10 9HX
4435	17-Dec-12	14-Jan-13	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX24 6PP
4470	17-Dec-12	14-Jan-13	28		Deceased	EX9 6QB
4468	24-Dec-12	21-Jan-13	28		Transfer	EX14 1FQ
4491	14-Jan-13	11-Feb-13	28		Moved To Care Home	EX12 2NR
4457	14-Jan-13	11-Feb-13	28		Moved To Care Home	EX14 1FQ
4501	21-Jan-13	18-Feb-13	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX14 1NS
4512	4-Feb-13	4-Mar-13	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX10 0BS
4522	4-Feb-13	4-Mar-13	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX10 9PQ
4581	18-Feb-13	18-Mar-13	28		Transfer	EX5 2EJ
4557	25-Feb-13	25-Mar-13	28		Moved to Private Sector	EX14 3HB
3945	12-Mar-12	2-Apr-12	21		Moved to Private Sector	EX14 2JH
3984	26-Mar-12	16-Apr-12	21		Moved to Private Sector	EX10 0RJ
3975	26-Mar-12	16-Apr-12	21		Moved To Care Home	EX8 2AD
3997	2-Apr-12	23-Apr-12	21		Moved to Private Sector	EX14 1FQ
4069	21-May-12	11-Jun-12	21		Moved to Private Sector	EX8 2PG
4077	28-May-12	18-Jun-12	21		Moved To Care Home	EX5 3HA
4087	4-Jun-12	25-Jun-12	21		Moved To Care Home	EX8 3QN
4107	11-Jun-12	2-Jul-12	21		Deceased	EX9 6JL
4115	18-Jun-12	9-Jul-12	21		Deceased	EX8 3AL
4106	2-Jul-12	23-Jul-12	21		Moved to Private Sector	EX24 6LT
4257	10-Sep-12	1-Oct-12	21		Transfer	EX10 9NT
4222	10-Sep-12	1-Oct-12	21		Evicted	EX12 2BR
4225	10-Sep-12	1-Oct-12	21		Private Sector	EX9 6QJ
4238	17-Sep-12	8-Oct-12	21		Deceased	EX8 3AQ
4356	24-Sep-12	15-Oct-12	21		Deceased	EX10 9HZ
4262	1-Oct-12	22-Oct-12	21		Private Sector	EX13 5EH
4289	1-Oct-12	22-Oct-12	21		Transfer	EX8 4BW
4292	8-Oct-12	29-Oct-12	21		Transfer	EX12 2NR
4269	8-Oct-12	29-Oct-12	21		Care Home	EX8 4DG
4286	15-Oct-12	5-Nov-12	21		Private Sector	EX13 5XA
4297	15-Oct-12	5-Nov-12	21		Private Sector	EX14 1QN
4355	29-Oct-12	19-Nov-12	21		Deceased	EX13 5LS
4360	29-Oct-12	19-Nov-12	21		Transfer	EX8 4BP
4401	5-Nov-12	26-Nov-12	21		Transfer	EX11 1HE
4395	26-Nov-12	17-Dec-12	21		Moved to Private Sector	EX14 2JQ
4393	26-Nov-12	17-Dec-12	21		Moved To Care Home	EX8 2AD
4389	26-Nov-12	17-Dec-12	21		Moved To Care Home	EX8 4DQ
4459	3-Dec-12	24-Dec-12	21		Transfer	EX11 1TL
4409	3-Dec-12	24-Dec-12	21		Transfer	EX14 1FQ
4170	6-Aug-12	27-Aug-12	21		Moved To Care Home	EX8 2RP
4212	13-Aug-12	3-Sep-12	21		Deceased	EX10 8BL
4188	13-Aug-12	3-Sep-12	21		Moved to Private Sector	EX8 1UD



Capability Chart - End to End Times, Accommodation Viewed to Repairs Completed from 01-Apr-12 to 31-Mar-13



## **Agenda Item: 16**

**Housing Review Board**

**5 September 2013**

**SB**



### **Grounds Maintenance Task and Finish Forum – interim report**

#### **Summary**

This report presents an interim statement on the work of the Grounds Maintenance TAFF so far, including a series of recommendations for the Housing Review Board's consideration. It has been necessary to seek the Board's approval of these recommendations in order that further work on the subject can continue, and the full review of the Grounds Maintenance Service be completed in line with the Housing Review Board's expectations.

## **Recommendation**

1. That the level of tenant involvement with the service be increased by:
  - a) Ensuring that there were always opportunities for tenants as well as staff to be involved in estate walkabouts.
  - b) Training tenants to be 'green inspectors'.
  - c) Setting up a new Service Review Group to look at grounds maintenance or to extend the remit of the Estate Management Service Review Group to cover this area – the Landlord Services Manager to explore the options further.
  - d) Ensuring that tenants are always involved in any changes to the service, prior to implementation.
2. That consideration be given to using the HouseMark 'photobook' to record and improve the appearance of housing estates.
3. That the Council considers charging properties sold under the Right to Buy scheme an 'estate rent' charge and to seek legal advice on this.
4. That the Landlord Services Manager investigates joining the HouseMark estate management benchmarking club.
5. That the Council's website be used to give information about the level of grounds maintenance provided, the service tenants could expect and about when the service was/would be carried out.
6. That newly designated Village Green land at Littleham, Exmouth be considered for removal from the HRA and the Council asked to consider whether it wished to retain the land or relinquish it to Exmouth Town Council or Littleham Residents' Association.
7. That a budget be provided from the HRA to identify and re-measure and catalogue all the housing areas maintained under the grounds maintenance service.
8. That garden licences be reviewed, in terms of the land they were on, the purpose of the licence and the fee charged.

### **a) Reasons for Recommendation**

To bring up-to-date the grounds maintenance service, make improvements for the customer and ensure good value for money is achieved.

### **b) Alternative Options**

To leave the grounds maintenance service as it is.

### **c) Risk Considerations**

We could fail to achieve high levels of value for money, perform less well when measured against our peers and suffer a reduction in customer satisfaction levels.

### **d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations**

Are contained within the report.



## e) Date for Review of Decision

March 2014.

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### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Housing Review Board members will recall considering a paper on grounds maintenance presented by the Landlord Services Manager at the meeting on 10 January 2013, which set out the position on grounds maintenance following concerns raised that the service may be in need of review. There was an indication that some residents who received this service would welcome an improvement from the one currently being offered, and consultation undertaken had revealed mixed views on the subject. Overall the report concluded that the service, still based upon the arrangements agreed in 1993, provided reasonable value for money, but had not been market tested for a number of years, and there were some quality issues.
- 1.2 At that meeting the Board recommended that a TAFF be established to review current working practice and to consider ways forward for the grounds maintenance of external communal housing areas.

### 2 The Grounds Maintenance TAFF

- 2.1 The Grounds Maintenance TAFF has had three meetings so far, and made some progress on understanding this vast and varied area of work.
- 2.2 The TAFF met for the first time on [15 March 2013](#) to agree terms of reference and the scope of the review to be undertaken. It considered the relevant sections of the 2007 Service Level Agreement between Housing and Street Scene Services so that a better understanding of the current service and issues would be gained by all present. A programme of future meetings for the TAFF was also agreed.
- 2.3 The TAFF met again on [26 April 2013](#) when a demonstration of Street Scene's Down To Earth (DTE) system was given by the Parks Development Officer. DTE contains all the information they have on grounds maintenance services Street Scene carry out on our behalf, giving detailed information of the activities carried out on all our housing communal areas. It provides an audit trail of price increases and how inflationary figures have been applied, and it was confirmed that tendered rates are the same for all EDDC customers, with outside customers paying a higher charge.
- 2.4 This meeting also considered a list of around 140 garden licences held by Housing, split into three categories:
  - Those on Housing land in tenanted areas (where multiple garden licence areas would be better taken back into the Council's control, in line with current policy on dealing with requests to claim areas of communal land).
  - Those on Housing land in non tenanted areas (where they could be reclaimed unless the income provided outweighs the cost of maintenance by ourselves).
  - Those on non Housing land (which should be handed over to the Estates team for their management).

It was recommended that garden licences be reviewed, in terms of the land they were on, the purpose of the licence and the fee charged.

- 2.5 The third meeting of the TAFF was on [2 August 2013](#) where the Landlord Services Manager presented a paper reminding the forum of the current levels of satisfaction with the grounds maintenance and reviewing services offered by other social landlords. A number of further steps that could be taken to improve the service offered by East Devon Homes were identified, and appear as recommendations in this report.
- 2.6 The second part of this meeting heard a presentation by the Street Scene Manager on benchmarking of Street Scene's grounds maintenance service, using data taken from Value for Money (VFM) benchmarking & the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) statistics, which covered:
- Comparisons with nearest neighbours – Exeter City Council and Mid Devon District Council on:
    - the overall cost of the service
    - specifications
    - recharges to the HRA.
  - Accounting for the cost.
- 2.7 It was noted that East Devon had areas of green space spread over a large rural district, with large towns which included prime parks (Manor Gardens, Exmouth and Connaught Gardens, Sidmouth) and recreation grounds. Compared to Exeter City and Mid Devon, Street Scene advised that EDDC offered a good value and enhanced service (to a higher standard) with over £110,000 of extra works included. Time and travel costs were increased due to the rural nature of the area. We would like to evaluate this work more closely.
- 2.8 The benchmarking presentation had also highlighted inaccuracies regarding the size of the housing areas maintained by Street Scene. An example was given where the square meterage at Lymebourne, Sidmouth had been underestimated. The areas had last been measured in 1998 and there were discrepancies between the DTE (Down to Earth) system used by Street Scene and EMap.
- 2.9 The Forum agreed that all of the housing areas maintained by Street Scene should be re-measured and that some of the areas should be off set back to the General Fund, where relevant. It was acknowledged that there was a cost implication for undertaking this work and the Forum felt that a budget should be sought from the HRA.

### **3 Conclusions**

- 3.1 The Grounds Maintenance TAFF has considered several aspects of the service in its meetings so far, and made a series of recommendations.
- 3.2 It has been necessary to seek the Board's approval of these recommendations in order that further work on the subject can continue, and the full review of the Grounds Maintenance Service be completed in line with the Board's expectations.

## **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications.

## **Financial Implications**

Any budget agreed for the re-measuring of Housing grounds maintenance areas will need to be met from the HRA balance.

## **Consultation on Reports to the Cabinet**

Customers have been involved in the preparation of reports to the Board and are included on the Grounds Maintenance TAFF itself.

## **Background Papers**

- Minutes of TAFF meetings held on [15 March 2013](#), [26 April 2013](#) and [2 August](#) 2013.
- [Report to TAFF held on 2 August 2013](#)

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Sue Bewes  
Housing Landlord Services Manager

Housing Review Board  
5 September 2013

## Housing Service

### Quarterly Performance Indicator Report

### Quarter 1 2013/14 Financial Year

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## 0.0 Summary

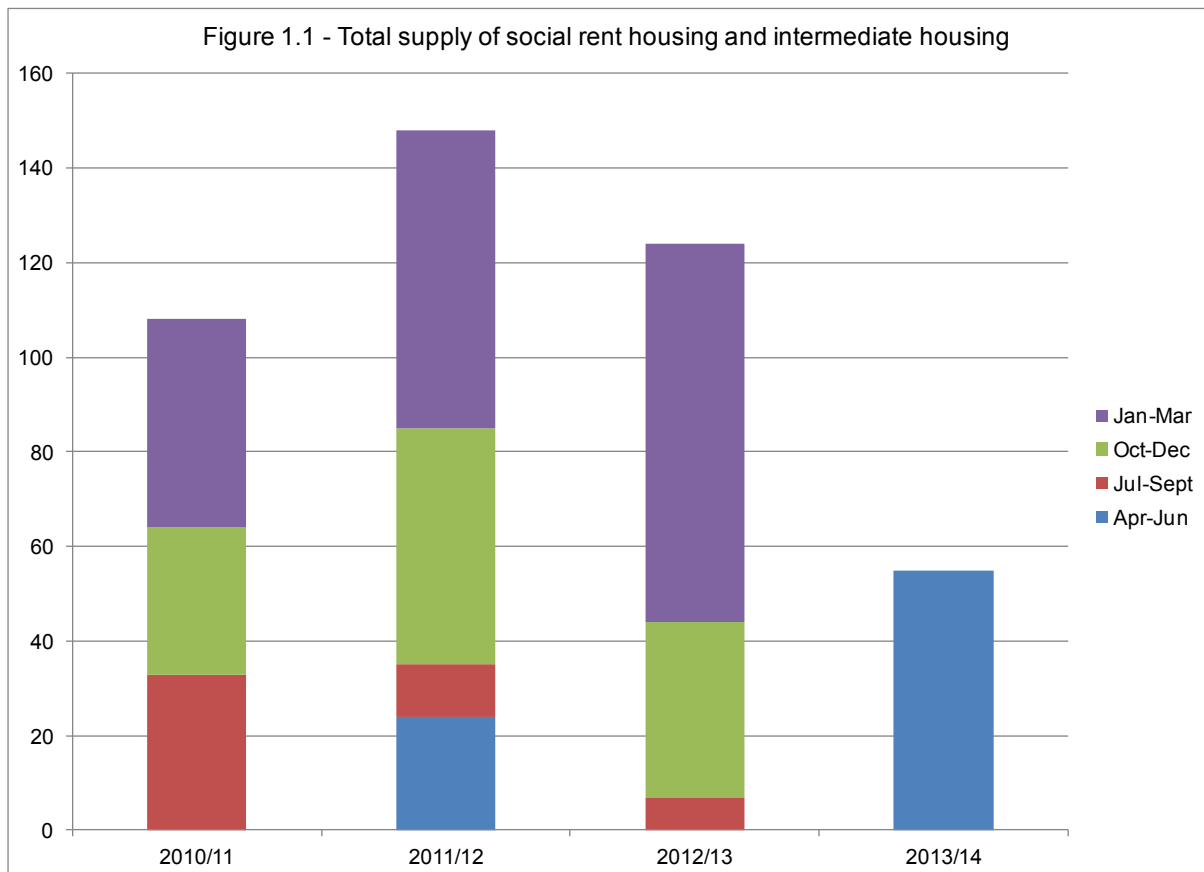
Description	2012/13		2013/14				Progress against last quarter	
	Jan - Mar	Cumulative Total	Apr- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar		Cumulative Total
Total supply of social rent housing and intermediate housing	80	124	55				55	
Total New ASB Cases	45	205	53				53	
No. of new stage 1 complaints	3	21	5				5	
Cost of temporary B&B accommodation (£)	£3,176	£34,761	£2,957				£2,957	
Calls answered under 1 minute	97.31%	*	97.82%				*	
The average re-let time in days General Needs	24.42	*	32.14				*	

Description	2012/13		2012/13				Progress against last quarter	
	Apr- Mar	Cumulative Total	Apr- Jun	Apr-Sep	Apr - Dec	Apr- Mar		Cumulative Total
% of rent collected from current tenants (incl. arrears bought forward but excl. service charges) - Year to date	99.72%	99.72%	99.57%				99.57%	
Percentage of emergency (immediate) repairs completed within target time - Year to date	85.7%	85.7%	87.8%				87.8%	

## 1.0 Affordable Housing Completions

Performance Indicator	2011/12			2012/13			2013/14						
	Cumulative Total	Target	% of target met	Cumulative Total	Target	% of target met	Apr-Jun	July-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Cumulative Total	Target	% of target met
Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (LAA)	148	100	148%	124	100	124%	55				55	100	55%

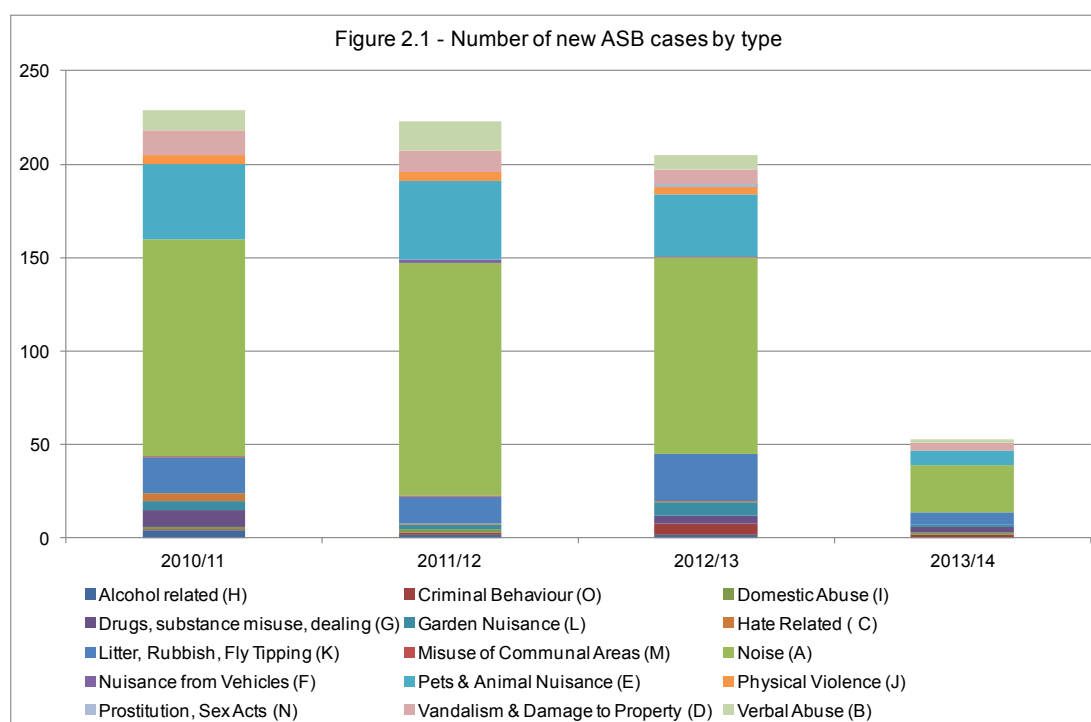
Source: SPAR.net



## 2.0 Anti-social behaviour

Performance Indicator	2012/13		2013/14				Progress against last quarter
	Jan - March	Cumulative Total	April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - March	
<b>No. of new ASB cases</b>							
Alcohol related (H)	0	2	0				0
Criminal Behaviour (O)	0	6	2				2
Domestic Abuse (I)	0	0	1				1
Drugs, substance misuse, dealing (G)	0	4	3				3
Garden Nuisance (L)	2	7	1				1
Hate Related (C)	1	1	0				0
Litter, Rubbish, Fly Tipping (K)	9	25	7				7
Misuse of Communal Areas (M)	0	0	0				0
Noise (A)	20	105	25				25
Nuisance from Vehicles (F)	0	1	0				0
Pets & Animal Nuisance (E)	8	33	8				8
Physical Violence (J)	0	4	0				0
Prostitution, Sex Acts (N)	1	1	0				0
Vandalism & Damage to Property (D)	3	8	4				4
Verbal Abuse (B)	1	8	2				2
<b>Total New ASB Cases</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>53</b>				<b>53</b>
Live Cases at End of Quarter	24	*	26				*
Resolved	48	208	47				47
Unresolved	1	2	0				0
% of closed cases that are resolved	98%	99%	100%				100%
Resolved by Early Intervention	49	210	47				47
Actions Taken by Early Intervention	45	205	56				56
Number of surveys received	24	92	23				23
How easy to report complaint - % positive rating	95.5%	90.8%	91%				91%
How quickly were you interviewed - % positive rating	88%	91%	90%				90%
Was staff member helpful - % positive rating	100%	94%	86%				86%
Overall satisfaction with way complaint was dealt with - % positive rating	83%	76%	78%				78%
Overall satisfaction with outcome of complaint - % positive rating	82%	67%	61%				61%

Source: Estate Management Customer Satisfaction Survey, Host Access

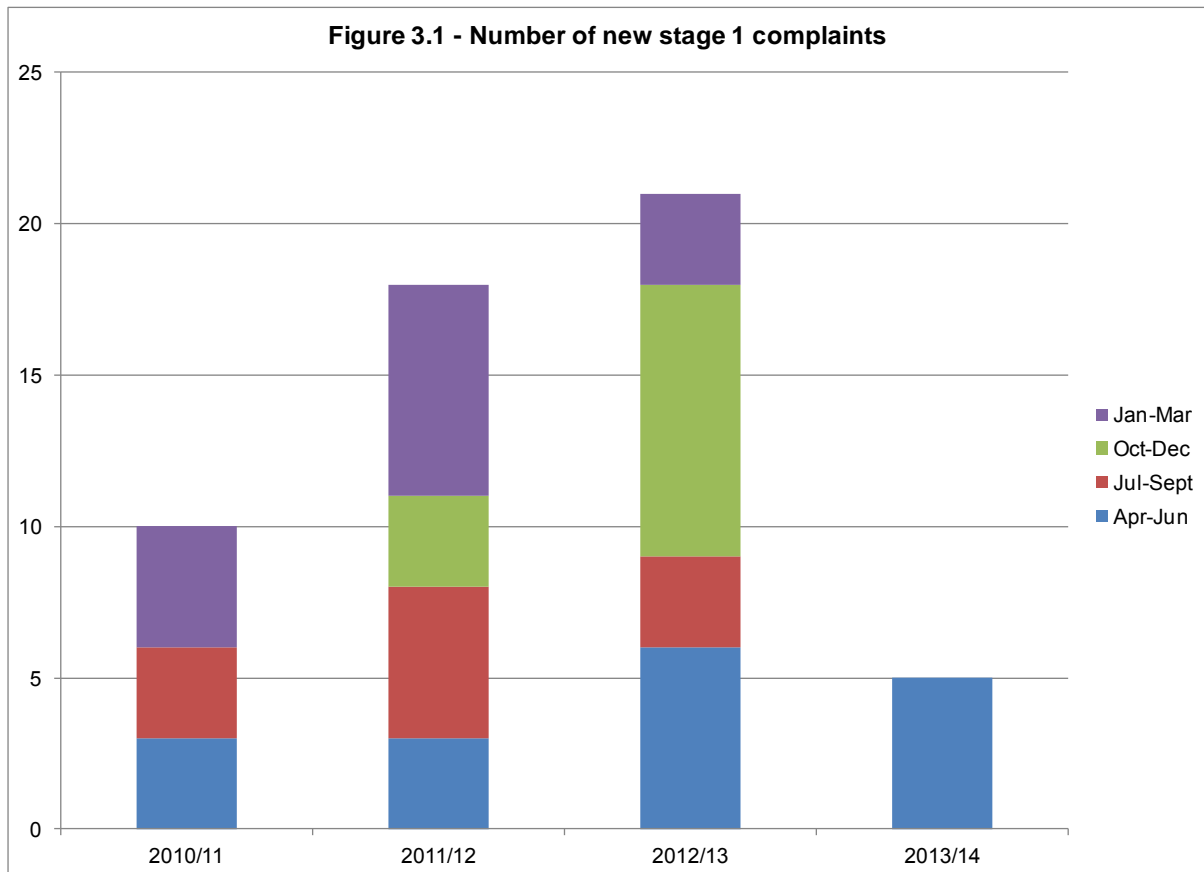




### 3.0 Complaints

Description	2012/13		2013/14				Progress against last quarter	
	Jan - March	Cumulative Total	April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - March		Cumulative Total
No. of new stage 1 complaints	3	21	5				5	
Average time in calendar days to issue full response to all Stage 1 complaints	11.7	17.0	11.0					

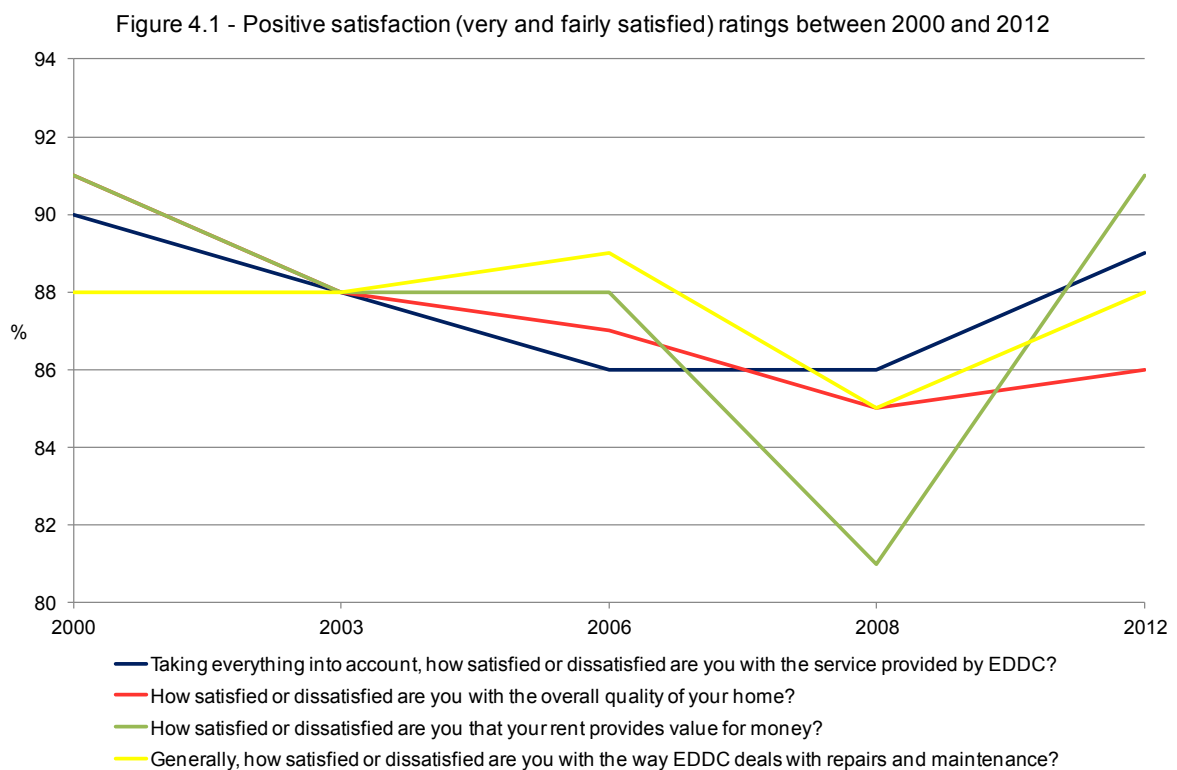
Source: Host Access Complaints Stage Report and Lagan (from Q1 2013/14)



## 4.0 Customer Satisfaction

Description	Tenant Group	2000 STATUS	2003 STATUS	2006 STATUS	2008 STATUS	2012 STAR
		Very & Fairly Satisfied	Very & Fairly Satisfied	Very & Fairly Satisfied	Very & Fairly Satisfied	Very & Fairly Satisfied
%						
Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by EDDC?	General Needs	90	88	86	86	89
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall quality of your home?	General Needs	91	88	87	85	86
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your neighbourhood as a place to live?	General Needs	#	#	#	82	89
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your rent provides value for money?	General Needs	91	88	88	81	91
Generally, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way EDDC deals with repairs and maintenance?	General Needs	88	88	89	85	88
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that EDDC listens to your views and acts upon them?	General Needs	#	#	#	64	73

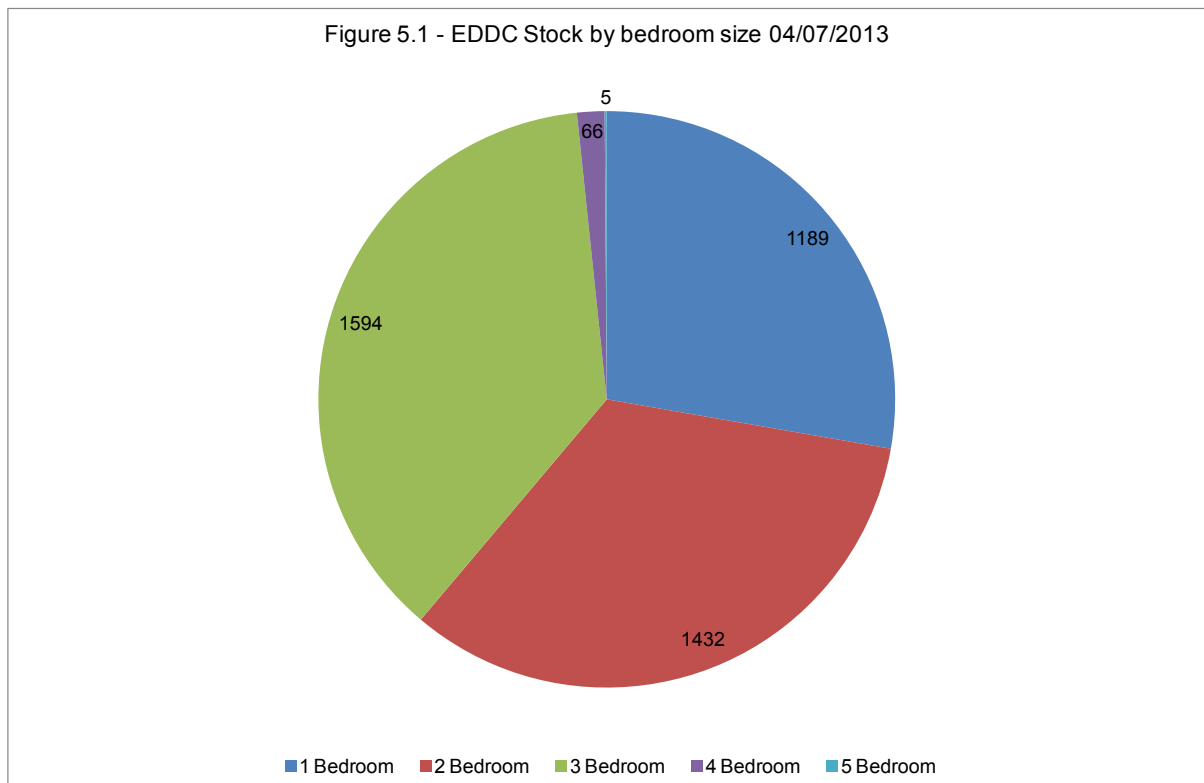
Source: STATUS and STAR surveys. NB: The STAR results are based on valid responses only, STATUS on non-valid and valid responses – they are therefore not directly comparable.



## 5.0 EDDC Stock

Date	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom	5 Bedroom	Total
04/04/2011	1189	1428	1609	70	5	4301
15/06/2011	1188	1426	1609	70	5	4298
01/07/2011	1188	1426	1609	70	5	4298
01/08/2011	1188	1427	1609	70	5	4299
01/09/2011	1188	1427	1609	70	5	4299
03/10/2011	1188	1427	1609	70	5	4299
01/11/2011	1188	1427	1609	70	5	4299
01/12/2011	1188	1427	1609	70	5	4299
03/01/2012	1188	1427	1609	70	5	4299
01/02/2012	1188	1427	1609	70	5	4299
01/03/2012	1188	1427	1608	70	5	4298
30/03/2012	1188	1427	1607	70	5	4297
02/05/2012	1188	1427	1607	69	5	4296
01/06/2012	1188	1427	1607	69	5	4296
02/07/2012	1188	1427	1607	69	5	4296
28/11/2012	1190	1423	1605	68	5	4291
04/01/2013	1189	1423	1603	68	5	4288
09/04/2013	1189	1424	1598	66	5	4282
04/07/2013	1189	1432	1594	66	5	4286

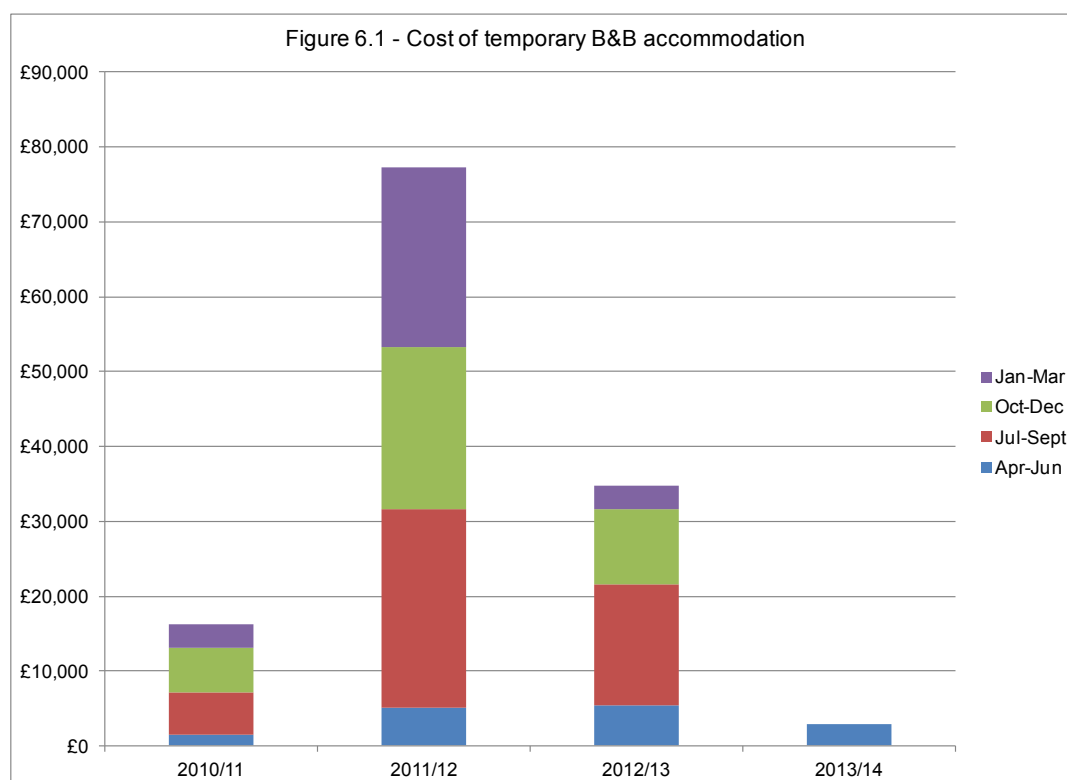
Source: Host Access Bedroom Analysis



## 6.0 Homelessness

Description	2012/13		2013/14				Progress against last quarter
	Jan - March	Cumulative Total	April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - March	
Office Interviews: Number of people who come into EDDC office for housing/homeless advice	627	2414	673				673 *
Approaches: Number of people who indicate that they are homeless or about to become homeless	125	464	127				127 *
Acceptances: Number of people who EDDC have accepted as homeless	9	35	6				6 *
Preventions: Cases EDDC have intervened to prevent homelessness	82	305	79				79 *
Number of households in temporary B&B accommodation at end of quarter	2	*	1				*
Number of days spent in temporary B&B accommodation	92	699	60				60
Cost of temporary B&B accommodation (£)	£3,176	£34,761	£2,957				£2,957
Number of households living in temporary accommodation at end of quarter (not including B&B)	17	*	13				*

Source: Homelessness & Housing Options Team & SPAR



## 7.0 Home Safeguard

Description	2012/13		2013/14				Progress against last quarter	
	Jan-March	Cumulative total	Apr-June	July-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-March		Cumulative total
<b>Call Handling</b>								
Answered in under 1 Minute	97.31%	To follow	97.82%				To follow	
Answered in under 3 Minutes	99.58%	To follow	99.73%				To follow	
Answered in over 3 Minutes	0.42%	To follow	0.27%				To follow	
% of Operators Achieving Under 1 Minute KPI	64%	To follow	50%				To follow	*
Operator quality checks (target 100%)	100%	To follow	100.00%				To follow	*
<b>Installations</b>								
Under 2 working Days (urgent) -	0	31	4				4	
Under 2 working Days (urgent) - % installed within target time	0%	100%	100%				100%	
Under 5 working Days - Number	0	0	0				0	
Under 5 working Days - % installed within target time	0%	0%	0%				0%	
Under 15 working Days (non urgent) - Number	132	457	121				121	
Under 15 working Days (non urgent) - % installed within target time	100%	100%	100%				100%	
Under 20 working Days (non urgent) - Number	0	0	0				0	
Under 20 working Days (non urgent) -	0%	0%	0%				0%	
<b>Repairs</b>								
Critical repaired within 48 hours -	14	106	14				14	
Critical repaired within 48 hours - % repaired within target time	100%	100%	100%				100%	
Critical repaired within 96 hours - number	0	0	0				0	
Critical repaired within 96 hours - % repaired within target time	0%	0%	0%				0%	
No critical within 10 working days - number	97	255	83				83	
No critical within 10 working days - % repaired within target time	100%	100%	100%				100%	
No critical within 15 working days - number	0	0	0				0	
No critical within 15 working days - % repaired within target time	0%	0%	0%				0%	
<b>Complaints</b>								
Total complaints	1	1	0				0	
Response sent in under 5 days	1	1	0				0	*
Response sent in under 20 days	0	0	0				0	*
<b>Service User Satisfaction (target 5%)</b>								
<b>0</b>								
Installations	#		#	#	#	#	#	*
Monitoring	#		#	#	#	#	#	*

Source: Homesafeguard Team

## 8.0 Lettings

Performance Indicator	2012/13		2013/14			Cumulative Total	Progress against last quarter
	Jan-Mar	Cumulative Total	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec		
Total number of units vacant at the end of the period	9	*	9			*	
Number of units vacant and available for letting at the period end	7	*	3			*	
Number of units vacant but unavailable (BVPI) for letting at the period end	2	*	6			*	
The average re-let time in days General Needs	24.42	*	32.14			*	
The average re-let time in days Sheltered Housing	21.05	*	15.76			*	
Total number of re-lets during the period benchmarked	74	235	42			42	*
The number of properties accepted on first offer GN	31	108	29			29	*
The number of properties accepted on first offer SH	31	87	26			26	*
The % of properties accepted on first offer GN	86%	*	76%			*	
The % of properties accepted on first offer SH	82%	*	90%			*	
Percentage of new tenants satisfied with the allocation and letting process	#	#	#			#	*
Percentage of dwellings that are vacant and available to let - GN and HfOP	0.16%	*	0.07%			*	
Percentage of dwellings that are vacant but unavailable (BVPI) to let - GN and HfOP	0.05%	*	0.14%			*	

Source: CORE, Anite (via Business Objects)

Figure 8.1: Housing Voids – Property Type Dwelling – Capability Chart – End to end times, start of void to keys to new tenant, 1st June 2013 to 30th June 2013

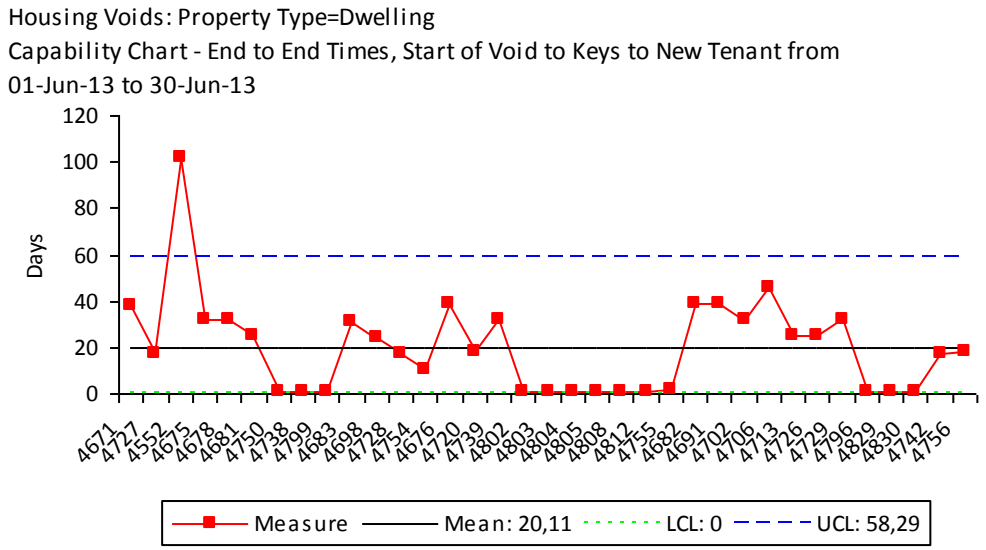
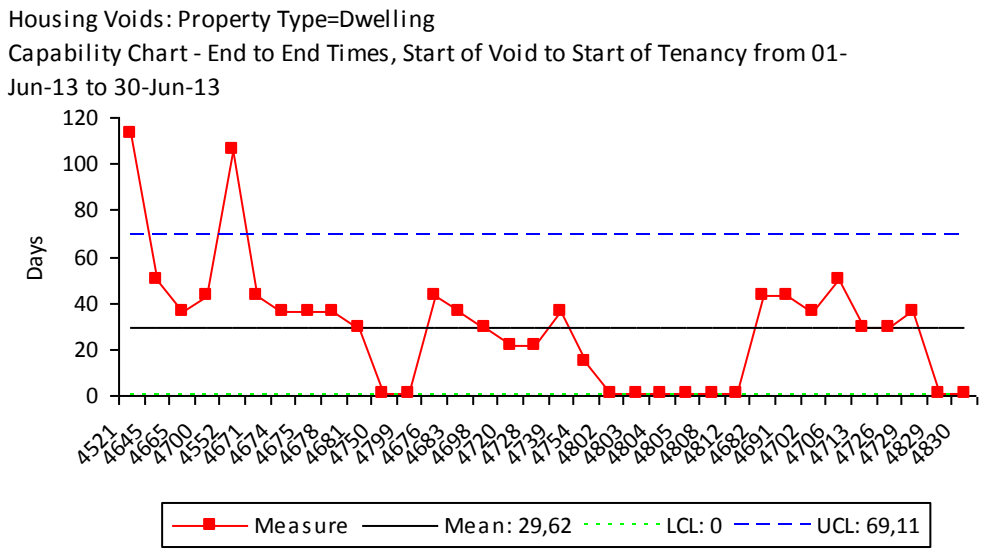


Figure 8.2: Housing Voids – Property Type Dwelling – Capability Chart – End to end times, start of void to start of tenancy, 1st June 2013 to 30th June 2013



## 9.0 Number of Households on the East Devon Housing Waiting List

Performance Indicator	2012/13				2013/14				% Change between Apr 11 & Jun 13
	Jul-12	Nov-12	Jan-13	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	
Band A - Emergency Housing Need	1	0	0		0				-100%
Band B - High Housing Need	205	331	345	392	344				82%
Band C - Medium Housing Need	862	709	715	721	666				1%
Band D - Low Housing Need	1200	1257	1272	1114	776				-13%
Band E - No Housing Need	1891	1797	1305	865	982				-25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4159</b>	<b>4094</b>	<b>3637</b>	<b>3092</b>	<b>2768</b>				<b>-9%</b>

Source: Devon Home Choice



## 10 Private Sector Housing

Description	2012/13		2013/14				Progress	
	Jan - March	Cumulative Total	April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - March		Cumulative Total
Empty homes investigated	60	*	46				*	*
Empty homes genuinely brought back into use	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Non-exempt empty homes	549	*	527				*	*
Disabled Facilities Grant Applications	30	88	22				22	*
Disabled Facilities Grant Completions	24	94	15				15	*

Source: Council Tax Return & Private Sector Team records

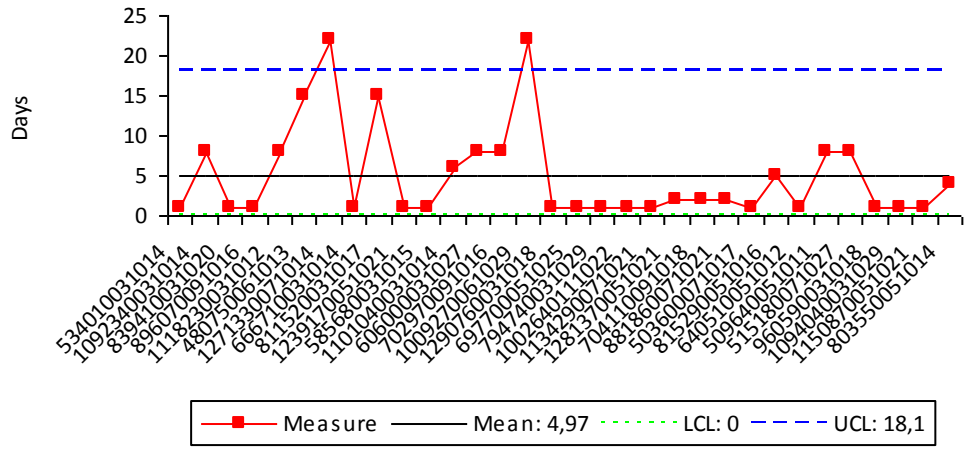
## 11 Rental

Performance Indicators	2012/13	2013/14				Progress against last
	Apr-Mar	Apr-Jun	Apr-Sep	Apr-Dec	Apr-Mar	
Rent and service charges due for the period benchmarked (whether property is occupied or not & excluding all arrears brought forward)	£16,301,328	£4,274,582				*
Rent and service charges that could not be collected during the period benchmarked due to empty dwellings	£116,013	£43,707				*
Rent collected year to date from current tenants	£16,368,152	£4,215,579				*
% of rent due collected from current tenants	100.41%	98.62%				
Rent collected year to date from former tenants	£12,493	£3,604				*
Current tenant arrears - start of year	£128,274	£126,960				*
Current tenant arrears - end of period	£126,960	£135,458				*
Former tenant arrears - start of year	£91,927	£70,860				*
Former tenant arrears - end of period	£70,860	£54,531				*
Gross Annual Rent Roll	£16,301,328	£17,427,142				*
Annual rent and service charges due (excluding rent lost due to dwellings being vacant)	£16,185,314	£17,248,952				*
Total rent and service charges of current and former tenants, which were actually written off as unrecoverable year to date	£31,537	£18,605				*
Total number of evictions due to rent arrears year to date	5	2				*
Number of tenancies at the start of the period	4257	4242				*
Number of tenancies at the end of the period	4242	4251				*
Rent collected from current tenants as a percentage of rent owed (excluding arrears b/f) - GN & HfOP	101.1%	99.6%				
Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit (excluding HB adjustment) - GN & HfOP	0.78%	0.79%				
Former tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit - GN & HfOP	0.44%	0.32%				
Rent written off as a percentage of the annual rent roll - GN & HfOP	0.19%	0.11%				*
Percentage of all tenants who have been evicted for rent arrears - GN & HfOP	0.12%	0.05%				*
Percentage of rent lost through dwellings being vacant - GN & HfOP	0.71%	1.02%				

Source: Rental Team; HouseMark PI Tracking

Figure 11.1: Housing Rents – Property Type Dwelling – Capability Chart – End to End Times, Start of Tenancy to First Payment/Benefit, 1st June 2013 to 30th June 2013

Housing Rents: Property Type=Dwelling  
 Capability Chart - End to End Times, Start of Tenancy to First Payment/Benefit  
 from 01-Jun-13 to 30-Jun-13



## 12 Repairs

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14				Progress against last
	Apr-Mar	Apr-Jun	Apr-Sep	Apr-Dec	Apr-Mar	
The total number of emergency (immediate) repairs completed year-to-date	1306	172				*
The total number of emergency repairs completed year-to-date that were completed within target	1119	151				*
<b>Percentage of emergency (immediate) repairs completed within target time - Year to date</b>	<b>85.7%</b>	<b>87.8%</b>				
The total number of urgent repairs completed year-to-date	4,982	1,145				*
The total number of urgent repairs completed year-to-date that were completed within target	4,463	1,107				*
<b>Percentage of urgent (urgent) repairs completed within target time</b>	<b>89.6%</b>	<b>96.7%</b>				
The total number of routine repairs completed year-to-date	2262	410				*
The total number of routine repairs completed year-to-date that were completed within target	2054	381				*
<b>Percentage of routine (priority &amp; non priority) repairs completed within target time</b>	<b>90.8%</b>	<b>92.9%</b>				
Total number of reactive repairs completed year-to-date	8,550	1,727				*
Total number of reactive repairs completed year-to-date that were completed on time	7,636	1,639				*
<b>Percentage of all reactive repairs completed within target time</b>	<b>89.3%</b>	<b>94.9%</b>				
The average number of calendar days taken to complete responsive repairs in the period	15.11	17.20				*
<b>The Percentage of repairs completed right first time in the period</b>	<b>86.1%</b>	<b>82.4%</b>				
<b>How was repair dealt with? % Indicating Reasonable</b>	<b>97.4%</b>	<b>96.2%</b>				
The percentage of properties, requiring a landlord gas safety record, that have a valid landlord gas safety record	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>To follow</b>				*
Overall gas safety check service rating - % positive satisfaction rating	<b>97.9%</b>	<b>98.5%</b>				
Gas safety check work finished in one visit - % positive rating	<b>98.9%</b>	<b>95.6%</b>				

Source: Host Access Housing Monitoring Report; RHH Online Live Reporting; Gas safety customer satisfaction survey

### Item 18

#### Exclusion of the Public

The Vice Chairman of the Committee to move the following:-

“that under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, of the description(s) set out on the agenda is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing this item in private session (Part B)”.